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GNOSIS | An International Refereed Journal of English Language and Literature

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An International Refereed Journal of
English Language and Literature

Vol 6 No.2, January 2020

Editor: Saikat Banerjee

Vol No.2 Jan 2020

GNOSIS

An International Refereed Journal of English Language and Literature

Vol.6 -No. 2 January, 2020

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Editorial

The January 2020 issue of GNOSIS had a very warm response from the readers in India and abroad that articles have been flowing in quick succession to fill the folder for this issue even before the deadline of 31 August 2019. The thumping reception of the journal shows the depth of multicultural issues in literature to which critics and readers are attracted. As a journal committed to quality research and writing, we are aware of the need to delink quality from publication cost. Hence, our decision to charge no publication fee from the scholars whose papers will be published in the issues of GNOSIS. At the same time since GNOSIS is a self-financed venture, co-operation and support in the form of subscriptions are solicited from the readers and admirers of English Literature and Language from all over the world.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the Academicians and well wishers of GNOSIS who recommended GNOSIS for publication. There are nine research/critical articles, and one short story in this issue. Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my reverend Associate Editor, Dr. Indira Nityanandam and our esteemed members of the Board of Advisors and Review Editors for their selfless and tiresome efforts in assessing the articles very sincerely and giving their valuable remarks to bring out this issue in such a grand manner. I am also grateful to the revered contributors who have made this issue of the Journal a beautiful reality. Wishing all the readers a mental feast. Happy Reading!

Dr. Saikat Banerjee
Editor

Humans are Dalits

R. Venkataraman

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to propound the idea that humans the world over are essentially *dalits*, not physically present as certain communities in India, but as people with their congenital bent of mind orienting towards the irresistible tendency to commit sins, and inflicting arrogance and disaster in the life of others. The argument is this:

In the Indian context*, dalits* are those that are rooted deep into their soil of birth and belonging as denoted by the Marathi word *dalit*. This is physical in sense. When the word is lent extension of meaning, it assumes an archetypal connotation – the rootedness of the human mind in general towards evil. Therefore, logically considered, the rootedness of the mind is to err. Hence, at the mental level, except those of the *superego*-bent who emancipate and self-overcome, others are of the deep rooted mould and hence *dalits* in a wider sense.

In order to prove this premise, two literary works – Bama's *Karukku* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* are analyzed of the rootedness of the characters with the latter lending credence to the sinful tendency of the mind accounting for its rootedness in the sinful domain.

Keywords: Dalit, physical, mental, emancipation, self-overcoming, archetypal.

1.1 Introduction

The discussion in this paper pertains to the term "*Dalit*" with its elastic semanticity. There prevails a physical sense to the term *Dalit* which is confined to India, for the term is synthesized with Indian social life, of course with stigma. In western literature, the term has no connectedness with caste. Yet, the Indian meaning of the word pervades the nature of human propensity to naturally revel in infliction of pain on others. This is deep rootedness representing the deep rootedness of the *Dalit* in the soil of belonging.

The word *Dalit* is of Marathi origin which means "one who is rooted to the soil". The *Dalit* in India when appended with this meaning emerges as one who would not dare to move out from his soil of belonging for fear of being stamped by caste higher-ups. Further, the *Dalit*'s fear to move out of his place of belonging is a talisman by itself providing him with the security needed. David Rubadri's last two lines in "A Negro Labourer in Liverpool" best

describe the *Dalit*, even though the lines pertain to a different context: "Here his hope is the shovel, /And his fulfilment resignation". The purpose of *Dalit* literature is to affirm the humanity of the *Dalit*s and also to establish their personhood. Further, *Dalit* literature involves revealing the mental pangs and physical sufferings of the victims in particular and the general stigma attached to the sociological segment. The mental pangs involve rejection and eventual rebellion.

The term *Dalit* is very unfortunately vulgarized in its very conception and menacingly translated and (mis) interpreted. In the Indian context the term has denotative bearing, and in the world context it has its connotative implications. *Dalit* writing in India exposes the infliction of disgrace on the socially underprivileged. But the subterranean causative force of the inflictors ironically escapes being noticed of the connotative interpretational impact. Didactic literatures of the kind of *The Ramayana*, The *Mahabharata* and *Cilappatikaram* are hardly to come by, and we will to abide, , by the implicit dictates these great works invest us with. Though Lord Rama's friendship with Guhan, a fisherman, is an instance of oblivion of caste and status, on is appalled at Drona's expression of disgust, and despicableness at the birth of Karna. The Tamil translation of the term *dalit* into 'Tazhthappattor' (those that are wilfully rendered downtrodden) finds its full fathomed presence in the situation where Karnan faces ignominy, unable to answer the query regarding his birth. It could be said that *Dalitism* started here.

2.1 Physical Sense of *Dalit*

The dehumanization process hinging on one's birth in a particular caste or race inflicts pain on the victim both physically and psychologically – the former because of the corporeal frame which bespeaks of the birth, and the latter because it is the psyche which bears the brunt of vituperation, and disparagement.

The Marathi word *dalit* means "of the soil' (from the cognate' Dala') and "that which is rooted in the soil." A Dalit therefore means that the person belongs to the soil by being of ancient lineage, and one who is rooted to the soil. Considered in this light, any one whose lineage is ancient is a *Dalit*, not to speak of the fact that all people have an ancient lineage. If one can trace his lineage, then one can boast of one's ancience. If not, the sense of ancience cannot become pronounced though it is dormantly, unknowable .Viewed in this light, all people are *dalits*. But over the centuries they stood intimidated, buckled, bent, and exploited by Rachmanistic powers. This means that the 'Tazhthappattor' community, financially poor, mentally ill-informed and, therefore socially unbecoming, have been victims of malicious

trickeries, craftiness and insidiousness of the financially muscled who held or hold positions of power. Hence, it is all a question of dominance over people whose ancience is rooted to the soil and therefore permeates with the sense of belonging, alas, with the concomitant jeopardy to their physical well being with its impact on their psyche which has dwarfed them in course of time.

The socially unfortunate due to intractable oppression, remain rooted to the soil, and hence are Dalits. If, however, emancipation in the form of governmental encouragement for their upliftment takes place, then there is possibility for their release from the rootedness to the soil which situation would rid them of the *dalit* stigma. Tin this context, the term dalit, which is denotative of caste, is a misnomer and semantic nonsense. This is an instance of situational irony, rootless despite rooted to the soil!

2.2 Examples drawn from literature

With the views expressed so far, I take to deal with on comparative basis two novels – *Karukku* by Bama and *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Bama's autobiographical *Karukku* has a three dimensional significance, for it exposes Bama's predicament as a woman, Christian, and Dalit though the pronouncedly permeating inveterate *dalit* stigma is responsible for the ignominy inflicted on her. Hence*, Karukku* exposes the protagonist's blackening which runs concomitantly with the debased mentality of the inflictors.

The slight begins: "The post office, the *panchayat* board, the milk depot, the big shops, the Church, the Schools – all these stood in their streets …. Besides, there was a big school in the Naicker street which was meant only for upper caste children" (*Karukku*, P7). Untouchability, both in speech and practice, irreverent address to *dalit* elders even by tiny children from upper castes, the indiscriminate fault-finding leveled against *Cheri*-Children (slum children), disgrace inflicted in open in the presence of non-Dalits, the tug of war in mind whether to hide or not the *dalit* identity, the protagonist's decision to become a nun herself to spare *dalit* children from being oppressed by nuns themselves, being a Tamil is "equivalent to being a *Paraya*, the discrimination that bursts out at the time of burial of the dead, police harassment at the instance of upper caste people, the absence of will to will good for the *dalits* even by priests and others of Christianity who conveniently go oblivious of the teachings of Jesus Christ, the upper castes and those in churches making the ignorance of *dalits* as their capital and each day bringing new wounds demonstrate that the physical and

mental pangs of *dalits* come from external forces. The situation is ironical because most of the 'upper castes' mentioned in *Karukku* behave in attitudinal regression, and it is really surprising to note the sense of 'upper' prevailing among such people because they represent and denote an aberrant mental state-a commonality in humanity which the early English dramatists demonstrated, and animated in their moralities by means of allegorical representations.

In the tussle between the upper castes with regressive mind and the *dalits*, the soul of the former is in jeopardy, for it is always possessed by the devil called pride. Consequently, humanity suffers. This pride is congenital, inherent, inveterate, and passes from one generation to another and as a consequence it gets rooted to the soil of the mind. While the physical factors determine the dalitism of *dalits*, their poverty, ignorance, shameful social conditions, pitiable miseries together with injustices and slight, which can be erased and effaced by welfare measures, the obdurate adamancy of perpetrations of harassment, which is blind to humanism defies all avenues of cure. That is, the rootedness of detest and discrimination, pride and prejudice refuse to be cleared. Hence, such people are also *dalits* as they are rooted to the soil of drainage of the mind. Perhaps this is the devil, from the point of view of true Christian connotation that accounts for a "closed society" alienated from humanistic perspectives constituted by anti-social sourpuss. While historical and social contexts undergo changes, the human heart remains static, and as it is rooted deep in the soil of what can be termed as misanthropy, and hence such hearted men are *dalits* – this meaning taking recourse to the original Marathi meaning of the word.

2.3 Meaning of *dalit* at the mental level

As regards Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, we confront two characters – an erstwhile Puritan woman Hester Prynne who has become adulterous, and Arthur Dimmesdale, a hypocritical priest. In the puritan sense, these two are sinners. In the course of the novel the puritan background and tract of Hester Prynne are never allowed any display in the form of encounter between Reason and surging of Heart. Dramatization of events start with Hester being mounted on the scaffold, a clear demonstration of public Puritanism in the form of societal concernment, for private profligacy is deemed detrimental. The private psychology of Hester is grounded on the impulses, feelings and emotions of her heart which represent the defects which are there already at her heart and mind emerge when an opportunity strikes – here the chance to lean on the personality of her liking, Arthur Dimmersdale, lending credence to belief that ideas and concepts such as Puritanism are

purely labored and eventually intellectualized to constitute the moral backdrop, accounting for the sustenance of the concept called culture.

The marriage between Hester and Chilingworth proves incongruous, both consenting to marry out of individual necessities. From Hawthorne's point of view, the marriage is unnatural. Hester does not have any remorse over her attachment for Arthur, for she has taken to the path of her psychic dictates – the Id being predominant. Roger Chillingworth who was Prynne before, is after all natural in his impulse to slake his thirst for revenge against Arthur Dimmesdale. Any man in his position would naturally take to that recourse, for the heart needs assuagement first, not be brain, that can ward off with its thinking power the consequences of emotions.

Though Hawthorne does not labour to exhibit the reasons for Aruthr Dimmesdale's fascination for Hester, one can easily understand that the minister abides by the pleasure principles of his psyche, the Id, much against his professional imperatives – the products of a laboring mind. Pearl, the product of adultery and therefore immorality is not matured enough, for the tidings of her heart are yet to take shape, and it is natural to see her sticking to moralistic standards as she insists on Hester to stick to her bosom the letter 'A' thereby emphasizing that only Arthur Dimmesdale's confession would make her lead a normal life.

Taken as a whole, the set moral standard of society is against the sticking of the heart to its longings ignoring the dictates of the intellect in the case of Hester's love for the minister Roger Chillingworth's frenzied drive to wreak vengeance on Arthur Dimmesdale, and the latter's uncontrollable heart tidings that slight his thinking power in preference to the companionate Hester, of course hideously. These three personalities are victims of the congenital, and connate mindset that is controlled more by impulses, emotions, and feelings than by intellect. This is against the dominance of the sense of morality demonstrated by society collectively. Thus we see that intellectualization of the situation to the tenor of morality is set against the emotionalization process that has its leanings towards the heart.

3.0 Conclusion

Analysing the two novels – Bama's *Karukku* and Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter,* we see two different atmospheres. In the former, there is refusal to emotionalize the issue of expatriations of those rooted to the soil (*dalits*) by those who adhere to the foolish dictates of their mind cultivating detest which goes along the process of transmission from generation to generation which is also rootedness to the mental soil of cabined, confined blinkered outlook. In the latter novel, there is absence of intellectualization of the issue of natural life, and the surgings of the heart take the follow through. The trio find it difficult to extricate themselves

from the impulsive and emotive bondage. Hence, they are also rooted to the soil of naturalness in mind.

Collectively we find three groups of Dalits – Dalits in the Gujarathi sense of the word – those who are physically rooted to the soil in *Karukku*, those (of upper castes) who as, inflictors of physical and mental agony to the former and thus stand rooted to the irretrievable darkness of mind, and hence *dalits*, and the triple personalities in *The Scarlet Letter* who find themselves inextricably positioned with their aching of heart taking to the path to satiate their desires (Roger Chillingworth dies in the middle) and therefore rooted to the soil of feelings and emotions.

If Bama and her kind are Dalits in the physical sense, those responsible for they being dalits are also dlaits, for they are all rooted geographically and mentally respectively. As has been stated earlier, despite all our progress, advancement, and innovations, the Human heart and mind remain unchanged and unchangeable. Thus, the *Dalit* emergence which is inveterate, as ancient as civilization (?) itself, which has so far remained un-seeable makes its state pronounced due to the angular novelty of outlook of the reader which takes cognizance of the mental dimension of *Dalitism* with the dimension physical, already seen and experienced in the widest commonality and which has limited global relevance in the form of racial discrimination (caste in the Indian soil). This has the concomitance of attitudinal and preferential choices, and aberrations that inescapably become global in character.

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The Bliss of Teaching: Exploring the Paradigms of Happiness involved in Pedagogy

Dr. Komil Tyagi

Abstract: Teaching may not be the primary choice of the young in India because of the low financial remuneration that it offers but when it comes to happiness, it is the most worthwhile professions in the world. A lot of philosophical significance is advanced towards this profession since the ancient times but in the contemporary world the means and modes have evolved into newer forms. However, the paper confirms that the level of academic and platonic contentment achieved through this profession is unparalleled. Learning of new concepts, revision of old ones, delivering instructions through multifarious channels and finding elation in the end results are the key concepts involved in raising the happiness quotient of a teacher. This paper will act as a source of encouragement to many who wish to take up this profession but are inhibited by financial constraints and those who are still on the horns of a dilemma.

Key Words: Teaching, profession, happiness, stimulation, conversation, discussion, relationship, challenges.

If teaching could ever be classified into a profession, it would be one that offers eternal bliss. One of the finest line of vocations in the world, it offers great delight in the procedure itself. Teachers are the architects of humankind that define the perceptions and ambitions of the world and value academic and objective labour. The act of teaching is the most gratifying task and is the source of happiness for all; the student, the teacher and the society. Teaching is an enchanting phenomenon that becomes a source of interminable and definite happiness for the Guru. In the process of pedagogy, happiness is achieved at a multitude of levels. Ranging from the learning phase, to delivery of instruction, to making a substantial relationship at all echelons and lastly proceeding to the ultimate mark, all roads lead to contentment.

The initial process, acquiring knowledge for the purpose of instruction, is the first step in the manifold path, to acquire happiness. The exaltation received while **learning a concept/**subject/theory for a class is great, for it helps in the expanse of one's own intellectual ability while preparing for someone else's. Mental stimulation is received after having learnt a concept and therefore it leads to gratification. Learning about a new concept

or revisiting the old ones with familiar or novel examples forces the grey matter to flex a lot of muscle. Preparing for a class helps create connections between the teacher's prior experience and students' previous learning. It facilitates deeper understanding of content knowledge and helps in building critical thought. This act of revising and redesigning their content knowledge and methodologies, always keeps a teacher in a learning mode. The learner stage is the happiest phase of life as it helps the pedagogue expand his/her horizon.

In the mechanism of this vocation, teachers have to be perpetual students. A training course, here or there to renew certificates, is fine, but a constant revision and evaluation comes with one's own experiences. Understanding the learning process along with one's students provides the teachers with wonderful insight. A lot of learning takes place on the teachers' side of the classroom as well. It is said that a concept is fully absorbed by a student when he/she is ready to teach it to others. So, the instructor has to chew and digest a notion before delivering it, which is an intellectually rewarding progression. Teaching lets an individual ignite others with one's passion for learning and reveals how others can become lifelong learners themselves.

In the act of training, the pleasure is multiplied manifold by **delivering instructions to the students where it moves into multifarious channels** and shapes into multiple phenomenon. The adulation received through the deliverance of a lecture, getting desired responses at specific spots (probably) and delving into the pleasure of successful communication of thoughts, add to the delight of this vocation. Delivering instructions is always a pleasure which can be authenticated with the fact that almost every child has played the character of a teacher in his/her early life. In a child's play every individual loves to don the teacher's role and teaches everyone, from pillows, to soft toys to younger siblings and children from the neighborhood. The best moment for a teacher is witnessing a student grasp a concept for the first time. There is no better reward than helping a student finally reach clarity. This instant can be life-changing for both the learner and educator. Teachers instruct to reach out and see their progress develop over time. Gurus love it when their students understand academic curriculum and find ways to apply it practically in real world situations. Since preparing students to be successful and happy adults is the eventual goal, teachers have to maintain a composed and contented disposition.

Educators find great pleasure in conversation, demonstration and discussion. Probably, teaching is one of the only professions in the world where repetition is the source

of elation and gratification and, not frustration. Though in many universities the same syllabus is taught over years and sometimes the chapters are not changed for decades altogether but the delight of teaching the same texts remains the same, for the receivers are new every time. To elucidate this, I will take an example from my own experience. Keats' poem 'Ode to Autumn' was in the syllabus for all the different classes that I was teaching for a particular year. Different streams, different classes, and different learners made the experience of delivering the same lecture, diverse. Since the first year students were new to the poem but not to the poet, the lecture was tilted towards the pleasures offered by the poem. The second year students had already done the chapter before; therefore the focal point had to be shifted on the deliberations of the poem, the history associated with it and its varied interpolations. The focus was more on discussion than explanation of concepts. In the class of computer applications and pure sciences, the poem was the greatest source of aesthetic pleasure that drew us away from complex metaphysical mechanisms of life and also kept us much within. Diverse comports helped gain varied angles to a singular text and therefore, added to the component of the poem every time it was taught in the classroom. As a teacher, I gained the most out of it for I had not only learnt an assortment of reflections on the text but had also discovered a number of ways to introduce, teach and discuss a particular text and furthermore, how inadequate is the preparation of a teacher even if you have to teach a similar text to different classes. The elation gained out of this practice was unparallel.

Most instructors/educators working in the colleges of India are not trained to teach and therefore teaching skills have to be acquired through everyday classroom experience. Gaining these skills through day after day experiences and, the ever continual process of learning grows to be a spring of happiness for the teacher. Since there is no formal training, and the orientation courses come much later in the term, on-job training pursues. An educator has to be an amalgamation of a multitude of phenomenon. Teaching is much more than plain transmission of information, as the Guru has to build a three way relationship between subject matter, teacher and students. The classroom becomes a laboratory for the teacher, where experimentation and inference drawing is held at a similar pace and space. The way; the eyes widen as the teacher introduces a concept for the very first time, a wandering eye moves back from outside distractions to the class when real life examples are given by the instructor, the pencil rushes into a frenzy when something significant is discussed, the heads nod as the lecture advances, the facial expressions change when something is demonstrated through an empirical method; are all diminutive gestures that are markers to define the

success level of a lecture and their observation makes classroom teaching a joyful task. Scientists create something new in every few years and the accomplishments of those formations are seen immediately but teachers have to create multiple novel intellects every single instant and the domino effects are seen much later. As the results come after a while, the moments of happiness have to be captured by the teacher within the classroom as they are not just reflexes but signs that reinforce the accomplishment or malfunction of an experiment.

