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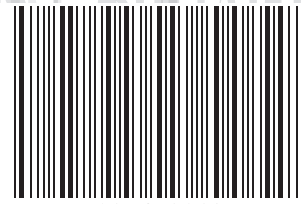
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Editorial

Shilpa Gupta & Debosmita Paul

Of Pandemics, Epidemics and Literature

Pandemics and epidemics have severely impacted human lives at several junctures of human history. Moreover, a historical study of these outbreaks project the fact that they are accompanied by socio-political and economic crises. Nancy Tomes, in her article titled "The Making of a Germ Panic, Then and Now", focusses on pandemics/ epidemics of the 1800s and the period between 1900 and 1940. She states that the impact of these diseases are similar at all times with effects like "high immigration rates, diffuse fears of economic interdependence, and concerns about the global movement of people and disease" (2000, p.191). Furthermore, she adds that in the 1800s "revolutions in science, media, and entertainment altered existing mechanisms governing the flow of information and images of disease" (Tomes, 2002, p. 628). Her observations of the earlier pandemics/ epidemics are quite clearly similar to the experiences during COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing, almost a year-long, global lockdown, has also led to a large scale economic slowdown, diplomatic tensions over the spread of the disease and high rates of migration. Simultaneously, it has made alterations, in a positive way, in the fields of science and literature. One notices that the general continuum of human life is dynamically hindered and altered due to these outbreaks.

Literature has been a witness to these outbreaks, borne and recorded their effects using metaphorical language. S. Walia aptly describes the role of literature during such situations; "Pestilences tend to bring out the best and the worst in us and literature keeps the tally" (Shelly, 2020, para.1).Geoffery Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1400), Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the*

Plague Year (1664), Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* (1826), Albert Camus' *The Plague* (1947), Garbiel Garcia Marquez's *Love in the Times of Cholera* (1985) among many others have depictedpandemics and epidemics in terms of the Bakhtinian metaphor of "chronotope" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.84) with a certain level of "impasse" (Hitchcock, 2013, p.65)being evident during the disease outbreaks.

Epidemics and the subsequent large scale deaths are not new to the Indian subcontinent. Experiences about them have been recorded in literature of the Indian subcontinent as well. These pestilences are seen as the wrath of the heavens according to popular belief. Offerings to goddesses like Olabibi, Shitala Devi, Bonbibi, Olaichandi and Manasa Devi are made to appease the heavens and get rid of the disease. These goddesses are revered by the people of all religions. Therefore, ceremonies in reverence to these goddesses are a display of the syncretic culture of the Indian subcontinent.

Narratives from this region, too, use these episodes of epidemics and pandemics to mark an aberration in the continuum of human life, culture and society. Intizar Husain's partition novel *Basti*, written and published in Urdu in 1979, describes the outbreak of plague as one of the several incidents in the history of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, where they have been forced to abandon their homelands and settle back once the crisis was over. While describing about his childhood memories about Rupnagar, the protagonist Zakir quotes his Bi Ammi whose memories of such outbreaks is part of a racial consciousness. She states that during cholera outbreaks Muslims die and during plague Hindus. However, her age-old belief is challenged and shattered as the plague affects and kills people from both religions. The plague and the resultant mass-migration in Rupnagar comes to her like a shock: a shock which Zakir, his remaining family members and friends were to receive during the partitions in 1947 and 1971.

Noted Bengali novelist, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's bildungsroman novel Srikanto (1917-1933) uses the plague outbreak in Burma in a strong metaphorical sense. Fear of spread of plague from immigrants had made the Burmese government create a quarantine area in a small island about eight to ten miles away from the city of Rangoon. The ship doctor's comment makes it clear that the arrangement was only for the coolie-class whose ship tickets were priced at rupees ten. Although Srikanto belongs to the upper class gentry, he is forced to go through the quarantine procedure as he didn't have the requisite

'letter'. The island, nevertheless, is a glimpse of an egalitarian society, where Srikanto, Abhaya, Rohinida, Nando Mistri, his concubine Tagor, Haripada Mistry and many others, live together. They proceed to a normal but sectarian society as soon as the quarantine period is over and they reach Rangoon. Da Thakur's hotel is a microcosmic description of the various communities residing in Rangoon and the communal antagonism amongst them. Chinese, Burmese, Odiya, Telangi, Chattagram Muslims and Hindus stayed under one roof, yet were communally divided on the basis of religion, class and caste. (Chattopadhyay, 1933, p.238) The hukkahs (pipe) of the Brahmins and the other lower castes were separate. Yet, when the plague; "pilague" (Chattopadhyay, 1933, p.301) as the "Hindustani's"(Chattopadhyay, 1933, p.301) pronounced it, spread in Rangoon, it spared none.

Moreover, the epidemic forces the patriarchal and moralizing Srikanto to abandon his "judgemental male gaze" (Sharma, 2019, p.66) and criticism of Abhaya's act of leaving her cruel and depraved husband to live with a man who loves and needs her" (Sogani, 2002,p.98). Her relationship with Rohini is based on "truth and humanity" (Sharma, 2019, p.66). Srikanto finds no other option but to take refuge under Abhaya, when he gets infected by the disease, thereby, accepts Abhaya's decision and also her humanitarianism. The abnormal surroundings of the epidemic helps Abhaya get her freedom from living an oppressive life under the conservative patriarchy.

Odiya writer Fakir Mohan Senapati's story "Rebati" (1898), revolves around the Cholera epidemic. Cholera becomes the metaphor of the aberration that the advent of women's education brings into the rural community. Rebati's father, Shyam Bandhu decides to educate his daughter and Basudev, the local school teacher, helps him out in his endeavor. Shyam Bandhu's decision faces resistance from inside his family through his mother; a representative of the patriarchy. However, Shyam Bandhu and Basudev's mission remains unfulfilled as cholera strikes the village killing Rebati's parents. Rebati's is left in her old grandmother's guardianship who blames her and her education for the calamity that had struck the community. Rebati's dream of achieving knowledge through the books is incomplete as the epidemic takes her life as well, leaving her ailing conservative grandmother behind who keeps blaming her even after her death.

Epidemics and pandemics in literature, therefore, represent the changes that make a drastic impact on the society: its culture and politics. The outbreak of

COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in writings with the pandemic as the central theme. These, too, are expected to harbinger the 'neo-normal' state in the society: its culture, politics and economics.

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Orange River Boundary: A Passive Dispute between South Africa and Namibia

Sushmita Rajwar

Abstract

The demarcation of the boundaries in the African continent has been a result of the colonial decisions and were done most of the times without taking the Africans into any consideration. This led to many arbitrary borders which later gave rise to border conflicts due to several reasons but mainly because of the contention on the accessibility to some resources present near the border. Orange River Boundary Conflict between South Africa and Namibia is one such border conflict that has raised issues with regard to utilization of water resources from the Orange River. Grazing rights of the local Nama population and diamond mining rights in the region has caused several disagreements leading to failed talks and conclusions. This paper attempts to analyze the Orange River disputed boundary, displacement of the Namas into the neighbouring regions due to the conflict and the sharing of the resources of the Orange River by Namibia and South Africa.

Keywords: *African continent, Border conflict, Nama population, Orange River, Water resources*

Borders in Africa were introduced during colonialism, which according to numerous scholars, were created without taking into consideration the knowledge, content and suggestions of the African population. Therefore, due to their colonial origin the boundaries of Africa are considered to be arbitrary by many scholars. Loisel (2004) characterized the African borders as follows:

Borders in Africa would be arbitrary and artificial, delineated by

exogenous colonial powers with little knowledge of the local communities, dividing pre-existing and homogenous ethnic groups and thereby stirring frustrations and conflicts. (p.4)

For Davidson (1992), the arbitrariness of the colonial borders and the dissection of ethnic groups and tribes in the colonial era are the major causes of African conflicts. (p.10) In other words, the ethnic wars that are caused by the arbitrary nature of African boundaries are the major causes for instability in the continent.

According to Griggs (2000), the mismatch between nations and states is responsible for the continents' instability, civil wars, genocides etc. (p.1) In the process of the European colonization of Africa, mainly the scramble of Africa, ethnic considerations were in general ignored and the colonies and protectorates included within their borders, with few exceptions, large numbers of different, often antagonistic tribes, while dividing others between different jurisdictions. Loisel (2004, p.4) also says that these borders are the product of continental and global rivalries among European powers. Scholars like Odugbemi (1995, pp. 501-503) and Clapham (1996, pp. 1-2) argue that everywhere borders are artificial and the case of Africa is not different from others. Though, from the start the Organization of African Union (OAU) acknowledged the imperfections of the national boundaries of African countries (which were the by-products of colonialism), it decided to accept the inviolability of the national boundaries in its 1964 resolution.

What constitutes the Orange River Boundary Dispute?

Namibia and South Africa share a nearly 1000 km long boundary, a considerable part of which runs through the Orange River, along the Northern high-water mark, rather than being in the middle of the river as is the international practice. This demarcation originated in July 1890 (Demhardt, 1990, p.356), when the Germans accepted this boundary line proposed by a military superior Britain and agreed to article III of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty:

In Southwest Africa the sphere in which the exercise of influence is reserved to Germany is bounded. To the south by a line commencing at

the mouth of the Orange river, and ascending the north bank of that river to the point of its intersection by the 20th degree of east longitude (Herslet, 1967, p. 361).

The situation did not bring any major problems into the scene, until Namibia's independence from South Africa in 1990. The Namibian constitution, Article 1 (4) stipulated that: "The nation of Namibia shall consist of the whole of territory recognized by ... the United Nations as Namibia ... and its southern boundary shall extend to the middle of the Orange River"(Demhardt, 1990,p. 362).

Namibia referred to, amongst others, the Helsinki Rules on the uses of International Rivers to defend its claim. However, South Africa continued to adhere to the existing boundary contract claiming "both [river] banks (Evans, 1993,p. 134). From the early 1990s onwards, South Africa and Namibia discussed the location of the Orange River boundary, establishing a Joint Technical Committee to research and report on the boundary demarcation in 1993 (Evans, 1993, p. 134). Contrary to other Namibian territorial claims in South Africa (On 1 March 1994, following three years of bi-lateral negotiations, a South African-Namibian dispute over ownership of Walvis Bay, a coastal enclave, and 12 offshore islands was resolved, when South Africa returned these areas to Namibia) the boundary dispute was never settled.

Figure 1:Map.
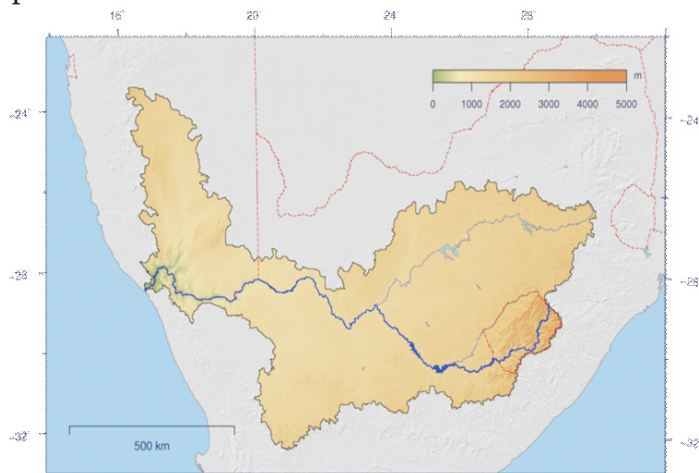
Note: The Orange River between South Africa and Namibia seen in Black color

The issue mainly is complicated by two factors. Firstly, the presence of valuable natural resources in and on the banks of the Orange River is a bone of contention. The river mouth contains major diamond deposits and islands in the Orange River provide valuable grazing lands, while the river also provides good fishing opportunities and is a source of water, in the arid desert borderland. Both Namibia and South Africa claim access to these resources. When South Africa ruled Namibia, it exercised sovereignty over the whole river, which is very wide in some places. During this period, South Africa granted mineral rights to its mining companies to exploit the area's valuable diamonds, and land rights in the river's islands to the local communities in and around the Richtersveld. Under pressure from these beneficiaries, South African governments have generally been unwilling to release South Africa's access rights to these natural resources. Access to land and diamonds in what it perceives to be 'its' side of the river and river mouth is a key motivation for Namibia's request for boundary re-adjustment (Van Amerom, 2008, p.198). However, while South Africa has expressed the willingness to revise the boundary to follow the river's median line, it has never been willing to relinquish its water, grazing, fishing and mineral property rights, to the dismay of Namibia (Van Amerom, 2008, pp.206-227).

Secondly, the issue is also complicated because there have been disagreements over the actual boundary delimitation decided by the Germans and the British. South Africa did agree to review the boundary during the two presidencies preceding President Thabo Mbeki. However, the premature ending of De Klerk's administration and postponements during the Mandela regime meant that the process of specifying what had to be delineated was never accomplished (Conley & van Niekerk, 1998, p.131). Namibia requested a follow up of these tacit agreements. But former South African President Mbeki did not feel obligated by these never formalized arrangements of his predecessors. During his first presidency in July 2000, he decided that the boundary would not be adjusted (Graig, 2001, para.1) and demanded that Namibia should adhere to 'the OAU's policy on respecting colonial boundaries' (Pana, 2000, para.1). This has not happened; the Orange River boundary dispute has continued to flare up periodically and put pressure on the otherwise cordial relations between South Africa and Namibia (Evans, 1993, p. 140).

It is also important to study the impact of this conflict on the local people living on the banks of the river. Some of the people of Namibia have been taking their cattle for grazing to these lands for years and now they have been denied these grazing rights. There have been agreements and disagreements regarding the actual boundary, whether it is in the middle or up to the North bank. Moreover, the conflict has caused drastic changes in the lifestyle of the people. Further, because of the discovery of diamonds, there have been creation of diamond prohibited zones along the coast, which forced the local people to migrate to other areas along the coast. There are challenges for the people staying in the islands regarding the grazing rights. For decades locals on both sides have enjoyed grazing rights on the islands in the middle of the river and South African miners have continued to exploit the resources that fall in the middle of the river but after the 1991 agreement by both the governments to recognize the boundary to be in the middle of the river, the grazing rights of the South African locals have been affected and they have been forced to leave their areas and move towards other places along the coast of the river.

Displacement of the Population from Orange River to small towns in Richtersveld, Northern Cape

The Orange boundary dispute has mainly affected the population living on the banks of the Orange River. These people have been left at the mercy of the South African government which still recognizes the earlier boundary. Apart from that, mining activities for diamonds have been on for a long time which has also led to displacement in the region. The displacement that took place as a result of the dispute between the two countries due to non-delimitation of the boundary has forced people to settle in small towns in the Richtersveld. These small towns are Steinkopf, Springbok, Port Nolloth and Okeip. The displacement has also resulted in significant changes in the lifestyle of these people who were mainly farmers and pastoralists and had to adapt to new ways of livelihood when they shifted to these towns.

1.   Steinkopf

Steinkopf, is the town where large number of people from the Orange River border shifted to, during the initial phase of displacement. This place is also

closer to the border and connects to Namibia by road. Almost everyone living in this small town has family members in Namibia too. The reason can be attributed to the fact that when the population shifted from the border a large number of them also chose to go to Namibia, because "Namas" as the word used for these tribes suggests, they had originated from Namibia. Since Namas were pastoralists, they kept changing places and had a settlement along the Orange River but due to mining activities and border demarcation conflict, all these people were forced to leave their lands. A large number of them went to Namibia and a substantial number shifted to South African towns in search of better livelihoods which they got in towns like Steinkopf.

