Inclusive

An Open Access Peer Reviewed International Journal
of **Kolkata Centre for Studies**

January
2015

Special Paper Section

The problematic of social representation: who must write on Ambedkar, dalit history and politics?

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Nindak niyare rakhiye aangan kuti chhawaye,
Bin sabun pani bina nirmal karat subhaye.
- Kabir

Among the Marxists an apocryphal story was popular once upon a time.

It was said that on a visit to Moscow after the Communists came to power in China, Zou Enlai was welcomed by Stalin, who was fond of tongue in cheek comments, with the following words: 'œWelcome to the USSR comrade. I know all about you. You were born in an elite family of civil servants. You went to the best schools and spent some years studying in Japan, France and Britain and learning European languages. In contrast look at me. I am a poor peasant from Georgia who barely managed an education at a seminary. My mother was illiterate. Unlike many of the Bolshevik leaders, including Lenin, who came from elite bourgeois backgrounds I had to work very hard to create a place for myself in the Soviet proletarian revolution. Yet we are both communists, are we not?

Not one to be caught off guard the witty Zhou parried: 'Of course we are similar. We both betrayed the classes which produced us!.

History is replete with leaders and people who betrayed the classes which produced them. Take the case of Mussolini, the political father of Italian Fascism. The son of a blacksmith, he betrayed the Italian Socialist Party and raised the business supported Fascist gangs which smashed the land reform movement in rural Italy and the communist movement in the industrial cities of north Italy. Even in the 1920s the political machinations of the Italian ruling class which tempted the King to gift him power in Rome were well known. Yet he did not lack admirers across the global political right. His numerous admirers included the conservative and racist British politician Winston Churchill and the Hindu nationalists of India who, however, did not betray their backgrounds unlike their hero. Mussolini's fan, and later his friend and protector, the Austro-German corporal called Adolf Hitler emerged from virtual penury to lead the biggest reactionary mass movement against the German working class called National Socialism. Fascism and Nazism are best defined as anti-labor reactionary mass movements often, though not always, led by charismatic lower class demagogues who never tire of advertising, and sometimes exaggerating, their humble origins. Let

our readers be reminded that humble backgrounds produce reactionaries and revolutionaries both. Some of the most brutal dictators in the 20th century betrayed their proletarian backgrounds. For example Rafael Trujillo, the US backed anti-Communist dictator of the Dominican Republic (1930-1961), was born to a Spanish sergeant and started his adult life as a telegraph operator before forming a gang of thugs used by right wing politicians. Once his boss like abilities became evident, he was almost naturally picked up by the CIA and trained by the US Marines '" a special achievement of which he remained proud till his end. Also take the example of the the Bolivian soldier Mario Teran who volunteered to execute the Argentine-Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara in a dilapidated school building in 1967. Teran was not upper class whereas his defiant victim was a middle class physician turned international Marxist revolutionary.

Reminding our readers of these things has been necessitated by the persisting problem of social and religious representation in contemporary India; books are being banned, art exhibitions are vandalized, film shows are interrupted, articles vanish from the net, archives have been vandalized, a rationalist has been assassinated and dissenters face the prospect of being hounded any time. This disease of intolerance, most ironically, seems to have spread even to the organizations of the oppressed. Some weeks ago, after Wendy Doniger's books on Hinduism were proscribed, a dalit organization called Committee Against Appropriation of Ambedkar Writings (CAAAW) attacked Arundhati Roy for portraying Ambedkar as a junior partner of Gandhi in her Introduction 'The Doctor and the Saint' to the annotated critical edition of B. R. Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste edited by S. Anand and published by Navayana1. I do not think Ambedkar would have approved of either the formation of the CAAAW or the intellectual sectarianism it has demonstrated. The whole affair smacks of the various self-righteous brigades and senas comprising semi-literate individuals which have mushroomed in India to keep an eye on who is writing on what and whom. The desire to punish dissent and, if possible, burn the dissenters at the stake has become so widespread and strong that very few among the inquisitors actually read and criticize the texts they vilify.

So what has Roy done to keep the so-called dalit reps up and about ?

Contrary to the claim of the CAAAW the 'Doctor and the Saint' juxtaposes the views and actions of Gandhi and Ambedkar on the caste question. By means of this juxtaposition Roy has convincingly established the consistency of Gandhi's savarna defense of the caste system throughout his political career. On various matters Gandhi may appear inconsistent, and this inconsistency is often used by his apologists to defend him against his critics, but on the caste question his basic position remained unchanged. With Ramrajya Gandhi remained committed to the Varnashramdharma. And this position was virtually the polar opposite of what Ambedkar experienced and wrote of caste. Roy's narrative makes it clear that Gandhi was a bania by caste who defended the rigidity of the caste system despite the growing scientific evidence against caste in his lifetime. On the other hand, Ambedkar was a mahar who came to the conclusion that unless the caste system, and the scriptural sanction on which it is based, is destroyed Hindu society would not be cured of its historical sickness. A careful reader of the concerned text cannot fail to note

how Roy connects Gandhi's defense of caste with the dominant Hindu view of history and civilization. 'The Doctor and the Saint' is a product of meticulous research which, this author feels, should have been done by an Indian historian several decades ago. Why this was not done by a reputed savarna historian either at the Centre for Historical Studies in JNU or the History Department of the Delhi University [the two most respected history departments in India] is a question which might be taken up in another essay. In fact Roy should be congratulated for vindicating Ambedkar's resilient critique of the caste system at a time when Hindu nationalism is in the ascendant and some dalits have felt no compunction in joining hands with it. Ambedkar's views on the Hindu Mahasabha, the ancestor of today's Hindu nationalist parties, are too well known to be repeated here.

The ill informed and malicious CAAAW attack on Roy raises an important, though old, question with which reformers and revolutionaries have always contended: who has the right to represent the oppressed? The jury is still out on this. And so are the swords. Most feminists believe that in order to understand the oppression experienced by women one must be a woman. Similarly the former slaves of the USA, comprising its underclass today, would suggest that being Black is necessary to comprehend the racial discrimination faced by the Africans in America. The native Indians of America might assert the same. If you expand oppression from the category of gender and race to that of class other exclusions can arise. The workers may insist that only workers can understand their problems and hence represent them. The peasants may say the same thing. These are strong views and, given the elitism of power in general, historical experience supports them; men, and some female agents of patriarchy, usually do not see the world like a women with true consciousness does, middle class folks don't empathize with the working class in general and townspeople obviously cannot understand the problems of peasants. It seems two opposite contemporary views have been expressed on this problem of social representation in the recent past. According to one of them, held in particular by the Dalit-Bahujan critics of Roy, only the oppressed can, and therefore should, write on matters concerning them because the non-oppressed cannot experience or narrate the problems of the oppressed. Since the non Dalit-Bahujans do not, and cannot, feel the exploitation experienced by the truly oppressed they cannot adequately express or represent their feelings. Empathy is exiled from this normative perspective. This view, a close inspection would reveal, amounts to a subjective view of politics and raises important questions pertinent to political representation. It may not necessarily be a historically valid or politically preferable view. Without doubt if tested against the whetstone of historical evidence, this subjectivity will be prove difficult to defend. Given the stratified nature of the Indian caste system and the internal divisions within the dalit-bahujan bloc this subjective view of political representation might even prove counter-productive to the dalit-bahujan cause. Let us assume for a moment that only Dalits should be allowed to write on matters concerning them. In such a case will a single Dalit discourse be sufficient to express the varied views and experiences emanating from the vast multitude of Dalit castes? The problem with caste subjectivity is simple: one caste can always claim that it cannot be represented by members of another caste because either it is above or below it in the caste hierarchy '" this unique feature of caste, recognized and critiqued by Ambedkar several decades ago, has ensured its longevity. Among the dalits the subjectivity may

split further. The un-seeable may claim that the un-approachable cannot represent them and the un-approachable may exclude the untouchable from its politics. The Mahar may not represent the Mang and neither might represent the adivasis who, though touchable but oppressed, might further be divided into hermetic Bhil, Gond and Santhal segments. Thus a political bloc of all oppressed castes will never emerge and the development of an organic intelligentsia capable of articulating the interest of this bloc will become impossible. This is precisely what the savarna establishment wants. Here it is pertinent to remember that in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed Paulo Freire asserted that a unity in praxis is essential to the liberation of the oppressed. Subaltern sectarianism militates against this praxis.

The emergence of a small Dalit middle class or the proliferation of the NGOs dedicated to serve Dalit interests complicates the issue further. It may be said that the life experience of a Dalit more or less integrated into the system is different from the lives of the poor and truly deprived members of the scheduled castes and tribes. What is the degree of common feeling between people like Udit Raj, Narendra Jadhav, Devyani Khobragade and the poor dalit girls gangraped and often murdered by men of the dominant castes in the Indian villages? Should this class difference within the dalits make us automatically conclude that educated dalits do not have the right to represent poor dalits and that if they do so this representation will necessarily translate into a betrayal of dalit interests in favor of the Dalit elite? It is true, and Roy has reiterated this well known point once again, that the largely Brahmin Communists of India have been casteist in their practice and that Marxism in India has tended to ignore the caste question. But it is also true that the caste question, as it is posed in Indian politics today even with respect to dalits, does not pay adequate attention to the class differences which have developed within castes in modern India. The class difference among the Dalit-Bahujans may inveigh against the caste solidarities desired by their leaders in the name of caste. Within the dalit-bahujan circles there is increasing talk of the emergence of a dalit-bahujan capitalist class thanks to the opportunities for capital accumulation created in India by globalization. Are the poor dalits expected to look up to these capitalists for representation, patronage and financial support? How many of them, we may ask, were present at the Jantar Mantar in New Delhi to express solidarity with the oppressed and raped dalit women of Haryana some weeks ago?

There is another problem with the question of representation and this emerges from the phenomenon of inter-caste marriages which are not entirely uncommon in metropolitan India today. What, it may be asked again, will the offspring produced by inter-caste marriages write on? Will they have the privilege of writing on both castes or only one or none? Cinema and theatre portrayals increase the problem. Should only Dalit actors play the role of Dalit characters in cinema? If this becomes the norm a dalit-artist ghetto will soon develop in the Indian film industry. The highly paid savarnas will love this. On the other hand non-dalit actors have done justice to the cause of the oppressed in numerous Indian films. Neither is Shabana Azmi a dalit nor is Om Puri an adivasi but have they not essayed the role of the oppressed to perfection in cinema? Balraj Sahni, a fair skinned upper caste Punjabi, was neither a peasant-migrant hand rickshaw puller nor a Muslim from UP but was he unconvincing as both in Do Bighaa Zameen and Garam Hawa? And

what about art '" will only Dalit painters and sculptors be allowed to take up the themes of caste oppression? This debate will go on because the attractions and rewards of intellectual reductionism are not to be underestimated in the sprawling market of ideas but in the middle of all this let it not be forgotten that Ambedkar wanted the annihilation of caste and not the conversion of caste into a political ghetto or a monopoly of selected intellectuals.

The other view, with which the Enlightenment influenced rational, progressive and scientific Ambedkar would have concurred in all likelihood, does not define or restrict an individual's ability to represent a social interest by his or her class, racial, gender or caste background. This view emphasizes the intention and work of the intellectual over and above his social background and is illustrated below with reference to certain historical examples.

In the matter of representations of class interest Ambedkar appears closer to the Marxist position according to which the difference between the traditional and organic intellectual, to deploy concepts developed by the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, lies more in the intention than the social background of an intellectual. In both Marxism and the Dalit-Bahujan tradition the role of the educated enlightened intellectual as a representative of the oppressed been highlighted. It is true that a person cannot change his social background but it is also true that he cannot be held responsible for his birth. He can only be held responsible for his ideas and actions. Ambedkar did not attack Gandhi because the latter was a bania but because Gandhi's ideas and work, which influenced the Congress, represented the interests of the savarna castes. History proves that a man can use his education to promote political reaction, reform or revolution depending upon his worldview. In India a person's caste never changes but does this mean that he remains true only to his caste? There is reason to believe that he may or may not always betray his class, caste or gender by speaking up for the other. While a handful of opportunist Muslims and Dalits can be found in communal parties like the BJP a large number of non Muslims and non Dalits speak on their behalf in several social forums. A Dalit in the BJP, for instance, might speak for his community in Manuwadi undertones and yet enjoy the privilege for doing so simply because he is a Dalit individual !Â Historians know that a worker can as easily be a fascist, casteist, chauvinist, racist or patriarchal and a petty bourgeois can be an anarchist, socialist or communist. Dictators and fascists may, and often do, come from humble backgrounds as noticed above whereas communists and socialists have often emerged from the middle class. This makes the issue of political representation sociologically more interesting. If only the workers had the moral sanction or social permission to write on the working class we would have learnt nothing from what Karl Marx and Frederick Engels wrote simply because these two were not proletarians by upbringing and social status. Neither would have the Bolsheviks been petty bourgeois, and the Nazis workers, in such large numbers. Most of the Bolsheviks like Lenin and Trotsky came from affluent backgrounds and would have easily become ministers in any European government of the time. Instead they chose the path of proletarian revolution. The question is whether Marx, Engels and Lenin were the organic intellectuals of the proletariat without socially belonging to it? Indeed the problem of social and political representation is serious '" a charismatic messiah can easily betray his followers or an entire nation. In sum it can safely be assumed that to serve a class, caste or tribe a person

should not ethnically or socially belong to it. The experience of tribal politics in India, including the recent political history of states like Jharkhand and Chattisgarh, lends more weight to this argument. The late Mahendra Karma, founder of the notorious Salwa Judum, was an adivasi but whether he served the interests of the adivasis is debatable.

B. R. Ambedkar was the finest intellectual produced in modern India. His grasp of economics, sociology, history, law and anthropology was astounding. Right from the beginning of his life as a child in a military-mahar family he was also influenced by Buddhism and Kabir. Upon moving on to higher education his intellect was impressed by Western enlightenment philosophy. One of his close and lifelong friends was a westernized Parsi gentleman with whom he lodged in the United States. The impact of European Enlightenment on Ambedkar's intellectual evolution into a modernist thinker and leader is too well known to be recounted here. His writings make it clear that unlike the traditionalists, and the confused post modernists of our times, he upheld the Enlightenment values of science, reason, equality, liberty, fraternity and constitutionalism. When he had to choose a faith, for faith was important to Ambedkar, he chose Buddhism "' a rational heterodox order of universal humanism relevant to all humans developed by an enlightened kshatriya noble. Had Ambedkar subscribed to the view that only a dalit can write on or represent the dalits he would not have reposed faith in the Buddha. Nor would he have developed a critique of the Bhakti tradition; who can forget his assertion that it is one thing to speak of the equality of men before God and quite another to propagate the social equality of men. He would also not have held steadfast to the universal values propounded by the Enlightenment thinkers almost all of whom came from elite backgrounds; his greatness is to be seen in his ability to give a practical shape to these values unlike many leaders who pay lip service to the slogans of the French Revolution. I am not an Ambedkar 'expert' but I do not remember his ever having said that only the dalit-bahujans should write on topics related to their condition of oppression. Ambedkar always chose his words carefully because he was aware of his mission in life and therefore in his work an extraordinary commitment to an objective view of the truth and reason is clearly visible. In my view we can anticipate the Pedagogy of the Oppressed in his writings because, quite like Freire in the 1960s, he believed that a subjective understanding of oppression was only the necessary and not the sufficient condition of liberation from oppression. He arrived at conclusions after subjecting the evidence available to him to the most severe test of reason and generalization. His work is permeated by the scientific method "' the hallmark of modern philosophy and political praxis. Gautam Buddha, the Enlightened One, preached reason, a casteless society, advocated the middle path and created a Sangha sans inequality in the 6th century BCE. The Buddha was not a dalit. It is recorded that he descended from a palace and renounced a kingdom to seek the cause of human suffering and his path has been accepted by millions of dalits in India. Hence he, like his great follower Ambedkar, belongs to them as much as to all those who strive for a humane, egalitarian, just, educated and scientific society irrespective of their caste backgrounds. Most certainly the Dalits must do and write what is good for them but they must keep their doors and windows open to their friends many of whom for no fault of theirs are not Dalits. Undoubtedly among these friends will also be some well meaning critics but in dealing with them the Dalits will

do well to adopt an attitude exemplified by Kabir, one of Ambedkar's gurus, in which the saint extolled the advantages of settling our critics in our courtyard.

Notes and Referances

1. S. Anand (ed.), Annihilation of Caste The Annotated Critical Edition, Navayana, New Delhi, 2014.

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Ethnic Paradigms in Anjum Hasan's Lunatic in My Head

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1. Introduction

Anjum Hasan"s works can be located within the context of contemporary Indian English writing. Although the gamut of her work includes poetry, travel writing, criticism and novels, for the purpose of this paper I would restrict my study to one of her novelistic productions: Lunatic in My Head (2007). Hasan occupies a pivotal position as a writer because unlike most of the other advocates of North-East writing, she presents through her fiction a counter narrative of the reality of ethnic tension and conflict in the region. 1 Although it is problematic to reduce a reading of Hasan"s fiction to the biographical, it is important to consider her position as an ethnic minority in a tribal-dominated place like Shillong. 2 The novel not only addresses the question of identity and its troubled relationship with the place one inhabits but also examines the negotiation of ethnic minorities in North-East India, a region which has historically been subjected to political, cultural and economic marginalization by the Indian nation. My objective in this paper is to investigate into the ways in which Lunatic in My Head attempts to represent the complex political and socio-cultural situation of India"s North-East, and more importantly how it takes on the task of articulating the anxiety of ethnic minorities living there, who are permanently stigmatized as settlers and outsiders, people who do not indigenously belong to the place. However, I am also interested in how the novel excessively exploits stereotypes in its portrayal of Khasi characters particularly the multiple nameless Khasi male figures who we encounter almost in every chapter. Hence, while the narrative seems to be expressing disdain for ethnic discrimination, it conterminously utilizes racial stereotypes in the representation of certain groups of characters.

The question of ethnicity resides at the centre of debates surrounding the social reality of North-East India. Although the historical and political situation is varied across the eight states of the North-Eastern region, ethnic conflict is a common phenomenon that defines (even limitedly) the political scenario in almost all of them. This reality has become an integral thematic ingredient in the literature of the region, especially in the past fifty years. The quest for identity is another running literary motif which explicates the complexity of definition and re-definition of the ethnic and political subject located in North-East India at this historical juncture. This, however, does not seek to communicate the notion that all literature from the North-East are mere reflections of each other or even that they are collectively driven by the exact same historical and cultural forces. In fact, the genre of ‚North-East literature' is a recently constructed one, primarily through the efforts (read vested interest) of the publishing industry. This emerging literature has, over the past few years, generated literary criticism which almost predictably associates it with themes of violence, epistemic disruption of cultural identity, folklore and the like. For example, Margaret Ch. Zama describes this literature as that which has ‚¦ undergone historical and political trauma of

untold suffering and marginalization'|' 3 and Tilottoma Misra claims that, ‚An intense sense of awareness of the cultural loss and recovery that came with the negotiation with ‚other' cultures is a recurrent feature of the literature of the seven north-eastern states' 4. Although these arguments are not entirely incorrect, they remain problematic since first, they simultaneously mask over the distinct socio-cultural and political situations of the various ethnic communities of North-East India, tribal and non-tribal and second, they almost evade aesthetical appreciation of these same literatures. Moreover, criticisms of North-East literature have often over-emphasized the issue of marginality which shapes the subjectivity of writers from the various indigenous communities in the region. The problem with this reading is the fact that it inherently overlooks the marginalization and discrimination of the non-indigenous people in all the North-Eastern states. The importance of Anjum Hasan"s Lunatic in My Head resides precisely in it attempts to explore the lived reality of non- tribals in Shillong, a city in which the majority population is tribal.