If one is a teacher in a college or University, teaching provides a unique prospect to uphold a spirit of youthfulness. Working with young minds keeps the teachers in touch with their world, and the educators are always up to date with the latest as the young generation students never let them be out of touch. It is essential for teachers of young students to remain youthful and flexible. Young learners keep their teachers aware of the most recent in every discipline and therefore add to the knowledge quotient of the teacher. In many cases they share the best and worst of their life experiences with each other, the teacher becomes the pilot for his/her pupils as they have themselves flown through many a rough patches in life. They will not only provide solutions but will also offer to be a sponge for those convoluted emotions. It is symbiotic, for sometimes the teachers also compare notes, especially concerning their children and get suitably advised by the young students. This way they build an esteemed and enduring relationship that becomes the genesis of a blissful and affectionate life. Here is an example of a young student talking about his not-so young teacher:

> He tells my parents how I took every class he taught. He tells them, 'You have a special boy here.' Embarrassed, I look at my feet. Before we leave, I hand my professor a present, a tan briefcase with his initials on the front. I bought this the day before at the shopping mall. I didn't want to forget him. Maybe I didn't him to forget me. 'Mitch you are one of the good ones', he says admiring the briefcase. Then he hugs me. I feel his thin arms around my back…he asks if I will stay in touch, and without hesitation I say, 'of course.' When he steps back, I see that he is crying. (Albom 4)

The deliberations analyzed here, make the career appear a contented one, as if treading the silken route to euphoria but there are another visages to the picture. Teaching in countries like India that see a tug of war between resources and population, is like balancing on a tightrope as the challenges outnumber the rewards. Apart from the discipline that is to be executed in the classroom by conducting oneself as an example, the educator has to take pleasure in managing the strength as well, since the robust number of pupils in Indian

classrooms is another limitation. Our Ex-President and a teacher, Mr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam mentions his experience:

> I had been enjoying my time in the large, tranquil campus, working with professors and inquisitive students on research projects and teaching. The authorized strength of my class was sixty students, but during every lecture, the classroom had more than 350 students and there was no way one could control the number of participants. My purpose was to understand the aspirations of the youth, to share my experiences from national missions…When I finished, I had to answer numerous questions and my class extended from a one-hour teaching session to two hours. (9-10)

Time is what the teachers have to race against as apart from the time allotted to instruction, time is also employed in planning and grading. The pedagogues have to fight technology as well, as they have to make sure that the learners should be off their phones while they are listening to the instructor or reading literature, at least. Students of the present era are so used to varied forms of technologies and have a totally different skill set. The moment a new topic is introduced it is 'googled' up. The educator has to compete with the information provided on the internet and also ensure that the method of information transfer has to be more interesting and then, the guide has to look for plenty of ways to incorporate technology into new-fangled activities. Disability (mental or physical) is also a part of student diversity as it can affect teaching and learning processes. Educators have to be well equipped to handle the diversity of students they will encounter during every teaching session. These challenges and the measures taken to resolve them, offer the instructor enormous exercise to design the itinerary of her/his way out of these labyrinths. Gaining triumph over these major and minor challenges in classrooms everyday gives a teacher a scope to widen the breadth of her achievement, which in turn brings jubilation.

When students offer skepticism and reservation in the class, the teacher, through her own self assurance and poise, restores trust. Every situation, positive or negative has to be turned into a learning experience and the navigator is always overwhelmed by his/her powers that steer the class in the right direction. Sometimes, the influence of an unconstructive home environment can overpower an educator's abilities as well. He/she may have spent hours or days preparing for a particular session, but it happens sometimes that just before the delivery of the lecture, a problem occurs at the domestic front or other recurring problems from the familial side surface. Such issues fragment the potential and thought process of the instructor but regardless of all the challenges the teacher emerges winner. Entering into a classroom with confidence and delivering a lecture successfully, despite all odds, is almost like a

therapy session that leaves one optimistic and recharged for life. Success at one space fills the mind and the body with the encouragement needed to encounter other ordeals of life. How many other professions give a chance to be motivated, almost every hour?

Educators across the world have to juggle with scholarly, academic and committee work. Vacation time is also preparation time for them as teachers never take a break. There are always papers to grade, training sessions to learn newer methodologies, and orientation courses, refresher programmes, conferences and seminars to attend. During vacations, the teachers prepare for their next classes; they follow their interests and train themselves to be better educators. Therefore, it is advised to not to look at the profession of teaching through rose-coloured glasses; it is a difficult and complex work that can easily overwhelm both new and experienced instructors. Teachers walk on a thin line, where they have to learn to dissociate their other line of duties from their primary responsibility of teaching, which is the actual basis of contentment. Here is a case study:

> As a student teacher, Carl was thrilled with all of the fun and innovative things that he had the opportunity to introduce to his students. Unbeknownst to him, his supervising teachers were taking care of the plethora of other duties, leaving him with a false perception of freedom as a teacher. Before he realized it, he had given in to the routine and lost touch of his sense of purpose. As a new teacher, it isn't long before innovation is traded for familiarity. Many a college graduate enters their first classroom, finding there is far more awaiting them than they could have ever imagined. They discover themselves under an avalanche of paperwork from students, the principal, and the district. Creativity and enthusiasm can easily be squelched by the overwhelming and unseen demands of the classroom. Eventually Carl realized his dissipation. He knew assigning and grading work wasn't teaching. He refocused his attention and developed healthy boundaries for himself, his students, and the daily pressing requirements. As a result, the flashes of brilliance and creativity once again entered his classroom. His students flourished and teaching again became his rediscovered passion. More than anything else, students need you to be a teacher. (Caruana 80-81)

In the life of a Guru, the **eternal joy lies in the end result** as it can be observed through the transformation in the lives of others. The theories, experiments and facts taught in classrooms can be seen in praxis as students move into successful spheres and offer gratitude for having learnt the ways of life. This in turn emanates positive energy to replicate the procedure in every class, year after year. It brings satiation to the soul to see the students succeed in various forums of life. Indian sacred texts, especially the *Bhagwad Gita*, promote the theory of *karma* which proposes that inner contentment can only be achieved if we work for the betterment of others. Newer perspectives can be achieved by stepping out of one's

own world and venturing into the other's. Deep inside, every teacher knows that he/she can never be alone as their minds are always working on one or the other student's career or life. This incessant process of meditation for the other is reciprocated in several ways. It helps the mind engage in constructive thought at all times, thereby reducing the amount of pessimism in life. In one of the many stories discussed in *Apples and Chalkdust*, is a conversation:

> The driver stopped the car, put it in park, and excitedly ran around to meet her. Taking off his sunglasses so Maggie could see him better, he said with a touch of disappointment, 'You don't remember me, do you?' Apprehension turned into delight as Maggie finally recognized her former student. 'Of course, I do, Jay, You're a hard one to forget. 'I never forgot you, Mrs. Jensen. You're the only one who gave me a chance…Maggie smiled as she read his business card, 'Jay Getz, Architect.' Even if the results of your labour aren't immediately apparent, take joy in the fact that your influence reaches further than you know. (Caruana 9)

The philosophies of the world promote that happiness lies in performing one's roles. And a pedagogue performs the never ending role of a demonstrator, an educator, a trainer, a preceptor, a master and eventually a mentor. If we follow the scientific principal of direct proportion rate, then a teacher's role guarantees him/her the maximum quotient of bliss. The larger than life role of a Guru is the foundation of the cloud nine. Happiness is a woven fabric that needs many a thread just like the teacher's role, which can never function in a linear direction; rather this is cryptic and multifarious. The interpolations are so deeply rooted that at the surface level, the success rate of students builds a mirage of contentment but the real accomplishment lies in the sense of fulfillment achieved from life. Successful educators enjoy years of pleasure as they watch their students grow up and flourish as adults. Teachers give their students the hope to continue their struggle against the challenges planted by life and put up a brave front. They don the role of parents, friends and counselors as their responsibility is more deeply entrenched than it appears. One of the most revered professions in the world, it receives a lot of gratitude from all comports of life. With the life lessons that they learn and teach simultaneously, their periphery expands to a level that the margins blur. Before they fill each learner with affirmative blueprints of life, the mentors 'drink life to the lees'. This is the only vocation that involves concurrent individual and societal growth and makes a difference to the world at all echelons. It is a fond desire and the need of the times that the charm of this profession, which occupies a seat higher than the Lord's, increases by leaps and bounds, for when the world shall drink from the bowl of knowledge, and would swim in the streams of learning and teaching; the dream of a utopian world shall be realized.

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Patriarchy in the garb of Patriotism – Exhuming the ensconced meaning in nationalism through Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Anandmath

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Abstract: The paper seeks to explore the ramifications of nation on gender and identity in the Indian context through the late nineteenth and twentieth century i.e. the heyday of national consciousness. The paper seeks to explore the ramifications of nationalism on gender, religion and identity exploring through Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Anandmath. The paper tries to delve into and understand Bharat Mata as the symbol of exclusion than of inclusion and the maternal metaphor associated to nationhood as orchestrating the cultural predominance of the Hindu cult. The paper also looks at the gendered conception of nationalism - the attributes of Bharat Mata being the begetter of brave sons, guardian of Indian culture (read Hindu upper caste) came across as a regressive force, imposing the male generated conception of motherhood on all the women in India. The paper looks at the patriarchal undertones that the image of Bharat Mata carried in the social realm. Furthermore, the papers seeks to look at this sanctification of the sexualisation of the female body through images of the goddess nation, circ*umscribing the agency of Indian women.*
Keywords: Nationalism, identity, Hindu nation, Bharat Mata, women.

Introduction

The name "Bharat Mata" itself begets curiosity in the minds of the observer over the ambiguity of Indian nationalism. Allegorical representations of nations as woman began in eighteenthcentury wherein Germania of Germany and Marianne of France are viewed are warriors and protectors of national identities of these nations from the outsiders. The nationhood herein was defined by common language, ethnicity and culture constructed by homogenisation of population. In these countries, using Foucaudian concept of "governmentality" manifested in the form of nationhood which preceded the state formation. European governmentality was characterised by existence of "nation state" (Foucault 1991). Indian case is rather unique. Indian subcontinent comprised of diversities of language, religion, ethnicity and culture. Indian nationalist leaders borrowed western concepts of social organisation namely nation state, utilitarianism and liberalism to weaponise their fight against imperialism. Colonial governmentality instead of homogenising Indian masses into a nation to finally deliver the promise of civilising mission - reaffirmed the diversity by building its

governmentality on recognising primordial categories of caste and religion. Indian nationalism was based on opposition to this colonial difference (Chatterjee 1994) which was inimical to liberalism and to counter divide and rule based colonial difference, the concept of nationhood was borrowed, an ideal of Indian nation was constructed which celebrated its existence in the form of Indian civilisation existing in the holy texts of Indian civilisation. The female allegory which came attached to this concept came to be known as *Bharat Mata*.

Allegorical representations from the West

Unlike Germania and Marianne which represented the collective ethos of the entire German and French nation, Bharat Mata corresponded more with the Hindu nation state propagated by Hindu Mahasabha and RSS. Bharat Mata unlike her European counterparts marked inter- cultural fractures instead of unification. Bharat Mata invoked the imagery of Hindu Goddess Durga draped in Traditional Hindu sari, seated on the lion constantly under threat from attack from Outsiders. Before 1947 it was British, post 1947 Muslims were categorised as such. Although Nehru linked this abstraction to the people in his most inclusive definition of Bharat Mata - but when this *Hinduised* personification became the mainstream via paintings and poems - it alienated certain sections of society. Bharat Mata became the symbol of exclusion than inclusion. In the social realm, Bharat Mata came to be chastised for carrying patriarchal undertones. The attributes of Bharat Mata being the begetter of brave sons, guardian of Indian (read Hindu upper caste) culture came across as regressive enforcing the male generated conception of motherhood on all the women in India thereby taking away the very agency for their self- definition and existence. The definition of the self was not an autonomous act rather was laid out in the imagery of Bharat Mata. The personification of Marianne empowered women by infusing them with warrior like qualities and mobilised masses under the idea of French nation. Bharat Mata on the other hand alienated various sections of the society along with subduing the agency of the women by creating an imagery of an ideal woman of the nation which all women being repositories of culture has to compulsorily follow.

Gendering nationalism

Fruzzetti & Perez (2002) argued that Gandhi believed in essential oneness of humanity, men and women could not be regarded as different in essence but on the other hand in his nationalist project for Independence women had a larger role both as symbols and makers of future nation. Women nature was personification of self -sacrifice, embodiment of

silent suffering, ahimsa, on the whole a symbol of the nation of which the core was Hinduism. National movement in order to dismantle the colonial rule adopted feminized character in symbolism and its tone. Women purity was ascribed to the purity of the nation creating a cause worth laying lives for thereby resulting in feminisation of land and political action. Indian female exceptionalism and idea of purity was deployed by men including Gandhi not only to create political action and an idea of a nation but also altogether identity of Indian woman itself. Symbols like Vande Mataram meaning prayer to the mother and Bharat Mata were used. Motherland of the farmers was transformed into Mother of the nation. Men also infused the resolution of women issues and liberation of women issues is linked with the liberation of Bharat Mata from the chains of colonialism. During the partition of Bengal in the air of revolt and dissent - Abanindranath Tagore's painting of Bharat Mata surfaced.

> "The painting's central figure holds multiple items associated with Indian culture and the economy of India in the early twentieth century, such as a book, sheaves of paddy, a piece of white cloth and a garland. Moreover, the painting's central figure has four hands, evocative of Hindu imagery, which equates multiple hands with immense power." (Dehejia 2017)

While mapping the maternal metaphor associated to nationhood, one can locate cultural predominance of Hindu cult in defining it and infusing it not only with an ideology of motherhood but also with moral fervour linking service to the nation being the service to the mother. The common mother of all Indians, Bharat Mata thus was created and represented differently in different scenario. Being embodiment of power (shakti) as durga and in some cases as tearful victim, frail widow asking her brave sons to rescue her from threats. The moods of Bharat Mata reflected the mood of he nation which was appropriated to mobilise the masses for a specific political objective. Map drawing cartography which was western exercise of demarcating boundaries inspired Indian nationalists to functionalise the mythology combining modernity with beliefs. The worship of Map of India as Bharat Mata In some places identified Hindu nationalism with the land of India, a fixed geographical territory. Mother as map of nation also was used to define political citizenry articulated as Male Hindus sons of the nation which comprised the ideal of India. Worshipping the map of India using Hindu symbols raised the question of space for Muslims in this map, a geographical territory worshipped as India or Bharat Mata. The religious dogma of Hinduism

was thus converted into political rhetoric with place of worship of India as temple and vande matram as major hymn which alienated Muslims even further. (Gupta, 2001)

In *'Bharat Mata in shackles' by D. Banerjee, 1941*goddess depicted as a tragedienne within the tumultuous national air with the earlier version of the national flag with Gandhi's charkha representing the Swadeshi Movement in India during the freedom struggle and its leaders in the background. This popular print which was disseminated across the nation for nationalist propaganda – the nationalism envisioned by the upper caste Hindu leaders of the Congress. Banerjee's painting of the saffron sari clad, benign Bharat Mata on the map of the India is the anthropomorphised mapping of a female body which of Sumathi Ramaswamy describes as "the national longing for cartographic form" - each nation's longing for inscribing a form to the contours of its boundaries. In the Indian context such it a double-edged sword, by making the goddess as a symbol for national mobilisation on one hand and on the other sanctification of the sexualisation of female bodies by lending the garb of the mother and this deification of the territory disregarded humanness to its inhabitants (read : female).

Abbey of bliss?

Prototypically, the concept of Mother Nation cementing the nation came from the most important books in Bengali literature and Indian Literature alike, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Anand Math. Set in the backdrop of the Famine of 1770 and The Sanyasi (ascetic) movement, the novel is lauded for the foremost imaginings of "Nation" as a mother. Captured by the song Vande Matram, (Victory to the Mother) Bankim Chandra Chatterjee exhorts the masses about Nationalism at a time when the ongoing nationalist movement suffered an eclipse. In the beginning of the novel, the spiritual guru Satyanand stumbles upon Kalyani and her girl child saving them from man hunters, the Guru becomes a refuge throughout to preserve the Nation's honour, its resources from getting pillaged by the British, and has an army of ascetic warrior men named Santans (children). Satyanand's mobilising of the Santans to action for saving the motherland from the fetters of the colonial rule was enmeshed with Swami Vivekananda's notion of the "warrior monks" as fighters protecting the Hindu nation with their moral and spiritual fortitude. The ascetic warriors of Chatterjee's novel donning the saffron robe of Hindu holy men remain pure, removing themselves from the temptation provided by female sexuality by not touching women or being alone with them. These warriors see their quest to free Mother India as spiritual and as informed by the religious tenets of Hinduism. (Banerjee 2012).

In Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's project then, the coalescing of athleticism and asceticism was to counter a sense of effeminisation of the Bengali natives under Britishers. The hegemonic sense of male Hindu cultural supremacy in the novel is represented by the character of the spirited Jivananda who breaks the conjugal ties, embracing celibacy in the service to the MotherNation. He quintessentially fulfills the writer and the Guru's desire for a Hindu leader imbued with physical strength, untainted by female sexuality and capable of stimulating solidarity amongst other men for the larger cause of the Nation.

Feminists question whether the celibacy taken up by the men in the novel was an unacknowledged thrust upon the women characters. To set her husband free for the mother nation's service, Kalyani embraces death, yet she is saved by Bhabananda. The role of the gendered subject in this highly Nationalist novel is limited: the sacrifice of the mother daughter gives way to the homosocial bond between the sons. Kalyani, as a repository of the Indian tradition is revived not leaving behind the purpose for which she had embraced death - her body, her beauty being the object of desire by men, distracting and derailing the Nationalist spirit. Her beauty, sensually described by the infatuated Bhabananda compels him to leave behind his ascetic codes to marry her, which she firmly declines. Her death and rebirth in the background of the Nationalistic fervour is a way of showing how "women" must be redefined and reimagined to meet the requirements of the moment (Betty Joseph 2010). However, she is a foil to the character of the feisty Shanti, the wife of Jibananada. Shanti is a defiant one, not conforming to domestication, this hoyden orphaned child married to Jibananda, sees a progress not just as an individual but as a feminized self. However, her femininity is armed; her sexuality and later cross dressing make her sexuality ambiguous. In the film version the euphoria of the new nation comes through female characters, Shanti being the mainstay of it. She erases the outer order of femininity donning the male armour for fighting for the struggle for freedom. The novel is strikingly galvanising the role of women as countering the whole virile enterprise of the Nationalist sentiment. Though temporary, her act of opting into the phallic realm dissolves the universalising theories of subject composition under Nationalism, as being a discourse of male militancy. In the episode where she contests with the British commander, she exposes and shames his weakness for women, emasculating him as a "militant".

In the exchange where she is sent as a reconnoiter with the Englishmen, she as a Native woman is highly sexualised, on the other hand she hides the biological difference in

camp of the Santas to facilitate the son's desire for the Mother. The Santan- army displaying its enormous devotion to the Motherland is at the core of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's religious patriotism. The two protagonists are reminded by the respective women characters to foreground their selfless service towards the nation over and above everything, this is the central message the novel delineates. The glorification of the Nation as a mother and goddess, the "fertile woman" in the song Vande Mataram to the idols of – Jaggadhatari, Kali and Durga that Satyanand describes to Mahendra become ideational symbols, a woman typically not in the public sphere, the goddess' body is represented in full splendour. It problematises the fact that : while an image whose non biological sons are selflessly devoted in her worship, the daughters in the material reality of things are subjugated under traditions and institutionalised patriarchy, her sons are torchbearers of. The whole concept of the sanctification of the sexualisation of female bodies by lending the garb of 'The Mother' and by deifying the territory disregarded humanness to its inhabitants (read: female). Rabindranath Tagore was first one to look through the religious stanzas of the song which he believed no Mussalman (Muslim) would chant and saw this as an obstacle to integration. In the novel more than the Britishers, the antagonist is the Muslim emperor Mir Zafar, consumed in alcohol and hedonic pleasures; he is the opposite of everything asceticism entails.

Cut to the present context, the novel's propagation of Bharat Mata as the ultimate religion of the patriots holds true in a Nation witnessing the popularity of Hindu Nationalism. Anand Math becomes a protoform of Hindu Nationalism which the RSS with its reciting of "Bharat Mata" as a trumpet for its conception of a "Hindu Rashtra". The recent feminists debates on this issue question how like sex and gender, the idea of a nation is merely "imagined", it reinforces differences. Like language being highly phallocentric, symbols too lead to "othering". Feminists have never required any special markers of identification like slogans; flags etc. beyond visible politics that brings Feminism closer to other movements of equality and freedom.