Steinkopf has a population of 7,261 (2,278.63 per km²) consisting of 4049 females and 3212 males (2001 census). It has an area of 3.19 km2. It was formerly known as Kookfontein and was established as a mission station of London Missionary Society but was later taken over by the Rhenish Mission. The good sides of this town were it had natural springs so that there was availability of water for the people and it has copper mining activities which helped the displaced people in getting jobs. Water holds an important place in the traditional Nama culture, a regular source of water was important for these people in selecting a new place to settle.

Figure 2: Area of the Northern Cape Towns
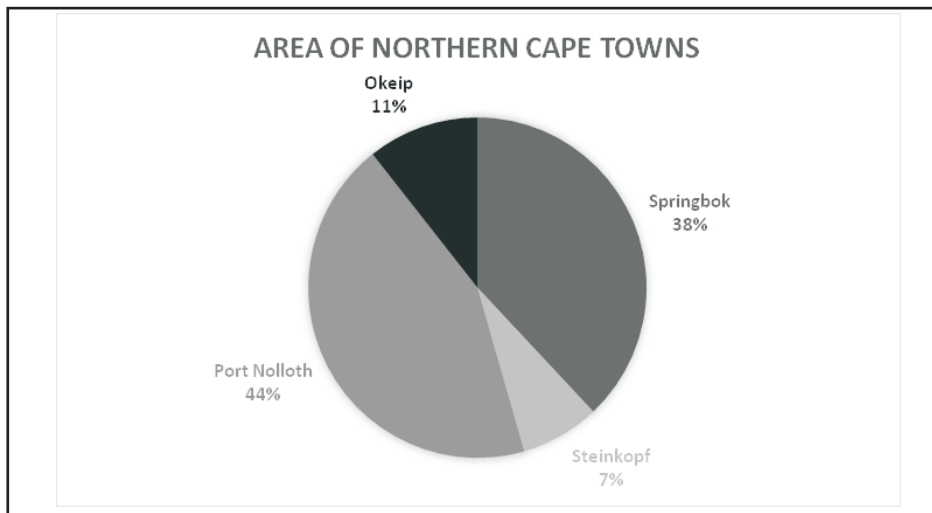
2.   Springbok

A substantial population when displaced from near the Orange River settlements shifted to Springbok also. This is the largest town in the Namaqualand area. As of 2001, it had a population of 10,294. It is located on the road which connects the Cape to Namibia. So, people would usually take this route if they have to travel to Namibia from Cape Town and nearby areas. It is also the main town of Nama Khoi Local Municipality which includes a number of surrounding towns such as Okiep and Nababeep.

The reason for people shifting to this town was mainly in terms of better livelihood. The town is located at an altitude of 3300 feet between the high granite domes of Small Copper Mountains and this was the reason it turned into a major commercial and administrative centre for copper mining operations in the region. Even though mining activities are no longer a major commercial activity now, since mining has been happening for years and the resource has been almost fully exploited, the town still remains an important administrative capital in the region, more so because of its location as large number of tourists stop over here while going to Namibia. Today the main source of income for this town is not only mining activity, but commerce and farming as well.

3.   Port Nolloth

Port Nolloth is a town and small domestic seaport in the Namaqualand region on the northwestern coast of South Africa, 89 miles (144 km) northwest of Springbok. The population of this town is 4655 which includes 2328 females and 2326 males. It is the seat of the Richtersveld Local Municipality. The port was previously a transshipment point for copper from the Okiep mines, and diamonds from the Namaqua coast. Since 1970s, the principal seagoing activities have been fishing and small-vessel tourism. Today the town is a sleepy commercial hub with a number of holiday homes and a caravan park at the adjacent McDougalls Bay. It is also a gateway to the Richtersveld National Park, located 100 miles (160 km) to the north along the Orange River.

The bay upon which the port sits was known by the indigenous Namaquapeople as Aukwatowa ("Where the water took away the old man").

This place came to limelight when copper was brought from neighbouring copper mines in Okiep to be sent away by sea. The diamond rush as it was called, made everyone to flock to this lesser-known port. A rush of prospect seekers and investment re-established Port Nolloth as a substantial service centre, even as copper shipments ceased altogether in 1944. Thus, people who were settled along the Orange River served as useful labour in this port for many years. A number of Nama families still reside here. They have worked in the diamond mines for years and are settled in this small port now.

Figure. 3: Population Distribution in the Northern Cape

	Springbok	Steinkopf	Port Nolloth	Okeip
■ Coloured	79.37%	98.10%	75.77%	95.48%
■ White	18.80%	0.17%	7.71%	2.00%
■ Black African	1.63%	1.28%	16.13%	2.52%
■ Indian/Asian	0.20%	0.45%	0.39%	0%
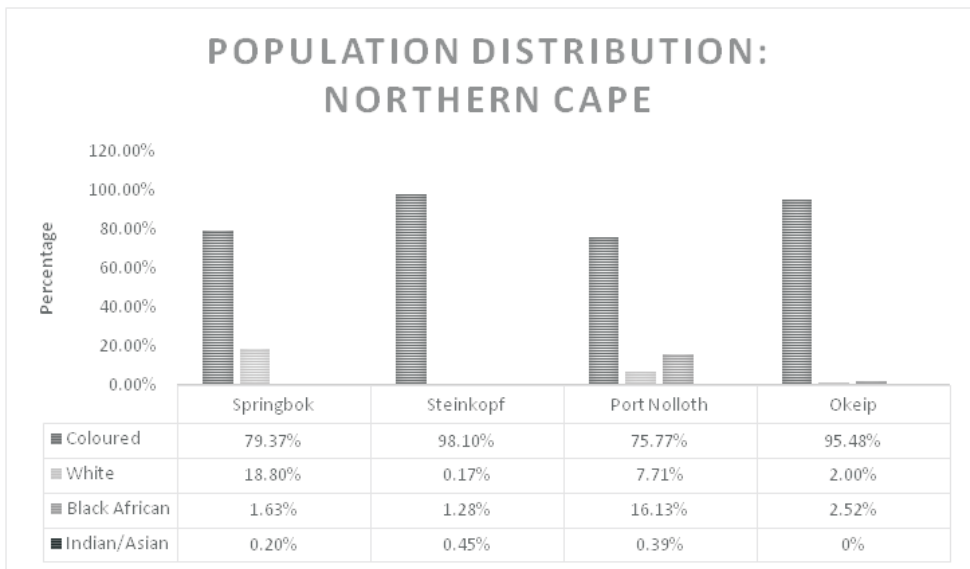
4.   Okeip

Okiep is a small town in the Northern Cape province of South Africa, and in 1870s was ranked as having the richest copper mine in the world. The town is on the site of a spring that was known in the Khoekhoe language of the Nama people as U-gieb (large brackish place) and was originally spelled as O'okiep. The town has a population of 5241 which includes 2684 females and 2557 males.

Hence, this was a town that had huge prospects for work and provided livelihood opportunities to Nama people who used to stay at the Orange River

boundary and were forced to leave their home. A number of them shifted to this small town and got engaged in copper mining for years. But as with most metals, copper suffered mixed fortunes, and in the early 20th century the copper price dropped below the profitable level, so that mining operations ceased, but were resumed when prices rose. Most of the population in this town still consists of Nama tribe who have moved from the South Africa-Namibia border.

Thus, two things are very clear from the above cases, firstly that almost all the people who have shifted from the Orange river belong to the Nama tribe and have shifted to these towns in the Namaqualand and secondly, these people have shifted either in search of better livelihoods since their lands were taken away from them for mining purposes, or because of the ongoing boundary dispute between South Africa and Namibia. We can see that this population has not only shifted to the Namaqual and but they have also gone to Namibia (the place where Namas originally belong to).

Hence, the conflict and mining induced displacement has not only snatched the lands of these pastoralists but this conflict has also separated them from their own people (relatives). Further, the Apartheid era has completely taken away their Nama identity as they were not allowed to follow their customs, their traditions and speak their language at that time and today these people are fighting hard to retain that identity. They are trying to become Namas once again.

Nature and Magnitude of the Dispute

As compared to the other displacement factors, what is the relative share of the boundary dispute? Though the other factors like mining in the Orange River have caused huge displacement, yet the displacement that took place as a result of the boundary dispute between Namibia and South Africa is of a greater magnitude. According to Namibia, the river boundary is in the middle of the Orange River but South Africa's position is that the boundary is on the Namibian bank at high-water mark, as based on the delimited boundary between Germany and Britain under the Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty of 1890. In 1991, prior to the independence of Namibia, South Africa agreed to change the position of the boundary from the North bank to the middle of the river

(Thalweg)¹. However, disagreement existed concerning claims to mineral rights in the river, grazing rights in the islands in the river and fishing rights in the waters. As a result, South Africa backed out of its earlier commitment in 2001 stating that 1890 agreement should be upheld citing the utipossidetis principle, a principle according to which colonial boundaries, however arbitrarily drawn by the imperial powers are to be respected. Namibia has also threatened to take the dispute to the International Court of Justice if South Africa does not revert its 1991 position (Shah, 2009, p.356).

This started causing problems to the people mainly Namas residing on Orange River banks as the large number of these people depended heavily on the Orange River for water supply. These people had enjoyed grazing rights on the islands namely Krip, Long or Groot, Sand or Piet Maritz, Little or LambeVlei, Horse or Broe and Modder or Camp Islands located in the Orange Riverfor years. They also enjoyed fishing rights in the waters of the Orange River. Fruits and vegetables were also grown in these areas.

But since 1991, they have been facing problems from both sides of the river due to the claims they make on the Orange River. After independence, Namibians claimed half the river that restricted the rights of the people residing on the South bank of the Orange River and since 2001, when South Africa declined the offer to demarcate the boundary, South Africa has been claiming the waters of the Orange River. This has caused people indulged in fishing to be treated as trespassers by the South African government.

These developments from time to time had finally forced these inhabitants to shift from these areas and find other places to settle. In terms of choosing some other place, the Namas chose towns that had at least a regular supply of water as water holds a special importance in their traditional rituals. Since, they were leaving their farms and cattle behind, they also wanted options for new livelihood. Thus, these people shifted further South towards the small towns that came to be known as Namaqualand later on. However, some of the Namas also went to Namibia, mainly because of ancestral roots in that region. So, today one can find members of the same family settled in South Africa as well as Namibia.

Since the Orange River's banks are highly diamondiferous and some deposits

of alluvial diamonds were brought down from upstream by the flow and distributed by in-shore currents, diamond mining also took place in the region. This also caused further displacement in the region. But the diamond mining also provided employment to a number of people who were being displaced in the region. While talking to the inhabitants in the Richtersveld, one can find that every family has had one or two members working in the diamond mines along the Orange River for employment after they had lost their lands.

Conclusion

There have been many instances in the past when both sides of the government officials have either promised to settle the dispute or have agreed to enter into negotiations in order to find an amicable resolution to the conflict. During the 1990s the matter was brought up between the Government of Namibia and former South African governments headed by Nelson Mandela and F. W de Klerk. As a result, technical teams were appointed by the two governments in the early 1990s, and both countries had agreed upon a document concerning a new position for the border in Namibia's favour (this meant the border would be considered in the middle of the river). Unfortunately, this could not be finalized owing to the demise of F W de Klerk's minority-rule administration in 1994, but matter was further discussed when Mr Mandela became South Africa's President. Maps showing a new demarcation for the border were approved by the surveyor-generals of both countries but, again, the process was not completed before Mr Mandela's retirement.

During the term of South African President Thabo Mbeki, who succeeded Mandela in 1999, this border dispute was deliberated from time to time. A meeting was held between South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki and Namibia's President Sam Nujoma, in Upington during August 2011, where it was agreed that the issue was settled and that the border would remain where it was.

However, immediately after this the Namibian Foreign Affairs, Information and Broadcasting Minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab repudiated the news that the dispute stood settled.

From time to time, South Africa has also issued statements claiming the border

as it is, which again brings the two sides in conflicting positions. For instance, South Africa's Minerals and Energy Minister, Phumzile Mlambo-Mgcuka in 2002, told the South African Parliament that although negotiations on the issue between the two countries' foreign ministries were continuing, South Africa would not give up its claim to the border, based on the long-standing Organization of African Unity (OAU) policy of maintaining boundaries inherited from the colonial era. In 2013, the two countries agreed to establish a Joint Committee of Experts which later submitted its final report to the government, but nothing was done after the submission of report. The issue came to notice again in 2018, when the Democratic Alliance in the Northern Cape, South Africa raised this issue with the Minister of International Relations. The matter was once again picked up only because of the dispute and irregularities in issuing of mining licenses to South African firms along the Orange River.

The problem yet to be resolved is the potential geographical extent of mineral licenses awarded by Namibia along the river, as these are currently valid only for the north bank and do not extend into the river itself. Negotiations with South Africa for a relocation of the border between the two countries along the middle course of the Orange River have made little progress, despite a South African government-funded survey delineating a new boundary completed in early 2000s.

At present the border continues to run along the north bank which means that, in contrast to companies awarded concessions by Namibia, companies with South African licenses can prospect the entire river bed (Sebastain, 2008, p.94). In a step that was defined as surprising by Namibia, South Africa terminated abruptly the long-running discussions with Namibia on the position of the diamond-rich Orange River border. The South African Foreign Affairs spokesman Dumisani Rasheleng said in 2001 that the decision to confirm the 1,000-kilometer border on the northern high-water mark--rather than in the middle of the river, as demanded by Namibia--was not open to discussion. "As, far as the South African government is concerned, this matter has been laid to rest", (Sebastain, 2008, p.115-116) he stated. This shows the attitude of South Africa with regard to this dispute which will never reach a

conclusion if they behave in the same manner. However, Namibia continues to insist that the question has been settled in its favor, and only technical details remain to be solved. At stake is not only the access to water, crucial to Namibia's parched south, but also the grazing rights of farming communities as well as the river's mineral rights (Sebastain, 2008, p.118).

Thus, if in future both the countries want to see a prosperous relationship, the delimitation of the border should be taken up seriously and the existing confusion should resolve. The population that has been earlier displaced from these regions has also started reclaiming their lost lands. If the South African government wants to resolve these issues it should propose a speedy resolution to this dispute through a joint committee. No matter how stable the relationship between South Africa and Namibia has been since the last two decades, the relationship is not that of equals. South Africa as a country not only has a huge population as compared to Namibia, but also has enough resources that has given it a much stronger position on the international platform.

Finally, the important role that South Africa plays in almost all the regional organizations in Africa like South African Development Community (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and its involvement in global regional groupings like Brazil Russia India China South Africa (BRICS), has brought South Africa to a much important position not only in the African continent but around the whole world. It is also certain that the future of Namibia will also remain tied to that of South Africa and it would be in the best interest if both nations keep this relationship as cordial as possible. Therefore, it is also less likely that the Orange River Boundary conflict will become an active border conflict in near future.

End Notes

1. Thalweg is a German word that translates to mean 'the channel continuously used for navigation', and is a general area, not a specified line; and is used under international law to demarcate navigable rivers that are also boundary rivers.

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Trends in the Party System: From the Congress System to Multi Party Coalitions

Zinat Ara

Abstract

Indian democracy has been operating for over seven decades which has shaped the party system. This paper analyses the different trends in the Indian party system. The focus is on the current phase which shows a tilt towards a stable equilibrium.