2. Connected ‚Others'

The novel Lunatic in My Head is exclusively set in Shillong and features three protagonists named Firdaus Ansari, Aman Moondy and Sophie Das, all of whom are linked by their non-indigenous identity. Although the characters are all circumscribed within the urban space of Shillong, their lives do not intersect except for one brief moment towards the end of the book. The characters occupy disparate subject positions and inhabit different spaces within the cityscape, yet the narrative underlines their connectedness through an amorphous, initially undisclosed element which we later discover is their '˜dkharness" or non-tribal status. They collectively maintain the ontological space of the '˜other" in relation to the '˜self' of the Khasi characters in the text. Firdaus is a young Muslim woman, described as ‚vaguely north Indian' but who has never lived anywhere else apart from Shillong. Ever since her parents had died in a train accident, she had been living alone with her grandfather, who is originally from Bihar but whose circumstances had forced him to come to Shillong. Aman Moondy is an aspiring civil services candidate whose life revolves around the psychedelic rock music of the seventies particularly that of the English band Pink Floyd. His father was a doctor who had moved to Shillong from Calcutta in order to escape the competition in the metropolitan city. Dr. Moondy is not a Bengali but the son of a mithai shop-owner originally from Uttar Pradesh. His successful ascendency to the medical profession had provided him with the opportunity to escape Calcutta and the ‚Bengalis among whom he"d grown up,' who would continuously treat him as ‚the outsider, the never good enough U. P-wallah, whose father was only, after all, the owner of a mithai shop.' We do not however have a detailed account of the history of Aman Moondy"s mother, although the narrative does reveal her non-tribal identity simply through her usage of only Hindi and English. The third protagonist is Sophie Das, an eight year old girl who thinks that she is an adopted child. Her father is a Bengali who teaches English, initially in a college and later in a school. Sophie"s mother is also a school teacher but the narrative does not specify where she is from except for its constant mentioning that she is ‚from the north.' The three characters are hence from diverse ethnic backgrounds and their parents and grandparents have migrated to Shillong from various parts of the country. They are

not ethnically or religiously linked and their connectedness resides merely in their positions as ,'¦foreigner(s)'¦who did not have roots'   in Shillong.

In the past century, there has been a growing presence of a multiculturalist social fabric in Meghalaya and other parts of North East India. Apart from being inhabited by several distinct tribal communities, the region has witnessed large-scale immigration of people from different parts of the Indian nation as well as those from its neighbouring countries. This resulted in a deeply diverse ,ethnoscape'   5 which ultimately became one of the factors responsible for the perpetuation of conflict in the area. Conflict in North-East India has been largely shaped by intersecting factors of ethnic consciousness and shifting definitions of political geographies. The movements of the various tribal communities in the region have been commonly driven by a mixture of identity politics and territorial claims, responding to both the infiltration of non-indigenous people as well as the expanding control of the Indian State since Post-Independence. They have also been greatly structured around binary ideas like tribal-non-tribal, insider-outsider, hills-plains and indigenous-settler. What Firdaus, Aman and Sophie share is precisely this space of the outsider and it is their occupation of that space that makes them become the incidence of discrimination and to an extent, even violence.

As mentioned before, the word ,dkhar'   that the Khasis use to identify ,outsiders'   is indiscriminately descriptive of all the non-tribals, regardless of their actual ethnicity and the place where they are originally from. For the Khasis, the ,dkhar'   is simply a person who is culturally, religiously and racially different as well as someone who has not had a long history of settling on the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. The term ,dkhar'   took a pejorative turn only later when the identity movement in Meghalaya heightened in the seventies and eighties. The diversity within this same group of ,outsiders'   is not recognized, especially by the various right wing groups in the state who perceive these outsiders" presence as a threat which potentially could pollute the sanctity of Khasi identity and also the rob the Khasi people of their land and natural resources.

By creating the connection of the three characters in Lunatic in My Head, Anjum Hasan seems to satirize this undifferentiating clubbing together of ,foreigners'   by the Khasis which she is certainly aware of and has been subjected to while in Shillong.6 By underscoring the characters" distinctness, (contextual and otherwise) throughout the novel, she attempts to underscore the arbitrariness of the ,dkhar'   classification. Her very usage of such a paradigm to draw a connection among the three characters could be read as a subversion emerging from the inside, by a person who occupies that subject position. However, also integral to this categorization is the sense of shared experience by the characters, who are recipients of similar forms of marginalization and discrimination. They are collectively the target of the right-wing pro-Khasi politics and worldview that see them as mere intruders. More than their non-indigenous identity, Firdaus, Aman and Sophie are more intimately linked through the shared trauma of being racially discriminated.

3. Identity and Place

The first troubling question that Lunatic in My Head puts forth is through Firdaus Ansari who struggles with the definition of her identity. She refuses to call herself Bihari (even though her parents were from Bihar) because she has only lived in Shillong and nowhere else. To Firdaus, it is the sense of place rather than factors like race and ethnicity that defines her identity. It is her own individual relationship with Shillong that truly creates and develops her subjective self. Shillong is the place where she grew up going to schools ‚where good English was spoken,' the place where on April afternoons, ‚pine trees dripped slow tears' and the place which Firdaus ‚longed for'¦even as she lived there, even though she had lived there all her life' ; all of which are built into her consciousness. Her Muslim religious background is brought to her notice only by Ibomcha, (the Meitei man she is seeing) who finds her pork-eating surprising. Even though Firdaus declares that she is a non-believer and protests against Ibomcha"s bracketing of her identity to a religion which her grandfather and parents follows, he is not ultimately convinced and argues that, ‚It"s in the blood, you can"t change what"s in the blood.' Firdaus" predicament is revelatory of a modern conception of identity which focuses on the individual and the struggles and actions that s/he encounters in the world. Contrary to this, Ibomcha views identity as something rooted to religion, kinship and ethnicity. It is what Chanchala K. Naik calls a '€œpre-modern' conception of identity, that which is ‚determined by birth.' 7 Firdaus" desire to escape such labelling, in a place like Shillong, is challenged and stunted by this kind of understanding of identity which people around her have. Her chronic hand-washing could be perceived as the way in which she psychologically deals with the burden of having to live with the imprint of ethnic and religious identity. However, Firdaus is not forever trapped in the shadow of these limiting categories. Towards the end of the novel, she finally agrees to marry Ibomcha, and this decision can be read more as an act which moves towards the transcendence her religious and ethnic boundaries than one which strives towards conjugal love.

The eight year old Sophie Das is probably the most interesting character in the novel because hers is not merely a case whereby her understanding of identity is being contested but where she in fact desires to escape her own ethnicity in exchange for being Khasi. Sophie is an introspective child who when we first encounter is pondering over the oddity of her family; her father was odd because he never speaks to any of her classmates" parents in school, her mother because she did not seem to have any family, and herself because she is a Das but could only speak a few sentences in Bengali. The Das family is rendered odd only when pitted against the context of families that Sophie is exposed to through her limited social interaction in school. The condition of oddity is thus largely a result of the seemingly unconventional, ethnically and culturally mixed character of the family; the fact that the father is a Bengali who doesn"t speak the language and who unlike other Bengalis in Shillong is ‚not full of banal talk about income tax and the price of tomatoes,' the mother is a ‚North Indian' whose kin has abandoned her for marrying against their approval and the daughter who being the manifestation of the cultural synthesis of the parents, continually fails to make sense of her own identity. Sophie"s recognition of this oddity triggers an anxiety that later on causes her to craft a narrative that she is an adopted child. She declares to her friends,

Deepti and Ibahun that her name is actually ‚Anna'   and that Mr. Das is not her father but her uncle. She claims that her real mother is dead and that her real father, whose name is Uncle Syiem, is alive and that he occasionally visits.

Although the myth of adoption could also be explained as a result of Sophie"s emotional disturbance because of her parents" troubled relationship, the fact that she chooses a random Khasi septuagenarian that she hardly knows as a fictional father figure speaks rather of her intensifying identity crisis. However, it is also important to look at the two possibilities as relational. Perhaps Sophie perceives the oddity intrinsic to her family as a consequence of its cultural discordance with the Khasi-dominated society of Shillong and perhaps, it is this that causes her to desire an escape from her own ‚odd'   position. One could thus say that Sophie"s adopted story is not just symptomatic of a childish imagination but revelatory of a deeper anxiety that she buries within, the anxiety of being a ‚dkhar,'   and simultaneously, a strong longing for being Khasi. This desire for a Khasi identity is articulated more forcefully when Sophie"s ‚dkharness'   is attacked at a wedding she accompanies her landlady, Kong Elsa to. The episode marks Sophie"s introduction to an alien atmosphere, that of the Khasi Christians which is ‚far removed from the world of her parents.'   Even though Sophie is initially ‚moved'   by the sight of the Christian wedding, her excitement is soon crushed by discriminatory stares which identify her as '€œa strangeness'   in the vicinity. At the food reception, apart from being conveniently ignored by the snack distributors, Sophie is also the target of blatant insulting laughs of fellow children, who appear to be revelling the fact that the ‚dkhar had been shown her place.'   This chain of occurrences in this one day has only worked towards the escalation of Sophie"s desire to '€œsomehow turn into one of them, to somehow become Khasi.'   The fantasy of adoption which serves to erase the reality of her non-tribal ethnic background evolves ultimately into a final yearning for the absorption of a Khasi identity and the integration into Khasi society.

The fiction of Anjum Hasan"s focuses more on the everyday episodes of urban life as the sites of conflict. There is no direct mention of the identity-cum-secession movements of the 1970s-80s in Meghalaya. It seems that Hasan consciously evades historical events and chooses to dwell more on the ethnic tensions located in the everyday. The first violent incident in Lunatic in My Head is when Aman Moondy and his Khasi friend Ribor venture out to have the popular local snack ‚aloo muri,'   which is usually sold by Bihari migrants. As the two friends wait for Sarak Singh, the aloo muri seller to finish preparing their order, three Khasi boys arrive and start demanding for their share first. It only was a matter of minutes before one of the boys started punching Sarak Singh on the shoulder telling him to ‚learn to show respect.'   Ribor"s and Aman"s attempts at tranquilizing them completely failed and instead resulted in the boys directing the antagonism towards Aman, the other ‚dkhar'   in the vicinity. Ultimately, the boys left nonchalantly without any bother to pay Sarak Singh for their order. This is a crucial scene in the book first because it is the first instance that racist physical violence is showcased and second, because it is here that the narrative enters the inner world of Aman Moondy and discloses the way he understands and negotiates a potentially racist urban atmosphere surrounding him.

The attack on Sarak Singh is interesting not because of the exertion of violence per se but because it speaks much about the direction and target of the violence. The Khasi boys" aggressive assertion of themselves (in a space that they identify as ,their own'   ) which later leads to the abuse of the ,dkhar'   aloo muri seller is successful merely because the person targeted is a working class man. The fact that Sarak Singh does not have a shop or company around him makes the act of terrorizing an easy task for the three boys. Later in the text, Aman Moondy"s father narrates an incident where ,some ruffians'   (reminiscent of the three boys who attacked Sarak Singh) came and demanded money from his clinic. However, the ruffians here failed in their mission despite the fact that they did use tactics of intimidation. Unlike Sarak Singh, Dr. Moondy"s position as a middle-class man, a doctor, an owner of a clinic was able to effortlessly chase them away. Therefore, one could argue that ethnic violence as depicted in Lunatic in My Head is more a danger which the working class are vulnerable to. This also lends a good insight into the way Shillong"s right-wing politics operates in the text; how the claim for rights over the place by the various Khasi organizations enhances and condenses depending on the economic and social background of the people they attack.

Ethnic politics is not something comprehensible to Aman Moondy that, like Firdaus Ansari, he does not seem to know how to address situations of discrimination. As the text describes, ,He found it particularly hard to defend himself against racist attacks because he was never sure who he was defending- an encroacher, a permanent guest of the hills-people, or someone who belonged here because he had never lived anywhere else? Which one of these? He didn"t know.'   The questions that bombard Aman at that moment are important not only because they unveil his lack of understanding of his own identity and the implications of being a non-tribal in Shillong but also because they trigger a larger debate about the politics of identity vis-Ã -vis the idea of ,homeland' in North East India. Like Firdaus, Aman seems to perceive identity as something created and shaped by the place one inhabits instead of other factors like race or religion. He cannot fathom why despite the fact that he had lived in Shillong his whole life, there is a counter line of reasoning which identifies him as an alien and an outsider. The claim for indigenous rights over place and land that fuels the ethnic movement in Meghalaya is thus a great threat to Firdaus" and Aman"s sense of identity, which is heavily structured by this very paradigm of place.

In Lunatic in My Head, Hasan makes a pertinent intervention not only by highlighting the marginalization of the various non-tribal communities in Shillong, but also by underlining the city"s multicultural social fabric. The novel begins with an entry to the urban landscape of a particular locality called Laitumkhrah and through Firdaus" journey in its streets, we are introduced to a variety of ethnically diverse characters: the quarter-British, quarter-Assamese and half-Khasi woman who owns a beauty parlour, the Goan woman who runs a liquor shop, the Sindhi bookshop owner, the Bengali men picking their children up from school and the like. By emphasizing on the socio-cultural diversity of Shillong, Hasan attempts to underscore the metropolitan character of the city, the fact that it has had a history of settlers from all over India and also the world. One could safely argue that through this emphasis, Hasan also strives to challenge the arguments of the indigenous movement, which seeks to establish the tribals" exclusive right over the place. Through

her three protagonists, the author depicts the deeply intimate and emotional relationship that non-indigenous communities also share with a place they migrate to. For diasporic communities such as these, the homeland is not only the space of emotional investment but also the hostland, the surrogate place which nests people who have been (perhaps violently) removed from places they originally come from. Through the novel, Hasan powerfully articulates a claim of belongingness for the ‚dkhar'   or non-tribal population, for those who may not indigenously be from Shillong but have lived there long enough to call it a home. After all, a multi-ethnic place like Shillong ‚cannot always be understood in terms of the dominant and the peripheral, but also in the sense of a continuous negotiation between alternate centres of cultures.' 8 Although Hasan"s representation of the volatile and insecure sense of self of the non-indigenous people is important, her project is rendered deficient because there seems to be an evasion of any report on the political history of Meghalaya, which is crucial to the understanding of identity politics in the state.

The colonial encounter had had a huge impact on the ethnic landscape of the entire North East region, which was previously inhabited primarily by various indigenous tribal communities. Although there existed a considerable amount of mobility in the pre-colonial era which resulted in cultural interaction between the different tribal groups and to an extent in exchanges with non-tribal populations from the plains (especially those from parts of present-day Bangladesh and Assam), large-scale migration of people from various regions of the Indian nation to these tribal areas escalated only in the colonial and post-Independence period. Various factors contributed to this phenomenon including the infiltration of the colonial regime into the region and the Partition of British India (1947). The indigenous and identity movement in Meghalaya emerged in reaction to these social and political transformations. According to Bengt G. Karlsson, the assertion of the rights of the indigenous people, particularly the Khasis and the Jaintias, have over the years centred around ,¦the notion of self-determination, that is, that indigenous people, like all other people and nations, should have the right to govern themselves and thus to exercise control over their traditional land and resources.'   9Â However, this is more a response to the attempt of the Indian state in the Post-Independence period to interfere with and consequently weaken the traditional political and land-ownership system in the area. It is interesting to note that in the colonial period, this kind of interference was limited. In fact, some areas inhabited by indigenous communities in North Eastern India remained un-administered largely because the colonial rulers thought them to lack a readiness for modern political institutions. As Sanjib Barauh argues, ,¦the tribal peoples could supposedly pursue their ‚customary practices'   of kinship and clan-based rules of land allocation.'   10

It is only after Independence that the entire North East region was subjected to a process of nationalization, primarily through the imposition of various development plans. Baruah again observes this phenomenon as ,¦the intended and unintended consequence of the Indian state"s efforts to exert control over (this) frontier region and to make it a normal part of the Indian state'€'s national space.'   11 Added to this is also the anxiety of the potentially hegemonic invasion of alien cultures and religions. However, what is interesting is that while most of the right-wing political groups in Meghalaya strongly negate the influence of ‚Hindu culture,'   they do not take such a

stand against Christianity, an equally alien religion which was brutally enforced on the Khasis at the expense of the indigenous religion. The lack of any sense of cultural or racial continuity between these communities in North East India and people in other parts of the country further made it difficult for the former to easily accept their status as citizens of India. The ethnic and indigenous movement in Meghalaya is thus a result of a combination of factors which are intimately entwined. The movement is not only simply a fight for identity but also one against the growing control of the Indian state over resources as well as a struggle for the preservation of indigenous culture. The situation of ethnic conflict should be mapped and comprehended in the light of this historical background. The antagonism towards the non-tribal population is thus, very much a part of the indigeneity discourse in the state.

As essential as Lunatic in My Head is to the understanding of the situation of non-tribals in Shillong, it is also imperative to be observant of the problematic representation of Khasis in the novel. Except for Aman Moondy"s friend Ribor, all the Khasi males are unfailingly portrayed as intellectually wanting, potentially violent and completely useless troublemakers. Moreover, these male characters dispersed throughout the narrative often appear as objects who happen to be in the line of vision of the non-tribal characters in many episodes in the book. For example, as Firdaus walks through the streets of Laitumkhrah, she confidently assumes that the ‚college boys whistling raucously' are Khasi. In another instance in the text, the reader is again exposed to Firdaus" ruminations over her detestation of the attention she would get in college from ‚small, gentle boys in faded jackets who chewed kwai incessantly, prefixed all sentences with a rustic ‚Ai' and looked forward to jobs in the Secretariat.' There is disturbingly an instant and unquestioning association of unpolished, vulgar and coarse behaviour with young Khasi men. The narrative does not stop at the description of these male characters but goes to the extent of predicting their professional future as if these men completely and hopelessly lack the capability to acquire other better job besides clerical jobs in the state government.

Many of the other Khasi male characters we encounter in the text are loosely portrayed as undercover militants, whose mindless aggression and authoritativeness is constantly parodied. The narrative is replete with incidents of such characters creating social disorder, primarily victimizing non-tribal characters: the ‚boys' attacking Sarak Singh, the ‚boys' in the tea-stall who end up shooting the non-tribal shop-keeper, etcetera. One could thus say that although the text is challenging one form of stereotyping (that of the dkhars" by the Khasis); it is instead indulging in another through its representation of Khasi men. Â Furthermore, on one of the occasions that Aman encounters David Rockwell, an unemployed man who is financially dependent on random friends, he immediately constructs a category of ‚men like these,' akin to Rockwell whom he runs into ‚everywhere.' Aman describes these men as ‚self-pitying,' '€œpermanently drunk,' and ‚bitter' with ‚uncompromising wives and several children.' Interestingly, all these men have Khasi nick-names like ‚Bah Duh,' ‚Bah Hep,' '€œBah Rit' and ‚Bah John.' This is clearly an evidence of a generalizing tendency that the text is guilty of and which it repeatedly commits through the non-tribal characters. The very fact that Aman claims to meet ‚men like these' everywhere drives home the idea that men in Shillong, particularly Khasis are inevitable

unemployed alcoholics, who are dominated by their wives and apparently quite ignorant about any form of birth control. The generalized of the narrative during descriptions of Khasi characters is not only politically problematic but unveils the lack of narratorial complexity of the text itself.

