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EDITORIAL

The present issue of *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* is a general issue that provides a window into recent research happening across disciplines such as linguistics, history, cultural studies, ethnomusicology, and political science. It captures some of the debates, new and old, on themes ranging from multilingualism and pedagogy, political history, colonial history, history of medicine to tribal studies, architectural heritage, and violence and memory.

In the first article of the issue, Dripta Piplai Mondal addresses a pressing field of concern—having accepted our multilingual reality, how to implement an effective multilingual pedagogy in the classroom. This question is especially relevant in the context of India today, where we are re-thinking pedagogy in order to make it more consonant with rights of individuals and collectives. In this article, the author takes up a case study of West Bengal to point out the gap between the idea of a multilingual classroom as proposed in pedagogic policy documents and the actual multilingual classroom situations. The author discusses the specific difficulties of implementing a multilingual pedagogy in the state, and also proposes possible solutions to the problem.

The second article is about the controversy regarding the Liberation of Goa in 1961 during the Nehruvian regime that attracted much international criticism of the first Prime Minister of independent India. Poulami Aich Mukherjee provides a different perspective to the episode and argues that the war was not a violation of the international stand of non-violence that India had adopted, but was in keeping with the demands of justice and order, as colonialism itself is a threat to international peace and security. The continuation of Portuguese imperialism meant a denial of the rights of self-determination of the people of Goa, and it also threatened the process of integration of a newly independent nation.

Subir Dey traces the historical roots of the recent declaration by the Assam government for demographic engineering that marks out certain geographies and communities, where one is likely to notice a higher rate of underage marriage and other factors leading to demographic problems. This exploration leads us back to the nineteenth century when important demographic shifts and a

"radical reconfiguration of the meanings of geography" took place in Assam due to the policies of the British government. In other words, Dey demonstrates that current policy-making in Assam is ridden with a colonial inheritance in thinking and is most unhelpful with regard to fault lines along the issues of language, culture and resources that were, in fact, created in the region as a result of colonial policy.

The next essay is also an attempt at historicizing a practice—K. P. Girija charts the transition of Ayurveda from being a *vidya* to being a *vidyabhyasam* from the nineteenth century onwards. In Indian philosophical traditions, *vidya* is "not merely learning from/ about an external world, it is a learning process that includes the aspiration to ultimately know the self and to be liberated through that knowing." While, what the author denotes by *vidyabhyasam*, is the system of modern education, driven by "the idea of a willed individual acquiring an objective and disembodied knowledge." In this process of transition, what was earlier a heterogeneous group of practices, with a high proportion of local variations, got welded into a standardized practice of Ayurveda in Kerala.

Prachi Vaidya Dublay's essay on *adivasi* music from an ethnomusicological perspective is narrated in the first-person, thus collapsing the boundaries between the subject and the object. It traces the journey of a practitioner of music (the author herself), located in a different socio-cultural context, in discovering the many dimensions of *adivasi* music. In that process, the author interrogates many categories—'adivasi', 'art', and 'music'. Dublay also unravels the many features of 'adivasi music' from a rich repertoire of material collected during field work.

Sujit Kumar's article also deals with the *adivasi,* albeit from a different perspective. He examines the issue of 'autonomy' of traditional communities such as the *adivasis* with respect to their customs. The dilemma is between the 'responsibility to act' on the one hand, and the 'responsibility to otherness' on the other hand. The former approach is unaccommodating with regard to traditional customs that are not in keeping with the progressive spirit of modernity, for instance, regressive customs and practices concerning women. On the contrary, the latter approach does not valorize modernity and questions its universality and authority to intervene in the lives of those who represent its 'other'. The author takes up a case study of the Ho *adivasi* community to address this dilemma, and tries to propose a case-specific middle ground for resolution.

Occasioned by the demolition of the Hall of Nations and Industry at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi in April 2017, the next article by

Narayani Gupta traces the history behind the monumental failure to protect national architectural heritage in India. She argues that protection of such heritage is buttressed by four pillars—scholarship (history and architectural history); the concept of heritage; nostalgia; and appropriate conservation norms. Gupta analyses how, since Independence, India has fared on these counts, leading up to the kind of apathy that attended the demolition of the Hall of Nations that was a priceless piece of modern architectural heritage.

Another dimension of history and memory is evoked by Ishmeet Kaur Chaudhry in her essay on Safina Uberoi's documentary 'My Mother India' on the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. To be precise, the subject of the film is Patricia Uberoi, Safina's mother and well-known social scientist of Australian origin. By virtue of her marriage to the equally well-known sociologist J. P. S. Uberoi, she was exposed to the precarious situation of being a white woman married to a Sikh man, and caught up in the throes of the violence against Sikhs following the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The author examines Patricia Uberoi's status as an "unnoticed" subject, and interrogates the notion of white dominance by exposing the vulnerability of a white "outsider" in this particular context.

Arpita Mitra

DESIGNING STRATEGIES FOR A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

Dripta Piplai Mondal

Introduction

Congregation of many languages in one classroom is a common scenario in Indian classrooms in different rural and urban areas. In many instances, one classroom comprises languages that have different structures, patterns and vocabulary. "Multilingualism" is a social situation where groups or communities communicate in more than one language with varying proficiency. This is called "societal multilingualism". When individuals have the ability to use two languages, separately or mixed, with varying degrees of competence, it is called "individual multilingualism" (Maher, 2017: 3). As Edwards pointed out, multilingualism is the necessity of the majority in the world today (Edwards, 2002: 1). Monolingualism is an idea related to one powerful language for wider communication.

The heterogeneity of the classroom is often considered as a hindrance for conducting everyday teaching-learning practices. As a result, the potential for using multiple languages/using multilingualism as a resource for classrooms is not explored by the teachers concerned and teacher educators. The position paper for teaching Indian languages, National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005), suggested that every child in India should receive early education in their mother tongue. It has been mentioned in the NCF 2005 position paper that 'the new teacher training programmes will sensitize the teachers to the nature, structure and functions of language, language acquisition and language change and equip her with strategies that can help her to build on the resources of a multilingual classroom' (NCF, 2005: 27).

Ideally, children with varied linguistic backgrounds can avail of the facility of learning in mother tongue if multilingual pedagogy is adopted. In order to ensure meaningful participation of all students in the classroom, there is a strong need to understand the nature of multilinguality that is rooted in almost all Indian classrooms.

Where existence of many languages creates a conflict in classrooms, multilingual learning space can enable students to use their own language to negotiate while communicating. Multilinguality has been viewed as a potential site for negotiating conflict (Agnihotri, 2014).

India is not only a multilingual country; it has intense language contact situations in different areas. Languages with different origin and structure are often located in the same space where languages share common features as a result of contact. There is 'diffusion of grammatical process over contiguous areas' (Emeneau, 1956:3). For example, in the north-eastern part of India, different Tibeto Burman languages often exist with Austric languages like Santali, Khasi, Mundari and Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese. Co-occurrence of different languages in the same space gives rise to different types and degrees of bilingualism and multilingualism, language shift and language mixture of different degrees. Children with different types of bilingualism/multilingualism (simultaneous or sequential)[1] are often present in the same classroom. Children often shift their languages as a result and mix their codes at the word, phrasal or sentential levels.

The paper aims at:

(a) understanding the nature of children's talk in terms of multilinguality;
(b) discussing some problems of multilingual classrooms as commonly viewed by teachers;
(c) understanding situations where language conflicts are common in classroom; and
(d) suggesting some planning strategies for multilingual classrooms where there are language conflicts due to the presence of many languages in a single classroom.

The paper tries to explore the nature of multilingualism present in rural school children's speech in India, with special reference to the situation in West Bengal, and to find out the gap between the idea of a multilingual classroom as proposed in pedagogic policy documents and the actual multilingual classroom situations.

Towards a Multilingual Pedagogy

Understanding Multilingual Pedagogy

Use of old instructivist approaches are often not encouraged along with the recent developments in the educational scenario in India.

Elementary level education is presently viewed as a reflective and collaborative process where the teacher is also empowered. The overall learning experience has become learner-centric, while previously the predominant system was teacher-centric. In the era of various new teaching-learning objectives, multilingual education has been adopted as an approach to combat social injustice in the classroom, as the use of homogeneous language and culture always marginalizes the child in multilingual-multicultural classrooms.

There is a need to understand the types and nature of multilingual pedagogies. As Garcia and Flores mentioned, 'multilingual pedagogies have started to acknowledge the hybrid language practices of bilingual people and their role in the development of more competent users of academic practices in different standards.' (Garcia & Flores, 2010: 232) Multilingual pedagogies are designed keeping a number of factors in mind, for example, language use, orientation, etc. Multilingual pedagogies can be of different types. These can be additive and linear (L1+L2= L1+L2)[2] where two languages are used together or subtractive or linear (L1+L2-L1= L2), where two languages are used initially followed by the use of one language. These designed multilingual or bilingual pedagogies can be used for transitional bi/multilingual education for immigrant children. Multilingual pedagogies can also be used in immersion revitaliza-tion programmes. In transitional bi/multilingual programmes, children's home language is used along with the formal school language initially. At a later level, only the school language is used in classrooms where the transition is marked by the bi/multilingual classrooms. Language revitalization programmes aim at revitalizing the languages in danger. In immersion programmes, the target language is used along with a different language that is known by the learners.

Multilingual pedagogies were initially linear, later they became dynamic. Instead of conceptualizing L1 and L2 as two different sets in a linear way, dynamic pedagogy conceptualized L1 and L2 as complex and interrelated. So, in dynamic multilingual pedagogy languages are not carefully controlled so that the children can negotiate their language use among themselves through interaction (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). It can be understood that a multilingual classroom does not merely use pedagogies where children with different mother tongues are present in a common space. Rather, it deals with multilinguality in every individual child's linguistic behaviour. In a typically multilingual classroom, various tasks are conducted using different languages used by the children. For example, words from different languages can be written on a blackboard with different

coloured pens. Children can be allowed to use those words while constructing some sentences, either by speaking them or writing them.

Designing and implementing multilingual pedagogy in multilingual provinces is not an easy task. Various challenges have been addressed for implementing the idea of multilingual education in terms of administrative tasks, teacher training, and bringing changes in the existing curriculum and developing materials in different languages.

Multilingual Education Policy in India with Special Reference to West Bengal

In the Indian scenario, multilingualism has been adopted as a major approach in several schools in certain multilingual states, e.g. Chattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, where a huge number of students are from different indigenous communities. Multilingual education was started in Odisha by using ten languages in 754 schools initially. Plans have also been made where children shift from mother tongue to the regional standard through a transitional phase. The system has been implemented in around 1000 schools in the year 2014-15 and nine more languages were introduced in the multilingual education programme. Textbooks, supplementary materials and other resources were also prepared for implementing the multilingual teaching-learning experience. Initially, all the content areas in school (e.g. mathematics, social science etc.) use the mother tongue of the children. Gradually, the L2 or second language and L3 or third language are introduced to the children. After the 5th standard, the different curricular areas start using the regional standard.

Multilingualism has not been adopted as a policy in West Bengal yet, while the province has a high degree of rural as well as urban multilingualism. Due to language contact and convergence, children use three to four languages in their day-to-day life in a number of districts of West Bengal. For example, children from Purulia, Bankura and Midnapore districts use multilingual codes with mixture of eastern Hindi (Magahi, Angika etc.), Bangla and other languages like Santali, Koda, Mundari, etc. Districts of northern Bengal have borders with Assam, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Children from Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch Behar use Nepali, Bangla, Sadri (a link language)[3] and their mother tongue (often a Tibeto Burman language like Rabha, Garo, Boro etc.). Though

the state has multilinguality as a common phenomenon, neither the curriculum nor teacher training policies concerning language address questions related to use of multilinguality in classrooms.

The document 'Teachers' Training in West Bengal', published by the West Bengal District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in 1999, is an important document in this regard. The document mentioned that teachers in a multilingual state like West Bengal need to decide the language of the classroom, i.e. the language in which the interaction will take place primarily. Bangla (the regional standard) is generally considered as the sole language that is to be used in the classroom. The document pointed out the issue of reconsidering the language of interaction for the classroom. There was a scope of allowing a multilingual interaction following the document, but unfortunately it was not considered. Multilingual pedagogy has not been implemented in West Bengal yet, but a recent scheme called Early Grade Reading and Numeracy (EGRaN) by The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan suggested the use of multilingual pedagogies to some extent.[4]

Considering the huge number of bilingual/multilingual children of the province, teachers can be encouraged to use multilingual pedagogy if needed. Teachers can be allowed to create low-cost user-friendly multilingual Teaching Learning Material and preserve the materials in a common resource centre for future use (Piplai, 2016: 43).

Multilingual Children: Different Dimensions

Nature and Types of Multilingual Children

Bi/multilingualism has different sources. Paradis mentioned that there are both internal and external sources (Paradis, 2013: 69). Internal sources of multilingualism for a child depend on the following factors:

a. Typology of the first language: typological features of L1 are important for overall language acquisition and use. L2/L3 can be typologically different from L1. For example, native speakers of many Austric languages (e.g. Santali, Mundari, Ho) acquire Indo-Aryan language/languages as L2. Thus, the features of their native language and the second language differ widely.
b. Language transfer: Transfer from first language (or L1) to the second language (or L2) is an important factor for

multilingual children. Negative transfer of the L2 often results in developmental errors in L1. On the other hand, positive transfer boosts the use of L2. There is a need to understand the language transfer issues of children who get input in a different language in formal classrooms.

c. Patterns of acquisition: The sequence of acquiring L1, L2, L3, etc. affects the multilinguality of a child.

Some of the external factors that contribute to the multilinguality of the child include the following:

a. Richness of environment related to the languages: The context of the child may have resources that are helpful for the acquisition of L2, L3, etc. If a child lives in an environment where there is frequent interaction with members of other speech communities, the child can use codes of different speech communities alternately. The child can mix codes as well.

b. Socio-economic status of the family: Language use of the family members may or may not include input in L2, if the family members are not exposed to the regional standard language or other languages of the neighbourhood. Educational level of the child's mother is also important regarding the L2 input. If the mother is exposed to a certain level of education, the primary language data from the mother in L2 helps the child to develop mastery in the L2. If the family is exposed to L2 through newspapers, television and exposure to education, it is possible for the child to listen to or read materials in L2. Mobility of the family members is also related to their socio-economic status. If a rural family has members who go to cities/towns everyday for work, the child gets exposure to the languages of city/town.

c. Size and type of family: Bigger families have more members. Different members have different mobility patterns and exposure to languages. In bigger families, different women are of different provenance; they come from different villages/cities. Therefore, children get access to different languages and codes.

d. Birth order of the child: In rural areas, younger children have access to regional standard/school languages through the older siblings. School is a major source of acquiring a new set of codes/a new language. School bi/multilingualism helps older children to use the newly acquired languages with younger children at home domain.

e. Cultural identity: Oral narratives of a community are passed through the older members. Folk tales, riddles, songs in traditional languages contribute to the multilinguality of children. A child may or may not be fluent in the family language, but the family language is viewed as the vehicle to preserve cultural identity.

The reflection of multilingualism is different in children for a number of reasons. Children get access to different languages if the family members speak those languages. At times, different family members come from different communities as well as different linguistic backgrounds. For example, a child may have Rabha-speaking mother and Boro-speaking father in the northern part of Bengal. The child is likely to receive primary linguistic data from both the languages throughout the acquisition period. In some instances, members of a family regularly visit a linguistically-culturally different place for livelihood. As a result, those members get access to different languages. Thus, the child gets access to the different languages at home through them. In this way, the rate of multilingualism differs in different children depending on the linguistic exposure of his/her family members. It has already been mentioned that schools play a major role regarding access to multilingual codes. Negative context factors contribute to the linguistic behaviour of subtractive bi/multilinguals. Exposure to a new language in school may contribute to additive bi/multilingualism.

Multilingualism and Children's Talk

The multilinguality embedded in children's everyday language use can be understood from a close analysis of domain-specific language use. Ethnographic accounts of children's talk at home domain or playground reveal different patterns of multilinguality. Hymes gave an analysis based on ethnography of communication of the African American children (Hymes, 1996). The analysis showed that the speech and narrative structures of the African-American children were often different from the other children of the classroom. It has been observed that the structural difference of the African American Vernacular English with the Standard English used for classroom often lead to poor performance of the children in class. It has been found that children negotiate their perception of differential values placed by educators on dominant and non-dominant cultural capital. Ethnographic accounts of the children's language use can also reflect this negotiation process. Children use different multilingual

codes to negotiate while talking with each other. Children naturally tap linguistic resources, using rules and vocabulary from both the languages. Children use code switching intentionally for specific situations, listeners and topics. Children may switch language to demonstrate social identity, convey specific meanings or emphasize a point.

Alternative use of different set of codes from different languages is common for multilingual children. As mentioned above, children utilize vocabularies and rules of different languages and switch different codes often. Thus, the speech used for everyday talk is linguistically rich. Inability to visualize the richness of speech and its potential use to facilitate classrooms often creates tensions in terms of formulating strategies for classroom. In this situation, it becomes difficult to choose the language of interaction, instruction and various tasks for classroom.

Silencing of 'Powerless' Languages

Apart from the basic understanding of multilinguality in children's language, it is also important to talk about the notion of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) at this point. CLA is a major part of language education systems that educators and teachers need to understand. As Fairclough mentioned, CLA is about "how language conventions and language practices are invested with power relations and ideological process which people are unaware of" (Fairclough, 1992: 205). When the heterogeneity of a multilingual classroom is ignored and homogeneous language and culture are imposed, factors related to Critical Language Awareness become necessary to understand. In many instances, a multilingual classroom comprises children who speak the so-called 'powerless' languages.

In the state of West Bengal, districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch Behar, north and south Dinajpur in the north; and districts of Bankura, east and west Midnapore, Purulia have a high concentration of different minority languages including indigenous languages. The languages include Rabha, Tamang, Bhutia, Mahali, Kora, Lodha, Bhumij, etc. There is a strong need to understand the relevance of critical language awareness in terms of the multilingual classrooms comprising a number of minority languages, as there is always a possibility of silencing the minority children who speak the so-called 'powerless' languages. This silencing is a common scenario in many schools of West Bengal (specifically in the districts mentioned above) where children from different linguistic backgrounds study

together in a class. The teachers, in many cases, are not aware of the linguistic backgrounds of their students. Thus, teachers interact with the students in either the regional standard (Bangla, in case of West Bengal) or widely used regional languages (e.g. Hindi, Nepali, Santali etc.). Teachers in these areas mostly use the regional standard as the instructional language.

Potential Problems and Possible Solutions

The regular planning for classroom, keeping in mind the choice of the language of interaction, instruction and the language of regular tasks (monolingual vs. multilingual designed tasks) can help to maintain the pace of multilingual children.

If there is an initiative from the lesson planner (teachers mostly) regarding a basic evaluation of the multilingual nature of the children, it can be helpful for the overall teaching-learning experience. The evaluation can be done through creation of a basic note on the language use of the children. Teachers can be allowed to note down the language use of the children in different domains, e.g. home, playground, market, and so on by listing basic words and sentences used by them. *Prathamik Shiksha Karyakram* or Prashika (1999) mentioned such an intervention method for understanding children's linguistic background.[5]

Various teacher training initiatives for pre-service and in-service teachers discuss the language teaching strategies regularly or irregularly. The suggestion of keeping a note on the children's domain specific linguistic behaviour can be a part of these teacher training initiatives. The relevant notes on the children's linguistic behaviour can be used as a platform for designing tasks for classroom. In fact, it is possible to design tasks based on the texts/materials in languages that the children speak.

Difficulties in multilingual classrooms arise mostly because of the lack of understanding regarding the potential multilinguality in the children's language, nature of multilingualism and the patterns of acquisition of multilingual codes. The teacher educators and teachers may not be familiar with this potential multilinguality in children and/or the possibilities of using multilingual pedagogy in classroom. The common assumption is that: every child needs to learn and acquire fluency in the target language or the textbook language for the classroom. Multilingual pedagogy proposes an alternative idea. The idea is to create a multilingual classroom where children can experience learning in different languages. In a typically

multilingual classroom children can use their familiar and known language(s) in the initial years of schooling and then start shifting to the school language. Balanced exposure to the different languages in classroom can help the children to maintain the pace with other children. It can be argued that simple and basic understanding of the multilinguality in the children's everyday language use and background of acquisition can be helpful for the planning part of the classroom. Planning of language lessons include planning for the first language classroom as well as classes for other content areas, as language is also the medium of instruction and explanation in other content areas like maths and science.

Assignment of school language in the schools of dense multilingual areas does not follow specific rules in terms of local language use. As a result, at times children are assigned to read completely different and out-of-context languages in school textbooks. For example, in Nepali-speaking schools, Bangla is often assigned as the school language. In a school comprising mostly Hindi speaking students, Nepali or Bangla can be found as the assigned school language. A class full of children from different minority linguistic groups are often given school texts in only one language. In these cases, classrooms promote homogeneous languages where there is heterogeneity of language use. Use of homogeneous languages in multilingual classrooms leads to problems related to incomprehension in children.

There is a common notion among teachers and educators that use of more than one language is harmful for children's learning process. As Cummins mentioned, 'Bilingualism has positive effects on children's linguistic and educational development. When children continue to develop their abilities in two or more languages throughout their primary school years, they gain a deeper understanding of language and how to use it effectively. They have more practice in processing language, especially when they develop literacy in both, and they are able to compare and contrast the ways in which their two languages organize reality' (Cummins, 2001: 17).

It is often argued that it is practically not possible to use multilingual teaching methods and aids in classroom as the planning part is complex. It can be argued that the planning part of a multilingual classroom often becomes complex as there is lack of understanding regarding the nature of child's linguistic background. As Garcia and Flores mentioned, '…education must include, in some ways, the language practices of children. Although it is easy to understand how monolingual education is simply not enough to fulfil this criteria, it is more difficult to envision how to build on the language practices of all students, and teachers and children with different characteristics

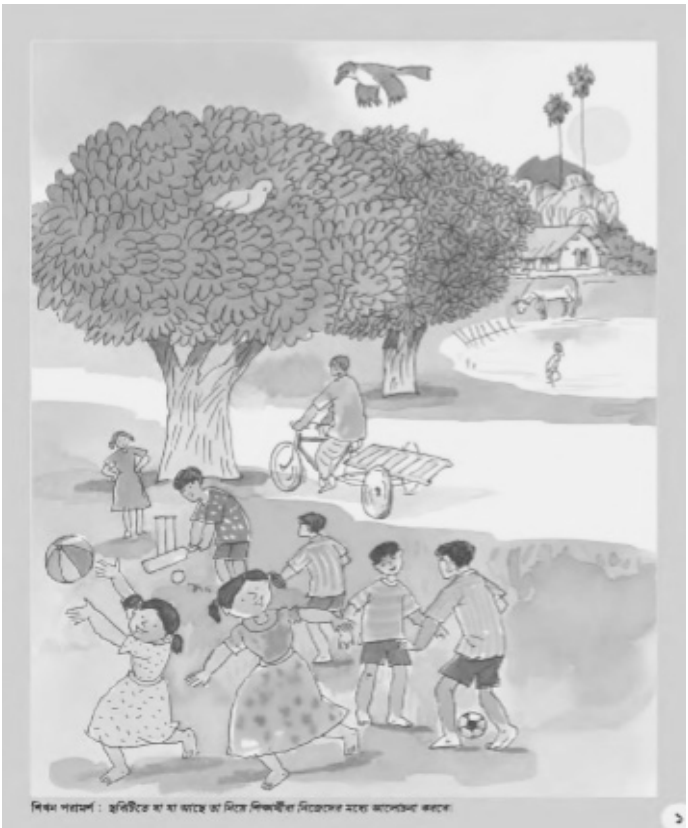
work together in various geographical and socio-educational spaces' (Garcia & Flores, 2012: 232).

One way of doing this is the following: The textbook language shows a mismatch with the children's home language in many cases. Mostly, children with different minority languages are given textbooks in regional standard or some other prominent regional language. The textbook language creates a conflict with the home language of the children. The conflict can be controlled by using neutral texts like pictures, picture cards and picture books where the child himself/herself can construct texts by using his/her set of codes. For example, the picture from the first standard textbook *Amar Boi* (My Book) of the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (Pic. 1) affords the possibility of constructing text in any language or create multilingual texts for classroom use. But the potential use of pictures to construct multilingual texts for classroom use is not clear from any educational policy documents of the state.

There could be another way of building a multilingual pedagogy. It has been mentioned that earlier multilingual pedagogies were viewed as use of more than one language in a classroom. But presently, multilingual pedagogies use hybrid languages and techniques. In order to use hybrid techniques we can use dynamic multilingual heteroglossic instructions and texts in classroom. The creation of reading material for multilingual classrooms can be done by marking the conflict points between the languages. Conflict points or difference points between languages can be explained through the understanding of basic structures of the languages. In other words, the conflict areas can be found by analyzing the languages morphosyntactically. The following section will discuss in detail how marking language conflicts can be helpful in planning a multilingual pedagogy.

Marking Language Conflicts in Classroom can be Helpful to Plan a Multilingual Classroom

Children in multilingual classrooms have different home languages. These languages may structurally differ in various ways from the school language. Structural differences in phonological, morphological/morphosyntactic levels between different languages (home language and school language) are indicators of language conflict. Listing these conflict points between home and school languages brings out various problem areas in the classroom. The conflict points can be helpful in understanding the nature of difficulties in multilingual classrooms.



Pic. 1: A page from *Amar Boi*, textbook for standards 1st and 2nd, West Bengal

Ideally, finding the conflict points from the children's language use and the description of the school language can be done by following certain steps. The overall understanding of the conflict points can be used to design strategies for multilingual classrooms. Basic conflict points between languages can be listed from the narratives of the children, evident from the understanding from ethnographic account of children's speech[6]. It is possible to get some idea regarding the pattern of the children's talk through some designed tests as well. It includes:

- Record of spontaneous story telling by children where children freely use their preferred patterns of speech.
- Free writing samples of children collected: classroom task, home work or other task.

Collected narratives can be used to understand the types and patterns of conflict. Conflicts between languages may occur in terms of:

- Use of classifiers where either of the languages has classifier and the other language does not have it (e.g. Hindi *ek larka* 'one boy' vs. Bangla *ek-ta chele* 'one boy').
- Difference in agreement patterns also exhibit major conflict between languages. Agreement between subject and verb is reflected in terms of person, number and gender. Children's home language(s) and school language may have different patterns of subject-verb agreement. For example, one language may agree only in terms of person and the other language may agree in terms of both person and number. Also, one language may reflect change in verbal forms in terms of gender and the other may not have gender agreement.
- The nature of the subject of a sentence may have different semantic role and syntactic structure. For example, one language may have a subject with syntactically marked agentive role. The other language may not be marked with agentive role and have a different form. For example, Hindi has subjects with or without agentive roles (and ergative case markers in subject), but eastern Hindi languages like Maithili or other eastern Indo-Aryan languages like Bangla do not have agentivity marked on subject explicitly.
- Negative particles have different positions in a sentence in different languages. Negation can be either pre-verbal or post-verbal. If home language and school language have different positions of the negative particles, there is an evident conflict. For example, neg-X(verb) vs. X(verb)-neg in Bangla and Rajbanshi.
- There are different types of discourse particles in different languages. The home language may not have certain frequently used discourse particle in the school language or the regional standard. This may create a conflict.
- If a language has complex or compound verbs, the light verb may use a different form in the two languages to mean the same form. For example, *kha liya* (literally: eat taken) or 'eaten' in Hindi can be expressed as *kheye phello* (literally: eat thrown) in Bangla.

Marking different conflict areas based on the structures of different words and sentences (and sounds) have huge potential for developing teaching-learning materials for multilingual classrooms. Beginning the early years of teaching by using the mother tongues of children and gradual shift to the regional standard or school language has been suggested by the Odisha model of multilingual

classroom. For this gradual shift from mother tongue to regional standard, designing of the curriculum in different levels needs to be planned keeping in mind certain issues.

- Different languages present in a single classroom may have different structures and different types of conflict points with reference to the school language.
- After listing the conflict points of different languages, there is need to make a common conflict listing of all the languages in a classroom.
- After creating the common conflict point list, there is need to create teaching plans keeping in mind the conflict points.
- The conflict points can be used to develop tasks for classroom use. For example, conflict points can be used for tasks like fill up the blanks, match the following etc. where different linguistic items of similar type can be put together. The child can be allowed to use any of the listed forms.
- Conflict points can be kept in mind to create multilingual texts where, for example, nouns or pronouns in one language can be used with verbs of another language for explaining the basic structures of languages.

Teachers can keep in mind that the discourses of their students can be different discourses of the prescribed text languages. In practice, the varied discourses can help teachers to develop different kinds of tasks and activities for multilingual classroom.[6]

Concluding Remarks

Kumar has mentioned that children are given little space for hypothesis formation and search for meaning (Kumar, 1992: 5). It can be argued that unfamiliarity with the school language leaves no scope for the children to decipher meaning or form any hypothesis. Multilingual classroom can be a space for negotiating conflict, practising social justice and assertion of language rights of the children.

It has been discussed that multilingualism is neither a barrier for learning nor an impossible pedagogic practice to design. In reality, mere announcement of multilingual language rights cannot solve the learning difficulties of children with multilinguality as well as children in multilingual classrooms. Creation of strategies, development of teaching-learning materials and implementing them with systematic planning can actually build a real multilingual classroom.

Multilingual education has been viewed as a barrier for national unity. But recent trends have marked multilingual education not only as the key to social justice, but also as an investment in global market (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). It has been argued that multilingual education can add value to social mobility and global development. In recent days, multilingual classrooms are planned in the context of minority children and multilingual pedagogy is considered as a resource for the classroom. Since language is considered as a resource rather than only a right in present day world, multilingual education will probably be the global solution for designing education policies in future.

Notes

1. Simultaneous bi/multilingual children acquire two or more languages at the same time, while in sequential bi/multilingualism children acquire languages sequentially.
2. L1 is first language, L2 is second language, L3 third language, and so on.
3. A link language or Lingua Franca is a language that is used by members of different communities for communication.
4. The EGRaN (2016) scheme mentioned that it is important for the teacher to listen to the children of his/her class as the children are undergoing a shift from home language to school language gradually. Teacher should listen to the children carefully and decide the strategies for classroom accordingly.
5. *Prathamik Shiksha Karyakram* or Prashika initiative by *Eklavya* used survey of the linguistic features of certain languages to design classroom planning.
6. The story grammar is helpful to figure out the structural linguistic features of the children's language use.
7. Sharing of home-stories in classroom is also a potential activity for language classes. Different skills are related to the story-telling sessions. Students can tell stories, listen to them, and write down parts of the stories. They can also read stories written by each other. Children can also be asked to take home a book or a book-bag. Children can also be asked to find printed materials at home, then make a list and share at classroom.

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NEHRU, NATIONALISM AND THE INTEGRATION OF PORTUGUESE COLONIES INTO THE INDIAN UNION (1947-61)

Poulami Aich Mukherjee

The Portuguese were the pioneers among the European powers who came to India for trade. They were also the first Europeans to set up political administration in an alien territory under a viceroy having his headquarters in a piece of land where a fortress was permitted to be set up by the local ruler, namely the king of Cochin. Within a decade of their arrival on the Malabar Coast, through force of arms they managed to obtain a territorial possession on the western coast of India, namely Goa to which they shifted the political headquarters after three decades of their contact with India. In course of time they brought under their jurisdiction a few geographical segments on the western coast of India and by hook or crook they managed to hang on to them till 1961 even after all the European powers had left India free.

The Indian national leaders who drove the colonial powers away through the practice of the long-cherished principle of non-violence introduced by Mahatma Gandhi could not tolerate the existence of the Portuguese in independent India. They were averse to use force of arms to reunite the Portuguese colonies with the Indian Union. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, despite the impatient attitude of his colleagues, followed a policy of "wait and see". The National Convention for the integration of Goa, Daman and Diu with India held in Bombay on 14th May 1961 reminded the Government of India that it was the 'sacred duty of the Government of India and the entire nation' to free the Portuguese colonies in India. At last after a long period of twenty-five years of wavering, in the defense of his own countrymen, he resorted to the "Operation Vijay" on 19th December 1961 and brought the Portuguese colonies of Goa, Daman and Diu directly under the Government of India. Nehru was criticized vehemently by a section of the international media for having violated the principle of non-violence in the reunification

of the Portuguese colonies to India and was branded as a hypocrite peace-maker in international diplomacy. I shall address some aspects of reunification and examine the points that may justify the "Operation Vijay".

Territorial Possessions of the Portuguese in India

Afonso de Albuquerque, realizing the distance between India and Portugal and the inclemency of weather in India proposed the idea of setting up territorial possessions in India where the Portuguese and the mixed race born out of intermarriages could settle and work for the interest of Portugal. Though there was a suggestion on the part of the Portuguese king to acquire independent territorial possession in Cochin by subduing the local king, the then Portuguese Governor reported that it would be unfair to do it in Cochin since the king was the only one who offered willingly a place to start a factory and a fortress when they were driven away from Calicut. So, they decided to look for territorial possessions elsewhere. Albuquerque was of the opinion that people with Portuguese blood passing through Indian veins would be the best fighters for the good of the Portuguese nation. So, he conquered Goa and subsequently his successors obtained through force of arms and diplomacy other areas on the western coast of India. A quick survey of the way in which the Portuguese possessions in India were created is in order.

1. *Goa*

The Portuguese possessions in Goa consisted of areas which were known as old and new conquests.

a) **Old Conquest** (***Velhas Conquistas***): Afonso de Albuquerque conquered Tiswadi in Goa in 1510 which is generally known as *Ilhas*. The Portuguese obtained Salcete and Bardes in August 1548 through the treaty signed with the King of Bijapur. All these three districts along with that of Mormugão were usually known as the Old Conquests (*Velhas conquistas*).

b) **New Conquest (*Novas Conquistas*)**: With a view to compensate for the loss of the Portuguese pockets on the Malabar coast to the Dutch, the Portuguese conquered the districts of Bicholim or Bhatagram, which was annexed to the Portuguese territories in 1781. The district of Satari, was also brought under the Portuguese in 1781. Ponda or Antruz was taken over by the Portuguese in 1763. Sanguem too came into

Portuguese possession in 1763. Quepem was brought under the Portuguese in 1763, while Pernem district came under the Portuguese in 1788 only. By 1788, what is known as the new conquest—Pernem, Bicholim, Satari, Ponda, Quepem, Sanguem and Canacona—was complete and the Portuguese were masters of the territory between Sawanthwadi in the north and Karwar in the south, and Supa in the east on the west coast.