Keywords: *Party, Democracy, Party system, Elections Nation building, Opposition party*

Political party is a link between the people and the state. In fact, democracy cannot be imagined without them. In essence, a political party calls for citizen's participation in the political process – open expression of opinion on public matters, creating requirements without fear of repression, by the process of voting etc. Political party is a necessary part of modern politics. The institutions and organizations are required to represent the interests of the citizens.

In a pluralistic political order, various organized groups work in the political process. The groups articulate their interests and parties aggregate them. This interaction works in the form of political parties. It mobilises and competes for popular support based on the programme of policies and action which requires a democratic climate and an electoral process.

The quality of democracy in any country depends on the character and conduct of political parties. The role of political parties in a pluralistic society like India, becomes important where it is not only strengthening political democracy but also promoting participatory democratic political culture.

> In A. Kohli's words; India's democracy has been strengthened by a political process that has facilitated a modest degree of redistribution of power and of other valued resources such as status and dignity, even if not of wealth (Kohli, 2001, p.2)

All political parties have a definite ideological orientation which shapes their goals and programmes. In western societies, political parties act as a representative instrument and a means of insuring peaceful and regular alternation of government. Whereas in developing countries the parties work for the invention of new ideas to link the public and leadership.

The origin of the party system in Indian politics is largely a result of historical development with the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Here, a well- organized national movement was allowed for independence. It had a mass base also. After independence, single member constituency or first past the post system was adopted (Sridharan, 2005, pp.344-369). India has evolved a unique party system which combines the functions of providing a stable framework of authority with a wide range framework for disputes and resolution of conflicts at various levels of society. It is a competitive party system in which the competitive parts play rather dissimilar roles. It consists of party of consensus and parties of pressure.(Kothari, 2012, p.40) The parties of pressure function on the margin. Inside the margin are various factions within the party of consensus and outside the margin are several opposition group and parties. They constantly pressurize and influence the ruling party. The working of representative government in India has maintained a parliamentary system based on competitive and free elections. The role of party system has played a crucial role for the survival of this system. Various factors have affected the character of the party system in India such as diversity of the cultures, character of the state, demand for economic development etc. M. Duverger in his 'Political Parties' aptly says that; "the party system and the electoral system are two realities that are indissolubly linked" (Duverger, 1959, p.205). There is high competition in elections through which a political party gains power in the Indian party system. To win elections, issues related to caste, class, religion etc. are used by them to mobilise people and at times a compromise is done to capture power. There is a noticeable change within the party system over a period of time.

The responsibility of the Election Commission is to conduct free and fair elections. Consistent steps are taken by the Commission during elections to reduce violence, misuse of money, booth capturing etc. although more serious efforts are required to make the process fair. However, there has been a noticeable change now as the marginalized sections also participate and elect their representatives.

The last three decades in India, i.e. after 1990, have been dynamic with regard to the evolution of party system. The Indian party system is facing transition from one party dominance to a multi-party system and a sort of coalition government. This is due to the rise of regional centres of power. However, the role of regional political parties is very crucial within national politics.

The role of the Congress party has been very crucial in shaping the party system and at the same time responsible also for its downfall. In 1967 elections, Congress lost its position as a majority party in many states due to which its dominance was strikingly reduced. Many parties emerged simultaneously and it created conflict and competition among them. As a result, these parties formed coalition governments in various states. In 1969, the Congress split to give way to the formation of Congress O which changed the shape of the party. Indira Gandhi tried to establish her supremacy by consolidation of power and use of slogans like "Garibi Hatao".

With the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and victory of Congress I with Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister, opposition unity became more difficult. In comparison to other parties, support for Congress I was still widespread, however, it was also declining region and community wise. It began to lose base not only in the Hindi belt which is about 42 percent of parliamentary seats but in Muslim dominated constituencies too. This indicated the weakening of Congress in the minority and regional bases. Post 1984 elections, a new political situation had emerged. The Congress was the dominant party only at the centre but in the states, it was a different scene.

In post 1989 period, remarkable change was observed with the coming up of an opposite trend towards regionalization of Indian politics. This had helped in bringing the marginalised section into the central level of Indian politics. In fact, this period showed a hegemonic dominance of the Congress party, on one hand, and support for the regional parties, on the other. However, barring

few states many state governments were replaced by national parties like the one in Bihar and Orissa.

In India, party system has travelled a long way from one party dominance to coalition system. Coalition governments are generally associated with instability. However, the concern is to save it from misuse for selfish purposes. The party system in India is exclusive in nature. It has been characterised by one party dominant system with Congress occupying the central position. It became competitive both at the centre and in the states after 1967 general elections.

Emerging Trends

It is essential to understand the nature of the party system in democracy which has deepened more in the last seventy years in India. Participation of weaker section has increased and thereby strengthening the democratic process. The pattern of representation to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha mainly reflects that each segment of the population is getting represented.

After independence, only educated rich class got the chance to be elected as people's representative. But in recent years, a new trend has come up where S.C., S.T. farmers and women too, are getting a chance to participate in elections. Their participation has increased considerably. The 2004 elections aimed to end one party dominance. The growth of regional parties has resulted in power sharing with the central government. The system has reflected tolerance for difference. One important feature of the Indian process of democratization has been the radical shift in the social basis and is one of the important factors behind the growth of regional parties.

The quality of democracy in any country depends on the character and conduct of the political parties. For a successful and stable democracy there should be two major political parties contending for power – one in the government and the other in opposition, for an alternative.

In a healthy democratic setup, elections are contested on local issues and problems affecting common people. However, in Indian democracy, it seems to be a far off aim. Indian democracy is changing very fast: many issues have been already addressed, some new issues have emerged and a few old issues remain to be resolved. The need of the hour is that divisive tendencies should be closely

taken up and evaluated timely.

The dynamics of the 2014 general election raised some important questions about contemporary Indian electoral politics. It was experiencing a paradigm shift marked by less fragmentation, more popular participation and weaker electoral competition. There was an increase in the number of political parties and candidates during those elections. A. Ziegfeld writes; "from the perspective of the vote shares won by the country's main political parties, not as much has changed as the news headlines might suggest." (2014, para7). An assessment by R. Diwakar, concluded that "although the Congress decline has continued, and therefore the BJP has won many recent state assembly elections, it is premature to conclude that the Indian party system has shifted to a BJP-dominated one". (2017, p.327)

India is moving towards a different, dominant-party system away from fragmentation and coalitions. Political scientists have their own views regarding this. Some have pointed out that India was witnessing the birth of a new party system. In the *Journal of Democracy*, E. Sridharan writes: "The results were dramatic, possibly even epochal. The electoral patterns of the last quarter-century have undergone a sea change and the world's largest democracy now has what appears to be a new party system headed by a newly dominant party." (2014, p.20) Similarly, P. Chhibber and R.Verma noted that with its historic victory, "the BJP has clearly replaced the Congress as the system-defining party" and would likely become the "focal point of electoral alignment and re-alignment" in India (2018, p.221).

M. Vaishnav and D. Smogard (2014) concluded their assessment of the 2014 results by noting that if the trends persist, "India may well have closed the book on twenty-five years of electoral politics and moved into a new era"(10th June2014, para.2). On the same lines, L. Tillin remarked that the extant evidence is "somewhat equivocal as to whether the 2014 elections mark a departure in longer term electoral patterns or the consolidation of a new social bloc behind the BJP" (2015, p.117). The bulk of the increase has come from unrecognised parties or smaller parties that have not met predetermined thresholds outlined by the Election Commission to qualify for official recognition as either national or state party.

The reason behind BJP's success in 2014 is due to its regional stronghold.

Actually, 75 percent of the BJP's parliamentary tally in 2014 came from just eight states in the north, west, and central regions of the country (Vaishnav, 2018, para.10). The big pro-BJP move was the result of party's effectiveness in mobilising its traditional urban middle class and upper caste Other Backward Castes (OBC) Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). Before the 2014 general elections, the BJP ruled just five (of twenty-nine) states –less than even its previous high of seven states (Vaishnav, Ravi and Hinston, 2018, para.12)

There is empirical support for more unequivocal judgments of 2019 elections results which led to serious political changes. Indeed, the available evidence points in one direction: 2014 was not an aberration; it was instead a harbinger of a new era (Vaishnav, 2019, para.4). India appears to have ushered in a new, fourth party system— on a different set of political principles, quite different from the earlier one. During the 2019 elections, the BJP gained majority in the Lok Sabha for the consecutive second time; a feat that was last accomplished by the Congress Party in 1980 and 1984. After this, the competition in the system in recent decades held that in India's first past the post electoral system, a small share of candidates are winning elections with the support of a majority of voters in their constituencies. Since then it has become routine for members of parliament to win only with minority support.

1952 to 1967: One Party Dominance

The period between 1952 and 1967 in India's party system is characterised by the dominance of the Congress and the existence of smaller opposition parties for both at the centre and the states. The social background of the Congress leadership and its important role in winning the country's independence played a key role in placing it in a dominant position. Most account of the Congress party emphasize the role of Nehru in the construction of a high modernist India where the state will be in charge of Nation-Building and economic development. The appeal was to adhere on the ideas of Socialism, Secularism, Democracy and Federalism. The Indian National Congress (INC) was ruling without coercion. Dominance by a single party coexisted with inter party competition. Opposition parties had little hope of obtaining sizeable majority at the legislatures in spite of the very fact that Congress didn't gain a majority of the votes. Its votes varied from 49 to 40 percent. Within the

Congress various groups with opposition parties assumed the role of opposition, reflecting the ideologies and interests of other parties. Therefore, the conflicts were within the party.

The opposition party had little hope of preventing the Congress from sizeable majority in the legislature despite the ruling party's failure. This could be due to the inadequacies of the opposite players on the political scene. Due to the fragmentation of opposition parties which seriously contested elections, limited their ability to unseat the Congress. Instead, at times the foremost political competition occurred between factions within the Congress Party representing different ideological viewpoints (Chhibber and Verma, 2018, p.221). Thus within the Congress and not between the Congress and the opposition parties that the major conflicts within Indian politics occurred. According to R. Kothari, this phase consisted of a party of consensus and parties of pressure, where the latter functioned on the margin (Kothari, 1964, p.1162).

1967 to 1977: Period of Dominant Party and Opposition at the State Level

The year 1967 had created a situation that the dominance of the Congress party was strikingly reduced. The fifth Lok Sabha elections marked the start of another phase of Indian party system and continued till 1975. Despite the strong opposition the Congress won the general elections of 1971. Although, in the same year parliamentary and state assembly elections were delinked. In this phase, the Congress party retained their central position but anti-Congress alliances also started emerging simultaneously. These alliances represented a consolidation of the non-Congress space at the state level. There was a clear rise in political competition and political cleavages resulting from social change. New groups and classes were incorporated into the political system. The dominant party model had shown the way to differentiated structure of party competition. Then parties started making alliances to make coalition governments.

The imposition of Emergency in 1975 eroded the popular support for Congress party. The party system weakened due to the suspension of freedom of press. The press only represented the government. No one could criticise the government. This led to the concentration of extra-constitutional powers with

the centre. Thus, this period marked the decline of the party system, making them rely on make-shift electoral arrangements for generating support.

1977 to 1989: Conflict between the Congress and Regional Parties

The Congress faced a defeat in 1977 elections while its rule was restored in 1980. This period showed the possibility of emergence of a two-party system. But this too failed due to the disintegration of the Janata Party and dramatic re-gaining of power by the Congress. The return to power for the Congress was a different affair this time. The earlier phases saw a bestowing of respect for the opposition but this phase reflected an intolerance with exclusivist leaders and no sharing of power. There was distrust towards opposition. After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, an emotional support was extended to Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress. Various electoral majorities in a fragmented party system emerged and national parties did not command widespread support across all regions of the country. The new political situation after 1984 elections showed the dominance of Congress at the centre but not in majority of the states.

1989 to 2004: Multi-Party System and Beginning of Coalition Politics

The 1989 elections showed the end of single party rule in India. Hence onwards, the party system had acquired a true multi-party character. It established a coalition government at the centre formally. A new party configuration of polarised multi-party system had emerged with more fragmentation, unstable coalition governments and weak administration. The National Front coalition of 1989-90 had a different outcome. The spatially compatible loose alliance put together by the National Front-BJP-Left, however, was based on ideological incompatibility. This reiterated the unsustainability of a broad anti-Congress coalition, which had not yet set aside the ideological extremes.

For the first time in 1991 elections, no party secured a majority in the Lok Sabha nor could they form a coalition government. Moreover, people were more aware of their caste and class positions. Therefore, allegiance to parties representing their interests rather stability was a priority for the voters. Vote share of the Congress reduced during this election. Furthermore, marginalised social groups had started entering the political sphere and utilised the democratic

space provided by electoral politics. This might be looked as a 'second democratic upsurge from below' (Yadav, 2004, p.1) which was more coherently represented by the United Front, the BSP, SP and RJD. In 1996 elections, there was a significant number of regional parties within the central politics which in turn signified politicization of individuals living in remote areas. Caste had also played a crucial role at this point. Success of BSP among Dalits, consolidation of OBCs in Bihar and UP, in the post-Mandalisation phase, led to rise in reservation politics based on caste. It also led to the growth of various sorts of caste associations mostly in north India which showed a positive co-relation with election outcome. In this election, BJP emerged as the single largest party with 162 seats and took the lead in government formation. The 1998 elections witnessed three coalitions. There have been three contenders rather than two for power in 1991, 1996 and 1998 elections. Before 1991 the opposition parties come together to challenge the Congress party but after 1991 Congress was opposed single-handedly even by the BJP. This situation continued till the 1999 elections.

The formation of alliances and coalition governments at the National and State levels has introduced a new phase in party competition and cooperation. The role of regional political parties in coalition politics is dictated by two contradictory parameters. One is accommodation and adjustment between coalition partners on ideological political and electoral questions. The other is 'realpolitik' characterised by the efforts of the partners to enhance their individual space within coalition. (Raghuraman, 2004, para.12)

2004: Revival of Congress and Coalition Government

Congress Party had fulfilled the message of a single party dominance/coalition between 1952 and 1989. End of single party rule was the message of 2004 elections. The result of 2004 elections gave an opportunity to all non-NDA political parties to evolve an alternative political coalition led by Congress in the name of UPA (United Progressive Alliance). The regional parties also had played a significant role. It appeared that any party wishing to win a national mandate has to weave its way through the different states and secure a verdict in each of these. (Yadav, 2004, p.1)

End of single party or coalition rule was the result of 2004 elections. The results of this election revealed that in states like Kerala, Tripura, West Bengal and UP

the electorate had many choices between the NDA, the Congress Alliance and others. In each case the 'others' had a great share of votes. It projected the likelihood of two alternative coalitions – the Congress-led UPA and the BJP-led NDA. Thus, disapproving 'bi-polar hypothesis'(Raghuraman, 2004, para.16). This change in the party system; along with a decline of the strong base, increased the representation of regional parties, regionalisation of all parties, continuous increase in competition; explain the changed system of government formation.

2014: Towards Stable Equilibrium

In 2014, India again had a single party majority after 1984. BJP took the position that belonged to the Indian National Congress, eight elections ago. Although BJP had majority on its own but headed for coalition with its pre-election allies. The Congress was defeated and reduced to its lowest ever vote share. The big pro-BJP swing was the result of party's effectiveness in mobilising its traditional urban middle class and upper caste base and forging a deep connection with other backward castes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. BJPs objective was to expand its base from the present as its majority of 52% of Lok Sabha seats is very disproportionately based.