As mentioned previously, in the context of North East literatures, Hasan"s novel is valuable for its alternative perspective on the victimization of tribal communities, by instead underlining the marginalized positions of the non-tribal population in North East India. However, while Lunatic in My Head on the one hand attempts to challenge the socio-political binaries of tribal- non-tribal and insider-outsider, its utilization of socio-cultural stereotypes in the portrayal of Khasi characters on the other is again an investment in the same oppressive binaries structures. Moreover, Hasan'€'s narrative completely excludes any mention of the political history of North East India, which forms the basis of identity politics in the area. As Parag M. Sarma argues, , In a region where movement of people in search of pasture and field was a s natural as the hills or the mountain streams, the drawing of maps has sadly identified people with territory, thus setting loose social and political movements that try to sanctify territories from the perceived outsider or the ethnic other.' Ethnic conflict in the region should thus be understood in the context of political cartographic engineering of the Indian state in the postcolonial period. In its aim to represent and communicate racial discrimination of the ethnic minorities in Shillong, Lunatic in My Head ends up magnifying the differences between the Khasis and the ,dkhars' simply because it does not discard the stereotypical frame of representation.

1. By utilizing the term ,North-East,' I am not endorsing the homogenizing tendency that constructs the North-East region as one unified entity but merely to refer to its geo-political position within the Indian national territory.
2. Before I proceed, it is imperative for me to clarify that I am aware of the problematic orientalist connotation of the term ,tribal' and that I am only using it as a social category as prescribed in Article 342 of the Constitution of India to refer to ˜tribes or tribal communities, or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities'¦which are all deemed to be ,Scheduled Tribes.'
3. Margaret Ch. Zama, ,Introduction' in Emerging Literatures from Northeast India: The Dynamics of Culture, Society and Identity, SAGE Publications, India, 2013, p. xii
4. Tilottoma Misra, ,Introduction,' in The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays, Oxford University Press, India, 2011, p. xii
5. ,Ethnoscape' is term coined by Arjun Appadurai which defines ,the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers [sic], and other moving groups and persons [who] constitute an essential feature of the world, and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree.' For a detailed discussion see Appadurai, A, ,Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy' in Theory, Culture & Society, Volume.7, No.2, 1990, p. 295'“310.

6. Anjum Hasan had spent the first twenty-five years of her life in Shillong. One could assume that much of her characters" subjectivity is drawn from her own as she had existed as a '€œdkhar' and an ‚outsider' in that place.
7. Chanchala K Naik, ‚Identity and the Social Self' in Identities: Global and Local, Pencraft International, Delhi, 2003, p. 65
8. Parag M. Sarma, ‚Towards an Appreciative Paradigm for Literatures of the Northeast,' in Emerging Literatures from Northeast India: The Dynamics of Culture, Society and Identity, SAGE Publications, India, 2013, p.41
9. Bengt G. Karlsson, ‚Nature and Nation' in Unruly Hills: Nature and Nation in India"s Northeast, Orient Black Swan, New Delhi, 2011, p.. 64
10. Sanjib Baruah, ‚Nationalizing Space: Cosmetic Federalism and the Politics of Development in Northeast India' in Development and Change, Volume.34, No.5, Oxford, 2003, p. 915'€"39.
11. Sanjib Baruah, ‚Nationalizing Space...' , p. 918
12. Parag M. Sarma, ‚Towards an'¦ , p. 44

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Education in an Area of Conflict: Learners' Reflections

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Introduction

Conflict is a living reality in the present times. The most recent Ploughshares report states that, '2007 saw an increase in armed conflicts from 29 to 30, with two added to the report and one removed. The number of countries involved increased from 25 to 26'.1 Learning could be lost or compromised during times of conflict and emergencies. Hence, conflict is seen as a major obstacle towards the achievement of the Dakar goal of Education for All (EFA) by 2015.2 The impact of conflict situation on learners and education system as a whole is seen as devastating and regressive. In such a situation, the importance attached to schooling is due not simply to beliefs about the value of education in itself but also to a conviction about the role that the school plays in offering children a sense of protection, normality and routine when all around is chaos. It is seen 'as contributing to the physical, psychological and cognitive protection' of learners.3

The causes and content of conflict would vary from 'economic, social, political, symbolic, psychological, and multiple'.4 For Marx, the main cause of social conflict was the uneven relation in the means of production resulting in the unequal distribution of wealth and resources. Dahrendorf (1959) argued that structural conflict arose in relations of dominance. The scale of conflict could vary from a family feud to a communal riot to a war involving the whole world. As such the intensity of conflict would differ with regards to the extent of destruction and its duration. It could involve verbal abuses or physical altercations based on the situation and cause of the conflict. It could last a few minutes or episodic or stretch for many years as the case may be. In many cases, violence can be used as an expression of conflict, escalating when institutions are not able to channel into peaceful decision-making process. It is 'fuelled where political opportunities are closed (or have been closed for a long time), where political entrepreneurs use terrorism to increase their power and where individuals are gradually socialized to a military image of politics'.5 People are killed in the name of caste, community, ethnicity, honor, and religion, so on. Terror and fear is used, sometimes staged, to control the people by both state and non-state actors.

In this paper, first of all, I intend to understand the conflict in Manipur. I have delimited this paper to ethnic conflict as my focus would be on the assertion of ethnic identity, trying to understand how it emerges and is mobilized to fuel conflict. I would try to present the impact of conflict and education on each other; and the impact of conflict on children/learners, based on learners' reflection of their experiences with the help of some studies and interviews I had taken of five learners, now studying in Delhi, who had studied and were affected by conflict, both with the state and with other ethnic groups, in the state of Manipur.

Conflict in Manipur

The state of Manipur, under the Meitei kings, was an independent kingdom whose history could be traced to the 13th century. She became a Protected State of the British Empire due to her strategic location after the First Burma War in 1823, soon gaining the status of a Special State.6 She was defeated in the Anglo-Manipur War in 1891 and was declared a Subordinate Native State, under Indirect Rule of the British Empire. When India was getting ready for the celebration of freedom from British rule and the birth of a new nation in 1947, the princely state was having a similar aspiration of a sovereign Manipur. Similarly, the Naga group of tribes has been harbouring claims for sovereignty since 1929 when a unified group of Nagas under the name of the Naga Club submitted a memorandum 'demanding that the Nagas be left alone and free' to the Simon Commission in Kohima.7 Both these Self Determination Movements with secessionist aspirations from the newly independent Indian Union was due to their differing cultures and also due to the fact that people of these region had always been independent and used to their own way of living.

A sense of belonging has been difficult to found both historically and culturally, and a geographical distance continues to keep most of the North Eastern states alienated from 'mainland' India. After the merger with India, the indigenous culture couldn't feel a sense of belonging to the dominant culture; in fact they began to feel threatened by it. The idea of India continues to be alien to them. It is no coincidence that the two regions where the Indian state are engaged in conflict over territorial rights '" North East and Kashmir '" have a history of being acceded into the Indian Union under 'disputed circumstances'.8 The secessionist movements led to the birth of a number of groups with separatist aspirations from the Indian Union. The region continues to witness 'insurgent violence' and state's efforts to control the same with the huge deployment of security forces on a sustained basis and enactment of repressive special acts. This has further led to many killings of insurgents and civilians alike, leading to further alienation.

As we know that the North Eastern states aren't a homogenous unit. Similarly, the state of Manipur itself is home to several ethnic groups. The Imphal Valley is inhabited by the Meitei, along with various communities from other parts of India. The surrounding Hills are inhabited by different tribes, in total 29 tribes, and could be divided into two parts: those bordering Nagaland and those bordering Mizoram. The Meitei, the Naga and Kuki tribes, and some Scheduled Castes are taken to be the original settlers of Manipur. The others communities are taken to be immigrants and hence, termed 'outsiders or foreigners'. Each group and the tribes within each group want to and continue to preserve their individual identities. In addition, religion is beginning to influence the sense of otherness in the region as most of the tribals have converted to Christianity and the non-tribal, Meitei are Hindu or a co-opted group of Manipuri Muslim. Both the Meitei and Naga groups have been seen to have resorted to the aid of religion and culture for the call of a pan-ethnic identity. For instance, the Meiteis are on their way to revive their indigenous Sanna-Mahi religion and Meitei Mayek/script, in place of the Vaishnavite faith and Bengali script, as part of the process to re-discover their Meitei identity. Similarly, the Naga group's call of 'Nagaland for Christ' seems

more so to create 'solidarity among the various Naga tribes' and rationalize the differences from the dominant culture.9

There is further conflict within the state with the presence of ethnic rivalries mainly over territory. The problem arises when all the communities forming the political nation are not given equal status and sharing of resources in the society which would, in turn, lead to the fight of formation and strengthening of the consciousness and demand of a distinct cultural nation by each group.10 Land alienation has been the root of conflict in North Eastern India, which constitutes the main grievance for the tribesmen, as their economy is mainly agriculture based. Fifty per cent of the economy of Manipur is based on agriculture with no major industries in the state.11 This could explain the attachment of the people to their lands. Ethnic association is a medium through which groups fulfill their economic and/or political interests; and is 'perceived as fundamental to the survival of the core moral values and identity of oneself and one's children'.12 The ethnic group legitimizes its existence by tracing a historical affinity with a common history and a common descent group, with a distinct cultural attributes of their own in the form of customs, rituals, dressing, language, so on. The assimilation politics of the state continue to fuel separatist aspirations of various ethnic groups.

The region continues to witness the strong notion of a territorial homeland based on a shared ethnic identity, with the demand of a separate Naga state (the demand for a sovereign, independent country has taken a backseat). The proposed territory of Greater Nagalim, demanded by the Naga separatists with the support of various tribes constituting the Naga group, would include the present day state of Nagaland, along with Naga-inhabited territories of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. The political parties and insurgent groups of the concerned three states do not accept this and the clashes continue. There is another demand of a separate Kukiland unifying all the scattered Kuki in Manipur, India and Burma since 1950's. Many of the Hill districts of Manipur are inhabited by both Naga and Kuki tribes influencing the conflict, reflected in the major Naga-Kuki and Kuki-Paite clashes in the 1990's which resulted in people of both groups being killed and entire villages being burned down. The past decade of 2001-2010 continues to be conflict ridden, with curfews, protests, demonstrations, rallies, agitations and economic blockades being a regular feature in the everyday lives of the common people. The issues ranging from the signing of ceasefire between the Indian Government and the Naga insurgent group NSCN (I-M)13, demand of education affiliation to Nagaland Board by the Naga Hill districts of Manipur, demand for the repeal of AFSPA14, killing of civilians, implementation of Inner Line Permit, the list goes on.

Conflict and Education

Smith states that conflict and education are multidirectional and impact each other.15 Impact of conflict on education is consequential in the sense that learning is disrupted as learners are denied access to schools and learning, destruction of infrastructure and school buildings as they are seen to represent the state; and in many cases are being used as safety refuge to provide shelter to civilians and as barracks and storage houses for the police personnel in cases of emergencies. In the World Bank funded research titled Reshaping the Future: Education and Post conflict

Reconstruction, the impact of conflict on the teachers and the debilitation of the teaching forces is highlighted giving the examples of Rwanda where 'more than two-thirds of the teachers in primary and secondary schools were either killed or fled'; Cambodia where the conflict and killings left 'the system with no trained or experienced teachers'; Timor Leste, where the relatively short conflict in 2000 led to 'almost no trained or qualified teacher for its secondary system and no access to tertiary education' as all the teachers were Indonesian and did not return.16 The lack of teachers would definitely lead to a superficial or no teaching and learning.

Educational materials that encourage negative attitudes towards other groups may encourage hostility amongst a new generation, thereby potentially extending the conflict. In a study to ascertain the citizenship orientations of Israeli Palestinian Arab, and orthodox and non-orthodox Jewish Israeli youth based on the theory that the forming an affinity with one's country is often more problematic for minority ethnic groups than for the dominant group. It was found that the Israeli Palestinian Arabs, who had to negotiate between the dual roles of being Israeli citizens versus being members of the Palestinian people, were politically active in discussion and participation, more efficacious but had lesser national pride than the Jewish Israelis.17

Glazier conducted a yearlong ethnographic study of a bilingual/bicultural school on Arab and Jewish students of first grade with the theoretical underpinning that education would promote cultural fluency if learners were made to engage in each other's company.18 The interactive environment was created in classroom, hallways, playgrounds and outside by organizing birthday parties and play; family and community participation with family outings, field trips, parents' meeting and inviting Jewish parents to share their experiences of the Holocaust; initiating activities such as drawing cards for each other on festive occasions, conversations on difficult and contested events of the past so as to facilitate the accepting of other's views, and making the learners work in projects together. The major implication was that contact alone would not lead to cultural fluency; instead it should be an ongoing process. The curriculum should be connected to the learners' own lives and reach them with the teachers' role of facilitating pedagogues. In a revisit by the researcher 5 years later, the initiative was found to be successful, but few learners had left the school.

Education could play a key role in identity formation which may make it potentially either an instrument for peaceful development or a means of reinforcing intolerance. Those working in the field of education and conflict have made a significant contribution to challenging the assumption that education is always a positive force in areas of conflict. Bush & Saltarelli is of the view that education has both a destructive as well as constructive role in times of ethnic conflict. Education can be used as a weapon in cultural repression by the dominant groups in any kind of conflict as in the case of Sudan after independence in 1964 'all the missionary schools were taken by the state and all foreign missionaries expelled'. This would be seen as 'war-intellectual starvation' as the destruction and closure of schools is a denial of learning and of human rights.19 In addition, there could be the distortion, complete negation or non-discussion of issues and controversial events such as the Holocaust, the Partition of India; the absence or isolate mention of Dalit, Native,

Subaltern, Tribal and Woman in History writing. Such segregation could lead to further inequality, inferiority and stereotyping, thereby encouraging hate of the 'œother'   as 'alleged in the case of the Nepali speaking population of Southern Bhutan and the encouraging of negative attitudes in educational materials, as argued by both the Israelis and Palestinians about each other schools'.20

The impact of education would fuel or cause further conflict. It could result in the unequal treatment of the curricula content as the dominant group would be in control and not every group would be represented. In Manipur, amongst all the groups the Meitei have a greater share in the power structure, in terms of number and a greater holding of important posts. The hostility on ethnic lines is there for all to see. This social and cultural reproduction is visible in the school curriculum, as I have found in the analysis of the History and Political Sciences state books as part of my M.Ed. Dissertation. 'All the ethnic groups are not given equitable representation in the textbooks as the dominant group is given maximum space and representation. The textbook is used as cultural reproduction of the dominant class, the Meitei, by giving them more space and voice amongst all the ethnic groups in Manipur. Common men, women and hill tribes are given isolate mentions or sometimes none at all'.21 In another study where altogether twenty four participants, teachers, researchers, religious leaders and social workers irrespective of any background interviewed felt that there was a very strong communal and ethnic divide in the education system in the state of Manipur.22 For instance, the Meitei have begun to introduce the Meitei Mayek in the schools in place of the teaching of Manipuri subject as a modern Indian language, which was earlier in the Bengali script. The tribal resent and question its utility and believe it does not have any prospects in the future. Most of them cannot read nor write Manipuri, be it in any script.

Impact of Conflict on Children/Learners

The learners are the most important constituent in the education system but they are the ones who have no say in the working of the system. The importance of taking children as participants and listening to their experiences is, because they reflect on their own; it helps increase their self worth and visibility; plus, it contribute to the relevance of data.23 A very important issue in the study of conflict is the effect it has on children and adults alike, as reported in a study which found them to be 'mentally disturbed . . . under acute stress and unable to relax, and in many cases slept poorly'24. A study by the United Nations reports that 'such experiences leave emotional, psychological and spiritual scars that may last a lifetime'.25 Padilla, Ruiz and Brand (1974) have found that 'ethnic attitudes are formed early, and that once positive or negative prejudices are formed, they tend to increase with time'.26 The development of learner self identity in conflict area is seen to have affected 'their associations with others, religious convictions, self understanding, and clothing choices in their post migration lives'.27

The Machel Report describes the issues of child recruitments as soldiers in the armed conflict and it was claimed that during the 1990's 'more than 2 million children have died as a result of war and some 15 million children have been displaced within their countries or made refugees'.28 Also, children could become refugees and internally displaced or across the border; victims of sexual

exploitation and gender based violence; threatened by landmines and health hazards; be bereft of food supplies and nutrition. In addition, learning opportunities are lost and learners would have to compromise.29

I interviewed five people, three of my interviewees were Meitei girls from an interior/rural region of the Imphal valley; and the other two, a boy and a girl belonged to the Mao tribe from the hill district of Senapati. Based on their reflections of having had experienced conflict in their school years, I came to know that the tribal girl who had her early schooling from the valley had to shift to the hill district in the late 1990's due to the ethnic clashes between the Naga-Kuki and the Kuki-Paite groups. Many individuals from both groups were killed, nearly 10,000 houses and 600 villages destroyed in the eight-year feud.30 She is one amongst the many learners who had to shift or was displaced cause of the ethnic strife. Learners were displaced again post June 2001, when the Indian Government and the Naga insurgent groups agreed to a ceasefire to Manipur and the rest of the country. This led to protests in the Imphal valley with the Meiteis burning down government buildings and offices as they thought that the Indian Government was trying to have a settlement with the Naga separatists. Though not a single Naga was attacked, more than 10,000 Nagas are believed to have left the valley and fled to the hill districts or to Nagaland, to never return.

I want to share my experience as a learner in the year 1997-1998 when the ethnic conflict was at its peak and many learners, especially the tribal learners who had come to study in the Imphal valley from the hill districts, had to flee. Though we went to school every day, classes weren't held as half the learners weren't there. Also, some of the teachers had fled because of the clashes. Many a times, the senior students would come and conduct quizzes and other activities to keep us occupied. We never discussed the issue as if it hadn't occurred only. We only had one wish and hope that our friends would come back. Some of them returned from their homes in the Hill districts when situation calmed down, many of them never came back, losing a year or getting admitted elsewhere. Reflecting back, I am now able to understand as to the withdrawn and reclusive behavior of my fellow learners after they had returned, who had earlier been fun loving and outspoken as any 12-13 years old would be at that age.

Julia Dicum talks of 'adaptation, resilience and politicization/resistance' by the learners in the midst of violence and chaos.31 The adaptation could be in the form of teachers taking classes at home when schools were shut in the valley during the period of ceasefire in 2004. One girl spoke of how her father taught her Geography at home during the same period. The school provided 'extra classes after school' and organized 'camps' for students of Class X. In addition, Class X and XII were exempted during the 4 months shut down of educational institutions. Learners in the hill districts mostly opt for Arts stream after Class X (there was only the option of Arts in the government schools in the whole district, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya has started offering Science from 2010). Learners had either to opt for private schools, or go to Imphal valley or Nagaland if they wanted to study Science or Commerce. We can see everyone "" teachers, parents, school, civil society and learners 'adapting' to the chaos around and engaging in the act of learning.

Talking of 'resilience', I felt it came out strongly in the interviews of the three female learners from the interior region of Imphal valley. They all spoke of working hard to score good marks to be able to 'come to Delhi or elsewhere'. This also reflects the notion of 'coping and hoping' wherein learners cope with the conflict and uncertain present with the hope of a better future.32 We can see further 'adaptation' when they say they had to opt for a professional course instead of a 'general line' so as to 'get a job fast'. We can note a certain gender bias, even if they try to laugh it off, while one of them says, 'it would have been better if I were a boy'. There is a hint of hope that maybe they would have been able to pursue a subject or course of their choice. This reflection is also visible in the interview of the girl from the hill district, when she speaks about very few of them opting for Post-Graduation and mostly going for jobs (call centre); and 'some are teaching back home as parents didn't allow them to come'. A greater 'exodus' is taking place from the state of Manipur and Nagaland, in fact the whole of the North-East to the metro cities 'to seek education, jobs and make a new life away from the strife'.33

Another common observation was regarding the medium of instruction. In the valley, the major explanation is done in Manipuri/Meiteilon and this caused a major problem to the tribal students, as they speak different tribal languages. In the hill, the local tribal teachers explained in the mother tongue. However, the Mathematics and Science teachers mostly came from the valley (Meitei, non-tribal) and sometimes, the teachers' proficiency in English was felt to be inadequate by the learners and they would not know the local tribal language hence, learners faced difficulty in understanding and doubts remained. The other aspect of teachers being caught in a 'culture of power', when they are part of the minority group, is also important and needs to be addressed.