In 1741, the Portuguese invaded Sadashivgad belonging to the rulers of Sonda and forced them to part with Paroda, Molem and Siroda. Later, in the wars between the Marathas and Hyder Ali of Mysore, the rulers of Sonda sought the help of the Portuguese in order to protect their small kingdom on the condition to cede to the Portuguese Antasruj alias Ponda and the Panchmahals i.e., Hemand Barsche, Zambaulim alias Ashtagar, Cacora, Bali together with Chandrawadi and Cancona. In lieu of this, the Portuguese agreed to give 20,000 *ashrafis* to the rulers of Sonda annually and to continue the grants and *inams* in the latter's kingdom, for the maintenance of temples and *agraharas*. The treaty was signed in 1791. Pernem, Bhatagram and the Satari Mahl became part of the Sawantwadi kingdom as a result of the fall of Adil Shahi in 1685. In 1746, the Portuguese attacked the territory of the Savants and seized the forts of Acaro, Tiracol, and the Satari Mahal.

2. *Northern Provinces*

The coastal regions of Gujarat were very important for maritime trade. Therefore immediately after getting possession of Goa, they cast their eyes on Diu which was considered to be the gate to India. But Bassein was offered to them by the ruler of Gujarat who did not want to part with Diu. There were four important areas in the Portuguese possession in north which came under generic name "northern provinces".

a) **Bassein:** Nuno da Cunha attacked Bassein on 20th January 1533 and went back to Goa. When he got the news in Goa that Bahadur Shah had been making all the preparations to attack Chitor since its ruler had passed away and there was only a young boy to succeed him, he proceeded to the sultanate of Gujarat. By the time he reached Bassein in the month of December 1533, the Sultan of Gujarat sent an envoy called Sheik Iwas, offering Bassein. Presumably it was done

by the Sultan because of the fear that the Portuguese would conquer Diu and would do harm to the entire sultanate of Gujarat. Since the Governor saw that Bassein was important on account of its revenue as well as its nearness to Chaul, he accepted the offer and agreed to sign a treaty with the envoy who had all the powers for the same from the Sultan. The treaty was concluded on 23rd December 1533. Bassein was handed over to the Portuguese. It continued to be under the Portuguese till 1739 when it was conquered by Chimaji Apa, the Maratha General and in the light of the treaty of 1740 the Portuguese were allowed to retain Fort Daman along with twenty-two villages.

b) **Diu:** Both Nuno da Cunha and Sheik I were the signatories of treaty dated 25th October 1535 in the light of which the Portuguese were allowed to build a factory in Diu. The latter said that in the previous year when Bassein was given to the Portuguese, a treaty of peace and friendship was concluded and to add to the existing friendship, the sultan was pleased to give a place for a fortress in Diu to the Portuguese king with all the conditions contained in the discussions with Simão Ferreira who, at the orders of the governor Nuno da Cunha, had been sent to the Sultan of Gujarat and agreed on the terms and conditions specified in the treaty.

c) **Daman:** Daman lies 500 kilometers north of Goa; situated in 20º 21' 55" and 72º 54'16". It has an area of 72 square kilometres. The Portuguese deemed it necessary to acquire it for the safety of Bassein. It was under an Abyssinian captain employed by the sultan of Gujarat. The Portuguese governor Constantino Braganza (1558-1561) sailed against Daman with a fleet of more than hundred vessels with two or three thousand soldiers. They defeated the Abyssinian captain in 1559 .The old fortress was pulled down and a new fortress was erected by the Portuguese.

d) **Dadra and Nagar Haveli:** The Portuguese obtained in 1781, Nagar Haveli Pargana of seventy-four villages as a *jagir* for maintaining relations of amity with the Maratha Empire in accordance with the Treaty of Friendship signed in 1779. Nagar-Haveli stands out as one of the important territories. Nagar-Haveli, in reality, was given by the Marathas to the Portuguese for collecting revenue. The Marathas did not transfer their sovereignty over it to the Portuguese. The treaty of 1779 and the two *sanads* of 1783 and 1785 make it abundantly clear

> that the Marathas affected only a revenue grant called *Jagir* or *saranjam* and not a transfer of sovereignty. But the Portuguese interpreted the treaty of 1779, particularly art. 17 of the treaty, as constituting a transfer of sovereignty and treated Nagar-Haveli and other areas from this angle. But this interpretation of the Portuguese was rejected by the International Court of Justice in its judgment in the case of "right of passage over Indian territory". The court said that from an examination of the various texts of art of the said treaty, placed before it, it is unable to conclude that the language employed therein was intended to transfer sovereignty over Nagar-Haveli and other areas to the Portuguese. There are several instances on the record of treaties concluded by the Marathas which show that, where a transfer of sovereignty was intended, appropriate and adequate expressions like cession "in perpetuity" or "in perpetual sovereignty" were used. The expressions used in the two *sanads* and connected relevant documents establish, on the other hand, that what was granted to the Portuguese was only a revenue tenure.

The Indian national leaders took the stand that India could not be considered totally independent unless the Portuguese and French pockets in India were liberated and integrated into the Indian Union. Mahatma Gandhi had written way back on 30th June 1946 that India could not allow the existence of the Portuguese rule in India. The Portuguese governor in Goa wrote back telling that the people of Goa did not want independence. The National Congress, which met at Jaipur in December 1948, resolved elaborate pattern for the solution of the foreign possessions in India. In categorical terms, the government of India requested the Portuguese Government in 1950 to leave their possessions in India to the Indian Union.

The Portuguese government went on hammering on their argument that they held Goa not as a colony as the British had held India and therefore there was no question of leaving Goa. They amended the Portuguese constitution on 12th June 1951 so as to make all their colonies into the "overseas provinces" of the metropolitan Portugal. Based on this assumption, Portugal rejected the demand of the Government of India on 1st May 1953 and reiterated that Portuguese possessions in India constituted overseas provinces of Portugal and hence were its integral part. India closed down its delegation in Lisbon on 11th June 1953.

Public opinion grew indignant and pressure was applied on the

Indian national leaders. Goan nationalists, imbued with the idea of non-violence, organized *satyagrahas*. Even though the French left their possessions in 1954, the Portuguese continued to hang on to their possessions in India citing other motives. They spread the information that Goa was the "bastion of European and Roman Catholic Civilization" though Indian Christians reacted saying that Christianity had reached India centuries before the arrival of the Portuguese. Nehru met the then Pope in July 1955 and got the issue confirmed that the problem of the Portuguese settlements in India was not a religious problem, but a purely political one.

Liberation and Reunification of Dadra and Nagar Haveli

Dadra, which was given to the Portuguese by the Maratha rulers as a *jagir*, was not very far from the Portuguese possession of Daman. On 22nd July 1954 about thirty unarmed Goan volunteers entered the territory of Dadra .The Portuguese police officer directed his gun towards them. The nationalist inhabitants of Dadra supported the volunteers and overcame the police force numbering thirty-two (Note of MEA to the Legation of Portugal in India, 1954: 22). Thus Dadra was liberated from the Portuguese.

V.K. Krishna Menon declared in the United Nations General Assembly that it would be fantastic to imagine that a free and independent people of the Indian Union, who secured independence from Britain, would allow any other power to occupy a chunk of their land (UNGA, O.R. Session 10: 240). The Portuguese Legation in New Delhi submitted a note to the Government of India on 24th July 1954 demanding the grant of necessary transit facilities to the Portuguese armed forces staying at Daman to enable to them go to Dadra for the purpose of re-establishing the order, which had been disturbed, and to drive away the invader. Government of India replied stating that it could not permit the movement of foreign troops and police on Indian soil. It was made clear that the Government of India could not be a party to the suppression of a genuine nationalist movement for freedom from the foreign rule in part of the Portuguese establishments in India (Rubinoff, 1971: 57).

The volunteers of Azad Gomantak Dal along with some volunteers of *Jana Sangha* marched to Nagar Haveli on 31st July 1954 and liberated Naroli. The volunteers of People's Party entered Nagar Haveli from southern border simultaneously and marched towards Silvassa, the capital of Nagar Haveli. The volunteers of Azad Gomantak Dal liberated Silvassa on 2nd August1954 after capturing

155 Portuguese armed personnel, and hoisted the Indian Flag at Silvassa on the same day. The volunteers of Azad Gomantak Dal captured Khandwel on 11th August and completed the liberation of Nagar Haveli. The former Portuguese administrator of Nagar Haveli surrendered after crossing Nagar Haveli borders into the Indian Union along with fifty-five armed personnel (Case concerning right of passage, I: 100-103; III: 795-801). The liberation of these two enclaves enthused Goans as well as the citizens of the Indian Union.

The Portuguese tried to convince the world that those who liberated these two enclaves and launched the *satyagrahas* were not Goan patriots but were Indian intruders. With the support of the Government of India, Portugal got membership in the United Nations Organization on 22nd December 1955 and on the same day they filed a case against India in the International Court of Justice at The Hague regarding the right of passage over the Indian Territory between Daman and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The case dragged on till 1960. The General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution on 15th December 1960 rejecting the Portuguese claim on the Portuguese possessions in India as their "Overseas Provinces". The court after several sessions totally rejected the Portuguese claim for the right of passage through the Indian Territory to Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Finally the enclaves of Dadra and Nagar Haveli were formally incorporated into the Indian Union in August 1961.

Goa, Daman and Diu

A number of associations were formed in Goa by the local people to fight for their liberation from the Portuguese. They organized *satyagraha* and invited Indian national leaders like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia to inspire them. Goa Congress Committee, Gomantakiya Tarun Sangh, Goa Seva Sangh, Goan Youth League, National Congress (Goa) and Azad Gomantak Dal were some of the organizations that led the fight for freedom from the Portuguese. They organized civil disobedience movement, *satyagraha* and so on. The role played by the press and women in the people's fight for the liberation of the Portuguese colonies in India is remarkable.

Nehru and the Reunification

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru clarified the attitude of the Indian Union towards the problem of Goa when he made his statement in the Lok Sabha on 25th August 1954. He mentioned that the resistance

movement in the Portuguese possessions was entirely Goan, popular and spontaneous and its strength lay in that fact. He added that India adhered to non-violence since British Rule. However, he explained that adhering to non-violence did not mean that India would give up or allow any derogation of its identification with the cause of its compatriots under Portuguese yoke. At the same time, it also did not mean that the Indian Government might not pursue, favour or forcibly create the situation of violence. It was also not the wish of the government to think and resort to military action (Nehru, 1958: 373). In a reply to Acharya J. B. Kripalani's poser, he affirmed that his government was not pledged to non-violence (Nehru, 1958: 382).

It was quite natural to expect that Portugal, an ally of the British would follow the British and leave their possessions in India to the Indian Union. But, contrary to the general expectation, they tightened their hold on these territories. *The Times of India* (Bombay) published Nehru's categorical declaration on 15th August 1955: 'I declare here and now that we shall not send our army. We will solve this problem peacefully. Let everybody understand this clearly' (16/08/1955). He questioned the right of the Portuguese government, in terms of international law, to open fire on unarmed volunteers who were not at all attacking the territories (Chari, 1955: 1064). Though Nehru was against the entry of Indian nationals into Goa as *satyagrahis*, 4204 *satyagrahis* marched into Portuguese possessions in 1955 in small groups on the Indian Independence day. The Portuguese police opened fire without any warning and justified the act, saying that the volunteers had ignored the orders to halt and had continued to march into Goa (Lok Sabha Debates: 10250 & 14401). The bloodshed raised protest from everyone in India. Nehru condemned the savage and uncivilized firing of unarmed non-violent *satyagrahis*. India protested and asked for the closure of the Portuguese consulates in Calcutta and Madras. The Indian Consulate-General in Goa was withdrawn on 1st September 1955.

However, Nehru did not change his attitude towards the eradication of colonial rule from Goa. On 15th August 1954 from the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi, he had observed that Goa was the oldest symbol of the colonial idea in India. It was an ugly pimple and if anybody suggested that India should continue to tolerate that pimple, then he had understood the mind and heart neither of India nor of Asia (Rajan, 1964: 521 ff.).

Nehru objected to the suggestion of plebiscite from some quarters. He was of the opinion that necessary conditions for plebiscite did

not exist in Goa where the people were scared to express their own opinion.

As a protest against atrocities committed on the *satyagrahis* in Daman, Government of India closed down the Consulate General in Goa on 1st September 1955 and on 6th September of the same year, the diplomatic relations between India and Portugal were severed. The Government of India declared that the liberation of the Portuguese pockets in India was the responsibility of the Government of India (New Leader 36: 6-9). Subsequent to the killing of the *satyagrahis,* Government of India banned the entry of Indians into Goa in support of the *satyagraha* for the liberation of Goa. Hence the struggle for freedom in Goa went further underground. Azad Gomantak Dal spearheaded the movement.

International Support

The Goans continued their efforts to get themselves liberated from the Portuguese yoke. This evoked keen interest among various peoples. The People's Republic of China, Latin America, Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam denounced repressive measures of the Portuguese against the activities of citizens in the Portuguese possessions for freedom. They extended their support.

Soviet Union sympathized with the Goans trying to get freedom from the Portuguese. Soviet Premier Marshal Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Communist Party secretary, visited India and had occasion to have first-hand information about the problem of Goa. In his speech at the civic reception in Madras on 28th November 1955, Marshal Bulganin expressed his view that the Portuguese presence on the Indian soil was a shame to the civilized people. He further offered his support to the Indian people for the liberation of Goa (Shirodkar, 1999: 141).

The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Cairo on 26th December 1957 urged Portugal to hand over Goa to India, as it believed that Goa was an integral part of India (Asian Recorder, 1958: 1833ff.). In December 1960, UN General Assembly adopted a 43 Nation Afro-Asian "Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" by votes to none with nine cases of abstention (Yearbook of the UN, 1960: 46). The UN General Assembly proclaimed the 'necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations'.

Several African nationalists who met at the Seminar on Portuguese

colonies held in Bombay on 23 October 1961 extended support to Nehru for the liberation of the Portuguese territories in India. Some of them were Marcelino dos Santos (Mozambique), G. Ferreira Viana and J. Savimbi (Angola), Adriano Araujo (Portuguese Guinea), Kenneth Kaunda (President, National Independence Party, North Rhodesia), Mbiyu Koinange (General Secretary, Pan African Freedom Movement for East and Central Africa), Nsilo Swai (Tanganyika) and Abdel Karim-el-Khatib (Minister for African Affairs, Royal Moroccan Government). The *Indian Express* (Bombay) reported that they expressed their solidarity with India in the fight against Portugal (24/10/1961). They even advocated use of force to eradicate Portuguese colonialism.

The trend of the UN towards the end of 1960 was against the Portuguese colonial attempts in the world and the resolution of 15th December 1960 insisted that Portugal should furnish reports on the colonial territories in view of the UN Charter. The Portuguese were urged to do it without any further delay. This attitude of the UN encouraged Nehru and he hoped that the Portuguese rule in territories in India would come to an end shortly. But he could not fix an exact date for its dissolution. Despite agonizing moments, he preferred waiting for the peaceful withdrawal of Portugal (Rajya Sabha Debates, 1960). The Congress Party too was enthused by the stand taken by the UN on colonialism. The 66th Session of the Congress held on 6th and 7th January 1961 at Bhavnagar adopted a resolution on Portuguese colonies and colonialism in which it condemned the Portuguese as the most autocratic and ruthless imperial power in the world (Asian Recorder, 1961: 3755 & 3757). Some newspapers like *The Hindu* commented critically on the attitude of the British who abstained from voting at the General Assembly of the UN when the Afro-Asian Resolution on ending colonialism was put to vote. *The Hindu* commented that perhaps international politics and too tender regard for Portuguese susceptibilities might have obstructed the way of Britain being outspokenly in favour of what was right (19/12/1960). All India Trade Union Congress too was vocal in expressing its concern over the delay of Portugal in liberating the territories in India. They insisted that the Portuguese pockets in India should be immediately liberated and returned to India (Proceedings of the AITUC 26th Session: 3761).

Portugal took steps to tighten its hold on the territories in India and formed corps of volunteers in each territory with a view to 'cooperating in the maintenance of order and the defence of the integrity and national sovereignty of the territory concerned'. Lisbon set up civil defence organizations in each of the overseas territory

under the direct supervision of the respective Governor General.[1]

Nehru maintained a "wait and see" policy which was not tolerated by the people at large. The National Convention for the Integration of Goa, Daman and Diu with India held in Bombay on 14th May 1961 reminded the government of India that it was the 'sacred duty of the Government of India and the entire nation' to free the Portuguese colonies in India. The Convention adopted a resolution to this effect (Asian Recorder, 1961: 3983). The Congress party realizing the need for responding to the popular demand extended its full sympathy to the Goans in their fight for freedom and their wish to come to the fold of the Indian nation after liberation.

An historic development took place in India. On 12th June 1961, the *Varishtha Panchayat* at Free Dadra and Nagar Haveli passed a resolution urging the Government of India to incorporate those areas within the Indian Union. The Government of India yielded to their request and introduced the relevant bills and passed them in the Parliament[2]. This decision was vigorously resented by the Portuguese government, which sent protest notes to the Government of India and also complained to the UN Security Council branding the action as 'a typical case of international aggression' (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1961: 18317).

On 17th August 1961, Nehru made it very clear that India would not allow the Portuguese to pass through the Indian Territory to reach Dadra and Nagar Haveli and warned that if anybody tried to enter the Indian Territory he would be 'ejected with all speed' (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1961: 18317). Realizing the need for the change of foreign policy, he declared in response to the debate on foreign affairs in the Lok Sabha on 17th August 1961: '…if I am asked at the present moment to give any kind of assurance that we shall not use armed forces in regard to Goa, I am not in a position to give it. I do not know what we may do at any time, but we cannot at present in regard to the development of events everywhere, rule out the question of using armed forces in regard to Goa' (Lok Sabha Debates: 2775). During the discussion on Dadra, Nagar Haveli Enclaves Merger Bill and the Constitution (Tenth Amendment) Bill in Rajya Sabha on 16th August 1961, he added: 'the time may come when we may decide even to send our army there. When that comes, it will be an open effort of ours, not a secret or furtive one' (Indian Affairs Record, 1962: 2).

However, Nehru explained that India's difficulty in this regard was moral because he had been saying that the country would not go to war unless it was attacked. He feared that if his government intended to resolve the issue by waging a war against Portugal, it

might result into either a war with other countries or a complicated situation (Lok Sabha Debates: 2774). Portugal, being aware of the attitudinal changes of India, decided to seek international help to protect their colonies. Portugal sent protest note to India, denying 'insinuations regarding the situation in Goa and the imaginary repressive measures adopted there'. It further stated that life in Goa was normal and that there was no doubt about the patriotism and firm decision of the population there to remain Portuguese and that they resented Indian threats of armed action against Goa (Asian Recorder, 1961: 4200). Government of India warned Portugal that if the situation in Goa worsened, threatening peace and security of the Indian subcontinent, it would have the right to resort to such steps as might be indispensable to face the situation. It expressed its unhappiness over Portugal's denial that there was any repression and suppression of liberties in Goa (Asian Recorder, 1961: 4200).

Portugal, interested in giving a legal and constitutional status to the colonies, conferred Portuguese citizenship on all the inhabitants of its overseas territories under the statute of 28th August 1961. Portugal raised the number of 120-member Portuguese National Assembly to 130 and of these additional seats, one was allotted to Goa, Daman and Diu.

On the other hand, Portugal stepped up repressive measures in Goa leading to a large number of arrests and deportation of an Indian political prisoner to Portugal, which was strongly objected to by the Indian government[3]. The Portuguese Governor General in Goa appealed to the Goans to muster strength to face the "Indian aggression" and started a systematic campaign in the territories against the Government of India[4].

Nehru, who was slowly moving to the idea of non-peaceful action, declared that India would not tolerate Goa as a foreign base on the coast of India. He further clarified that the Government of India never considered that there was no possibility of the use of force to liberate Goa. It was not permanently committed to the policy so far pursued by it, and if necessary, it would resort to other methods too[5].

Since the situation was turning explosive, as per the announcement made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on 5th December 1961, the Government of India began 'precautionary' troop movement in view of the rising oppression and terrorism in Goa and the aggressive postures adopted by the Portuguese against Indian shipping and even fishing vessels (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1962: 18635). The Indian government asserted that it was obliged to take the precautionary step in order to fortify the defense on

the border and the coast (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1962: 18636).

Immediate Steps for Liberation

The Government of India on 12th December 1961 sealed two of its mainland routes to Goa for civilian population with a view to facilitating the movement of troops on the Goa border. The Portuguese Governor General, in his turn, assumed emergency powers and declared the evacuation of Europeans and locally born women and children of Europeans from Goa, Daman and Diu. He further announced: 'the military forces would need to act with the greatest possible liberty of movement as is convenient, in a fight that is likely to be characterized by the greatest toughness' (Indian Affairs Record, 1962: 3).

On 15th December 1961, Government of India sent a protest note to Lisbon against the oft-repeated acts of aggression and the mounting reign of terror and repression of the peaceful and freedom-loving Goans and the terrorization and interference with the Indian populations on the borders (Rajya Sabha Debates: 755ff). The United States of America tried on 18th December 1961 once more to stall military action suggesting a period of six months more and Washington would get a promise from Lisbon for the solution of the problem. India did not accept it since the nature of the solution was not clear. At last at zero hour on 17th-18th December 1961 the seventeenth division of the Indian Army with naval and air support made a three-pronged entry and entered into Goa, Daman and Diu. Gen. J. N. Choudhury, G.O.C, Southern Command was in overall command of Goa operation. Major General K.P. Candeth directed the Artillery operations. The Naval forces under Rear Admiral B.S. Soman provided support to the action. The Air Force under Air Vice-Marshal Pinto helped the action in giving cover to it. The *Times of India* reported Army Staff Gen. P.N. Thapar stating that the Indian army had gone there 'not as conquerors of a foreign land but as part of the Indian defence forces, who have always served their mother-land to defend the honour and security of our people' (18/12/1961).

The Government of India promised the Goans political liberty, economic progress and increasing prosperity, which would come from the common endeavour. It assured that the cultural pattern of Goa would be maintained intact under the Indian Constitution. The government reiterated that the action was justified and it had

not violated the UN Charter while Portugal did violate it. In view of the breakdown of law and order and the danger to which the Indian population was exposed, Government of India was constrained to send troops to Goa, Daman and Diu. According to the *Times of India,* the leaflets dropped by the IAF planes on 17th-18th December had the following message:

> The defense forces that are now with you are for your protection. It is their task to defend the honour and the security of our motherland from which you have been separated for too long and which you largely by your own efforts again made your own. They will take every step to ensure your safety, uphold your dignity and honour whatever the cost. At this critical moment, however, Goans must remain watchful. The Portuguese will do everything to leave Goa in ruin and the Goan people in misery. They do not care what happens to Goa now, for they must and will depart. They have nothing to lose by sowing destruction in this land. Their Portugal is at a safe distance. They will try to destroy our bridges, our railways, our temples and churches, our schools and public buildings, and fine and God-given harbour. Crores of rupees and immense human endeavour will have to be re-spent to rebuild all that is destroyed. The Goans cannot and must not allow this to happen at any cost. Be calm and brave. Rejoice in your freedom and help to safeguard it. (18/12/1961)

The "Operation Vijay" as the military entry into the Portuguese territories in India was called, lasted till 19th December 1961. According to V.K. Krishna Menon's statement on 19th December 1961, the people of Goa, Daman and Diu welcomed the liberation army with great enthusiasm and helped it to complete the unfinished part of the Indian revolution (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1962: 18638). The entire operation lasted for 24 hours. There were light casualties on both sides. UN Security Council could not succeed in calling for a ceasefire on account of the strong support of Ceylon, Liberia, UAR and Russia, one of the permanent members of the Council. This was a great victory for India.

The Lok Sabha passed two Bills unanimously whereby Goa, Daman and Diu were declared as integral parts of the Indian Union and provisions for administration were made. Government of India conferred Indian citizenship on all those who were born or domiciled in the former Portuguese territories or either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents were born in those areas before 20th December 1961. Those who did not want to be Indian citizens were ordered to declare in writing that they would maintain the citizenship or nationality they possessed before 20th December 1961. Indian government agreed to make arrangements for the transfer of movable assets and personal property, withdrawal

of funds, free disposition of immovable property. It allowed the Portuguese military and retinues to leave India for Portugal on 2nd May 1962.

On the other hand, Portugal passed a bill in their National Assembly by which it refused to recognize Indian sovereignty over Goa, Daman and Diu. The Bill also made provisions by which Goa would continue to be represented by the three representatives of Goan origin. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who after a long period of patient waiting, had sent the forces to the Portuguese territories in India, was maligned by a few prejudiced parties.

Some sections of the international press joined hands in slinging mud on the face of India in general and Nehru in particular. India's action in Goa aroused strong reactions in many parts of the world. On the one hand, its action was highly welcomed by many of the Afro-Asian, Latin American countries and all the socialist states. They described India's act as an act of liberation of Goa from Portuguese colonialism. On the other hand, its action was strongly criticized by Portugal and the other Western states. They criticized India for aggression against Portuguese territory and thereby violation of international law as well as the UN Charter. Further, they were also critical of India for violating the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence, which India professed to preach as well as practise while pursuing its foreign policy.

Western powers like United States of America were very critical of Nehru's attitude. Arthur Schlesinger wrote: 'The contrast between Nehru's incessant sanctimony on the subject of non-aggression and his brisk exercise of *Machtpolitik* was too comic not to cause comment. It was a little like catching the preacher in the hen-house; and it suggested that Harrow and Cambridge, in instilling the British virtues, had not neglected hypocrisy. If such judgments were unfair, it was almost too much to expect the targets of Nehru's past sermons not to respond in kind' (Schlesinger, 1960: 527). *Washington Post* on 20th December 1961 accused Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru of a departure from his professed dedication to principle and morality. It added that with the integration of Goa into India, the Indians lost the credibility and commitment to non-violence[6]. The world press questioned his commitment to non-violence and vehemently attacked his "holier than thou" attitude immediately after the steps he took for integration of the Portuguese settlements.[7]

It may be argued that India did not violate article 2(4) of the UN charter because its action was not against the territorial integrity or political independence of Portugal. Goa was Non-Self-Governing Territory (NSGT), a colony, which did not form an integral part of

the territory of Portugal. Colonies in general do not form an integral part of the Metropolitan territory of a colonial power. Goa was only provisionally under the colonial administration of Portugal. There was no legal frontier between India and Goa, so there could not be any question of aggression against its own frontier and against its own people. In fact, it was an integral part of India. Goans were as much Indians as the people in the other parts of the country. Moreover, Portugal had no valid entitlement regarding Goa because a valid title cannot be acquired by military occupation.

Further, India's action was not in any other manner inconsistent with the purpose of the UN. India, by its action, rather helped in furtherance of the purposes of the UN. One of the purposes of the UN is 'to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of people' (Art. 1(2) of the Charter). Portugal denied the Goans their right of self-determination. But India, by its action, enabled the Goans to realize their right of self-determination. This also means that India, by its action, assisted the Goans in attaining freedom from Portuguese colonial domination, finally merging with the rest of the country. Again one of the purposes of the UN is to maintain international peace and security (Ar.1 (1) of the Charter). Colonialism has been declared as the greatest source of threat to international peace and security. India by its action assisted in eliminating this source of threat, at least on the Indian subcontinent, to international peace and security and thereby helped in promoting one of the purposes of the UN. Thus, India while taking over Goa and other Portuguese possessions in India through force acted in accordance with the UN Charter i.e., Articles 73,1(2) and 55 and UN resolutions, particularly GA resolutions 1514 (xv) and 1542 (xv).

As concluding remarks, it may be argued that the success of the national movement in British India and the acquisition of independence from the British played an important role in boosting the national sentiments of the people in the Portuguese territories in India. They adopted some of the techniques like Satyagraha, non-violence, civil disobedience and so on that were practiced in British India to get rid of colonial rule. The reunification of these Portuguese pockets with the Indian union was a natural consequence of the success of the national movement in British India. The leaders were imbued with the spirit of Independence and could not tolerate any foreign power in India. They all fought for national integrity.

Goa is analysed here as a symptomatic case in point, embodying the vicissitudes of transition, with an emphasis on politico-legal

problems in the aftermath of the end of the Portuguese Empire and the evolution of a new polity. The merit of such an exercise, besides analysing the political character of the state marked by the conflictive co-existence of opposing systems i.e. dictatorial and democratic, lies in the fact that it implicitly attempts to emphasize the limitations of colonial historiographies and epistemic approaches. These approaches make a fundamentally debatable assumption that the transition and integration of former non-British colonial pockets in India was without substantive problems in the absence of serious armed conflict as in the case of Portuguese Goa or smooth transfer of power as was the case with French Pondicherry on the east coast. This assumption which narrows down the framework of understanding the dynamics of human politico-cultural encounters, emerges partly due to perceived critical similarities in the civilizational aspect, geo-political and historical settings, socio-cultural, linguistic and religious affinities between India and these smaller territories, and partly due to the European intellectual preoccupation with the "Collapse of Empire".

Notes

1. Decrees to this effect were issued in Lisbon 31st March 1961 (Kessing's Contemporary Archives, 1961: 18071).
2. The bills which were introduced in the Lok Sabha on 11th August 1961 were adopted by it on 14th and 17th August respectively. The Rajya Sabha passed them on 16th and 23th August 1961 respectively. The President gave his assent on 27th November 1961 (Rajya Sabha Debates: 736). See also Rajya Sabha Debates: 91. The legislation comprised two bills. One was The *Tenth Constitution Amendment* making Dadra and Nagar Haveli, the seventh Union Territory with retrospective effect from 11th August 1961 and the second was to amend the Representation of People's Act entitling the new territory to one seat in the Lok Sabha. Accordingly, the Union Territory would be ruled by an Administrator and the role of the *Varishtha Panchayat* would be advisory on the pattern of territorial councils. All judges, magistrates and other executive officers serving in the territories would continue their function under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High court. Pending the election of a member to the Lok Sabha, the president would nominate one.
3. It was Mohan Ranade who was deported to Portugal from Goa jail on 23rd August 1960 (Rajya Sabha Debates: 576; Lok Sabha Debates: 1228 ff).
4. Address to the Legislative Assembly in Panjim on 1st September 1961 (*Navshakti*, 12/09/1961).
5. Inaugural Address at the Seminar on Portuguese Colonies, New Delhi, 20th October 1961 (*Navshakti,* 23/10/1961).
6. 'Prime Minister Nehru has lost that power to influence the opinion of the world which derived from his life-long professed dedication to principle and morality… Portugal has lost Goa, but it would, in any case, have lost it hereafter.

It is nothing so tangible as an ally; it is nothing so material as land, or money or trade. It is something infinitely more precious and more rare. What is lost is fair in the essential goodness and morality of a new nation, whose record, hitherto was unsullied by any act of aggression' (National Secretariat for Information, 1962: 158-59).

7. The Cleveland Plain Dealers wrote on 10th December 1961: 'India's Prime Minister Nehru, famous for his non-violent approach to the solution of other nation's disputes, himself made what sounded like war talk on two Asian fronts' (National Secretariat for Information, 1962: 144). The New York World Telegram wrote on 18th December 1961: 'India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who made himself in world's no. 1 holier-than-thou moralizer and man of peace, can no longer act as the conscience of mankind. He ranged from critical to indignant when Britain, France and Israel invaded Egypt, when Russia crushed the Hungarian revolt, and when the United States backed the rebel invasion of Fidel Castro's Cuba. Now, after yesterday's Indian invasion of tiny Portuguese Goa, he is in the same boat with those who condemned, Goa has 1537 square miles and 6,50,000 people on the south-west coast of India, a nation has 450 million people…. When he was Mohandas Gandhi's disciple he accepted the master's doctrine of non-violence as a political weapon simply because it happened to be the right policy at the time India was seeking freedom Britain. It was not something he believed in absolutely' (National Secretariat for Information, 1962: 148).

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PAIRING SPARE DEMOGRAPHY WITH SPARE GEOGRAPHIES

Some Historical Reflections on Discourses of Settlement in Late Nineteenth-Century Assam

Subir Dey

Blueprints of Demographic Engineering in Contemporary Assam

On 27th March 2017, the department of Health and Family Welfare (A) of the Government of Assam floated a draft of State Population Policy soliciting comments and observations within thirty days. The moot point of concern, which prompted this measure, is claimed to be the rate of increase in the population of Assam as per Census 2011. The current rate of growth of population in Assam, which is 17.07 percent, is argued to be unsustainable. Apart from citing other parameters that substantiates the continuation of this rate of growth, it underlines right at the beginning that incidence of underage marriage of the age bracket of fourteen to twenty is quite high particularly in *char* areas, tea belts and some tribal areas in the state.

In drawing up this scenario, the report does acknowledge the positive indicators of the State's demography such as higher sex ratio and higher female literacy rate than the national average. However, it argues that the demographic dividend that the State is supposed to reap, owing to the presence of its young population, is not possible in the absence of population planning. Hence, the challenge for such population policy and its implementation has been ascribed to four domains: diverse communities, geographical accessibility, socio-religious beliefs and health related service problems. Within these four domains, the geography of riverine and tea belts is once again underlined and it is indicated that in some communities there is higher incidence of underage marriage and polygamy and that some communities have socio-religious beliefs that are against modern conceptions of family planning (Government of Assam, 2017: 1-6).

Interestingly, while citing the numbers, the report does forward credible references of sources. On the other hand, when it outlines these four domains of specific challenges within Assam, it does not provide any such reference. In the absence of any references, it implies that these challenges are part of common understanding and does not require any credible substantiation. Along with this, certain other features of this draft policy have prompted criticism that it carries within itself an attempt to target particular communities. The *Business Standard* carried an article saying that the two-child policy suggested by the Government of Assam places women at a particularly disadvantageous position (28/04/2017). Additionally, it has also been argued that instead of population engineering through linking child norms to opportunities and benefits from government, improving healthcare and education has been far more successful in containing demographic crisis in developing countries.

As mentioned above, the report quite clearly identifies not only certain communities but also certain geographies where it finds the problem particularly accentuated such as the *char* areas and the tea belts. Reference to these geographies and the population located within these geographies in the draft of this legislation of the current government brings us a rather interesting opportunity to revisit their colonial roots. This paper takes the opportunity to do so.