Gendering nationalism hence does the task of legitimising appropriation of women deities, mobilising women for nationalist struggle by linking their issues with those of colonialism along with discipline the sexuality of women in the hues of patriarchy all being tied to the noble end of liberation. The language as feminized deity thereby asserting goddess and other mythical figures served to provide the basis of new Indian nation. Indian women were "remade undernationalism" and after fulfilling the national mission, were restored to

homes. Patriarchy made minor concessions for a national mission in which women were appropriated via symbols and language, divested from all sort of agency and manipulated to an end only to be reduced to the imminent subordinate position in the status quo after the goal has been achieved. Women in nationalist struggle came across as tools of political action denying any agency of them. Promise of national liberation didn't fulfil the promise of women liberation. Coming back to Gandhi who advocated for gender equality in the personal realm didn't quite back it up in the political realm. Action in one realm and suppression in other reflects the duel standards of Indian nationalist including Gandhi. The invention of new cultural fiction of "new women" which was the subject of reform of whose harbingers were men. All these was done to counter the colonial assertion that Indian women liberation is possible in British rule (abolition of sati) and regressive practices prevalent in India doesn't make it conducive for self -rule. One questions the very foundations of such assertions, in all of such countering -was the voice of women themselves anywhere heard? Were these subaltern figures under both colonialism and patriarchy marginalised only to be "protected" by both brown and white men?

In the reform movement, protection of women from western reforms became tantamount to protection of land and culture. The new women who was literate and had rights was not liberated rather appropriated in the cultural battle against Imperialism. Although they conceded reforms by themselves (resisting such from British side) Indian men were not ready to relinquish the overall structure of patriarchy. Reforms were to be carried to the likings of men which women for their inherent lack of "being" had no agency to initiate or resist. It is very legitimate to doubt the agency of Bharat Mata herself. Who made her, defined her, pasted the attributes and finally appropriated. The answer would be men.

Disintegration and aftermath

The communal and the gender angle merge in one of the most unfortunate events in history: the Partition of India. In a country where the woman figure was once revered to as a mother goddess ("Janni"-"Janma bhumi") turned into a demonic savage only by means of some artificially created boundaries. Questionably, was the vantage only a means of convenience - once to instil patriotism against the Britishers, and on another, defiling it on communal grounds? Most Partition literature traces the gruesome horror of the New Nation's development and the ravaging effects on women, who as emblems of society were ripped off their "honour" only as a means for avenging the larger honour of the Nation. In its very cradle, the newly formed nation witnessed barbarity and atrocity; from the same Motherland the conjoint tore off bonds and bodies.

Conclusion

In the present context, the propagation of Bharat Mata as the ultimate religion of the patriots holds true especially in a Nation witnessing the popularity of Hindu Nationalism. Anand Math becomes a protoform of Hindu Nationalism which the RSS with its reciting of "Bharat Mata" as a trumpet for its conception of a "Hindu Rashtra" (Hindu nation). The recent feminist debates on this issue question how - like sex and gender - the idea of a nation is merely "imagined"- it reinforces differences. Like language being highly phallocentric, symbols too lead to " othering".

To sum up by Mary John's argument, the problematic with divinising the Motherland through the Bharat Mata figure is that: it overtly and directly closes off any feminist demand for changing the status quo, the only possible orientation to this figure being that of worship and not of justice. On the other hand, by making the territory of the nation drawn on the contours of the maternal figure, it limits questioning, much like the patriotism instilled in Anandmath, a slogan like "Jai Hind" (Victory for India) couldn't exhort them to dedicate themselves selflessly in the duty of the motherland as captured by "Bharat Mata ki Jai" (Victory for Mother India).

<div align="center">**Works Cited**</div>

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R. K. Narayan and the Age-Old Tradition of Story-Telling: A Critique of his short story *Under the Banyan Tree*

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Abstract: The present paper tries to interpret the story in the light of what Narayan says about it and has tried to analyze the story as a story having all the major elements of a short story. Its main theme is the divine power of the story-teller. Narayan focuses on the life of the story-teller and the quality and condition of the audience i.e. the villagers. Narayan acts like a painter. A painter while painting does not have the exact idea of what he is painting; the picture becomes clear only after he has finished painting. Narayan also portrays the picture of a village, and then the central character Nambi on his canvas. The story is open-ended and leaves the readers to interpret it as they think. When Nambi is unable to continue telling the story, he himself does not know why he is not able to complete his story. It is open to the reader to reach a conclusion according to their own mindset or understanding.

The setting of the story is rural. Nambi tells his story under a huge banyan tree. The holiness attached to the Banyan or Peepal tree in the story reminds us of the Hindu culture and mythology, and thus providing additional dimension to the setting. The title of the story reminds us of a 'pyol' or a 'chaupal'. In olden days every village had a few central places called 'chaupals' where the villagers gathered, sat, chatted, shared their daylong experiences, and exchanged news of the locality in the evening. Even in the ancient times villagers gathered under some big tree, which was generally a Banyan or Peepal tree. All the ceremonies or country rituals were generally held under such trees because there were no modern City-halls or Studios at that time. Even Rishis(saints) taught their pupils, or delivered sermons under the shade of such big trees. The banyan tree is the 'Namisharanya' of the village Somal. In ancient days such holy trees attracted sages, scholars and even the laymen. The great epics the *Mahabharat* and the *Bhagwat Puran* were recited under such trees in a forest. The story spread from person to person, and from elderly persons to the young and the children. Even the priests like Nambi collected threads of these great stories from others, and created their own stories to entertain the illiterate villagers and earned their living by way of charity from them.

Narayan with his dramatic skill creates the situation and background of the story by adding minute details of the events taking place before and after the story-telling. On Friday evening the villagers came to temple for worship. Nambi lit a clay- lamp in a niche of the temple. The lamp was a signal to the villagers, and that very night the villagers gathered under the tree for enjoying the story. He began his story by posing a question – 'What do you think there was?', and tells his story perhaps as an answer to that question. By doing so he follows the tradition of narrating the whole epic-long story of great poets like Valmiki or Vyas, or Saunak. Commenting on the story Dr. Disha Sharma in *Short Stories of R. K. Narayan: Themes and techniques* observes: "It is an idyll of pastoral life. The story takes us into the old pastoral world of peace and tranquility inhabited by selfless, sober, sympathetic, co-operative people. The atmosphere of the story is strange but beautiful. The charm of the story lies in the remoteness of the setting." (244-245) Dr Sharma's remark covers only one aspect of the story. The world is pastoral but the story is not idyllic – there is a clear touch of realistic portrayal of the characters, setting, and the situation.

Plot according to Aristotle is more important than character. Narayan arranges the incidents in a very skillful and artistic manner to depict the character of both the story-teller and the audience. The way they gather, listen, and react to the story helps the writer in throwing light on their character and personality. First comes the setting of the story – the description of the village and the villagers. The Village derives its name from 'Soma' - god's divine drink called 'Amrit'. Som is also the name of the Moon who is symbol of beauty and charm as well as of wisdom and intelligence. Ironically, the village of Soma is ugly, dirty and unhygienic. The use of irony is very apt, and its cutting edge is marked when the writer remarks that the villagers are happy in such surroundings. We are reminded of the epic poet Milton who makes Satan utter that "the mind is its own place and is itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven" (Orgel et al. 11). So the unsanitary condition of the village may present a picture of hell but for the villagers it is heaven. The insanitary conditions of the Village may look hellish but the villagers have no problem, and appear so contented as if they were living in heaven. It seems that they have drunken deep the Soma from the stories of Nambi, and have become forgetful of their surroundings. They live under the perpetual enchantment of the story-teller. The way Narayan describes the place makes the characters so loving and lively. The end of the story is used by the writer to create the divinity of the Goddess Shakti.

Narayan's Narrative style used in this story is equally remarkable. It is swift, firm, graceful and lucid. He is capable of creating a whole scene in one or two sentences. We come across the high point of the story when Nambi narrates the story 'on an epic scale'. The story ends with anti-climax. The person who is capable of telling his story on an epic scale falters so badly on the last day that he ends it by saying only a few sentences. We get the impression that he is a perfect artist. Like a good story-teller he begins the story by making the audience inquisitive, and then keeps the people spellbound by carrying them through different shades of life. He asks them – ' what do you think there was?' and then probably begins his story in the familiar old style – There was a king – a saint – a rich man – a poor woman – a trader, a potter – a poor beggar and so on. Thus he has ample scope to create new situations, and even new sub-plots. He has the whole day to use his imaginative faculty to create new episodes to narrate them next time. We are reminded of what Shakespeare says of a poet who can create a whole new world out of airy nothing:

> The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
>
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, earth to heaven;
>
> And as imagination bodies forth
>
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
>
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
>
> A local habitation and a name. (Craig, 171)

Narayan started his career as a journalist, and wrote stories about local events for the English newspapers and magazines. He wrote his first story about a one-armed beggar who stood in a narrow street in front of a coffee house and begged from the young men coming out of it. Narayan closely watched people, places and events around him, and tried to write small pieces about them. He had deep knowledge of life, and critical insight into human conduct, character, moods, feelings and sentiments and had artistic skill to make use of them at proper place and time. The way he has drawn the character of Nambi amply illustrates his mastery of his craft. Nambi is the universal prototype of a story-teller. How humorously he talks about the age of Nambi! He simply suggests – He was a man of about sixty or seventy, or was he eighty or one hundred eighty because it is just a matter of surmise. With tongue in cheek he draws our attention to the cleverness of such priests, or saints to conceal their age so that the people may think that they are very old/ancient persons of deep divine super wisdom, and are capable of performing miracles. The audience i.e. the villagers are characterized by their silence, their actions, their beliefs and their living conditions. They present the picture of age- old listeners of stories. They

link everything with God. They are fatalists. When Nambi cannot go ahead with his story, they firmly believe that it is because Goddess Shakti has got angry with the priest or with them. Narayan brightly brings to our mind the real illiterate, ignorant, optimistic, God-fearing superstitious people of our country in nineteen forties when the story was written. The bright side of these people is that they have faith in universal brotherhood. Narayan informs us that there was only a tank, a small expanse of water, right in the middle of the village for drinking, bathing, and washing the cattle. What a great harmony between man and nature!

Those who examine the story in the light of modern literary theory find it a piece of eco-criticism. The fact that the villagers use highway as refuse ground is taken as their protest against depletion of natural resources in the name of progress, and their mockery of the technological innovations that the mechanized urban society often boasts of. The highway is meaningless and useless to the rustic society of Somal because it fails to provide them any sort of eco-oriented economic assistance. Nambi on the other hand appears to be a source of spiritual nourishment for them. They feel and think that Nambi, the priest is a link between Goddess Shakti and them, and thereby protects them under her divine power.

There are many symbolic suggestions in the story. Goddess Shakti represents the divine power that lies behind the creative power of Nambi who like Shiva is both a creator and destroyer of the universe. He creates the imaginative world of the writer, and when the Goddess withdraws her power, he stops telling stories, and thus brings an end to his own world of story-telling. Symbolically Narayan suggests that the old tradition of telling stories to large crowds in forest under big trees is over. Now we have new means of mass communication.

Some critics try to find autobiographical note in the story; they think that like Nambi, Narayan himself was losing his creative power. At the most he might be saying that a writer must stop writing if he feels that his power is on decline otherwise his writings will fall under criticism. So far as he is concerned, he continued his writing successfully even after the present story. He purposely includes this story in his last collection to suggest a comparison between the creative life of an author and the cycle of human life. The first story of this collection is about a young boy and the last story is about the old priest Nambi who is losing his creative power at the end of his life as suggested by his vow of remaining silent during the rest of his life.

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God's Call-The Voice of Dalit In William Dalrymple's *The Dancer Of Kannur*

Betty Merin Eapen

Abstract: The paper brings light into the transitory and transient nature of power from the victor to the victim. The concept of victorious victim is explored in William Dalrymple's *The Dancer of Kannur* which appraises the ordeals of Hari Das, a dalit who performs the art form Theyyam. The eight hundred year old ritual dance form is performed in the scared groves especially in the northern parts of Kerala. The artist is summoned by the pantheistic deities, assumes the role of the God and assures prosperity to the society. Theyyam is not only a medium for Gods to speak rather it turns into an instrument to resist the legitimatized oppression of the social system. Veritably, the art form is metamorphosed as a resistance tool to predominate the upper class, even though for a confined time.

Keywords: William Dalrymple, *The Dancer Of Kannur*, oppression, social system.

More than facts, figures and peripheral data, William Dalrymple's travel book *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* (2009) has traced the sensibility, aesthetics and the reality of the unexplored contemporary India. *Nine Lives* encompasses the tales of nine lives across the country, representing the different religious beliefs of the multicultural society. "The Dancer of Kannur" is the second chapter of the book which entails the story of Hari Das, a Theyyam performer. Theyyam is a traditional worship art form of Kerala concentrated on the Malabar region. The divine art form is "pre-Aryan, non-Brahminical, Dravidian religious system that was later absorbed into Hinduism's capricious embrace" (36). Theyyam artists become a vehicle through which the devotees can expresses their grievances and gratitude to God, in other words artists themselves become the God. Unlike any other art forms, the artists have to follow a strict routine of prayers, vegetarianism and celibacy before their performances. In addition, the scared ritual needs a lot of physical and mental devotion in order to attain the vigour in every performance. The unique and eclectic makeup with natural colours, hefty headgear and costumes made of palymra leaves bestow the performer with charisma of the God.

Hari Das, a dalit from Kerala works nine months in a year as a manual labourer who builds wells and works as a warder in weekends in Tellicherry Central Jail. And for the rest

of the three months he incarnates as deity who possess powers for exorcism, cure, medication, blessings, and advise. The providence of God is reassured and restored through every performance of Hari Das for the past twenty six years. The aura of "part –time Gods" enables Hari to be revered during the performances in the three months of a year. And in the rest of the months the dalit artist lives in abject poverty and ostracization. Belonging to the lowest strata of the society, dalits are treated as 'demonic others' as the "result of the long arrogant and supercilious belief in the racial superiority"(186 Nagarajan). Dalits, the victims of social oppression of the caste system, encounter physical and mental torment from the upper caste who believes that the subalterns have to be lived under control. A myriad of problems have bedeviled the miserable existence of dalits along with social exclusion, denied justice and untouchability.

In Theyyam, the artists incarnate as Gods, Goddess or local heroes, according to the myth that is prevailed in the area near the scared grove. The deities of Vishnu, Shiva, Narasimha, Chamundi, Guligan, Bhagavati are summoned by the artists and the believers worship them with absolute reverence. The respectful 'waiting and watching for the moment' for the Gods to come and dance will end once the embellishments of theyyam are removed. "They may pay respect to a theyyam artist like me during the theyyam itself, but outside it they are still as casteist as ever" (38). "The rest of the year, no one here would even greet me or invite me to share a cup of tea with them. But during the season no one knows me as Hari Das. To them I am like a temple, if not a god. Suddenly I have status and respect" (55). After the seasonal job the performers go back to the harsh realities of life. "At the end of the season we just pack up our things and prepare to go back to our jobs- to being a bus conductor, or a well builder, or life in prison. There is a total disconnect with this life."(55). The stringent nature of caste system draws them to lead double lives, where their identities are switching between that of a victim and victor. The dance form is an artistic expression against the 'most conservative, socially oppressive and rigidly hierarchical societies'.

The elite class Brahmins is not chosen to be incarnated, but the members from the subaltern society. Around twenty subgroups of Dalits including Vannan, Malayan, Pulayan, Chingathan, Munnutan, Anjootan dance according to the myth proliferated in an area. The myth of Theyyam ranges from tales of blood sucking vampires (yakshis) to the native heroes who lost their lives for a social cause. The issues of inequalities, injustice and heinous honour killings prevailed in societies are discussed through the art which in fact has ensued tensions in the upper crust. Many of the Theyyam stories perpetrate about "a member of the lower

castes infringes or transgresses accepted caste restrictions and is unjustly punished with rape (in the case of women) or death (in case of men, and sometimes women too) and then is deified by gods aghast at the injustices perpetrated by the Brahmins and the other ruling castes" (36). According to a story, a Tiyya caste boy out of his hunger plucked a mango while he was herding the upper class family's cattle. The mango fell on the owner's niece, thereby polluting her. In the fear he absconded from the village and returned after many years. The supercilious blue blooded master caught and beheaded him for the trivial theft and for polluting an upper class girl. The Dalit boy is reincarnated in Theyyam performance consequently becomes an immortal form of God. The injustice and humiliation inflicted upon him is redeemed through the performance.

Theyyam is also a reviver of the lost glory of village deities, small shrines and small local Gods. Theyyam performers bless for the prosperity in the land and draw away the misfortunes of the village. But these Theyyam performers could not relegate their own misfortunes; therefore subjected to live under the tyranny of the caste system throughout their lives. The trance they undergo is like a resistance or the powerful voice against the rigid ways in which they are marginalized. The cult is a sound to the muted voices. For some it is "an acceptable safety value to allow complaints against the misdeeds of the upper castes to be expressed in a ritualized and non-violent manner"(36).

The part-time job as a warder in the prison, does not give the liberty to work, because the jail authorities who are supposed to control the inmates are being controlled by them. They are startled to punish the prisoners who have great financial and physical support from the political parties. The nominal but regular income is the only attraction to stay in the job. The familial profession of being a Theyyam artist too does not provide Hari Das with descent remuneration. The lifespan of Theyyam artists are low, as they are ruined by illness at an early age. The head gear which weighs more than five kilos, the tightness of knots which blocks the free blood flow, long hours of performance before the fire intensify the misery of an artist.

The structural inversion of the ritual form subverts the conventional power relations and revitalizes the system. It taunts the apex of social hierarchy of Brahmins who has seen themselves as next to God or the only one who has the right to serve God. The people who demean themselves before the higher caste are being resurrected through the cult. Hari Das considers theyyam "as much as a tool and a weapon to resist and fight back against an unjust

social system as a religious revelation"(37). The thottam songs criticize the upper class to reform their behavior and advice them to be kind and gentle towards others. The songs convey the message of doing good acts will be rewarded whereas the bad acts to the lesser privileged ones cannot be escaped from the punishments. Despite the criticisms, Brahmins greatly believe in the healing power of Theyyam, that the priests and astrologers cannot provide. Pottan Theyyam is also a strong form of criticism against the rigid caste system where the God advice not to treat the lower class badly. According to Pottan Theyyam, Lord Shiva wants to teach Brahmins a lesson. Adi Shankacharya, a saint from Kerala is on the verge to attain enlightenment, but withdrawn from nirvana because of his arrogance and pride. Shiva, Parvathy and Nandikesan took the form of a Pullaya family and appeared before Adi Shankacharya, the great teacher and obstructed his way while crossing the paddy field. On the basis of the caste system the lower caste people can not hinder the path of a Brahmin, the Pullayan is supposed to jump into the paddy field. The Pullya family who were dirty and smelled meat and toddy, did not move away, Adi Shankacharya questioned them and imperiled them to be beheaded. Pullayan implored with sophisticated and philosophical questions which Adi could not answer and then he realized that a lower class man could not have intelligence to ask such questions. Out of his sixth sense he understood that it is Lord Shiva and family. He was petrified and accepted his ignorance of being prejudiced to the marginalized. In order the generations to realize the importance of harmonious existence of human beings, Adi Shakaracharya intiated Pottan Theyyam that celebrated the Lord Shiva's Pullaya form.

The God's call capacitates a Dalit to have self respect, there upon creating his own niche of self actualization. In the hysterical disassociation, the outcaste attempts to overcome the pain inflicted upon them by the elite. The stories enacted out lash the dominion of hierarchy, by questioning the social evils and misdeeds. Their incapacity, untouchability and illiteracy become the greatest power on earth though for a short span of time. The preferment and preeminence attained in the trance provides power to wrestle with the stark realities of life.