Despite the fragmentation and the creation of new regional political outfits, states have witnessed a growing convergence around two parties or alliances. These alliances are often fluid but their anchors remain fairly constant. So, after a period of considerable turmoil, Indian politics is reverting to a more stable equilibrium.

These trends reflect low levels of trust in opportunistic political cultures that have reduced the time horizons of coalition partners engaged in multi-level political combats. In such a context, parties that understand and seize the chances offered by coalition building have some advantage. Those who make the system work are rewarded while those who are unable to reconfigure it to their advantage are gradually marginalised (Yadav, 2004, p.4).

While the struggle for power between castes and classes dominates political life in the primary arena of state and panchayat politics in India, regional aspirations are significant factors in the political calculations. However, the last decade has recorded unending multiplication within the

number of political parties and fictionalization of the political space, an increase of regional/caste based political parties that threaten to unleash fissiparous tendencies, an end of ideology based politics, a decline in political morality, political corruption, and criminalisation of politics. While urban middle class were busy bashing politics and politicians, the democratic space provided by electoral politics was being used more deftly by marginalised social groups who voted not as individuals but as groups and more often used their rights to reject very frequently (Yadav, 1999,p. 2393).

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Exploring Diaspora through 'Roots' and 'Routes'

Nabanita Deka

Abstract

Diasporas are essentially travellers occupying an in-between space. In this context then, the idea of diaspora involves the idea of departure. This idea of departure however is often fraught with tension, anxiety, trauma, memory, separation, (dis)placement, (dis)location and (dis)ease. The paper thereby is an attempt to explore this idea of diaspora using Vijay Mishra's idea of diasporic imaginary to examine Indian diasporic communities. In doing this, the paper will use Subhash Ghai's movie *Pardes* (1997) as a trope to further understand concepts of 'old' and 'new' diaspora.

Keywords: *Diaspora, Indian diaspora, Trauma, Memory, Identity*

The study of diaspora has acquired great relevance in post-colonial studies. Diaspora now has become a space for articulation of identity through movement and travel. Although, the term diaspora was largely coined during the Classical Age, its study has become an important theoretical tool to examine movement and dislocation happening all over the world today. This paper is an attempt at understanding and exploring diaspora by chiefly using V. Mishra's idea of "diasporic imaginary" (2005, p.1) as an entry point to theorize and analyze Indian Diaspora so as to highlight the contemporary position of Indian diasporic communities and its role in 'Nation-making' process. Finally, using S.Ghai's movie *Pardes* (1997) as a trope, the paper intends to examine concepts of 'old' and 'new' diaspora and establish the fact that the idea of 'homeland' even though it is 'imaginary' is still an idea which every diasporic Indian strives to achieve, ultimately affirming to the age old belief that 'You can take an Indian

out of India, But Not India out of an Indian'.

Diaspora has become an important field of study today. The launch of the journal *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* in 1991 by K. Tololyan highlights not only the importance of diasporic studies as an instrument of analysis but also the need to do away with the sharply defined borders of the nation state especially in today's era of globalization and multiculturalism. "Diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment," Tololyan (1991) writes in the first journal of *Diaspora* (p. 5). According to Tololyan, the term diaspora that once described only the Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion, has become broader to include immigrants, refugees, expatriate, overseas community, temporary workers and so on. The effect of globalization and liberalization is a major reason for this. However, in order to understand diaspora in its present context, we need to first study its historical specificities.

The word 'diaspora' derives from the Greek word 'dia' meaning 'through' and 'speirein' meaning 'to scatter'. The *Webster's Dictionary* refers to diaspora as a 'dispersion from'. Hence, the word connotes the idea of a centre, a locus, a 'home' from where the dispersion occurs. The idea of diaspora involves the idea of departure. It thus invokes the idea of journey or multiple journeys. While talking about the definition of diaspora, V. Mishra in his seminal lecture delivered at Victoria University of Wellington titled "The Diasporic Imaginary and the Indian Diaspora (2005)talks about diaspora's culture-specific association. He states,

> The Oxford English Dictionary refers quite explicitly to John vii, 35 ('the dispersion; ... the whole body of Jews living dispersed among the Gentiles after their Captivity') to make the connection clear. The OED, with its characteristic homage to the written word, locates the first use of the term in Deuteronomy xxviii, 25 where we find: 'thou shalt be a diaspora (or dispersion) in all kingdoms of the earth'(p. 3).

For Mishra, the word diaspora is dynamic in character today, and it can be thus referred to as "any group living in displacement" (Clifford, 1994, p.310). Calling it a postmodern phenomenon, Mishra (2007) says that diaspora intends to dismantle a "logocentric and linear view of human affairs, essentialist notions of social and national cohesion that connected narratives and experiences to

specific races and to origins…" (p.3). Nevertheless, at the crux of the notion of diaspora is the image of journey. But not every journey is to be understood as diaspora because diasporic journeys are not about temporary sojourns. They are "essentially about settling down, about putting roots 'elsewhere'" (Brah, 2017, p. 443). Hence, they are not to be understood as casual travel, although it works through travel practices. Even though the idea of travel has a happy and exciting image affixed to it, this however, is not the case when it comes to the idea of travel, viz-a-viz, diasporic journey/travel. "All diasporas are unhappy, but every diaspora is unhappy in its own way," writes Mishra (1996, p. 189). In this context then, what needs to be examined is the history of the slave trade and indentured labour and the painful journey of these slaves and labourers to an unknown land to work in plantations – who had to undertake the painful journey due to abject poverty and later on due to the call of the glitz and glamorous post-capitalistic world. Diaspora, thus as H. Lahiri (2019) states is a "social formation outside the nation of origin. It is a phenomenon involving uprooting, forced or voluntary, of a mass of people from the 'homeland' and their 're-rooting' in the hostland (s)" (p. 4).

Haunted by a sense of self-imposed exile and situated within an episteme of real or imagined displacements, diasporas thus, are "people who do not feel comfortable with their non-hyphenated identities as indicated on their passports. Diasporas are people who would want to explore the meaning of the hyphen, but perhaps not press the hyphen too far for fear that this would lead to massive communal schizophrenia" (Mishra, 2005, p. 1). There is thus a sense of fear-one that might lead to loss of identity. The diasporic community thus, oscillates between real or imagined displacements. A closer analysis, however, reveals that diasporic communities as Mishra (2005) says, "occupy a border zone where the most vibrant kinds of interactions take place and where ethnicity and nation are kept separate" (p.1). They are thus fluid and ideal formation creating alternative public spaces and "forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference" (Clifford, 2017, p. 452). However, it is the fluidity of the polyglot crowd that at times makes the autochthons crowd anxious. This is because diasporas have a progressive and a reactionary streak in them:

> A people without a homeland is not an aberration but an already prefigured cultural 'text' of late modernity. In other words, the positive side of diaspora (as seen in the lived 'internationalist' Jewish experience) is a democratic ethos of equality that does not privilege any particular ethnic community in a nation; its negative side (which is a consequence of its millenarian ethos of return to a homeland) is virulent racism and endemic nativism" (Mishra, 2005, p. 18).

Diasporas are not separatist so to say but at times may have separatist or irredentist moments. This is primarily because their idea of 'homeland' centres on a 'real space' from which "alone a certain level of redemption is possible" (Mishra, 2005, p. 2). Homeland thus, is the real '*desh*' against which all other lands are '*videsh/pardes*'. So when, the real '*desh*' cannot be experienced/achieved, the diasporic community strives to create a utopic '*desh*' in '*pardes*'. This utopic '*desh*' in '*pardes*' then is what Bhabha refers to as the 'third space'. This third space thus provides the diasporic community a spatio-temporal 'in-between space' to discuss, confront and negotiate aspects of cultural hybridity. This, however, is seen as clamouring by the autochthons and breeds in a fear – the fear that their idea of nationalism is under threat from the diasporic community, which ultimately compels them to ask, "What do we do with them now?" (Mishra, 2005, p. 16). It is this fear that compelled George Speight to lead a coup against the government of Mahendra Chaudhry, an ethnic Indian and his Fiji Labour Party in 2000. This is to be read against another truth about diasporas that is, diasporas do not return to their homeland.

It is because diasporas do not return to their homeland, barring a few, diasporic communities try to create another '*desh*' in '*pardes*' using their 'imaginary', which Mishra terms as 'diasporic imaginary'. It is to be noted that the word 'imaginary' here is used in both its original Lacanian sense and in its current usage as found in Slavok Zizek's works. Imaginary, as Zizek (1989) defines is the state of "identification with the image in which we appear likeable to ourselves, with the image representing 'what we would like to be'" (p.105). The idea of the nation thus is connected with the citizens' imaginary identification with it. True to what B. Anderson (2017) said in his essay "Imagined Communities", nation is indeed an "imagined political community... It is imagined because the members

of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 124). Nation, also, has a meaning only when declared as an absence. The idea of nation, thus, is seen at extreme risk from the Other (the diasporic community) since the Other has varied ways of enjoying the idea of Nation that does not specifically mirror the idea of nation of the autochthons. This is the reason why there is a growing atmosphere of racist phobia and hate crimes, ultimately leading to the rise of right-wing populism in Europe and USA. The term right-wing populism is used to describe groups, politicians and political parties that are generally known for their opposition to immigration, especially from the Islamic world and for Euro-scepticism. Right-wing populism in the Western world is generally associated with ideologies such as anti-environmentalism, neo-nationalism, anti-globalization, nativism, and protectionism. Take for instance, the former US president Donald Trump and the former Chancellor of Austria, Sebastian Kurz who won election because of their right-wing populist themes like anti-Mexican, anti-immigrant policies with focus on protectionism. The current trend of Islamophobia too is attributed to this. The concern for the natives then is 'What if the immigrants take away their jobs?' and get entitlements to the same benefits and privileges that are being enjoyed by a nation's 'real' citizen. In this context, the Other (the diasporas) are seen by the autochthons as someone who wishes to steal the nation's enjoyment. However, in this imputation to the Other, "we repress the traumatic fact that we never possessed what was allegedly stolen from us (cited. in Mishra, 2005, p.5). Enjoyment, then is always imaginary and the auto chthons ascribe to the Other what they wished to have and enjoy.

The diasporic community, on the other hand, enjoys two kinds of 'Nation-Thing', which the autochthons or the nation-state considers as a loss of their organic connection with the nation-state, something that otherwise has always been taken for granted by them. Diasporas then signify a "Gesellschaft, an alienated society without any 'organic laws', against the nation-state's own Gemeinschaft or 'traditional, organically linked community'" (Mishra, 2005, p. 6). The nation-state sees the world of diaspora as an ideal world without taking into consideration their traumatic past. However, the fact remains that the dominant group's homogeneous entity remains intact only because of the diasporic community's idea of homeland.

The diasporic imaginary is also very complex because while they want to create a '*desh'* in a '*pardes'* and wish not to be regarded as an exclusive group in 'pardes', they vouch for a racialized nation-state and aim to construct Purism in their own '*desh*

> …some of the strongest support for racialized nation-states has come from diasporas; some of the most exclusionist rhetoric has come from them, too. Even as the hypermobility of postmodern capital makes borders porous and ideas get immediately disseminated via websites and search engines, diasporic subjects have shown a remarkably anti-modern capacity for ethnic absolutism. In part, this is because diasporas can now recreate their own fantasy structures of homeland even as they live elsewhere." (Mishra, 2005, p.8)

In other words, the diaspora wants a pluralistic society in the West but advocates a purist society in the East. Racial purity thereby is of paramount importance here. At the same time, the nation-state too needs diasporic communities to remind itself of the value of homeland and nation. Hence, diaspora's idea of homeland and nation is very different from the autochthons. To further elucidate this, let us talk about the Indian diaspora, which although is a comparatively recent phenomenon but its historical roots go way back to the '*ghummakar'* tradition, a tradition that took the "gypsies to the Middle East and to Europe, fellow Indians to Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka as missionaries and conquerors, and traders to the littoral trading community around the Arabian Sea" (Mishra, 2005, p. 12). In the modern world though, it all began during colonialism when the imperial forces started transporting people to work in plantations and colonies. There is however, a radical break in terms of narrativity between the diasporic movement then and today's diasporic movement. Mishra (2005) refers to them as the 'old' diaspora and the 'new' diaspora:

> The old (that is, early modern, classic capitalist or, more specifically, nineteenth-century indenture) and the new (that is, late modern or late capitalist) traverse two quite different kinds of topographies. The subjects of the old – 'before the world was thoroughly consolidated as transnational' – occupy spaces in which they interact, by and large, with other colonized people(s) with whom they have a complex relationship of

power and privilege, as in Fiji, South Africa, Malaysia, Mauritius, Trinidad, Guyana and Surinam; the subject of the new are people who have entered metropolitan centres of Empire or other white settler countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the US as part of a post-1960s pattern of global migration. The cultural dynamics of the latter are often examined within a multicultural theory. (p. 13)

The binaries of 'old' and 'new' are sharp and contrasting. V.S Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961) perfectly encapsulates this. Mohan Biswas' parents, Mrs Tulsi symbolize the old diaspora whereas Anand, Owad represent the new. However, the 'old' and the 'new' Indian diaspora are not to be treated as isolated communities for a close analysis reveals that the 'old' has now amalgamated with the 'new', which brings me to my next point of analysis. Subhash Ghai's movie *Pardes* (1997), is a perfect example of the Indian diasporic lives. America is the land of hope and freedom. "My first day in America/It's living up to be/ I'm finally here with my fantasy/This is where I'll find my destiny", as the lyrics of the song "My first day in USA" goes. The film has Amrish Puri, Shahrukh Khan, Apoorva Agnihotri and Mahima Chadhury in the leads. Amrish Puri (Kishori Lal) is the first of his family to migrate to USA and establish himself as one of the richest and powerful businessman in the States. On his visit to India, he chooses Mahima Chadhury (Ganga) to be his daughter-in-law because he wants to reform his westernised son Apoorva Agnihotri (Rajiv) with an Indian 'touch'-to bring him closer to his Indian 'roots' through the 'route' of marriage with a 'sanskari' Indian girl. Shahrukh Khan (Arjun) who is an amalgamation of the 'old' and 'new' diasporic world is given the task of uniting Ganga and Rajiv. "Pardes ko Ganga jaisi bahu ki jarurat hein (The foreign land needs a daughter-in-law like Ganga)," Kishori Lal says [my translation]. It is to be noted here that in Hindu tradition, Ganga means pure and sacred. In this context then, it can be said that Kishori Lal wants to purify the West and create a racially pure and absolute 'desh' (India) in 'pardes' (USA).

Kishori Lal belongs to the 'old' diasporic world and there are instances in the movie when Ghai gives us an insight into the construction of 'old' diasporic self-contained 'little Indias'. Take for example, the scene where a felicitation ceremony is organised for Ganga on her arrival in the States. We see nothing sort of a 'little India' with the gathering consisting of only Indians. The idea of

nation and nationalism in a 'home' (USA being their home now) away from 'Home' is invoked when Ganga sings "*I Love My India*" much to the happiness of the Indians present there. The lyrics of the song beautifully signify it: "*Yeh Duniya, Ek Dulhan/ Yeh Mathe Ki Bindiya/ Yeh Mera India/I Love my India/ Watan Mera India/Sajan Mera India.../Karam Mera India/Dharam Mera India.*" This thus signifies that the Indian diaspora no matter how far they are from their homeland will always strive to establish a 'little India' wherever they are thus, affirming to the popular adage that 'You can take an Indian out of India, But Not India out of an Indian'. The union of Arjun and Ganga (who fall in love with each other because the westernised Rajiv misbehaves with her) and Kishori Lal's approval to their union suggests that the 'old' diasporic Kishori Lal has finally accepted the 'new' way of love of the post-capitalistic diasporic world.