What are *char* areas and tea belts? Who live there? The draft of the policy is rather polite to just point towards these geographies because that is more than adequate for the audience. So, if you ask this question to anyone in Assam, who does not bear the burden of being politically sensitive or correct, for instance, my mother, the prompt response would be *'Lebaar'* and *'Miyan'*.[2] The quantum of history and diversity that these two terms and their associated imageries can subvert and conceal is not funny. These identities are etched onto the geographies of tea estates and riverine areas just like the Rhino of Kaziranga forests in Assam.

How did these geographies come to be so ethnicized? Why does the current policy draft on population maintain special concerns for these geographies and the demographic section who are perceived to be their residents? The historical exploration that such a question demands has begun only in the last two decades of historical studies of Assam. This paper dwells on some of these existing historical studies that unpack and elaborate on the ecological and geo-political discourses specific to 19th century Brahmaputra Valley that were deployed for its colonization and consequently reconfigured the political geography of Assam into different enclaves of organized

commodity production. Having situated the regional specificity of the logic of colonization, the paper engages with a set of correspondence of colonial bureaucracy and the debate within it that set in motion a demographic change carrying forward the project of colonization of the "spare" geographies of the valley.

Based on this historiographical exercise as well as historical exploration, the paper attempts to demonstrate the perilous continuities and similarities between motives and perceptions behind colonial policy that subverted indigenous conceptions of ecology and the contemporary attempts at demographic engineering as outlined in the beginning.

Mapping British Assam: Applying Scales of Revenue to People and Spaces in the NineteenthCentury

For trade and commerce, the British East India Company needed information and undertook intelligence-gathering about the Brahmaputra Valley as early as 21st August 1788. However, it was not until the 1792 expedition of Captain John Welsh, solicited by the Ahom principality, that serious intelligence gathering regarding the region began. In this direction, Dr Peter Wade, an assistant surgeon on the team of Captain Welsh, had gathered enough material by 1805 to compile a brief statistical account of the history and geography of the region. Formally, this last decade of the eighteenth century is seen as the first significant contact between the British and the region.

These early accounts are impressive intelligence dossier from today's point of view. However, so far as those times are concerned, these reports show the priorities and approach that the Company took while documenting the region. If we leave out works written in the language of the region, this kind of intelligence literature appear to be quite pioneering. However, we would do well to remind ourselves that these were primarily compilations in English language of information related to events, places and people, gathered from primarily indigenous records. In these accounts, even when the official brief of the authorities of British East India Company was not in favour of military expansion, one can see the very template for information was that of military intelligence gathering (Wade, 1927). A historical outline was constructed in order to have a better grasp on the prevailing crisis of Ahom principality and activities of neighbouring kingdoms and communities. A geographical outline was required for geo-strategic purposes. Hence, Dr Wade's description is essentially about nomenclature and classification of

the space known as Assam, primarily in quantifiable terms. Wade's account was the first dossier to draw up Assam in colonial revenue and administrative terms such as districts, *paraganas*, *taluks* and towns, etc. It identified districts and towns on both the banks of the river Brahmaputra and further triangulated the direction of the numerous streams and tributaries of the river Brahmaputra. Place-making in these terms was already at work.

The formal occupation of this region by the British East India Company after 1826 further provided the scope for making the territory of Assam more legible in terms of revenue capacities and potential. It is from this moment onwards that the Company began to demarcate the territory, acquired by virtue of the Yandaboo Treaty, and define the geography and demography of this region. Henceforth, all reports were built upon prior literature, amplifying and enhancing those very templates of information. Hence, these colonial writings became the basis on which this region came to be viewed and understood both by people within and outside it.

Between 1826 and 1838, David Scott, an agent of the Company, undertook all the official arrangements with all the chieftains and Ahom principality. He sought to establish a tributary system in place that would generate revenue for the Company. However, resistance, rampant corruption of revenue collectors did not allow this tributary arrangement to sustain and by 1838 the Company established direct management for the region. Till this period, drawing upon reports such as that of Wade and other official correspondence, the basic demarcation of territory appears to have been on the basis of the tributary arrangements that had been made. It is in this context that Goalpara, Kamroop, Durrung, Nowgong, Assam Rajah (the region later to be known as Upper Assam and Brahmaputra Valley) emerged as districts in the writings of John McCosh in 1837. This very approach of demarcation of territory on the basis of revenue generation and its demography as revenue-paying subjects was the cornerstone of British colonial rule. Any entity whether human or natural falling outside this classification was to be brought within these folds by the British government. The nineteenth century British rule in Assam unfolded itself primarily on this line of governmental thinking. This approach itself was responsible for many demographic shifts that were, perhaps, not intended but happened as a result of this rule.

The first of these demographic shifts took place during the period 1826-1838 when under the protection of British rule, the nobility of 'Assam Rajah' or the Ahom principality attempted to raise revenue, as per the existing traditional levies, in cash. There was a lack of personnel who could maintain and direct an office of revenue

collection in cash, and operate with a court language that was not native to the region (Bengali). As a result, the Company sought to bring landlords and intermediaries and settle contracts of collection with them who were not resident of the concerned areas. The most abrupt change was realization of revenue in cash instead of kind as was the case with the traditional system of *paiks*. Thus, within a few years of the new administration, the conciliatory policy of the British East India Company turned out to be atrocious for the commoner on the ground as intermediaries decided to fleece the toiling tiller and make the most of their short-term tenure. The disgruntled nobility and chieftains, who, owing to their incompetence, were replaced by intermediaries in the new system of documentation, rebelled unsuccessfully in 1828. However, the most common response in this case was the desertion of land by commoners who sought refuge in hills and zones, which were outside the regime of revenue. This resulted in large tracts lying vacant and massive arrears and default in the registers of revenue (Barpujari et al., 1960).

Each Commissioner succeeding David Scott as well as the authorities in Calcutta realized the challenge of striking a balance between continuation of a traditional non-documented regime and the very foundation of their own government in the mercantile principle of maximization of profit through maximum utilization of resources.

By 1838, when the Brahmaputra Valley was brought under the direct management of the Company, the territory began to be demarcated in the following terms: 1) land under rice cultivation; 2) land under village settlement and plantation; and 3) waste as jungles, hills, rivers (McCosh, 1837: 127).The agenda that British rule followed from this period onwards was to amplify the revenue potential of lands under revenue generation and find the best possible means of putting 'Waste', which included diverse ecological terrains, to revenue-generating commodity production. Thus, began the process of conversion of "usufruct commons"[2] into active production geographies, neatly demarcated on the pages of revenue ledgers and physically marked by well-hedged fences, revenue posts and pillars on the ground.

(Un)Settling 'Wastes' of British Assam in the Nineteenth Century

It is in this context that British Assam acquired the epithet of being 'labour short' and 'land abundant' in the parlance of the British East India Company. The departure from this understanding

was to improve the balance between land and labour. Organized production of tea was, thus, the first measure that the British undertook in order to attain this improvement. The terrain chosen for this was all the unoccupied land above the flooding level of the numerous tributaries and the main river channel of Brahmaputra on both its northern and southern banks.This land was situated on uneven topography so that water did not get accumulated at the root of the tea tree. However, the set of Wasteland rules that emerged from this objective was not confined to tea. It began to be rolled out uniformly across the diverse topography of the valley. The inherent logic was not ecological but economic. Any geography that was outside active human occupation began to be categorized and enumerated as 'wastes'. Classification of soil began to be undertaken on the fundamental principle of its nature and scale of productivity. The set of rules that governed such parceling off of lands was known as "Wasteland Rules" that became law of the land on 6 March 1838. By the time Assam was conquered by the East India Company, its monopoly and its mercantile interests had been vanquished by industrial interests in Britain. The Charter Act of 1833 allowed for European capital to own land outside Presidency towns fairly unencumbered. It was around the same time that Francis Jenkins, the newly appointed Chief Commissioner of Assam was busy drawing up rules to invite Europeans to hold 'wasteland' at very nominal rates of rent and with very little conditions on its use. These rules were gradually liberalized in 1854 and then in 1861 under fee simple grants. Such liberal rules led many European planters to buy or hold lands in far greater quantum than was required because 'such wastelands provided them with far greater resources than what land as a factor of production ordinarily denotes'(Guha, 1977:10-12). Interestingly, this discourse and logic of 'wasteland' finds relevance in the legislative battles of mid-twentieth century fought between different political parties based on community lines over the question of land settlement. This illustrates that the logic of 'wasteland' came to be a part of the political vocabulary and the political imagination of the host population of the province as well (Guha, 2006: 166-170).

This logic of governance was a watershed moment as pre-British regimes did not function on such cartographic and survey driven rule of proprietorship. The new regime that sought to interpret the existing physically unoccupied geography of Assam as 'wasteland' with only token regard for 'social meanings' that was endorsed by the residing subject population. The plantation economy flowed from this logic of 'wasteland' which was put to profitable use by commercial

production of tea and in course of this produced an enclave economy and topography that cut right through traditional economic and agrarian geographies of Assam. While the administration adopted the traditional nomenclature of "*basti*", "*rupit*" and "*faringati*" as classification for rural geographies, its underlying economic logic was inverted on its head by introducing the rule of property conditional upon paying revenue (Baruah, 2001: 45-49).

This radical reconfiguration of the meanings of geography of Assam then brought two more demographic shifts:

— the coming of Europeans and their settling down as planters on vast tracts of lands fenced and demarcated through complete subversion and marginalization of indigenous conceptions of the surrounding ecology, thus making the existing rural economy subservient to this new enclave formation.
— the 'import' of impoverished indigenous communities as indentured labour, who were made to settle along the fringes of the plantation estates, sharply demarcated from the Scottish style bungalows of planters but attached to the estate and the whip of the planter, with near absolute immobility and away from the resident population of the region.[4]

Thus, traditional ownership and usage of resources by resident communities, and certain mobilities within this geography were curtailed, while new mobilities of capital and profit-making entities were aggressively promoted. This resulted in a hierarchy that is visible in classification of colonial documents as new economic settlements began to be enumerated as 'tea or special' cultivation and 'ordinary' cultivation. Colonial bureaucracy after decades of trying to frame residing subjects of Assam within these two classifications at the end of nineteenth century relented and shifted to promoting the logic of demographic engineering as an essential requirement for 'improvement' of the province which in turn meant organized commodity production (Kar, 2007: 344).

In course of colonizing the geography of Goalpara, the 'settlement of wastelands' resulted similarly in undercutting a complex and fluid relationship of state and society—something that was signature of that region. Diverse ideas of space and mobility were curtailed and reconfigured by privileging sedentary cultivation of preferably profitable and marketable commodities. The community known as Meches was primarily that of cultivators who would utilize a particular plot of land only for a few years. This was particularly irritating for governing officials as revenue paperwork and staff had

to continually roam with this mobile occupation. Officials attributed this manner of life to the abundance of their surroundings. Thus, if such peripatetic occupation was a problem, then the solution lay in changing the abundance of the surrounding (Misra, 2007: 429).

The riverine area close to the river that became cultivable only during the low ebb of the river in the winter was a crucial part of the arithmetic of subsistence of the resident communities. These lands were used only during that season to grow mustard, a crop that provided among other things the cash that could be used to pay the rent and revenue. The colonial bureaucracy downplayed the unsuitability of the riverine tracts for permanent cultivation in order to expand the revenue base under the Colonisation Scheme that it undertook to create 'orderly' settlements on a premium. The consequence of this kind of settlement was that the East Bengali peasant settlement was exposed to floods in a manner that was only destructive. This colonial policy combined with the construction of railways across the floodplain terrain of the Valley turned the equation of human settlements with the river into an antagonistic one. The policy of land settlement stretched the discourse of 'abundant wasteland' to an unrealistic extent focused solely on maximization of commercial acreage and agrarian revenue. Consequently, permanent settlement of East Bengali peasants in these riverine tracts came in conflict with the arithmetic of subsistence of the cultivation pattern of resident communities and pastoral groups leading to antagonistic equations within the different communities as well but most importantly, it brought about the discourse of floods as a 'problem' within public sphere and was crucial in shaping policies about the river (Goswami, 2010).

However, invoking the logic of 'wasteland' was only one part of the discourse of scripting the idea of colonization. The other part was measuring the capacities of labour and assessing the skills of residing population to the demands of organized commodity production and sedentary cultivation. The analytical departure of the above scholarship has also similarly concurred on the accompanying process of construction of taxonomy of the various communities within the neat lines of 'caste' and 'tribes' in the geography of Assam and the periodic examination of their production caliber for becoming sedentary cultivators.

The residing population eventually failed to pass this test of becoming sedentary ryots as demanded by colonial administration. Colonial bureaucracy argued that the availability of 'abundant' land was the prime reason why the residing population of Assam was

disinclined to practice sedentary cultivation. Hence, it was argued that all measures on the part of the government failed to alter this mode of production, and the colonial bureaucracy was, therefore, compelled to make systematic efforts for demographic engineering in order to reconfigure 'waste' into 'productive' geographies—themuch quoted 'smiling fields' (Baruah, 2001: 109-124).

The 'value' of a 'race' was primarily measured in terms of its availability for organized commodity production.As early as 1840s such characterization could be seen at work in the following correspondence of one Mr. Butler: 'The people are not industrious or enterprising, and will not cultivate more than is sufficient for their own wants; unless Assam is colonized from Bengal, there is no prospect or hope of the province being brought fully under cultivation for centuries to come' (Kar, 2007: 344).

Official circles in Assam by the end of the nineteenth century were of the firm opinion that the task of organized commodity production had to happen through special measures of demographic engineering from outside the province. Such a discourse appears to have converged with the pan Indian survey that initiated from the circular of WW Hunter in 1885. However, it simultaneously opened a debate about the terms and conditions under which such demographic engineering was to be carried out. We proceed now to examine the debate as it unfolded between the provincial government of Assam and the central government of India.

Measuring 'Waste' and Finding 'Settlers': Cotton's Crusade of Civilization in Assam

Sir Henry John Stedman Cotton in his long career in the Bengal Civil Service, served as Chief Commissioner of Assam from 1896 to 1902. Cotton drafted a note in response to a letter from T.W. Holderness, Secretary, Department of Revenue and Agriculture, Government of India, in 1898. He compiled from latest reports of cadastral survey data related to quantum of land that was constantly going out of cultivation each year, and tabulated these lands as 'culturable wastes' from 1853 onwards. He then juxtaposed this data with that of revenue realized so far from the same year. He inferred from these statistics that while realization of revenue had increased, there was no corresponding increase in acreage of cultivation.

On the question of a policy of migration, he talked about the inertia in the existing discourse of 'improvement' or 'development' of the wastelands owing to the fear of mortality which arrested the

wheels of 'civilization' in its march towards Assam. He explained this inertia to be emanating from a pathological error of 'race science' in identifying the suitable 'reclaimer'.[5] Drawing upon an episode of experiment in reclamation in Bengal, Cotton explains the fatal flaw. Let us note this in his words:

> The failure of the experiment was due to many causes and among others to the selection of a most unsuitable emigration agent, but it is principally to be attributed to the *error* of importing for the reclamation of jungle in a malarial tract of country a body of cultivators drawn from districts of quite different climatic conditions. Nothing is better known in Assam than that the coolies imported from Behar and the North West Provinces are not only useless for clearing jungle, but that they succumb to malaria far more rapidly than the more hardy and indigenous tribes from other parts. There is every reason to suppose that they would make good cultivators when the land is cleared and the miasma is blown away, but they ought never to be employed as the pioneers of cultivation (Cotton, 1898: 11).

Cotton clearly refuted the official reasons that had been against active colonization, namely 'the obstacles of climate and language and the risks to health' and 'the initial mortality expected'. He called upon numerous precedents of reclamation from different parts of the Empire to demonstrate its inevitability and stressed with utmost emphasis that such notions which were a decade old in the case of Assam could not be allowed to hold anymore the crusade against nature and the necessity of 'reclamation' with almost a lament to the injustice done to the very nomenclature of this experiment and exercise. His own words are appropriate here as well:

> It is the fact that sickness almost invariably attends the breaking up of forest lands, and I have no doubt that mortality will be considerable among new settlers in Assam, even in a comparatively open country. But it is impossible to forego reclamation for ever on such grounds as this. The fight of civilization against nature demands its victims no less than war against human enemy, and land cannot be reclaimed from jungle except at the cost of a comparatively high mortality amongst the pioneers of cultivation. The mortality among the early settlers over large tracts in America, Africa and Australia was frightful, and in India also the State-aid attempt of opening out the Charwa jungle in the Central Provinces some twenty-one years go [sic], and the more recent efforts at reclaiming waste land in Upper Burma, have been attended with a very heavy death-rate […] But the cost of life and treasure has never been allowed to count in the balance, and *the triumphs of peaceful industry must continue to claim their victims*[…].The fact that the opening out of new land is

> attended with many risks makes it incumbent on Government to see that all possible sanitary precautions are taken, but it cannot be accepted as a reason for practically prohibiting the extension of cultivation and civilization (Cotton, 1898: 10).

For Cotton this was a crusade for 'peaceful industry' and 'civilization' and the price of death had to be paid. This could not be an excuse for retreat of 'civilization' or 'cultivation'. Cultivation as imagined and dictated by colonial bureaucracy was akin to civilization. Cotton provided a course of correction in taking forward this industry in the following words:

> The rude and temporary cultivation of nomadic and aboriginal tribes must, therefore, be the prelude to the migration of regular agriculturists[…] It is however, fortunately the case that there are ready to hand other reclaimers in Assam than these imported coolies, and no more efficient agency could be found than some of the indigenous races of the Assam Valley, such as Cacharis, Garos and Lalungs, whose services can be obtained with little cost, to whom employment on tea gardens offers comparatively small attractions, and who are inured to the climate. It is also needless to add that the Naga and Mikir Hillmen in localities where their services can be made available afford a material second to none for undertaking the clearance of heavy jungle. But as cultivators of any sort, they would be quite useless(Cotton, 1898: 11).

At this moment, it would serve us well to leap a decade in time and cross over to Bengal and look at another official observation. F.A. Sachse in his highly informative gazetteer of the district of Maimansingh made the following observation:

> One peculiarity of the district is the number of representatives of aboriginal tribes. Garos number 38000, Hadis 26000, Hajangs 25000 and Koches 32000. They inhabit the Susung and Sherpu villages along the foot of the Garo Hills and are the pioneers of cultivation in the Madhupur jungle. The Garos and Koches do not use the plough but only the kodali and they still prefer to cultivate virgin ground. After cutting the jungle and cultivating two or three crops they make way for a Muhammadan family and start over again (Sachse, 1917: 39).

Sachse is not curious about what kind of arrangement operated between groups of different modes of cultivation which appeared to be opposite to each other. His appreciative tone suggests that he found the arrangement extremely beneficial for the purpose of reclamation and sedentary cultivation. It is highly unlikely that Cotton had any inkling of an established practice in the neighbourhood that seemed to coordinate on its own to fructify colonial objectives that

he desired to see in Assam. This was a case of clairvoyance but also helps in pointing out that drive and experiments of reclamation and increasing acreage of revenue settlements was a product of colonial regime, something that had been in operation throughout the long nineteenth century across the Empire and the case of Assam was not an isolated one.

Nonetheless, after eliminating many groups of cultivators citing various issues of health, climate and habits, Cotton cited Porteous's notes from his Naga Hills diary eight years ago, 22nd April 1890 to forward the candidature of settlers from Deltaic Bengal. Naming Mr. Porteous as his most observant officer, he quoted from his diary in this report which is reproduced here as well:

> The best hope for colonizing the Dhansiri Valley will be by colonisation from Sylhet. The Muhammadans of Eastern Sylhet, who have opened out so much land under the Tippera Hills both in Sylhet and Hill Tippera, and equally so the Manipuris, who are even better as pioneer settlers, would make the very best of stuff for imported colonists, being both industrious and habituated to the kind of climate that prevails in the Dhansiri Valley (Cotton, 1898: 11).

Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, the 'waste' had been measured and the 'settler' had been identified as well. However, another fundamental aspect of this whole policy was rules of settlement: in other words, what incentives to provide which would prompt migration.

Henry Cotton turned to Bengal and Burma for rules as well that could prompt migration to Assam. In his note under discussion, Cotton built a critique of the ongoing system of settlement by drawing upon several instances of successful colonization from Bengal and the existence of exceptions to the principle of the current system of 'no intermediary' such as in Kamrup district. He argued the following:

> My remarks will, I hope, not be misunderstood. I do not wish to disturb the settlement of the province, which has now adapted itself to the conditions of the people and could not be superseded without violating the fundamental principle that changes ought to be allowed to arise spontaneously[…] I think that the results of the settlement have been very unfortunate, and that there will be need of tender handling in assessment and the adoption of a more liberal policy in the future, especially in the direction of grant holdings and the free permission of subletting by those who are in a position to attract raiyats to cultivate their lands […] The object of my observations in not to propose any such change. But I think I may claim to have said enough to show that the

> extension of cultivation, upon which the advancement of the province depends, can never be accomplished by the prohibition of subletting or under a raiyatwari settlement (Cotton, 1898: 8).

Besides the abstract details of tenurial rights and terms of settlement, Cotton employed the trope of civilization in order to justify not only his appreciation for the system prevalent in Bengal but also of the crucial role an intermediary played in ushering a society towards "progress". Interestingly, he quoted one from the emerging middle class who was schooled in the idea of agriculture that we have referred to earlier. Cotton cited the recorded opinion of Rai Bahadur Jagannath Baruah, partially to make his point but let us cite him in some detail in order to have a glimpse of the discourse prevalent at the receiving end.

> If it is politically important to preserve from extinction the comparatively small class of zamindars almost all over India, it is of vital importance to preserve and to allow the formation of a much larger middle class who in every country in the world always lead the van of progress, enter the learned professions, direct the commerce and trade of the country, man the civil and military services, cultivate the arts and sciences, and, in point of fact, are the leaders of society. It is this middle class, the larger number of tenure holders intermediate between the zamindars and the cultivating raiyats, who have made all the progress that has been made in Bengal—in language, literature, science, arts and commerce and trade. They will be useful at all times, and they are politically more important than even the zamindars, as they possess more influence and are in greater touch with the masses. Having a stake in the country, they will always be on the side of law and order. Their loyalty to the Government is undoubted, and they will be more useful in critical times than a vast mass of hand-to-mouth tenants, having no leaders to guide them. It will be a grave error if the proposed rules, which will undoubtedly deal a heavy blow upon the growth of the middle class, be finally adopted (Baruah, 1897: Appendix).

Cotton's strategy of colonization was summed up in a comment from Mylne from Burma whom he repeatedly cited:

> Judging from our experience, if you want to open out Assam, you must be prepared to give more encouragement and better terms than the Burma Government gives. State emigration I don't believe in, and, at any rate, to begin with, there must be someone between the Sircar and the emigrant to whom the latter can look for money advances and assistance, and in whom he has confidence. My notion is if you could, by offering liberal terms induce wealthy and influential men like […] and others to take up the thing, not for honour and glory, but a commercial undertaking,

> there must be a margin of profit. By this means a few thousand families might be induced to emigrate, and once comfortably settled, they would themselves attract others (Cotton, 1898: 14).

Cotton's crusade and his scheme for the siege through reclamation did not meet official sanction. In a reply to his note, T.W. Holderness, in 1899, dismissed the essential argument made by Cotton. He vehemently defended the need and efficacy of the ryotwari system. While taking on each of the observations made by Cotton, he provided a blow by blow return. He held on to the theory of miasma and resultant high mortality as responsible for the depressed and inhibited growth of Assam. He further underscored the cases of successful colonization held up by Cotton as inadequate and reiterated that absentee landlordism of Bengal was behind the failure of the experiment in Charwa tract and not the choice of the reclaimer (Holderness, 1899: 1-4).

On the question of the scheme of colonization, he instructed to frame fresh proposals keeping the directives of the Government of India in mind. He concluded stating that in the given circumstances, the 'tea industry would seem to be the natural training grounds for immigrants. They are probably better looked after and protected against the climate on a tea garden than they would be on a zemindari grant' (Holderness, 1899: 4).

Cotton decided to refrain from any modification of his proposals and did not pursue the matter further but perhaps decided to respond in another way. He scripted another report highlighting the atrocities of workers on tea estates. This caused major embarrassment for the tea lobby and Government of India. Cotton had to step down from imperial service (Kar, 2007: 349).

Fullers' Incentive and Rules of Reclamation

After Cotton's exit, Sir James Bamfylde Fuller was appointed Chief Commissioner. Fuller was an official who had run the ryotwari system and also the experiment of Charwa tract that Cotton had criticized. Quite a few important changes took place under Fuller's administration with regard to colonization. In 1905, the Government of India called for fresh proposals on the question of colonization in Assam. This initiated another round of discussion in which F.J. Monahan once again represented the essential argument of Cotton. Monahan argued that a scheme for getting colonizers from outside the province was difficult because the suitable candidate, the farmer, from East Bengal was not yet under any substantial demographic

pressure to look outside his province. In fact, East Bengal was also receiving people from Behar and North West Province which filled the lower order of laboring population. More importantly, he once again put forth the argument from Cotton's note that there was considerable demand and practice of subletting and anyone in Assam who had more land than he required for his own needs would sublet it. The reason behind this, according to him, was that subletting land was 'part of his notion of rising in the world' (Monahan, 1905: 2).

Deliberations began with the Government of India in June of 1905 and L.J. Kershaw reported on the matter. By this time another important change in the revenue administration aided towards reaching something of a consensus about the matter. Kershaw in his report to Government of India that surveys had led to reveal the spatial and temporal limits of the idea of 'abundant wastes' of Assam. He then delineated the topography as well as the demographic character of unoccupied lands in Assam valley which so far were clubbed under 'waste'.

> The field which Assam offers to immigrant settlers is certainly very extensive, but is not so extensive as is sometimes supposed. Of the enormous area of waste with which the plains districts of the province are credited, a very large proportion is not suitable for permanent human habitation, consisting of the riverain lands of the Brahmaputra and its principal affluents, which are deeply submerged during part of the year […] Moreover, in some parts of the valley,—notably in the Darrang district,—there are extensive stretches of savannah land between the riveraincountry and the forests that skirt the hills, which lie too high for the growth of crops other than tea. Deducting, however, the riverain areas and these sandy plateaux, there remains a very large area of the country available for permanent cultivation(Kershaw, 1905: 1).

The proposals eventually crystallized and sought a closure in 1908. The rules that received approvals from the Government of India regarding cultivation on unoccupied tracts came down to the following:

1. The reduction of the assessment on wastelands, to induce existing cultivators to extend their cultivation. This had already been authorized.
2. The offer to colonists of a revenue-free term. It was proposed that the power already possessed by the Chief Commissioner to make such an offer should be more freely used.
3. The adoption of a rule to preclude the danger of this offer attracting labour from tea gardens.

4. The offer to tea-garden managers of land on favourable terms on which they might settle coolies.
5. The offer to such managers of the mauzadarship over coolie settlers colonizing waste tracts near their gardens.

The Government of India approved the above in principle with some precautionary directives which were to guard against absentee leases, against alienation. It was further suggested that a *jotedari* system similar to that of Jalpaiguri in Bengal was to be introduced and that facilities were to be given for settlement of areas larger than 50 bighas with groups of tenants under a headman. The most crucial part was that formal rules were seen to be not necessary and instructions under Section 12 of the Land Revenue Regulations could be issued (Notes on Colonisation of Wastelands in Assam, 1908).

The proposals were not totally amenable to the tea estates associations who saw the grants awarded to them as inadequate and this question remained alive in correspondence even in the next decade. However, so far as 'special' measures for 'ordinary' cultivation were concerned, the debate as we can see above concluded rather on an anti-climax. The initiative began with the aim of large-scale colonization with special rules and investment schemes that essentially sought to alter the landholding system of the province. However, in the end, it was reduced to investing the bureaucracy with executive powers to be used to promote colonization.

Ritupan Goswami in his Ph.D. dissertation pointed out how Curzon's stated intention of constituting Eastern Bengal and Assam led to an increase in migration towards Assam from East Bengal (Goswami, 2010: 212). However, there was another set of events, which recent scholarship has underscored, and which does not allow this argument to settle comfortably. Tariq Omar Ali contends that a considerable opposition had gathered in Eastern Bengal, particularly in the jute-growing districts against the Partition of Bengal 1905 onwards on the grounds that this reconstitution led to the loss of trading opportunities and cultural proximity with Calcutta in which traders and professionals, who constituted the public opinion of the jute hinterland of East Bengal, had invested heavily (Ali, 2012: 113-115).

However, one might argue that this opposition was mainly from the middle class and did not correspond to the needs and aspirations of the cultivating class for whom the Scheme might have definitely proved useful. Here we would like to recall that perception of the

destination was very important for prospective migrants, and during this decade, Assam was reeling under the effect of 1897 earthquake and epidemics of malaria and small pox. As mentioned, the earlier ambitious proposal of Cotton did not meet official sanction; therefore, there was no scheme in place that could exploit the advantage brought about by the plan of 1905. Thus, once again, the plan of Curzon can be said to have carried within it the intention of promoting mass migration from East Bengal to Assam, but there is nothing to suggest that such change provided a stimulus to the networks of migration to Assam that had developed so far. So far as the perception of people about Assam is concerned, Tariq Ali demonstrates that as late as 1921, vernacular tracts depicted that Assam was a destination of uncertainty to which people moved only when all means to make a subsistence living had been exhausted in Bengal (Ali, 2012: 38-39).

However, the presence of the prospect of this mass migration for reclamation of land in Assam valley in the government and public sphere during that phase had one negative outcome. It aroused a lurking fear in the public sphere of Assam which quite rapidly organized itself into public opposition towards migration from East Bengal as early as 1915 (Kar, 2007: 350).

This discrepancy between politics and policy needs to be borne in mind. Curzon did have the prospect of jute extension in mind when the territorial redistribution scheme was drawn up but provincial administrative correspondence, as we have discussed, clearly did not formulate any measures to this effect. The effort that was made to promote jute was to distribute seeds and exhibit methods of cultivation at various districts without any effort at settling East Bengal farmers for the purpose. F.J. Monahan informs in his report that jute was grown to a certain extent in all districts of Assam as well as the plains of the Garo Hills. It was grown in Goalpara for export. Very active encouragement was not feasible and that it was stated that it should be left to gradual development (Jute Cultivation in Assam Valley District, 1905).

Concluding Observations

In summation, from our brief survey of late-nineteenth century British Assam, it should be clear that though there was a desirability of colonization through demographic engineering both at the provincial and central levels, a systematic scheme of colonization failed to emerge even after considerable deliberation. Among many other factors, the difference of method and approach on the question

of reclamation was at the heart of such a situation. Moreover, even in the course of elaborate discussion spread over almost a decade, the figure of the Muslim cultivator from East Bengal found favourable reference only twice, and the prospect of his migration was seen to be not good enough as the Muslim cultivator was not destitute enough to forsake his province and migrate. However, by 1907-08, the annual report of land revenue administration of Assam already noted the gradual trickle of settlers from Mymensingh and other districts of East Bengal to Darrang where they were said to be setting 'example in good husbandry'(Annual Reports of Land Revenue Administration of Eastern Bengal and Assam, 1907-08: 3).

It is interesting to note that in course of deliberation on colonization policy where so many migration streams were discussed, this trickle did not find favourable mention because it was thought that the tracts of Assam Valley did not hold out enough incentive for them. The quantum of this settlement did not come to notice before the Census of 1911. The point that is being made here is that within the thinking of the provincial government, prevailing notions of the tracts being unhealthy and without much economic incentive did not allow them to take notice of the trickle of settlers from East Bengal and anticipate that it would turn into a torrent. Given the racial taxonomy the government officials subscribed to, such an oversight is not surprising.

However, the fact remains that in course of discussion on colonization, the question of subletting got a certain official recognition as an essential tool for inducing reclamation. This turn in administrative discourse holds importance for us. Similar tendency of acquiring holdings and subletting them with their occupants was noted in East Bengal towards the end of the 19th century within a section of East Bengal peasants (Nakazato, 1994).

Thus, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, both these geographies acquired a rather common feature of agrarian aspirations and ideology within the 'forward' section of its landed peasantry. There were those in Bengal who aspired to acquire and cultivate and had the capacity to do so and there were those in Assam who were open to having tenants in land they had acquired. As seen in policy correspondence, the apparent contrast between land tenure systems of zamindari and ryotwari had been diluted so far as unoccupied tracts of lands were concerned. Thus, the steady stream of migration that Assam province witnessed from Eastern Bengal in the subsequent decades appears to be not so much due to how conditions of Assam were different and advantageous but rather how tenurialconditions similar to Bengal came to be formulated for the

settlement of unoccupied tracts by the turn of the twentieth century.

These unoccupied tracts were primarily the floodplains and *char areas* of Assam, particularly in the lower bank of the Brahmaputra Valley. The settlement rules that were formulated and revised right after the occupation of Assam by the British East India Company throughout the 19th century is responsible for the formation of what is known today as the tea belts of Assam. These geographies and their demography was the product of colonial policy. These spaces were reconfigured and 'peopled' in order to promote what the Crown government and their loyalists thought to be 'progress' and 'civilization'. The policies and measures that were formulated were premised on utter disregard of the social and ecological meanings and the method of resource use that indigenous societies endorsed.

Today, in these very geographies, the 'demographic problem' that the current public sphere perceives and the current government seeks to address, appears to carry a heavy baggage of colonial governmentality. It seeks to introduce legislation premised on an ideal set of standard of living and development that is not in consonance with the economic and ecological realities of these geographies.

Through this empirical exercise, this paper sought to insist on a much nuanced understanding of the ecological and historical setting of these geographies in Assam rather than simply categorizing communities residing in them in parochial terms. Previously, such constructs of identities helped in building an enclave economy and this reproduced itself in a highly differentiated society premised on these identities which in the post-independent era has been embroiled in divisive and internecine conflicts in domains of language, culture and resources. Geographies within the state till today are known by their respective occupants such as tribal belts, tea belts as mentioned in the current population draft. It is highly plausible that if this colonial inheritance is not abandoned in current policy thinking, it might leave behind a huge gulf between the outlays and outcomes of its policies.