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Koovagam: A Counter Carnival of Gender Bending

Christina Romeo

Abstract: Transgenders are people who transcend the conventional gender structure. They mostly carry a male physique and female behavioural traits and their life is therefore on the fringes. Marginalised both socially and spatially, transgenders have created an elaborate network that spans across India, establishing a divergent discourse that both parallels and opposes the mainstream organisations of gender that excludes them. As outcasts, they tend to create counter-narratives whereby they can come together and create a space for themselves which is beyond ridicule and discrimination. One such subaltern mini-narrative is the Koovagam festival, where India celebrates the transgender identity. This paper entitled "Koovagam: A Counter Carnival of Gender Bending" aims to analyse the role of Koovagam festival, and its associated myth and performance in creating a space for transgender empowerment.

Keywords: Transgender, Koovagam, Carnival, Counter-narrative.

Introduction

'Gender' is one of the most contested and challenged term of discussion. While the male and female genders get ample amount in the public space, the case of the transgender is one of silence. No open meetings or discussions are there in their case; the transgenders are excluded completely from mainstream society and politics. There is not only marginalization, but also grave humiliation and agony that literally makes their life hell. Generally the word transgender or eunuch is defined as "a person whose identity does not conform unambiguously to conventional notions of male-female gender roles but combines or moves between those" (Sarada, 1).

They are persons with mostly male physique and female behavioural traits. They consider themselves as women trapped inside a male body. They are neither male nor female but considered the elements of both. Transgenders are very much a part of Indian society like any other gender, but they are marginalised by the taking away of their authentic public space and thereby throwing them out of focus. The transgenders who wished participation in various genres of life were relegated to the fringes of society by addressing them in derogatory terms like '*Hijada*', '*Shikhandi*', '*Ali,*' etc. and also by considering them as

something filthy. Thus they are simultaneously inside and outside the society. This state can be read in connection with Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. Buchanan states abject as "that which disturbs the self, by provoking either disgust, fear, loathing or repulsion… it is simultaneously outside and beyond the subject and inside and of the subject" (1). The abject is the process that separates from one's environment what "is not me". Transgenders in India are viewed in a similar vein, as the other or a symbol of aberration. Society projects the meaningless existence of the eunuchs who lead a life of emptiness and social isolation.

Tyranny of the Indian Family

The transgender history in India dates back to the epics. In ancient times, they enjoyed influential positions in society and were considered as beings with special powers. But their positions got altered by the advent of the British and since then they have beenan infringement in public decency.As a result the mainstream society excluded them as something bad and they became a site for constant marginalisation and maltreatment even after white rule ended in India.The Indian family also plays a major role in this exclusion.

The Indian family is an institution by itself and a typical symbol of the collectivist culture of India right from ancient times. The Indian family has a clear plan of action. It is a productive and procreative unit. The family enables a man to create and govern a nation as he is the undisputed head of the family. So the personal and political power is directly proportional to the number of family members. The transgender's ambiguity regarding both virility and fertility are thus excluded from the family. Exclusion from family deprives the transgendersof both personal power and protection. They are forced to leave their family. The transgender becomes the prototype of the emasculated subject in the power politics and hence should be excluded, cured and kept away from a cultured and morally high Indian family.

Religious Sanctification and Creation of Myths

In such a condition, inorder to voice themselves and to conceal a sense of ignominy and lack of desirability, a religious sanction is pivotal. Through stories from myths, epics and sacred texts, religion did provide some liberty to the existence of transgenders, which was fiercely held on to by them. "The element of religious sanction comes from a strong presence of transgenders in the myths and religious texts of ancient India"(Nair, 91).

The myth of Mohini appears in *The Mahabharata.* Aravan serves as a significant sidekick among the mainstream heroes in the epic. He was the son of the Pandava warrior Arjuna and the Naga Princess Ulupi. Based on lore and stories, a human sacrifice was required to win the war of Kurukshetra. This wasn't easy as the man chosen for sacrifice was expected to possess 36 male characters. The only two people eligible were Arjuna and his son

Aravan. Aravan became the sacrifice as Arjuna was an important and mainstream Arya warrior and moreover a conventional hero. Being a bachelor, Aravan expressed his desire to marry before his death. As a doomed man who will die the next day after his marriage, nobody was ready to marry him. Lord Krishna saved the day by taking the Mohini avatar and married Aravan. After the nuptial night, Aravan was beheaded and Lord Krishna underwent the ritual of attaining widowhood.

This myth is often used by the *Hijaras*as a means for identity formation in a mythological narration. As K. Delliswararo and Hangsing says:

By referring to individuals of an ambiguous gender status of Arjuna…, *Hijaras* make an attempt to prove the existence of gender variant in ancient times and within sacred text and claim their authentic identity that has existed throughout history. Through this narration of myth story *Hijaras* may wish to define themselves who they are and how they want to see themselves as an individual who has existed throughout history but also as important individuals within the ancient text for their deeds (10-11).

By considering themselves as the descendants of Lord Krishna the transgenders are trying to carve a decent space for them both in society and history. This above said myth of Aravan is re-enacted and performed at Koovagam, in the Villupuramdisctrict of Tamil Nadu.

Aravan is known as *Kuttantavar* in South India. The central thread of the festival is the marriage and sacrifice of *Kuttantavar* and the widowhood and mourning of his wife, Mohini. This annual festival of 18 days, celebrated during the Tamil month of *Chittirai,* views transgenders, who call themselves *Alis* or *arvanis*, re-enact the lore. In the initial 6 days, the *Cami (Aravan's head)* is paraded through the village streets along with music, dance and fireworks, and a *pooja* with coconut offerings and *aarti*is provided for Aravan by each house. Aravan's soul is symbolically transferred to a pot from the *Cami*and the former is repainted on the 13th day. The next three days sees the arrival of transgenders in large numbers. On the 15th night, the transgenders celebrate by dancing with the *Karakkam*i.e. Aravan's flower crown, which is assumed to contain his powers.

Once the dance is done, the *alis* is married to Aravan, with the traditional *thali-tying* ceremony. They, then, engage in a kind of role-play, which becomes the symbol of the consummation of their marriage. The next day, the soul of Aravan is again transferred to the repainted head from the pot. As part of his sacrifice and ritual re-enactment of his death, the *Cami,* is arrayed through the village. The parade turns North, at noon, to face the *Kurukshetra* battlefield, which denotes Aravan's entry into the battlefield and later his death the hands of *Alambusha*. On reaching the symbolic *Kurukshetra*, the garlands decorating the *Cami* are

removed implying the removal of flesh and his death. The lament of the widowed *alis* then resonates in the entire village; with broken bangles and dishevelled hair, *alis* mourn the death of their husband. The mourning takes place at the *Alukalam*, the weeping ground, where the newly wedded brides discard their bridal finery and grieve for their husband.

The *alis* remove their marriage-threads, flung them at a post erected for the ceremony. After washing, they don white sarees as the symbol of widowhood. In honour of the deceased Aravan, 'blood rice' is served at the weeping ground. This offering is believed to make childless women conceive. It is this conjecture that brings numerous transgenders to, the otherwise invisible, village of South India.

The festival thus becomes a ritual re-enactment of the trauma and repressed feelings of coming out for the transgenders. Linked to this idea of repression is Freud's stage of sublimation "whereby the repressed material is 'promoted' into something grander or is disguised as something noble" (Barry 93). Here, the repressed emotions are sublimated into myths which then achieve religious sanction and thereby attain mainstream value. As Sonya suggests:

> The idea could be to have a God of their own with whom they could identify and present as a talisman for garnering popular support. Aravan and the Mohini narrative fit the pattern of rituals and lore that are so essential in gaining a cultural history and acceptance. (92)

The repressed emotions of marriage, consummation and motherhood find expression in the festival. During the festival they wear colourful bangles and ritually tie the *mangalsutra* around their necks. This act can be seen as a path to gain dignity and respect in the accepted culture. The transgenders flaunt their bodies with all kinds of ornaments. For them "the body announces their choice of being" (Nair, 89). The *mangalsutra* or *thali* in the Indian scenario not only shows the transformation of a young girl into a mature married woman, but also her spot in the society as an adult who is respected and capable of running a household. Through the tying of the *mangalsutra*, the transgenders relive their dream of having a 'normal' and respected life in the community. After the death of Aravan the cutting of *thalis* can be seen as a ritual castration for the transgenders. In the metaphorical sense, the fear of being degraded, dominated or made insignificant in a relationship is castration anxiety. Through the cutting of the *thalis,* the repressed emotions of discrimination and degradation or castration anxiety isremoved and a relief is found. Thus the festival becomes "a return of the repressed" (Barry, 96).

A Counter-Narrative

The festival becomes a mini-narrative which augments a base for the changing positions of the transgender groups in the society. Koovagam deconstructs the monolithic idea of gender by parodying the totalising metadiscourse of heterosexuality. This can be linked with Peter Barry's concept of a "narrative that disrupts and deconstructs all notions of universal, ahistorical, consistent metanarrative" (89). Basically what one sees in Koovagam is an incredulity towards the metanarrative of heterosexuality. More than a mininarrative, the festival moves to a counter-narrative where a public space for the marginalised transgenders are created. According to an article by Raul Alberto Mora,

> Counter-narrative refers to the narratives that arise from the vantage point of those who have been historically marginalised. The idea of 'counter' itself implies a space of resistance against traditional domination. A counter-narrative goes beyond the notion that those in relative positions of power can just tell the stories of those in the margins. ("Counter-Narrative")

So Koovagam becomes a counter-narrative and hence a symbol of resistance and a cry towards a life in the mainstream society. The festival creates a public sphere where these subaltern voices clash and blend, breaking down the metanarratives of sex and gender, thus enabling genuine interaction. By opening up the relative nature of the mainstream and fringe cultures, the festival fashions a chance for new perspective and a new order of things.

The eighteen-day festival at the sleepy village of Koovagam becomes a carnival of the marginalised. It is liberating as for that short period, the authority or the dominant culture has little or no control over the revellers even though this would be a "licensed transgression". But its true emancipating potential is viewed in the realization that the already existing rules and conjectures were not immune to ridicule or re-conception. It clears the ground for fringe ideas and subjects to enter into a public interaction. In Koovagam, throughout the eighteen days, there are all kinds of celebrations like songs, dances, games and even a beauty pageant. Here, life is lived like a fest. It is a brief moment where life unshackle its official furrows and brings upon an Utopian freedom of transgression. For Bakthin, carnival and carnivalesque create an alternate social sphere where social hierarchies are abolished and everyone is equal. The life-long discrimination and marginalisation moves away for these eighteen days and the transgenders truly experience mainstream living. The emotions of marriage, being a wife, widowhood and motherhood are experienced and enacted by the transgenders without any shame or discrimination.

Activism and Empowerment

The Koovagam festival formalizes Aravani's position in the conventional and prevailing social structure. It is a space that the fringe society has long been grappling to carve out for itself. Such an act is mythopoeic in nature as it involves the appropriation of local myths, folklores and legends from different parts of the world. Now, the festival has morphed itself into a public sphere where bonding, sharing and co-ordination of the transgenders happen. It becomes a zone of comfort for the community. Through such a public sphere a kind of activism and empowerment is achieved.

While the Koovagam festival is an occasion of cultural and religious significance for the transgenders, it is also used as a space to convey a message on their empowerment. Details about safe sex and awareness on HIV have become a part of the festival The events organised by various NGOs during the festival becomes the budding ground for transgender campaigns against violation of basic transgender rights, violation faced during work and sex, stigma and bigotry attached to transgender identity etc. Through these initiatives the transgenders are made aware of the rights they have and thereby a grass-root level change is being made.

Conclusion

Koovagam becomes a power space where marginalised and discriminated transgenders are sanctified and sanctioned. The myth and folklore give them an authenticity which was denied by the mainstream heterosexual society. The re-enactment during the festival is seen as a performance of their repressed emotions of marriage, motherhood and mainstream life. Through such a performance, the festival becomes a positive move towards inclusion. Koovagam is their own pride march and a counter-narrative where the transgenders subvert and parody the 'normal' heterosexual metanarrative. Thus the festival becomes a public sphere which depicts the destabilization or reversal of power structures as seen in a carnival. This licensed transgression is then turned to a space where transgender activism and empowerment takes place. Awareness regarding social, cultural and psychological violence and violation are provided along with welfare schemes. Thus Koovagam becomes an arena of consent and contestation, a place where old genders clash and new ones are created.

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The Limits of Cosmopolitanism: A Reading of Mohsin Hamid's
The Reluctant Fundamentalist

Sushree Routray

Abstract: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Pakistani novelist Mohsin Hamid challenges the image of America as a country with tolerance, openness, and hospitality. The experience of an immigrant Pakistani to America shows the paradoxes and tensions in identity construction, cultural assimilation, and national belonging. Both Immanuel Kant and Jacques Derrida point towards the negotiation of unconditional and conditional limits of cosmopolitanism as an ideology. What one can routinely find in today's world is that cosmopolitanism is intensely conditional and driven by power and wealth. Linking it with Globalisation is deeply flawed. When wealth and power form the basis of affiliation with the Other rather than the authentic relationships, it becomes conditional. Further, the outsiders are constantly monitored by the laws of nations and police forces. The very nature of unconditional acceptance of others becomes impossible in conditional realities of human relationship that emerge in the trade and commerce of different nations. This paper exposes Cosmopolitanism as an ideology and outlines its limitations. Further, the novel demonstrates the conditional nature of hospitality with the limitations on immigrants.

Keywords: Cosmopolitanism, Orient, Pragmatism, Culture, Empathy.

Can reason be the only source of knowledge and truth? Living in a post-truth world, we are aware that reason can be manipulated to fulfil human greed. Rigid maintenance of universality is likely to side-line moral differences and different nuances of culture. In the novel, we can find plenty of instances where human beings are discriminated based on their religion and race. Changez is a man of abundant intelligence and reason who is an asset to his company. But still, he is not accepted as an equal by his colloquies after 9/11. "Normative chauvinism" occurs when one culture is used as a standard to measure other cultures (Nussbaum 24). Capitalism creates homogenous groups to sell its products. Profits drive them into putting human beings into positions. Changez later realises that he is also a modern-day "Janissary" who is just a cog of in the wheel that crushes everything that he does not fits in the larger political and economic agenda of globalization (Hamid 68). The greed enforces binaries in order to project their superiority on the other. When money becomes the driving force in a society then it eliminates and disrespects poor and helpless people.

The "systematic pragmatism" in Underwood Samson runs with the maxim of "maximum return" (Hamid 20). America works on pragmatism and meritocracy. Anything that does not add to the market value is discouraged. To apply "single-mindedly to the achievement of that objective" makes Changez inhuman like others (Hamid 20). It is Juan Bautista who makes him aware of his ignorance of critical personal and political issues that affects one's emotional state. In the essay "Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism", Martha Nussbaum argues:

> Under the influence of Nietzsche, eminent thinkers of quite different shorts have felt a dissatisfaction with a politics based on reason and principle, and have believed that in the ancient polis we could find an alternative paradigm for our political lives, one based less on reason and more on communal solidarity, less on principle and more on affiliation, less on optimism for progress than on a sober acknowledgement of human finitude and mortality. (Nussbaum 1-2)

The novel questions the ideology of cosmopolitanism as based on flimsy economic background. The first-person narration helps the readers to identify with the protagonist. Changez becomes aware of the plight and precariousness of life around him.

What is the manner that Changez relates to New York? At the beginning of the novel, readers feel that he is quite at home in the city. He is a hardworking man and the city provides him with excellent opportunities for growth and progress. The familiarity of the home connects him deeply with his culture to get a sense of identity. The smell of tea, Urdu being spoken by taxicab, samosa and Chana serving establishment feels like coming home to him. He feels as a part of New York with his polished accent and much-praised intelligence and is one of the best professionals in Underwood Samson. Cosmopolitanism makes it possible for people of different cultures to come in actual contact with each other. He is undisguisable from his colloquies at Underwood Samson despite a difference of culture, nation, tradition, and religion.

The imperialism is so deeply rooted in western civilization that the constant effort to diminish the culture of another nation is felt by the protagonist. Being an outsider, he can feel the diminishing gaze of insiders on him. He feels reduced by the stereotyped universal image of being the other. The novel gives a vivid picture of the deep sited Islamophobia that followed 9/11 attacks. Identity for Changez in America lies with the fact of being a slave to the system. The two-week beard on Changez's face makes him a subject of verbal abuse and

an object of suspicion. The writer stresses the point that he is only accepted till the time he is ready to "blend in with the army of clean-shaven youngsters who were my co-workers" (Hamid 59). The shared "interhumanity" between humans is not global if we view others in the light of our social, ethical or political goals (Falke7). Also tracing back the concept to Kant and Stoics, we can see that Cosmopolitanism has its roots in Rationalism. Human beings should not be made a means to an end but should be an end in themselves.

The novel reflects an American way of life. A nation without any collective memory of the past is shaken when the future becomes questionable. There is a lack of interest in tradition. The aggressive projection of this way of life on a global scale leads to the wrath of deprived nations. Changez is amazed when America as a nation that lives in the future tries to look back at its past after 9/11. The society has no identity of its own and is a permanent melting pot. Changez points out to this refusal to contemplate on the past. "What your fellow countrymen longed for was unclear to me – a time of unquestioned dominance? Of safety? Of moral certainty? I did not know" (Hamid 53). The dangerous nostalgia of the past cannot find anything sustainable as there is no collective memory. The real is replaced by symbolic as everything is commodified and can be obtained by money and power.

Memory can serve as a source of wisdom. Devaluing memory can lead to rootlessness. When the future is shaken there is nowhere to look as past is already withdrawn. With no past, the question of whether the past to be created is fictitious or not arises? It creates an identity crisis in an individual due to a lack of purpose in life. The Dionysian state, which is created by consumerism and technological worship, can lead to a devaluing of the uniqueness of the human experience.

Often the single community that is created by cosmopolitanisms is based on certain conditions and profits. It is about tolerating the other human being rather than accepting them. Morality and ethics form the basis of human relationships even today. As the relationships are not deeply rooted in the culture of people, they easily fall out in cases of tragedy and war. As Derrida points out in the essay that the generosity of the rights to asylum is" controlled, curbed, and monitored by implacable juridical restrictions" (26). He rightly quotes Hannah Arendt who says that:

Contrary to the best-intentioned humanitarian attempts to obtain new declarations of human rights from international organisations, it should be understood that this idea transcends the present sphere of international law which still operates in terms of

reciprocal agreements and treaties between sovereign states; and, for the time being, a sphere that is above the nations does not exist. (Qtd. in Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* 23)

Changez is accepted in America till the time he acts like an American. The twinkling he dresses up differently or grows a beard he is questioned about his identity. Each human being according to Kant should have the right of universal hospitality and the right to resort. But the guest should arrive in a peaceful manner. Pure, unconditional hospitality is a myth. Kant has conditions for hospitality. Similarly, as an ideology, the conditions can be dehumanizing to individuals belonging to different cultures and traditions.

Changez feels vulnerable and powerless by the precarious condition of his family in Pakistan. He becomes agitated by the injustice that American foreign policy had forced on his country. The novel provides a picture of human beyond the political and economic agencies. In the book *Welcome to the Desert of The Real*, Slavoj Zizek argues that

> This, then, is the truth of the discourse of universal human rights: The Wall separating those covered by the umbrella of Human Rights and those excluded from its protective cover. Any reference to universal human rights as an 'unfinished project' to be gradually extended to all people is here a vain ideological chimaera and, faced with this prospect, do we, in the West, have any right to condemn the excluded when they use any means, inclusive of terror, to fight their exclusion? (Zizek 150)

Changez feels like an outsider in a city that was home to him before. The violent propagation of media after 9/11 turned people hostile towards his religion. They refuse to look beyond their horizon at the other human being. Changez realizes that he feels much closer to a cab driver than his fellow colleagues. Chauvinism occurs when one fails to appreciate the differences in others culture. Each human being has a unique religion. There is no fixed way of looking at life. Changez drinks and enjoys premarital sex. The novel is a response to oriental myth and presents a complex individual who cannot be put in any categories based on religion, origins, or wealth.