The lone male interviewee belonging to the minority tribal group had to face double displacement. He had to shift from the Imphal valley to the hill district in the wake of the ethnic conflict in the mid-1990's when he was in the primary class, and a second shift from the hill district to the Imphal valley for his higher studies after 2006, when a campaign was initiated by the Naga students of Manipur to affiliate the private schools in the four Naga dominated hill districts of Manipur-Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul-with the Nagaland Board of School Education (NBSE). Textbooks were burnt, government schools were damaged or set on fire, and students took out protests with banners like 'œWe Want Common Education' , 'œWelcome Nagaland Board' and 'œGoodbye Manipur Board' . The affiliation is seen as a means to facilitate the learning of the Naga learners, as repeatedly they have had to face displacement and an alleged hostile learning environment in the Imphal valley. If the Nagaland Assembly passed a Bill allowing affiliation, the Manipur Government retaliated with banning the affiliation and issuing penalties. The affiliation was regulated for a year and the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur (BSEM) issued a notice that the certificate of NBSE would not be recognized in Manipur. This led to many students, especially of X and XII, migrating to schools either in the Imphal valley or to Nagaland. This shows that schools are not 'neutral' sites and the 'politicization' of education is a reality with schools used as centers of resistance, at times for subversive reaction.

When I probed him about his experience, he said he was in Class IX and how he faced problem especially in Grammar, English as they were studying for 6 months each in Manipur Board and Nagaland Board in one academic year. Moreover, the syllabus and textbook also changed. It was more or less same for Mathematics and Science though. On probing further as to how he felt about the shift; he said, 'students suffered'. Moreover, he was detained and lost a year. This substantiates that learners 'are keenly aware of what they are learning and when they are not learning'.34 This is evident in all the interviews. They all speak of classes being 'not regular', using of 'short cut' during science practical and a difference in 'level', 'quality' when compared to Delhi. We can notice a 'culture of power' in play when he shares his experience when in XII, one of his tribal classmates was scolded by a teacher for improper way of dressing saying, 'you tribal usually do like this'.35 This became a big issue with all the tribal students coming together, resisting the 'labeling' and demanding an apology for the generalized statement. The learner said if the teacher would have scolded the concerned student only they would not have protested. The learner exhibits further resistance wherein they create and adopt differentiating features to 'maintain their identity or out of dislike' for the dominant group when he shares that they 'weren't friendly with the Meitei'.36

Adolescence is seen as a period of energy and creativity. In the midst of absence or non-availability of basic resources, it is important to find out how learners engage themselves to fill the vacuum in the backdrop of conflict. This could lead to disruption in learning with schools and learning opportunities absent. Also, it might increase the possibilities of insurgency in the presence of repressive laws and actions of the state or an active engagement 'through their teenage years: their social, economic and political roles as community members'. Though the 'consideration of political activism by children and adolescents remains under-theorized and under-researched, the limited research which explores children's lives in a more holistic manner brings clearly to light the sophisticated understanding which informs the decision of many to engage in political struggle'. It is seen that children growing up in areas of armed conflict 'see violence as a legitimate means of problem solving'.37

Conclusion

The interactions with the various learners helped me in building an understanding that the learners, whether in the hills or the valley district are affected by the politicization of education because of the conflict with the state or inter-ethnic, as they are dragged willingly or unwillingly to the conflict around them. They all miss classes because of endless strikes and blockades, protest rallies pro- and anti-various state and non-state actors, the fight over which state board to follow affects their learning and show them in resisting roles. They have to compromise on the quality of education and do with existing infrastructure and resources. However, the degree and reasons would differ depending on the ethnic group they belong to and the area where they are getting their education. The tribal in the hill would feel safer than a tribal studying in the valley. They all show resilience and adapting to whatever opportunity they are getting to work towards a better life away from the conflict. The reflections of the girlÂ interviewees reflect how one's gender and class influences

the learners' decision in life with the girls and those from lower economic background having to compromise on the courses they study or having to earn a living as soon as possible and not study further even if they wish to.

Learners exhibit strong memories and show resilience which could help in understanding how learning takes place and what does it mean to learners in conflict areas. This could help in understanding the politicization of education in such situations by both the state and non-state actors. It would further help in developing various strategies of education in conflict areas and in turn, meet the learning needs of the learners. In understanding the multiple ways of knowledge acquisition the learners resort to, we could also acknowledge the important role of learners as 'active participants in the process when they make choices' and share their experiences in and out of school. Such sharing and engagement is said to be 'healing in political and violence contexts'.38

Plus, the important role of school in providing well being and hope for the future could form an important aspect in teacher education wherein the teachers could be encouraged to understand and support their students both in and out of school, more so in conflict area. The important need of democratic teaching and learning is a must for the success of 'inclusive education', wherein the political and cultural differences of each individual needs to be acknowledged and taken into account. Plus, the teaching and discussion of controversial issues and conflict as a living reality in the classroom could help answer many questions the learners have but don't know whom to go to for an answer, helping them form unbiased opinions and rational understanding about self and others.

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Rape in the Metropolis: the Geography of Crime in Delhi

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Introduction

Is rape a private matter that should not be discussed in a public domain? Of course, not! New Delhi, a metropolis, is again in limelight for wrong reason: 2012 Delhi Gang Rape Case; and this paper is a study of it. It questions on the safety and security issues of woman in the metropolis of India, and it also discusses how laws amendments have been made aftermath this barbaric crime. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) recorded the capital accounts for over 47 per cent of rapes and abduction of women in urban India. Mishra in Women Safety in Delhi says ˜for women across India, fear is a constant companion and rape is the stranger they may have to confront at every corner'.1

After every unfortunate incident of rape the general reaction of most of the people is: what was ˜she' doing in an unsafe place in the night; was ˜she' with her boyfriend; was ˜she' drinking and eating in the hotel alone? It seems that the mindset of the people has not accepted the process of urbanization and migration fully, and they still think that inhospitable and harsh cities will stop the migration and consequently crimes will stop in the metropolis. But, this time, fortunately the resident of this transit city came out from their shelters with one voice for a demand for justice to the victim and to hang the culprits, though the religious and political party leaders were busy in making their usual insensitive remarks e.g. a controversial religious guru Aasaram Bapu's statement that the girl could have escaped rape had she addressed the rapists as 'œbrother' , international president of Vishva Hindu Parishad Mr. Ashok Singhal was busy in criticizing Western Culture, Madhya Pradesh Industry Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya had been advising women not to cross their lines, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat shrugged this off by describing it as an urban phenomenon,Â Shafiqur Rehman, a member of a parliamentary committee on Home Affairs from Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), held women's irresponsible dressing codes responsible for the assault, Andhra Pradesh Congress chief Botsa Satyanarayana fantasized why do women need to travel in the night? And many narratives would soon be in the line with these which show the social dementia in the people of politics and religion when it comes to talk about a serious issue, and all this jabbering resulted in one conclusion that women are not safe in the capital of India, and women send vibes of insecurity being the urban residents of this transit city.2

History and background

On the night of 16 December 2012, Ram Singh, Vinay Sharma (20), AkshayThakur (28), Pawan Gupta (19), Mukesh (26) and the juvenile had gang raped the girl (23) in a bus after luring her and

her 28-year-old male-friend. The victim's friend, a software engineer, suffered fractures in his limbs in the incident. The girl died on 29 December, 2012 at a Singapore hospital. There were 130 effective hearings over 7 months, 85 prosecutions and 17 defense witnesses examined. All four accused were awarded sentenced to death on 10 September 2013.3

Rape made national headlines earlier to and afterwards this incident but we forgot them easily. In 2003 a medical student and before that a call center worker was raped. In 2011 Uttar Pradesh faced the worst atrocities. The Vice-President of SR Darapuri People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) stated, "I analyzed the rape figures for 2007 and I found that 90 per cent of victims were Dalits and 85 per cent of Dalit rape victims were underage girls'.4In January 2013, a 7-year old girl was raped in the school toilet in Goa. In March 2013 a Swiss-woman gang raped in front of her husband at a village in a Dalit district, and in August 2013, an Arunachal Pradesh teacher was arrested rapping fourteen underage girls in the hostel for over 3 years. BBC reported in February 2013, more than 7,200 children are raped every year in India. But this time only when the people identified the victim as one of them-urban, middle-class, and educated-and they came out on the streets and called for the capital punishment.

The Indian Penal Code had gone through a lot of amendments in the past too for the punishment for rape. In 1983 the following amendments had been made; they are: S. 376(2) i.e. custodial rape, S. 376(A) i.e. marital rape, and S. 376(B to D) i.e. sexual intercourse not amounting to rape were added; and U/s 228A of Indian Penal Code, no person can disclose the name of the rape victim, U/s 114-A of Indian Evidence Act; presumption can be made as to the absence of consent, U/s 53(1) of Code of Criminal Procedure, U/s 164A of Code of Criminal Procedure; provisions for medical examination of rape victim are given, and U/s 327(2) of Code of Criminal Procedure, there should be in camera trial for all rape victims. The amendments in 1983 are given for reference only.5

In this paper, we will discuss only the amendments aftermath 16 December 2012 gang rape case.

Sexual harassment and changes in law

Rarely a single incident of crime amends law but this time it happened, aftermath 16 December 2012 gang rape case that has led to various changes in rape laws in India. The major achievement was in re-defining "rape' and provisioning a death penalty too. It also defined several new offences such as causing grievous hurt through acid attacks, sexual harassment, use of criminal force on a woman with intent to disrobe, voyeurism and stalking. Accepting Verma Committee Report's recommendation, the Indian Parliament introduced amendments to the Indian Penal Court and after receiving the assent of the President on the 2 April 2013, and various changes have been made to the anti-rape laws in India. The Verma Committee Report proposed these amendments in law, and according to former minister of Law and Justice Ashwani Kumar 90 per cent suggestions has been accepted. The parliament has not included the recommendations now for marital rape, reduction in the age of consent, and amending armed forces special powers act.6

In section 354, four new sections have been inserted: 354A, 354 B, 354 C, and 354 D. Â The section 354 A recommends punishment for a manÂ (i) who makes physical contacts and indulges in unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures, (ii) demands and requests for sexual favors, (iii) shows pornography against the will of a woman, and (iv) makes sexually colored remarks. For the clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) there is a reward of a rigorous imprisonment for three years, or with fine, or both. For the clause (iv) it is for one year, or fine, or both. For assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe in the section 354 B recommends a reward between 3 to 7 years. The section 354 C rewards penalty for voyeurism for one to seven years with fine depends upon the severity of the crime. Here, the gazette has described ˜the private acts' rather explicitly. ˜An act of watching carried out in a place which'|''|¦expected to provide privacy and where victim's genitals, posterior or breasts are exposed or covered only in underwear; or the victim is using the lavatory; or the victim is doing a sexual act that is not a kind ordinarily done in public'.7 The dissemination of the capture images of the victim without consents is also considered an offence. The section 354 D for stalking, and the reward is up to seven years/fine depending upon the severity. The section 370 is substituted by 370 and 370 A where the law amendments for the trafficking of the person and exploitation of a trafficked person are introduced, and the term ˜prostitution' has been dropped. There is a subtle difference in the nature of 354 A, B, C, and D, and 370 & 370 A where except once in 354 D point (2) the word ˜whoever' is used in place of ˜man' whereas in 370 & 370 A there is not any instance of using the word ˜man' specifically. Voyeurism and Stalking are no longer a gender neutral term, and only a man can commit on a woman.8

Besides 354 and 370 the most important change that has been made is the change in the definition of the term ˜rape' under Indian Penal Code. A new term ˜sexual assault' has been introduced in place of ˜rape', and the penetrations, other than penile, have been added to the definition. But still the existing definition of rape in section 375 of IPC only covers the cases where the victim is woman. The section 376 describes ˜whoever' and states punishment for rape by a police officer, a public servant, a member of the armed forces, the management or the staff of the jail, a relative, guardian, teacher or the person in authority, and it also describes various places and the stages of the victim. Depending upon the situations-aggravated or alleviated (not aggravated)-the punishment will be rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine; and in non-aggravated situations it will be imprisonment not less than seven years but which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.9

A new section, 376A has been added for punishment for causing death or resulting in persistent vegetative state of victim. It states that if a person committing the offence of sexual assault, ˜inflicts an injury which causes the death of the person or causes the person to be in a persistent vegetative state, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than twenty years, but which may extend to imprisonment for life, which shall mean the remainder of that person's natural life, or with death'.10 The section 376 B describes sexual intercourse by husband upon his wife during separation, and rewards punishment of minimum of two years which may extend to seven years, and also liable to fine. The sexual intercourse by a person in authority

is described in section 376 C, and it rewards punishment of minimum of 5 years which may extend to 10 years, and also liable to fine. In case of ˜gang rape' in (376 D), persons involved regardless of their gender shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which is minimum twenty years which may extend to life and a fine, and the age of consent in India has been increased to 18 years.

Amendments and common criticism

Any legislation addressing sexual violence should reflect international human rights law and standards, and the main criticism of this new ordinance is that it fails to provide crucial human rights protections and redress for victims. Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia Director at Human Rights, reacted that ˜Indian parliamentarians should insist on a law that deals with these critical issues'.11The new ordinance ignores the committee's key recommendations on police accountability, and it provides legal immunity for members of the armed forces. Its failure to state the sexual violence as a violation of women's rights has been much criticized. The discriminatory provisions are easy to decode from the above discussion where for the same crime the punishment varies, and the capital punishment is only in some cases of sexual assault which result in death or ˜persistent vegetative state' for the victim and in cases of certain repeat offenders. The ordinance retains archaic and discriminatory concepts for defining criminal offenses as ˜insults' or ˜outrages' to women's ˜modesty' rather than crimes against their right to bodily integrity. The ordinance fails to draw a distinction between the harm caused by penetrative and non-penetrative offences, e.g. the act of touching another person's sexual part is given the same punishment as penetrative sexual offences. According to amended Penal Code 375, the wives can bring a charge of ˜sexual assault' against husbands only when they are ˜living separately under a decree of separation or under any custom or usage'.12The Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch criticized and opposed the death penalty under all circumstances realizing it as a degrading punishment and a violation of the right to life. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, enacted in 2012, increased the age of consent to sexual intercourse from 16 to 18 also received severe criticisms.

The ordinance fails to repeal section 377 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes consensual same-sex relations among adults. The LGBT activists are quite dissatisfied, and they argue that anyone including men, can be raped and they should have recourse to justice. Anjali Gopalan of Naz foundation says ˜People from the LGBT community are looked down in our society. In cases of sexual violence, men feel helpless. They can approach no one. If some of them gather the courage to go the police station, the case is not registered. They make fun of the victim'.13But to amend the Indian Penal Code to make the definition of rape `gender-neutral' is under consideration. On the contrary, the anger of most of the women organizations and NGOs for women were against the exception no. 2 in 375 which states that the sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape. Rath quoted the UN Population Fund that observed that more than 2/3rds of married women in India, aged between 15 and 49 have been beaten, raped or forced to provide sex; and in 2005, 6787 cases were recorded of women murdered by their husbands or their husbands' families.14

In spite of these amendments in 354 and 370, the lewd remarks have been exchanged on National Television in the realty shows, and one of the most popular reality show program named Bigg Boss Season 7 on Colors channel telecasts at 9.00 PM daily is an exemplar of it. During a task in the show, Andy misbehaved with Gauhar by passing crude remarks on her lingerie (Deccan Chronicle).15 According to one participant, Kushal, ˜Armaan Kohli has abused every single woman in the house (TNN)'.16 A leading newspaper The Hindustan Times says ˜Reality Show? Let's just call it voyeurism central (HT).17

Let's not deviate further from the seriousness of the topic by discussing a reality show largely popular in the urban middle-class population. But incidentally it only demonstrates how easily we forget things.

Conclusion

Law remains but the criminals continue to act against society. The amendments of 1983 and the recent amendments of 2013 have brought some important changes in the existing laws of rape. But it is time to realize that rape is a sexual assault which is not for sexual gratification, but it is an act of violence which is expressed through sexual means. Severe and certain punishment in a time bound manner can provide a justice to the victim because on an average most convicts get away with three to four years of rigorous punishment, and with a very small amount of fine. Lengthy prison sentences have some behavior-altering deterrent value therefore; these criminals should be sentenced to life imprisonment.

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Women's Empowerment and Panchayat System in the Era of Market Economy

Sekhar Sil

IDespite of the close relation between decentralization and the self rule, conceptually, these two are not identical with each other. Devolution of power could also be taken place at the provincial and district levels without having people's active participation and their substantive role in decision-making process. In other words, the decentralization process could be existed purely as an administrative arrangements. So if decentralization process wants to bring self rule, people's participation would be a primary condition for it. Participating in decision-making process is also important as it is the only way for the marginalized section of the society to be empowered. But empowering people through participation in decentralized local bodies cannot be thought off by excluding women and their causes as they are the most vulnerable section of the society, otherwise constituted half the population of the country.

For a long time there was no serious attempt was made by the central and state governments to address the issue of women's empowerment through decentralized system of local self-government. To ensure women's participation in local bodies 73rd constitutional amendment was made in which 33% of seats have been reserved for them along with the existing system of reservation for SC's and ST's. No doubt that after introducing such reservation policy for women, their participation in local bodies definitely have been increased. In this regard such policy could be viewed as part of the welfare programme of the Indian state. Now, at present moment, we are living in the era of liberalization where capital dominates every aspect of economy. In view of the dominating role of market economy it is not very clear that how much local bodies could play an effective role to enhance women's empowerment at the grassroots level. This article is an attempt to analyse to what extent Panchayats and other local bodies are performing their role in facilitating women's involvement in decision-making process. .