The 'old' and the 'new' diasporas reflect "the very different historical conditions that produced them" (Mishra, 2005, p.14). Nevertheless, be it the old or the new, diasporic consciousness lives and oscillates between the tension of loss and hope – loss of the motherland and an exclusivist identity in a foreign land and hope of creating a utopic motherland in a foreign land and forging an inclusive identity in harmony with the autochthons. In this context though the question arises, what if through dislocation; through the dislocated journey of diaspora, the diasporic communities have instead found their 'real' location; their 'real' home since diasporas do not return to their 'real' homeland? If this be the case, then diasporas indeed are hybrid in nature that (is) deeply soaked in complexities and conflicting identities especially for the second and later generation of diasporas.

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Understanding Public Administration: Contemporary Approaches

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Abstract

Several fields in social sciences such as Public Administration are characterised by the diversity of approaches to study the phenomena critical to their disciplinary foci. Understanding the complexity of the subject of public administration and political process in real terms is not an easy task. For that, it needs to be studied from all possible methodological and analytical frameworks to get proper insight of its problems in order to bring suitable solutions. Accordingly, with a perspective to study the multiplicity of dimensions of a subject critically and realistically, the diversity of methods along with techniques and approaches (traditional, modern and contemporary) were evolved over a period of time. These differing approaches, over the years, also reflect the changing priorities, value systems and conceptual innovations that go into the constant reinvention of the discipline. As such, approaches are the methods of investigation and critical examination of the evolution, themes, foci and overall structure of a subject. That way, the major approaches to the study of public administration are classified into three main categories of traditional, modern and contemporary approaches. Initially, the first two approaches were quite helpful in the study of the subject when it was in the stage of infancy and there was not much of complexity and inter-disciplinarity in it. However, as and as the fields of enquiries started becoming wide-ranging, complex and inter-disciplinary in nature, the traditional and modern approaches were faced with their inherent limitations, giving way to the contemporary approaches. Accordingly, in this paper a detailed account of the contemporary theoretical explorations in the emerging trends in Public Administration is provided.

Amongst the contemporary theoretical explorations in the emerging trends in Public Administration, development management and new public service stand out prominently as conceptual categories. This paper covers two significant theoretical constructs of Development Management and NPS which represent important landmarks in the post-New Public Management phase of the theoretical progression of Public Administration as a discipline. However, the ideological locale as well as the functional objective of the two stand in sharp contrast to each other. Indeed, development management and NPS have been able to set new trends in understanding the institutional machinery as well as functional dynamism of public administration in current times.

Keywords: *Approaches, Methods, Development management, New public service*

Introduction

Public Administration as one of the fields of social sciences is characterised by the diversity of approaches to study the phenomena critical to its disciplinary foci. Theoretically, an approach "consists of a criterion of selection – criteria employed in selecting the problems or questions to consider and in selecting the data to bring to bear; it consists of standards governing the inclusion and exclusion of questions and data" (Dyke, 1962, p. 114). Further, the multiplicity of dimensions of a subject and the perspectives through which they can be studied act as the fertile ground for the evolution of different approaches in various fields of knowledge. For instance, referring to the subject of Political Science, Isaak (1969) writes so succinctly:

> An approach, in political enquiry, is a general strategy for studying political phenomenon. Approaches are formulated and used for a number of reasons. They can function at both heuristic and explanatory levels. That is, an approach might provide the framework for, or even take the form of, a model or conceptual scheme, or it might serve as the impetus for the development of theory of politics. (p. 157)

At the same time, with the change of focus or axes through which a phenomenon is going to be studied, a subtle transformation in the approach to study that phenomenon takes place. It is for this reason that the social sciences experience a rich variety of approaches of study.

As a field of enquiry, varying approaches have been adopted by different scholars to study and explicate the various dimensions of Public Administration. These approaches, in fact, mirror the dominant paradigmatic prisms through which the scholars have attempted to look into the theoretical structures and functional dynamics of the subject. Differing approaches, over the years, also reflect the changing priorities, value systems and conceptual innovations that go into the constant reinvention of the discipline. As such, approaches are the methods of investigation and critical examination of the evolution, themes, foci and overall structure of a subject. That way, the major approaches to the study of public administration are classified into three main categories of traditional, modern and contemporary approaches. Initially, the first two approaches were quite helpful in the study of the subject when it was in the stage of infancy and there was not much of complexity and inter-disciplinarity in it. However, as and as the fields of enquiries started becoming wide-ranging, complex and inter-disciplinary in nature, the traditional and modern approaches were faced with their inherent limitations, thereby giving way to the contemporary approaches. Amongst the contemporary theoretical explorations in the emerging trends in Public Administration, development management and new public service stand out prominently as conceptual categories. In this paper a detailed account of these two significant theoretical constructs is provided.

Development Management

Conceptually, development management represents the generational transformation in both the idea of development as well as its administration in the times dominated by the neo-liberal perspective of life. It is, in fact, the reinvention of the idea of development administration that has remained critical in conceptualizing and administering the processes and objectives of holistic development in the post-colonial societies. The move towards recasting the notion of development administration into the mould of development management has been necessitated primarily by reconceptualising the conventional idea of development into the contemporary discourse of sustainable development, on the one hand, and elevation of the traditional institutions and processes of administration into more focused and effective tools of management, on the other hand. Thus, development management

signals the recasting of the long-standing idea of development administration as per the contemporary needs of the society. Development management indeed seeks to re-strategize the objective of both short term as well as long term goals of society, and evolve appropriate management tools and techniques to achieve the desired objectives. In present times, the concept of development has been argued to give space to the idea of new public service which has become the latest fad in administrative sciences.

Though development management has been defined variously, in doing so, it is pertinent to first explicate the connotations of the terms 'development' and 'management', before arriving at the meaning of development management. As a concept in Public Administration, development is generally understood as the positive transformations brought about in different walks of life of people in a society. Such an idea of development was almost universally acceptable during the decades of rapid socio-economic transformations in the development societies. The essence of such a notion of development was to make provision for the basic needs of the life of people in order to make their life enjoyable, if not affluent. But with the emergence of a number of ecological side-effects of the processes of conventional development, presently, the term implies to that which lasts or in other words, is sustainable development. Likewise, with the cutting-edge advancements in the nature, tools and techniques of administration, the conventional administrative processes have become more and more scientific and precise, giving way to their recasting into management. In sum, thus, development management is defined as 'end-to-end management of the delivery chain for sustainable development.'

Development management may be distinguished from development administration in three distinct ways. Firstly, theoretical overtones of the term 'development' in the two differ drastically. While in development administration, it is understood in the most comprehensive sense to include all the probable aspects of the life of people, it is conceived in a very narrow sense of just delivery of services in the discourse of development management with the social objectives almost totally forgotten. Secondly, the primary objective of the performance of managerial activities in the two also differ substantially. For instance, development administration focuses on bringing about a holistic transformation in the life of people positively, whereas in development

management, the prime objective of meeting people's basic needs comprehensively has now apparently been overshadowed by environmental protection concerns. Lastly, the scales of assessing the operational dynamics of administrative activities have shifted from effectiveness, change-orientation and participation orientation to that of economy, efficiency and profitability in the delivery of goods and services. In a nutshell, development management manifests the contextualization of development administration in the framework of neo-liberal economic policies advocated by the international donor agencies, on the one hand, and incorporation of the theoretical innovations in the administrative sciences in the current times, on the other hand.

The theoretical roots of development management may be located in the neo-liberal political discourses arguing for the withdrawal of state from the overstretched welfare related activities that it had acquired for itself in the post-war period. Politically while these policies resulted in the radical recasting of the political and administrative systems particularly in developing countries, administratively, they led to the demand for institutional pluralism in the administrative structure of these countries. The recasting of political systems obviously led to the externally-induced policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization, whereas the administrative discourse got increasingly dominated by the creative theoretical interventions underscored by public choice theories and reinvention of administrative processes and products. As a result, the hitherto notion of development activities being all inclusive (social, economic, political and administrative) was replaced by the market induced activity of delivery of goods and services. Moreover, such goods and services needn't be delivered in a monopolistic manner by the government agencies. Rather, there must be institutional pluralism in which market and the private players would play a critical role in delivery of services. Thus, development management turned out to be the perfect articulation of the new conception of perceiving the needs of the life of people and the machinery and processes of fulfilling those needs.

The functional dynamics of development management are underlined by a number of interrelated steps. It begins by setting an early agenda of development that has to reflect the running theme of the entire exercise. At this

stage, the focus of management needs to be on visualizing efficient and effective strategies to achieve the ultimate objective. After strategizing the executive actions, a comprehensive framework of assigning responsibilities and stipulating rewards for delivery of objectives become sine qua non in order to make the system operational. Once the system gets going, it becomes imperative on the leader to ensure that all types of logistical as well as managerial support are available to the workers engaged at critical points of the management chain. An important attribute of development management is to take every task in hand as a team work so that maximum output could be obtained by minimum inputs. In such a team work, the involvement of community also gains salience in view of the constant review of the processes and products of the exercise. That way, development management could become the mainstay of administering development in complex situations being witnessed in contemporary times.

In sum, development management has come to symbolize a complete turnaround in the conventional discourse on development administration. It has not only dislocated the vision of holistic development that the developing countries cherished and sought to achieve through the concerted strategy of development administration, but also reoriented the nature and ethos of the machinery that has to undertake the task of carrying out such development. In a way, metamorphosis of development administration into development management signals the withering away of socialist and welfare-oriented perspectives of administration in the developing countries and their replacement by the neo-liberal concerns of placing everything at the doorstep of market forces. While such a reinvention in the administrative system of the developed western societies may be an acceptable phenomenon, it would probably not be the best way of taking care of the developmental needs of the common people in the developing countries where the toiling masses still depend upon the government for meeting many of the basic needs of their life. So, what development management seeks to establish may be appropriate for certain societies patterned on neo-liberal principles and having reasonable level of development, its prescriptions might not be plausible option to be emulated in the developing countries.

New Public Service

The concept of New Public Service (NPS) has been evolved by J. V. Denhardt and R. B. Denhardt (2007) to reorient the focus of conventional administrative systems in order to make them better equipped to meet the challenges of administering the growing complexities of the modern societies. NPS may be considered as an ideological antidote to the hegemonic assertion of the neo-liberal perspective and the only plausible framework of constituting administrative systems in the contemporary times. In other words, it is a strong rejoinder to the universalistic aspirations of the free-market forces that have sought to reverse the democratic and socialistic credentials, albeit the focus of the public administration in the majority, if not all, of the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. NPS is considered probably as a subtle effort at reintroducing the ethos and values of New Public Administration that have been ruthlessly eroded in the wake of the consolidation of neo-liberal economic agenda in almost all parts of the world. Amidst the chanting of market mantra by all and sundry, NPS argues for resetting the agenda of administrative reforms in order to make public administration responsive to the needs of the people instead of serving the interests of the market.

In putting forward the notion of NPS what Denhardt and Denhardt (2007) do is in fact an argument in favour of such a reorientation in the nature and functional dynamics of administrative system that it becomes the mainstay of serving the interests of the common people. In other words, the proponents of NPS seek to provide certain functional indicators to reshape the public administrative system so that it truly becomes a servant of the public rather than remaining a mute spectator of the free play of the predatory market forces to devour the public interests. Hence, instead of the prevalent focus on making public administration a facilitator of the market forces in delivering goods and services to the people, NPS asks for an activist role of the public administration to serve the interests of the common people rather than just playing second fiddle to the market forces. At the same time, such a role can be played by the public administration only when it is sure of its vision and mission of pursuing public interests rather than being a mere facilitator to the serving of the interests of the big corporations.

In calling for reorienting the ideological focus of public administration, NPS

does not seem to undermine the universal core values of efficiency, economy and effectiveness of the administrative processes. Its focus is mainly on putting the people first in the entire process of public administration in such a way that public interest does not suffer at the cost of market forces in any eventuality. Further, it argues for the fullest use of the administrative and managerial innovations and creativities so that the administrative activities reflect the contemporary state of things in the discipline. However, in making the administrative processes efficient and economic, NPS does not seem to compromise with the objective of effectiveness in delivering the goods and services to the people. That way, it seeks to bring the clock back by reinforcing the identity of people as citizens rather than customers. Such a conceptualization of the beneficiaries of the public services is quite reassuring in view of the fact that citizens of a country are entitled for certain rights and privileges to be provided to them by government agencies without minding the loss or gain arising out of them. But in the conceptualization of people as customers, the profit motive of the service provider becomes the foremost concern which quite often makes the agencies breach the norms of civility, humanity and democracy.

With the understanding of people as citizens with sovereign rights and entitlements, the administrative system is expected to work in an ambience of responsibility. It needs to be held accountable for whatever it does to the public institutions as well as people at large. For instance, in democratic societies like India the elected government in the form of ministers and other functionaries is put to scrutiny for its performance every five years. And, if it is found to be wanton in discharging its responsibilities as per the expectations of the people, it is simply voted out and replaced with another set of representatives. Hence, NPS argues for a paradigm shift in the accountability structure of the administrative systems in such a way that the expectations and aspirations of the public bodies including the basic law of the land or constitution are given priority over the corporate and other private interests. This seems to be quite an important reinforcement on the part of the NPS, given the fact that the current phase of corporate and other private interests claim hegemony over public interests.

The crux of the theoretical hypothesis of NPS resembles to that of the New

Public Administration to some extent, especially with those arguing for privileging people over all other concerns of administrative efficiency or increasing the productivity of an organization. Given that the NPS has been a subtle protest against the overstretched intrusion of managerialism in the realm of what has apparently been something made to serve the interests of the common people, the humanistic and democratic credentials of this argument is quite obvious. Its pursuits at snatching the mainstream public administration from the clutches of management and econometrics naturally fortify its argument for relocating the subject into the lap of political science. It indeed testifies the dictum that history repeats itself, given the action replay of the sixties and seventies, so far as dislocations and relocations of public administration as a discipline are concerned. The only marked contrast between the thrust of new public administration and NPS is probably that while the former sought the broader transformations in the discipline, in latter, the object of reformulation has been the public services only. Nonetheless, NPS heralds a new line of argumentation on the apparent nature and scope of administration amidst the war cry to make it as much non-political and entrepreneurial as possible.

Notwithstanding the newer perspectives thrown by the NPS on the nature and objectives of public services in contemporary times, it has been subjected to a number of scathing critiques. In this regard, two theoretical foundations of the NPS have been questioned by the theorists. Firstly, it has been argued that public services are a component of the administrative system of a country whose overhauling in a revolutionary sense would not be possible without resetting the foundations of the political system as well. On this count, the formulations provided by the proponents of the NPS appear to be paradoxical in nature as they argue for formation of a new public service without recasting the foundational context in which such a new service is to be created. Secondly, NPS does not seem to break new grounds in the theoretical formulations in public administration as most, if not all, of the things it prescribes have already been argued for at different places and times in the evolution of the discipline of public administration. However, despite such limitations, NPS surely provides a refreshing perspective on the contemporary phase of public administration.

Conclusion

Development Management and NPS represent two important landmarks in the post-New Public Management phase of the theoretical progression of Public Administration as a discipline. Drawing their conceptual lineages from the theoretical constructs such as development administration and New Public Administration respectively, these two streams of conceptualizations have sought to contextualize those the orizations with reference to the contemporary advances in the discipline. However, the ideological locale as well as the functional objective of the two stands in sharp contrast to each other. Indeed, development management and NPS have been able to set new trends in understanding the institutional machinery as well as functional dynamism of public administration in current times.