The "Third world sensibility" that Changez feels with the drivers shows the risky nature of human beings where life is endangered because of social, material and historical factors (Hamid 33). After meeting Juan – Bautista, he sees how traditional the empire was. He understands the plight of migrants who are dependent on the host country for protection and livelihood. Their life is constantly endangered by state violence. He becomes the

consciousness of the inhumanity of his job that values money and power above human beings.

Coming back to Lahore, he is at first dismayed by the condition of his home. But he later realizes that it is his gaze that has changed. He is looking at his own house through "that particular type of entitled and unsympathetic American who so annoyed me when I encountered him in the classrooms and workplaces of your country's elite" (Hamid 57). By changing the framework of his vision, Changez is able to appreciate his house rather than thinking it as a valueless family holding. The American norms that he has learned in Underwood Samson cannot encapsulate the lived experience of his home.

Suzanne Keen in her research on empathy points out at the textual gaps in narrative techniques that the reader fills with their idea of embodied consciousness. This can help in overriding the resistance that is often displayed by members of the in-group towards the outsiders. Empathy can be at odds with human rights. She explores "false empathy" in place of "failed empathy" (Keen 25). Treating human being as equals until the time they are similar like others is morally deficient in itself and fails to recognize the distinct otherness of them.

Each person we meet can change us because of "potential interconnectedness" (Falke 84). When we treat the other as an object then the willingness to be overwhelmed is lacking. Marion argues that "To conceive of love as a need would render the beloved a mere means to personal self-fulfilment" (47). One of the abilities that literature has is to make the readers aware of their own prejudices. This novel draws our attention to certain extreme notions that get propagated even today by media.

Can we look at an outsider without preconceived notions? Changez argues the point at the end when he says that "you should not imagine that we Pakistanis are all potential terrorists, just as we should not imagine that you Americans are all undercover assassins" (81). The being of another human being refuses to be grouped as an object with fixed qualities. What happens when the uniqueness of experiencing life is reduced to a formula? The inability to look at the subjectivity of the other person creates a crisis later. Falke articulates "The act of love requires us to yield our intention" (Falke 3). Human beings are not objects nor an extension of our perception and fantasies. The "Imagined Empathy" (Keen 20) is at odds with human rights. Keen argues that

Indeed, they regard it as a typical manifestation of Western arrogance, imagining common ground with the victims of global capitalism and fantasizing relationships of

emotional recognition in place of the unseemly relation of consumers to the exploited. Empathy, in this light, becomes a delusion of the affluent West, which ought to be revealed for throwing up impediments to social change. (Keen 25)

This gives rise to false empathy instead of failed empathy. The novel shows the traces of "political correctness" (Nussbaum 23) that Americans has inherited from the Stoics. The careful scrutiny of the foreigners based on their outward images and language is a result of this. Abstracting the uniqueness into types reduces the other human being into an object serving the needs of profit and interest. The Dionysian state creates purposelessness. They cannot fight for universal causes as there is no collective memory.

The novel breaks some of these prejudices by pointing at the details of the life of a Pakistani. Instead of a symbolic world where he is similar to the ideologies that west believes in and creates, the novel creates an alternative. By counter-narrative, Hamid breaks the stereotype. He points out to the fact that it's not like all Pakistani's do not drink. Similarly, it's not that only educated people to drink. But even people in villages do drink. Further, he points to the fact that "Indeed, in our poetry and folk songs intoxication occupies a recurring role as a facilitator of love and spiritual enlightenment" (27). The novel carefully separates the politics of self-identification from any underlying religious faith.

The war against terrorism instead of attacking the culprits condemns the whole group of people that share the religion. The divide between Orient and Occident is deep-seated in people. Each country has certain stereotypes of the other. No religion is monolithic. To reduce the complexity into one group is to reduce the sensibilities that each culture offers. Each human being has a unique life and is born in a particular space and time.

The novel shows how the insider-outsider perspective is naturalized by Americans. Erica's father believes the news that he reads in newspapers. The condescending gaze of the west on the east is felt by Changez wherever he goes. Further, since it is a multicultural society, he cannot accept his exclusion based on his religion. The officer who checked his passport in the airport had a "mastery of English inferior to mine" (36). Political choices should be guided by moral principles which should include respect for another's culture. Joseph Darda in the article "Precarious World: Rethinking Global Fiction in Mohsin Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist" argues that,

First, war influences the norms by which we recognize life ("recognisability"). Second, to counteract this system of norms we must understand the human as

"precarious," as faced with life's end from the start, and differentially so. Third, acknowledging our shared precariousness might form the basis of an international coalition committed to contesting those forces that differentially subject some to life's precariousness ("precarity"). (Darda 110)

Advancement in technologies has forced recognition of the other. Multiculturalism emphasis both on group identity and individual right to choose an identity for themselves. The interconnectedness of goods, people and capital leads to perforate the national borders. The oxymoron in the title draws the reader towards the dichotomy. The novel offers a dialogue against the complacent streamlines that media propagates. The true fundamentalists are the employees of Underwood Samson who relentlessly focused on profit instead of human value.

The destruction of any tradition that provides a wider meaning of life that may appear incomprehensible to the west does not mean that the country is barbaric. Globalization cannot be limited to economic and political causes. It has to rise above it to incorporate differences in the people. There is a clash between two forms of the metropolis that Derrida points out to. The nation and the state, where we can see New York acting under the nation of United States of America. Derrida further argues that "Is there thus any hope for cities exercising hospitality if we recognize with Arendt, as I feel we must, that nowadays international law is limited by treaties between sovereign states" (Derrida 23). Changez wears an ethnic kurta to meet Erica's parents. He is really comfortable in his choices of cloth and feels that "It was a testament to the open-mindedness and— that overused word— cosmopolitan nature of New York"(Hamid 25). But when he meets the doorman, he feels offended by his disapproving glance. Changez reconsiders his loyalties after 9/11. The victimisation of Afghanistan and the involvement of America in these wars makes him aware of the politics of power. As a theory, cosmopolitanism seeks to transcend the narrower limits of communities and tries to see the world as it is. The novel is a grim reminder of miscommunication between two nations.

The comparison often troubled Changez. He counter-argues the traditional images propagated by media of his country being poor and ignorant. The xenophobic image of his country troubles him. He gives a picture of his country that was far civilized and sophisticated. He argues that "we were not the crazed and destitute radicals you see on your television channels but rather saints and poets and—yes—conquering kings" (47). The Shalimar Gardens, Lahore Fort, Royal Mosque are ruminants of rich culture and heritage.

In order to transcend the limits of narrower communities, it is important for cultures to have a dialogue with each other. It is a cultural position that has to be formed and discussed on particular social bases. Cultural attachments do not necessarily form a source of conflict in showing ethical obligation to distant strangers. Changez who is the protagonist of the novel is an example of this. He can connect to people from different places and class based on his shared humanity. The awareness of their pain and finitude of human life can help people to become aware of the injustices and inequalities that vulnerable human beings suffer under institutional order.

Thus, cosmopolitanism as an ideology encourages us to look towards a future beyond the horizon of possible existence and the immediate community that one lives in. But the horizon is difficult to attain due to numerous social, political and economic factors. There is a need to create more empathy among citizens in order to cultivate humanness and respect for the other. If they lack adequate reasons to intervene then the haste with which media and political elites manipulate public opinion will create a human crisis. Human beings live in societies. The social life is not isolated but is conditioned by one's material and social surroundings. The novel argues for human solidarity. Cassandra Falke argues that

> Instead of dividing empathy into logical or emotional acts that begin from an assumption of the distance between subjects, phenomenologists have instead worked to describe empathy as a "unique and irreducible form of intentionality" that is called forth by the moment (Falke 86)

We have a collective identity as human beings. We all feel the pain and suffering in our limited beings. It is very important to not form any preconceived notion of the other. Active participation in the suffering of others is an expression of our shared humanity. Climate changes and global warming makes it essential to form delicate balance by entering into critical dialogue with other cultures and civilisation.

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Treatment of "Gender" in Language and Gender Research: A Diachronic Analysis

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Abstract: This study investigates the notion of gender in its treatment in the related fields of sociolinguistics, language and gender, variation studies, etc. The investigation in this study assumes a near diachronic approach to see how the notion of gender has evolved from being simple category variable to a complex factor by adopting Penelope Eckert's "three-wave" analytical frame of reference. Some of the objectives of this study are to shed light on the theories that have facilitated the construal of gender in sociolinguistics, to elaborate on the methodological approaches that have been incorporated to research the field of variation and gender, and to provide readers with a broader understanding of how variation studies have progressed from being mere surveys to complex multilevel epistemological undertakings.

Keywords: Three waves, gender, sociolinguistics, variation studies, identity, culture, community.

Introduction

Gender has always been a complex sociolinguistic variable in the literature of contemporary variation studies and related fields. The primary objective of this paper is to first briefly discuss how the field of language and gender has progressed in the course of time by adopting the thematic approach from Penelope Eckert's seminal work on the three waves of variation (Eckert, *Three Waves* 87-100). The paper will also try to shed light on the theories that have facilitated the construal of gender in sociolinguistics and elaborate on the methodological approaches that have been incorporated to research the field of variation and gender. The overall aim of this paper is to give readers a broader understanding of how variation studies have progressed in the course of time and how the notion of gender contributes to the foundation of the field of contemporary sociolinguistic studies.

Three Waves of Variation Study

A near-diachronic representation of language vis-à-vis gender can be captured through how gender has been handled in variationist sociolinguistics. In so doing, elaborating the three-waves of variation studies is crucial.

First and Second Waves of Variation Studies

Eckert (*Three Waves*) shows that the study of sociolinguistic variation and gender broadly fall under three major waves. The first wave is known as survey era and it reflects the dialectological interests of sociolinguistics. It reflects the differences between the way speakers talk within a large, usually urban, speech community and how that can be stratified according to social class and style. Gender was often also implicated, and there was a convergence between careful style, middle-class speech, and women's speech. What made these kinds of studies first wave is that the research culminated describing "these differences and when it had used them to shed light on the dynamics of language change. There was little attempt to interrogate why these social factors might pattern together in urban speech communities, and what their convergence signified about the societies concerned…." (Meyerhoff 89).

An attempt to go beyond the survey nature in order to explore the social meaning of the variables signifies the nature of the second wave of language and gender research. The gamut of research in the second wave was conducted by asking questions about the local context of language variation at the time of the actual research. The research of this kind draws on more detailed knowledge of the way community is organized and what drives social action in the community. While the first wave appears to show the close links between variation studies, dialectology, and historical linguistics, the second wave research marked the close connections between early sociolinguistics and anthropology. Labov's study (*Social Motivation* 273-309) of Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts is a good example of research that did both. The study examined how the use of raised onsets in two key diphthongs (/aw/ and /ay/) had become more than a marker of locality. Sankoff & Labarge (*Linguistic Variation* 239-250) also considered what certain convergences of gender, style, and social class in early social dialect surveys might mean. Drawing upon work by sociologist Bourdieu, they noted that not all women were associated with the use of middle-class speech variant. Women whose jobs placed them in professions (e.g. teachers) where language was a crucial resource, were more likely to use middle-class variants than women working in professions (e.g. cleaner) where standard language use was not a key marker of success. The fact that even lower-class women were more often directed into professions which are part of the corresponding linguistic marketplace than men is how society is organized rather than about women per se.

The idea that women may draw on linguistic symbols of social status more than men recurs in Eckert's work *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*. In this work she studies

teenagers in the United States. Eckert suggests that high school girls made use of a broader linguistic repertoire (both collectively and individually) than high school boys did. There seemed to be a number of reasons behind this, including the fact that the boys had access to a more varied repertoire of social markers that enabled them to position themselves in the high school community (e.g. leadership in school council, sports activities). This more socially situated analysis of gender patterns in speech paved the ground for the third wave of language and gender research in which researchers approach variables as components of style. As Eckert points out, some of the second-wave work actually predates some of the survey studies of the first wave (*Three Waves*). Hence, it is crucial to consider these waves as more of reflecting research sensibilities than pure chronological history of the field.

Third Wave of Studies

The main move in the third wave of variation studies was from "a view of variation as reflection of social identities and categories to the linguistic practice in which speakers place themselves in the social landscape through stylistic practice" (*Three Waves*). The third wave viewed the meaning of variation as an essential feature of language. Once such a feature, for example a certain linguistic usage related to gender, is identified, it can be used to index a specific kind of membership of the users in a particular population. This index may also facilitate an outsider's understanding of the particular stereotype being associated with a certain population or its subgroups. Wong (*Reappropriation of Tongzhi* 763-93) shows how Hong Kong journalists integrate their biases in operationalizing the term "tongzhi" used by gay communities to often refer to themselves. As evident in the studies by Bucholz (443-60) and Cutler (428-42), such indexes can also be used to attempt at claiming in-group qualities that bestow admiration, as in how white American boys use African American Vernacular English features to index masculinity.

Zhang (*Rhotacization* 201-22) finds "orthographically" marked uses of rhotacization in twentieth century Beijing literature. This rhotacization is used to represent the speech of a prototypical urban male persona in Beijing. In the study, where the state mangers show considerable rhotacization, the yuppies, especially the women, show a subdued use of this variable. Another Beijing feature (as mentioned in Eckert, *Three Waves* 95), the interdental pronunciation of /z/, is commonly associated with the feckless character, the "alley saunterer". The alley saunterer is a male stereotype and female state managers use this one considerably less than their male colleagues do. Through this kind of stylistic strategies the male state managers have constructed themselves as local. In the third-wave studies, it is observed that style is used as a meaning making resource for giving a social life to language..

As Eckert (*Three Waves* 97) suggests this shift in the usage of /t/ expands its "force to its participation in a broader phonological system, whose shape takes on indexical potential through iconization".

The studies that have been mentioned above focus more on the gender and language links. However, this three waves of variation studies encompass every possible aspect variationist research. Although these three waves appear to be distinct in terms of the ideological shifts, works in variation studies seem to share properties across the ideological boundaries of the three distinct waves. Thus, brief analytical articulations about how to theorize gender and how the methodological treatments of gender vary are the salient points to discuss in the upcoming sections of the current study.

Theorizing gender

The dawn of the sociolinguistic studies in the areas of gender and language often took it to be axiomatic that gender ought to be investigated only when it was evident. And gender was most salient "…in cross-sex interaction between potentially sexually accessible interlocutors, or same-sex interaction in gender-specific tasks" (Brown & Levinson 53). This premise contributed to several scholarly undertaking concerned with the linguistic styles of men and women in traditional heterosexual relationships. However, some significant and controversial theoretical assumptions have rendered the prior assumption open to debate. Thus, investigating influential theories for gender and language based on Meyerhoff (87-102) is a crucial a theoretical exercise.

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The Relation of Gender to Sex and Sexuality

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The categorical difference between sex and gender has been considered to be one of the driving forces of the Western feminist thoughts, and thus, it influences sociolinguistics, and related fields of language and gender. The difference between sex and gender aims at opposing the perspectives that naturalizes distinctions and uneven power dynamics between women and men to sex or biology. Feminists in the West and elsewhere often find the following model given by Shapiro negatively debatable. Shapiro says that gender refers to the social, cultural, psychological constructs that are imposed upon these biological differences. This kind of model is problematic both in its conception of gender and in its assumptions about sex.

Challenges to norms of sex and gender can cast a particularly illuminating light on the construction of sex and gender because they make norms and counter-norms of gender visible to scholars. Indeed, the study of such challenges has become one methodological corollary of a post-structuralist theoretical approach. In linguistics, a post-structuralist approach has led to

a recent series of studies which focus on various kinds of sex/gender transgression. For example, Hall's work with Indian hijras (ritual specialists, mostly men, who describe themselves as hermaphrodites but have often undergone a castration operation) highlights the process of socialization into gender. Cameron's study of college men watching a basketball game, and gossiping about other men whom they label "gay", shows how some men continually construct themselves as heterosexual by labelling other members as "gay' in the absence of any information or even any indicators about their sexuality because their cloths or behaviour or speech are perceived as "insufficiently masculine".

Gender as Activity and Relation

The question of how to think of gender as something which is structure and practice, institutional and individual, is one of the primary objectives here. One of the pivotal understandings of gender as a being something that one does is directly challenging the notion of gender as something that one has. The metaphors which have arisen over the time to capture this idea are– gender as activity, gender as performance, gender as accomplishment. This array of metaphors can be understood as foregrounding a practice-based approach to gender. Practice theory reacts against structural-determinist social theories that did not incorporate how human actions make structure. Although Ortner (*Making Gender*) argues that key practice theorists often make little attempt to engage with works by feminist, subaltern, post-colonial, and minority scholars, her argument ignores feminist linguistic anthropological work. A number of feminist linguistic anthropological works do draw on practice theory. Butler challenges the view of gender as an "attribute" with those of historical and anthropological approaches that understand gender as a relation among socially constituted subjects in specifiable contexts. This model of personhood by Butler has been called abstract individualism. Butler's theory has been called to be a part of liberal political philosophy.

Ways of understanding gender as something other than a possession or attribute are not only found in non-Western cultural systems, but they also are part of a challenge to hegemonic world-views in North America and Western Europe. The sociolinguistic tradition of gender as an activity draws upon a Marxist psychological tradition called Soviet activity theory, which is highly influenced by the work of Vygotsky. Goodwin (*He-Said-She-Said*) draws upon the Vygotskyan tradition to argue that activities should be the basic unit of analysis for the study of interactive events. Goodwin examines the different social structures created by African American boys and girls in a range of speech activities and in a range of play activities. Gender identity varies across context. The particular focus on activities in

linguistic research on gender then changes the issue at hand from "what the differences are between men's and women's speech" to when, how, and whether men and women's and women's speech are instantiated in the same or in the different manners. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, in a related theoretical framework "Communities of Practice" (404), have argued that studying how gender is constructed in communities of practices challenges existing approaches to the study of gender in sociolinguistics.

When Gender is Relevant

Is gender always salient or relevant? – is the heart of feminist analytic practice. Barrie Throne (107) says she was drawn to the moments when gender divisions were highlighted in her study of school children. She says it is the truth when one understands when gender is relevant and when not, when it marked and when not. The question of relevance has been extensively discusses within conversational analysis (CA). Schegloff argues that gender (and class and ethnicity) are not analytically linked to a specific conversational mechanism that would produce outcome. Schegloff then believes that analyst can only talk about people's identities in terms of the roles they play in conversation. Talking about identity in this manner leads one to allow priority to a "Unitarian" approach to social theory. Although Scheloff's way asks interesting questions about the links between difference and class, ethnicity etc. his recommendation hardly allowed space for determining whether a focus on difference or similarity is more important in a given context. Schegloff's approach ultimately suggests gender is never relevant. This approach simply ties back to abstract individualism.

Social identity needs to be reconsidered as an issue worth investigating on the backdrop of the relevance question. Invoking similarities between men and women may be warranted by, and politically effective in some situations, in many others such invocations have led to the application of unacknowledged masculine norms to judge women as inferior. The solution to this problem may be not to the focus on when gender is relevant, but how gender is relevant. Ochs (1992) deals along the same line. Ochs argues that in any given community there is only a small set of linguistic forms that referentially, or directly and exclusively, index gender.

Methodological Approaches

In the upcoming sections, the paper will attempt at briefly mentioning the methodological shifts in approaches over the history of variation and gender. It will try point out major studies and how all the approaches mentioned in them eventually shape and are shaped by their very understanding of the research and findings.

Generalizations About Gender and Variation

Starting from 1980s, several studies of urban speech communities in the Middle East produced findings that seemed to challenge the first wave association with gender, style, and social class. Whereas Western surveys had found that women used more of the standard variants than men when a variable was above the level of social awareness, in the Middle Eastern studies women seemed to reverse this pattern. They were typical users of local colloquial variants of Arabic. Hence, it seemed to counter the findings of Labov and Trudgill. However, it was found (based on Harei) that awareness alone was not sufficient for women to orient to the prestige norms of classical Arabic. Because familiarity with Classical Arabic depends on the formal instruction and men's greater access to that. Interestingly the same argument had been made for creole speech communities in the Caribbean by Le Page & Tabouret-Keller in arguing for variation as "acts for identity".