(I)

Decentralization process through local bodies can be traced back in the colonial period. But in respect to people's participation, the establishment of local bodies became meaningful only after the independence. While reflecting Gandhian ideal of Gram Swaraj, the local self bodies like Panchayet is considered to be an extension of democratic participation at the grass root level. It should not be held that... decentralization and self rule are identical to each other. Decentralization can be taken place at the provincial and district levels without having people's active participation

and their substantive role in decision making process. In other words, the decentralization process could exist purely as administrative arrangements. So if decentralization process wants to bring self rule, people's participation would be a primary precondition for it. But the question of participating in decision making process is also important as it is the only way for the marginalized sections of the society to be empowered including women. Gandhiji believed that decentralization was essential for the realization of the ideals of democracy to enable each individual to participate in the decision making and implementing process. Democracy was the embodiment of real freedom to mange one's own affairs. It could effectively function only in small units. His concept of decentralization implies the basic principle of self-sufficiency in respect of the basic needs of man.[1]

But the draft constitution completed in February 1948 made no mention about the 'Panchayat.' Finally due to the intervention of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, the issue of Panchayat was referred to the Constituent Assembly advisor B.N. Rau in May, 1948. As an advisor of the Constituent Assembly, Rao's idea that our constitution should start from the village and work upwards to the Provinces and to the Centre was at variance with the basic features of a modern constitution in that the latter dealt with the structure of government at the central level, and in a Federation, at the central and state levels. He thought it better that to regulate the details of Panchayat to auxiliary legislation to be enacted after the constitution had been passed. Interestingly, the debates over Panchayat revealed the existence of two conflicting ideas. Ambedkar condemned the village as a 'sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow mindedness and communalism.' Incidentally his position was very close to that of held by Nehru who wrote to Gandhi that a village, normally speaking, was backward intellectually and culturally, and no progress could be made from a backward environment and narrow minded people were much more likely to be untruthful and violent. However, several members expressed strong resentment against the uncharitable observation made by Ambedkar. Ultimately, the following amendment was moved by K. Santhanam, 'œThe state shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.This was accepted after some discussion, and incorporated in Article 40 of the Constitution. So, initially our Constitution-makers were quite confused to introduce even the Panchayat system in the country despite of powerful influence of Gandhian ideals.[2]

The first serious attempt towards democratic decentralization and Panchayati Raj was made by the recommendation of the team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service, headed by Balwantray Mehta. The recommendations of the Balwantray Mehta Study Team centered on the scheme of 'democratic decentralization.' It preferred a three-tier organization of the Panchayat bodies in rural areas to the then existing system. It recommended the creation of a Zilla Parishad in each district to replace the District Planning Committee; the functions of the old District Boards should also be taken over by this body which was to be placed at the apex of an integrated structure of rural self-governing institutions. Below the district level, it recommended the constitution of Panchayat Samiti co-extensive with a development block in the district. At the village level Gram Panchayats were to be constituted to secure community action in as large a

measure as possible with Gramsevak as the key figure in community development system and Panchayati Raj. The structure of the proposed Panchayati Raj set-up according to the Balwantray Mehta Study Team, should be an integrated one. The members of the Panchayat Samiti were to be elected by the members of the Gram Panchayat within the area, and the presidents of Panchayat Samities within the district would become ex-officio members of the Zilla Parishad. Each level of this structure would have the power to require the lower level to function as its agent. Then, again, the budget of the Gram Panchayat was to be approved by the Panchayat Samiti and that of the Panchayat Samiti to be approved by the Zilla Parishad.[3]

The Balwantray Mehta Team made Block the hub of all development work, when the Team was called upon to suggest 'a single representative and vigorous democratic institution' substituting all others and capable of taking charge of all development activities in the rural areas there had existed three local areas, the Panchayat, Block and District. The Team rejected the Panchayat as it was 'too small in area, population and financial resources to carry out all these functions. The Team considered the significance of district as development unit but found it large enough to provide 'the requisite resources, necessary administrative and technical personnel and equipment required for a properly coordinated development of the district.' The Team regarded the block as the most suitable unit for the experiment of democratic decentralization. It offered as area 'large enough for functions which the village Panchayat cannot perform and yet small enough to attend the interest and service of the residents.' Added to this was the fact that some of the block were already functioning as the development units and had been equipped with adequate personnel in different fields.[4]

But the Team did not specify the nature of representation in Panchayat institutions. A section of public opinion does not favour political parties taking active part in Panchayati Raj bodies. It is argued that these institutions deal only with local problems. The involvement of parties will hamper local initiative. The necessity of party activity is there at the national and state level, where major policy decisions are taken. The thesis of party-less democracy is based on the assumption that the Panchayats in ancient were heavens of unity, peace and prosperity. But in the name of party-less democracy it was overlooked that caste and class inequality, factions, and funds had very much been there in the ancient Panchayats. In fact rivalry and factionalism had been lying low because the wealthy few who had wielded real power had duped the common men, and had supported their factionalism and rivalry. They were unable to raise their finger against them. In fact the principle of unanimity and party less democracy had immensely benefited the rural landed gentry, the entrenched power elite in rural society.[5]

Ultimately it was felt that introduction of party politics was necessary for a meaningful participation in Panchayat bodies. It was also viewed that Panchayati Raj institutions operate within the bigger structure of parliamentary democracy of which political party is a vehicle. The party is instrumental in organizing a mass of people in a democratic society on the basis of some ideology. It was argued that the unorganized masses cannot rule themselves. Electing leaders and holding them responsible and in proper check are the tasks of the people in a democratic society.

It is a very difficult task, and cannot be successfully accomplished without a political party which is organized.[6] By the recommendations of Ashok Mehta committee the party system somehow got entry into the Panchayat institutions at the rural areas.[7] Actually the Balwantray Mehta committee was concerned with the question of structure and institutions of Panchayati system. Later Ashok Mehta committee emphasized on the aspect of development through mass participation and the need of party based democracy at the local bodies. But neither the Balwantray Mehta committee nor the Ashok Mehta committee seriously thought about the question of women's participation in local bodies. On the contrary, empowering people through participation in decentralized local bodies cannot be visualized by excluding women and their cause because they are the most vulnerable section of the society constituted half the population of the country.

For a long time there was no serious attempt was made by the central and state governments to address the issue of women's empowerment through decentralized system of local self-government. Ultimately, to ensure women's participation in local bodies 73rd constitutional amendment was made in which 33 per cent of seats have been reserved for them along with the existing system of reservation for SC's and ST's. No doubt that after introducing such reservation policy for women, participation of women in local bodies definitely has increased. Statistically, in the state of West Bengal, before the reservation the percentage of women's representation was constituted just as less than 2 per cent in local Panchayat bodies. After the introduction of reservation policy that has arose to 36 per cent .in rural Bengal.[8] Clearly it shows that the system of one-third reservation has changed the course of democratic participation in local politics. In recent Panchayat election women's reservation has increased up to 50 per cent so that more women can participate and involve themselves in decision making process for their own village and community. In this regard such policy could be viewed as part of welfare programmes of the Indian state. Now, at present we are living in the era of liberalization where capital dominates every aspect of economy. In view of the dominating role of market economy it is to be analyzed to what extent local bodies could play an effective role in enhancing women's empowerment at the grass root level.

(II)

The logic behind the market economy is drawn from a particular understanding about the human nature. It is argued that since human beings are self-interested creatures, they tend to maximize their own interests. Those who favour market, like Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, hold that any attempt to form central planning in particular and economic intervention in general in the name of general public interest is largely incompatible with the basic human nature. For them the market is seen to be morally and practically superior to government and any form of political control. In fact Hayek argues that planning in any manner is bound to be economically inefficient because state bureaucrats, however competent they might be, are confronted by a range and complexity of information that is simply beyond their capacity to handle. In his view, economic

intervention is the single most serious threat to individual liberty because any attempt to control economic life inevitably draws the state into other areas of existence, ultimately, leading to totalitarianism. Friedman criticizes Keynesianism on the grounds that 'tax and spend' policies fuel inflation by encouraging governments to increase borrowing without, in the process, affecting the 'natural rate' of unemployment.[9]

By pointing out the limitations of planned economy and Keynesian welfarism they tried to justified market economy on several grounds. First and foremost, because they tend towards long-term equilibrium, markets are self-regulating. Re-stating Smith's idea of the 'invisible hand, Hayek likened the market to a vast nervous system which is capable of regulating the economy because it can convey an almost infinite number of messages, simultaneously via the price mechanism. Second, markets are naturally efficient and productive. Market economies are efficient at a micro-economic level because resources are drawn inexorably to their most profitable use, and because rich and poor alike have an incentive to work. At a macro-economic level, private businesses are inherently more efficient then public bodies because they are disciplined by the profit motive, forcing them to keep costs low, while the taxpayer will always pick up the bill for public losses. Third, markets are responsive, even democratic, mechanisms. Competition guarantees that producers produce only what consumers are willing to buy, and at a price they can afford; the consumer, in short, is king. Finally, markets deliver fairness and economic justice. The market gives people the opportunity to rise or fall on the basis of talent and hard work. Material inequality thus simply reflects a natural inequality amongst humankind.[10]

The thrust towards market economy which ushered the process of globalization and free flow of capital raise certain questions for the viability of participatory democracy in a different way. No doubt, market economy strongly advocates for the freedom of choice of an individual which definitely upholds the value of liberal democracy. But looking at the most important aspect of market, that is the predominance of capital, has the centralizing tendency so that market economy could sustain and secure itself. In is evident from the fact that any form of capital investment introduces a particular kind of bureaucratic and technocratic up gradation and such process need not be concerned with any form of democratic values. In other words, in the era of market economy the dominating role of capital requires a totally different kind of structure which prefers centralization as against the process of mass participation in decision-making process. So, the emerging tension is between the economic centralization with the political decentralization which prevails at this moment in the country.

But in respect of women and other marginalized groups, empowerment is an active, multi-dimensional process which enables them to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. It implies decentralization of power and authority in the deprived, oppressed and powerless people who have not been able to participate in decision-making and implementation of policies and programmes of both government organizations as well as in societal matters.[11] If the emerging structure of market economy does not provide enough scope for the participation of these disadvantaged groups, including women, the question of empowerment will be definitely affected.

It is true that there is a constitutional guarantee for women's one-third reservation in decentralized local bodies but that does could not ensure the substantive participation for them. In fact, in a traditional society like India, there are many constraints specifically against women which restrict them to play an effective role in decision-making process despite their legitimate participation in such institutions. In patriarchal set-up, it is the general view that women should maintain the subordinate position vis-Ã -vis men and they should confine to the familial duties and responsibilities rather joining public life. There are several findings suggest that women representatives remain absent in Panchayet meetings because of their preoccupations for the family.

With the emergence of the structure of market economy, having a tendency towards centralization another constrain is added along with other limitations. How such market driven economic structure affect the institutional arrangements of local governance is need to be analyzed. The growing numbers of MOU's (memorandum of understanding) singed between the various state governments and multinational corporations, indicate the erosion of state authority in respect of the growing influence of liberal-market economy. Such erosion of state authority also suggests that state retreats from welfare policy under which participatory democracy at the grassroots level was flourished at once. The negative impact of market economy over the participatory politics in rural areas can be well judged by looking at the various movements against land acquisition policy in different parts of the country. Apparently, these movements organized as a protest addressing the issue of livelihood for the marginalized people. But beyond the question of livelihood, such movements actually highlight that the policy of land acquisition violates the basic understanding of participatory democracy and the consent of the people. And, in most of the cases, the land acquisition process is part of the understanding between the state and the multinational corporations, the policy itself ultimately protects the interest of the private sector in place of general welfare of the people.

But for the marginal and disadvantaged sections, participation is the only way of empowerment which could provide ample scope for bringing about changes in the status of the people and boosting upward mobility of women in both rural as well as in urban areas. In short, peopleÂ s participation is essential to the success of democracy. Without public political participation it is difficult for the people to find opportunities to change and influence public decisions and to bring them in their favour.[12] In respect of women, the question of empowerment could positively influence their own lives but also of men and of course those of children. The subordination of women in Indian society tends to impair their effectiveness in reducing deprivation in general, and it is not only the well-being of female children or adult women which is improved by the enhanced agency of women. We all know that women's decisions and actions can have a profound impact on the policies the government decides to pursue and the lives that people can lead. In much of India, women tend to be rather homebound and politically unassertive, but given the critical importance of political action and pressure, a real difference can be made by women taking an active role in these activities. The effectiveness of public action and the expansion of social

opportunities depend a great deal on the effective freedom of women to express their reasoned agency.[13]

Clearly, when the new economic structure and its decision-making process grossly violates the principles of grass root democracy and the claim of agency, definitely, there is a scope for serious reservations about the prospect of a real democratic participation in decentralized rural governance. In conclusion, we have to remember that democracy at large, signifies certain core values which determine our whole existence in life. When we consider the issue of participation there is a need to relate it with the basic democratic ideal of equality. As participation is intimately connected with demands of equality, democratic participation requires the sharing and symmetry of basic political rights, to vote, to propagate and to criticize. Actual participation in political movements and public action can make a major difference to the agenda of governments and influence its priorities. Issues of inequality and participation are particularly crucial in India, where social divisions are pervasive and have tended to take a heavy toll on both economic development and social opportunities.[14] But when the attempt towards equality has been replaced by the notion of individual freedom of market economy that ultimately reduce the claim of marginalized sections to be equal in democracy. It is not simply a matter of erosion of democratic values at the local decentralized bodies rather it may affect the democratic ideal to a greater extent. For that we have to see the impact of such process in the exercise of democracy and democratic values in our political life.

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Rabindranath Tagore: the poet communicator and opinion leader in Colonial Bengal

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I

In the academic field of Bengali literature scholars made serious studies on Rabindranath Tagore to analyse literary techniques used by him in his poetry, drama, short stories and novels, etc. Most of them have shown us how they stimulate our emotional and psychological thought process and how does the literary brilliance created by him attempted to do so. It is true that Tagore had nurtured the thought process of the people in Bengal. Not only he was a true worshiper of spiritual ecstasy but also his poems and songs shaped the behavioural outlook of the readers. Keeping the existing works in hindsight the present article attempts to look into his literary brilliance from different stand points. Here, an attempt has been made to conceptualize his works from different levels of human communication. He was a great communicator who deployed all his realisations and lessons from life to stimulate his readers towards a domain from simple interpretation of literature to in-depth understanding of its meaning. A nationalist, teacher, friend and a philosopher inside him performed the role of an outstanding motivational source. Whenever it was necessary, he expressed his opinion as an opini-builder and he was successful to shape human thinking at this effort. He was aware of the impact of his works on the emerging intelligentsia of the 19th century Bengal; he was also aware of the might of a pen and its capacity to kindle the faculty of human reasoning relating to any social cause or issue.

II

In communication study, the process of communication has been conceived as a system of sending message by a sender towards a receiver through an identifiable channel or medium. The message has to carry an intended meaning devoid of which communication is not effective. As per Denis McQuail, 'communication is a process which increases commonality ' but also requires elements of commonality to occur at all'1. What is said by Harrold Lasswell, is a formula adopted in 1948 which helps to identify 'œWho says What to Whom through Which Channel with What Effect-2. The effect is the key point here. In this backdrop if we take Tagore's way of communication, we would find that he spontaneously developed in his writings by which he sought to stir up the minds of the readers. The textual elements of his messages were embedded in his poems, songs, novels and short stories. He intended to ignite the large section of audience against the evil social institutions, held by the dominant section. In this perspective one needs to keep in mind that the study of communication unfolds four levels of message transmission pattern. They are - intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass communication3. In the light of these four levels we have to probe how Tagore appeared to be a perfect example of great a communicator.

III

In his poems and songs the worship of spirituality exists. Writings which uplift the soul, songs which arouse the mind, drive away the darkness of traditional concepts of life and opens the window of new aspirations.

No individual can show someone else a proper way to the higher level of thinking unless he himself realises by harnessing spiritual salvation. The process of intrapersonal communication works within the mind of an individual to acquire wisdom about his living world and the surrounding environment. Intrapersonal communication is the communication within oneself, communication between the body and soul --- a self-learning cognitive process. We may know that the poet at his boyhood was almost alone due to the absence of emotional companion (although his emotional attachment with Kadombori Devi at his boyhood for few years). From dawn to dusk he was surrounded by the servants of the Tagore family. The other family members were quite older than him and due to age gap an unbridgeable distance was there4. At that stage he engaged himself in intrapersonal communication to explore the mysteries of nature and the universe. Gradually he felt that a man is the best teacher of himself. Therefore the loneliness in his boyhood fertilised his mind for poetry which was kept within him as priceless wealth. His mind always sought the answers of many queries regarding the mysteries of the universe. From these feelings he wrote 'œJol pore, pata nore- (water drops, leaves dance). The first line of this poetry is the expression of nature's beauty from the stand point of his initial perception. Exploration of the nature continued further and his bewildered mind gathered many questions and their answers too through cognition. He wrote-

Akash bhora, surjo tara, bishwo bhora pran,
Tahar majhkhane, ami peyechi mor sthan.
Bishmoye tai jage, jage amar gaan...
(The sky is full of Sun and stars; the universe is full of life,
amongst them I exist.
My song rises out of astonishment).

Simultaneously, seasonal beauty and the charm of different climate inspired him to think over their utmost delicacy. His songs on rain namely 'Ashar'(Rain) and poems on spring, e.g. ˜Bashanto' (Spring) are the products of his exploration through intrapersonal communication.

Nil naboghane, ashar gagone til thain ar nahi re.
Ore, aj tora jashne gharer bahire.. 'Ashar.
(The blue sky has become cloudy. Oh please, don't go outside).
Ajut batsor age, hey basonto, prathom falgune,
matto kutuhali.
Prathom jedin khuli nandaner dakshin duar,

morte ele choli. ' Basanto.
(Million years ago, oh spring, drunken and excited,

Thou came from the southern door of paradise, thou came to earth.)

In his poem Prosno (Question) he expresses his curiosity to explore the truth. In Srishti Sthiti Prolay (Creation-stabilization-destruction), the poet delineates the existence of supreme power, God out of his own perception5.

Throughout his life he learnt many ups and downs of life, the nature of human relationship, friendship, love, compassion, happiness and sorrow. . The contents of many of his books e.g. Kari o Komal, Manashi, Sonar Tori, Chitra, Choitali, Kanika, Kalpana, Kotha o Kahini, Khanika, Noibedya, etc. and novels e.g. Noukadubi, Chokher Bali and Shesher Kobita leave such evidences. In Chokher Bali Tagore depicted suffering of a widow that touches our heart.

In his younger days he had to look after the family estate. There he came in touch with the poor, humble and obscure people. He understood their day to day sufferings and his collection of short stories Golpoguccho by and large came out of it6.

The poet himself said, 'œA higher law of consistency works within me... that inspires me to move forward-7.

IV

Interpersonal communication is the communication between two individuals. The feedback from the receiver is instant, and the most interesting feature of this pattern of communication is that most often the sender acts as receiver and the receiver acts as sender. Wilbur Schramm and Charles E. Osgood in their circular model of communication had clearly stated how communication functions in cyclic form. It is a face to face and the most effective level of communication8.

Tagore throughout his life met different people. He got company of many scholars and noble human beings. He learned many things from them and they also learned many important aspects of life since Tagore and his associates shared and exchanged many ideas. As an active recipient he could assimilate those within himself.

We observe that he engaged himself for communication with some stalwarts like Michael Madhusudan Dutta and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay who had great influence upon him in his childhood. The satirical dramas of Michael and the literary techniques of Bankim Chandra taught him various literary aesthetics. His closeness with Nabin Chandra Sen9 and friendship with D. L. Roy during his early days also produced noteworthy writings from his pen. He was an admirer of science and the book Visva Parichay10 tells that the poet had scientific temperaments. Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose dedicated his book on scientific essays Abyakto to Tagore. Bose said,

'œToday I am sending the ray of a mere firefly near to the ray of Sun.-11 In 1896 Bose invented Microwave and received felicitation from The Royal Institute, Britain. Tagore congratulated him for that success and since then their friendship went strong. Likewise when Tagore received Noble prize in the 1913 for his book Gitanjali (Songs Offering), Bose also congratulated him for his achievement and his worldwide fame. So all that points to his intent to proceed for interpersonal communication across generations and level of personal attachments

Although there are controversies regarding the relation between Tagore and Swami Vivekananda but the poet was a lot inspired by Swamiji's Irish disciple Sister Nivedita and her contribution for Indian nationalist movement. Her speeches influenced the youth of Bengal, and that inspired the Poet too. Keeping in mind Nivedita's personality Tagore created the character Gora (although it was a male character, in the novel)12.

His attachment with people outside the world of literature who were connected to the nationalist movement is remarkable. He had many conversations with Mahatma Gandhi on the problems of the country under the British rule. His title Gurudev was conferred upon by Gandhi13. Aurobindo Ghosh, an influential leader of Bengal's rebellion14 against the British power was also influenced by Tagore for his rationalism. Ghosh met him and they had conversations through exchange of letters. In prison Ghosh used to read many of Tagore's books very attentively. Later, at Aurobindo Asram in Pondichery Tagore met and praised him for his change of mind from extremism to non-violence.