Notes

1. *Lebaar,* a corrupt pronunciation of the word labour, is the common term by which most residents of Assam refer to the manual working population of tea estates. Apart from the colonial registers where this population that was brought through indentured system during British rule, this term perhaps gained wider currency from the common practice of this working population standing in market places of small towns across Assam to solicit manual labour for the day during off season of the tea growing cycle. On the other hand, the term *Miyan* is used as a term to address with affection and respect within

Islamic world. Even God is referred to as *Allah Miyan*. In Assam, the term is essentially used in reference to Bengali-speaking Muslims who migrated during British rule from the then East Bengal. The connotation of this usage is usually derogatory; it is a reference to their recent migratory past that has a rather stigmatized position in public memory and history of Assam. This term has also gained currency through the widespread migration of this population from their rural settlements to urban areas where they sell their labour for daily wages or perform various services like pulling rickshaws and so on.

2. I derive this term from Gorky Chakraborty (Chakraborty, 2012).
3. For detailed accounts of critical tea histories, see Behal, 2014 and Sharma, 2011.
4. See Jayeeta Sharma's account which tells us about the role of 'scientific theories' during colonial regime in identifying in a pathological manner people and places that went into designing the roadmap of capitalist transformation in Empire (Sharma, 2006: 445).

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VIDYA TO *VIDYABHYASAM*: TRANSITION OF AYURVEDA FROM WAYS OF KNOWING TO KNOWLEDGE

K. P. Girija

Introduction

All over India, knowledge in ayurveda had been disseminated not only through state institutions and large private institutions such as ayurveda *patshalas* or schools/colleges, but also through individual teachers and practitioners. In the context of Kerala[1], in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were only three institutions for the teaching of ayurveda: the princely state supported Travancore Ayurveda Patshala (TAP), Tripunithura Sanskrit Patshala (TSP) and the one and only private institution of British Malabar, the Kottakkal Aryavaidya Patshala (KAP). Nevertheless, hundreds of students learned *vaidyam* (indigenous[2] medicine/ayurveda) from eminent practitioners, either by staying with the *vaidyas* (indigenous medicine practitioners) or regularly attending the classes and treatment sessions.

The duration of the courses and learning period differed in all these institutions and individual run learning centres. The titles given to students at the completion of the courses were also different. The diversity of texts and syllabus, in fact, protected the diversity of knowledge and the specialized treatments in specific fields such as *marma*, *netra*, *visha* and *balavaidyam*. In the initial period, all the three established ayurveda institutions put into use this specialized knowledge by inviting traditional *vaidyas* as lecturers and teachers. By the end of the twentieth century, the three Samhita texts[3] were introduced as the central pillars for *vaidyam* learning in order to standardize ayurveda education and this eliminated all region-specific unique knowledge in the field of formal ayurveda education. In south India, *Ashtanga Hridayam* (AH) and its abridged version *Ashtanga Samgraham* (AS) were the most popular texts amongst the practitioners. The *Charaka Samhita* (CS) and *Susruta Samhita* (SS)

that were familiar in north India had not been used much in Kerala in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On account of this and also because of the regionally specific medicinal practices as noted above, ayurveda of Kerala was treated as not sufficiently classical as that of north India. This was rectified partially by unifying and standardizing the syllabus and texts used for learning *vaidyam* in other parts of India. The shift in ayurveda education that occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has to be seen in the context of the major changes that took place in the general educational sphere in India. But, the specific significant moments of rearrangement that had happened in ayurveda has not been well documented.

Ayurveda Education

During the nineteenth century, diverse methods were in existence for ayurveda teaching in Kerala. The first formal educational institution, an 'Ayurveda Patshala' (Ayurveda School), was established in Travancore in 1889 (Mohanlal, 2014).[4] But prior to this, education in ayurveda had been formalized through individual teachers (*gurus*), either in their residence or in regionally supported spaces and community supported *patshalas* (Varier, [1980] 2002). The Sanskrit Patshala of Tripunithura in Cochin introduced an ayurveda course in 1926. Apart from these state-supported institutions, KAP was started as a private endeavour in Kozhikode in 1917 (Varier, 2002: XI). The TAP and the TSP admitted only upper caste students[5] (Mohanlal, 2014: 9), whereas other institutions all over Kerala run by individual teachers adopted a variety of methods for selection of students. Some of the teachers admitted students up to *sudra* castes,[6] some admitted strictly upper castes, some others admitted students from all castes and religions.[7] KAP, the first private ayurveda educational institution in Kerala, admitted students across castes (Varier, 2002: XI). It functioned as a stepping-stone between the caste-ridden state institutions and the individual-run secular and non-secular endeavours, until the institutions of the princely states opened their gates to students from all castes, under social pressure. Thus, the students from the marginalized communities and castes were supported only by individual *vaidyas* till the establishment of the KAP.

In the twentieth century, adapting to the changing situation, individual *vaidyas* too modified their syllabus as per the requirements of the newly evolving institutions. They also contributed to the

development and dissemination of an institutionalized ayurveda by introducing modern disciplines of learning such as physiology and anatomy in their teachings, under the supervision of allopathic medical practitioners.[8] Some of the *vaidyas* advertised that there will be a *vaidyashala* (pharmacy) as well as a 'medicinal garden' (herbarium) adjacent to their ayurveda *patshalas*.[9] Earlier, the students used to accompany the *vaidyas* in collecting the medicinal plants from the fields, home gardens or hills. This indicates that there was also an effort on the part of individual *vaidyas* to organize medicinal gardens in producing herbs, as this became a modern requirement. Through their personal endeavours, many individual *vaidyas* not only contributed to involving marginalized practitioners in the mainstream *vaidyam* practice, but also incorporated some of the new emerging requirements into their curriculum.

Medium of Learning

Both the *patshalas* of Travancore and Cochin insisted on a good base in Sanskrit for learning *vaidyam* and admission was restricted to upper caste students. In contrast, KAP of Malabar gave admission to not only students from all castes and communities, but also allowed them to write the examination either in Sanskrit or Malayalam (Varier, 2002).[10] The basic qualification for admission to all the ayurveda *patshalas* of the State was knowledge in Sanskrit. But in the KAP, the students who did not know Sanskrit were selected through an entrance exam and they were taught Sanskrit. Thus, the KAP initiated a revolutionary step through the introduction of Malayalam as a language to access and express knowledge in *vaidyam*. Allowing students to write examinations in Malayalam provided an opening to many of the lower castes to enter into the field of formal ayurveda education as many of them relied on vernacular texts and oral knowledge for practicing *vaidyam*. However, the medium of instruction in the schools run by individual practitioners varied according to the proficiency of the *gurus*. *Nattuvaidyan* Kesavan from Kollam district, Travancore state, advertised the introduction of a new syllabus in his ayurveda *patshala*.[11] Through the advertisement, the *vaidyan* informed that there was a provision in his *patshala* to learn *vaidyam* according to the TAP syllabus or the KAP syllabus. He also engaged a doctor to teach modern physiology and anatomy.[12]

The curriculum, period and mode of teaching were different in each institution, whether they were state-supported institutions such as Travancore and Cochin *patshalas* or community and individual

supported teaching centres such as *patshala* of Kesavan *vaidyan* in Travancore and KAP in Kozhikode. At the level of practice, the *vaidyas* in all the three regions in Kerala do not refer to CS and SS. They follow the regionally available vernacular and Sanskrit texts such as *Vaidyasara Samgraham*, *Sahasrayogam, Chikitsamanjari* etc. The only Samhita texts used to learn *vaidyam* in Kerala was the *Ashtanga Hridayam* (AH), and most of the teachers and institutions preferred to use *Ashtanga Samgraham* (AS), an interpretation of AH (Mohanlal, 2014: 10; Varier, [1980] 2002). The Samhita texts became part of the curriculum all over India only after the systematization and institutionalization of ayurveda in the twentieth century. In south India, AH was one of the authoritative and popular texts of ayurveda (Valiathan, 2009: i). The former director of TAP, Mohanlal, finds the Samhita texts difficult to learn, compared to the AH which is said to be easy to remember. A comprehensive understanding of AH facilitates the learning of the Samhita texts (Mohanlal, 2014: 10). Memorizing AH was not merely a requirement of *vaidyam* learning, it was an inherent part of *bhasha* (language) learning culture in Kerala (Mohanlal, 2014: 10).[13] While CS, SS and AS contain a mixture of prose and poetry, AH is composed in verse except a few prose lines at the beginning and the end of each chapter (Valiathan, 2009: ii) which makes it easy to memorize. The immense popularity of AH is demonstrated by the more than 30 commentaries on it (Valiathan, 2009: iii). In 1979, when the Central Council of Medicine standardized the curriculum of Ayurveda learning in India, AH lost its prime position in formal learning spaces. Instead, the other two Samhita texts were introduced as part of a uniform syllabus. (Mohanlal, 2014: 11).

The courses offered, the period of the courses, and the titles or degrees given, varied in all of the institutions. While TAP had a four-year *Vaidyashastri* certificate course and a five-year *Vaidyakalanidhi* certificate course, the TSP had a six-year course for the *Ayurvedabhushanam* certificate. The KAP insisted on a four-and-half-year *Aryavaidyan* certificate course. The three other private colleges that opened in the 1950s at Ernakulam, Shoranur and Kannur offered certificates in *Vaidyapadan*, *Vaidyabhushanam* and *Aryavaidyan* respectively.

The KAP trust members codified a syllabus for a four-year degree and a three-year diploma course, by introducing physiology and anatomy as part of the curriculum.[14] Their main text for teaching was AH. The other classical texts, CS and SS were introduced only in the final year, along with the texts prepared by KAP. Furthermore,

while discussing about the syllabus, the organizers stated that 'the medicines used in our treatment are not from the published books such as *Ashtanga Hridayam*. Kerala had a number of unique treatments such as *uzhichil* (oil massage), *pizhichil* (oil bath), *pothichil* (covering the body with medicine and mud), *navarakizhi* (medicinal pouch with *navara* rice), *dhara* (oil bath for the upper body part), etc.'[15] KAP's interest in preparing new texts also involved incorporating non-textual knowledge. On account of these regionally specific methods, and use of treatments and medicines belonging to the oral and vernacular corpus of knowledge, the ayurveda of Kerala was not considered by the north Indian ayurveda practitioners as classical as their own practice.

Nattuvaidyashala to Ayurveda Department

In 1915, the Ayurveda Patshala was under the supervision of *Nattuvaidyashala* (Indigenous pharmacy) superintendent (Mohanlal, 2014). The department was named as *Nattuvaidyashala* since the distinction between a classical, consolidated ayurveda and the scattered *nattuvaidyam* had not been emphasized at that time. Ayurveda and *nattuvaidyam* were seen as one and the same practice and there was not any differentiation between practitioners who used written texts and those who did not.

During the colonial rule, the assertion of '*nadu*' or region as an indigenous space against an outside space/invasion/rule gained ground. *Nadu* and *nattuvaidyam* represent a rooted space and medical practice respectively. Later, when this indigeneity needed a name and a title to represent its authentic place among many practices or different indigeneities, the necessity of formulating certain practices as ayurveda or *the* indigenous knowledge of a region arose. By 1917, the superintendent became the Director of Ayurveda and all the grant-in-aid *vaidyashalas* remained as *nattuvaidyashalas* or *vishavaidyashalas* (pharmacies for treatment of toxic cases).[16] This was also a period where ayurveda began to stand out among the varied *nattuvaidyam* or ayurvedas and asserted itself as the classical tradition of a region. By 1950, the name of the department was again changed to the Department of Indigenous Medicine (Mohanlal, 2014). The change in designation was also a change in its social as well as intellectual status. The post-Independence scenario necessitated the assertion of an indigenous or native practice against a modern medical practice. By this time, the projection of ayurveda as a classical tradition and elevation of it as *the* indigenous knowledge of a region was almost

complete. In 1990, the Department of Indigenous Medicine was named as the Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy and by 2010 it was transformed into the Department of AYUSH (ayurveda, yoga, unani, siddha and homoeopathy).

In British Malabar, which came under Madras Presidency, until 1945 the *vaidya* institutions had come under the School of Indian System of Medicine (ISM).[17] The term 'ayurveda' was never used to describe a coherent and consolidated practice which followed the Charaka, Susruta and Vagbhata Samhitas or the *Brhatrayi*.

Neither the Indian System of Medicine of Madras Presidency nor the *Nattuvaidyashalas* of Travancore and Cochin had marked ayurveda and *siddha*[18] as distinct practices of regions like Kerala and Tamil Nadu. By the twentieth century, the trend of naming any valuable practice belonging to a particular geographical space asserted the 'indigeneity' of practices. This invariably invited standardization of not only curriculum, but also the texts used for teaching and the medicines prescribed for illnesses. Earlier, the regional variations influenced the nature of herbs, minerals and metals used in making medicines. The practices, medicines and the ingredients used in preparing medicines varied between south India and other parts of the country as the climate and geography differed. For instance, pulse reading was a peculiar treatment, prevalent in Bengal, where it perhaps originated (Bannerji, 2004). At present, none of the ayurveda and *siddha* educational institutions, except those run by The Art of Living Foundation, include the learning of pulse reading as a method of diagnosis in their curriculum.[19] What I wanted to emphasize here is that till early twentieth century, all over India, the curriculum differed from region to region, the texts (both oral and written) used for learning also differed in each region though the basic tenets and body concepts remained the same.

New Certificates, New Social Status

Till mid-twentieth century, in the three formal institutions of Travancore, Cochin and Kottakkal, the titles awarded to the students who completed the course of *vaidyam* were also different as were the curriculum and the texts. This continued until the reorganization of the Ayurveda Department in the mid-twentieth century, which ended up in standardization of the syllabus and the texts used for learning ayurveda. Initially, TAP offered a four-year course and the students were awarded a '*vaidyatest'* certificate after successful completion of the course. Though private students and practitioners were allowed

to appear for the *vaidya* test, not all private students were allowed to appear. Only upper caste students were allowed (Mohanlal, 2014: 9). Those who completed this test successfully were appointed as the grant-in-aid *vaidyas* of Travancore. The course was reorganized in 1910. A four-year course offered a '*vaidya pareeksha* certificate' or Lower Medical Certificate (LMC) and a five-year course offered a '*mukhya vaidya pareeksha* certificate' or Higher Medical Certificate (HMC). AH was the main text for learning, apart from AS, *Hridayapriya*, *Sahasrayogam*, *Yogamritam*, etc. (Mohanlal, 2014: 10).

The first reorganization of the course as well as the *patshala* was initiated in the year 1917 when it was upgraded as His Highness the Maharaja's College of Ayurveda (Mohanlal, 2014:12-13).[20] Simultaneously, the post of *Nattuvaidyashala* superintendent was changed to the Director of Ayurveda. Instead of the existing LMC and HMC courses, a five-year course on *Vaidyakalanidhi* and a four-year course on *Vaidyasastri* were introduced. Apart from knowledge of ayurveda, modern medical knowledge of anatomy, physiology, dissection and medical jurisprudence were also included in the curriculum. But an examination was not conducted on these subjects (Mohanlal, 2014:13). In order to give practical knowledge to the students, an Ayurveda hospital and a pharmacy were established as part of the college. A herbal garden—another new component and requirement—was also established in a 110 hectare land at Pulayanaarkotta. In 1929, a postgraduate course of two years was introduced in *Ayurveda Acharya*, which included writing a dissertation and attending an examination and a viva (Mohanlal, 2014: 15).[21] Almost 20 students passed this post-graduation within a span of 20 years, till the course was discontinued (Mohanlal, 2014:15-16). During this time, the only ayurveda course available in Cochin was a six-year course in *Ayurvedabhushanam* by the TSP.

In 1938, the Travancore state introduced an examination to award *visarada* (expert) certificate for a one-year advanced course on *vishavaidyam* (toxicology). Though other specialized streams such as *Marmavaidya Visarada* and *Netravaidya Visarada* certificates were introduced in 1944, they were subsequently stopped in 1946 (Mohanlal 2014: 16). In 1950, a Diploma in Agatatantra (toxicology) was introduced to the graduate students as a specialized course. The diploma was offered in no other fields such as *marma*, *netra* and *balachikitsa* which were unique practices that had existed outside the educational institutions. This was also stopped subsequently, but it was insisted that traditional practitioners required the *Vishavaidya Visarada* Certificate and it was monitored through examination

conducted by the Vishavaidya Board. Earlier, the subjects taught in all the four[22] *visarada* courses were exclusively from the specialized treatments practiced in Kerala (Mohanlal, 2014: 16). When the *visarada* courses were stopped and specialization in each subject was introduced as a post-graduate degree M.D. (Doctor of Medicine) what was lost in this transformation was not merely a title, but the peculiar indigenous treatments of a region as well as the vernacular sources used for it, which were developed and sustained in parallel with ayurveda. The courses in all the four areas were taught by indigenous practitioners in the respective areas, and they brought in their unique knowledge and used vernacular texts for teaching them. When the subjects were integrated into the general curriculum of ayurveda, the specificity of the regionally available knowledge and the rich vernacular texts that described a variety of medicines and procedures were also delegitimized. The knowledge of the texts could not be accessed through a general reading of the texts alone.

Transmutation of Ayurveda

In 1942, the five-year *Vaidyakalanidhi* course introduced in 1917 was discontinued and a new professional course, the Diploma in Indigenous Medicine (DIM), was introduced (Mohanlal, 2014:74).[23] The name of the title to be given had not been decided even after the course had commenced. The duration of the course was six years, which included a one-year entrance course, four years of academic course and a one-year internship (Mohanlal, 2014: 75). The entrance course consisted of learning Physics, Chemistry, Biology and English, which also means that the course was envisaged based on the principles of modern science. The qualification for admission was fixed as a pass in Sanskrit *Sastri* test or ESLC (Eighth Standard Public Examination). Till then, knowledge in modern science subjects was not necessary for learning *vaidyam*. The DIM course was continued till 1949 and 150 students from six batches had acquired certificate in this course. Meanwhile, there had been continuous protests and strikes by the ayurveda students, demanding affiliation of the Ayurveda College with the Travancore University, which was formed in 1937. Finally, after ten years of protests, the state decided to form a faculty for Ayurveda in the University in 1949-50 (Mohanlal, 2014: 81). Following this, the DIM course was stopped and a four-and-a-half-year integrated diploma course (DAM-Integ.) as well as a five-year and nine-month integrated degree course (BAM-Integ.) were commenced. This was envisaged to enrich ayurveda by

incorporating allopathic subjects into it. The students of the earlier DIM course were allowed to obtain a Transitory Diploma in Ayurvedic Medicine by taking an examination which included subjects such as anatomy, physiology, pathology, obstetrics and midwifery (Mohanlal, 2014:85). Simultaneously, different departments such as clinical, pharmacological and ayurveda departments were started in the college. By this time, the first medical college of Travancore state had also been instituted. The students of the integrated courses started a strike for 'practicing what they learnt' when they preferred to practice allopathy and the same was denied to them. The strike was withdrawn after the ruling Communist ministry decided to allow them to practice allopathy on a condition (Mohanlal, 2014: 102).[24] The integrated diploma and degree holders had to attend another two-year Diploma in Medicine and Surgery (DMS) and those who cleared it were granted registration to practice modern medicine. They were appointed in the Department of Health as Assistant Surgeons. A condensed course in MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine) was also started in the medical college for ayurveda students.[25] All these processes culminated in transforming ayurveda students into allopathy practitioners. In reality, the intention of the state was to enhance the knowledge of ayurveda students by incorporating modern scientific knowledge about the body, health and medicine. But the students who had studied both ayurvedic and allopathic subjects preferred to practice allopathy. Thus, introduction of the integrated courses ended up in transmuting ayurveda into allopathy. Dr Mohanlal observes that the integrated courses or the combined courses were not useful for ayurveda education and the students graduated during the period did not make any contribution to ayurveda (Mohanlal, 2014: 103).

In 1959, the state decided to abolish both the integrated courses and introduced a diploma in *Shuddha* (pure) ayurveda to retrieve the 'purity' of ayurveda. By this time, the unified Kerala had formed and this *Shuddha* ayurveda course was introduced in all colleges across Kerala with a uniform curriculum and standardized texts. This initiative again ended up in delegitimizing the varied health practices, their vernacular texts, the knowledge and the bodily perspective used in assessing the disease and prescribing medicine.

Internal Versus External Assessment

While the *vaidyas* are qualified through examinations and external assessments conducted by educational institutions, the

nattuvaidyas—paramparyavaidyas (traditional practitioners)—still believe that the basic qualifications for *vaidyam* learning and practice are *thanmayeebhavam* (an approximate meaning is a harmonious blending or empathy) and *upasana* (devotion, dedication, worship).[26] One can argue that these attributes are new concepts that are added in the context of the competition among various traditional practices, ayurveda and modern medicine. One can also argue that these were old concepts dug out and attached to the reformulating process for making it appear more authentic and pure. But what is interesting is that during the interviews, only the traditional practitioners upheld these concepts. None of the ayurveda doctors interviewed (including the one who acknowledged the contribution of *nattuvaidyam*) ever used these terms, which indicates that the practitioners have different types of belonging to their practices, that is, perspectives in terms of the learning of *vaidyam*. Modern education does not need either of these concepts in order to give admission to a student into its institution (no matter whether it is an ayurveda college or medical college). It needs certain qualifications determined on the basis of marks obtained and subjects studied or rather an external assessment. It also needs an assessment based on an entrance test. These examinations or assessments do not in any way count the inner qualities of a person such as *thanmayeebhavam* and *upasana*. So, one kind of practice highlights the inner qualities which could not be measured but can be assessed only through one's involvement, devotion and dedication to the practice, whereas the other kind of practice highlights efficiency assessed on quantifiable terms. *Thanmayeebhavam* is important in the context of treatment where a practitioner not only feels empathy towards a patient or one who does not feel well, s/he also sees the other person as equivalent to her/himself. *Upasana* is significant for a person's willingness or desire to pursue *vaidyam*. It is believed that a person who does not have *upasana* does not usually stay back and 'finish'[27] the learning of *vaidyam*.[28] *Upasana* denotes something more than dedication and devotion. It is a lifelong learning process which needs a will to pursue *vaidyam* through involvement and dedication. *Upasana* leads a person into attaining knowledge progressively and practice *vaidyam* through observation, participation and interaction with the *vaidya* teacher. The basic requirement to sustain *upasana* is perseverance. *Nattuvaidyas* sternly believe that mere learning of texts does not make a *vaidya*.

Nattuvaidyas also believe that one who learns *shastras* (the science of medicine) alone cannot offer good treatment.[29] It is important to

learn *shastras*, but it is much more important to know the *sutras* (the techniques, strategies) of *shastras* for the functional application of *shastras*. There are layered meanings to each word and concept used in the *slokas* (verses) of any traditional text that deal with medical practice. There is a possibility of misinterpreting the meanings of *yogam*[30] when using them in a practical situation of treatment. So, *sutras* are as important as *shastras* in the learning of *paramparya vaidyam* (traditional medicine). In other words, one should be acquainted with the intricacies of the language of *nattuvaidyam*, whether it is Sanskrit, Malayalam, Arabi-Malayalam[31], or Tamil. A rather simple example would be a word named *kayam*, which could mean body (*sareeram*), strength, fever, accumulated dirt in specific body parts (*chevikayam* or dirt inside the ear), etc. in different contexts. The word also denotes asafoetida in some parts of Kerala. So, the *vaidya* should have the efficiency and versatility to pick up the appropriate meaning of each usage as per the context of the treatment. This also extends the efficacy of a *vaidya* in dealing with the language that represents the indigenous medical knowledge which does not necessarily require literacy. Again, even if one is well versed in *shastras* and its *sutras*, these are not sufficient for practicing *nattuvaidyam*.

Among *shastras* and *sutras* there are further differences and certain secrets that can only be acquired through close observation and day-to-day experience. There are hundreds of *shastras* and *sutras* which have not been written down. This is elaborated by Sukumaran[32] through an example of *chittamruthu*, a highly used medicine for the treatment of diabetes. One does not know at what point the creeper *chittamruthu* produces *amruthu,* the essential medicine for the cure of diabetes. People—including many practitioners—do not know this and they think that *chittamruthu* is always good for the treatment of diabetes. The stem of *chittamruthu* must be hung in different places. After two full moons, two sprouts appear in some of these stems. Only in those stems can one find *amruthu* meant for the treatment of diabetes. So even if the knowledge is available in texts, it could not be accessed just by memorizing the text.

Vaidyas believe that *marma* and *marmasastras* (the science that deals with vital spots) is not an easily available knowledge as per the requirement of the modern institutions.[33] For them the learning and practice of *vaidyam* is not an easily accessible educational package. The *nattuvaidyas* I interviewed asserted that *vaidyam* cannot be learnt through a four to five-year time-bound and fixed syllabus. Learning of *vaidyam* needs a lifelong dedication and passion and is one where a practitioner encounters and deals with many difficult and peculiar

situations. Handling these situations with efficacy, inventiveness and inner strength develops creativity and ability in the practice. The day-to-day practice is important in developing one's potential to encounter and overcome difficult situations of illness. There is a dynamic relationship between the knowledge acquired from actual practice, the knowledge accessed through written text or memory and the knowledge transmitted from generation to generation. These different notions of *vidya* go much beyond the normative frame of textual and codified ideas of knowledge or *vidyabhyasam*. They also challenge the fixed curriculum of formal medical education. Creating binaries of theoretical and practical knowledge is insufficient in understanding the larger complexities involved, as this article has tried to show.

Vidya Versus Vidyabhyasam

Vidya is translated as sciences (*sastras*), or a compendium of rules for religious or scientific treatise (Jha, 2010). Acquiring *vidya* in many Indian philosophical traditions is not merely learning from/about an external world, it is a learning process that includes the aspiration to ultimately know the self and to be liberated through that knowing. The body is central in achieving this knowledge about the self. *Vidya* (*arivu/bodham*, knowledge) is a joining together of the knower/subject (I or *aham*) and the known/object. One who knows oneself has *arivu* and it entails one with *athmabodham* or self-knowledge (*Oru Samoohika Kazchapadilninnu,* 2013: 14-21). Knowing oneself is dependent on the precondition of not fixing the 'I' with the pride of 'I know'. In other words, pride is a particular recognition of the 'I' or the self as the one who knows. Conceit is a production of a separation between knowledge and the knower (*aham*) or the self and the other (*Oru Samoohika Kazchapadilninnu,* 2013: 14-21). So, a separation between knowledge and the knower creates not objectivity, but *avidya* (blocking of knowledge). In this view,[34] *avidya* is not ignorance; it is a different notion of the self or a projected self as one who has knowledge and the power of that knowledge. Instead of objectivity or a separation from the knowledge (object) and the knower (subject), *arivu* (knowledge) requires a joining together of the two. The self-reflexive moment is in the vertex of the joining together. In sharp contrast, learning, in modern education, is equated with the process of 'acquiring' knowledge and information. Here, objectivity is the central pillar in the practice of accessing knowledge from a defined distance.

The advent of modern education (*vidyabhyasam*) in colonial India initiated explicit and implicit discussions on religion, knowledge, language and practices of the indigenous communities as well as those of the colonizers. Education became a buzzword that often stood in place of knowledge, though the concept of knowledge was reflected upon in innumerable perspectives.[35] While education represented knowledge or dissemination of knowledge, the indigenous mode of learning was classified in the colonial documents under religious learning by making an invariable association with practice and belief. Modern education became the central pillar in building up the idea of a better individual in terms of her capabilities and the worldview she acquired through the attainment of education. The capabilities meant not only certain technical skills, but also included acquiring specific language/s, particular ways of understanding, speaking and behaving. Such capabilities positioned the individual in a particular way within the society and worked as a deciding component that shaped her relation to the self and others. The referent, education, implied a plethora of things in different contexts. Many social activists have perceived[36] it as a space that promised parity to people across castes and communities. The concept of education has been studied as an institutional apparatus with its constraints and possibilities on the basis of how the content, teaching and learning are perceived within an educational system (Kumar, 2004). It has also been analysed on how the subjects were refashioned within the learning process (Seth, 2007). The content of learning and teaching, or the form of learning, is studied sometimes as an empowering tool (Mohan, 2006: 5-40) and, on other occasions, as an ideological tool for implanting dominant views (Kumar, 2004). The space that disseminates the knowledge or information is also viewed as one that provides parity as well as that produces new hierarchies (Satyanarayana, 2002: 50-83). The referent always accommodates contradictory positions and possibilities.

However, when the notion of *vidya* is transformed into *vidyabhyasam* in the twentieth century, the aspirations of the communities differed, the interpretation of *arivu* also varied, centred on the universal idea of education and empowerment. The notion of the self and its non-separable relation to *arivu* is subsequently reordered with the idea of a willed individual acquiring an objective and disembodied knowledge and a power through that knowledge. This unresolved tension and its contradictory and shifting meanings are reflected in indigenous medicine, in the transition of *vidya* to *vidyabhyasam* from the nineteenth century onwards.

Glossary

Aham	I, knower
Amruthu	the essential indigenous medicine for the cure of diabetes, in epics *amruthu* is a medicine used for eternal life
Arivu	knowledge, knowledge of the self, wisdom
Ashtangas	eight branches/divisions
Athmabodham	self-knowledge
Avidya	ignorance, lack of knowledge, a projected self as one who knows
Balachikitsa	pediatrics, indigenous treatment for children
Balavaidyam	specialized branch of treatment meant for children
Bhasha	language
Bodham	consciousness, knowledge
Brhatrayi	the three canonical texts that codified indigenous healing practice: *Charaka Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita* and *Vagbhata Samhita* or *Ashtanga Hridayam*
Chikitsa	treatment, care in terms of medicine
Chikitsamanjari	compilation of medicines and treatment
Chittamruthu	a herb used for the treatment of diabetes and other ailments
Dhara	oil bath for the upper body part
Guru	master, teacher; hard, heavy
Kayam	body; fever; strength; asafoetida
Kizhi	medicinal pouch
Madrassa	schools for religious teaching meant for Muslims
Mantra	incantation, magical spell
Marma	vital spots in the body
Marmachikitsa	massage and treatment for vital points in the body
Marmavaidyam	massage and treatment for vital points in the body
Marmasastra	knowledge on vital spots
Nattuchikitsa	indigenous treatment
Nattuvaidyam	indigenous healing practices/indigenous medicine
Nattuvaidyan	indigenous healing practitioner
Nattuvaidyasala	practicing place of indigenous medical practitioners, indigenous pharmacy
Navara	a variety of rice that has medicinal value
Netrachikitsa	indigenous treatment for eyes
Netravaidyam	indigenous treatment for eyes
Paramparya	traditional, from generation to generation
Patshala	school, learning place
Pizhichil	oil bath
Pothichil	covering the body with medicine or mud
Sahasrayogam	a text comprises of 1000 medicinal compounds
Samgraham	essence of a large repertoire of knowledge

Samhitas -	The three canonical texts that codified indigenous healing practice: *Charaka Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita* and *Vagbhata Samhita* or *Ashtanga Hridayam*
Sareeram	body
Sastra	the science of medicine
Shuddha	pure, not mixed
Siddhavaidyam	healing practice that used minerals and metals with herbs
Shlokas	verses
Sudras	a group of lower castes hierarchically positioned below Brahmins and above other backward castes
Sutras	techniques, tricks, strategies
Tantra	technique, strategy
Thanmayeebhavam	harmonious blending, seeing the other in oneself, empathy
Upasana	devotion, dedication, worship
Uzhichil	medicinal oil massage
Vaidyam	indigenous medical practice
Vaidyan/Vaidya	traditional health practitioner/s
Vaidyaratnamalika	garland of diamonds made of medicine (allegorical usage)
Vaidyashala	place where patients are treated and medicines are given
Vidya	skill, expertise, knowledge and wisdom learned
Vidyabhyasam	education
Visarada	expert, knowledgeable person
Vishachikitsa	indigenous toxicology
Vishavaidya/n	toxicology practitioner/s
Vishavaidyam	indigenous toxicology
Vishavaidyasala	pharmacy for the treatment of poison cases
Yogam	composition of medicines, fate

Abbreviations

BAM-Integ.	Integrated Degree Course in Ayurveda
CS	Charaka Samhita
DAM-Integ.	Integrated Diploma Course in Ayurveda
DIM	Diploma in Indigenous Medicine
DMS	Diploma in Medicine and Surgery
ESLC	Eighth Standard Leaving Examination
HMC	Higher Medical Certificate
KAP	Kottakkal Ayurveda Patasala
LMC	Lower Medical Certificate
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery
SS	Susruta Samhita
TAP	Travancore Ayurveda Patasala,
TSP	Tripunithura Sanskrit Patasala

Notes

1. The region was territorialized and named as the state of *Kerala* in 1956. Till 1947, the area was largely known as Malayala Rajyam with two princely states, Travancore and Cochin and the British ruled Malabar that came under Madras Presidency.
2. The concept 'indigenous' is used in this paper to denote the practices which have sustained themselves for centuries in a limited or enlarged geographical area and within encouraging or hostile situations, irrespective of whether they had their origin in the same area or not.

   These practices have attained adaptiveness and certain attributes unique to the region where they are located. The idea is different from the dictionary meaning of 'indigenous' which emphasizes and restricts the practice as something that *originated* in a particular area.
3. *Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridayam* are known as the '*Brhatrayi'* or the larger 'threesome'.
4. This section relies on a book titled *Ayurveda Education in Kerala* written by Dr Mohanlal, the first Director of Ayurveda Medical Education. Dr Mohanlal hailed from a traditional *vaidya* family, learned *vaidyam* from his father Kunjuraman, and later joined the Ayurveda College for formal training in *vaidyam*. He builds on an earlier text written by Subramania Sharma, *Ayurveda in Kerala Universities*. Sharma's tract deals with the initial 70-year history of ayurveda education, whereas Mohanlal analyses the history of 120 years. As of now, apart from official documents, this is the only available authentic source on the history of ayurveda education in Kerala.
5. TAP opened its doors to the lower castes in 1914, whereas TSP gave admission to the lower castes only in 1933 (Mohanlal, 2014: 105). Also see *Vivekodayam* weekly, 1904, December, 9: 5, 1911; August, 7: 5 & 6. There had been continuous appeal from subaltern communities through media and legislative assemblies, to open the gates of these educational institutions for all (See *Vivekodayam*, 1912, October-November, 2: 4). The upper caste *vaidyas* of British Malabar appreciated the Travancore government for supporting TAP financially and morally. However, the Ezhavas (a powerful lower caste group in terms of land and property) of Travancore vehemently criticized the government for not allowing them entry (only to them and not to all the lower castes) in TAP and Sanskrit colleges of the princely states (See *Vivekodayam*, 1909, October-November, 6: 1 & 2). The Ezhava community had publicly lamented saying that "our people are well versed in Sanskrit and *vaidyam*, still the Ayurveda Patshala and Sanskrit College did not give admission to our children" (See *Vivekodayam*, 1912, August, 3: 1, Asan). In Madras Presidency, Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Ayurveda Patasala (KPAP) established in 1898 by the Devaswom Board, did not admit lower castes till 1908. At the same time students from all over India (Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Calcutta, Lahore and Punjab) got admission in this *patshala* (See *Dhanwantari* monthly, 1908, December, 6:5, Varier, *Madirasiyile Ayurveda Patsala*—Ayurveda School in Madras). *Dhanwantari* is a *vaidya* magazine published from northern Kerala for a span of 21 years from 1906. This is the first *vaidya* magazine of Kerala published by KAP.
6. *Sudras* are lower castes according to the *chathurvarnya* caste hierarchy. Castes below *sudras* are classified as untouchables. In the latter half of the twentieth century, through new associations and administrative powers, and also because

of their high visibility in the educational, economical and administrative sectors, *sudras* are upper castes in present-day Kerala.