Form Versus Function

The connection between women's and men's life choices and how gendered roles position women and men in society was the subject of Lakoff's influential work exploring the nature of women's language in middle-class Western society. Lakoff's work drew a connection between the gender differences she believed existed and the social place of women in middle-class white American society at the time she was writing. Lakoff's work spurred a large number of empirical responses in the following decades. Her work overtly invited criticism because most of her claims were based on her introspections of what she knew about middle-class American society. Holmes (W*omen's Language*) made the point that Lakoff's generalizations suggested a one-to-one match between form and function that was not supported empirically. In an extensive research work (*Women, men, and Politeness*) Holmes demonstrated that generalizations to the effect that women use more of any given linguistic form are not very informative, unless the analyst carefully separates out the functions that those forms ate used for.

Apparent Gender Paradox

In a 1990 paper, Labov drew attention to what he called the "gender paradox". It elaborated two very different patterns associated with women and language change. One that happens when a change occurs above the level of conscious awareness and other where the change occurs below the level of conscious awareness. Former one is marked by the usage of standard-like varieties by women more than men and in the latter women seemed to use more of the less standard-like varieties than men. Eckert's response, in her several scholarly articulations (*Jocks and Burnouts*; *The Whole Women*; *Linguistic Variation*), was to observe

that this is a paradox only if we assume it is the same women in each case, but this is not necessarily so. In so doing, she urged sociolinguists to pay much closer attention to the place variation plays alongside other social practices in constructing and projecting different styles and personas. Her study (*Linguistic Variation*) of teenagers in subaltern Detroit corroborated her stand in this kind of research. Her work also highlighted the socially situated nature of gender patterns in language.

Social Constructionist Account(s) of Variation

The turn to social constructionism in research on variation and gender gained its fullest manifestation in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Eckert & McConnell-Ginet introduced the concept of "community of practice" to the field. They argued against the overly simplistic dichotomy between "men" and "women" as a component from the first-wave, survey-style research. They argued that gender is realized and experienced through the practices of the many communities that we are members of. They also put focus on how gender is enacted in all those spheres of our lives makes us "women" and "men". Since about 2005, it has been less commonly seen as an explicit research framework in language and gender, perhaps partly because of criticisms about the lack of agency in this framework. However, its influence has been immense. Research on variation and gender now either position itself as part of the shift to more local notions of gender and identity, or explicitly position itself outside such analyses of gender identities, and justify this stance for methodological or ontological reasons.

Conclusions

Rather than providing only a chronological approach, the paper has followed the three-wave model to elaborate on the works done over the years and discussed salient theories that go into constructing the understanding the notion of gender in sociolinguistics and social anthropology. However, only a few of the theoretical paradigms have been discussed due to the limitation of space. The theoretical implication of this work is to shed light on the notion of gender as a complex and crucial element in sociolinguistics. The paper also implies that an enormous amount of research has gone into the construal of gender as a complex sociolinguistic variable, and the field of language and gender in general is epistemologically and ontologically significant to conduct further investigation in the areas of discourse, conversation, pragmatics, and other related areas of applied and critical linguistics.

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Acoustic Qualities of Vowels in Bangla English: An Empirical Study of L₁ Interference

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Abstract: In Indian context acquisition of English as the second language (ESL) involves many challenges and difficulties. In the bilingual situation that the study site affords, the first language (L_1) Bangla is obviously the dominant or 'superstrate language' and has a significant effect on the process of acquisition of English as L_2 that is the 'substrate language' in the given context (Weinreich 47-50, Ascoli 13–45). The present study has empirically reviewed the acoustic structures of the monophthongs in Bangla English that are found to have varied greatly from the vowel acoustics of the British English in RP. It has been revealed that, the English long vowels have lost their distinctive durational configurations; central vowels have been lowered; and a new vowel /o/ has been introduced. Results show that L_1 vowel acoustic structures being different from the RP vowels (especially of namely / ɜː /, /æ / and /ɑː / in Bangla English) induce considerable variations in most of the native SCB speakers' English vowels. The relative acoustic proximity or distance between any two vowels across these languages in terms of F_1 and F_2 configure the English vowels acoustically. But the speakers fail to realize the central vowels mostly, as the category is almost non-existent in their L_1. These findings support the view that the interference factor that has resulted in such deviations. Behind the L_1 induced alternations in the L_2 vowels, the motivating factors include interference of the first language, non-uniform inventories and structures of the segments, different prosodic requirements and language-specific phonotactics.

Key Words: ESL, bilingualism, Bangla English, vowel acoustics, linguistic interference, substrate language.

I. Introduction to the research problem

Most of the earlier studies on the structure of vowel sounds in Bangla English[1] (henceforth BngE) are based on impressions gathered for different sources. They are not supported by any empirical research and their results. The present study concentrates on the acoustic

structures of vowels in BE, and intends to provide empirical supports to all the previous works that laid the foundation theoretically.

English in India has long been recognized as an official language. However, far greater number of speakers use 'English as the second language' (ESL) than the speakers speaking it as F_1. In the Indian context, far from being monolithic, ESL is characterized by diversities, being used in many regional variations. Each of these varieties of English in India has resulted from huge interferences of the dominant language (*i.e.* the mother tongue concerned). In the state of West Bengal in India, it is typically a bilingual situation that necessitates a conflict between the 'substrate' and 'superstrate' languages to confer victory on the latter (Weinreich 47-50, Ascoli 13–45).

When it concerns English as F_2 and any Indian language (like Bangla) as F_1, it's almost an uneven tussle between non-uniform inventories and structures of the segments, different prosodic requirements and language-specific phonotactics. In the bilingual situation (as Kolkata, our site for study affords one), mother tongue or the first language (here Bangla is the L_1) is always 'superstrate language', destined to dominate and have a significant effect on the process of acquisition of the 'substrate language' English (as L_2). The present study is an enquiry into the effect of bilingualism on BngE, more specifically, into the extent of mother tongue interference at the phonetic level.

II. Scope, Motivation and objective

The experimental study is restricted to the phonetic level, mapping of the first three formants and temporal duration of monophthongal vowels in two varieties of English and Standard Colloquial Bangla (henceforth SCB).

Except the fact that, both SCB and British English (BrtE) belong to the Indo-European family of languages, there are hardly any linguistic similarity between them. Syntactically, Bangla is a SOV language, but English prefers the SVO pattern. At the level of phonetics and phonology, the former is a syllable-timed language[2] (Ghosh 12, Roach 135), but the latter stress-timed. The stress system is very strong in one, but almost non-existent in the other. Again, Bangla is a vowel harmony language[3], but English is none.

In terms of vowel phonetics, English has a larger inventory (having 12 members) than Bangla (that has 7 monophthongs):

Table 1. Contrastive words exhibiting the monophthongal vowels[4] in the languages

British English (RP)			Standard Bangla			
Vowel	Phoneme	Word	Vowel	Phoneme	Word	Gloss
Front	iː	'seat'	Front	i	[dik]	'direction'
	ɪ	'sit'			[til]	'seasame'
	e	'set'		e	[bet]	'cane'
	æ	'sat'		ɛ	[gɛn]	'knowledge'
Back	uː	'shoot'			[dʰɛn]	'meditation'
	ʊ	'put'	Back	u	[bʰut]	'ghost'
	ɔː	'short'			[sukʰ]	'happiness'
	ɒ	'shot'		o	[gol]	'round'
	ɑː	'sharp'		ɔ	[mɔd]	'wine'
Central	ɜː	'shirt'			[cʰɔl]	'pretension'
	ə	'shutter'*	Central	a	[macʰ]	'fish'
	ʌ	'shut'			[kan]	'ear'

The uses of acoustic spaces are also different. The following figures show that, English plot is more crowded, leaving almost no empty space.

Figure 1: Acoustic vowel distribution in British English:
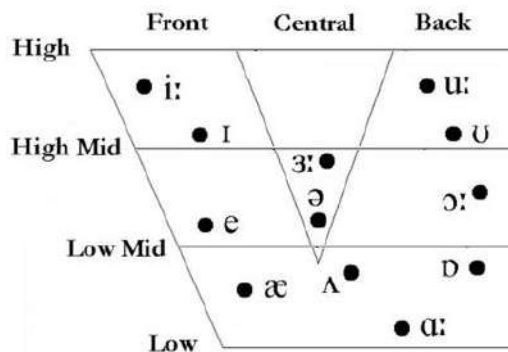
On the other hand, Bangla with a smaller inventory of 7 vowels has a wide open space in the centre:

Figure 2: Acoustic vowel distribution in Standard Bangla:

It determines the extent and direction of the vocalic shifts, horizontal vowel movement is to be found more than that in vertical direction (Lindblom 13–44). While talking about phonetic variations in BngE, Kostic and Das in *A Short Outline of Bengali Phonetics* and Datta in the CIEFL Bulletins (vol. 9 and vol. 11) also talked about the effect of unique vowel inventory.

The study has been undertaken with an objective to make a comparative study of BngE, BrtE and the SCB in order to measure the extent and direction of sound changes in the first under the impact of the last, whereas the BrtE is to serve as a point of reference. Here, the data on monophthong vowels from the conversational of six native Bangla speakers (3 female, 3 male) from Kolkata are measured and compared with the formant structures of the British English as reported in the previous acoustic studies. This study will show how differently from British English (BrtE) the Bangla English (BngE) realizes the English monophthongs in connected speech; how it distributes the acoustic vowel spaces among all the monophthongs. Empirical data are also going to substantiate the deviations in the forms of loss vowel contrasts, minimization of the vowel inventory, and random vowel substitutions in BngE.

III. Literature review

A great number of studies have dealt with the acoustics of British English vowels. Jones' "The Pronunciation of English" and "An Outline of English Phonetics" and Firth's "Speech" were canonical studies on acoustics of BrtE vowels, that served as the standard point of references for many of the subsequent studies. There Jones concentrated on the distinction between the comparative acoustics of English peripheral vowels (*cf.* the vowel plot in Appendix 1, figure 10) and central vowels. The formant structure of the 11 vowels in RP, as reported by Deterding (49) follows (values averaged from the original gender-specific formant matrix, as shown in Appendix I, table 8):

Table 2 & Figure 3: Structure of vowel formant (in Hz, Deterding 49)

Vowel Formants (in Hz)		
	F₁	F₂	F₃
iː	292	2452	2984
ɪ	376	1966	2759
e	607	1857	2772
æ	854	1676	2666
ʌ	779	1359	2691
ɑː	778	1236	2666
ɒ	655	1131	2636
ɔː	402	858	2708
ʊ	395	1257	2571
uː	322	1314	2541
ɜː	542	1566	2664
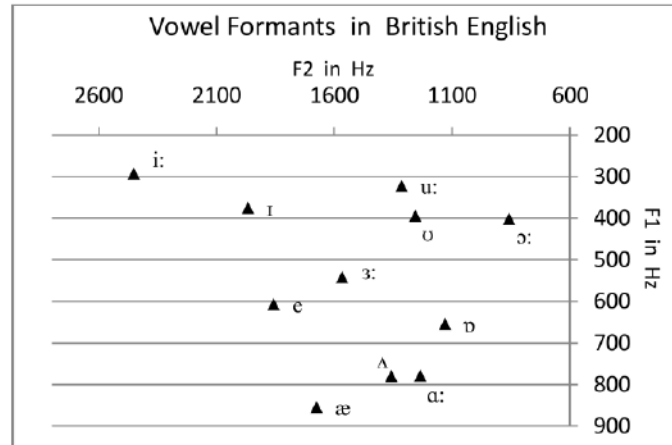
Deterding (47-55) did not include schwa in his study. However, we accepted the stance that English has 12 monophthongs in RP, as the Figure 1 shows. Of them, BrtE has temporally 7 short and 5 long vowels. Temporal duration of a vowel is phonemically contrastive in many languages like English (Durand 77–98). Compared to English, Bangla has much less number of vowels, since vowel length in the latter is not phonemic. Bangla vowels are underlyingly short never having the phonemically contrastive long vowels, unlike the following binary pairs in English:

$$/ \text{ɪ} /   \quad \text{vs.} \quad / \text{i:} /$$

$$/ \text{u} /   \quad \text{vs.} \quad / \text{u :} / \quad \text{or}$$

$$/ \text{ɔ} /   \quad \text{vs.} \quad / \text{ɔ:} /$$

As reported by the researchers like Hai, Kostic and Das, Ghosh, Hossain et al, Alam et al., Bera and others, though vowel length in Bangla is not contrastive, depending upon the contexts often it undergoes alternations to lead to allophonic length contrasts. For more specific example, vowels are uniformly long in monosyllables (Dan 69, Ghosh 95). Such finding of Bangla vowel lengths as the following have been reported:

Table 3: Comparative duration of Bangla Vowels[5]

	Vowel Duration (in msec.)		
	Hossain *et al.* (2007)	Alam *et al.* (2008)	Bera (2012)
i	75.20	68.99	75.00
u	72.75	68.30	76.50
e	75.37	75.45	84.25
o	72.48	75.74	81.25
ɛ	—	90.89	99.75
ɔ	72.15	74.65	93.50
a	68.38	98.02	88.75

They show the allophonic length contrast in different varieties of Bangla. The last two studies show that Bangla vowels are longer when they are lower on the acoustic vowel plane. The next table presents another aspect of their acoustic quality, the formants F_1, F_2 and F_3 (measurements have been done in Hertz[6]):

Table 4: Comparative formant values of Bangla Vowels (in Hz)[7]

	Savithri et al. (2005)			Alam *et al.* (2008)			Bera (2012)		
	F_1	F_2	F_3	F_1	F_2	F_3	F_1	F_2	F_3
i	298	2675		359	2318	2860	347		
u	339	1011		365	1024	2755	437		
e	450	2443		501	1750	2467	494		
o	443	902		446	1042	2688	504		
ɛ				694	1567	2285	617		
ɔ				664	1193	2488	635		
a	905	1417		766	1458	2341	786		

The studies (though only one study incorporates all the three formants[8] and all the seven vowels) show that, higher vowels have lower F_1, and back vowels are characterized by greater F_2, but the F_3 variances across vowels are comparatively less. However, none of these studies is going to be accepted in mapping the acoustic differences between SCB vowels and vowels in British English. Across these three studies, informants, speech corpus, stimuli and samples were different and heterogeneous. But our study intends to compare empirically vowel acoustics in BngE and SCB with reference to the acoustics of BrtE vowel, as reported so far.

IV. Test design

Two empirical experiments have been conducted, one with Bangla English (BngE) vowels and the other with the vowels in SCB. The same set of speakers have been recorded and analysed to detect the language-specific vowel acoustics.

In the first experiment with BngE (as L_2) the 12 monophthongal vowels have been tested for their formants and length that are compared with the formant structures of the vowels of BrtE in RP.

The second experiment with the 7 SCB (L_1) vowels aims at looking for the probable impact of the vowels in the substrate mother tongue on their BrtE counterparts. This way our

study is supposed to make the point as to how the L_2 vowels are realized— are they more under the impact of RP or of the mother tongue (*i.e.* L_1).

V. Methodology

Both the experiments follow the same methodology as mentioned below except the different data sets, one being the samples of BngE and the latter SCB vowels as samples.

i. Speakers

In order to find the phonological variables of Bangla harmonizing vowels, I would record 20 different native speakers of the languages from different geographical regions but with the similar educational background.

The set of 6 speakers (3 male and 3 female) were recorded from the central and southern parts of Kolkata (*cf.* Appendix II). The speakers should be young (in the range of 26-28 years), formally educated (at least graduates). They should be the people born and brought up in Kolkata so that they would be the natural speakers of Kolkata SCB.

ii. Materials

For the first experiment 96 test words from English and for the second experiment 56 words from SCB have been used (*cf.* Appendix III). as stimuli to extract speech tokens. The monoyllabic carrier words were put medially in the sentence domain. The sentence templates were 'In English X is a word' (the target would occupied the 'X' slot), and [tara Y bollo] 'They told Y' (monosyllabic test words to occupy the 'Y' slot) respectively in the experiments. The test words were all monosyllabic with the structure CVC, where the coda was always a non-nasal unaspirated segment. Voiced coda was kept to the minimum, since vowels are longer before the voiced obstruents than before the unvoiced ones; the effect is very large in English, where the contrast is also phonemic: e.g. 'bad' vs. 'bat' (Chen 129-159; Klatt 1208-1221). As much as possible, the stop consonants /p/, /t/ and /k/ were preferred in both onset and coda positions. Nasal consonants and nasalized vowels were put aside fully for the experiments.

iii. Recording

For recoding data digitally, the SCB speakers of Kolkata were given the scripted sentences carrying the test words and requested to reiterate them five times as normally as possible. These utterances (Experiment-1: **96** words/sentences x **5** iterations x **6** subjects = 2,880 tokens & Experiment-2: **56** words/sentences x **5** iterations x **6** subjects = 1,680 tokens) yield a total of 4560 speech tokens that constituted our primary data. Recording was done in a

sound-proof room, at the investigator's own place in Kolkata. Sampling rate and recording attributes were 44,100 Hz, 24 bit, stereo. The utterances are to be directly recorded on the Tascam DR-100 MKII portable digital recorder connected to a Shure head-worn microphone, and then transferred on to a branded Laptop (Dell Inspiron N4030). Every care was taken so that no noise could creep in.

iv.   Statistical Documentation and Annotation Criteria

Using PRAAT Software designed by Boersma and Weenink, segmentation of the vowels was done. Running a PRAAT script acoustic values have been extracted, mainly the first three formants temporal duration (in msec). Once the values were stored in the Microsoft Office Excel file, it was ready for producing the final results in the forms of Excel graphics or diagrams.

VI. Results

Report of the Experiment-2

Using the values stored on Excel, the following acoustic configurations have been derived for all the twelve English vowels produced by the SCB speakers:

Table 5: Formant structures and duration of vowels in Bangla English

	F_1 (Hz)	F_2 (Hz)	F_3 (Hz)	Duration (msec)
iː	314.3863	2601.278	3170.864	101.8057
ɪ	405.025	2245.766	2993.763	71.05367
e	521.298	2104.094	2669.689	90.58667
æ	777.2567	1847.073	2359.825	109.1583
ɜː	655.2257	1378.152	2338.108	151.8513
ə	569.4642	1470.414	2493.892	79.5035
ʌ	792.2183	1395.677	2259.386	104.1693
uː	354.382	898.3017	2817.684	95.789
ʊ	429.0707	1088.763	2760.843	76.83233
ɔː	623.4434	1062.773	2417.26	131.558
ɒ	675.0708	1085.857	2608.281	102.5586
ɑː	781.2673	1335.55	2367.315	157.093

At the formant level, it's evident that, i) F_1 and F_2 variances across vowels are more consistent than the F_3 variances, and   ii) most of the vowels show different formant structures from that in BrtE. Regarding duration, they confirm that, iii) high vowel are shorter, and iv) in the short/long vocalic pairs, the long vowels are consistently longer than their short counterparts.