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Construction of City Space and Class Identity in Shama Futehally's Novel *Tara Lane*

Aditya Premdeep

Abstract

Post LPG (liberalization, privatization, and globalization) phase the divide between poor and rich has increasingly widened specifically in the Indian cities. Mumbai is no different. In fact, indiscriminate industrialisation and urbanisation have sharpened the distinction. Indeed, some of the most expensive and luxurious housing societies coexist side by side with some of the most deprived and overcrowded slums in Mumbai. Futehally's novel *Tara Lane* shows this ambivalence of the Mumbai city very realistically. This paper makes an attempt to study the reconstruction of the contemporary city space and broad class division in the Mumbai city as portrayed in Futehally's novel.

Keywords: City Space, Class conflict, Shama Futehally, Urbanization

"The city had always been a site of glaring inequality, but the immense wealth that began to be generated as a consequence of the neo-liberalization policies that had been so readily embraced by the elites sharpened the divide between the haves and have-nots even further. Today's Mumbai is simultaneously the home, as the cliché goes, of what is doubtless the most expensive private residence in the world and most likely the world's largest 'slum' population as well" (Lal, 2013, p. iv). Shama Futehally's novel *Tara Lane* not only reconstructs the Bombay city realistically but also foregrounds the material and social inequalities that are apparent in the contemporary Bombay city. She clearly portrays that urbanization and industrialization have divided the society into two halves: the rich people living in sprawling houses and the poor and marginalized are forced to live in depriving slums. Her novel stresses that class

differences are so stark and real in a metropolitan like Mumbai. In this paper, therefore, I will examine how the Bombay city has been reconstructed in Futehally's novel. Besides, I will also study the class divisions that are so real and widening in the city. Another interesting enquiry of the paper would be to examine the class neutral spaces such as Bombay locals and other public places and occasions of social intercourse such as marriage when people transcend their class positions even though momentarily.

The Bombay City in *Tara Lane*

The Bombay city has been part of various narratives. From Salman Rushdie to Rohinton Mistry various authors have vividly and realistically represented the city in their novels. Rushdie's first novel, *The Moor's Last Night* has representative depiction of the Bombay city. Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* also beautifully portrays the metropolitan city truthfully. Futehally in *Tara Lane* carries forward the legacy received from Rushdie and Mistry. The Bombay city unfolds itself throughout the novel occupying the central position in the narrative of the *Tara Lane*. Her literary representation is not singular rather she takes into account the perspectives of different classes of people who are residing and have been integral part of the city. She views the Bombay city as known for its riches and bounties but also the other side of it; the city that neglects the poor and the marginalised. The city as seen from the perspective of not only rich people but also the marginalised section of the city. Futehally also depicts the different parts of the metropolitan city from the most prominent locations to the dingiest localities; from some of the most expensive residences and bungalows to the most deprived and sordid slums. Thus, she tests the class distinction that engulfs the city into the poor and rich. Additionally, Futehally's novel reconstructs and records the functioning of the Bombay city naturalistically. From its people, its transport system, the industry, workers, rain, drought, roads, slum and slum population and their hardship to its government, the corrupt officials and its municipal councils.

First published in 1993 *Tara Lane* is a great reminiscence of Bombay city and its inhabitants during 1950s and 60s, the time where the novel is set. By setting the novel in a real location, Futehally vividly describes Bombay and its various places. The protagonist Tahera was born and brought up in Bombay. She attends her school here with her younger sister Munni and later is married in

the same city. All the events happen in this city only. The Bombay city, its places, its people, its way of life, its means of transport, its culture, its industries, its slums and its problems find prominence in the novel.

Written in the first-person narrative, the novel opens with the narrator describing Tara Lane. Tara Lane is a lane in the Bombay city, where the Mustaq family lives and is named after the protagonist Tahera which is shortened as Tara. Tara Lane is an ordinary lane in the Bombay city. It is "dusty and purposeless" and situated near "Kamal Film Studio" (Futehally, 2006, p. 9). On its right side is "a grey euphoria hedge with tiny thick cobwebs buried between its leaves" (Futehally, 2006, p. 9). Like most of the lanes of the Bombay city of 1960s, Tara Lane too has slums situated on its periphery. Poor industrial workers, the residents of these slums, live in what is famously called as 'Kholi'. The writer is very keen to observe minute details as she writes: "Behind the chickoo leaves was the kholi in which Samuel and Ayah lived" (Futehally, 2006, p. 9). The author has minutely observed the slum: "wooden edge of a string bed, the beautifully crack in the floor, the battered aluminium bowl" (Futehally, 2006, p. 9). The condition of drainage reminds of the poor sanitation of slum locality: "On either side of the small road there were narrow gutters of dark water carrying bits of paper" (Futehally, 2006, p. 10).

The City and the Slum

Slums, sociologist Ashis Nandy remarks, "are reminders that another India exists. The slums are reminders of the open wounds of a city. That reminder is painful" (2010, paras. 4-5). Does urbanization give rise to the slums? Sociologist argues that industrialization and urbanization marginalize the have-not population of the city. Slum is a bitter reality in all the cities of India and the world. Bombay city is no exception. Slum dwellers live side by side with the bourgeoisie class. Mustaq Saab, the owner of the factory and his family live in a posh locality but his domestic help as well as many factory workers live not far away from his house but they live in slum. Their condition is not good. Sanitation and water supply is not adequately provided. All of them are constantly in debt. After the strike in factory, many workers do not have money to buy ration for their family and they even face difficulty in getting the ration supply on credit. *Tara Lane* reveals and exposes the hard reality of urbanization and industrialization in metropolitan cities. It also exposes the

failure of Nehruvian development model when a large section of the population is deprived of even the basic amenities but a great chunk of the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few. The slums of the Indian cities are reminder of the loopholes of the development model and the failed efforts of the government. Futehally shows how big the divide could be between the rich and the poor and between have and have-nots in the city like Bombay.

Bombay's social world, Gerard Heuze argues, has increasingly been bifurcated. At one side is the large, organized world of the upwardly mobile and aspiring middle class and elite, striving to retain the ideals and social parameters of modernity and order. At the other side is the informal world of the zoparpatt is (slums) and chawls (working class residences) where self-employment, marginalization, and exclusion are the fundamental social conditions. Although the story is recounted from the perspective of Tahera, the daughter of a mill owner, a greater part of the narrative is devoted to the description of slums and slum dwellers. The protagonist is extra sensitive to understand the problems faced and hardship endured by the marginalised. The domestic servants, the factory workers, other employees make the prominent part of the narrative of the novel. As Tahera recalls: "The slums around the station were a huge, menacing huddle, their roofs dark and dripping like witches' cowls" (Futehally, 2006, p. 19). Here she describes the slum habitation. The huts of the servants were on the hill. Earlier this place was sparsely populated but now it seemed to be packed with huts. Four glass jars meant it was a sweet-shop. Beside it was a pile of bicycle tyres and a few spokes, making it a cycle shop. Futehally devotes long passages to the description of overcrowded and deprived slum neighbourhoods and the living conditions of the working-class population who irrespective of their contribution to the industries in which they work, are forced to live in the most deprived spaces in a metropolitan like Mumbai:

> At seven in the morning Bombay was oddly fresh, like a child's yawn. Beyond the trucks stretched a waste of mill-yards, enormous barren yards piled with cotton-waste, with perhaps an oily black wheel visible in a shed. The women and children who slept on the pavement were beginning to sit up, very still yet, their pink or green saris dim with dust, as in an old oil painting (Futehally, 2006, p. 101).

The trucks began to move and the car jerked forward. We passed the gates of the Chembur refinery, where workers were trooping in the early morning sun; then the slimy green swamp of water around which children squatted and trucks were washed, and women beat their washing on flat stones and chased away urinating dogs; on the far side was Bombay's largest slum; then the slimy water gave way to mangrove and finally to ragged patches of grass; and the highway became cleaner and swifter till it turned into a magnificent bridge which sped like a ribbon over a great silky sheet of sky-blue water. Never could I believe that this magnificence was so near our doomed and hopeless city, that the same trucks which passed the Chembur refinery so quickly reached a different world (Futehally, 2006, pp. 101-102).

"The slums around the station were a huge, menacing huddle, their roofs dark and dripping like witches' cowls" (Futehally, 2006, p. 19)**.** The novel records the picture of the Bombay city of 1960s at the time when Pandit J. L Nehru was the Prime Minister of India. Like S. Shukla's *Raag Darbaari*, Futehally's *Tara Lane* also puts to test the Nehruvian development model. Various lanes, slums, kholis, are remarkable representations of the failed development efforts by the government. Even after two decades of the independence, no substantial improvement has been made in the lives of common men and women. As the protagonist goes to Borivili National Park, she passes "through worse lanes than Tara Lane"(Futehally, 2006, p. 17). She has "to pass bare-bottomed children and rows of smelly diesel trucks" and "to get through cars and trucks and bicycles which all barked absurdly at each other and didn't move"(Futehally, 2006, p. 17). She goes to another world when she sees "rows of cannas and long buffalo sheds" (Futehally, 2006, p. 17). This gives us a picture that no development has taken place in spite of the efforts of the government. Even government has been criticized by many characters of the novel; Ayah and Samuel often call it "gorement" sarcastically (Futehally, 2006, p. 12).

The Mushtaq family's sprawling house is surrounded by squalor of the slums. This makes the protagonist "feel deep down" (Futehally, 2006, p. 81). Tahera feels:

I fell, deep down that things can't be totally....they can't be......real. I

mean,'I said desperately to my bewildered husband, for instance our lovely house and garden. When they are surrounded by such slums and such squalor…… they can't be real (Futehally, 2006, p. 81).

Thus, Tahera is not just able to notice this class division that is apparent but she is also disturbed by it. She always feels that "they can't really exist, or shouldn't exist" (Futehally, 2006, p. 82).

The Mushtaq Family

Eighteenth century English novelist Jane Austen in one of her letters once remarked about her technique of plot construction, "three or four families in a Country Village" was "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work" (as cited in Carter & McRae, 2016, p. 256). Austen's technique of novel writing was "the acute observation of society in microcosm" (Carter and John McRae, 2016, p. 256). Futehally seems to draw this technique from Austen. This is evident in *Tara Lane* as the novel mainly focuses on three or four families in the city of Bombay. It is primarily about the Mushtaq family, two or three housemaids and servants, and the factory workers who live in the nearby localities of the family residences.

The rich Mushtaq family is the owner of the factory that manufactures stationery of all sorts, where a substantial number of workers contribute to the company. The members of the family are class conscious and try to preserve their class prestige. They reside in posh locations; possess enormous wealth. However, the family surrenders its class identity when Munni and Tahera go to Ayah's hut carrying the sari and an envelope for Katreen's newly-born baby. There is also constant tension building up between Tahera and her husband Rizwan after the marriage. Rizwan is quite opposite to Tahera. Rizwan is class conscious and he makes every effort to counter the strike called by the factory workers' union.

Futehally often tests many characters through moral conundrum. Many fulfil the moral obligations quite considerably. For instance, Mushtaq, the patriarch of the family is honest and upright and upholds his integrity in spite of all circumstances. Hamida Khala considers him "wonderful" but "impractical" for the same reason (Futehally, 2006, p.137). However, no one discharges their moral obligations as does Tahera. In spite of all difficulties and adverse

circumstances she is adamant to be upright. She is never willing to give up and lose her "standard" (Futehally, 2006, p.126). She is thus incorruptible. The factory might be closed but she will not compromise with her integrity. From start to the end she will maintain that. For this she has often has fight and conflict with her husband Rizwan. But Rizwan is different. He is not shy to bribe anyone whether it is Irshadullah or the labour commissioner.

Dadi, the grandmother of the protagonist is representing the bourgeoisie. She is only concerned about her status and class and often mistrusts her servants. However, the family fortune falls at the end of the novel. The factory is liquidated. The family has to move into a smaller accommodation. It has to surrender its "standards" as the family income has dwindled (Futehally, 2006, p.126). They surrender their class and understand that there are people and class beyond their rank. The factory owner Mushtaq understands this fact quite clearly.

Class Divisions in *Tara Lane*

"Slums are parts of the city that constantly reminds us of our moral and social obligations" argues sociologist Ashis Nandy (2010, para. 5). Futehally carefully explores these obligations in her novel *Tara Lane. Tara Lane* portrays clearly the class divisions that a reap parent in the microcosm of the Bombay society. The narrow strip of Tara Lane separates the expensive mansions and overcrowded and deprived slums. At one side of the lane lives the elite Mushtaq family in sprawling mansion, who owns the stationery factory whereas the poor industrial labourers, servants, and housemaids live in congested and shabby slums at the other side of the lane. Dadi, the protagonist's grandmother and the wife of the founder of the factory lives separately "in an enormous mansion at the other end of the lane" (Futehally, 2006, p.13). The relationship between the two groups is characterized by class and money. Futehally observes the class divisions closely that shape the lane and contrasts the characters of both the classes throughout the novel. Tahera the protagonist and her sister Munni go to Montessori school by car whereas other children travel by bus. She recalls "we were only children who were brought to school in a chauffeur-driven car. The others came alone by bus" (Futehally, 2006, p. 16).

However, the poor and rich divide, the upper and lower or the haves and have-notsdistinctions narrow when the slum dwellers work for the rich people as

domestic helps, drivers, or as vegetable vendors in the locality. Although the Mushtaq family, the owner of the factory (represented through Tahera and Munni) belong to the elite group of the society, yet they attend the wedding of Samuel and Katreen. Similarly, Tahera goes to see Katreen's ailing son and assists him financially. On these occasions, the class hierarchies become irrelevant paving way for expressing goodwill. Thus, both strong class divisions as well as smooth interface between the two classes can be seen in the novel.

Nonetheless, the class divisions widen again during the conflict between the factory union and the factory owners. The factory workers are on strike because the salary has not been paid. But the newly appointed Rizwan bribes the labour commissioner and other administrative officials to take action against the workers who are on the strike. Subsequently, the union leader Irshadullah is arrested by the police. He is handcuffed and sent to police station and thus the factory workers call off the strike. Thus, with the use of the force and unfair means, the strike is cracked. Now they are left on the mercy of the factory owners. However, the call by the union to suspend the work signifies the victory of working class. There will be no work till the enquiry is complete as the workers doubt that their union leader Irshadullah has been bribed to end the strike.

Nevertheless, the division narrows again when Katreen, the wife of Samuel, finds it difficult to even find a job as a housemaid. When Tahera and Munni visit her hut, she eagerly asks for a maid's job: "'Bibi', she said, very low, 'after you are married, if you need someone to work in the house, you will not forget Katreen?'" (Futehally, 2006, p.77) Katreen's child is ill and she has no money to give him treatment. Samuel's salary has been cut due to the loan they had taken. It is the beginning of the month and she has no money and therefore has no choice but to ask Tahera for the money.

Transcending her class position Tahera is sympathetic to the factory workers and the maids and servants who work in the house. She is often disturbed by looking at the dismal condition of the slum dwellers and knowing about their plight. She couldn't stop herself from hugging or embracing her housemaid Katreen's child Anton. However, her parents are very class conscious. They always have in their mind that as part of an elite family they cannot mingle with the poor people. For instance, it is unimaginable for the Mushtaq family to

accept that Mushtaq himself went to the bank for money and sat beside the other peons. For Tahera's mother, it is against her status to go to buy the provisions herself. Tahera's parents cannot attend the wedding of their housemaid's daughter. Also, there is always a sense of mistrust for the servants. Tahera's grandmother (Dadi) always thinks that her housemaid Roshanbi steals sugar.