V

We also find that Tagore was an excellent group communicator since a group communicator strives to initiate a new thought process and leads this way towards its effectiveness. In Viswa Bharati University, established in 1918, Tagore introduced a unique mode of education different from the conventional system. The concept of 'Mass Line Communication' as noted by the illustrious leader of socialist China Mao Tse-Dong also found place in his mode of group communication. He used to take his classes under a tree instead of a classroom. The role of a group leader is very important in group communication. S/He functions as a role model and strives to imbibe new ideas and conducts towards effective changes. His interaction with his pupils was very informal in nature. He tried to bring back the educational system of the Vedic era. Maintaining discipline was mandatory but it did not demand too much rigidity from the students. As he himself was very close to nature which nurtured and nourished his personality, he strove to bring his students close to the experience he acquired through intrapersonal learning system. As a group leader (like as a teacher) he shared his ideas with pupils which proved very effective. The practice is continuing at Visva Bharati University by the teachers till date15.

One can refer to two well known from his pupils. One of them is Suchitra Mitra, the celebrated Rabindrasangit (Tagore songs) singer and the other is Indira Gandhi, who became the first woman prime minister of India. Apart from these two, many of his students were heavily influenced by

Tagore's ideas and vision to build up an exceptional educational system and receptive society consisting of insightful individuals. Here lies the success of a true role model in the form of a group communicator. He inculcated superior moral values in the minds of his followers who would determine India's future and lead her from gloomy past to bright prospects.

VI

. The term Mass Communication refers to the fourth level of human communication. In short, it is a process of sending messages to a large number of audiences through a specific mass medium which could be accessed by all. It is noteworthy that Tagore was bestowed with an immense power to motivate his readers minds, there way of thinking so that they could break the fortification of puritanical social syndromes. Bearing the characteristics of 'Elite' he had becomes an ideological inspiration and opinion leader. In the words of Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz an Opinion Leader can influence a large number of people in the society. They either reinforce or counter an agenda set by any socio-cultural-political institutions. The multitude layers positioned in different spheres of emotional, psychological and cultural heritage of human mind had been often countered by Tagore. Most often he reinforced them too. Thus, Tagore fulfilled the requirements of opinion building and ideological inspiration.

Since his childhood, Tagore passed through a long journey of experiences. He came close to his family servants. He met common people while running his family estate. . He roamed to remote villages, met Bauls, a folk singers group of the remote villages Bengal. He met many poor people and witnessed the instability in their lives and lack of peace.

As a socialist, Tagore protested against caste system, dowry system and many other social malpractices as well. He protested against superstitions. His collection of short stories Galpoguccho, filled with related illustrations, justifies this assertion. He wanted to awaken masses through writings against social maladies.

In this respect we can refer to few things from his short stories. In Denapaona (Give and Take) Tagore depicted how terrible the dowry system was. In this story Tagore narrated that a newly married girl was tortured by her in-laws when her husband was absent. They pressurises her for dowry and the girl ultimately dies. It is noticeable that popular view against the dowry system gradually developed since the readers were sensitized by the consequences of the dowry system, leading to the death of a girl.

Likewise the story Yoggeswar er Yogyo depicts how a poor father suffers from the burden of his daughter's marriage while the family of the groom has lots of demands.

The story Shasti (Punishment) reflects the male dominated society and the suppression of womanhood. Bhikharini (A Beggar Woman) shows a poverty-stricken old woman's wretched

condition. Further, the drama Bisarjon (Sacrifice) compels the readers to shade tears as it depicts the cruel act of slaying innocent animals by the name of sacrifice to the deity.

During the period of Bengal's national movement Tagore took up an important role. Many of his songs and poems vigorously attempted to awaken the sleeping souls of Indians. A good example is Our Tryst with Destiny16:-

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
by narrow domestic walls;
Where the words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-widening
thought and action--
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake.

In the poem Bharattirtha (The holy India), Tagore deliberately protested against the caste system and social stratification. He sang the song of unity and secularism through the following lines:-

Eso hey arjo, eso anarjo, hindu musalman-
Eso eso aaj tumi ingraaj, eso eso christan.
Eso brahmon, suchi kori mon dharo haat sobakar.
Eso hey potit, hok aponit sob apomanbhar.
(Come o Aryan, come Non-Aryan, Hindu and Islam.
Come English, come o Christian.
Come o Brahmin; hold each other's hand with pure heart.
Come o fallen, reduce the burden of disgrace.)

. Tagore performed his duty towards the nation. He sang the song of united India, namely Bharata Bhagya Vidata (India ' the fortune maker) which became our national anthem after independence:-

Jana Gana Mana Adhinayaka Jaya hey
Bahrata Bagya Vidata.
Punjab Sindhu Gujrat Maratha Drabira Utkala Banga
Bindha Himachala Yamuna Ganga Ucchala Jaladhitaranga
Taba suva naame jage, taba suva ashisa mange
Gahe taba jayagatha.
(Hail! the leader of people

Hail India! The fortune maker.
Punjab, Indus, Gujrat, Maharashtra, South, Odissa and Bengal.
Bindha, Himachal, Yamuna, Ganges and the swelling waves of sea.

Thy holy name awakens, thy holy bless redeems.

Sings thy ballad of victory.) In the year 1

905, when Bengal was at stake due to British Government's evil policy to part Bengal into two states, Tagore started his initiatives and took an important part to protest against it. For this he wrote the following verse:-

Banglar mati Banglar jol
Banglar bayu Banglar fol.
Punno houk, punno houk
Punno houk, hey. Bhagoban.

(O God! Let the soil, water, wind and fruit of Bengal become holy.)

He didn't stop there. He came to the open yard, walked miles with the common people and instructed them to tie each other's hand with Rakhi (A wrist band which signifies unity). It was his way to protest against the British's ill administrative policy17.

In the year 1919 British administration killed many innocent people in the massacre of Jwalianwallabagh (A place within Punjab). Tagore raised his voice against the massacre. He gave up the title 'œKnighthood- conferred upon by the British Government. As an opinion leader he performed his duty towards the nation and the people of his country. He wrote:-

Ei monihaar amay nahi saje.

(This honour doesn't suit me)18

He was the composed the music of the song Vandemataram written by Bamkim Chandra Chattopadyay. The song became the slogan for the freedom fighters. He was a believer of pure non-violence and protest by non-cooperation which was the strategy invented by Mahatma Gandhi.

VII

We need to understand the personality of Tagore through his writings, songs, religious believes, and socio-cultural ideology. In social studies the word 'œpersonality- is significant. With the evolution of personality a person can relate all his acquired knowledge with the world and

surrounding social milieu. The surrounding environment functions as external stimuli. This leads to intrapersonal experiences that enrich the personality hidden within a man. The self-activation process along with personal realisation also triggers other forms of communications, namely interpersonal, group and mass communication. We note that Rabindranath Tagore Wanted to explore a new person within himself every day. This led him to grow his own dynamism within himself through a self-learning cognitive process. As a writer, he was neither only a Guru (teacher), nor a philosopher for his readers; but a pathfinder of the nation. As an opinion builder and sender of message to the large audience of Bengal during the Bengal's renaissance he tried to arouse people against social paralysis, the darkness of mind, superstitions and anti modern attitude of the influential sections of the society. So, Tagore was more than a writer since he was a universal opinion builder. He could be considered more as a catalyst who engineered the thought process of the people of Bengal. Thus, his contribution in every level of human communication is intense, especially in mass communication..

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Consequences of Violence against Women on Their Health and Well-being: An Overview

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*Violence against women, according to the **UNICEF**, continues to be a global epidemic that kills, torments, and injures '" physically, psychologically, sexually, and economically which in turn devastates human existence, fractures communities, and stalls development; it is one of the most persistent violation of human rights that denies women security, dignity, equality, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. This violence, a clear example of gender-based discrimination, is a major source of women's decreased health and wellbeing. In its numerous forms, violence against women has been recognized as a highly prevalent social and public health problem with serious consequences for the health of women and their children. The present paper provides an overview of the most common forms of violence against women and its prevalence. Furthermore, the paper also examines and provides a detailed overview of research findings about the direct and indirect consequences of violence on health and wellbeing of women that may include physical and chronic health problems, mental health problems, and sexual health problems. Taking into consideration the reasons behind the violence and its consequences the paper emphasizes the necessity for initiatives to be taken with coordinated efforts across different sectors to support and protect victims, to ensure that women are able to assert and exercise their rights and that society has instruments at its disposal to punish aggressors.*

Keywords: Health, Violence, Wellbeing, Women

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a serious problem worldwide, prevalent in all regions and classes. It is recognised by the United Nations as a violation of their human rights, especially concerning their entitlements to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity in political, economic, social, cultural and civil life.1

Violence against women has evolved in part from gender inequality. It is deeply entrenched in social, cultural and economic structures and results in unequal power relations between men and women. Violence is thus both a manifestation of gender inequality and a means to the maintenance of such power imbalance.2 It is sustained by a culture of silence and denial of the seriousness of the health consequences of abuse. Even where a particular act of violence might be deplored, powerful social institutions-the state, families, normative systems that regulate gender relations collude in maintaining the status quo.3 Historical studies in some countries show that physical violence or brutality committed by men against their wives was an accepted fact in the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries and that violence was accepted as a '˜corrective measure' in cases where women did not comply with social mandates. Alas, even today we routinely come across such news items that show various forms of violence against women when society feels that women did not comply with the social mandates.

Since, in the past, violence against women was generally limited to private life so there was negligible awareness on the issue. The extent of this social problem has now extended from family to neighbourhood to work and educational institutions. India has recognized the problem of violence against women and therefore has created provisions, committees, national policies, and other organizations for the empowerment of women. However, the ground reality for women continues to be extremely harsh despite the constitutional, legislative and administrative framework in place. The failure to implement protective provisions and continuing gender, caste and class biases within society ensures that constitutional, legal safeguards are rendered meaningless to many.4

An article that appeared in India Today on 16 June 2011 reported India to be the fourth most dangerous place for women in the world. This global poll was conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation with the help of 213 gender experts who ranked countries on their overall perception of danger, as well as by six key categories of risks - health, sexual violence, nonsexual violence, harmful practices rooted in culture, tradition or religion, lack of access to economic resources and human trafficking. According to the poll, India ranked fourth primarily due to female foeticide, infanticide and human trafficking. Although the ranking was based on specific types of violence, there are many other serious threats and violent crimes committed against women in India. This violence may start even before women are born with sex-selective abortion and battering during pregnancy, continues throughout their lives in countless forms and occurs in both the private and public spheres of society involving fathers, brothers, partners, colleagues, superiors or strangers. It can take many forms that may result into physical, sexual, and psychological harm as recognized by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993).5 These are further elaborated as follows:

a)..... Physical violence and aggression such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating, biting, burning, acid attacks, dowry related abuse, honour and khap killings and murders.
b)..... Sexual violence such as rape by partner or stranger and other forms of sexual coercion, unwanted sexual advances or harassment, refusal to use condoms, forced prostitution and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, dating and courtship abuse e.g. date rape, acid attack and other practices harmful to women.
c)..... Psychological/emotional violence such as intimidation, belittling and humiliation, a range of controlling behaviours such as isolating women from their family and friends, monitoring their movements, or restricting their access to information, assistance and other resources, threat of physical or sexual violence, partner homicide, differential access to food and medical care for girl infants.

Panday et alreported that for Indian women between the ages of 15 to 49 who are married or have ever been married, the likelihood of suffering from disease increases by 35 per cent if they experience physical or emotional violence and by 42 per cent if they experience sexual violence.6 The latest data from National Crime Report Bureau (NCRB, 2013) states that a total of 2,44,270 incidents of crime against women (both under Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Special & Local Laws(SLL)) were reported in the country during the year 2012 recording an increase of 6.4 per cent from the previous year with the rate of crime committed against women being 41.7.7 The report also observed that '˜cruelty' inflicted on Indian women by her husband or his relatives comprise 43.6 per cent of all crimes against women while an astonishing 98.2 per cent of the offenders in rape incidences of the country in 2012 were known to the victim. These numbers does not take into consideration incidences of marital rape, as in India it is not recognized as an offence.Thus, it may be suggested that women are generally unsafe at the place that is considered to be the most secure place in the world i.e. her marital home and also ironically she is more likely to be victimized by those who are supposed to protect her well being and dignity. Based on a 13 year analysis of crime data in India, The Times of India dated 28 July 2014 reported that a little more than 57 rapes happen every day. This averages over 2 rapes every hour every day. The data also reports a women being molested every 26 minutes. This may also mean that children '" boys and girls '" in India grow up in a situation where they see violence against women as the norm which is very dangerous for the future of the society.

(Source: NCRB)

Figure 1:. Per cent Distribution of Crime against Women during the Year 2012

If we look at the statistics for the increase in violence and compare the conviction rates for offenders of violent crimes against women, one would have to agree that the policies for the protection of women seem rhetorical rather than meaningful, enforceable, legal safeguards. The problem of violence against women continues to plague our society causing appalling damage to the lives of thousands of women and children. While various statistics are now available it is important to remember that any of them are bound to be underestimates of the scale of the problem due to the hidden nature of this crime and women's reluctance to report it. Women experiencing violence are often emotionally involved with, and economically dependent on, those who victimise them, making it difficult to disclose their experiences, let alone to seek support. Persisting societal and/or cultural '˜silence' on the problem '" and fears of not being believed, ostracized or re-victimised by people around them '" can further intensify women's reluctance to take help-seeking steps.8

2.0.. HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONSEQUENCES

Violence against women and girls has important health and wellbeing consequences. It has recently drawn attention as a leading cause of preventable morbidity and mortality. In the past two decades research has begun to document the grave repercussions of violence on the health of

abused women, and that of their children. Many studies conducted worldwide now show that abused women and their dependents have significantly worse physical and mental health than non-abused women.9 Because of the health burden of violence, these findings have expanded the focus beyond a human rights' perspective to include a public health approach. Both the Cairo Programme of Action in 1994 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 devoted an entire section to the issue of violence against women. In May 1996, the World Health Assembly adopted the United Nations' definition, and a resolution declaring violence a public health priority and urging the adoption of a '~gender perspective' in its analysis.

The first major report to highlight the harmful link between violence and health was published by the World Bank in 1994.10 The authors at a global level considered the health burden from violence against women aged 15 to 44 to be comparable to that posed by other risk factors and diseases high on the world agenda, such as HIV, tuberculosis, sepsis during childbirth, cancer and cardiovascular disease. In 1999 the United Nations Population Fund declared violence against girls and women specifically a '~public health priority'. Since then, violence against women has been recognised as a key determinant of health and efforts have intensified by international human rights and health organisations to raise awareness about the traumatic health consequences of violence and provide guidance in how to address them.11

Any type of violence negatively affects the health and wellbeing of the women who experience it. According to a report of UK Centre for research on violence against women (2011), a single incident of physical or sexual violence can have both immediate and long-term physical as well as psychological health consequences. It also explains that when a woman experiences chronic physical, sexual, or psychological abuse that violence becomes increasingly likely to have long-lasting impact on her health even after the abuse or relationship has ended.12 The long-term health consequences of abuse are well documented and vary by the form and severity of abuse, and by exposure to multiple types of abuse (physical, sexual, psychological) that co-occur and recur across the lifespan. In extreme cases this violence can lead to severe disability or even death, but even in less severe cases violence impacts on the everyday lives of women.

2.1.. Physical Health Consequences:

Injuries arising from physical abuse are the most obvious health impact of violence. The injuries sustained may be up to an extent of being extremely serious and may require medical treatment ranging from minor bruises, welts, burns, cuts, wounds, swelling, contusions, and fractures to spleen or liver trauma and chronic disabilities. Often the women also have tufts of hair pulled out, split ear drums, black eyes, broken noses and fractures of the jaw.13 Plichta found that facial injuries were sustained by 81 per cent and abuse injuries by 94 per cent of women. Another direct health impact of violence with severe long-term consequences is traumatic brain injury.14 Banks reviewed the link between traumatic brain injury (e.g. concussions) and partner violence and reported that abuse victims can often suffer repeated '~mild' brain injury that can have a lifelong impact.15 Potential consequences of traumatic brain injury include sleep disturbances, headaches,

dizziness, depression, irritability, anxiety, changes in social or sexual behaviour, speech problems, cognitive impairment, and memory issues.16 The exact mechanism of such effects has not been established but could include recurrent injury or stress, alterations in neurophysiology, or both. For instance, abused women frequently (10'"44 per cent) report choking, incomplete strangulation, and blows to the head resulting in loss of consciousness which can lead to serious medical problems including neurological sequel.17

The head, neck, face, thorax, breasts, and abdomen are the most common locations of injuries followed by musculoskeletal injuries and genital injuries.18 Battered women also often show defensive injuries like fractures, dislocations, and contusions of the wrist and lower arms resulting from attempts to protect herself.19 These physical injuries may also have secondary consequences on other chronic health conditions in women like increased rates of gastrointestinal disorders, including stomach ulcers, spastic colon, irritable bowel syndrome, gastric reflux, indigestion, and diarrhoea. Similarly, arthritis, cardiac symptoms such as hypertension and chest pain have also been associated with delayed effects of physical violence.20 The consequent functional damage to the organs can last far longer than the violent relationship.

In addition to specific associations between violence and longer-term illnesses, there is evidence that abused women remain less healthy over time.21 It has been suggested that abused women's increased vulnerability to illness may partly be due to lowered immunity because of stress resulting from the abuse.

Ackerson and Subramanian's analysis of data from the National Family Health Survey '"3 found that women who experienced violence were found to be 27 per cent more likely to be severely anaemic.22 Women who experience violence are also more at risk of being underweight and having poor nutrition.

2.2.. Gynaecological and Reproductive Health Consequences:

According to Campbell, 'œgynaecological problems are the most consistent, long lasting and largest health difference between battered and non-battered women.' 23 Plichta and Abraham found that violence tripled the odds of receiving a diagnosis of a gynaecological problem. 24 This may include immune system problems and increased risk of bacterial infection, external or internal vaginal or anal injuries, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), fibroids, sexual dysfunction, decreased sexual desire, genital irritation, pain on intercourse, chronic pelvic pain, vaginal bleeding or infection and urinary tract infections.25 A study of violence against women in the state of Goa by Patel et alfound that 'œwomen who had experienced physical and sexual violence were 70 per cent and 90 per cent more likely, respectively than those who had not experienced such violence, to be diagnosed with endogenous infections such as bacterial vaginosis.' 26 An association has been found between violence and HIV as well as with STIs. A study by Weiss et al27 showed that the experience of sexual violence within marriage resulted in a threefold increase in women's risk of acquiring STIs while Silverman et al28 reported that women who experienced

both physical and sexual violence were almost 4 times more likely than those who did not experience any violence to be HIV infected. This association has been linked to women in violent relationships being forced to engage in sexual intercourse and being unable to negotiate condom-use for fear of further abuse.29 Sabotage of birth control, disapproval of birth control, preventing use of contraception, 30 and refusal by men to use condoms, increases women's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, STIs and puts women at risk of unwanted pregnancy thereby leading to poor gynaecological and reproductive health.31

Women in abusive relationships have more unintended pregnancies.32 Of the estimated 80 million unintended pregnancies each year, at least half are terminated through induced abortion33 and nearly half of those take place in unsafe conditions.34 While unintended pregnancies carried to term have been associated with health risk to mothers and infants, illegal and unsafe abortions place women's health at even greater risk.