The formant structures (Table 5) are now shown with the help of a vowel plot below:

Figure 4: Vowel positions on the acoustics plane in Bangla English(BngE)
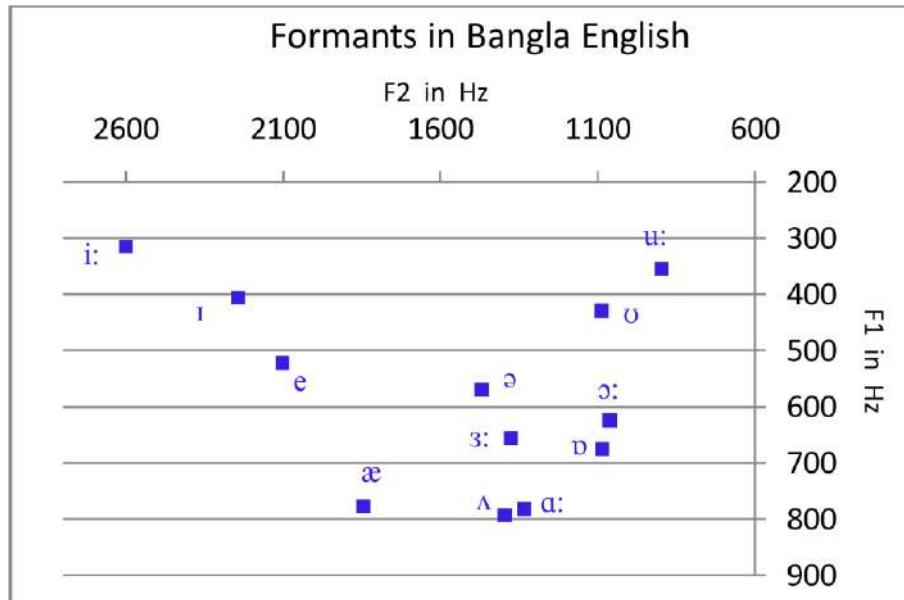
This finding invariably brings in a comparison between this and vowels in BrtE. It seems, the BngE vowels are more spread up here using a wider acoustic area, compared to the area used by the BrtE vowels. This sprawling constellation of the BngE vowels is clear in the figure:

Figure 5: Comparative acoustic positions and spaces used by the vowels in BngE and BrtE
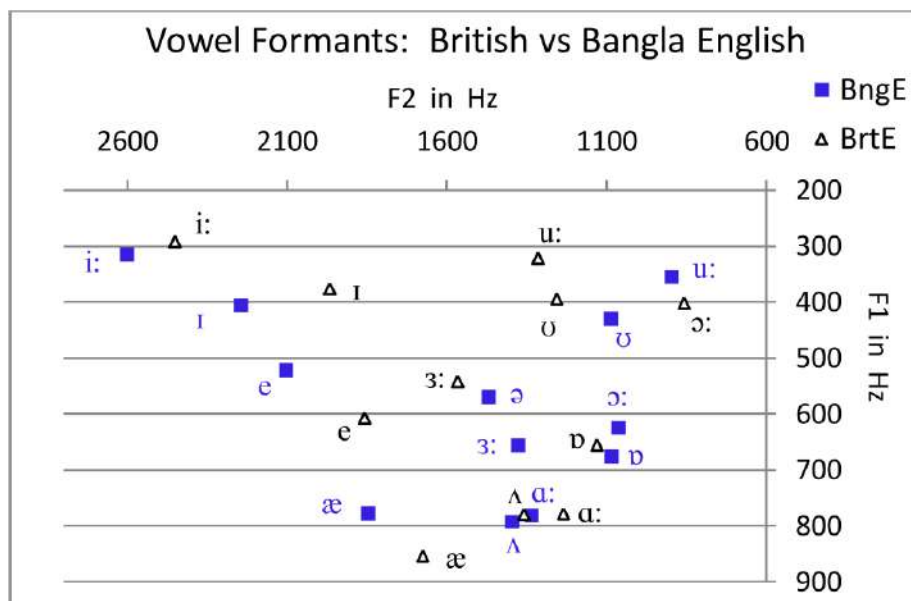
In BngE vowels tend to get lowered (/e/ is a big exception); the front vowels are far more fronted, but the back vowels don't show much deviation. In the lower part of the plot, due to the over-crowdedness the vowel distinctiveness is in danger, more so in the BngE. There remains hardly any acoustic distance

between /ɑ/ and /ʌ/, or

between /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/.

To find an answer to the question as to how far a native vowel is impacting the BngE vowels, it is necessary to look at the vowels concerned more closely, to make a direct comparison between the respective acoustic configurations of vowels in SCB and their English counterparts. First we need to conduct another empirical test where the same set of speakers would yield speech data from their F_1 variety.

Report of the Experiment-2

The next experiment conducted tries to find out the acoustics of SCB vowels in monosyllables. Results about the first three formants and temporal duration are summarized below:

Table 6: Formant structures (standard deviation in parenthesis) and duration of vowels in Standard Bangla (SCB)

	Formants in Hz			Duration (in msec.)
	F_1	F_2	F_3	
i	327 (43)	2511 (271)	3088 (293)	76.7
u	391 (77)	813 (113)	2920 (310)	73.8
e	494 (88)	2321 (266)	2897 (281)	90.0
o	540 (90)	889 (115)	2903 (336)	90.5
ɛ	776 (113)	1941 (238)	2725 (295)	107.5
ɔ	718 (101)	1044 (101)	2841 (318)	100.1
a	895 (119)	1386 (129)	2788 (291)	102.7

It also reveals the same universal fact that vowel height and length (only allophonic) are inversely related. As regards the formants, vowels (except /a/) are characterized by second formants that consistently increase with the growing heights. It indicates the vocalic inclination toward periphery, as clearly shown in the figure:

Figure 6: Acoustic vowel positions of the seven SCB monophthongs
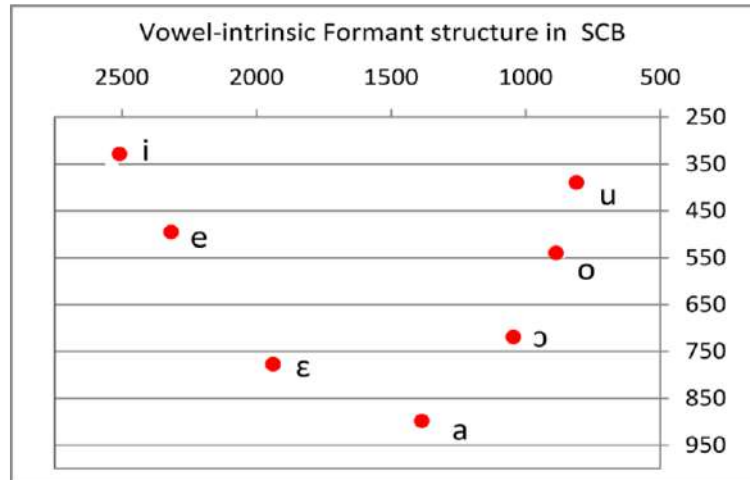
The whole acoustic space has been utilized except the centre. Vertical axis is more densely crowded, this is even more for the back vowels. After ascertaining the acoustic vowel locations in SCB, it will be interesting to compare the positions of 12 English monophthongs as produced by the same set of SCB speakers. With the formant configurations already assigned to the BngE vowels (Table 5) and SCB vowels (Table 6), we have drawn the following figure on Excel worksheet that shows the comparative locations of all the 19 vowels across two languages:

Figure 7: Comparative acoustic positions and spaces used by the vowels in BngE and SCB

It makes it more evident that, SCB vowels are using somewhat wider and lower vowel space. Except the English central vowels and the short high back vowels, BngE counterparts are not very far away from the SCB vowels. Thus, in the comparison made by the figure 5 and differences found between the vowels in the two varieties of English (BngE and BrtE) can be explained as an effect of the 'superstrate' SCB. Adding to this comparison, the following figure makes another comparison among acoustic vowel locations across the three languages under consideration:

Figure 8: Comparative acoustic positions and spaces used by the vowels in BrtE, BngE and SCB

The lowering tendency of the BngE vowels, especially the high ones is clearly a manifestation of interference of the acoustic configurations of SCB vowels, as produced by the native speakers. BngE /e/ is a big exception and here also we can see the SCB attraction that has pulled the BrtE vowel up. Compared to the BrtE counterparts, in BngE the front vowels are far more fronted, because the respective SCB [+Front] vowels are attracting them.

VII.   Analysis

Now in the following section, we have looked more closely at the impact of the individual SCB vowel on their English counterparts. The table below narrates the schemata for this comparison:
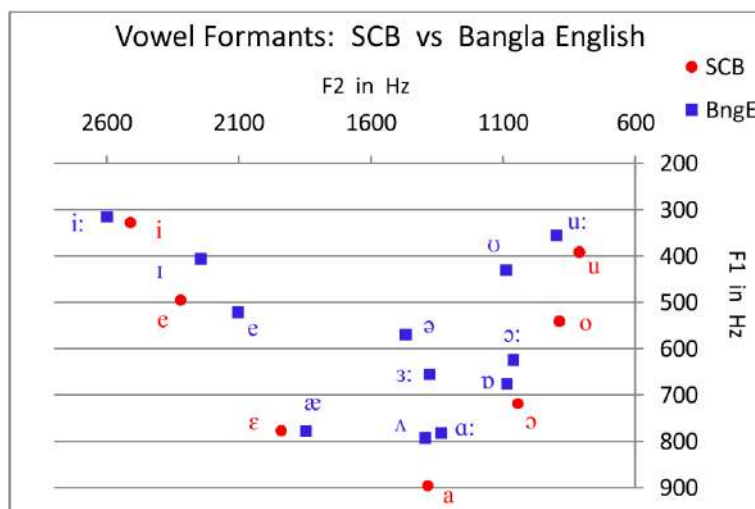
Table 7: Comparative schemata for testing the 'superstrate' impact of the SCB vowels

Sl.	SCB Vowels	Impact on English vowels	Figures	Plots
1	i	[i:] & [ɪ]	Figure 9a	A)
2	u	[u:] & [ʊ]	Figure 9a	B)
3	e	[e]	Figure 9a	C)
4	o & ɔ	[ɔ:] & [ɒ]	Figure 9a	D)
5	ɛ	[æ]	Figure 9b	E)
6	a	[ɜ:]	Figure 9b	F)
7	a	[ʌ] & [ə]	Figure 9b	G)
8	a	[ɑ:]	Figure 9b	H)

Here the following figure has focused on the first four cases, where the SCB [+ATR] vowels are exercising their power of attraction on the acoustically closer English vowels:

Figure 9a: Role of the F_1 [+ATR] vowels in the realization of F_2 (BngE) vowels
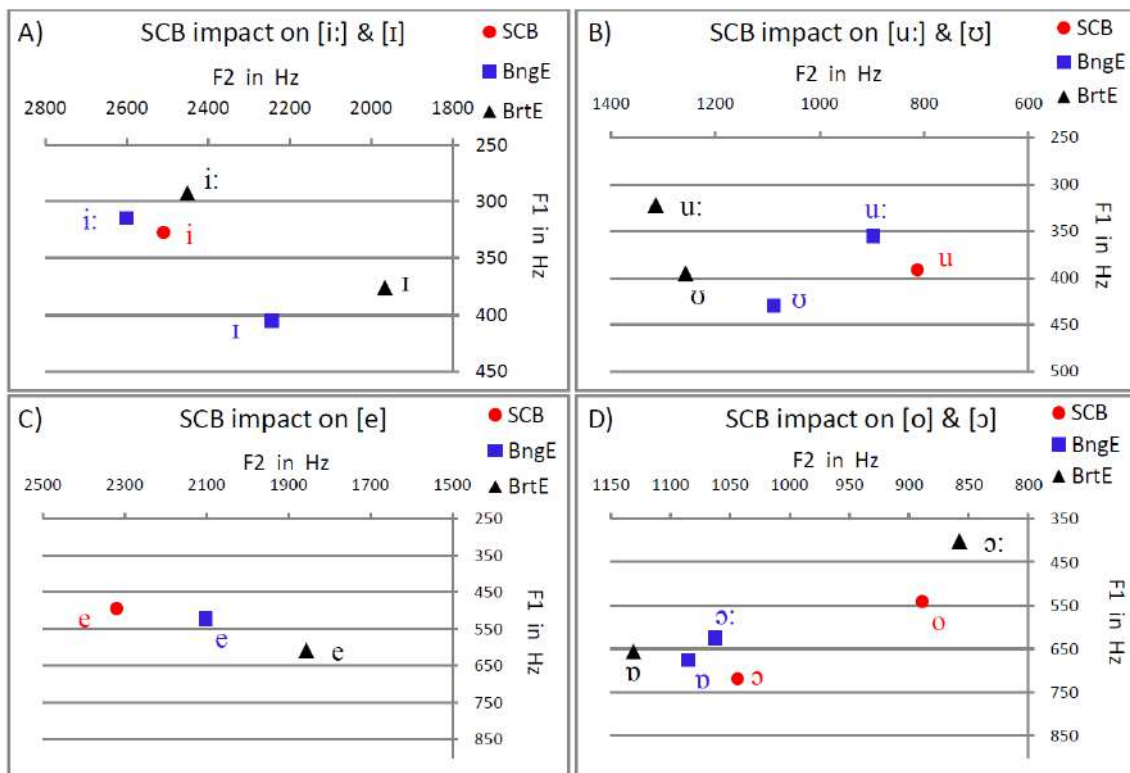
In case of the first plot *i.e.* figure 9a.A), the SCB [+ATR] high vowel /i/ has attracted the close BrtE counterparts and makes them more fronted in the realization of BngE vowels.
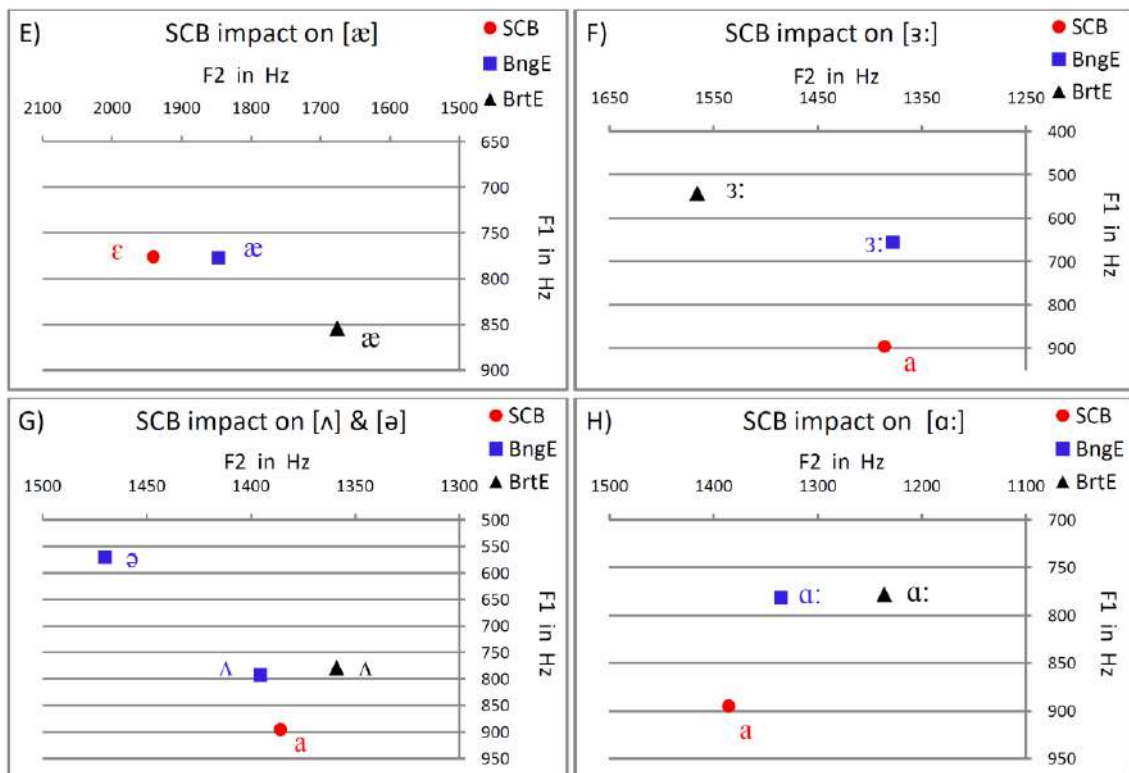
In case of the second plot *i.e.* figure 9a.B), the SCB [+ATR] high vowel /u/ has attracted the close BrtE counterparts and makes them more retracted in the realization of BngE vowels.

In case of the next plot *i.e.* figure 9a.C), the SCB [+ATR] vowel /e/ has attracted the close BrtE counterpart /e/ and makes it more fronted and slightly raised in the realization of BngE vowels.

In case of the last plot *i.e.* figure 9a.D), the SCB [+ATR] vowel /o/ does not exist in RP. But this Bangla vowel finds the long vowel / ɔː/ as the closest BrtE counterpart and realizes it almost as /o/.

Now the last four cases have been graphically presented in the following figures where the [–ATR] vowels in Standard Bangla are exercising their power of attraction on those English vowels that are acoustically closer:

Figure 9b: Role of the F₁ [–ATR] vowels in the realization of F₂ (BngE) vowels

In case of the first plot *i.e.* figure 9b.E), the SCB [–ATR] front-mid vowel / ɛ/ has attracted the close BrtE counterpart and makes it more fronted and raised in the realization of BngE vowels.

In case of the second plot *i.e.* figure 9b.F), the SCB [–ATR] low vowel /a/ has attracted the close BrtE counterpart and makes it lowered in the realization of BngE vowels.

In case of the next plot *i.e.* figure 9b.G), the SCB [–ATR] low vowel /a/ has attracted the close BrtE counterparts and makes them more fronted in the realization of BngE vowels.

In case of the last plot *i.e.* figure 9b.H), the SCB [–ATR] low vowel /a/ has attracted the close BrtE counterparts and makes them more fronted in the realization of BngE vowels.

Thus, we have already had ample evidences of interference of the first language, when across the two languages there are non-uniform segmental inventories.

VIII.   Conclusion

Our subjects being post-graduates are well aware of the way British English sounds are realized. As such they tried best to make their own productions as close to RP as possible. However, L_1 effect is found here quite inescapable for certain vowel sounds, namely /ɜː/, /æ/ and /ɑː/. Acoustic quality of these BngE vowels produced by the most of the native SCB speakers showed considerable variations. When a certain English vowel and a BngE vowel are acoustically close enough in terms of F_1 and F_2, then their production is very close to the RP. But the speakers fail to realize the central vowels mostly, as the category is almost non-existent in their L_1. Even they find it difficult to distinguish

between /ɑ/ and /ʌ/,   or

between /ɒ/ and /ɔː/.

The subjects seem to have confusions over the distinctions between them.

However, the study is not all conclusive. Further investigations are needed to throw light on the areas not covered here, like inter-speaker variations, impact of prosodic strengths on vowel formants (as L_1 and L_2 have different prosodic requirements), other phonetic or phonological variables, such as different syllable structures, coda quality, nasality, as well as the effects of gender or age, Beside whatever revealed by the study here and the other factors mentioned, vowels may owe their changes and shifts in acoustics to language-specific phonotactics, different prosodic requirements and non-uniform segmental structures across languages and varieties. Another dimension has been much emphasized by Labov (273-309), who talked about the possible impacts of geographical regions, socio-economic factors and socio-linguistic factors on segmental realizations and their acoustic invariances.

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Notes:

1. It's a variety of English used by the native speakers of Bangla in typically a non-British way. As such, in every aspect, the English language is heavily dominated by the linguistic structures of their mother tongue.
2. A few linguists like Faenhdrich and Burgel (1-20) claim that Bangla is more a mora-timed language than syllable-timed.
3. Phonologists often claim that Bangla is a semi-vowel harmony language, but never as harmonic as Assamese.
4. In the word 'shutter' the schwa is in the second syllable. A disyllabic minimality is required for the schwa to occur, as it can feature in an unaccented syllable only preceding or following a prosodically stronger syllable.
5. Alam et al. in their empirical research work *Acoustic Analysis of Bangla Vowel Inventory* (2008) used the symbol /æ/ instead of /ɛ/. The present study of ours has considered these two phonemic symbols as equivalent.
6. Formants may be measured in Hertz (that provides cues for physical properties of a sound in the production process), Bark and Mel (both provide the perceptual cues but with some difference).
7. In their experimental works (as mentioned above) Savithri et al. (109-114) and Hossain et al. did not measure the formant values for the [+Front][-ATR] vowel /ɛ/. The reason behind, as both Ghosh and Sanyal indicated, may be that the sound was included very late in the Bangla vowel inventory.
8. F_1 values stand for the respective vowel height or relative position up the vertical axis on the acoustic vowel plot. F_2 signifies the vowel position along the horizontal axis.