7. P.S. Varier, a *sudra*, learned *vaidyam* from a Brahmin guru (Krishnankutty, 2001; Varier, 2002).

   Advertisement of Kesavan *vaidyan* in *Vivekodayam* 1904, November-December, 4:8&9,1. Venkiteswara Sastrikal, an upper caste teacher of the TAP, privately taught ayurveda to some lower castes. He gave a memorandum to the state in 1907, seeking permission for his lower caste students to write the '*vaidyatest*' examination. The State had approved private students to write the test though it took another seven years to admit lower castes in the Ayurveda Patshala (Mohanlal, 2014: 9).
8. Kesavan *vaidyan's* advertisement regarding his *patshala* at Kollam, Paravur. This is a recurring advertisement that appeared continuously for five months. *Vivekodayam*, 1904, September, 4:6,1; *Vivekodayam*, 1905, July-August, No.5:11&12,1. Editorial note about the opening of a new *vaidyasala* and *patshala* by Keralavarma Sastrikal at Karamana, Thiruvitamcore, *Dhanwantari,* 1906, June, 3:11.
9. Another recurring advertisement that the newspaper carried for almost ten issues, *Vivekodayam*, 1904, October-November, 4: 8 & 9, 1.
10. Also see *Dhanwantari,* 1903, August, 1:1, *Vaidya Pareeksha Niyamangal* (Rules of ayurveda examination).
11. *Vivekodayam* 1904, November-December, 4: 8 & 9, 1; 1908, February-March, 5:11&12, Aryavaidya Patasala inaugural speech.
12. Ibid.
13. Also interview with Krishnan Bhattathiripad, a *vishavaidyan* (toxicologist) on 30/04/2013.
14. *Dhanwantari*, 1917, January, 14:6.
15. Ibid.
16. In the early twentieth century, the *vaidyashalas* supported by the King of Travancore were either *nattuvaidyasalas* or *vishavaidyasalas*. The practitioner in the *nattuvaidyasalas* treated all kinds of illness, where as that of the *visha-vaidyasalas* mainly treated cases of poison (Menon, 1986; Bhaskaranunni, 2000).
17. See The Report of the Committee on the Indigenous System of Medicine, Madras, 1923.
18. Siddha is one of the codified indigenous medical practices of south India. The textual corpus of siddha is mainly in Tamil and Sanskrit. As in *vishavaidyam*, *siddhavaidyam* also used *mantra* (magical spells) and *tantra* (secret strategies) in its practice along with medicines. In north India, the *nathsiddhas* constituted a heterodox group more interested in iatrochemistry, a branch of chemistry and medicine rooted in *alchemy* (White, 1996: 1-14).
19. The foundation gives emphasis to pulse reading in their ayurvedic learning and it has huge demand outside India. (See http://www.artofliving.org/pulse-diagnosis, accessed on 16.11.2016).
20. Also see Bundle No. 172, General Section File No. II-17 of 1918, Vol. I, Reorganization of Ayurveda, Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum.
21. Ibid.
22. *Marma*, *netra*, *visha* and *balavaidyam* are the four specialized streams of indigenous practices pertaining to Kerala. The practitioners used unique medicines for their treatment, which are not seen in the available Sanskrit texts on *vaidyam*.

23. Also see Bundle No. B.No.656, No.19984/52/EHL dated 7.9.1953, Ayurveda College—Administration Report for 1951-52.
24. Also see the Udupa Committee Report on Ayurveda Research Evaluation 1958, pp. 22-65.
25. Ibid.
26. Prof. Padmapadhan, a Professor in Chemistry and a *siddhavaidyan* in a workshop on *marmavaidyam* conducted by Kottakkal Kanaran Gurukkal Smaraka Kalarividya Patanakendram at Kaladi on 20/07/2013. Pattambi Unnikrishnan interviewed on 16/05/2013, Sukumaran Asan, Melattoor interviewed on 20/07/2013.
27. As per many *vaidyas,* there is no finishing point in the learning of *vaidyam.* It is 'like the sea' and each one can take whatever they want according to their capacity. (Interview with Ravindran Asan and Selvanesan Asan at Trivandrum dated 10/05/2011)
28. Kishore Gurukkal, a *marma vaidyan*, Kollam, interviewed on 24/01/2013, Sukumaran Asan, *marma vaidyan*, Melattoor interviewed on 20/07/2013.
29. Selvanesan Asan, a *marmavaidyan*, in a workshop on *marma vaidyam* at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in June 2011.
30. Here the word *yogam* means the composition of medicines such as herbs, roots etc. and their proper mixing. It has no direct connection with the practice of *yoga.*
31. Arabi-Malayalam uses Arabic scripts but the language is Malayalam. There are different views on the evolution of Arabi-Malayalam. The commercial transactions between the Arab countries and Kerala in seventeenth and eighteenth century are seen as the point of origin of this language by some scholars (Ganesh, 2004). Another view is that Arabi-Malayalam developed through the *moulavis* or *mullas* in the *madrassas* (Islamic religious schools) when the colonial state asked them to impart modern education through the madrassas (Innes, 1997).
32. Sukumaran Asan interviewed at Kaladi, Kochi on 8/10/2011.
33. Kishore Gurukkal, interviewed at Kaladi, Kochi during a seminar on *kalarichikitsa* (treatment based on kalari) on 8/10/2011. Padmapadan in a workshop on *marmavaidyam* conducted by Kottakkal Kanaran Gurukkal Smaraka Kalarividya Patanakendram at Kaladi on 20/07/2013.
34. This is an *advaitic* view where Athman and Brahman are one and the same.
35. National Knowledge Commission Report 2006. The report classifies traditional knowledge in the knowledge application category and education under knowledge production category. This differential treatment delegitimises certain systems of knowledge production by situating them outside the purview and norms of education. The UNESCO World Report on 'Towards Knowledge Society' contradicts the above position by defining knowledge society as 'a society that is nurtured by its diversity and its capacities' (UNESCO, 2005: 17).
36. The leaders of the lower caste movement (Ayyankali, Sahodaran Ayyappan, Poykail Yohannan and others) perceived education as a weapon that would enhance the communities' social status.

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IN SEARCH OF 'ADIVASI MUSIC': TRAVELS IN HISTORY, CULTURE AND POLITICS

Prachi Vaidya Dublay

The Beginning of a Wonderful Musiquest

The story began in the year 2010. I[1] went to the Adivasi Academy located in Gujarat's Tejgadh village with India's renowned literary critic and cultural activist, Ganesh Devy. During my visit to the Academy, Devy asked me, "You're a singer. Would you like to hear some Adivasi songs, while you're in our Academy?" I said, "Why not Sir?" I had grown up listening to and singing Gujarati folk songs, but these Adivasi tunes seemed quite alien to me. I thought as if some harsh, weird sounds were falling on my eardrums. What kind of music was this? Why would we call this music at all? I was in a bit of a confusion. Then I thought, completely discarding any experience at first go is certainly not the sign of a good student. I felt a bit embarrassed and started listening more carefully. While listening to the tunes, I realized that the Adivasi, by using both the micro and macro levels of sound, were creating very interesting patterns of sound. And there was a reverberation of it—reverberation, an important feature of music-making. I was stunned to experience this. It felt like this music was connecting me with a unique musical self of mine, a self that I had never met before, a self that was generating a simple yet a complex feeling. What was this feeling like? Having these thoughts in mind, I left the Academy. On our way back, I was trying to hum some of these Adivasi songs.

"Rudo rupalo maro Tejgadh no mahudo… Eni dandi gayi aapa ne tepa,
Hoy koi puro toh koi adhukado… ghammar ghataadar Tejgadh no mahudo!"

This Adivasi song tells us the story of the dense Mahudo tree of Tejgadh village. While returning, I was humming these tunes. Devy heard me and said, "Don't you think that if these songs have

touched you, you should learn them and perhaps write about them?" I spontaneously nodded my head in agreement.

After this, there was no holding back. I made a bunch of friends in the Adivasi Academy. Travelling to various villages across India, I learnt a lot about my Adivasi friends by understanding their culture, rituals, and way of life. While celebrating their festivals, and listening to the songs and stories from their elderly, I did not realize when this journey began, continued and turned itself into a wonderful musiquest.

The journey that began in Gujarat continued across India through Chhattisgarh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. Several years passed. I noticed that during this journey my urban body was under stress, but this unique discovery of Adivasi tunes gave a joyous feeling to one's heart. The loving and giving nature of the Adivasi people, their holding on to memory, their knowledge about the environment overwhelmed me from time to time. But their silence, often displaying numbness, would also make me apprehensive and somewhat uncomfortable. As I journeyed ahead, I realized that the Adivasi world was undergoing a major transition in all spheres. This experience had an impact on the artist as well as the human being in me. It even made me anxious. But it also got me thinking: what is not undergoing a transition? My so-called city, my so-called music, my so-called existence itself has always been undergoing a transition. Then why is there such silence in these Adivasi villages? Or is it only me, who has become used to the cacophony of city life? How do I, merely a student of music, understand this transition? Slowly but steadily, I explained it to myself: "My journey is a musical one. Maybe, music will answer these questions."And I refocused myself onthe music, and along with my Adivasi friends started to listen, learn, and sing their songs, once again.

There is no "Adivasi"

While listening to the Adivasi songs[2], I realized that in traditional Adivasi songs, the word "Adivasi" never appears. Although, in some of the modern songs that are connected to some political or social movements or in some songs used for reform, the word "Adivasi" does appear. The important thing to note here is that if I ask any of my Adivasi friends what or who they are, they would say: Me? I am a Gond…I am a Munda…or a Bhil…Bodo…Santhal…Paniya…Gaddi…So, my Adivasi friends recognize themselves by

their community identity. I pondered, does it then mean that the term "Adivasi" was coined by the so-called mainstream for its own convenience? Or was it created to make a division such as Adivasi and Nagarnivasi (the one from the town/city), on the lines of the *self* and the *other?* If this is true, then what is the difference between the *self* and the *other*? Is this difference, really as dialectical as they call it? In consideration of these, I use the words "Adivasi" and "tribal" with great care, respect and sensitivity, within inverted commas.

It is a known fact that in order to dismiss colonial words like "tribal" and "animist," Gandhi himself had coined the term "Adivasi" (meaning native). Similarly, the British anthropologist and tribal-activist Verrier Elwin also had coined a word for these groups, calling them "Bhumijan"—people of the land.[3] In 1930, in present-day Jharkhand a big gathering of several groups such as the 'Adivasi Mahasabha' took place and it was decided unanimously that they all would come under the umbrella category of "Adivasi" and would continue to struggle for their dignity and rights together.

But to be honest, in the years of being in company of my Adivasi friends, I have realized that I am not as "urban" as I had thought myself to be, neither are my friends, as "Adivasi". Yes, there are some differences between us at some levels, but despite these differences, the threads of humanity and music have been connecting us for years. Then what do mere constructs, like "Urban music" or "Adivasi music", aim at establishing? How and in what way these 'musics' are different from each other? Does being different mean being inferior or superior? Was this the same conflict that pushed Rishi Matanga, in the sixth century, to elaborate in the treatise *Brihad Deshi* the distinction between *marga* and *desha*? Classical and Indigenous?[4]

I do not consider these as binary. In fact, it is only the diversity in music genres that brings about the possibility of a dialogue between them. Such dialogues develop these genres even further, helping them to evolve. What are the objectives of a researcher? Discussing various subjects related to art and theory, analysing the scriptures of art, to open up the path to knowledge for generations to come? It became utmost important for me to address these questions.

Beginning of the Research

Research did begin, but I was not aware of any research methodology; neither had I read about any, nor learnt any. Until now, I had been teaching courses in universities merely based on my field experience. Rather than teaching, I was singing songs with my pupils.

But three scholars guided this research and deeply influenced my modus operandi. India's eminent musicologist, Ashok D. Ranade used to say: "In the beginning, look at the song, let the data speak… the song will tell you its own story. Once you understand that story, slowly you can add your own understanding and interpretation to it!" But,

first, you have to listen with patience…

Ganesh Devy said, "If you want to learn about Adivasi music, connect to their community…live with them, understand what they want to say, then you can sing their song!" But,

first, you have to listen with patience…

India's renowned film critic, Satish Bahadur, who used to teach me Urdu poetry, would often say, "There is plenty of music hidden in the interval between the words of every song… experience that pause, feel the poise, then only you can reproduce it!" But,

first, you have to listen with patience…

These words spoken by my teachers always remained with me throughout this musiquest.

"Kita na hoi, thapiyana jai, aapoaap niranjan soyi!"—Nanakdas

I do not understand how the *niranjan*, the Abstract Truth, manifests itself. But when I started listening, I remembered Ranade's words—"Any sound tradition has mainly three levels—*bhashana* (speaking), *pathana* (chanting), and *gayana* (singing)." While listening to the Adivasi songs, it seems that they spontaneously transit through all these three stages. In sum, speaking while singing and singing while speaking happen with great ease in Adivasi songs. This question always made me think where this ease comes from. Why this kind of music comes out of the body without any kind of stress, whereas every note that otherwise comes out of my throat, drains my body, mind, and intellect to its very end.

Then, just because this music appears simple, does it also mean that it is easy? Not at all…In fact, just because it is innate, one should not assume it is easy. These songs contain the very complex nature of human behaviour and the character of these communities is inbred in these songs. They cannot and should not be performed just as imitation. In order to understand these songs and perform them, it becomes necessary to understand the internal existence of these communities and connect with their daily routines. As I connected

with these communities, listened to their songs on a daily basis, I found that just as their songs lacked the term "Adivasi", there was also no mention of terms such as music, art, artist, theory, and theorist. In fact, I realized that these terms do not exist in their daily discussions either.

Neither Art, nor Artist, yet We Sing, We Play, and We Dance!

If I take the example of my friends from the Bhil community, they'll say, "Look…today we are jumping with the *timli*, today we will play *dhol pehi* and we will do *garba*, today we will recite the *akhyana*, and we will have *dhandal-dhamal*." These are various aesthetic expressions associated with sound and vision of the community. But they will never use musicological terms like *gaayan vaadan nartan*…If at all there is art, then it is a quintessential part of their lives, and not an entity which is larger than life.

Once I had asked Devy, can we call these aesthetic life experiences Art? He replied: "Please remember that there has been nothing like 'a non-marketed art' in the history of humankind. So long as it is not marketed, it does not become 'art', it remains as 'life'. The change in nomenclature is absolutely clearly linked with the nature of patronage. When the sources of patronage shift, the naming of arts change. In future you will have 'digital arts' for a large variety of performing and visual arts. This is because the funding source has changed."[5]

Devy's reply made me ponder over the definition of Art and I started probing into the question:

What is *Kala*? Art in the Indian Context

The word for art in Indian tradition *kala* was mentioned for the first time in *Rig Veda* (8.47.16). It is derived from the stem '*kal*', which means beautiful, melodious and it ends with the stem '*la*', which means to achieve something. To achieve beauty, to achieve a pleasant melody is what art is all about. Bharata's *Natyashastra* (200 BC to 200 AD)too mentions the term '*kala*' but mainly with regard to the performing arts like music, dance and theatre.

Extending this horizon of art, Rishi Vatsyayan's work *Kamasutra* (second century AD), gives the description of sixty-four different forms of art. Among the earliest meanings of art is an important one—skill or craftsmanship. And as we know, the existence of craftsmen depends on the will of the patron, the purchaser, the evaluator, the

connoisseur, in fact, all of them. It involves the use of artisanship,the sale and evaluation of art. Naturally, every piece of art will definitely try to attract patronage in some form or else it cannot survive as art. It is interesting to observe how the meanings of 'art' and 'craft' have changed over the period of time in human history.

To speak about "Adivasi Art" before it was considered an Art, playing of a drum or a flute in such a society was not dependent on any patron or outsider's evaluation, so these societies never used the words 'art' and 'artist' in their own languages. Although, they have tried to please gods, their ancestors, and nature, but these three entities have been regarded as part of their internal existence. In this sense, we can call this experience organic. The entire group is singing, and the entire group is listening to it all together. You yourself are the creator and you are the receiver too.

After spending a long time with these communities, I realized that they treat music more as a phenomenon than as art. An unadulterated desire is associated with these spontaneous musical manifestations, like obtaining self-satisfaction, relieving the pain caused by day-to-day work, sharing happiness with the community, gelling in with its traditions and festivals, exploring the mysteries of nature, and presenting various peers at the feet of these mysterious and divine powers. Merely entertaining the 'other' is not their purpose; this is why there is an ease in their expression, no performance anxiety, no stress.

"Why do you sing?" I ask my Adivasi friend. "It feels good," he gives a simple, straightforward answer. But what appears to be a simplistic reply has a deep traditional knowledge hidden behind. I remember, during his lecture series "The Will to Sing" (1st July 2000, Bandra, Mumbai) Ranade had,to my question "why does one sing?" replied,"Because one desires to sing!"

But this desire to sing has to go a long way before it turns into actual singing. How is this journey? In order to understand this musical journey, it is necessary to understand how humans evolved.

"In Human Evolution, three important stages are described. The first stage was when man's spine straightened and he started walking on two legs.Consequently, his hands became free, free to do several works. The second stage was the discovery of fire, and the third was the development of the spoken language. These three stages have been critical to establish humanity as we know it today," explained Ganesh Devyin his lecture series on "Evolution"(Vadodara, 2009).

But the interesting thing to note is that many historians and researchers believe that music has been in existence much before the

spoken language of words was formed. An infant adapts to tunes and rhythms faster than he can start speaking the words. Based on this argument, many new interpretations of music came into existence. Archaeologist Steven Mithen's book *The Singing Neanderthals* is an important step in this direction (Mithen, 2005).[6]

There is very little evidence to know the nature of the music that existed before the evolution of the spoken word, so how do we find the answer? We could work with hypothesis. It is an established principle that almost 10000 years ago, agriculture was born. Prior to that, people used to live their lives in small groups, travelling in tribes and mostly leading nomadic lives. At such a time, why and how did man use his voice box, and to what benefit? With the help of some hypothesis and the use of particular sounds that are found in Adivasi communities even today, like the Bhil community's Kikiyari (a shrill high pitch sound pattern produced by an individual or a group)[7], we can say that mainly in the absence of light, being surrounded by darkness, when they needed to communicate with each other, humans started using their vocal box. In addition to that, for the sake of admonition, for sharing emotions, for warning each other of danger, for conversation, and beyond that, for expressing one's own joy and sorrow, people used to imitate and create different sounds using their vocal chords. They used to play with these sounds, create specific patterns and structures out of them. The seeds of what we call music today were sown during that time. When the Indus Valley Civilization was discovered during an excavation, a flute with seven holes and a wooden drum covered by animal skin were found. What does this indicate?

Imagination and creation are humankind's most important influences. On the one hand, there is the passing of the wind through bamboo, and the sound waves produced by it gave birth to the flute. On the other hand, using a dead animal's skin to cover a wooden plan and then hitting it to create different rhythms, and along with that, whistling, clapping, tapping on the ground…all this has been possible only due to man's imagination and need for creation. Even today, the Adivasi consider the *vanhri*, the flute and *dhol*, the drum as their traditional and key musical instruments.

From this perspective, now a complex question arises: many of the Indian Adivasi communities who had never before (especially during the pre-independence era) spoken of themselves as Adivasi or artists have now become "Adivasi Artists", who find a large audience in government and non-government festivals. They sell their 'art', 'music', crafts and 'paintings'. They have prepared museums of

'primal art'. They organize several seminars on Adivasi Art and Craft. They are creating new 'songs/music' amidst their battle for social-cultural identity, political identity and rights, and are also using music as a means of spreading awareness. With the rise of technology, like in every other sphere of the society, the Adivasi self is also undergoing a noteworthy transformation in all its dimensions. Their way of living is changing faster than ever before and so is their music. As we know, music is an intangible form of art as well as a fluid, temporal form of art; it is time-relative, intimately connected with the breath of humans. All the incidences that affect the human breath, also influence the music created by humans. In this sense, from being an organic experience to being a socio-political-cultural instrument, what a magnificent journey 'Adivasi music' has gone through in its transformation from being a mode of existence to being an art and a theory.

When the face of every sphere of society is changing rapidly, when music is constantly being redefined all over the world, can these community sound practices now be considered as music, an art form? Can we, at least now, trace the theory behind these age-old sound practices as manifested through their oral being?

What is Shastra? Theory in the Indian Context

The etymology of the word *shastra* (theory) comes from the stems *shaas* and *shansa. Shaas* means to rule and the meaning of *shansa* is to describe. These are the main components of any theory, that is, regulation and description.

With this understanding if we look at the traditions of Adivasi music, then it is clearly evident that these sound traditions are bound by different rules. In their presentation, the description has unique significance, for example, which instrument should be used, which song should be sung, which chant should be orated during certain occasions and rituals and why and how this should be done. On this basis, we can definitely argue that every Adivasi sound tradition has its own theory. Yes, its nature is oral, but the theoreticians of music can now write the script and theory of Adivasi music by making a detailed study of the rules, regulations and descriptions of these oral traditions. The very fact that these oral traditions have survived through ages and are still very much alive, is sufficient evidence that they have an inherent structure of their own. It is only a romantic myth that these are free-flowing sounds, which are beyond grammar.

But again, exploring and understanding the theoretical frame-

work underlying these living traditions is a slippery ground in many ways as the researcher has to guard himself or herself against romanticization, ossification, standardization, Sanskritization and most importantly, the appropriation of Adivasi music. A researcher could be caught easily into the traps mentioned above knowingly, or even unknowingly, and thus it becomes even more complex and difficult to decipher the underlying grammar of this oral tradition. The researcher may also have to face the criticism of "straight jacketing" all communities by writing ONE theory for them all. But before raising such objection, an informed critic would always remember the fact that every space, every culture is distinct but after all, we all live on the same planet. Thus, there will certainly be some similarities along with differences, a circular culmination of the journey of sounds which bring these oral traditions under one umbrella called Theory. All said and done, it becomes still more crucial for a music researcher to understand the theoretical framework that rests underneath all Adivasi music.

The Being of "Adivasi Music": Some Salient Features

Here are some salient features of "Adivasi music":

- Rooted in oral tradition, this category of music primarily depends on human memory—very long song-texts are rendered only on the basis of memory. Like the *Mahabharata*, singing of the Dungra Bhil community runs for seven consecutive nights without taking recourse to any literary text or written script.
- The song-texts are very long but the tune is set maximum to three or four notes. Covering the entire octave is an exceptional case. Thus, one may say that Adivasi songs are based on tetra-tonic, quadra-tonic and penta-tonic scales—the scales using three, four or five notes only.
- A seed of extendable melody is seen in every tune, but they do not elaborate it because the repetition of the same tune is important in Adivasi songs, and not the imaginative extension of the same. This is so because communities believe that imagination may separate the human being from the group, while being collective is an important virtue of Adivasi music. The entire community is involved in musical performances. This is the reason that despite the possibilities of luxurious imagination, no imagery detail is found in collective song play.

- Compositions are primarily found in three, four and seven beats, the rhythms that the human mind responds to with ease. Even here, the presentation of the collective is kept in mind.
- The music is presented with the inherent flow of human rhythm, so this music is not dependent on any external instrument, the body of a human seems to be used as an instrument for creating a rhythm by striking feet on the earth, clapping, making loud, gibberish sounds, etc. This is why the use of instruments is not mandatory. Of course, we do find wonderful instruments also which add rustic and earthy color to this tradition.
- Since it is not individualistic music, the creators of the songs remain unknown. Many times it is seen that new verses are added into songs from generation to generation, which appear to emerge again due to the collective consciousness of Adivasi society.
- *Gayan*, *vadan* and *nartan*, that is, singing, playing music, and dancing are all presented together—there is no separation of these arts in an Adivasi musical performance. Musicologist Sharang Dev defined this interpretation in his thirteenth century work *Sangeet Ratnakar* as—*"geetam, vadyamtatha nrityam trayam sangeetam uchyate!"*—"song, play, and dance,the triumvirate of music". But since long before this, these three forms have existed as a collective form of art in Adivasi communities.
- There is a special music for every stage of life, from birth to death, and traditional songs contain topics such as nature, deity worship, human relationships, festivity, customs, rituals. At the same time, in the modern songs like *Jagaran* (reform) one finds discussion of issues related to the life of the Adivasis today.
- In Adivasi music, mostly natural and environment-friendly instruments are used—instruments, which can be played through every season, for example *dhol, dholak, nagada, khadatal, bansuri, morchung, pehi*, etc. But with the changing times, Adivasi communities too are using electronic instruments for making new music.
- According to the geographical position and condition of every Adivasi community, the method of singing changes, for example, people living in the mountains and the desert, sing mostly in a high pitch, while people living on the river banks have different vocal vibrations.

- Like many other forms of music, Adivasi music also sometimes becomes symbolic; it goes outside itself and keeps pointing towards other events or situations.

To illustrate the last point, let us take the example of symbolism in poetic themes: let us examine this song from the Raathwa Bhil community, "*Gulaab nu phool beni vaadi maa khilse, chinta na karso beni sukai jawase"*. In this Adivasi song, one friend is suggesting to another, "Oh my friend! The rose flower will continue to bloom (nature will keep its rhythm continuous), but if you worry(stop looking at the overall joy in life), then my friend, you will dry up. It seems as if the rose and a friend are representative of nature and life, with them the contradictory experiences of blooming and drying up are used and weaved well.

Similarly, the Gond community also has very symbolic wedding songs and death songs, in which the women make the bride sit at the centre of a circle of women and they sing sad songs as if asking the bride to cry now and get over with it. Later on, while carrying out the responsibilities of conjugal life, she will have to stay firm and will not have the time to cry. While on the other hand, the Gond tribe also celebrates the death of a person of old age and prays for their soul to find peace so that their journey ahead is full of joy. The experience and philosophy of a deep truth comes out with great simplicity through their singing, this is the primeval wisdom revealed in the Adivasi life and their music.

Does the Music of every Adivasi Community have Some Peculiarity?

While studying the documented songs during research projects, one notices very clearly that just like classical music schools, every Adivasi community also leaves its own distinctive mark on its songs and singing styles. For example, most of the songs of Rathwa Bhil community are set to seven beats and do not rest the musical phrase towards the end of the song on the base note 'sa'—that is, *shadaja* in Indian music, but very surprisingly, they end the song on lower *komal nishad*, the flat note 'ni'. After listening to these melodies, one wonders if they are underlining the incompleteness and complexity of life. This experience demolishes the misconception and the myth that Adivasi music does not have any grammar. Similarly, if we look at the songs of Gamit or Dehwali Bhil they are set to three beats which is considered as *teeshra jati* in Indian music.It appears that they

are expressing the triad *adi madh ant*—the 'beginning, middle, end'. Interestingly, these Dehwali and Gamit Bhil songs end the musical phrase on *sa*—and start a new musical journey again.

But in spite of these peculiarities and differences, Adivasi communities have some coherent tunes, rhythms and themes as well, which harmonize them all with each other. Stretching from western India to northern India, southern India, eastern India to central India, some tunes and rhythms could be found and heard in every region. Primal forms of Indian *ragas* such as the *Dhani, Piloo, Bhoop, Durga, Sorath, Bhairavi* are found in Adivasi ethos. But due to ethnic and geographical diversity, their musical expressions vary from community to community.

Let us try to understand this feature of Adivasi music with two examples. If we listen to the north-eastern Mising (Mishing) community's love song Oinitom… "aairee do aaieree do paapud kapila.. pakadam kavadun..", we would notice that it has a pentatonic structure which uses the notes *sa re ga pa dha*. But interestingly, just like some tunes from South East Asian countries, the tune of this Oinitom is also set in descending scale. It starts rolling down from upper *sa* to the base *sa*...like *sa dha pa ga re sa*. According to Indian classical music, these notes make the *raga* called *Bhoop*. But the same structure of notes will be heard in the ascending order in the western belt of India. Take the Bhil Adivasi song from Gujarat, "moda moda pahalu me.." It ascends from base note *sa … re ga pa dha sa* in this order. Again, a classical musician will immediately recognize this as *Bhoop*. But in contrast with the north-eastern tribe, this tune is going up from down in its tonal design. This change occurs because the communities mentioned above are distinct from each other culturally and geographically. Still, the commonality very much remains, as they both dwell in the penta with great ease. But why only these two cases! All over the world, music researchers are trying to address this question as to why human beings in all cultures dwell most in pentatonic?[8] All over the world ethnomusicologists are trying to understand the music of the indigenous communities through their culture and their culture through their music.

As far as India is concerned, special mention should be made of Rajasthan. The Adivasi music of Rajasthan is very eloquent and it has got completely mixed up with Rajasthani folk music. Indian classical *ragas* such as *Maand, Sarang* are considered to be the contribution of this region. One of the reasons for this musical affluence in Rajasthan is believed to be the existence of many musical communities such as the *Langa* community, meaning 'the giving of songs' and those who

ask for songs are called *Manganiyaar*. Both the communities earn their livelihood by singing and playing music. Through such examples we learn that musical categories like Adivasi, folk or classical are not watertight compartments, they are constantly conversing with each other—a fact that makes the musical traditions of India richer and deeper.

What is Parampara? Tradition in the Indian Context

If we carefully look at the very concept of tradition and listen to Adivasi songs, several fluid meanings of the word *parampara*, which is 'tradition', come to the fore. The word 'tradition' is a representation of an idea, tendency, and principle which is in existence from earlier times.There is an inner flow in tradition, and no blockage. It is a dynamic process in which new ideas, tendencies, and facts continue to get added. And generation after generation, this knowledge is passed on and revised. As Dr. Balamurlikrishnan, the legendary vocalist of India rightly had said, *"There is no tradition without addition!"* It is unfortunate that some societies have manipulated the component of tradition for their convenience and self-interest. But the Adivasi communities continue to a large extent with their tradition and live with the flow of *parampara*.

Temporalities and Adivasi Music

So far, we have been trying to understand the being of Adivasi music through travels in history, culture and so on. At this juncture, a question arises from the other end: can we discover the past of these communities through their oral stories and songs, which are so far unwritten? The answer is a big Yes. These communities give their ancestors the status of God. By listening to their creation myths and other songs we can figure out where they lived, how they followed rituals and practices, what the names of their kings and village gods were, what their relationship with nature and culture has been for centuries, and so on. The oral history of Adivasi music is an independent topic of study in itself.

For example, take this creation myth of the Rathwa Bhil community:

"Kona kona naam padya kaashiraam boman yaraha.
Kona kona naam padya kaashiraam boman yaraha."

It gives every detail about the origin of the community, like how

Rathwa Bhils have migrated from Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh to Chhota Udepur in Gujarat and how their ancestors prayed to the mountain goddess Rani Kajal. The place where they lived in Chhota Udepur was known as Rath Vistar. This graphic description gives the etymological background of the name of the community, which is Rathwa.

Just as these songs depict the history of these communities, the music reflects their contemporary culture and life as well. What is their relation with other forms of Indian music? What kind of questions the wave of modern civilization has put before them? How these musical traditions are changing their structure and texture, and so on? The answers can be found in their contemporary songs and music. Indeed, Adivasi music is a subject that can help us find a new dimension to the art and theory discourse.

Let us take, for instance, the new Bhil Song—'rongnambar' (Wrong Number), where a young Bhil boy is expressing his anguish by saying that how his beloved girl is treating him, just as a wrong number! And if he by mistake dials her number, he is beaten up badly by her family and friends![9] Not only is their present life and culture reflected in these songs, but their identity politics is also manifest in these songs.The changing structure and texture of Adivasi music where DJs and synthesizers have replaced the organic instruments and the songs are now creating a larger space for the Adivasi in every sphere of modern society. This is an indicator of the assertive and confident Adivasi self, which is refashioning and empowering itself by creating new songs and placing them on the web and CDs, making Adivasi music videos and using them all powerfully in their political movements like *Narmada Bachaao Andolan*.The song and slogan "*Aamu Akha Adivasi*" (We the Adivasi are All One!) is seen as a strong revolt in the Indian political scenario today. 'World famous' music bands, like Indian Ocean, have collaborated with Adivasi movements like *Narmada Bachaao Andolan* and have created wonderful fusion numbers, like *"Maa Reva Taaro Paani Kal Kal Behto Jaay.*"[10], with the help of electronic instruments.

Importantly, the change which has been brought about in music by technology has another face too, which may not be appreciated by some puritan or old school thinkers. The Adivasi music which used to be generated organically inside the communities, has now externalized itself. While it is being played on the synthesizer today, the relationship between the notes of Adivasi tunes have changed. The reason for this is that the synthesizer generates tempered, equidistant scale unlike organic instruments like the flute. Obviously

the structure and the texture of Adivasi music which is played on synthesizer will be different from that which has been practiced by the community say half a century ago. One can listen to one such Adivasi song which has a traditional tune but is played on synthesizer and drums.[11] The listener or the researcher here must understand that change, beyond good or bad, is inevitable. The so-called urban music and tribal music divide was bound to collapse, especially with emerging technology. One cannot expect the 'Adivasi' on one hand to remain its 'organic self' and at the same time to shake hands with the so-called modern main land. When technology encounters us with all its power, a new music is born, whether one likes this new face or not.

Writing Adivasi Music: What is Gained and What is Lost in Script?