Violence before and during pregnancy has been found to have serious health consequences for both mother and their unborn foetus. The main health effect specific to abuse during pregnancy is the risk of death of the mother, foetus, or both from trauma.35 Other possible risks that pregnant women experiencing violence may face include miscarriage, stillbirth, pre-term labour and birth, foetal injury, foetal distress, ante partum haemorrhage, preeclampsia, or peri partum complications than young women who are not.36 Around the world, as many as one woman in four is physically or sexually abused during pregnancy, usually by a partner.37 In a three-year study of 1203 pregnant women in hospitals in Houston and Boston, United States, abuse during pregnancy was a significant risk factor for low birth weight, low maternal weight gain, infections and anaemia.38 IIPS And Population Council's Study (2009) of young women in Tamil Nadu found that 33 per cent of women who experienced domestic violence reported at least one miscarriage, abortion or stillbirth compared to 22 per cent of women who had not experienced violence. Research by Ahmed et alin Uttar Pradesh found similar results: almost one in five women in the study experienced violence while they were pregnant and perinatal and neonatal mortality rates were found to be nearly twice as high amongst women who experienced violence throughout their pregnancy; overall the risk of infant mortality increased by 36 per cent for women who experienced domestic violence while pregnant.39 According to a WHO (1997) report women with STIs have a higher risk of complications during pregnancy, including sepsis, spontaneous abortion and premature birth. The report further adds that some STIs increase a woman's vulnerability to the HIV virus as well.40

2.3.. Mental and Emotional Health Consequences:

There is a positive association between mental health problems and violence.41 Women who are subjected to abuse state, that the psychological outcome has a more prolonged effect than physical outcome. Scars on the body heal more easily while scars on the soul take much longer to fade. International research finds that female victims of abuse have a significantly higher rate of

common health problems, even after abuse ends, compared to women who have never been abused.42

Researchers show that women who are subjected to violence experience multi-trauma. They often apply for medical care based on symptoms such as sleeping problems, anxiety, paranoia, a negative self-image, low self-confidence and depression quite a long time after the violence has ended without realising the connection between her experience of violence and her mental health problems.43 In one study in LeÃ³n, Nicaragua, after controlling for other factors, researchers found that abused women were six times more likely to report experience mental distress than non-abused women.44Likewise in the United States, women battered by their partners have been found to be between four and five times more likely to require psychiatric treatment than non-abused women.45

The acute psychological effects may include shock, confusion, extreme fear and incoherent speech. Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PSTD) are the most prevalent mental-health outcome of violence against women.46 Other effects of violence and abuse may include women consuming more prescription drugs, especially tranquillizers and anti-depressives. They may engage in health damaging behaviours such as unsafe sex, alcohol and drug misuse, smoking and eating disorders47 and develop some short-term physical and emotional problems, such as suicidal tendencies, preoccupation with the violence, emotional withdrawal, irritability, feelings of hopelessness or an inability to adequately respond to the needs of their children.48 In addition, self neglect and increased risk taking have also been implicated.

Sustained and acute elevated stress levels have also been linked to secondary consequences of health conditions in women like cardiovascular disease, hypertension, gastrointestinal disorders, chronic pain, and the development of insulin dependent diabetes.49 Stress during and around the time of pregnancy has been linked with low birth-weight infants, premature labour and premature birth.50

2.4.. Children's Health And Wellbeing Consequences:

The impact of violence is not limited to women's physical and psychological health. This violence is insidious and affects both the health and development of all family members, particularly children. Women's experience of violence also has consequences for children's health and nutrition status as well as their educational achievement and development. Violence can reduce women's control over resources, and ability to participate in decision making within the family. This can reduce women's capacity to direct family resources towards childcare and can have negative health implications for family members. An analysis of data from the National Family Health Survey-3 suggests that the prevalence of violence within the home reduced the likelihood of children being fully immunized.51 Children of mothers who experience violence also have an increased risk of experiencing wasting or stunting, are more likely to be severely underweight for their age, or to have a low body mass index for their age. Maternal stress has also been shown to cause children

to be born prematurely or with low birth weight as a women's capacity to adequately care for her child can be significantly hindered by depression, anxiety and other mental health illnesses.52

Children whose mothers experience violence may be at increased risk of emotional and behavioural problems, such as anxiety, depression and violence towards their peers. In a study in Nicaragua, children of women who were abused by their partners were six times more likely than other children to die before the age of five.53 Abused women say that their children become nervous, irritable and fearful, do poorly in school, and are often physically abused by the father or by the women themselves. Today, children who witness violence are also considered to be 'œbattered children,' since they exhibit the same psychological symptoms as do those who are the direct victims of abuse.54 Children in violent families may themselves be victims of abuse. Frequently, children are injured while trying to defend their mothers. In one study of abused women in BogotÃ¡, Colombia, 49 per cent reported that their children had also been beaten.55

Another factor that needs to be considered is that children are emotionally dependent on their parents, and that they tend to imitate the roles and behaviour they observe. Therefore, as adults they may have problems establishing affective relations different from those they experienced in their childhood. The Leon, Nicaragua, study reported that children who had regularly witnessed their mothers being hit or humiliated, compared to other children, were at least five times more likely to experience serious emotional and behavioural difficulties.56 Boys who witness their father's violent treatment of their mother may probably be more violent to their spouse in later life. On the other hand, girls who have witnessed the same violence may be more likely to accept violence as a normal part of marriage than girls from non-violent homes. Thus, children in such households tend to grow up to be violent men and battered women, and may also have greater tolerance for social and political violence.

3.0.. CONCLUSION

Violence against women has increased health burdens, disability, medical care costs; social service costs, child protection services costs, consequently draining out public resources which in contrary circumstances could be allocated to other urgent social needs. Furthermore, there is loss of labour and low productivity as a significant share of working population faces violence. This has a detrimental impact on the economic security of families as well as on the wider community.

Unfortunately it is not a small problem that only occurs in some pockets of society, but rather is a global public health problem. The seriousness of the different forms of gender-based violence, given the magnitude of this violence and its consequences for individuals and society, makes it imperative that urgent initiatives be taken to support and protect victims, and to ensure that women are able to assert and exercise their rights as human beings and that society has instruments at its disposal to punish aggressors. It is unfortunate to notice that often the investigation done by the state machinery, is so casual, negligent and defective, that allows the criminals of such violence to get away with their offence easily. The police generally try to patch up the whole case and are

reluctant to register an F.I.R. In certain instances, police seem to be reluctant to act against any influential person.57 Other interventions for prevention should also include promotion of self-sufficiency for women by reducing gender gaps in relation to employment and education, reducing levels of childhood exposure to violence; reforming discriminatory family law; strengthening women's economic rights and addressing harmful use of alcohol and drugs.

Breaking the cycle of abuse will require coordinated efforts across several sectors, including education, mass media, research, international networking, the legislative system, the judiciary, and the health sector. Community wide prevention programmes should be linked (e.g. health care workers, law enforcement agencies, and family violence programs). The power of the media (TV, radio, theatre plays, popular communication tools, etc.) and networking sites can be harnessed to change norms and values around gender roles and violence. More qualitative and quantitative research on violence against women and on the consequences of living in a violent situation on children and other family members is needed. Research studies on prevention, and interventions in injury, maternal child health, mental health, and HIV and AIDS must recognise their association with violence against women. Women may approach health-care settings before they approach to criminal justice or social service agencies, and if abuse is identified they can receive interventions that increase their safety and improve their health. Thus, assessment of violence against women should be done in all health-care settings. It is important that all health-care providers understand the relationship between exposure to violence and women's ill health, and are able to respond appropriately.

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Perspective Section

Slogans on Vehicles: A Study of the Identity Expression of Auto Rickshaw Drivers in Delhi

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Abstract

Social networking sites have highlighted the need for identity projection and image building in the last decade. Taking a cue from these studies, the present research aimed at understanding how auto rickshaw drivers make use of slogans displayed at the back of their vehicles to project their identity to the world. The attempt was to capture social identity dynamics of people from a socio-economic class that did not have time for and access to social networking sites. An analysis of hundred unique slogans was done, supplemented by interactions with auto rickshaw drivers to understand the identity dimensions that emerged from them. What was seen was that most of them showed a sense of awareness of the potential of slogans to reach out to the world. The data also revealed strong influences of family, community and religion on identity. Further, most auto rickshaw drivers showed a desire to contribute to the world and responsibility towards bringing about social change.

Key words: Social Identity, Image Projection, Bumper Stickers

Research in the area of identity in the last decade has focussed on understanding how identity is projected on social networking sites, such as Orkut, Facebook, and the like. SNSs have played a significant role in providing a platform to people to develop their identity profiles and engage with the world. Research studies have shown that people actively create social profiles that are closer to the image that they wish to portray to the world.1-6 What is significant is that SNSs, blogging and microblogging sites provide an opportunity to all users to communicate their thoughts to the world on issues of their choice. While these sites are restricted to literate users who have access to the internet, the need for developing a social identity is not.

In Maslowian terms, the need for social contact is a universal basic need7. Maintaining social relations inherently involves donning a social persona and developing an identity that transcends personal boundaries. Erikson,s seminal work on identity development and the description of identity statuses by Marcia has since been supplemented by works on social, cultural and regional identity.8

Perhaps the most significant aspect of social identity is one,s identity at the workplace. If we calculate the amount of time that a person spends at the workplace on a routine day, it often far exceeds the time spent with family, discounting for the hours spent in sleeping. This is even more

applicable to commercial drivers, who tend to have long working hours and spend a considerable part of the day on the roads, in engaging with the social world. The present research is an exploratory study that aims at understanding the attempt of people to reach out to the world, in the absence of access to the internet. The vehicles that auto rickshaw drivers use, provide an opportunity to them to communicate to the world. Unlike drivers of trucks, tempos, mini vans that function as commercial goods carriers, auto rickshaw drivers were the owners of the vehicles they driver and were in a position to control what was written on their vehicles. Initial interactions with auto rickshaw drivers revealed that they associate a sense of ownership with the vehicles and use it as a forum to share their thoughts, opinions, and vision with the world that they interact with.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION AND DATA COLLECTION

The study was visualised in two phases. In Phase 1, data collection involved gathering slogans depicted on the backs of auto rickshaw vehicles that ply on the roads in Delhi. It was somewhat difficult to keep track of registration numbers of vehicles in moving traffic and thus it was not possible to eliminate noting down the same vehicle twice. Further, the purpose of the study was not to gather statistical data on the frequency of slogans messages but to capture the nature of slogans that drivers wished to communicate. Thus, it was decided to focus on unique slogans rather than note repetitions.

In the second phase of the study, brief informal interactions were conducted with a select group of drivers on an individual basis. The drivers were oriented to the topic of the research and asked to express the reasons and thoughts underlying the choice of the slogan/s that they had chosen to convey. Interviews were conducted at auto rickshaw stands and often got converted into focus group discussions about what and why auto rickshaw drivers chose to get written on their vehicles.

In the end, hundred unique messages were collected and twenty auto rickshaw drivers were interviewed. For the purpose of this study, analysis was restricted to verbal statements either printed or painted on the auto rickshaws. Other prominent displays in the form of religious symbols, artworks, and specific objects such as shoes, mystic charms to ward off the evil eye, etc were not analysed.

Through the process of coding, themes were identified on the basis of the slogans that were collected. The themes were analysed to identify different dimensions of identity. The analysis was supplemented through data gathered through interviews. Interviews were conducted in Hindi and have been translated into English for the purpose of this paper. To maintain confidentiality, the names of the interviewees have not been revealed.

ANALYSIS OF SLOGANS

Although frequency was not a dominant concern, the data collection process in itself brought to light two significant themes that were most frequently depicted. Repetition in the content and

nature of these themes surpassed all other themes collectively. No separate records were thus maintained for them.

The first among these were slogans related to road safety. Almost every vehicle encountered carried the slogans,Keep Distance, and,Horn OK Please,. On being asked the reasons for this, some of the auto drivers mentioned that these were gentle reminders to people to continue to follow traffic rules. They however also admitted that they were fully aware that these two statements had become so common place that no one really notices them anymore. Yet they continued to carry these reminders highlighting the importance of adherence to safe driving practices.

The second most recurrent theme was of writing personal names and/or family relations. It was common to see the first name of a person decoratively written on the auto rickshaws. Interviews revealed that sometimes these were the names of the vehicle drivers themselves, at most times these were the names of their child/children. A common form of writing the same was,Chunnu te Munnun di Gaddi, (â€˜Vehicle belonging to Chunnu and Munnu, - translated into English from Punjabi), with,Chunnu, and,Munnu, being replaced by other names. It was significant that although the phrase in itself was written in roman script, the language used was Punjabi. Even more significantly, the participants interviewed whose vehicles bore these slogans, did not themselves belong to the Punjabi community. One of the drivers mentioned that in Delhi, everyone becomes a Punjabi. This was an indication of what they perceived to be an expression of the dominant culture of Delhi. Other forms of first name portrayals were followed by the word,coach, or,mail, referring to the vehicle belonging to the person whose name was mentioned, followed by the indication that it is driven at a speed approximating that of a train. Interviews revealed that younger auto rickshaw drivers, in the age group of 20-30 years, chose to get their own names written on the vehicles and were also the faster drivers. Older, married men, with families, chose to write the names of their child/ children. This, for them, was a way of conveying their love for their child/children. They also said that their children were their lucky charms and so, they were hopeful that the names of their children would bring them more work and keep them safe.

Another common feature was an indication of a family relationship, such as,Chacha- Bhateeja, (Uncle- Nephew),,Dadi Ma aka Pyaar, (Love of Grandmother), etc. Auto rickshaw drivers revealed that these were often symbolic of the person who had gifted them the vehicle that they were driving. What is most significant here is that the use of personal and family names was a very common occurrence. This shows that auto rickshaw drivers give important to their family relationships more than other aspects. Family is thus a dominant aspect of their identity. Significantly, during the interviews auto drivers highlighted that it is for the family that they work hard and earn their livelihood. It was thus for them a high priority that the vehicles bear the names of their family members. Since auto drivers mentioned that they mostly chose the names of their children, it is also possible that the names mentioned are an indication of the family size of the drivers at the time these names were printed.

Auto rickshaw drivers also chose to declare their community identifications through these slogans. Slogans such as,Dagar Boy,,,Rangeela Rajasthani,, and,Thakur, are some examples that reflect communal pride. These slogans highlight a strong sense of community belongingness as well as the need to define one,s identity by referring to one,s community or region. During the interviews, drivers also mentioned that they often used their vehicles to travel with their families to their native villages in and around Delhi. Such community based slogans served as marks of pride and also economic progress to other members in their community and extended family.

Greater specificity to particular groups was evident in slogans that denoted religious affiliations. The names of Gods mentioned varied from the more prominent Hindu Gods including Rama, Krishna and Shiva to specific references to kuldevtas or community Gods such as,Ma Chandrabadni,,,Jhandewali,,,Baba Marghatwale,,,Baba Mohanram, etc. Christian, Muslim and Sikh references to God were also seen in other slogans-,His grace is sufficient for me,,,Believe in Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your householdâ€™,,Ek tu hi Nirankar jiâ€ , (You are the only formless being),,Saain de kaake, na fikar, na faanke, (Son of Saai , no worries, no troubles),,Ya Khwaja Garib Nabaaz,. Most religious symbols and slogans were only declarations of the faiths of the drivers. This represented a sense of belongingness and identity affiliation to particular religious groups or specific Gods and Goddesses. At other places, vehicle drivers felt that the mention of certain verses would bless them and protect them from accidents and troubles. For instance,,Babe ki full kripa, (The benevolence of Baba),,Jake Rakho Saiyan Maar Sake na Koi, (The one who is protected by God cannot be hurt by anyone). The slogans displayed a range of religious commitments across different religions and faith based sects. In interactions with drivers, they expressed fear of God, praise for God as well as thankfulness for being blessed with a good life. Some drivers also claimed to use this space for promoting religious harmony. One of the drivers for instance claimed that he had not written anything on his auto earlier. But when communal riots broke out recently in Trilokpuri in Delhi, he used his auto as a platform to express his feelings. He mostly plied his auto in the same area and felt a sense of responsibility in spreading the message of peaceful coexistence. A Muslim himself, he got,Sabda Maalik Ek, (There is only one God for all) printed on his auto in an attempt to spread religious unity.

This sense of responsibility was also evident in many other interviewees. Post the 16/12 Nirbhaya rape case in Delhi, many auto rickshaw drivers displayed the sticker bearing the slogan,Ye zimmedar autorickshaw, karti hai mahilaon ka samman aur suraksha, (This responsible autorickshaw, respects and protects women) and,Mahilaon ka apmaan na karta hun an karne deta hun, (I neither disrespect women nor let others do it). Around election time, auto drivers also displayed the slogan,Apni soch se matdaan karen, pralobhan mein na aayen, (Vote using your own thoughts, do not give in to temptations). Other drivers used creative means of promoting safety. Two common slogans were- 1),Dheere chaloge ghar baar milega, tez chaloge Haridwar milega, (If you drive slow, you will get your family, if you drive fast, you will get Haridwar), referring to the danger of speeding, resulting in accidents and/or death; 2),Kutta bhi bina wajah nahi bhonkta, (A dog also doesn,t bark unnecessarily), referring to people blowing horn without reason and causing noise pollution. Others also used their vehicles for spreading messages of vegetarianism and

abstaining from alcohol. These slogans were indicative of a sense of responsibility that the drivers felt towards the society. They also mentioned that in their own small way, this was their attempt at contributing towards building a better world. They displayed conscientious behaviour as well as a sense of citizenship.

Finally, many auto drivers said that they used their vehicles to spread cheer around them. Clever lines, jokes, and poetry, that were sometimes their own creations, and at other times merely repetitions of what they had read elsewhere, were often used to bring a smile to people,s faces. Some such examples were,Chalti hai gaadi chalane wala chahiye, milti hai sawari, naseeb wala chahiye, (A vehicle will run if there is a good driver, a customer will be available if someone has good luck),,Gaadi nahi rani hun, driver ki diwani hun, (I am a queen, not just a vehicle, and I am crazy about the driver). Some slogans were also reflections of the personalities of the drivers.,Toofan, (Storm),,Superfast mail,,,Playboy,,,Tiger,, â€˜Please panga mat lena, (Please do not mess with me) were some forms through which the drivers expressed their own nature to the world. These can be interpreted as defining marks of their identity that they felt they needed to communicate to the world. In social media terms, these would be seen as identity projections. They acknowledged that these were the ways in which they wanted the world to perceive them. The drivers acknowledged that they wrote most of these lines for their entertainment value. In a world where most people underwent stress on an everyday basis, they felt that such slogans would bring a smile to people,s faces, despite the pressure of traffic jams, and long driving hours.

CONCLUSION

Several significant trends emerged from the study. The data revealed that auto rickshaw drivers made a conscious choice in deciding if something should be written behind their vehicles and what should be written. Interviews showed that the auto rickshaw drivers were well aware of the almost permanent nature of the display as well as the wide outreach that the slogans had.

The findings of the study, as discussed earlier, corroborate with recent studies that talk of identity projection. It is in fact now evident that people across classes attempt identity projection through whichever forum they find accessible. Image building and projecting identity in the social world may have started long before the concept of social networking sites was born. The attempt by vehicle drivers to reach out to the world is in consonance with the notion of identity development by Erikson. Slogans presented attempts by drivers to answer significant identity questions on Who am I? Where am I? Where do I belong?

In terms of influences on identity, family, community and religion appeared as dominant concerns. These are in consonance with the ecological framework of Bronfenbrenner9 and the work of Jenkins10 on social identity. The slogans show a strong sense of belongingness. Further, in Maslowian terms, social and esteem needs were visible. These were most evident in slogans that mentioned family relations, community belongingness, religious affiliations, and demonstrating pride in their economic progress and social status.

The study revealed a quest for finding meaning in their life and spreading social messages through the slogans. Broadly, they felt the need for contributing to the world and participating in social change.

In dealing with a small sample, the present research does not endeavour to arrive at generalisations. Yet, the research has revealed some interesting trends that warrant attention and open dimensions for further research in the field of identity studies.