The class differences are further manifested in the types of houses they own or rent. The factory workers, servants, and maids live in poor and inadequate accommodation in a metropolitan like Bombay. Futehally meticulously describes the house of Mr. Gonsalvez, the typist of Mushtaq, where one room is alternatively used as a room and a kitchen: "His wife and two daughters were at stove, in the part of the room that was used as a kitchen" (Futehally, 2006, p.116). Few days of strike leave them in crisis as Mr. Gonsalvez, the factory owner Mushtaq's typist says to Tahera: "'During the strike I told the children, yes, yes, today you get only rice without any dal. But now! Eat whatever you like, I tell them'" (Futehally, 2006, p. 116)!

Mumbai, the erstwhile Bombay city, for centuries, has been a great centre of commerce and industry. The city began to be industrialised during the British colonial regime. The increasing industrialization led to large scale migration of workers to the city which greatly increased its population. People continued to come to urban centres for new opportunities. Numerous slums flourished to shelter and house the newly arrived migrants. This trend continued for decades. With the increasing industrialisation and growing working class population, class differences also gradually widened. Also, with stronger trade unions, the factory workers started to assert themselves which resulted into long strikes by the workers. This further aggravated the problem.

The Bombay Municipal Corporation is like a Victorian edifice which epitomizes the Bombay city. It is the centre of power and authority. For the uneducated slum dwellers, it is "Moonispalty" (Futehally, 2006, p. 149). The class difference merge here as people from all classes throng here to obtain documents and certificates of different kinds. Its "maze-like corridors, its smell of urine, its shabby wooden benches and its enormous dusty rooms" make it like any government and public place (Futehally, 2006, p. 148). Trucks are stretched across the long lane. The women and children who were sleeping on

the pavement are now beginning to wake up from the long slumber. Their clothes are covered with dust from the road. At Chembur refinery factory workers are gathering at the gate. On the far side, the trucks are washed and women are washing clothes. It is Bombay's largest slum where the rich-poor divide is so sharp and still growing.

In spite of the profound differences in their living quarters, the Bombay Locals make an excellent space of confluence of people from different class and rank. "'Andheri local', 'Bandra local', 'Dadar-fast', and 'Ladies First'" are means of conveyance not only for the working-class people (Futehally, 2006, p. 51). Rather they are in some ways class neutral spaces. For instance, Tahera, the daughter of the mill owner, transcends her class position when she commutes by the Bombay locals to attend her college. The Bombay locals make the space where the rich, the middleclass and the poor are packed in the same compartment. Futehally writes: "They were a tight, anxious group of smartly-dressed secretaries and students, clutching their handbags against pickpockets and beggars, pulling down their skirts to hide the edge of a nylon petticoat, wiping anxiously at moist orange lipstick" (Futehally, 2006, p. 51). The compartment is so crowded that "there was never an inch to spare" (Futehally, 2006, p. 52). At one side is "the typist in the tight blue skirt" and at the other is the vender with "a large basket of fish or vegetables"(Futehally, 2006, p. 52). Thus, the Bombay locals merge the class differences in its day-to-day functioning.

Conclusion

Futehally's novel *Tara Lane* has received certain critical appreciations. Some critics found this novel too slow to start while others have appreciated her prose style. Rukun Advani observes, "Indeed there is so much grace and strength in her prose, so much that is apposite, poetic and unpretentious, that Futehally could have risked a less unambitious structure for her book. But perhaps she believes in the Schumacher school of fiction, which shows that small is beautiful, and that sentences carefully crafted can make a book stick in one's mind sooner than epic soap-operas" (2013, para. 10). Futehally's *Tara Lane* echoes the contemporary socio-political concerns that are apparent in the Indian society. Set in the Bombay city of 1950s and 60s the novel's themes of city and class identity coincide with the contemporary concerns of the Mumbai

city. She has exposed the hard reality of the development and progress that have been achieved during the industrialisation and urbanization of a metropolis like Mumbai. Futehally has also tried to portray that in a city like Bombay, there exist two types of India: 'Rich India' and 'Poor India'. That class division is one of the defining features of the contemporary Indian cities like Mumbai is clearly manifested in the novel. Like her second novel *Reaching Bombay Central*, *Tara Lane* also exposes the moral corruption that is so rampant in the society. The novel is particularly remarkable for the reconstruction of the Bombay city. Futehally realistically portrays the city, its people, its socio-political concerns, its means of transports and its minorities with remarkable observation and criticism.

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Acceptance of Homosexual Movies: Analysis of Audience Perception

Rachita Kauldhar

Abstract

Cinema is one of the most influential artistic tools that reflects society and simultaneously impacts it. Indian cinema, one of the largest cinema industries in the world, has been varied, creative and largely heterosexual. However, the past decade has witnessed the legalisation of homosexuality in India and increased representation of homosexual characters in the cinema, creating a positive social change and greatly contrasting the long existing social prejudices towards homosexuality.

This research focuses on how homosexual movies have been received by audience of various age groups. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 respondents belonging to various age groups, through an online survey. A positive variation in the reception of homosexual movies was noted among the respondents. The findings showed that representation in cinema and legalisation of homosexuality was one of the most credited factors for variation in the audience reception of homosexual movies.

Keywords: *Cinema, Heterosexual, Homosexual, Audience, Perception*

Introduction

Nowadays films occupy a significant portion of the media products consumed by people. In India, cinema is considered as a means of individual and social transformation, which contributes to the formation of the audience's outlook, including their attitudes towards topical social issues like homosexuality and its acceptance. Indian cinema has largely been heterosexual till date with

comparatively lesser number of gay-centered storylines. This disparity in representation has led to a significant impact in the social acceptance of homosexuality. However, an increase in the number of homosexual movies produced in Bollywood in recent years is quiet obvious.

Homosexuality is a sexual orientation enduring to romantic, sexual or emotional attraction towards someone from the same sex. It is referred to as a sense of identity that is centered on such attractions or sexual behaviour. People who have romantic or sexual feelings for someone of the same sex identify themselves as homosexuals. Movies with same-sex relationship plot lines are termed as homosexual movies. Homosexual movies need not strictly revolve around a love affair between characters of the same sex but need to have a protagonist who identifies him/herself as a homosexual. Till today, cinema has been largely heterosexual with a very small number of homosexual story lines. With a greater acceptance given to heterosexual story lines, homosexual movies are still marginalised; trying to make a significant space for themselves in India.

Gopinath (2008) in "Queering Bollywood - Alternative sexualities in popular Indian cinema", demonstrates the use of queer themes in four identifiable Hindi film sub-genres. These themes in their native Indian context are non-transgressive but acquire subversive value and function as queer points of identification when viewed without a non-nationalist bias. Watching particular films with this "queer dias-poric viewing practive," (Gopinath, 2008, para 1) sex/gender play which is normative (yet still coded) within the land of the film production are often reclaimed as queer through the differently subjective lens of transnational spectatorship, a lens faraway from patriarchy, sexism, and homophobia. This particularly becomes apparent in the Bollywood dance sequences —the frequent site of Hindi sex/gender play— where coded queer desires are much easier to de-code (or re-code) when within the diaspora.

The advent of homosexual movies in Bollywood can be traced back to 90's. If, on one hand, India has seen cinematic brilliance with films like *Fire (1996) to Margarita with a Straw* (2014), it has also seen shameless generalisation and biases when depicting a queer character. Nevertheless, cinema and its audience has come a long way where there are public discussions on queer acceptance. Earlier, homosexual characters were depicted as effeminate characters that

added no meaning to the story and were kept there to add insensitive humour to the plot. However, now there has been a great change in how homosexual characters are viewed by the audience. Their importance to the story is now considered and appreciated.

The movie that sparked homosexual conversation in Bollywood was the Deepa Mehta film *Fire* (Sabharwal, S.K. & Sen, R., 2012, pp.8-9). The movie released in 1996 but it was undoubtedly way ahead of its time. Centered on a lesbian relationship between two women who were unhappy in their arranged marriages, the movie tried to break through all shackles of the society. If movies, that discussed homosexuality explicitly in the mainstream, emerged in the 1990s, the 2000s saw the release of the movie *My Brother Nikhil* (Sabharwal, S.K., & Sen, R., 2012, pp. 8-9). It released at a time when homosexuality and AIDS were considered taboos, the film handled these two delicate topics with care and created sheer poetry on the silver screen. Released in 2010, *Memories in March*, created magic on screen as this movie carefully told the story of a mother who comes to collect her son's body and finds out that he was gay.

Margarita with a Straw (2014) was a movie that talked about two topics that are not popular in Bollywood, disability and bisexuality. This raw and brilliantly executed movie is about the protagonist realizing that she is bisexual and then eventually finding love. *Aligarh* (2016) explored many dimensions and asked questions like what it is to be a homosexual in India and the ill-treatment meted out to the LGBTQ community in the name of morality and sanctity of the society. *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga* (2019) released at a time when homosexuality was newly legalised in India. The story line is centered around a lesbian relationship, how the protagonist finds the courage to accept herself and step out of the closet.

Homosexuality was legalised in India in 2018, making it too early for the Indian society to completely accept homosexuality as something normal. It has been a taboo concept in India as it is considered to be against the traditional norms by most sections of the society. The existing ideologies have made the acceptance of homosexuality difficult, but this is not the only factor responsible. Cinema reflects the society but it has a great ability to impact social attitudes and for years due to its misrepresentation of gender minorities it has failed to aid the normalisation of homosexuality.

Cinema reflects the society it portrays and in turn impacts social behaviour. It undeniably is a major influential factor in the society and has a great impact on social behaviour. There are also numerous ways in which movies affect society and the modern world we live in: some of them negative, some of them positive.

Bhugra, Ventriglio, Kalra (2015) discuss social attitudes to homosexuality – both male and female – in the context of portrayal in Hindi cinema. These portrayals have been largely negative and have had an impact on the audience to great extents (p.20). Michelle, Mazur, Emmers-Sommer (2003) in their paper, "The effect of movie portrayals on audience attitudes about nontraditional families and sexual orientation", identified gender differences on homosexual movies. Men were less tolerant of homosexuals and held fewer nontraditional beliefs about the family than women (Michelle, Mazur, Emmers-Sommer, 2003, p.173).

In this paper, the researcher aims to study the variation in audience reception of homosexual Bollywood movies in the past decade, and will focus on various age groups of the society for the analysis. The last decade witnessed the legalisation of homosexuality by the Supreme Court - these changes lead to changes in social attitude. The research aims to also discuss the possible impact of revocation of section 377 and portrayal of homosexual characters by popular actors on audience reception.

Objective of the study

To study and identify the reasons of change in perception of homosexual Bollywood movies.

Methods

Participants

The researcher has chosen random sampling for the study. The sample for this research were the residents of Delhi who are of age 21 and above. The sample size taken for the research was 100. Delhi has a large population thus, 100 as a minimum sample size was considered appropriate to get meaningful results.

Data Collection: Survey

In this research, the researcher has collected the data through an online survey with the help of Google Forms. The researcher framed questions for the survey

keeping in mind the objectives of the research. A Google Form was generated and was circulated to people on their email ids for responses, who were living in Delhi and were above the age of 21. The survey was filled by 100 people belonging to various age groups, of which 52 were male, 47 were female and one was found in the category of others. However, sexual orientation was identified for almost all the respondents (91.6% heterosexual, 5.3% homosexual and others did not prefer to answer). Simple percentage method is used to describe and analyze the collected data. The survey was conducted in the month of February, 2020.

Data Analysis

Figure 1. Respondents Age
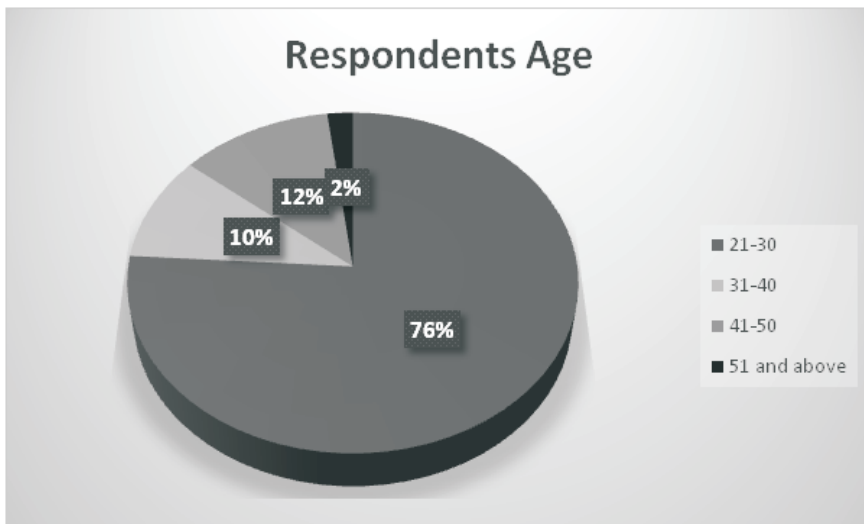
In fig.1 respondents age is measured. Respondents age group categories are categorised as 21-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years, 51 & above. The data reveals that three-fourth (76%) of the respondents are from the age group 21-30 years. Ten percent are from the 31-40 years age group and twelve percent are from the 41-50 years age group. However, only 2 percent of the respondents from the age group 51years and above participated in the survey.

Q1. Have you ever watched a homosexual movie?

Fig. 2. Have you watched homosexual movies

Have you watched homosexual movies
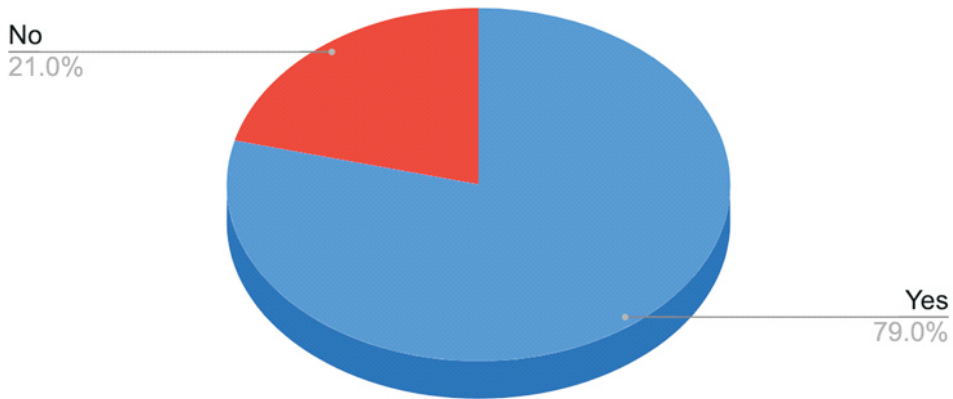
In fig.2. Respondents were asked if they had watched a homosexual movie ever. The graph depicts that a little more than three-fourth (79%) of the respondents have watched homosexual movies. While, twenty one percent of the respondents have never seen a homosexual movie.

Q2. Why would you not watch a homosexual movie?