As we have already discussed above, Adivasi music is being played on the synthesizer today and as a result some community-specific nuances and peculiarities are lost in the tempered scale—this is a musicological fact, but at the same time this music becomes more accessible to the larger part of society. It rapidly changes from being a phenomenon to being Art, and a Craft too. Whatever might be the case, Adivasi music exists as an intriguing entity and demands the serious attention of the researcher on constant basis. To an extent, it is possible to write the score of Adivasi music with various methods like Indian or Western Notation Systems, but as we are aware much is lost while translating the sound into a letter. In spite of this limitation, all over the world, musicologists are writing their indigenous music in their own scripts and notation systems. Also, in the digital age, it has now become possible to preserve the 'image' of every song through printing its sound waves which emerge during the recording sessions.

As we can see, Adivasi music poses new challenges every time but it is possible for a researcher to face them and to address the complexities which are increasing every day in the world of the Adivasi.

There is No Conclusion, Only Continuation of the Musiquest

It must have become clear by now that Adivasi music is a multi-dimensional and complex term, which is surrounded by many academic and non-academic debates. There is an important reason

for this: this term is seen and understood differently by different groups of people. The Adivasi themselves, cultural activists, academicians, and the artist fraternity, all view this term in a different light. In this case, searching for the root of this term becomes like travelling through a maze. Again the question might arise: 'Is breaking through this maze even necessary?' Well, in all these years of my journey, I have experienced that when the traditional wisdom of these communities is engaged in a creative conversation with modern thought, which is supported by science and technology, a complex yet amazing idiom of living is created in all spheres of life including music and art.This is the reason that after accepting all my limitations as an artist and a theoretician, I continue with my effort to look through this maze of Adivasi music to the very end of my journey. Yes, I shall continue to travel on this less-trodden path as I realize that this story of music does not belong to my Adivasi friends alone, but to me as well!

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Notes

1. This article has been purposefully written in a first-person mode in order to render visible the location of the author.
2. Major sources of this research article are the ethnographic references and empirical data collected by the author from year 2010 to 2017 in various tribal belts of India.
3. David Hardiman writes how Gandhi and Elwin were instrumental in using and popularizing the terms 'Adivasi' and 'Bhumijan' (Hardima, 2003).
4. Dr. Srinivas Rao discusses in his blog the sixth-seventh century Indian treatise, *Brihaddeshi*, written by eminent musicologist Rishi Matang. https://sreenivasaraos.com/tag/brihaddeshi/
5. Prof. Ganesh Devy, e-mail correspondence, 6 December 2016.
6. Hank Campbell discusses in his article how music is more innate to humans than language: http://www.science20.com/science_20/did_ _ music evolve_ language.
7. Rathwas making Kikiyari sound in the course of Timli Dance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_dL2ywz2O4.
8. Singer and composer Bobby McFerrin explains and demonstrates the power of pentatonic scale: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjvR9UMQCrg.
9. New song 'Rong Nambar' (Wrong Number) of Rathwa Bhils: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3M4doWuf1AQ
10. Indian Ocean recreates the tribal song Maa Reva: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89D-4-ztyIM.

11. Bhilala Adivasi Community from MP produces New DJ song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMnhBUzzpNk.

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THE FACE AND MASK OF 'AUTONOMY': REINVIGORATING CUSTOMS AMONG THE HO ADIVASIS OF JHARKHAND

Sujit Kumar

Introduction

'Modernity', despite being contested by tradition as well as post-modernist discourse, has managed to pervade and reshape different societies. However, the cultural changes taking place as a result of modernity are quite amorphous in nature and prove to be very difficult to capture by researchers. Nevertheless, modernity under a political schema does not necessarily annihilate tradition and sometimes only reframes the latter to serve its own purpose. For example, the customary institution of the Ho[1] Adivasis known as the *manki-munda* system[2] (henceforth *M-M* system) was not abrogated, but only reframed by the British for the purpose of revenue collection and administration. The post-Independence Indian state, already on a modernization spree, neither dissolved nor accorded any special status to these customary institutions.

Of late, the Indian state attempted to redefine the role of customary institutions through the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996. In the case of Jharkhand, apart from Wilkinson's Civil Rule of 1837[3], colonial tenancy laws like Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNTA), 1908 and PESA recognize the existence of customary institutions. While accepting the presence of customary leaders these laws changed the language of recognition, making the former dependent on the administration's assent (Sundar, 2005: 4432). However, after the creation of Jharkhand on 15th November 2000, the state government passed the Jharkhand Panchayati Raj Act (JPRA), 2001 (subsequently amended thrice in 2003, 2005 and 2010). Deviating from the recommendations made under PESA, JPRA provides for 50 per cent reservation (after amendment in 2010) of seats for women in local bodies. Moreover, in disregard of the customary institutions already existing in many scheduled

areas[4], panchayat elections were conducted in 2010, inviting the ire of customary leaders who instead demanded autonomy in self-governance as per their customs. A more general picture of the rights attributed to the Ho women is drawn in the third section of the essay. In addition to this, it has been noticed that people are apprehensive of the traditional norms of dispensing justice in several cases. Concerns regarding biased role played by the customary leaders and their corruption have been the basis of this disgruntlement.

Against this background, I would like to pose a few questions which will be taken up for inquiry in this paper. Should autonomy based on otherness be left unperturbed even if it victimizes its own people? If not, what should be the basis and nature of intervention? *Prima facie*, the above-mentioned questions raise certain concerns regarding autonomy and social stability—due to the claims put forth by customary leaders that their functioning is organically linked to the Ho culture—as against equality and justice. Underneath, however, rests a protracted debate between modernity and post-modernity wherein the "responsibility to act" is posed against the "responsibility to otherness". Using these phrases, Stephen White argues that in order to reshape societies, critical thinkers like Habermas have shown their interest in finding a basis of intervention, while thinkers like Foucault regard such intervention as an attempt to assert superiority over 'others' (White, 1991). The former's attitude is regarded by White as "responsibility to act" whereas the latter represents "responsibility to otherness". After briefly exploring this broader theme, we will attempt to answer the above-mentioned questions through an empirical analysis of two issues, i.e. women's political rights and quotidian notions of justice in Ho Adivasi society. The enquiry becomes crucial given the fact that the institution of *manki-munda,* for which autonomy is demanded, also plays a significant role in constructing an identity required to consolidate the community in adverse situation (Damodaran, 2002)[5]. Hence, my approach is guided by the principle that while the customary institutions need to be reinvigorated, their abrogation is undesirable.

The paper is arranged into four sections apart from the introduction. The first section sets the stage of inquiry by briefly revisiting the debate between modernity and post-modernity which helps in arriving at the approach used here to analyse the issues at hand. In the next section, a brief historical account on the evolution of *M-M* system as well as state's attempt at introducing local self-governance in the scheduled areas is provided. The third section deals with the empirical evidences in the sphere of women's political

rights and justice where the customary system has presumably failed to mete out 'just' treatment to its own members. Their examples are cited to examine the claim for autonomy and suggest measures to reinvigorate customary institutions. Finally, the paper will conclude by stating that, even though there is no harm in accommodating certain progressive values while conserving customary institutions it will be detrimental to abrogate the latter because of its capacity to create an 'inclusive' identity, that is, the power of customary institutions to forge unity among its members by curbing the potentially divisive factors like class. Jharkhand, being a resource-rich State, has been a site of 'land grab' as well as mining operations. Given this situation, an appeal to the customs and culture helps in forging a viable front to oppose the adversaries.

Revisiting Autonomy of Customary Institutions

Autonomy, as used in this paper, stands for a political position which is articulated on the basis of 'otherness' and asserted on grounds of separate identity. It covers the aspects of self-governance that aspires to retain a separate space for the sacral politics of community as existing in customary norms and institutions. However, analysis of autonomy moves beyond the external layers of this claim fixed on the basis of identity and re-examines it by raising more universal questions about rights and justice. 'Autonomy' in a multi-cultural society is premised on its pledge to preserve 'otherness'. But can autonomy act as a shield to conserve even regressive practices in the name of 'otherness'? Any society claiming to be liberal will answer this question in the negative. But the important question, which arises here relates to the nature and scope of intervention required to make the custom shed its own regressive practices. In an attempt to arrive at the manner of intervention required to reinvigorate the customs the paper will interrogate the "modern" values in juxtaposition to which such questions take place.

'Modernity' itself is a contested notion and is insufficient to provide answer to all problems associated with custom. Located in the Enlightenment movement of Europe, modernity propagated a value system which poses a systemic challenge not only to the existing feudal norms and aristocratic privileges but also to the agrarian 'mode of production'. Nevertheless, modernity with its embedded notions of rationalism and 'individual liberty' also has a relentlessly ethical agenda susceptible to camouflaged and deprave use. For example, acts like waging war for protecting "liberty" can

hardly earn repute as they serve as the pretext for expanding neo-colonialism by the Western powers. Akeel Bilgrami sounds convincing in his assertion that 'many of the developments of the West were not always rational, but are rather a result of the greater might of some worldly forces over others' (Bilgrami, 2015: 9). Likewise, acceptance of Charlie Hebdo's caricatures as representative of the genuine jibes of secularism hardly convinces critics like Mahmood Mamdani, who, in his article in *The Hindu* said that he did not regard them as 'blasphemy' but as 'bigoted' (15/01/2015: 9). Even though it seems that political systems sustaining "modern" values have triumphed, it has found serious contenders in oriental societies and also amongst the "others" living in the occident. However, this paper does not aim to defend any practices of the non-Western or Western societies which are presumably regressive in nature and victimizes its own people. This paper rather attempts to edify the insidious nature of traditionality and suggest measures for its amelioration by conjoining it with values which cannot be regarded as exclusively "modern".

There are certainly several hazards in pursuing modern values in an unqualified manner. In societies like India modernity can be used by the Hindu right-wing 'to fix' the minorities by pushing the logic of a secular state to its limits emphasizing a form of absolute secularism by pushing ideas like a universal civil code' (Nandy, 2003: 36). Hence, the Indian state is rightly dissuaded from pervading certain spheres of individual and community life. Despite this, certain institutions of the state, namely the judiciary has found it 'just' to venture into this restricted zone. However, this intervention appears to be discriminatory. Whereas, the Court rightly takes cognizance of the rights of a divorced Muslim woman it has shown reluctance in recognizing the rights of Adivasi women who are denied this right in the name of custom[6]. Nevertheless, there were many cases among the Hos when daughters enjoyed a share in father's property with the full approval of the village panchayat (Majumdar, 1937: 36). Even the British courts ruled in favor of women litigants in cases involving the latter's right to mortgage or sell property under their possession (Das Gupta, 2015: 101). As far as reaction from the intelligentsia is concerned, they hold different opinions in the two cases. While accepting the regressive nature of religious practices, they, for their sympathy towards 'otherness', want the solution to emerge from within. But the same class has reacted even more cautiously over the issue of customary practices, many a time avoiding intervention which may presumably lead to disintegration of the tribal world-view and social fabric (Corbridge, 1988; Corbridge,

2000; Hebbar, 2003)[7]. In fact, cultural autonomy has been projected in public imagination as a litmus test for liberal credentials of the state. Hence, in the context of cultural autonomy the classical dilemma of liberalism resurfaces. On the one hand, liberalism is supposed to preserve cultural autonomy, whereas on the other, it requires to intervene against the regressive practices for the sake of justice. In talking about women's political rights and dispensing of justice outside the customary fold we are seeking for a secular intervention in a given religio-cultural group, that is Ho Adivasis. In fact, unlike in the case of mainstream religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and others, secular and spiritual spaces are more vividly defined in the case of Adivasi societies. In the case of the Ho Adivasis particularly, the secular domain is headed by the *manki* and *munda* whereas the spiritual space is under the guidance of *pahan* or the *deuri* (the religious head in a village). Nevertheless, in constructing the Ho identity by merging the secular and spiritual domains and interpreting the provisions for women's representation as an assault upon cultural autonomy, the customary leaders have only devised a tool to protect their privilege.

The above remarks point towards the challenges to customs, either religious or cultural, when they are degenerative. However, the question remains as to what should be the basis and nature of this intervention. This question brings us back to the debate between the modernists and the post-modernists with several scholars subscribing to one viewpoint or the other. Whereas Habermas and others subscribed to the idea of 'responsibility to act', Foucault, Derrida and others nurtured the belief in 'responsibility to otherness' (Flyvbjerg, 1998: 214). This debate is not new in India and can be meaningfully replicated in the context of the *Uniform Civil Code*. Scholars like Partha Chatterjee have argued for an introspective dimension to this problematic and an evolution of panacea from within (Chatterjee, 1998: 360). In the same vein, Martha Nussbaum argues for the role of leadership in inculcating progressive values in the people (Nussbaum, 2015). Nevertheless, these options are largely curtailed not only by the internal politics of the community but also by external developments. For instance, threat perception from other communities—either politically motivated or real—curtails the ability of the leaders to propagate 'political morality'[8] and, thus, the opportunity for a community to be guided by progressive forces to evolve as a 'just' entity.

In retaining the regressive practices many traditional Ho leaders responded to a perceived threat from 'enemy from without' who

could take advantage of fault lines emerging along the issue of gender equality[9]. Furthermore, the panchayat elections are opposed by certain Adivasi organizations which claim that Adivasi 'democracy' is primordial in nature with inherent qualities to preserve the social fabric. Nonetheless, historians working on the evolution of the customary institutions have clearly stated that the British transformed the indigenous customs into customary law and 'the colonial ideology and institutions hybridised the tribal customs into an Anglo-tribal customary law' (Sen, 2012: xi). Having discovered the nature of the arguments provided by the Adivasi organizations, the question of women's representation and justice are taken up as 'ethical-political' issues which require attention following Stephen White's approach to overcome the dilemma of "responsibility to act" and "responsibility to otherness". Deriving from a close scrutiny of Lyotard and Walzer, White proposed an "inter-subjective dialogue" among values to arrive at a position guided by "care" (White, 1991).

The community itself is urged to be the prime mover in determining the nature of "care" wherein its members should shed regressive practices while not relegating themselves to subservience of everything offered by "modernity". A clue for such a possibility appears in the issue of "absorption" of Adivasis into Hindu fold. Whenever an Adivasi adopts some Hindu religious practices, it is assumed that a cultural "assimilation" is accomplished on some unequal basis. While this assumption is not entirely correct, a more feasible answer has to be found in the *finitude*[10] of social conditioning of a section of the tribal middle class, who, due to their close proximity to the Hindus, have started imitating many Hindu practices but without sharing the same religious consciousness which their Hindu counterparts hold.[11] Moreover, the Adivasi customs themselves evolved dialectically through interaction with cultural "others" as well as state intervention. Some of the "regressive" provisions are grounded in such interactions and, in the following section, we will try to understand their genesis.

A Brief History of the *M-M system*

Historiography of West Singhbhum ventures into a century or two preceding the colonial triumph of 1837 over Kolhan. The territory itself was colonized by the Ho Adivasis after removing the Saraks and Bhuiyans who were the early settlers (Sen, 2012). Primarily due to this reason, the history of West Singhbhum is coterminous with that of the Ho Adivasis. Several land settlement records, village

records, historical accounts provided by the British military officers and other sources have become the basis of Ho social history in modern times. On the basis of colonial ethnography historians have unambiguously stated that the Ho Adivasis are not the original inhabitants of present-day West Singhbhum (largely comprising erstwhile Kolhan and Porahat) (Das Gupta, 2011; Sen, 2011). In fact, the area was colonized by the Hos gradually since the tenth century onwards by displacing the Saraks and Bhuiyans from their settlements (Sen, 2011). This claim is validated by the absence of *khuntkattidar*[12] families in many villages of South Kolhan because the Hos ostensibly occupied already established villages. But there are evidences of original Ho villages also in Northern Kolhan (Das Gupta, 2011: 28).

Most of the historical accounts fail to provide a reliable clue as to the emergence of customary institutions of the *manki-munda*. The ambiguity associated with the *M-M system* is so prominent that some scholars doubt its supposedly organic nature (Hebbar, 2011:17) while others consider it to have developed organically among the Hos but manipulated severely during the colonial era (Das Gupta, 2011). Irrespective of such differences, there is consensus about the roles played by customary leaders which comprised both inter- and intra-village duties like allocation of village land to the landless, arbitration in case of disputes, and so on. Till they developed contact with the neighbouring principalities of Singhbhum, Saraikela, Kharsawan and Mayurbhanj, the Hos enjoyed an autonomous existence. Even though these principalities imposed a nominal amount of rent or tribute to be collected by the customary leaders, they never encroached upon the autonomy of the Hos. Owing to disturbances and conflict among the different principalities and with various Ho groups taking one side or the other, the British intervened to ensure short-lived peace in 1821. Ultimately, however, Kolhan was annexed by the British in 1837 and this led to active and structural intervention in Ho customary institutions (Das Gupta, 2011). The M-M system was revised to collect revenue, while at the same time stripping the customary leaders of many judicial and police powers, at least in criminal matters (Sen, 2011). While the Hos accepted the imposed revenue on most occasions they never shied away from contesting the colonial rule at any opportunity. It is, hence, clear that there was intervention in the material domain (land revenue) of the Hos during the colonial period. The British, apart from their intervention to curb the savage practice of witch-hunt, also attempted to codify the Ho customs (Sen, 2012). Thus,

several customary practices which received social sanction under the logic of Ho social evolution were reshaped according to external interventions.

Indigenous or 'sacral' politics to emphasize upon the role of customary institutions has revived itself in the past few years in the tribal-dominated areas of Jharkhand. It is claimed that the Adivasis use their participation in state-conducted elections to assert their autonomy or 'keep the state away' (Shah, 2007:130). Likewise, in West Singhbhum, which is recognized as a scheduled area, there is an arguably popular demand among the Ho tribal groups for the revival of their customary institutions according to PESA. Presently, customs are used to construct an identity crucial for consolidating the community in their resistance against the grabbing of '*jal, jungle and jameen*' (water, forest and land) (Sundar, 2009: 15). However, this claim can hardly go uncontested given the incidents of desertion by customary leaders. The president of the *Manki-munda Sangh*, Antu Hembrom, assisted the companies operating around Chaibasa, the district headquarters, in acquiring land. On being alerted of Hembrom's role, the villagers caught hold of him and punished him publicly by making him ride a donkey and garlanding him with footwear. However, despite several odds, identity politics has emerged as a viable tool to consolidate voices of dissent. In the absence of an alternative factor the ability of customary leaders to unify people against corporate powers is of great importance in their struggle to protect land, water and forest. Nevertheless, caution should be applied in not over-looking the power relations and class distinction within the community[13].

While the post-Independence Indian state ignored the existence of customary institutions, an initiative was taken as late as 1995 to redefine their role and space in local self-governance. In order to extend the provisions of Article 243 to the scheduled areas, the Central government, under clause (1) of Article 244, constituted a committee in 1995. A tribal Member of Parliament, Dilip Singh Bhuria was appointed as its chairperson with the widely experienced B. D. Sharma as one of the members of the committee. A four-tier structure rather than the usual three-tier structure was suggested for scheduled areas. It was to consist of gram sabhas with traditional village councils or nominated heads, village panchayats, intermediate panchayats and district councils. More importantly, the committee made the process of election optional in choosing the local representatives in its quest 'to blend the traditional with the modern by treating the traditional institutions as the foundation on which

the modern infrastructure should be built' (Jha & Mathur, 1999). Based on such noble recommendations of the Bhuria committee, the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act was passed by the Parliament on 24th December 1996.

Usually, PESA is regarded as a progressive legislation due to its sensible provisioning of governance in the context of tribal society and culture. However, it can be criticized for its conspicuous silence on the issue of women's representation. This gap, nevertheless, is filled by the otherwise controversial Jharkhand Panchayat Raj Act (JPRA). As amended in 2010, the JPRA provides for 50 per cent reservation of seats for women (see Section 21 of JPRA). Likewise, on the issue of 'justice' Clause 4 (d) of PESA recommended 'customary mode of dispute resolution' without giving due weightage to its social impact. Protest by the customary leaders against the JPRA on the ground of its incongruence with PESA is well founded given the attitude of the Jharkhand government towards the Adivasis[14]. But the contestation between Adivasi organisations and the State should not culminate into the withdrawal of progressive provisions like women's representation. While there is a need to reinvigorate customs according to universal principles of justice, the "otherness" cautions us against any hurriedly crafted strategy like that of the JPRA, which, despite bringing women to the public domain, has not really ensured their empowerment.

Interrogating 'Custom': Experiences from the Field

In this section we will analyse the two contexts against which the autonomy of customary institutions is interrogated. The first domain is that of women's representation in local bodies given their subjugated position in the traditional Ho social system; and, the second sphere is that of 'justice' in case of practices like witch hunting as well as instances where the customary system has failed to act impartially. These two cases, as a ground for interrogating autonomy of customary institutions, are guided by an approach which seeks to address the injustices prevailing in such societies rather than actively craving for a just order as per some universal guidelines provided by 'modernity'. The unequal status of Ho women draws one's attention to structural discriminations whereas the issue of justice has more to do with loss and benefit accrued to the individual. In the following sub-sections, a configurative analysis of the two cases has been attempted.

(a) The issue of women's representation

Many Adivasi societies of peninsular India are known for unequal socio-economic status accorded to their women folks. The absence of land rights, save the usufructuary rights[15], and denial of political rights point towards this discrimination. Apart from peripheral rights in land to sustain themselves on family land in the absence of male heirs, the Ho women do not enjoy any rights upon land. For example, in a household without a male heir, an unmarried Ho girl can cultivate her father's land till she is married, after which the land passes on to other male relatives of the deceased. However, inter-group disparities regarding rights also exist. For example, women in the Santhal tribal society are accorded land rights on par with their male counterparts. But the women belonging to Munda, Ho and Oraon tribes are not accorded land rights largely owing to the patriarchal nature of society. Several works pertaining to land rights of Adivasi women have been conducted earlier. Ritambhara Hebbar, through her ethnographic study of Mirra village, studied gender-related issues, especially land and forest, under the construct of 'homecoming' (Hebbar, 2005). Stating the centrality of women's labour in not only constructing the home, but also regenerating it through her labour on land and forest, Hebbar builds the case for granting land rights to Ho women. Likewise, gender discrimination in the customary rules governing Ho society has also been critically analysed by scholars like Madhu Kishwar who asserted that 'the bias that makes women's labour invisible and exaggerates the importance of men's labour is in part a result of treating the nineteenth century British Victorian family norm as a ubiquitous norm' (Kishwar, 1987: 97).

Later on, scholars like Sanjukta Das Gupta (2011) have asserted that the British attempt to bring more and more land within the ambit of revenue and recognition of *manki-munda* as their agents for collecting revenue, further consolidated the male ownership of land. Due to this multi-layered discrimination in the nature of laws governing land ownership in the Ho society, many scholars from developing societies argue for an analysis using 'intersectionality'. The proponents of this approach apart from regarding it as a tool for analysis also view intersectionality as a methodology capable of interrogating the multiple layers of power. Vrushali Patil, however, has elaborated upon the limitations of this approach by arguing that patriarchy is not entirely located in the locally-constructed social norms but is also derived from ideologies and practices prevailing

elsewhere (Patil, 2013). In the case of Ho Adivasi women, land rights were denied by customs and religious beliefs aimed at keeping intact the control of descent group. Moreover, the debilitating colonial land policies promoting patrilineal forms of inheritance further accentuated their marginalization (Das Gupta, 2015: 94). The perception that colonial provision on land revenue acted as the main culprit is also vindicated if we dwell on the nature of ongoing activism for ensuring land rights. While one approach is to frame the demand on the basis of recognition of individual rights, another approach subscribes to the 'erosion of customary rights in land and their restoration to the pre-colonial situation' (Bosu Mullick, 2013: 218). Even though there is a close relationship between property and political rights of Ho women we confine our analysis to the latter and investigate the changed scenario after panchayat elections. This will provide an opportunity to present a case for reinvigorating the customary institutions on a basis derived from engagement with both modern and post-modern values.

The legal battle for land rights initiated by social activist Madhu Kishwar was regarded by the tribal community as a conspiracy to grab tribal land using gender as a divisive tool[16]. Such excuses on the part of the community foreground autonomy at the expense of addressing many internal anomalies. Now, the question arises: Is 'otherness' in this context used as a strategy to perpetuate discrimination? If yes, what should be the basis of addressing this discrimination? Our attempt to find an answer to these questions will be guided both by an analysis of debates between different feminist schools as well as empirical evidences on women's representation. Carol Gilligan (quoted in White, 1991: 95), stating the position taken by "difference feminism", argues that interventions in such situations should be guided by the ethics of "responsibility and care" rather than an "ethic of justice". Whereas the latter is guided by the notion of balancing claims and rights against one another as per universal principles, the former evolves out of connectedness, compassion, and sensitivity to context. The qualities associated with the attitude of care are that of "holding" and not grasping or acquiring. Emphasizing the same nature of intervention which is more informed of the local context, Antje Daniel argues that Black feminism and postcolonial feminism have contributed significantly in framing a movement's objectives, opportunities, and choices socially and culturally (Daniel, 2016: 58).

Strengthening further the attitude of care and holding, Seyla Benhabib (quoted in White, 1991:103) argues that even in the discourse of *otherness* differences exist which defy universality. Hence,

the intervention should be based on the standpoint of "concrete other" and should be designed by replacing "justice" with "care". However, Benhabib's viewpoint is criticised by Nancy Fraser, who instead argues that 'an intense concern for the unique life history of each individual is largely out of place in the world of politics' (quoted in White, 1991). Hence, for Fraser "collective concrete other" will shift the focus to group identity from individual and the basis of intervention will be now based in the "ethic of solidarity" rather than "ethic of responsibility and care". While Fraser's views are appealing in a situation where "ethic of solidarity" targets an "enemy from without", it looks inapt in dealing with "enemy from within". Criticizing Fraser, White (1991) argues that resistance, even if articulated as a 'counterpoint to the dominant patterns of interaction', can still be guided by the attitude of care (White, 1991). He identifies the "threshold" level as the original domain of politics wherein the contestation will inform the adversaries of the unjust treatment meted out to them. In doing so, White is again pushing and confining the issue of gender equality to that of some sub-societal level. Especially, in a society where the private sphere overlaps with the public sphere, having customary inequality as the ubiquitous norm makes emancipation through care less feasible.

Customs in Ho Adivasi society have been primarily asserted to preserve male domination rather than removing the practices which reproduce patrilocality. Customs are ambivalent to the traditional role of women when they contribute materially to the well-being of the family. In the present times when the Ho women engage in the work of preparing and selling *diyang* (rice beer) in the market, unlike for the case of only household consumption earlier, the traditional social norms are never invoked to oppose this practice, given its economic value. But a woman entering the public domain is perceived as a direct threat by most of the customary leaders. Even during the early twentieth century, the higher classes among the Hos mostly belonging to the customary leaders adopted many lifestyle changes, but seldom encouraged these traits within the village due to the possible threat to their own status (Majumdar, 1937: 195). There exists a tendency among scholars to locate within Ho women's conventional role a sense of empowerment which tends to placate them and discourage from asking for economic and political rights otherwise unavailable in traditional system. Majumdar while recording the women's situation as that of *drudgery*, locates a virtue in their role as it seems to maintain the agility and health of the Ho women in remote areas and poor background (Majumdar, 1937: 13).

This narrative seldom recognizes, or rather chooses to ignore, the fact that women do not enjoy privileges available in a customary set-up without the consent of the male. Thus, women's representation in a customary society can only come through a negotiation for redefined positionality, if not through mere confrontation with customary institutions. Sujata Hazarika, in her study of the PRIs in Assam has found that women's representation in local bodies only makes sense if 'aspirations emerge to create democratic support structures that can support an ambience of extreme political awareness and participation among women' (Hazarika, 2008: 355).

In fact, the attempt to redefine their position can provoke retaliation which is typical of tribal societies[17]. In this regard, I shall mention the practice of witch-hunt, which, it is argued, is mainly evoked against 'independent, strong-willed women" who "may have challenged the status quo, which was enough to trigger resentment against them' (Singh, 2016). In a more nuanced study on the practice of witch hunt Shashank Sinha regarded this problem to be a result of 'new dispossessions' due to industrialization and mining projects (Sinha, 2005: 118). He argues that further tensions emerged in the Adivasi society making the vulnerable women an easy target, with mainly land but also social issues like family disputes and other squabbles as its root cause. Sinha further argues that the structure of violence in the cases of witch hunt has evolved 'from killing around the mid-nineteenth century to fines, dispossession, banishment or killing in the early twentieth century, to fines, beating and occasional killing around mid-twentieth century' (Sinha, 2015: 119). Thus, the connections between land grabbing and witch craft accusations are more visible and apparent now than earlier. The problem of confrontational attitudes vis-à-vis reforms gets further compounded by the fact that the 'Adivasis signal their acceptance of the state by subscribing to *accepted* means of protest' (Kumar, 2016: 45). Though the reservation of panchayat seats for women can be seen as a big intervention to improve their condition, serious doubts persist regarding its potential in the present form. During one of the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Noangaon, the respondents revealed that the elected *mukhiya* Anjana Tamsoy is nothing more than a puppet in the hands of her brother-in-law who virtually behaves as the *mukhiya*[18]. In such cases, the question remains: whether the assured reservations are sufficient to achieve the desired results or more meaningful interventions are required to ameliorate women's position? Interestingly, a woman being introduced to politics is not exclusively a gendered decision and in several instances, it provided

an opportunity for men to enter into power contestation. The male counterparts fielded their women in the elections to contest the primordial legitimacy of the customary head[19]. This verifies the division within the ranks of villagers where potential competitors perceive the panchayat elections as an opportunity to contest the existing power relations.

It has often been asserted that the Ho women also have opposed the panchayat elections. The issue of Ho women folk opposing the elections can be explained by emphasizing the hegemonic nature of custom where the consent of the exploited is given under some sort of "false consciousness". Essentiality of women's representation is vindicated by their "lived experience" of "homecoming" and their ability to emerge as the custodian of the ordinary Ho women. However, this change in role can hardly be materialized until the Ho society uproots its structural bias against women and accepts their political role beyond the four walls. Given the disregard[20] for increased women's participation, the panchayat elections have arrived as an opportunity for the Ho women and their progressive male counterparts to carve out an equal space for the former. The question of women's representation is proposed here as a gender question not to be understood as the typical male-female dichotomy. It rather needs to be resolved through the active alignment of male and female members against patriarchal customary institutions. The issue of women's political rights in Ho Adivasi society is exactly the one which confirms to the conviction that 'not all manifestations of otherness should be fostered; some ought to be constrained' (White, 1991: 133). Thus, the demand for autonomy should make room for this deviation from the customary "normal". With more and more women like Lakshmi Hessa challenging male domination and women like Rani Tiria working on equal footing with adivasi male counterparts, there exist enormous opportunities to overcome the hostility of customary leaders and create a more gender-sensitive political discourse.

(b) Custom and the issue of justice

Intervention in the sphere of justice pose more serious challenges to the Ho social structure due to the belief that the traditional system of dispensing justice is embedded in the communitarian ideology whereas the modern system subscribes to an individual-centric approach embedded in liberal ideals. It is due to this apprehension that we need to frame a ground for intervention which remains

sensible to its 'otherness' while addressing the problems in custom. The M-M system has been appreciated by its protagonists for its process and ability to dispense justice in a speedy and non-expensive manner. Customarily, in a Ho village, *munda* is the immediate authority to hear a case. If the case could not be resolved by the *munda* to the satisfaction of the accused, then the *munda* refers it to the *manki*. If not satisfactorily resolved by the *manki*, the case can be further referred to *teen manki* which is the final customary authority. If the case remains unresolved even after this, it could be taken to the court. However, following this procedure is not mandatory, but only conventional. The belief is that, imparting justice is not only intended to address the grievances, but also instill a sense of community within the inhabitants. This narrative takes for granted the uncorrupted nature of the customary leaders who can be assumed to be above worldly attachments like money, power, prestige, etc.

The tribal laws themselves are not 'indigenous to their culture' and gradually increasing contact with outside actors has reduced their importance (Majumdar, 1937: 170-171). Apart from this, there existed a dissatisfaction with the method of settling disputes by the tribal officers because of their dishonesty (Majumdar, 1937: 183). However, the increased litigation during colonial period can be largely attributed to the outsiders who, in order to take advantage of the ignorant aborigines and evade local panchayat, produced their cases in the court (Majumdar, 1937:183). A measure suggested then by Majumdar to make the administration of civil justice efficient was to make the tribal officers responsible to the people rather than the administration (Majumdar, 1937:185). Even today we can notice that village *mundas* and *mankis* are the first authorities to be contacted by the police in any civil or criminal case. In post-Independence India, the spurious activities of the village leaders have resulted in illegal alienation of tribal land (Sharan, 2009: 83). But the authority of the *munda*, acting in concert with village elders, in matters of justice was never seriously contested till the values of individualism proliferated among the Hos. Even though the institutions of police and courts had been introduced much earlier, the traditional nature of society left members with limited options to pursue them. With increasing reliance upon non-traditional sources of livelihood (like government jobs) and increasing monetization more and more families approach the courts in case of disputes or grievances against the customary institutions.

Moreover, incidents of witch hunt raise questions about the capacity of the quotidian nature of justice to get over its irrational

basis because such practice is simultaneously linked with the culture of spirit propitiation. Nevertheless, it will be wrong to unconditionally attribute this practice to custom. H.R. Trevor-Roper (quoted in Nandy, 2003: 64), in the European context, has attributed the rise in the practice of witch-hunt to the weakening of the institutions of church and Christendom. Likewise, scholars like Kishwar (1987) and several others have cited instances where there were firm economic reasons behind the practice of witch-hunt. Consequently, scholars have argued that the practice of witch-hunt is more prevalent in Santhal tribal groups where women enjoy land rights (Bosu Mullick, 2013: 217). It is further stated that, in Jharkhand, 'the phenomenon of witch-hunting is more likely in a situation where women do have a relatively high status and where that status is being degraded'. Even state officials in Jharkhand have identified 'superstition, health, illiteracy and property' as the main reasons behind instances of witchcraft (Singh, 2016). Usually, disadvantaged women like widows and others who enjoy usufructuary rights upon land are targeted to release the land in favour of agnates of the deceased. Besides this, witch-hunt being a practice which generally victimizes women, the customary system of justice also has an inbuilt bias against women. The grip of such injustice can be imagined from the fact that the victims of witchcraft who somehow managed to escape death are reluctant to take recourse to law[21] for the fear that their relatives who have stayed back in the villages may be targeted and ostracized (Sinha, 2015: 108).