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Review Section

Formation of The Secular

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Asad, Talal. Formation of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity (Cultural Memory in the Present).Stanford University Press: 2003. 280p. (paperback).

Asad,'s Formation of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity was an interesting text that helped us in developing a broader understanding of secularism beyond orientalist interpretation,'s history and politics.. The text took applied an approach to the understanding of the concept of secularism.. This was true because the text applied the gaze of the anthropologist as opposed to the more political and theological treatments of Taylor.. The text examined the social and cultural aspects of what is secularism, for example when he covered topics like agency and pain, cruelty and torture, human rights, or Muslim religious minorities in Europe in the text.. This was the reason why the work was so thought provoking and necessary.. As an anthropologist only can he made us confront often what are perceived to be common truths such as Islam being a religion of violence after the horrific events of 9/11.. What made his work so dynamic and perhaps dangerous was how he questioned the faulty logic of American Foreign Policy under the Bush Administration and made us delve into deeper understandings of how we have misinterpreted religion and violence.

Moreover, Talal Asad is a Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at City University of New York and he brought forward a deep dialogue into the social dynamics of what would formulate the secular.. The text itself engaged in debates and questioned the logic of Taylor and his assumptions based on the west.. Where the Taylor text focused mostly on politics and history of the Church, the Asad text delved into the social aspects and searches for meaning in the day to day activities of society in an attempt to develop a more intimate understanding of what it meant to be secular.. The search for meaning from the day to day activities of people was something he as an anthropologist was strong in bringing out.. He sought not to build a social history or meta-history, rather he gave a short brief of secularism, and in this he surgically moved along cultural and ethnic veins in search of purpose and meaning to explain these changes and developments in different societies as he stepped out of the shadows of 19th Century Europe.

The dialogue on secularism was very unique in comparison to Taylor in the sense that we are spared a mega-history of all things related to the Church, the Separation of Church, and state and we delved right into what culture and human interactions have contributed to the understanding of secularism.. The text gave us a blue print into what an anthropologist brought to the conversation of secularism.. He posited that it is a Euro-American phenomenon that secularism could be viewed only through political prisms.. In particular with America that religion had seen a resurgence do to the dynamic developments of the United States not having a church or monarch.

Asad came right into the debate by taking on a giant in the field Charles Taylor.. He challenged, when he argued that Taylor took it for granted that the emergence of secularism was closely connected to the rise of the modern nation because:

A: There was an attempt to find the lowest common denominator among the doctrines of conflicting religious sects.

B: The attempt to define a political or ethic group that was independent of religious convictions altogether. This later model was applicable throughout the world, but only after we have adapted to it the idea of an overlapping consensus which proceeded on the assumption that there can be no universally agreed basis whether secular or religious.

Asad questioned whether or not Taylor,'s belief in a free society could substitute despotism for a certain degree of self-enforcement and its failure.. He was not totally convinced of this and even felt that there was less of a link between the electorate and its parliamentary representatives.. Even further he believed the electorate was the socioeconomic interests, identities, and aspirations of a culturally differentiated and economically polarized electorate.. There was no space where citizens could negotiate freely and equally with one another.. The modern nation as an imagined community was always mediated through constructed images.

Moreover, Asad brought forward out a solid argument on the ‚œSacred vs. Secular, to address some of the sentiments in America.. He did a wonderful job off addressing the perception that religion incites or condones violence.. He addressed the loss of civil liberties after 9/11 with the war on terror and the perception that Islam as a religion and Arabs as a people who were responsible for acts of violence.. He was dismayed with the lack of public debate in American society which was a liberal democratic society but, as an anthropologist focused our attention on the disturbing trend to accept these myths as being self-evident truths.

Asad cited examples of secular leaders using violence in his attempt to wrestle away the moral high grounds from certain political groups that used cite that Islam was a religion of violence.. For example, he elaborated that Ariel Sharon and his indiscriminate use of violence to kill women and children in the Palestine terrorities was not guided by the Torah or God.. It was the decision of a secular leader of a secular state that acted in the interest of a country.. Moreover, he gave the example of Hafez al Asad killing 40,000 of his own civilians that had no guidance via the Quran, and it was once again the act of a secular state.

His point was clear that he did not find it a sufficient argument that simply religion could be the end all explanation for all acts of terrorism or violence.. He stated, ‚œMy point here is simply to emphasize that the new way people engage with such complex and multifaceted texts, translating their sense and relevance, is a complicated business involving disciplines and traditions of reading, personal habit, and temperament, as well as the perceived demands of particular social situations., 1

Finally, Asad,'s work was both timely and provocative as we can benefit from his critical analysis and ability to dissect a social phenomenon away from rhetoric and politics. Asad focused our attention back to cultural and symbolic interactions in society making us question our own fears and misconceptions.. . The utility of his work his innate ability to confront of our biases and fears while understanding secularism from a cultural and social perspective versus the more theologically and political inclined work of Taylor.

Notes and Referances

1. Charles Taylor, A Secular Age.Harvard University Press, 2003.

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Ethnography in Today's World

Amitabh Vikram Dwivedi

Sanjek, Roger 2014, Ethnography in Today's World: Color Full Before Color Blind. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania [Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism].. xix + 291 pp, (hardbound), . (ISBN 978-0-8122-4545-5)

In Ethnography in Today's World: Color Full Before Color Blind, Sanjek aims to ‚œaffirm the value of ethnography, in today's world (p. ix). He deals with the issues of urbanizing globe, including race, political activism, and migration. This theoretical work includes essays supported with the anthropological fieldwork method. Sanjek examines the literature and application of ethnography from a historical point of view, from its beginning in early nineteenth century to its present prospect after postmodernism and feminism in twentieth century in an urban world.

This book appears in . the Haney Foundation Series with the support of Dr. John Louis Haney which is intended to be a series of short monographs on cultural criticism in social sciences. The book is organized into four equal, thematic sections (each section has three chapters of almost equal length) followed by notes, references, index, and acknowledgements. Most of the essays extended his ideas and arguments including memoir, cultural criticism, scholarly overview, and personal commitment as anthropologist, also contained in his three previous publications, between the period 1990s and 2000s.

To begin with, what is appealing is Sanjek's proposed methodology: he aims to affirm the values of ethnography for a practitioner trying to follow the multidirectional and conflicting ideas of social knowledge-making in the present US. The book's first section, Engaging Ethnography, has three chapters about anthropological fieldwork in Elmhurst-Corona district of New York City. . Chapter one, ‚œColor full before Color blind: The Emergence of Multiracial Neighborhood Politics in Queens, New York City,, summarizes what an ethnography of the present as a process is. It also illustrates the significance of historical contextualization in an ethnically mixed community. Chapter two, ‚œThe Organization of Festivals and Ceremonies among Americans and Immigrants in Queens, New York,, illustrates the theoretical and comparative side of ethnography, comparison, and contextualization. Here, he examines the public ritual efflorescence trailing fiscal crisis, immigration and racial change in Queens while focusing on coherence. Chapter three, ‚œWhat Ethnographies Leaves Out,, less academically proposes two short field note episodes from a protestant church and elementary school.

The second section, chapters 4 through 6, introduces the distinctive features and history of ethnography. Chapter four, ‚œEthnography,, briefly surveys the development of ethnography and introduces the anthropological triangle. The author has tightly selected words in this rather

short chapter to discuss the ethnographic writing process, including the discovery procedure of listening, observing, and interviewing. Sanjek concludes this chapter with a remark that ‚œethnographic research produces results that can be obtained in no other way‚ (p. 71).. Chapter five, ‚œAnthropology's Hidden Colonialism: Assistants and Their Ethnographers‚, emphasizes how ethnography was earlier produced by hierarchical multiracial partnerships and teams of white professionals. The author states that ‚œ93 per cent of anthropologists in full-time U.S. faculty positions were white‚ (p. 81). . The author suggests that we need to write and revised our textbooks. Chapter six, ‚œThe Ethnographic Present‚, affirms the centrality of ethnography after postmodernism and how it remains an indispensable field.

The next section, Comparison and Contextualization, starts with Chapter seven, ‚œWorth Holding Onto: The Participatory Discrepancies of Political Activism.‚ This chapter exemplifies the comparison side of the anthropological triangle. It discusses the dynamics of political meetings, applying Keil's theory of ‚œparticipatory discrepancies‚ in three fieldwork locations. The intermarriage and immigration are the focus of Chapter eight, ‚œIntermarriage and the Future of Races in America.‚ The author concludes the chapter with six future scenarios, including ideologies, histories, concepts of identity, group and personal experiences, and inconstant courses and flows of migration relating intermarriage and political trends. The last chapter of this section ‚œRethinking Migration, Ancient to Future‚ states his frustration with the ‚œassimilation‚ approach and offers seven successive processes to larger historical context of immigration, including expansion, refuge seeking, colonization, enforced transportation, trade and labor diasporas, and emigration.

The final section, begins with Chapter ten ‚œPolitics, Theory, and the Nature of Cultural Things.‚ This chapter provides a narration of Sanjek's experiences with anthropology and the impact of other practitioners, including M. N. Srinivas, Fredrik Barth, and Marvin Harris on him. Chapter eleven, ‚œKeeping Ethnography Alive in an Urbanizing World‚ interrogates how a practitioner may preserve wide-ranging ethnography. The author concludes that ‚œFieldwork is hard work‚ (p. 183) and it generates a search for contextualization and comparative theory through his personal commitment and memoir to the field. The final chapter ‚œGoing Public: Responsibilities and Strategies in the Aftermath of Ethnography‚ concludes the book with a commitment to enter public life.

For a reader interested in anthropology, this book is an important book to read. It not only provides an interesting memoir but also interrogates well-known works, including Boas, Whyte, Geertz, Fabian, Marcus, and Clifford. A reader who has studied Sanjek's previous works might find some section repetitive otherwise it is a well-researched book.

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Footprints of A Rising Power

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Does the Elephant Dance? Contemporary Indian Foreign Policy, David M. Malone, Oxford University Press, 2011, New Delhi, 425 pages, Rs. 695/-, ISBN 0-19-807383-6

In the present multi-polar world India is seen as an ',emerged power- with its ',emerging- role receding to the background. India is increasingly becoming a ',busy- player in international networks of political and economic dimensions. In this context the present book under review sheds light on the particular ties India is having with various powers separately as well as with the regional groupings. The author David Malone being a seasoned diplomat but plays safe in declaring that his work ',is informed by an awareness of some of the growing scholarly theoretical debates of our time in the discipline of International Relations and how they have been applied to India, but ',this volume offers no theoretical arguments or frameworks of its own-.(p-2-3) and is ready to note that ',after years of selective engagement with, and studied indifference to a number of multilateral forums, India today is engaging in all fronts in all regions- (p.9- 10). According to Malone the ',most relevant Indian actors- having influence on Indian foreign policy apart from of a mix of influential commentators are the politicians, Indian Foreign Service and other officials the Defence establishment, India-s international economic team.

The book has an interesting opening unlike most texts on Indian foreign policy. The first chapter(History : A Vital Foundation of India-s International Relations) on historical moorings of India"s international relations highlights the making of India highlighting that India has opened up through trade and other cultural exchanges over centuries and also importing ideas like non alignment and such historical linkages have made India ',a naturally prominent, if not yet a central actor in international relation-.(p. 46)However, theoretically rich contribution of Kautilya on foreign policy related friends and enemies get no mention. In the next chapter (India-s Contemporary Security Challenges: More Internal than External?)the author finds addressing India-s security challenges(structural in nature) is difficult as there is confusion relating to organizational roles and jurisdictions between leading institutions (the PMO, the National Security Council, the MEA, and the MoD) as ',foreign policy making has suffered from the cacophony of voices espousing contrasting voices ideas of India-s place in the world (p. 72) While external security threat(international terrorism, nuclear proliferation) can be managed diplomatically and militarily, the internal threats(political fragmentation of parties, domestic insurgencies particularly of the Maoists, regional security challenges, sub-national ethnic movements, religious conflict centered around the Hinduvta debate)Â are difficult to manage given its entrenched base spread across the country and it is in the rise of economic diplomacy in a global networked alliance structure, lies the solution to the ills of development and discontent paralyzing India-s domestic sphere security wise. The chapter on ',India-s Economy: Its Global Calling Card- highlights the

shifts in Indian policy to structure her economy from the search for an autonomous economic policy(1974-66) to a toxic mix of autocracy and socialism (1966-90) to reforms, globalization and growing interdependence(1990 onwards) focusing on India-s aid imperative and in turn India-s own contemporary foreign aid programme in her immediate neighbourhood and mostly in Africa. The economic challenges facing Indian foreign policy relates to energy and food security, unpredictable economic consequences of potential instability in the Middle East, China-s accelerated economic growth, domestic rural-urban disparities and falling public delivery system, local consequences of global warming and climate change. India gained considerable credit in the G-20 during the 2008-9 economic crises with more creativity and calculated risk-taking and thus India-s economy provides an opportunity for new beginnings in Indian foreign policy. Malone in his ',India and its South Asian neighbours- indicates that India faces a circular challenge: unless its region becomes more cooperative (and prosperous), India is unlikely to develop into more than a regional power, but it is true as well that it cannot be a global power unless it reaches beyond its neighbourhood. (p.128) India-s approach to its neighbours is both too often reactive and at times dismissive. Malone believes that India has been trying hard in recent years to accommodate and tolerate neighbourly differences by elevating development discourse over the conventional security debate by linking geography with strategy keeping in mind China-South Asia relations but it is not yet such as to induce either awe or affection amongst those neighbours who matter. Next comes ',The Sino-Indian Relationship: Can Two Tigers Share a Mountain?- where the history of Sino-Indian relations is phased under ',ideological enthusiasm- of 1950-62, ',security dilemma- of 1962-76 after the border war, tentative rapprochements of 1976-98, the age of uncertainty since 1998 onwards in which the areas of potential conflict are security concerns like border disputes, long standing relation between Pakistan and China, the threat of nuclear weapons and the Tibet issue and a rising Indo-US relationship while the quest for energy security, interest in factor and product markets of developing countries and international trade are some economic concerns in the relationship. The author maintains that extrapolation of the past and a dialogue process that acknowledges differences instead of emphasizing imagined similarities is likely to lay the foundations for better mutual understanding may lessen impact of likely conflict as ',neither country has apparently developed a grand strategy relating to the other. Unprofitable preoccupation with the past on the Indian side and an equally intense preoccupation with domestic consolidation on the Chinese side have left the relationship in many respects under-tended-(p.129). In analyzing Indo-US relation the author highlights three main parameters '€" ideology, strategy and values. The ideological differences of 1947-66, the strategic contradictions of 1967-89 (Bangladesh war, Pakistan and Afghanistan War) and rediscovering common interests since 1990s on economic and political factors, Pokhran-II and its impact, strategic partnership (Next Steps in Strategic Partnership [NSSP]), rediscovering common values, regional power balances(new South Asia policy of US was conceptual decoupling of India and Pakistan, a new world order because these days Malone declares that ',Washington often see India as a useful hedge against the rise of China, if not as a reliable ally in all of its global adventures. This makes clear how far India has come, and perhaps also how US-centered uni-polarity proved but a fleeting consequence of the end of Cold War.-(p.177-78).With India-s key interests in the region lying in security and stability in order to guarantee a stable supply of fuel, cooperation and engagement in order to promote trade,

furthering investments in areas like petrochemicals, biotechnology, communications technology and tourism sectors to build up soft power, presently ',India-s West Asian policy has been focused not on Palestinians and Iraq as during cold war days but on a new set of key partners: Saudi Arabia, Israel and Iran- (p. 182-3) and India ',delicately manouvers- the same strategy of its economic interests with different partners in the region. In an effort to ',catch up- Chinese presence in the region of East and Southeast Asia, Malone finds broadening the economic dimension of India-s Look East Policy as a must along with increasing political and diplomatic ties bilaterally as also with regional groupings and forums like BIMSTEC, Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MCG), Asian Economic Community (AEC), APEC, and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Indian Diaspora and tourism add to the soft power potential of India in the region ',but the region is unsentimental and to meet India-s expectations will continue to demand more (and more accommodating) Indian engagement than has yet become habitual for Delhi-.(p. 223) The ',fading glory- of Indo-European relationship based on trade, defence and security, energy interests, political culture of the states, and the Indo-Russian relation growing out of India-s Russian interactions, defence procurement, political similar values of liberal constitutional democracy, economics and trade attachment, energy interests centering around the gas pipeline project compels India due to geostrategic reasons to revive such relationship and theÂ author visualizes that ',Unlike India-s relationships with China and the United States, Delhi may well find itself becoming a dominant player in Indo-European and Indo-Russian relationship-. (p.248)The last chapter on ',The Evolution of India Multilateralism: From High Ground to High Table- analyses India-s move from moral high ground of non-alignment, third world leadership to adjust to a new post-cold war order by exploring alternative places to rise like in its demand for restructuring of UN Security Council and a more confident India shifted from universalism to individualism cementing a place in 2004 in a small high-powered group at the WTOÂ called the Five Interested Parties '€" along with the USA, the EU, BrazilÂ and Australia. Backed by new global philosophy of ',cooperative pluralism- India is seen to play a positive role in issue like climate change and having new diplomacy in new forums (G 20) like finance diplomacy.Â However, Malone mentions that India-s table manners in these multilateral bodies are constrained by the pulls of domestic politics. While other countries are not immune to the push and pull of domestic politics, India-s challenge remains that it has not yet developed a habit of conciliating domestic pressures with a results-orientedÂ stance in some multilateral institutions(p. 271).

In such a coherent depiction of Indian foreign policy practice, India-s relations with Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole are not discussed at length. India-s relations with much of Africa are addressed mainly through the prism of India-s growing anxiety about its access to the natural resources for which its economy will increasingly hunger. (p. 11) Author mentions SAARC as a forum created largely by India in page 12 but evidence suggest that the idea was mooted and spearheaded by Bangladesh. IBSA, SCO, BRIC receives a sketchy mention as an imaginative way to give practical expression to the idea of South- South cooperation. (p- 13)Also it lacks a focus on Indian Ocean region and a possibility of a ',Look South Policy-.

Being an honest reader of Indian foreign policy, Malone tries to understand ',What kind of a world power, with what aims, and in partnership with what others, will India seek to be?-(p-17) and concludes that some of what was impossible for India in the 1950s is on offer today, for example, a seat at the high table of international financial and economic diplomacy.(p.278) Among positive changes are inclusion in WTO, growing partnership with parallel rising countries through forums like IBSA, strategic partnership with United States and India-s growing attention to the Middle East. Among continuing challenges are domestic Maoist insurgency, externally cross border terrorism, difficult relations with China, and a slow decline of its relative terms with Europe, impatience over increasing formal role in multilateral bodies. At the strategic level, India is not yet a particularly significant player beyond its own neighbourhood. India today advocates no particular ideology, nor does it operate within a defined foreign policy (or strategic planning) framework, beyond the assertion of national self interest generally focused on the international sphere. Given the recent splintering of international relations into a genuinely multi-polar system, India will likely organize its multilateral and even some of its bilateral diplomacy in years ahead through issue-driven ad hoc coalitions and in some cases evanescent groupings of countries. Its re-emergence, particularly if it manages its significant domestic challenges with success, will be one of major shifts of the twenty-first century. (p. 302-303)

The book is consciously made an ocean of references on Indian foreign policy (the bibliography ranging from pages 379 to 410)highlighting every sphere of influence that India strides in the present global order and evidence suggests of her linkage, both economic and political, with almost all the countries of the world '€" a linkage with utmost expectations from her partners. In essence the book cast doubt on the future efficacy, promptness and prudence of Indian foreign policy that is bogged under so many networks and alliances. Metaphorically such a networked India is seen as an elephant having giant strides but lacking swiftness.

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