F_3 shows the degree of lip rounding. Beside these three there are more formants, but these three are most dependable in configuring a vowel phonetically.

Appendix I

The Formant Structures of English Vowels
(Based on Previous studies)

Figure 10: Formant structure and acoustic spaces of British English vowels (Jones 1918)
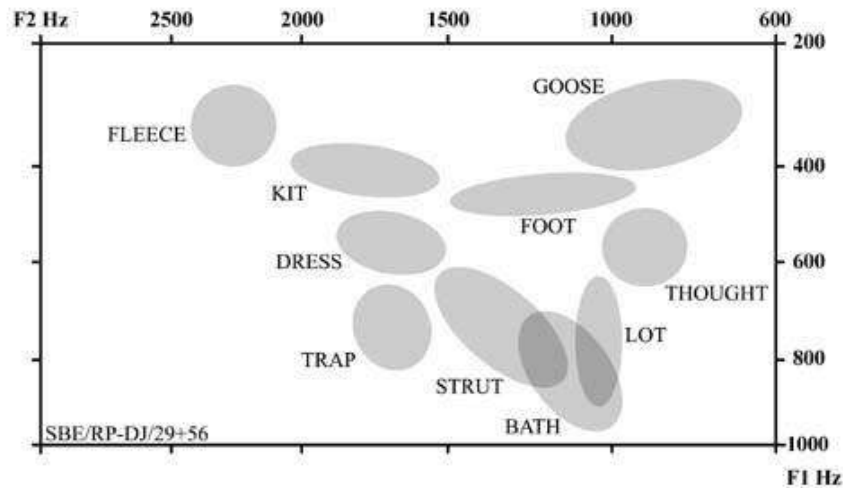
Table 8: Gender-specific formant structure of the monophthongs in Britsh English (Deterding 49)

	Male			Female		
	F_1	F_2	F_3	F_1	F_2	F_3
iː	280	2249	2765	303	2654	3203
ɪ	367	1757	2556	384	2174	2962
e	494	1650	2547	719	2063	2997
æ	690	1550	2463	1018	1799	2869
ʌ	644	1259	2551	914	1459	2831
ɑː	646	1155	2490	910	1316	2841
ɒ	558	1047	2481	751	1215	2790
ɔː	415	828	2619	389	888	2796
ʊ	379	1173	2445	410	1340	2697
uː	316	1191	2408	328	1437	2674
ɜː	478	1436	2488	606	1695	2839

Appendix II

The Bangla Informants from Kolkata, WB

Sl.	Names	Age	Qualification	Postal Address
		FEMALE		
1	Ms. Sanjida Parveen D/o-Mr. Salauddin Ahmed	26	MA (CU) Ph.D. (cont.)	7/1 C.K. Lane, Park Circus, Kolkata-700017
2	Ms. Sumedha Mukherjee D/o-Mr.Shibendra Mukherjee	28	MSc (CU) Ph.D. (cont.)	29/1/A, Panchkari Ghosh Rd, Behala, Kolkata-700008
3	Ms. Sauravi Chakrabertty D/o-Mr. Anup Chakrabertty	27	MA (CU) B.Ed.	50B, Harish Mukherjee Road, Bhowanipore, Kolkata-700025
		MALE		
4	Mr. Shounak Roy S/o-Mr. Sanakar Prasad Roy	27	MA (CU) B.Ed.	142 A, Dr. A.K. Pal Road, Behala. Kolkata-700034
5	Mr. Dipayan Mukherjee S/o-Mr. Debashis Mukherjee	28	MA (RBU) M.Phil.	11/1, Naktala Road, Garia, Kolkata-700047
6	Mr. Saikat Roy (M/23), S/o- Mr. Vivekananda Roy	26	MA (CU) B.Ed.	EE-90/2, Sector-III, Salt Lake City, Kolkata-700091

Appendix III

The Stimuli used in Studies on Bangla English and Standard Bangla
(used sentence-medially)

Table 9: The English study words used sentence medially for Experiment ONE (with Bangla English)

i:	'deep'	'peep'	'sheep'	'beat'	'cheat'	'teak'	'seek'	'peak'
ɪ	'dip'	'pip'	'ship'	'bit'	'chit'	'tick'	'sick'	'pick'
e	'cep'	'pep'	'zep'	'pet'	'bet'	'deck'	'peck'	'check'
æ	'tap'	'gap'	'cap'	'bat'	'cat'	'back'	'tax'	'pack'
ɜ:	'chirp'	'perp'	'stirp'	'dirt'	'curt'	'jerk'	'shirk'	'perk'
ə	'apart'	'afar'	'abroad'	'atop'	'contain'	'pertain'	'bitter'	'litre'
ʌ	'sup'	'cup'	'pup'	'shut'	'cut'	'duck'	'suck'	'puck'
u:	'soup'	'stoop'	'group'	'boot'	'suit'	'spook'	'shook'	'duke'
ʊ	'bush'	'pull'	'could'	'put'	'soot'	'took'	'book'	'cook'
ɔ:	'paup'	'corp'	'jaup'	'caught'	'short'	'cork'	'chalk'	'talk'
ɒ	'pop'	'cop'	'chop'	'cot'	'shot'	'cock'	'shock'	'dock'
ɑ:	'sharp'	'carp'	'harp'	'dart'	'cart'	'dark'	'shark'	'park'

*Table 10: The Bangla study words used sentence medially for the Experiment TWO
(with Standard Bangla)*

i	[dik]	[dip]	[tʰik]	[tip]	[bʰit]	[git]	[kit]	[cit]
	'direction'	*'island'*	*'right'*	*'mark'*	*'base'*	*'song'*	*'insect'*	*'supine'*
u	[bʰut]	[cʰut]	[kuʈ]	[book]	[dut]	[tuk]	[kup]	[cup]
	'ghost'	*'run'*	*'trickster'*	*'chest'*	*'envoy'*	*'magic'*	*'well'*	*'dumb'*
e	[lep]	[kʰep]	[bet]	[pet]	[bʰet]	[kʰet]	[bʰek]	[tʰek]
	'quilt'	*'part'*	*'cane'*	*'belly'*	*'gift'*	*'land'*	*'disguise'*	*'site'*
o	[lop]	[kop]	[bʰoʈ]	[ɹot]	[ɹot]	[pot]	[lok]	[ʃok]
	'end'	*'axe'*	*'vote'*	*'group'*	*'land'*	*'port'*	*'man'*	*'grief'*
ɛ	[tɛp]	[gɛp]	[pɛk]	[bɛt]	[kɛt]	[tɛks]	[cɛt]	[bʰɛt]
	'tap'	*'gap'*	*'pack'*	*'bat'*	*'cat'*	*'tax'*	*'chat'*	*'vat'*
ɔ	[bɔk]	[ʈɔk]	[bɔt]	[cɔt]	[cɔp]	[sɔt]	[gɔt]	[dɔp]
	'crane'	*'sour'*	*'banyan'*	*'jute'*	*'chaap'*	*'true'*	*'pattern'*	*'gust'*
a	[bʰat]	[sat]	[kʰat]	[pat]	[dak]	[tak]	[tap]	[pap]
	'rice'	*'seven'*	*'cot'*	*'jute'*	*'post'*	*'bald'*	*'heat'*	*'sin'*

The (Im)permanence of Love

Dr. Richa Srishti

Since time immemorial poets, writers, philosophers, artists, scientists and of course lovers have pondered, brooded, deliberated over the mystical subject of love. So, what was she doing thinking about it during this bus journey? May be because she has been always affected or afflicted by it? Was she afflicted? If she was affected, she needed to introspect. And if she was afflicted, she needed to cure herself out of it. And this is what she was seeking to do that day.

She thought, nearly one year ago, during another bus journey on the same route, she was struggling with the same emotions, with only one changed variable, emotions for a different person. It was as if that one year had never passed in her life; the time had come to a standstill. She smiled not only inside but outside too. Her eyes were tearful but she had a smile on her lips. Thankfully no one was watching her as she was sitting on the first seat just behind the driver's seat. One year ago, she had exactly the same stabbing pain in her heart, somewhere deep inside, eyes tearful, feeling lonely in this world…How is this possible to feel that again? She had deliberated at that time that she won't be able to feel the same intensity ever again. She had promised to herself that she won't undergo the same mental trauma again. Now here she was in the same small dome of same emotions. She had thought she handled it pretty well last time even when she was addicted to the pain. This time she did not want to get addicted even for a second. But it did not seem to be in her control as it was last time. Sometimes, she could see herself going far away. What is love actually? Is it an interplay of chemicals or something else? Is it only instinct, biological or is it just an illusion? Is there only body involved or soul too? Why are we so tormented by love? Is there intense pleasure too?

When she first met him four years ago, there was something between them that sparked at that very moment but they were unaware of it. They did not even realise when those short chance meetings in the corridors developed into long discussions on Fellini and Bergman's movies. It was so spontaneous and unmotivated. Sometimes, they would continue to spend hours standing under the tree in the small garden outside their cabins. He was nine years younger to her and consciously as well as unconsciously their behaviour was affected by that. So, amidst their intellectual and not-so-intellectual meetings in-between working hours, they

became the closest of friends. But was there any sort of romantic love in the air? Even if there was, both of them had very smartly hidden it for a long time. She still remembered vividly how she used to wait outside her cabin every morning just to have a glimpse of him (as the lift was near her cabin). At that time she had no longing of telling him of her emotions. May be that was the best time as it was not at all traumatic as she was feeling now. She was contented with what she had. She did not even know of his emotions; neither did he of hers and she did not want to. The life was not so smooth then too but it was not unbearable with her love for him hidden inside the secret chambers of her heart. It was like she cared for her feelings like a mother cares for her infant. It was pure and innocent. It was untouched by expectations or conditions, sleeping carefree in her embrace. She used to unhesitatingly tell him about her love interests and he about his. He respected her as he found her mentally strong and she derived strength from him. But during their ingenious conversations, she always wanted to venture into the cave where she felt he used to hide himself when he was too negative. She wanted to feel him in the real sense, to know him in the real sense, in a way never before he had felt. She could not bear him suffer. How could she do it to him now? Has she become selfish? She thought, it was not selfish when her love had only elements of *philia,* it might have turned selfish gradually as the elements of *eros* creeped into it. But was that much selfishness unhealthy? Wasn't it natural? How could she stop herself from being even a little bit subjective? Is it possible to love someone without expectation? Is it possible to only give as and when required and not expect anything, anything at all? It is not that she has not made an attempt. But she just went on suffering every moment. If she tells anyone she wishes to die, she is judged to be a person who is depressed. May be she is, may be she is not. She just needs the black clouds to fade away, nothing else. May be she has not found the real motivation to live. May be the routined life does not stimulate her to carry herself further. May be she is unlike others. May be she is not. Who has the answer?

The bus had stopped and she was also jerked out of her memories. There seemed to be some problem with the engine. She eased back into her contemplative mode. She was missing him with an unbearable intensity. She had never missed him even when he was not there with her always. She had devised her own ways of feeling him. Though before meeting him, she had the same taste as far as movies or music was concerned, but after meeting him when she used to watch the same movies, she found herself critically enjoying those with him *in absentia*. He did exist for her every moment then. She never missed him. How could she miss him? He existed while she was listening to the most uplifting Mozart piece or the saddest Chopin

nocturne. He was there when she felt hypnotised by Ravi Shankar's divine sitar tune or Kumar Gandharva's unconventional raga. She felt him in the dazzling glow of scorching sun after rain. He was shining there like the loveliest moon of all the moon lit nights. He was there when tears were rolling down her eyes incessantly. She smelled him when the rain fell on the parched soil. He was her most aggressive craziest anti-hero. He was the loneliest outcast passionate seagull. She never ever missed him. So, why was she missing him every moment now and feeling him everywhere at the same time? What has changed? She or he or the love between them? May be earlier there was not any 'we' (not even in a metaphorical sense) and they had their own spaces which interacted but never intersected. There was never any kind of shared action, concern, or response. May be their love was not meant to be in 'union.' May be the new identity of 'we' was what led to the impermanence of their relationship. May be this desire of 'we' was not mutual, it was only on her part not on his. As for him, she was meant to remain contented with the distance, the unfulfilled desires, and the physical as well as mental loneliness. He was contented with fulfilling his duties for his parents which included waiting for his traditionally arranged marriage too. He used to tell her that time was not in his favour. May be he could not bear the tension of the union of love or the separation. May be he wanted complete autonomy. This could explain his emotional unresponsiveness whenever s/he was going through a rough patch. She very well knew he was an introvert as was she. But the difference was that her introversion was never a barrier when one person needed another. He would withdraw into his cave and that time period would seem forever to her. That was the most suffocating duration as far as she was concerned. She felt so helpless that she too wanted to go far away (at least mentally) and never come back. The feeling of intense hurt was simply overpowering. After too much coaxing he would admit he was wrong and say sorry. This never helped and became a routine in their relationship.

If only she could time travel, she would have erased that moment from her life. The moment when she had heard him crying on phone. That moment had changed her life; not only changed, but eventually dismantled. Exactly one and half year ago, she had appeared for an interview for another job and she was selected. She could not gather the courage to break this news to him instantly and was planning how to. Due to administrative constraints, she unwillingly broke the news to her employer so that the relieving process could be initiated. Someway or the other he got to know that she was leaving within a month. That evening she got a call from him and he asked her, "When were you going to tell me?" For a few moments,

there was deafening silence on both the ends. She could not remember what she answered, she could only remember his words. It was as if the world consisted of only his words at that time. His voice was breaking and finally when he could not control his emotions, he hung up. She knew he was crying. She was shocked, stunned and remained like a statue for a long time. The next day in the office when she was clearing out her cabin, he came inside and stood there. He could not converse much and she could feel the tears welling up in his eyes. He immediately went out without helping her pack the things. His opening of emotions had disarmed her completely. She was feeling vulnerable even to herself. For the next few days before leaving, she felt as if she was in mourning. She was in a really wretched condition. She could not tell him anything, could not ask him anything as she feared she could hurt him further. She identified with his pain and that pain was now tearing her apart. She just wanted to leave as soon as possible. Those few days seemed as infinity. At that time too, she couldn't decipher whether he loved her. He did not say anything and she did not have the nerve to ask. She never could imagine that he could love her, he was too young! Or she considered herself too old for him! But she knew he was her confidante and she was his. May be she wanted to avoid the pain of separation at that time and thought it was best to leave that to time.

The distance did heal her pain for some time, though the deep pain of separation remained in its place. It used to resurface time and again either when he was silent for a long time or he used to become nostalgic of their time spent together. She never commented back when he was nostalgic as she used to be too emotional. She felt his pain but was never able to understand he really loved her in the same way she did. Their friendship developed deeper and deeper. He talked about his future plans with her, his potential job, his plan for marriage etc. During one of these routine conversations, he hinted his feelings for her and finally after a few faltering efforts accepted his love for her. She was surprised and tragically enough hopeful. When she told him of her feelings he too could not believe. Finally, he informed her that though he loved her there was no future for the relationship as he had family obligations to fulfil. She was internally hurt and pained but did not divulge anything to him. She was just happy with what she had at that time. She felt him even though he was not there with her. In a newer sense, she felt his love, the crazy love, the silly love, the abstract love. At least the pain of separation was lessened because of his acknowledgement of love. What happened after that is still a mystery to her. Unless and until she is able to get to the bottom of it, she will continue to be tormented. However hard she had tried to think, she was unable to decrypt. Innumerable times she had recreated their talks in her head to analyse where did she make the

mistake or he wanted something and she did not understand clearly. One thing she understood, he was not able to bear pressure and that made him go back to his cave again and again. He had also told her that as their relationship changed from 'friendship' to 'love' and he felt that she was having psychological problems, he could not be in a relationship which did not have a future as he felt uselessly guilty. She was becoming more and more confused as he was the one who had assured her that if this new relationship gets suffocating, they will still remain friends. May be for him it was possible, for her it was not. To go back to the state where both of them were unaware; that pure and innocent state, was it really possible? She knew it could not be possible for her.

Is it really true that love provides motivation only through self-interest and not through other's interests? No, she didn't think so. A few months ago, when both of them were oblivious of each other's feelings, he told her about his crush on one of her friends and she helped him as much as she could. Never ever for a second she thought about her own feelings. There was no self-interest. Though, he was unsuccessful in his so-called romantic endeavour, she was the one who was there to listen to his midnight outbursts. She was the one to sympathise with him (she could never empathise though!). The more she was thinking about this now, the more she was entwining herself into it. If love makes one forget oneself and not thinking about one's own concerns then that was the time when she had felt that for him. It was not that she was less concerned about him now but may be 'she' was there in their relationship at present, earlier it was just 'he.' The bus was almost empty but her destination was still far away. Did she want this journey to end? Yes and no - both. Yes, because she wanted to end this introspection. No, because she did not want to go back to her life which reminded her of the loneliness. To her, this journey seemed analogous to her life. She felt tired mentally. She didn't want to love anyone or anything but she could not live without loving. She wished to unbreathe love out of her system. It was her strong desire to love which had always heaped misery upon her. Why did she love? Why did she need to love? Did she need people in her life to love her or did she need them so that she could love them? He might have desired her well being only, but she, besides desiring his well being, desired a certain sort of relationship with him within which she could share herself with and connect herself with him. Earlier the relationship was of only 'friendship' through which she shared herself. But now she felt, after their acknowledgement of actual feelings towards each other, that relationship too has disappeared and this new relationship was not taking shape as she had expected. Though since the beginning she knew that there was no possibility of out and

out relationship as he had told her the day he acknowledged it. Even then she was bewildered and could not return to the previous state of mind. And she very well knew that she will continue to love him, happily or unhappily, willingly of course; it was just that she was not able to detach herself and at the same time continue to be attached. Why did she still feel him everywhere? Earlier when she used to feel him like this it gave her immense pleasure, now it gave her immense pain too. But she could not stop herself loving him. It was as if she was meant to go on loving him, irrespective of the pain it inflicted on her.

She had read somewhere that love promotes a sense of well-being a self-worth. Did it ever happen to her? Yes, it did but it seemed to be chemically induced. It had happened when he had acknowledged his feelings towards her and then she informed him that she too had similar feelings since long. It was bliss and it did not last long. Now all that seems to be an illusion. Or was that her figment of imagination? Whom should she ask? Is she going out of her mind? It was messing up with her everyday life. She did not want to return home after work. She wanted to overwork herself. She wanted not to think anything besides work. But that seemed to be clearly impossible. The more she thought not to think, the more all those thoughts came flooding to her from all directions. He had once told her, "I am life for you." She was wondering whether it was the opposite. Whether it was the birth of dreams for her or the death of illusions. Yes, it was true that he had always encouraged her to be strong but she never could find him when she really needed him emotionally. She felt she had always groped in the dark and created him in her own illusory world just for her satisfaction. Though he tried to empower her to climb higher and higher, she felt she wanted to embrace the depth of the abyss. She was also confused about his valuing her in his life. Whether he valued her because she was valuable, or whether she came to be valuable to him a result of her loving him. She knew both of them were fungible for each other but she did not know whether he loved her as an individual rather than her characteristics. There were certain characteristics of his that she never liked but that did not affect her love for him. She was not sure about his feelings regarding that. Hope can not only drive one to live, it can also extinguish the energy to live. For her it was clearly extinguishing her energy to live. She did not know whether to laugh or to cry her heart out. The biggest paradox was gaping in front of her - he, who used to give her lessons in heartbreak, was the one who had given her the biggest heartbreak. She wished everything could end somehow, this love, this friendship. Only if all this could be erased from her memory. She hated herself being in this perpetual state of mourning. Mourning of losing not him but losing love forever. She didn't know why for the the the first

time she felt that she won't be able to love again. With him, she felt she had lost her ability to love. She was experiencing an emptiness inside herself, a deep emptiness. Though she cannot 'move on', this might be her freedom from life. She was beginning to believe in the (im)permanence of love. May be it was a fact just like the (im)permanence of life.

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