The issue of disgruntled members approaching the courts arises mainly due to the fact that the customary leaders either act in a partisan manner or impose disproportionate penalties on them. One such incident took place in Simbia village where the *munda* punished a girl and her family for beating up another woman. The accused refused to comply with the punishment and, hence, a social boycott was imposed against her family. After a few days the *manki* (a superior authority to resolve disputes) came to resolve the issue. At this, the village *munda* questioned how the *manki* could take up the case *suo motu* while not being recommended by him. Later on, it was found that the accused had bribed the *manki* to appear in her favour[22]. Also, there are instances where the *munda* acted in vengeance to impose unjust penalties on the accused. For example, in Kondua village, a boy charged with molesting a girl from the *munda's* family was fined heavily (around Rs 30,000) and his family was also asked to arrange for a social feast in the name of tradition. The discourse of customary justice is rife with such examples which

makes its rationalization imperative. But the hazard of introducing modern institutions will be felt in the genuinely local cases where justice can be imparted as per the social fabric and its sensibilities. Moreover, the rationalization of justice through modern institutions of police and courts of law is hardly promising. All they can do is to save the individual from injustice inflicted by a corrupt customary leader while dragging the individual in perpetual misery due to its expensive procedure. Whereas justice can be ensured by simply manipulating the custom according to universal principles like human rights, this method of imparting justice is grounded in the notion of individual rights and will not be able to sustain the plural characteristic of justice required to maintain 'otherness'. But, why should we be concerned to preserve an 'otherness' which inflicts injustice over its own members? The answer rests in the earlier mentioned reason that, this 'otherness' acts as a source of articulating unity among the members. Hence, while working on a way to ensure justice we need to 'foster' rather than 'constrain' the otherness for the sake of its member.

In proposing such a notion of justice we find White's position guided by 'care' and defined in terms of 'finitude' to be quite applicable. We know that the power-seeking customary leaders leave little scope for reinvigorating the customary institutions. Nevertheless, few options can still be tried. The first one is being discussed for quite some time now, i.e., codification of customary laws (Bosu Mullick, 2013: 220). This requires an intervention which is well-informed of the socio-economic realities, and listing of cases with prospect of monetary benefits for the customary leaders. Also, the apprehension related to loss of vitality and strength of customary laws due to codification can be addressed by leaving the petty cases out of its ambit. The second option can be through constituting a bench of village elders (actually, this was the original custom) rather than relying upon a single customary head more susceptible to personal interests. While this solution does not ensure curbing of corruption entirely, the structure itself will make it difficult for the judges to go corrupt. However, there should be zero-tolerance towards practices like witch hunt which violate basic human rights.

Conclusion

Even though the preceding account on customary institutions of *Manki-munda* in West Singhbhum creates an impression that they have outlived their utility, at least the institution of *munda* plays

an intimate role in the daily affairs of the village. Moreover, these institutions play a crucial role in constructing Ho identity, which has the potential to overcome differences and helps in the consolidation of discontent whenever there is an assault upon livelihood of the people in this resource-rich district. When the state is desperate to sign off concern for people for its obsession with 'development' with the inherent component of human cost, cultural notions are revived through a call to custom. Nevertheless, whenever an attempt is made to curb the anomalies embedded in customs, the latter's ability to invoke in the public imagination the idea of an assault on autonomy by external forces comes in the way. Hence, an attempt at reinvigorating the customary system has to deal with this paradoxical utility of cultural autonomy. Due to this reason the interventions meant to correct the ills of the community should not be entirely guided by modern values. Such interventions should rather emerge through a more guided dialogue between discourse of 'modernity' and 'post-modernity' so that a middle path could be carved out. Furthermore, this logic informs us that attempts to introduce provisions like Uniform Civil Code[23] should be preceded by an endeavour to verify the presumable secular and spiritual issues and intervene in the former while leaving the latter aside. An intra-religious debate between the representatives of respective spheres will be an important development in this direction. In the second section of this paper I engaged theoretically with this exercise and identified a position, which while preserving autonomy also provides scope for reinvigorating custom by shedding its regressive practices.

Despite being quite promising in getting over this dilemma, White's position proved to be wanting in the specific context of Ho customary institutions. However, a proper way to address the issue of women's political rights as well as dispensing justice as articulated from the above analysis helps us arrive at a two-fold solution. In case of political rights of Ho women, while the attitude of 'care' should be owned more by the customary leaders as well as the Ho male, the political means suggested by Nancy Fraser should become the basis of women's activism. What is worth considering in the sphere of justice is a discriminatory coding of customary laws as well as collegium system for hearing of cases. It can be said that both the suggestions are in line with the idea of preserving 'otherness'. However, the materialization of these proposals rests on the dialogue between subjectivity associated with *Ho* customs and the quest of Ho society to organize itself in a non-discriminatory manner. Thus, in building a case for reinvigorating traditional institutions or customary practices

we need to intervene through piecemeal measures which enable the custom to internalise the values established on parameters of justice.

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Notes

1. I use the terms tribe and *Adivasi* interchangeably in this paper despite being aware that academicians and activists use the term 'Adivasi' to refer to 'original' inhabitants, free from evolutionary implications as well as colonization by the British and outsiders. On the other hand, the term 'tribe' is more of an official construct used for administrative purposes. Furthermore, the term *Adivasi* is embedded in the ideology of indigeneity and carries the notion of identity and culture.
2. This is the customary self-governance system which prevails among the Ho Adivasis. The *manki* heads a group of villages called as *pir* while the *munda* is the village headman.
3. Wilkinson's Rules, i.e. Regulation XIII of 1833 was originally introduced for the South West Frontier Agency (SWFA); it was later introduced in Kolhan in 1837 with its incorporation in SWFA. Even though the M-M system is not explicitly mentioned in Wilkinson's civil rule his letter dated 13th May 1837 mentions customary institutions.
4. Earmarked for the purpose of administration, these are the geographical areas having dominant or substantial Adivasi population. The Constitution of India recognizes such areas under Schedule V and VI. Whereas Schedule V deals with the administration of scheduled areas in other parts of India, Schedule VI applies to the governance of North-Eastern states.
5. Vinita Damodaran argues that tribalism is reinvented 'in a complex oppositional context where indigenous populations are threatened by forces of progress and modernity' (Damodaran, 2002).
6. Responding to the writ petition filed by Madhu Kishwar & Ors. Etc. vs. State of Bihar & Ors., the Supreme Court (by majority), in its judgment dated 17th April 1996, upheld the denial of land rights to Adivasi women as per custom. However, the dissenting judge Justice K. Ramaswamy pointed towards the granting of similar rights to Santhal Adivasi women.
7. While the state is still guided by the age-old perception of tribal egalitarianism and isolation, these scholars have objectively dealt with the tribal situation.
8. A term used by Martha Nussbaum. She explains "political morality" as a phenomenon under which public leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King could have used their wide acceptance to counter the misuse of religious sentiments and nurture a morality which informs a more secular politics of the nation (Nussbaum, 2015).
9. It is argued that if Ho women are accorded land rights then outsiders will be able to grab Adivasi land by marrying Adivasi women.

10. By 'finitude' I mean the everydayness of certain interactions which makes way into the mind of the subject without relegating them to the realization that he/she is integrated into the mainstream Hindu fold as a backward section.
11. My argument is that the Adivasis do not go beyond simple imitation of the rituals from other religions. Even though they imitate Hindu rituals it does create among them a sense of assimilation as per caste hierarchy, a point made by G.S. Ghurye. My article throws more light on this aspect (Kumar, 2018).
12. A *khuntkattidar* family is one whose ancestors are believed to have originally established the villages by clearing the forest.
13. Stuart Corbridge has provided an account of tribal people accessing reservation benefits in state jobs. This has resulted in the emergence of tribal elites which makes class distinction visible in the community (Corbridge, 2000).
14. Nandini Sundar, argues that the state government in Jharkhand has reiterated that the customary institutions have died out and there is no need for any special law for scheduled areas (Sundar, 2005).
15. The permission of limited land use by Ho women under certain circumstances is known as usufructuary rights. For a detailed account on Ho women and land see Kishwar (1987).
16. Two writ petitions were filed in the Supreme Court of India by Madhu Kishwar and two Ho women, Sunamuni and Muki Dui which sought declaration that Sections 7, 8 and 76 of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 6 of 1908, are *ultra vires* to Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India.
17. Wide prevalence of 'witchcraft' among the Santhals, in comparison to Chotanagpuri tribes, is attributed to the fact that women are accorded property rights in the former.
18. Focused group discussion conducted by me in Noangaon village, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand on 7th March 2013.
19. In Noangaon panchayat it was found that the brother-in-law of the woman *mukhiya* virtually acts as the *mukhiya* and enters into a power contestation with the village *munda*.
20. Some of the customary leaders openly expressed their displeasure towards the women representatives and went to the extent of charging them of promiscuous behaviour. The *munda* of Karkatta expressed such a view about the women *mukhiya* (Routrai Sundi, Karkatta, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand, 5th April 2013).
21. Jharkhand Witchcraft Prevention Act, 2001.
22. Field interview conducted with Arvind Munduia, Kathikuda village, West Singbhum district, Jharkhand on 3rd March 2013.
23. Article 44 of the Indian Constitution proposes uniform civil codes which will be applicable to every individual irrespective of their religious affiliation. Ever since independence this provision has proved to be mired with contention as its implementation is construed as an assault on religious freedom. As a result, there is a deadlock in its implementation.

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OUR ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE: RESPONSIBILITY OR BURDEN?[1]

Narayani Gupta

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime

(with apologies to Arthur Conan Doyle and Mark Haddon)

> Gregory: "Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"
> Holmes: "To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."
> Gregory: "The dog did nothing in the night-time."
> Holmes: "That was the curious incident."

'About half a dozen bulldozers worked overnight on April 23 at Pragati Maidan to pull down five iconic buildings—Hall of Nations and Industry. Next to come under the hammer is Nehru Pavilion.' Thus reported *The Hindustan Times* the following day (24/04/2017).

Thousands had signed petitions against the proposed demolition, but they could not/did not do anything when it was demolished on the night of 23-24 April 2017. This essay will suggest reasons for the absence of public reaction—reasons that go back over half-a-century.

Architecture, the Indian Government, the Citizens

This was not the first time an agency of the Indian government has destroyed buildings or settlements. Inhabitants of Delhi would recall the demolition of Mandi House in the 1970s, of the Turkman Gate *mohallas* and the shantytowns of Rouse Avenue during the Emergency of 1975-77, and of Jamuna Pushta in the 1990s. This was also not the first time people had expressed their views on public architecture. There were two episodes when protest had received a positive response from officials, and two others where the protests had been rejected. In 1989, the Central Government proposed to dismantle the canopy at India Gate, and install a large statue of Mahatma Gandhi. A sustained campaign to retain this piece of architecture was finally accepted, and a different site found for the statue (Gupta,

1994: 257-70). In 2003, public pressure led to the dismantling of an oversized and incongruously-placed structure for a police memorial. The failures were in 2006, when the Commonwealth Games Village was built on the floodplains of the Yamuna, and, separately, five Malls on the southern Ridge in Vasant Kunj destroyed the historic rock formations and forest.

The canopy victory occurred a year after the ICOMOS[2] Assembly at Toledo had issued a Charter to designate World Heritage Cities. India, where nearly all the major towns and cities (about 200) are historic, could have proposed one a year for many coming decades. But the first time India did put in nominations was 26 years later, in 2014, when Delhi, Ahmedabad, Chanderi and a section of Mumbai, prepared dossiers for application. In mid-2017, the walled city section of Ahmedabad was conferred the honour of being designated the first World Heritage City in India. With recognition comes expectations from town-planners and the custodians of culture and of urban development.

The *scale* of building in the last quarter century has made architecture not simply an 'art', but an industry. This leads on to another issue—land, especially in towns, is no longer as plentifully available as it was, and certain locations in towns have greater *cachet,* so that *replacing* buildings can appear to be an easy option. This is the great difference between architecture and the other visual arts—the present is in competition with the past. Painting and sculpture are largely securely lodged in museums. Some 'installation art' and *all* of architecture is located in the urban landscape. It is, therefore, endangered in a way the other arts are not.

Architecture, as it ages, becomes the physical manifestation of history, but it will remain a secure and integral part of our urban landscapes only if it is buttressed by four pillars:

- The *scholarship* that historicizes it (the responsibility of historians and architectural historians). Scholarship has been limited because political history has been privileged over the narrative of the developments of skills.
- The concept of *'heritage'* that gives it a definition and assigns responsibilities to care-givers, balancing a past against a present and an imagined future. This definition often sidelines minority or marginalized communities, and 'folk' traditions are treated less seriously than the 'classical'.
- The *nostalgia* that gives it emotional value because it is associated with a past remembered or imagined (a powerful

force which cannot be ignored). But nostalgia has often become diluted by indiscriminate merging with stereotyped images from myths and films.

- The application of appropriate *conservation norms*, relearning and applying the skills that created it (an optional specialization for architects), and working with inter-disciplinary teams. This is often paralysed in India because of a lack of fit between the Archaeological Survey's codes and those of conservation architects.

Indian Architectural History

Even today, seventy years after Independence, our children and all citizens are not taught the history of India after 1947.

By the 1970s, children born in independent India had become working adults—some of them became teachers of history, some engineers and architects. In those days, before the internet and autocad design, many teachers and students enjoyed reading history, and architects strove to be artists. But both history writers and architects unwittingly short-changed the country in one respect—historians ignored architecture, and architects ignored history.

Till the 1970s, Indian historians referred to architecture briefly and generally at two points—in the context of the Cholas, and of the Mughals. Courses of modern Indian history (conventionally 1707-1947) did not include any reference to architecture, and architectural history was not treated as a worthwhile field of research (thus leaving the field clear to non-Indian scholars[3], who steadily built up a superb body of work on this). In the anxiety to forge a nation, Indian scholars did not privilege the regional, much less the local. Great works of architecture were described as part of the *national* heritage, while smaller structures, streetscapes, neighbourhoods, went unrecorded. These could have been recovered by interviewing senior people, or those who were connecting after a long absence to a remembered landscape.

Ironically, the teaching of pre-Independence political history was going on at an exciting time, when 'modern' India was being constructed, literally and conceptually. In the 1950s and 1960s, the brutalist works of Corbusier, Rahman, Doshi and Kanvinde were changing townscapes, but students were not introduced to these, and therefore they did not develop an eye for them. A landmark was the completion of the pillar-free Hall of Nations in Delhi, in 1975, created by engineer Mahendra Raj and architect Raj Rewal, which

found its way into histories of world architecture. For the Delhi citizen, it was familiar as the venue of the Book Fair.

As for Indian architectural schools, 'architectural history' was taught as something essentially European-North American. Rewal's architecture was understood as branching out from this.

In Indian history, a landmark was the formation of the Urban History Association of India in 1978[4]. This was an acknowledgment that the history of urban settlements was not something to be done by historians alone, and that economists, sociologists, demographers and art historians could enrich it. Urban history was being approached by different roads—through the records of the Political Department, through municipal reports, through revenue and public health reports. Mariam Dossal surveyed the development and building of Bombay, Meera Kosambi of Bombay and Pune, and Veena Oldenburg, that of Lucknow. Pamela Kanwar described the creation of Shimla, a joint enterprise by the British and Indians.

Social scientists complemented the work of the historians. Geographers had been the first to study settlements, and the work of the Universities of Madras and Varanasi in the 1930s-1960s had been pioneering. Sociologists have published micro-studies of castes, communities, mohallas, slums (particularly examining these as likely points of tension, as Ratna Naidu did for Hyderabad). A corpus of work on medicine and disease has been built up. Post-1947, Indian architecture was the subject of a study on Chandigarh by the architectural historian Norma Evenson in 1969. It was followed, after a gap, from the 1980s, with work on individual architects.

In a country where political integration and economic modernization have happened simultaneously and not *in succession*, the specificities of individual towns should be committed to text before the towns become clones, with the same hoardings, the same leaders commemorated in street-names and statues, the same McDonalds and Woodlands shops. Increasingly, the inhabitants become foreigners to their country's past (this is to modify L.P. Hartley's "The past is a foreign country: They do things differently there"). Also, researchers should see the histories of different towns *individually* and not in typologies (Varanasi as a 'Hindu' city, Agra as 'Islamic' in architecture, Madurai as a 'temple town', Calcutta as a 'colonial city', Bombay as 'modern', etc.). Neither historians nor architects *alone* can do these portraits. Creative writers, like R.K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie, Intezar Husain, Asokamitran, Masoom Raza, Aman Sethi and Ranjit Hoskote, among others, have captured the spirit of town-dwellers.The hard work of antiquarian-enthusiasts

like the long-ago scholar Percival Spear on Delhi of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Spear, 1943), Thankappan Nair's street-histories of Kolkata (Nair, 1987), and R.V. Smith, who has written on Delhi's history every week for 40 years (Smith, 2005), is also something that history researchers should draw upon.

'Heritage': An Official Concern

Independent India continued two policies in the realm of Indian culture begun by the East India Company and the Indian Government under the Crown. One, they had catalogued archaeology and historic architecture; two, they had made government departments responsible for nourishing arts and crafts. Later, they took ownership ('protection') of sites and structures which had no obvious claimant or which had fallen to them by conquest. It was a more easy-going time, and they did not trouble to define the boundaries of listed sites. The Indian states also made surveys of historic structures. The Indian Parliament passed a law for safeguarding the architecture of the past. In the aftermath of Partition, there was a fear that these might be vulnerable, just as, in the aftermath of the 1857 Uprising Indian monuments were in danger of being destroyed by the British (Lahiri, 2017). There is similarity in the situations in which the Act of 1861 and that of 1958 were formulated. The reorganization of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) took time, and its cadre was demoralized by the sudden loss of one of their major showpieces, the Harappa sites. Continuing the tradition of the British showcasing Indian architecture and arts at Exhibitions, Maulana Azad in 1950 instituted the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) to familiarize other countries with Indian culture through exhibitions or performances. In 1952-54, three Akademies were set up to promote performing arts, literature and the visual arts (Sundar, 1995). A Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs was created in 1961, and the Archaeological Survey was attached to the Department of Culture. Culture became a separate Department in 1971. 'Culture' kept being paired off with different departments, for the longest time with Tourism.

In the 1980s, things changed. The work of government agencies in the realm of cultural heritage was supplemented by individual initiatives. This was inspired by developments in Western countries, and by a sense that the past suddenly seemed to be receding at a faster rate, and Indian culture was in danger of being submerged in a cultural globalization far more insidious than colonization had

been. 'Festivals of India' were held in the Soviet Union, USA, Britain and Japan to showcase Indian culture and architecture.

In towns like Jodhpur, centuries of deference have made it possible for a raja's charisma to achieve what a prosaic civic administration could not. The decline in the fortunes of the Rajput princes from 1966 did not weaken, in fact it enhanced, the presentation of their homes for public edification and enjoyment. There is a striking similarity in behaviour between these Rajas and the English aristocracy after the Act of 1911. Tourism became the major incentive to museumify Rajasthan's palaces in a fashion that James Tod would have approved (Ramusack, 2004).

The munificence of an English millionaire funded the creation of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in 1984[5]. (The term 'heritage' was far more evocative than the term 'Survey' or the austere 'Akademies'.) This was to supplement the Archaeological Survey (which holds properties, like English Heritage) and was, perhaps, envisaged as becoming, like the English National Trust, an owner of more modern properties. As it happened, INTACH grew in a different direction—project-based, identification and conservation of historic water-bodies and forests, recording indigenous knowledge-systems, conserving objects and taking on architectural conservation in non-ASI properties. Its strength has been its network of Chapters all over the country, which can be as active as they wish.

B.K. Thapar, an archaeologist and Secretary of INTACH, was alarmed at the rate at which secular buildings were 'disappearing under the pace of modernisation' and initiated a programme of listing non-ASI heritage buildings. It was based on individual towns, not on typologies. The listings of heritage buildings by INTACH covered over 400 sites.[6]

Bombay showed the way in respect of concentrating on the particular—the little books published on different neighbourhoods was a means of making small beautiful and meaningful. Shyam Chainani and Cyrus Guzder, neither of them architects, listed the buildings which made a section of Bombay into a recognizable heritage city.[7] This was buoyed up by an enthusiasm shared by architects, planners, officials, industrialists and citizens, an enthusiasm mercifully untainted by political ideologies.

Listing 'unprotected' buildings in Delhi began in 1988, and was a stop-go process till 1997, when it was completed for the areas under the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the New Delhi Municipal Council. The list was published in 2000. Things can

often go disconcertingly awry—when the INTACH published its list, *Heritage Buildings in Delhi*, the first reaction was interest, and a sense of gratification on the part of those whose properties were included, only to be succeeded by alarm at the dreadful possibility of there being a 'freeze' on those buildings, and a plea to have them 'delisted', a plea urgently reinforced by individuals with political connections.

Historians have been wary of 'heritage-ists', just as they are of popular books on history. They see 'heritage' as glamourizing the past by emphasizing the aesthetic elements of the creative and performing arts, bypassing narratives of oppression or injustice. It is true that widely-read books like *The Glory that was Greece, The Grandeur that was Rome*, and *The Wonder that was India*, did do this.[8] But to not study the arts critically is to impoverish the students. Imaginative lines of research would link ecology with regions (which are not necessarily coterminous with linguistic frontiers), migrations, choices in agriculture, festivals (in terms of cultural anthropology, as well as connecting them with seasons). Such efforts would identify the areas of cultural creativity that are based on social inequality but also recognize ideas that are produced by fine minds, aesthetic impulses that draw from the environment, from travails or hard endeavour, relations between texts and images, thus requiring the work of language-specialists as well as iconographers.

Indian architects from 1980 began discovering the 'heritage' qualities of British Indian architecture, and the Presidency towns and British hillstations came to be seen as 'heritage' as much as Varanasi, Agra, and Madurai. Birthdays and ranks have their uses—the 1990s saw the 300th anniversaries of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Bombay realized with delight that it had the largest holdings of Victorian Gothic anywhere in the world! The 1980s was a watershed. Bijit Ghosh, Director of the School of Planning and Architecture in Delhi, broadened the horizons of students and practitioners in two ways—one, he encouraged them to study the architecture of nineteenth and twentieth century India, flagged off by an exhibition on Lutyens' and Baker's New Delhi, brilliantly curated by Malay Chatterji[9]; two, he suggested that people's buildings—'vernacular architecture'—deserved as much attention as did the monuments built by trained architects. Thus, two other objects of nostalgia were created—the garden city of Lutyens' New Delhi, still intact, and the elegant *havelis* of Shahjahanabad, many deserted in 1947 after the owners moved to Pakistan, and subsequently divided up by refugees into shops or homes.

In the 1980s, architects who had earlier turned their back on the

Indian past, began incorporating gestures to the past—as in the Delhi Planetarium (1980) which M. M. Rana designed to harmonize with a fourteenth-century hunting-lodge, Charles Correa's Jawahar Bhawan in Jaipur (1991) which paid homage to the architect of Jai Singh's city, the dome of Bhikaji Cama Place of Raj Rewal (1980s), which imitated the dome of the vast Mohammadpur mosque nearby. Since there is in general very little awareness of architectural history, of distances in time (the Mohammadpur mosque is 600 years old, Rewal's building less than 60 years, and the contexts are totally different—a congregation space for prayer/a congregation space for shops and service-centres) the gesture achieves little. On the other hand, respecting the low-rise character of a precinct by not building towers is something that will be noticed by any passer-by. Mrs Gandhi responded to architect Patwant Singh's real concern that tower-buildings would soon destroy the low-rise beauty of Lutyens' New Delhi. The Delhi Urban Art Commission (DUAC), on the lines of that in New York (1898), was set up in 1974 to ensure that building projects would have to pass scrutiny by an independent group of people.

Memory and Nostalgia

While Indian scholars dragged their feet, 'heritage' was taken over by others. From the 1980s 'heritage' became an increasingly used word (as has become 'organic' since 2000). It is attractive to gesture to it in political harangues, it is written into textbooks, it is prefixed to tourism, it is used indiscriminately in advertising goods referred to as 'ethnic' (itself a patronizing word !). And, at a more popular level, two generations away from Partition, recent 'heritage' morphed into 'nostalgia'.[10]

Nostalgia is more personal, heritage is more inclusive. Nostalgia all too often can be an ill-understood or partial sense of the layered pasts. It can be projected backward in time, to generate a pride in some individual or group in the past with whom modern inhabitants would like to imagine a link.This can then see different communities as 'the other'. This is evident from the way the term 'Heritage Interpretation' in India has a meaning very different from that in the West where it refers to the many professions that co-operate to 'read', conserve and present aspects of historic structures, artefacts, and landscapes[11].

In India,'heritage interpretation' is understood to mean one of the three things: one, 'reclaiming' history, and establishing 'true facts' (a tautology); two, installing icons, in the form of statues, as was

done in Chennai and in towns in Uttar Pradesh; and three, changing names (one of the obsessions of political groups is toponymy—renaming is one of the most effective ways of blotting out or eliding history)—having won Bombay for Maharashtra and then corrected its name to 'Mumbai', there was a move to rename everything in Mumbai for Shivaji. In Delhi, there is another kind of competition—between the local and the national—so that Nicholson Park (named after the hero of the 1857 'Mutiny') became Tilak Park (nationalist hero) and has now got a statue of Maharaja Agrasen (founder of the Agrawal *biradari*). Kolkata went through a frenzy of renaming (such joy in turning Harrington Road, on which the US Consulate stood, to Ho Chi Minh Sarani!), which died down and was succeeded by a more sophisticated phase (Theatre Road became Shakespeare Sarani to indicate Bengali appreciation of British culture). It is not in the interest of any political party to press for a freeze on renaming, because they are privately reserving names still unchanged for their own heroes!

Reducing a place to anonymity has serious implications—if it has no association, none will grieve for it. The grave of Wali Dakhani in Ahmedabad is a case in point, where in 2002, his *mazhar* was flattened into a road and tarmac laid over. Such tragedies might be averted if people were made aware of localities and their specific histories.

Nostalgia can be a fragile balloon if it is not weighed down with factual or analytical material. Detailed knowledge may generate a new kind of *informed* nostalgia, which will be all to the good. This can be done by filling out history, with researchers working in the archives, with translators, anthropologists. Only then can we recover the past as social history, '*la vie quotidienne*', something not easy to do in our country, despite Indian historians' admiration for Marc Bloch. This shared enthusiasm has the potential to turn nostalgia into a sense of the past as it was, with its strengths and weaknesses. Otherwise losers of battles can be turned into victors, three-digit figures inflated into 1000s.

If people are to be concerned, even passionate, about the survival of great works of historic and modern architecture, the first step is to make town-dwellers familiar with them. None of it is 'packaged', the architects' names are not indicated, buildings are often in a state of demoralizing neglect, and can be mired in conflicts over land-ownership. They are unvisited either because they have become comforting havens for the socially marginalized, or because they are in use, and discourage curious visitors.

A quiet Englishman called Nigel Hankin (1920-2007) had for years been taking foreign visitors on 'heritage walks' in Delhi; two Englishwomen, Gaynor Barton and Lorraine Malone, had been taking friends on walks in Shahjahanabad. Some senior inhabitants enjoyed taking their friends for tours of their cities—Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore. These measures were paralleled by the emergence of popular groups with the same ideal of showcasing heritage, for the town-dweller as much as for visitors. Shyam Chainani founded the Bombay Environmental Action Group and worked tirelessly to list and protect architecture, forests and the seashore in a land-starved city. The Conservation Society of Delhi (CSD) had enthusiasts come together to introduce the city's historic architecture to its residents, in large part first-generation immigrants[12].The first 'advertised' walk for local people was led by a member of the CSD. Three friends elected to go on the walk. By the 1990s, the numbers had risen to 70. Today there are over a dozen walk-groups in Delhi, and others in towns elsewhere. They are commercially viable, and increasingly popular—people join for different reasons, the common denominator being nostalgia. City walks are different from visits to monuments. The latter awakens admiration for skills and for discriminating patronage. Walks communicate a sense of how earlier townsfolk lived. This can lead to rather superficial romanticizing of the past, of picturising *havelis,* imagining *mushairas* and street-cries, and recalling the fragrance of wet earth when *bhishti* sprinkles water in *galis*. There is no room here for irony, violence, cruelty, ugliness, corruption, though cloak-and-dagger stories are very popular.

Conservation as Policy

A backward glance. In Europe, following the horrific destruction of urban areas in the Second World War, the Charter of Venice[13] had been formulated in 1964 to guide conservation architects and heritage interpreters. UNESCO[14] and ICOMOS have been working on conservation in all its aspects—planning the technical work, generating public awareness, collaborating with governmental and tourism agencies, and designating 'World Heritage Sites'.

From about 1970, 'conservation' became a word used in India. The first breakthrough came in the context not of the maintenance of monuments or urban areas, but of the need to protect nature's world—with the Chipko Movement in 1973, from below, and Project Tiger, also 1973, from above. The latter followed on the enactment of the Wildlife Act in 1972, an initiative of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (Ramesh, 2017).

In 1982, 'Conservation' had been the theme of a seminar at Cambridge as part of the Festival of India in Britain (Allchin *et al.*, 1991). Frederick Allchin, well-known Cambridge archaeologist, played a leading role in this. Allchin had studied architecture before moving to archaeology, and became specifically interested in conservation from 1968 when, in his 40s, he spent two months in India to prepare a report for UNESCO on tourism in relation to the country's monumental heritage. He found that in India 'conservation' policy had stood still, and continued to mean just what it had meant to Sir John Marshall and the Archaeological Survey in 1907. Reading the papers presented at this seminar, it is clear that Bombay was ready to show the way to other Indian towns. Where Delhi officially had 174 monuments protected by the ASI, Bombay had less than five. 'Conservation' for Bombay-dwellers implied retaining the Indo-British heritage of buildings and precincts.

The term 'cultural conservation' has now come into use, to mean the new way of conserving monuments not in isolation but as part of 'conservation areas'. These needed to be delineated, both in island sites like Vijayanagara or Fatehpur Sikri as well as those enclaved in modern cities, like Delhi and Hyderabad.

With the institution of INTACH, what had been the responsibility of the ASI and the CPWD[15] became open to intervention from a new breed called 'conservation architects'—their number has gone up from one in 1982 (Prof. Nalini Thakur) to about 400. Careers could be built on revamping buildings of the colonial period, and also older buildings. But it was not easy to move in—the colonial buildings, mostly owned by official bodies, were the territory of the CPWD, and the older ones of the ASI. What could have surged into a nation-wide movement for conservation never happened because the fundamental requisite for conservation—which is that officials, technical experts, artists and social historians need to work as a team—seems very difficult to generate. Sadly, as professional skills multiply, enthusiasms die. There is often lack of a realistic timetable for projects, of stimulating interchanges of ideas, of building on what has been done, of ensuring regular maintenance, of using digital techniques to make up-to-date information available. Conservation projects since 1984, measured by *proposals*, are hearteningly numerous, but *completion reports* are dismally few[16].

In the 1980s, the second generation of Indian town-planners accepted the need to identify heritage buildings and to write conservation into master-plans. Delhi's *Master Plan* of 1962 had called Shahjahanabad a 'slum'. Its second edition, in 1982, called it one of five 'special conservation areas'. The Report of the National

Commission on Urbanization of 1988 had a chapter on urban conservation, written by M.K. Mukharji, which made conservation the responsibility of civic bodies. INTACH, in its early days, prepared a model bill on conservation. But no dynamic city-planner has thought to follow this up by creating teams of researchers to analyse the structure of cities, and work out ways to build livable urban settlements. Older planned cities or city-sections—such as Jaipur and Madurai—have been appreciated by scholars and practising architects in general terms—for their conforming to the 'canonical' (their sense of the *Vastushastra,* the result of reading it too schematically) or for their ambience (again it is very difficult to reconstruct the older city, therefore we may be indulging in nostalgia).

But it is in the *detail* that planning can be done sensitively, as pointed out in the 1910s by the most perceptive of city-analysts, Patrick Geddes. Integrating conservation into masterplans meant notifying and mapping cultural heritage sites. The process of municipal notification of heritage buildings in Delhi began in 2004 and was completed in 2010. In 2004, the Delhi Building Byelaws incorporated # 23, regulations governing notified heritage buildings. The CPWD published a good *Handbook on Conservation* in 2013, but the controls on heritage buildings have not been spelled out—whether it is to be the façade only, or also the interior? How are the skyline or the groundline and streetscape to be determined?

In increasingly crowded towns, it has been difficult to reach a consensus on design and permitted use. In 'developing' heritage areas as tourist baits, care has to be taken about two things—one, to control "creolization", when the inhabitants become—to borrow a phrase from Daniel Boorstin—'dishonest mimics of themselves'[17] (quoted in Waters, Hollington & Jordan, 2010: 30) as part of reinventing an area or a cultural practice in the anxiety to attract visitors, and two, to check the attempt to redesign towns to project a particular community's philosophy by renaming and designing theme parks.

As for ASI properties, the Archaeological Survey, by a notification in 1992 (incorporated into the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 2010) had formulated controls for monuments (not to be confused with 'heritage buildings') stipulating that 100 metres beyond a monument should be free of construction, and that for another 200 metres there would be design controls on construction). This cannot be made effective since the boundaries of most ASI properties are not demarcated,

and other buildings have come up close to them. The ASI (in charge of monuments) and municipal bodies (in charge of all buildings, including those notified as 'heritage') have a sense of territoriality which paralyses action.

These rules and prohibitions generate a tangle that is truly humungous. It needs full-time work by a dedicated office. The Ministry of Urban Development gave an impression of this being done. While formulating the Heritage Bylaws, they set up a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) for Delhi. But this has a handful of members who are required to attend meetings for about five hours every month. Its main concern seems to be to see that 'heritage conservation' does not stand in the way of 'urban development' rather than the other way round! The few and brief meetings of the Committee means that it cannot be taken as a serious group concerned with the beauty of the city.

It is difficult to get a measure of what is actually being *done* (as distinct from policy pronouncements, charters and declarations) to identify, showcase and take care of 'Heritage', portioned out as it is between ASI, INTACH, the Ministry of Culture and that of Urban Development. The last has expanded its functions of planning to becoming the national custodians of culture. In increasingly crowded towns, a consensus on design and permitted use is difficult, particularly when heritage areas are in use as offices or are covered with settlements. Their stakeholders have very different priorities. The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission of 2004 could have been an opportunity for creating heritage precincts in our towns, but no one had a clear idea of how it was to be done. In an echo of UNESCO's category, the Ministry of Urban Development in 2014 designated a dozen 'heritage cities', nearly all linked with the shrine of one or other of the religions in India. This is a rather narrow definition of 'heritage'.

In the last half-century, there is an impressive body of scholarship, and more institutions connected with heritage, and a vast increase in those with technical expertise on conservation. Oral histories and memory-projects have got off the ground. But the readiness to undergo the wear and tear of activism for a cause (the nationalist movement at one end, H.D. Shourie's Common Cause at the other) is conspicuously missing. Enthusiasm and vision was responsible for our architectural heritage, and enthusiasm and vision are needed if we are to give them their rightful place in our cities.

Designating Independent India's Heritage Buildings, 2014-17

To answer the question posed at the beginning of this essay we have to start from 2014. That year the Delhi Chapter of INTACH sent to the Delhi Urban Art Commission and the Delhi Heritage Conservation Committee a list of 62 buildings in Delhi constructed after 1947, to be added to the list of notified heritage buildings. Both bodies put off discussion on this for two years. Meanwhile, another document—the proposal for the Convention Centre to be built at PragatiMaidan after demolishing the Hall of Nations—was listed for discussion by the DUAC and the HCC, the former to discuss the design of the proposed Centre, the latter to ensure that its construction would not affect any nearby heritage building. It was quite clear that the unsaid issue was that a decision had to be taken as to whether the Hall was a heritage building-in-waiting.

When news spread about the proposed demolition, thousands in India and other countries signed a letter urging the Trade Fair Authority to redesign its proposed Convention Centre in such a way as to leave the Hall of Nations untouched (this, with the assumption that the Hall, along with 60 other buildings, was slated to be designated as a Heritage Building). In 1989, students of architecture had kept vigil by night to see that the PWD did not destroy the India Gate Canopy. Twenty-years on, schools of architecture have increased at an exponential rate, links between Indian practitioners and their counterparts in other countries have been growing. But on 23 April 2017 there were no students to check the bulldozers at Pragati Maidan. The battle had already been lost. This, in spite of the fact that on the surface many things were better now than they were 50 years ago: architectural history was growing, 'heritage' was defined, there were institutions for its protection, conservation was a profession, people at large were more familiar with their neighbourhoods and with monuments. Getting concerned citizens to sign a petition had been easy. What was not easy was to put a point of view across to officials who have the power to destroy as well as to preserve, and who have no real commitment to cultural heritage, and are reluctant to stick their necks out.

That is the answer to the question of why the dog was silent on the night of 23 April.

In Sum

Increasing attention to architectural history and increasing opportunities to be trained as conservation professionals have

improved the presentation of the major icons of architecture, but not the rest. Political parties and administrators alike look at all land as potential real estate. The nostalgia and the sharp sense of loss which fired the conservation lobbies in the West have been missing in India.

At present, there appears to be only one way to generate this enthusiasm—to work at a joint endeavour linking government agencies and individuals, without a sense of hierarchy. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, from the 1990s, has brought together material conservation, landscape revival, historical research and community involvement at Humayun's Tomb, Hazrat Nizamuddin and Nizamuddin Basti. This is an inspirational template for other sites. Its work meets rigorous standards of research, it is presented in a way not to evoke nostalgia but curiosity and pleasure. Its teams have a range of people across all ages and levels of skill. The rhythm of hand and mind working together will help impressionable children appraise our heritages and think of the artists, not the patrons, of the traditions honed in the forests and by the river, not in towns. These children will grow up to interact with the town, not *plan* it, to reverently restore the work of those who have gone before them, not bulldoze it, and enjoy their curiosity about history. Hopefully, this will build the bridge between past and present generations.

Notes

1. This is an updated version of a talk given at the IIAS in September 2016. I am grateful to IIAS for providing hospitality for a week's stay, and to the Fellows for their warmth and helpfulness. The talk was entitled 'The Hall of Nations and our Sense of History'. At that time, the future of the Hall of Nations in Delhi's Pragati Maidan was a subject of debate. Today, like the Babri Masjid, the Hall is a thing of the past, but its ghost haunts us.
2. International Council on Monuments and Sites.
3. Catherine Asher, Ebba Koch, Michael Meister, George Michell, Giles Tillotson, Anthony Welch, and Stuart Cary Welch (d. 2008) are among the scholars who have been continuously productive since the 1970s.
4. The Urban History Association of India was formed after a stimulating interdisciplinary conference organized by the History Department of Amritsar University in March 1978. Its sessions were held after the annual Indian History Congress sessions. Professor Indu Banga has been the driving force behind it.
5. Charles Wallace (1855-1916) bequeathed his considerable wealth for the promotion of Indian culture and heritage.
6. The earliest listings are from the late 1980s, and it is a work-in-progress. At present there are 400 volumes in the INTACH library. The next stage will be to have the sites 'notified' and designated as 'Heritage Buildings'.
7. Rahul Mehrotra and Sharada Dwivedi published some large books on themes from Bombay/Mumbai's architectural heritage, as well as small paperback

volumes which could be the basis for heritage walks. Shyam Chainani (1943-2011), who worked tirelessly for the conservation of structures and open spaces, published *Heritage and Environment* (Chainani, 2007).

8. According to a review that appeared in *The Hindu*: 'Part of a series on ancient civilisations—the other titles being *The Glory that was Greece, The Grandeur that was Rome, The Splendour that was Egypt* and *The Greatness that was Babylon—The Wonder that was India* [1st ed. 1954] was A L Basham's effort to correct the negative stereotypes of India perpetuated by the writings of James Mill, Macaulay and Vincent Smith. Smith's *Early History of India* [3rd ed. 1914] had become a standard in Indian schools and universities. Translated into a dozen languages including Spanish, Russian, Polish and Croat, *The Wonder*, along with nationalist historian R.C. Majumdar's multi-volume *History and Culture of the Indian People* sought to replace the imperial histories of India' (06/03/2005).
9. "The Making of New Delhi", exhibition organized jointly by the British Council, the Delhi Development Authority and the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, March-April 1980.
10. But local studies and architectural history remain distant from school and university courses. In 2002, some college and university teachers applied themselves to examining school textbooks and to making suggestions for making them child-friendly. It has been seen in other countries that a child's scale is limited, and that within the smaller unit he is able to ask lively questions and retain more for longer. There is therefore a strong case to be made for teaching young children less *national* history and *national* heritage, and more local history and entry-points into local cultures and heritage—whether music in Chennai, theatre in Mumbai or architecture in Agra.
11. "Heritage Interpretation" is an umbrella term coined in 1957. Freeman Tilden defined six principles of interpretation (Tilden, [1957] 1977). The term came in general use only from the 1980s.
12. The CSD started as the Monuments Sub-group of the Environment Group which had been formed on the initiative of the inspirational Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya in 1982.
13. The Venice Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, 1964, details an 'international framework' for the conservation of historic architecture.
14. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
15. Central Public Works Department, Government of India.
16. In putting the INTACH library in some order in 2005, I located 600 proposals, hardly any of which had been implemented.
17. Jaisalmer is only one example in India of how people living in a heritage site act the exotic role that tourists love to see, and also quickly learn to recite (not speak, since they do not understand the words) the guides' patter, in a range of European languages!

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VOICING RESISTANCE, TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES: READING 'MY MOTHER INDIA'

Ishmeet Kaur Chaudhry

The present socio-political situation of the Sikhs in Punjab and other states cannot be understood without referring to the two decades, the 1980s and 1990s. The events in these two decades have played a major role in redefining religion. Equally true for other religions worldwide, there is an apparent transition in the role that religion played in the past and that it plays now. In modern times, religion has largely become a site for identity issues. Punjab in independent India witnessed a separatist identity politics due to several events like Operation Blue Star, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination and the state-sponsored pogrom, followed by two decades of militancy and terrorism. These events constitute an inter-related loop that reshaped the history of Punjab, changing the social dynamics that suggested altered definitions of terms and ideas of religion, martyrdom, victimhood and saviour. This transition can be understood by studying the relationship of the state vis-à-vis citizens of a minority community.

In the same context, thrity-three years down the line, the 1984 anti-Sikh carnage[1] left an unforgettable impact on the minds of the survivors. The reason for this could be the long history of injustice that has continuously added to the woes of the survivors and victims all these years. Despite the fact that many innocent people were killed, the perpetrators and the major politicians involved in the killings remained scot-free (Singh, 2009: 152-155). The exact number of people missing and killed remain unknown; whatever little is known is only an estimated number. The People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) report in 1992 registered 2733 people killed in Delhi (PUCL-PUDR, 1992: 1), which is an official number as recorded in the report; many killings in various cities around the country remain unaccounted for. As an after-effect, the survivors continue to live in a deplorable state till date. The incident has become a case of sheer neglect that serves as an example of a systemic breakdown of

the state machinery as the police refused to protect people and the medical institutions refused to render treatment to the Sikhs who were being attacked and injured during the pogrom. A field visit to Tilak Vihar colony of widows of 1984 anti-Sikh violence, Trilokpuri and other affected areas, demonstrate an attitude of neglect and ignorance of both government as well as the Sikh leadership towards the victims. Numerous cases filed in the courts by the survivors and the oral narratives of the survivors offer tales of untold suffering, history of neglect and indifference towards these members of the community.

While studying communal violence and its impact, the question whether violence can be studied in isolation is critical.'Isolation' in this connection connotes reading in the context of a single community against which violence is inflicted, by ignoring its effect on members of other communities. Such an attempt would make the dominant/oppressive and the dominated/oppressed seem as neat categories but this neatness is a farce. It is evident from the oral narratives that neither all Hindus killed Sikhs (there have been several cases where Hindus had saved Sikhs during the pogrom), nor were Sikhs the only ones to get killed as many Hindus and people of other religions, who were sheltering the Sikhs or were living in Sikh dominated areas, were also killed.

The main objective of the present paper is to discuss how certain people, who do not belong to the community, become unnoticed subjects. Alternatively, the question that arises is: does mob-violence affect people belonging to the targeted religion, or a single caste, or does it affect others too? How do we define the victim? Is the victim always the insider who is directly hit, or are there outsiders too, who may feel the impact indirectly? With the understanding of the victim evolves an understanding of power relations, the position of the victim, the choices available to him/her and an understanding of suffering behind experience. The individual experiences are varied and so is the capacity to deal with them. Sandra Walklate suggests that 'under the conditions of what might be called "trauma creeps" these capacities have remained somewhat hidden from the view' (Walklate, 2017: 9).

The documentary 'My Mother India'(2002), directed by Safina Uberoi, focuses on the life of her mother, Patricia Uberoi, who married a Sikh Professor from Delhi University, Prof. J. P.S. Uberoi. It deals with how 1984 anti-Sikh violence affected their family. Patricia faced an identity crisis resulting from her experience of carnage. She had assimilated to an Indian way of life. She, later

on, was led to surrender her Australian passport due to the new policies that added to her self-inquiry centered on the concerns of belongingness. The year 1984 led to the separation of the family. The present paper engages with this film; it examines how a White woman in the postcolonial situation remains vulnerable and marginalized, suggesting a departure from the centrality enjoyed by the White in the colonial period. On the one hand, the impact of such incidences for research purposes remains limited only to the evident victims belonging to the same community. On the other, the documentary has a panoramic view of how such events influence people who may not apparently seem to have any semblance to the affected communities, but, the truth is that they are still important and integral members of the same community and any situation of sectarian violence has a direct effect on them despite the fact that they often go unnoticed.

It is often considered that an individual victim speaks as a collective representative for all victims, but for Patricia Uberoi, the crucial question is whether her suffering will be understood and received in the same way as that of other Sikh women. Or would she be an unclaimed victim? Patricia's experience combines a statement of truth as she bears witness to the times and to the reality of her own experience. Her narrative is also read as a testimony as she testifies the experience of others of her kind. The issue, captivatingly, gets extremely complicated in a discussion on witness and witnessing, particularly as to who bears a witness for the victims? Are the victims themselves witnesses or are the survivors witnesses? Patricia Uberoi is a witness to other victims of the Sikh families as a "tertiary victim" (Walklate, 2017: 8).[2] Nonetheless, she is also a primary victim who is left bereft of a witness. In her case, suffering is an individual's suffering and she alone bears witness to her own experience.

The Unnoticed Subject

Mass violence unleashed on certain communities results in community consciousness amongst its people. Interestingly, in the present study, the subject, who is from a different race and nationality, is directly affected by the community-targeted violence. Usually, the people of the Sikh community would be considered as the only victims but it is important to understand that there may be other people who struggle on the same account but the form of suffering may differ. Despite the fact that during the carnage the conflict was evidently visible between the Hindu majority and the

Sikh minority, many Hindus also suffered in areas where there was a Sikh majority and a Hindu minority.[3] Some of these subjects remain unnoticed subject. Judith Butler suggests how certain particularities are pertinent in recognizing the subject in certain contexts. She defines these specificities as "frames". She appropriately suggests that the subjects are recognized through the norms and these very normative conditions define the ontological existence of the subject (Butler, 2009:4). Since Patricia Uberoi may not seem to fit these general normative definitions of the Sikh community, she remains an unnoticed subject. The political representation of the people of the community stand out as the Sikhs display the turban, wear the long uncut hair or the five K's as an identity marker (or some of them) but for Patricia Uberoi[4] any such marker that provides a sense of belonging to the community is missing. Her belonging to the community is essentially determined by her marriage with a Sikh man. The identification to the community may have remained insignificant throughout her life, until they experienced the troubled times. Her White skin and blonde hair make her stand apart. This brings us to the critical inquiry of her identity as a Sikh or a White woman during the 1984 carnage.

For the community and the system, both legal and social, Patricia acquires a status of the "ignored" subject as she is neither a so-called directly-hit victim nor a non-victim. Her victimhood needs to be understood in the individual suffering she undergoes because of the anti-Sikh violence where the family had to remain in a hideout for several days. It is interesting to note how the term "victim" is defined and how Patricia embodies this definition. According to the 1985 United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for the Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, victim means any person who has suffered harm, individually or collectively. "Harm" includes physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights. The definition states:

> A person may be considered a victim, under this Declaration, regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, apprehended, prosecuted, or convicted and regardless of the familial relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. The term 'victim' also includes, where appropriate, the immediate family or dependents of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to present victimization (United Nations, 1985: 3).

For Patricia Uberoi, the measure of suffering is similar to any other victim. There may not be physical injuries or the loss of life in her

family (though her father-in-law died around the same time because of illness and not the anti-Sikh violence), which several other Sikh families had to experience. But the psychological trauma, insecurity and threat to life was damaging for her.

Ernest Laclau uses the phrase "the death of the Subject"[5] (Laclau, 2003: 428) in another context which in the present context aptly explains the conflict that the subject experiences when the subject is taken back to question her own human identity. Is it a matter of interpretation, occasion, threat or subjectivity? The entire process of communal/national othering makes her revisit her own identity, particularly in a place that has suddenly changed from what it actually was when she came in after marriage. At this point, she is thrust as an outsider, somebody who is forced to revisit her identity as an Indian (to which she finally submits by surrendering her Australian passport). Safina Uberoi, the director of the documentary and Patricia's daughter brings out the complexity of the situation for an Australian woman who is in a minority in the following words:

> It is confronting for an Australian audience to think what it is like for an Australian woman to be in a minority. Here, you are saying, 'OK you are the other. Now come with me and see what it feels like.' It also confronts Indians with the idea of foreignness. For Indians it's also a double-edged sword. Foreign rule is something Indians feel proud of having overthrown in1947 but they are also aware that Westernisation has remained a complex and complicated process in India (Simpson, 2002: 3).

In the same sense, conflicting identities seem to emerge for Patricia—they may be gendered, national or communal. Being married to a Sikh man who chooses to return to his religious identity by wearing a turban and beard, there is a formulation of the self, which is largely dependent on social experience. The meaning of self is derived from this social interaction where the self becomes an object and the vocabulary that functions as an image of "the other" is construed from the identity markers (like turban and beard) of religious significance. Thus, the individual (micro) interaction of the self arises from the social interaction on a macro level. Freese and Burke explain the origins of identity theory in social psychology as to how the person's environment determines the microscopic interaction that functions on two aspects as: one, action and reaction; and two, interaction:

> If persons and their environments mutually determine each other in a dynamical process of interaction, then a theory of microscopic

> interaction must rest on two things: (1) a theory of the person, as both cause and effect, and (2), the manner in which interaction dynamics are organised as identity dynamics (Freese & Burke, 1994: 5).

For Patricia Uberoi, the stimulation of the individual self is proportional to social interaction particularly at the moment of the event. In this case, it is reactionary (effect) to the cause of social experience (1984 anti-Sikh violence) and the consequential threat to her family. Particularly, the times when mob violence broke out in Delhi on 31 October 1984, the family had to stay in a hiding at a friend's house for almost a week. As suggested in the film, the mob must have visited their house in their absence to find nobody home. The family returned almost after a week and that called for a change in their entire life thereafter. This experience instills a sense of loss, particularly emotional, accompanied with a great sense of insecurity. Patricia was troubled by the incidences around her, such as, the buses, moving towards the places where Hindus lived in majority, being bombed by the Sikhs post-1984 violence. Therefore, she decided to send her son to a boarding school in Australia, independently, even without the consent of her husband. This very act of sending her son away to Australia portrays the fact how fissures arise in extreme stressful conditions. For her, India was no more a secure place.

For J. P. S.Uberoi, the "othering" was in terms of the "communal other" as a Sikh man who had never worn any of the identity markers earlier but chose to display his Sikh identity through the turban post-event and made attempts to understand the Sikh faith thereafter. Ironically, Sikhism displayed democratic notions of a secular and composite culture. The basis of the Sikh belief system seems to have got lost in the gambit of political assertions both by the assassinators and the assassinated as individuals. In an interview of the survivors, one of the victims wondered as to why the two Sikh men killed the Prime Minister that called for the brutal killing of several innocent people who were equally mourning the death of the Prime Minister like the people of other communities.[6] Despite the fact that even Sikhs, like common citizens, were neutral and grieving the death of their Prime Minister, their lives were at stake just because they belonged to the community of the men who had killed the Prime Minister. As the nature of violence clearly indicated that it was a state-sponsored anti-Sikh pogrom, the nation, suddenly, had become the custodian of an individual whose death had to be avenged at the cost of hundreds of innocent lives, which included men, women and innumerable children. Uma Chakravarti explains this disconnect between the nation and its people in the following

words, as a complete breakdown of machinery where individual goals superseded the national interest:

> They lost the sense of security that was considered an essential aspect of the watan's code towards them. The breakdown of the code between a watan and its people, and between different segments of its people, was the theme of the sense of loss experienced even by the middle class, otherwise comfortably positioned Sikh students. For Reena, a young Sikh school girl, the loss of companionship and camaraderie among friends and acquaintances, of being marked off as an outsider, made her feel very vulnerable (Chakravarti, 1994: 2725).

Similarly, many acquaintances and friends had turned against the Sikhs, blaming every individual responsible for the act of two assassinators. In the documentary, Patricia's younger daughter Zoe had a similar experience where her classmate passed adverse comments to her justifying the reason for killing innocent people. This had an unforgettable influence on her mind. She was unable to forget those comments even fifteen years after the incident. Safina suggests that she wanted to bring out the experience of the person who individually experiences hate. Safina describes Zoe's experience as follows:

> What Zoe says in the film is insightful. Her friend claimed she couldn't see that there was anything wrong with killing people who had done nothing wrong. Her friend said, 'I don't mean *you personally*' and Zoe replied, 'But of course you do. You mean me, and everybody else like me.' And that childhood experience brings tears to her eyes 15 years later when she's a grown-up person. That is the power of hatred (Simpson, 2002: 8).

A very powerful shot in the film where Zoe refuses to be excluded from the community is the act of challenging the hypocrisy that people often tend to display through use of phrases like "I don't mean you" (Simpson, 2002: 8) when they actually mean you. To put it rightly, it is an act of "being marked off as an outsider" (Chakravarti, 1994: 2722). This incident also suggests how instruments of hate inflict public in general and a deterritorialization (Deleuze *et al.*, 1983: 28) of communities is apparent. Though Deleuze *et al.* use this term in another sense, the concept is relevant in the present context in the way the communities are witness to a deterritorialized cultural experience emerging out of the political situation of the times. This situation tends to transform the relationships between communities influencing everyday cultural experiences, erupting out of a local event and transforming the city space into a hunting ground on the basis of identity markers.

The Mother Image and the National Imaginary

Though the film was made for an Australian audience it could never be detached from the Indian setting as it had a huge "historical contextualisation" (Simpson, 2002: 3). The documentary seems to address the possibility of reconstructing the self ideologically. It also offers an assessment of the past that is prominently available in the present, in a sense that life probably could have been different in case the 1984 carnage had not had such an impact on the family. Michaels aptly suggests that the past contributes to define an individual in the present. The events in the past not only influence the present but play a prominent part in defining the present as 'they can become part of our experience and can testify who we are' (Michaels, 2004: 139). In this case, this is largely made possible through documentary as a mode of narrative and memory that testify the life-shaping events. Bill Nichols claims that the formal mode of logical organization in a documentary 'supports an underlying argument, assertion, or claim about the historical world' (Nichols, 2001: 23). A documentary is different from a commercial film particularly with respect to the edits and cuts that is a mechanism to produce the desired effect, mostly fictionalizing that which may not be real. Nichols explains more lucidly that the organization of a documentary is assessed in 'terms of the persuasiveness or convincingness of its representations rather than the plausibility or fascination of its fabrications.'

Similarly, Wallis and Pramaggiore suggest that the documentary medium plays an important role in asserting an argument that enables the scrutiny of the issue at hand. In their words:

> Documentaries may also make other arguments: they may assert that the subject matter of the documentary is worthy of greater scrutiny (the issue has more sides than have been represented); that a social or economic practice has caused, is causing problems that need to be addressed; that a subculture is of interest because it resonates with culture at large (or, conversely, because it represents the profound diversity of humanity); that a forgotten but important cultural or historical figure needs to be given her or his due; that previous explanations of a historical event have not fully captured its complexity, or have deliberately ignored certain facts and viewpoints (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2005: 251).

Therefore, documentary as a medium differs from the commercial film in the very matter of approaching the subject. Focus on Patricia is largely to represent that which is missed or may go unnoticed. It opens up possibilities of addressing greater complexities when one encounters questions of identity and human rights. What is powerful

in the documentary is the narrative scale that binds humour as a mode of diction with a serious and an important concern. Patricia's recovery is problematized when her own identity as an assimilated Indian contradicts her appearance as an Australian. Her memory retraced the social ironies beginning with a pun on the underwear drying on the clothes line to the crucial act of estranging minorities based on identity-markers. This narrative device as employed in the documentary is a powerful means of a critical inquiry into the mindset of a society that is malleable to political pressures and categorizes itself into several segments based on caste, religion, language, region or even race.

The subject of the film being a white-Australian woman, brings forth the crucial issues of migration and dissects the whole construct of nation. The very title "My Mother India" knits 'the representation of woman and nation' together where woman is 'the self-sacrificing maternal figure' as depicted in the 1957 film *Mother India* (Simpson, 2002: 8). This corresponds to the idea that the woman depicts the nation. In the present case, this whole notion is extremely complex, particularly when she has to give up her Australian passport in order to work in India, she feels she has somewhere been extremely violent on her own self. At this point, we return to the phrase "death of the subject" (Laclau, 2003: 428) that seems suicidal in nature. The situation is more complicated than merely this, as the subject is forced to commit suicide (in a more symbolic sense) and once again becomes the ignored, unnoticed subject. More debatable questions arise from this: (1) How can a woman of foreign origin depict India as her nation? This may be on an individual level but when connected to the societal units of family and community there is an automated connection with them. This could be understood from the fact that when the mob-attacks began in the city, Patricia was equally vulnerable (perhaps even more vulnerbale owing to her white skin) as any other Sikh woman. Her national identity/nationality got diluted at that moment. This raises an ironical question whether she can really symbolize India as a nation. Interestingly, her situation and presence ear mark the real India versus the projection of India as a secular nation. (2) Her assimiliation to the Indian way of life and adopting the Indian dress and food habits convey an acceptance of both the people and national images on the part of the subject. But when she is percieved by the outsiders, their look transforms into a "gaze" pertaining to her colour and skin, and she is immediately ousted as an "outsider", a "foreigner". This may result in laying the geographical and political boundaries around her. Safina explains

that this depiction was inspired by the calendar images, a subject on which her mother was researching. She says:

> And that's another reason why the 'Mother India' theme was very current in my mind because she was looking at the representation of women and nation coming through in popular imagery. In fact, in some of the calendars used, you can actually see a 'Mother India' figure in the foreground and a map behind (Simpson, 2002: 9).

In the construction of the figure of 'Mother India', the situation of the woman determines a reconstruction of what Veena Das terms as "masculine nation". She talks of this concept in terms of 'violation on the female body' but she raises a very important concern for women that is equally relevant here:

> The violations inscribed on the female body (both literally and figuratively) and the discursive formations around these violations, as we saw, made visible the imagination of the nation as a masculine nation. What did this do to the subjectivity of women? (Das, 2007: 59)

For Patricia, the violations may not be physical but is apparently psychological. She moved to India after her marriage and fulfilled the expectations of the family as a typical Indian Punjabi wife, looking after her ailing father-in-law, much contrary to her own feminist mother-in-law who refused to see her husband during his illness and even on his death because of his behavior towards her during the Partition years. The treatment that Patricia received for her foreign-ness in India, redefined her own existence vis-à-vis the definition of the nation. At the same time, the formation of nation gets deconstructed with fixation of the "other" within it. "Fixation" suggests that the acceptance of the subject should have been in a natural manner in which the subject accepts the other (her husband, and his family and country). However, throughout, her foreign-ness gets reaffirmed either on account of her hanging panties on the clothes line, or issues arising around the panties during child plays[7] amidst several conventional people living around. With these panties evolves the East-West dichotomy that leads to defining the inner and the outer spaces as feminine or masculine. The moment women intrude into the masculine spaces (even with a little act of the display of panties) they tend to get scandalized. Uberoi explains that other Indian women would never hang their panties openly as for them "…panties are their underneath. It's their most private place, the underneath, the inside. That's where I wanted the film to go—the inside of public experience" (Simpson, 2002: 2).

Uberoi seems to merge the public experience with the insider's account of an individual's life. The most traumatic experience for Patricia was surrendering her Australian passport. Though just a paper document, it knits multiple arrays of the "self" that holds a matrix of issues pertaining to an individual's identity. Veena Das brings out the authenticity of these documents with respect to the roles of the state and how this becomes a crisis for the subject:

> The examples of FIRs, talaqnamas, sterilization certificates, ration cards, and hundreds of other such documents show how the state comes to be present in the everyday life of its subjects. Because it can be multiplied and literalized through documents such as court papers, certificates, and ration cards that can be genuine, forged, or even mimicked, it can enter the life of the community, but because the authenticity of these documents can always be put into question, the subject's identity can never be fully assumed in an encounter with the state (Das, 2007: 178).

Veena Das raises this issue in the context of the victims of 1984 anti-Sikh violence. Hence, by defining identities around documents, the individual's identities are inscribed as real rather than accepting the natural existence of an individual. Moreover, the state sanctions the existence, thereby acting as an agency of control.

"Justice Delayed is Justice Denied"

With this arises a crucial issue of representations and petitions made by the victims and sheer neglect of the state towards the matter. As the common saying goes, justice delayed is justice denied.The inability of the victims to prove the crime of the perpetrators due to absence of evidence cannot justify the rationality of the legal procedures.[8] It is a well-known fact that the riots were a consequence of the assassination of Indira Gandhi that aroused the vengeance against the Sikh community. Many senior Congress leaders and probably some veteran film stars and other important personalities who were involved remain unidentified and unpunished. Not a single case in the court has brought justice. The widow's colony in Tilak Vihar is a site where, even after thirty-three years, eyes get wet while narrating the gruesome experiences of 1984, often termed as 'Chaurasi'[9] that looms on as an infected wound. Despite the hopelessness in the eyes of the survivors, the words emit stories of suffering with little hope that someday someone might address their woes. Victims continue with a feeling of being orphaned and uncared for. Disillusioned but struggling with a sense of belonging towards those who have had similar experiences, the feeling of empathy underlines the

justification they search for the undeserving conditions that they all live in. *The Times of India* reported that, in the quest for justice, petitions by Sikhs on behalf of widows and victims have been filed in Australia in 2011 (21/10/2011) and recently in February 2015 (13/02/2015). This is particularly because section 268.117 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 provides that Australian courts have jurisdiction in cases involving crimes against humanity whether or not the offense was committed in Australia (Criminal Code Act 1995). Also, in 2012 a petition by M.P. Warren Enstch was moved in Australian Parliament to declare the anti-Sikh riots as genocide. In the petition, he said that 'as long as the violence continues to be referred to as "anti-Sikh riots" there can be no closure for the Sikh community' (India anti-Sikh riots: Australia petition to call it genocide). This openmindedness by the Australian legislation is a step forward towards asserting human concern above all boundaries of nation, race, class, creed or even caste. Particularly, when it is a question of violence, it is not related to particular sects alone. Such incidents need to be remembered and understood so that sensibility can be developed amongst people and to ensure that history does not repeat itself in any form to any body at all. The present times are very sensitive and othering is prominently visible in several forms. During 1984 anti-Sikh violence there was a complete breakdown of the system that would ensure justice. Perhaps, had the perpetrators been convicted, it would have set an example that may have averted the mob-violence that took place in later instances, such as the 2002 Godhra episode. Uma Chakravarti explains how the Muslims live in fear, anger and humiliation on several fronts:

> … subject to everyday forms of humiliation in normal times and fear for their lives in the more 'extra-ordinary' situation of the riots. Today it is they who hide or flee to 'safer' places each time political events target them. They too know that the state will not protect them as they realise that the lives of some citizens are expendable. That, to my mind, is the real tragedy of Indian society today: that large numbers of people feel that they must find an object of hatred in order to define themselves and that the state is increasingly complicit in such a definition as it becomes more and more the state of the majority community (Chakravarti, 1994: 2726).

Thus, it becomes crucial that representations be addressed world wide and greater justice be sought to protect human rights at the global front, be it in matters of gender, race, caste, class or ethnicity.

Conclusion

Concerning matters of representation, this documentary is a testimony on a deliberately muted subject (Ghosh, 1995) as recently a couple of films (even thrity-two years after the event) were banned. Moreover, there have been almost three decades of silence on the matter; the subject has not been adressed by major writers. Insider's representations have been several but very few writers of prominence have supported people in this concern. Reasons can be several, ranging from writer's delimma to political pressures. Amitav Ghosh highlights the issue of silence in his own case in the following passage, which very appropriately initiates the discussion about silence and writing:

> And until now I have never really written about what I saw in November 1984. I am not alone: several others who took part in that march went on to publish books, yet nobody, so far as I know, has ever written about it except in the passing. There are good reasons for this, not least the politics of the situation, which leave so little room for the writer. The riots were generated by a cycle of violence, involving terrorists in Punjab on the one hand, and the Indian government on the other. To write carelessly in such a way as to endorse terrorism or repression, can add easily to the problem: in such incendiary circumstances, words cost lives, and it is only appropriate that those who deal in words should pay scrupulous attention to what they say. It is only appropriate that they should find themselves inhibited (Ghosh, 1995).

The documentary "My Mother India" deals with such a sensitive matter very ingeniously. It knits the individual concern with a larger concern not just of a community in a nation but also on the international front. The boundaries of nation get transcended by the Australian origin of the protagonist, Patricia Uberoi, who becomes the major subject prone to violence instated against the community to which her husband belongs. Since the documentary interviews people who are involved with Safina, several voices get projected. Safina remarkably brings to the outside world the experience of the inside. In her attempt to do so, she somewhere brings forth another way of seeing, of those who survived, of those who were different but were equally affected. She also highlights the fact that once the one, who survives, realizes who hasn't, he or she begins to feel incredibly guilty. Working with the survivors in the camp, she wrote experiences for those, who were illiterate, as evidences were to be sent to the Nanavati Commission. Listening to stories of people, she acquired a sense of guilt (of herself being saved),

the survivor's guilt: 'So to hear these stories, you think, I'm so lucky it's disgusting. I don't deserve to be the one whose father was not attacked. I don't deserve to be the one whose house was not burnt to ground' (Simpson, 2002: 12). More than three decades have passed, and healing is still slow. People await justice, grappling to make sense of their identity for themselves, questioning their viable existence in the state they continue to live in. Correlating the experience of Indian Sikh women and that of Patricia, who comes from another country and assimilates their experience of the 1984 violence, one can see that the two are not different from each other, as those who had been staying here have been "othered" by their own people just as Patricia is "othered" as an unnoticed subject.

Notes

1. In June 1984 after the Operation Blue Star in which the Army had attacked the Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple at Amritsar, it is believed that the Sikh bodyguards had assassinated the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984. In retaliation, lakhs of Sikhs were massacred in a four-day pogrom across India. Delhi, Bokharo and Kanpur were worst-stricken. Post-carnage, thirty-three years down the line, a history of impunity continues as the perpetrators have not been brought to justice.
2. Walklate suggests that there is a link of the tertiary victim with witnessing that allows the possibility of mediating and 'has the potential to make victim of us all'. Though Walklate relates it to media's portrayal, she suggests that it is an important means to discern the roots of "cultural victimology" (Walklate, 2017: 8).
3. Karnail Singh's account depicted how in certain areas Sikhs were in majority and they also attacked the Hindus as a revenge for what was happening in other places. Vanita Juneja also reported how her family had to leave Chandigarh on the night of carnage primarily to save themselves as the Sikhs were spotting all Hindus in the vicinity they lived in.
4. Agamben suggests that in Latin there are two words for "witness", first, "testis" (from which testimony is derived); second "superstes" meaning 'a person who has lived through some-thing, who has experienced an event from beginning to end and can therefore bear a witness to it' (Agamben, 1999: 17). Similarly, Patricia Uberoi in the context of the event is a "superstes" as she experiences as well as stands witness to her experience.
5. Ernesto Laclau uses this phrase in the context of multifarious subjectivity that emerges as a result of multiple identities in the contemporary world (Laclau, 1992).
6. Uma Chakravarti records the experience of a woman whose husband was killed by the mob despite the fact that he had been fasting in mourning since morning (Chakravarti, 1994).
7. Safina Uberoi in her interview narrates how once during Dushera an effigy of Ravana was made by children and when they carried it for burning, a panty from the clothes line got stuck in the crown (Simpson, 2002).

8. For details, see Kaur, 2016.
9. For details, see Kaur Chaudhry, 2017.

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