Figure 3. Reasons for not watching homosexual movies

Reasons for not watching Homosexual movies
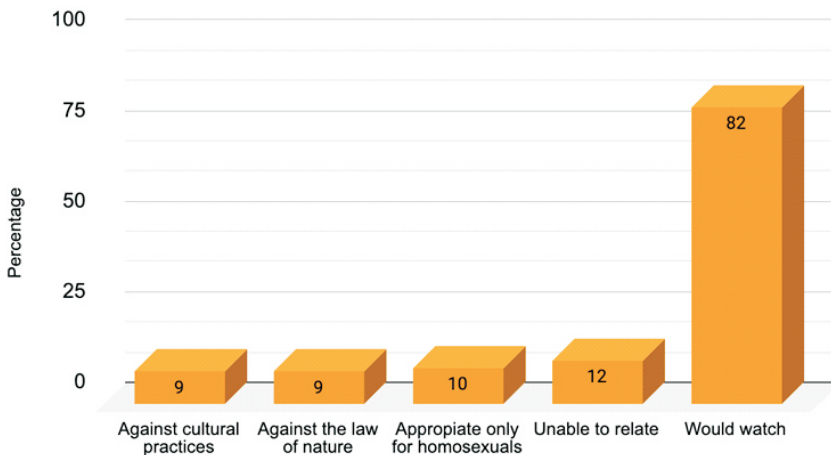
In fig.3. Respondents' reasons for not watching homosexual movies are measured. The reasons are categorised as against cultural practices, against the law of nature, appropriate only for homosexuals, unable to relate and would watch anyway. Although the category of others was also given, no respondent opted for that. Respondents were allowed to opt for multiple choices of reasons. The data reveals that a little more than three-fourth (82%) of the respondents would watch the homosexual movies anyway. However, few of the respondents identified reasons for not watching the homosexual movies. Almost ten percent of the respondents identified the three main reasons for not watching homosexual movies as being against cultural practices (9%), against the law of the nature (9%) and it is appropriate only for the homosexuals(10%). However, twelve percent are of the opinion that they are unable to relate to the content of homosexual movies.

Q3. Do you think homosexual movies are a bad influence on the society?

Figure 4. Homosexual movies are a bad influence on the society

Homosexual movies are bad influence on society
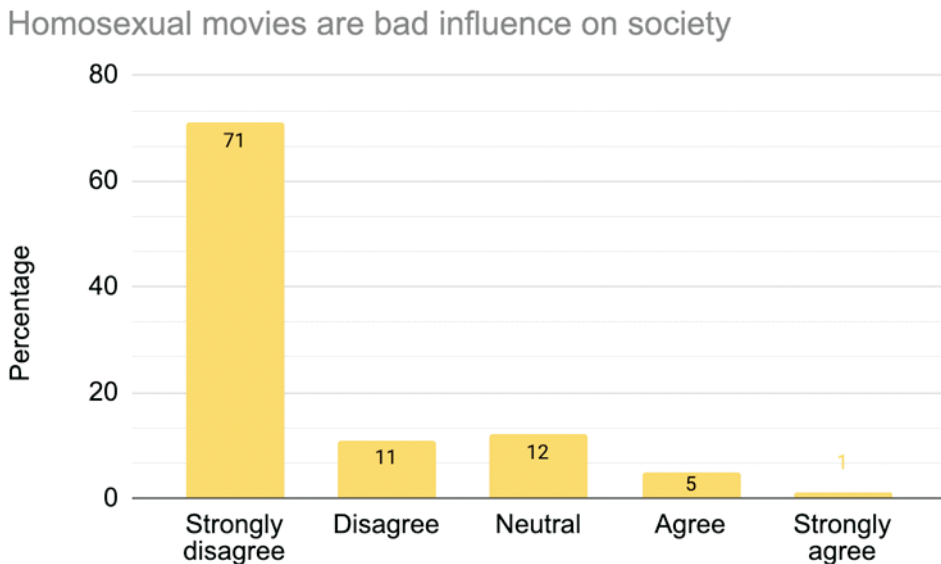
In Fig.4. Respondents' opinion on the bad influence of homosexual movies on society is measured. Five-point Likert scale method is used to analyse the ratings if they strongly disagree, disagree, are neutral, agree or strongly agree with the statement. Respondents were asked to rate the statement on the scale of 1 to 5, where 5 represents strongly agree, 4 represents agree, 3 represents neutral, 2 represents disagree and 1 represents strongly disagree. The graph depicts that a little less than three-fourth (71%) of the respondents are of the opinion that they strongly disagree with the statement. However, almost the same percentage of the respondents disagree (11%) and are neutral (12%) about the statement. It is interesting to note that only one percent strongly agree with the statement and five percent agree with it.

Q4. Does your perception of the movie remain same regardless of it being a heterosexual or homosexual movie?

Figure 5. Depicts the difference in perception of homosexual movies

Difference in Perception

Sometimes 13.0%

No 11.0%

Yes 76.0%
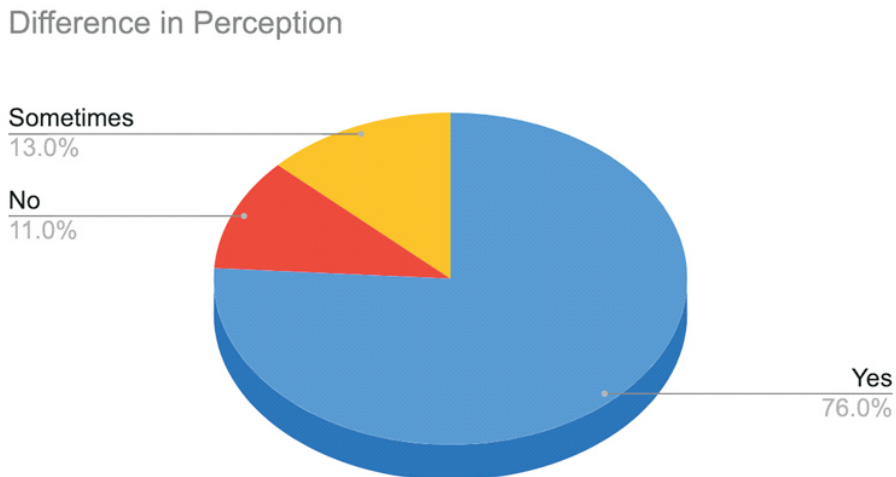
In fig.5. Respondents' differences in perception of heterosexual and homosexual movies is measured. They were asked if their perception remains same regardless of the content of the movie being heterosexual or homosexual. Almost three-fourth (76%) of the respondents said that their perception remains the same regardless of the content of the movie being heterosexual or homosexual. However, eleven percent said that their perception changes with

the content of the movie.

Q5. What are the reasons for change in perception of homosexual movies?

Figure 6. Reasons for change in perception of homosexual movies

Reasons for change in perception of homosexual movies
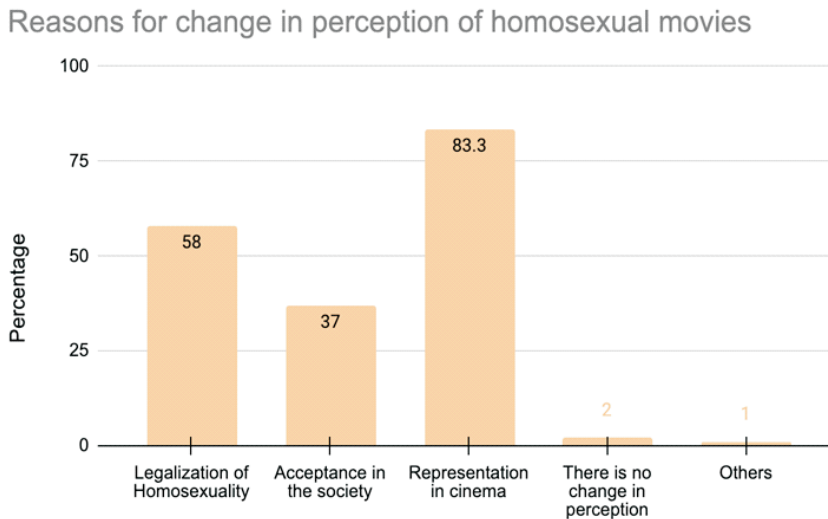
In fig.6. Respondents reasons for change in perception of homosexual movies were measured. The reasons are characterised as legalization of homosexual movies, acceptance in the society, representation in cinema, there is no change in perception and the category of others. Respondents were allowed to opt for multiple choices of reasons. The graph depicts that majority i.e. eighty three percent of the respondents identified representation of homosexual content in movies as one of the important reasons for change in perception of homosexual cinema. Although, more than half (58%) of them said legalization of the homosexuality in the country is another important reason. However, acceptance in the society has also increased, said thirty seven percent of the respondents. A very negligible (2%) response, that there is no change in perception, was also identified.

Conclusion

In the course of the study, changes in the viewers' attitude after watching the homosexual films were identified. The results depict that eighty three percent of the respondents identified representation of homosexual content in movies as

one of the important reasons for change in perception of homosexual cinema. Media representation of LGBT community and its issues in cinema, television and even on social media platforms made a glaring difference in the perception and acceptance of homosexual movies in the Indian society, especially in urban areas. Although more than half (58%) of them said legalization of the homosexuality in the country is another important reason. However, acceptance in the society has also increased, according to thirty seven percent of the respondents. Also, it is important to note that legalization and changes in the homosexual laws in the country with the widespread coverage of the non-fiction media led to the acceptance and recognition of the issues related to the queer community. Most of the changes in the viewers' attitude are detected majorly after the scraping of Article 377 of IPC.

The differences in the perception of homosexual movies can probably be related to the impact and effectiveness of films also, which can be further studied in extended research. The basis of further research raises a few areas to clarify the contribution of individual differences and the impact of movies, to analyze the acceptance in the areas other than metropolitan cities and forecasting the positive influence of movies on different groups of people. Also, the increased representation of homosexual content and issues through different platforms of media like cinema, TV and social media is imperative and need to be continued. Media is going to play a positive role in the acceptance and recognition of the queer community.

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The Printed Word, Polemics and Debate in Northern India up to 1860s

Farha Khan

Abstract

Christian missionaries used printing facilities in a major way for the purpose of Evangelization. They were trying to reach the 'elite' audience, especially the Muslims, by translating New Testament, Biographies of the Christian Saints and other literature in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages. Apart from the Translations, the original tracts were also composed in these languages, some of them with highly objectionable content. The intent was to make them Muslim friendly by imitating the Muslim way of writing. Nevertheless, the colonial administrators kept a check on the use of printing facilities by the 'natives' through various legislative laws and regulations.

In spite of these safeguards, the Indians especially the Muslims made full use of the new technology, owned numerous printing units and published a number of newspapers, polemical tracts and works of theologian literature.

Certain hitherto little-known aspects can be studied on the basis of the material obtained from archival records and missionary registers to take up questions: how far the printing venture of the missionaries had the tactic support of the Government of East India Company? Did the Government of East India Company really stand against the religious zeal of the missionary societies so that it could claim pursuing the policy of non-interference in matters of religion? Some data is also available to see how the 'Natives' especially the Muslims were aware of these complexities'. How far they were making use of these facilities and of modern printing technology, to run counter propaganda and produce polemical literature of their own?

Farah Khan

Introduction

The Printing Press and the dissemination of knowledge, though, brought a true revolution in the World; the countries of South Asia especially the regions of northern India remained deprived of its benefits till the 19th Century. The history of printing in India starts with the rehearsal of the evangelical efforts of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries in South India. Fifty-nine years after the landing of Vasco-da Gama at the Malabar Coast of Southern India, the printing press made its first appearance at Goa (in 1556). Here the art of printing was brought as an aid to Proselytization. However, during the early years, the missionaries relied almost entirely on political coercion. But, when it did not yield the desired results and the converts showed a tendency to revert to the practice of their old faith, the emphasis was shifted to the religious education of the converts. (Priolkar, 1958, p.13) In this program, indigenous languages were assigned an important role as Christian Literature was provided to the natives in Indian languages and printing press played a significant part in this endeavour.

Although, reputed scholars like B. S. Kesavan and A. K. Priolkar have done an extensive and useful study on printing and publication in India, their focus is primarily on the South-Western Coast. The thrust of this paper would be to look at how the Christian missionaries used printing facilities in a crucial manner for the purpose of evangelization in Northern India and how this can be related with the conversion in Northern India? Many of the regions in Northern India, especially Agra and Lucknow were richly populated with the Muslim inhabitants. By translating Old and New Testament, biographies of the Christian saints and other literature in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages, it seems obvious that the missionaries were targeting mainly the Muslim population. They had already used these tracts in other countries dominated by the Muslim population like Persia and Middle East. It was not that the Muslims were unaware of printing. Thirty-five years after printing of the first book in Europe (in 1457), we have evidences of material printing at Turkey in 1493 by the Jewish and Muslim settlers who had migrated from Spain and set up their presses there. In the Muslim lands like Egypt, Syria, Arabia or Turkey, the shrill call of the newspaper boy is as much a part of daily life as that sonorous cry from

the minaret above. They held a realm of journalistic literature and cheap translations. (Aqueel, 2009, pp.10-21) However, the acclaim to make the Indian Muslim aware of this technique goes to the Christian missionaries, even if they did it for their own sake.

I

The credit to introduce printing in India goes to the Portuguese Jesuits. However, if the locations of earlier printing presses in India are plotted on a map, Tranquebar, Madras, Calcutta along the Eastern Coast would represent the shaping of Indian Printing. Bombay contributes its share much later. But when one looks at the volume and variety of achievements in the field of printing, it could be said that printing in India actually had its origin at Serampore (Calcutta) by the Baptist Missionaries[1]. The main aim of the Serampore Mission (established in 1801), run under the supervision of the Trio – William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward – was to produce religious material and propagate Christianity. One more institution i.e., the College of Fort William was established in Calcutta (in 1800) with the similar intention. Its aim was also to popularize and spread the Holy Scriptures, and edify Christian literature in the regional languages of India. This schema can be traced back to the sixteenth century. The first book in an Indian language and script was based on the teachings of Christ and printed as 'Doctrina Christa' (1557). Tranquebar Mission's First English translation in 1712 was also the "Christian doctrine in question and answers" (Kesavan, 1985, p.12). Seemingly the task of the missionaries was two fold. In this process, they were not only propagating the doctrines of new faith[2], but also making attempts at weaning people from following their old religious beliefs and practices[3] by printing books on Hindu and Mohammadan religious laws. Several literary societies were especially instituted to print and publish the religious tracts in refutation of the Quran. *Ijaz-i Quran* and *Tahrif-i Quran* of the Punjab Religious Book Society could be named as few examples. Similarly, the famous periodical of Serampore Mission, *'Digdarshan'* also dealt with the topics like 'Mohammed and the Koran's History'[4].

However, very soon the missionaries realized that they could not carry this plan ahead without employing some 'native' hands[5]. Graham Shaw in his study on printing in Calcutta till 1800 emphasizes how the early phase of printing

marked a distinction between print culture and a culture that entirely depended on the race of the scribes. It was only with the help of these Indian assistants that a number of books and tracts were first translated and then printed in Indian languages. They were given the most difficult task of either translating the Christian literature into Persian language or scribing it in Bengali alphabets[6].

However, when the non-evangelists, for instance, J. A. Hicky through his *Bengal Gazette*, voiced a fearless critique of the administration, the first Censorship of Press (by Lord Wellesley in 1799) was brought into being. Thus, the first quarter of the 19th century was marked by the controversies over censorship and freedom of press that arose between the colonial administrators and the pioneers of the English and Vernacular language press in India[7]. For Company, freedom of press could have led to the subjugation of their Imperialism. Therefore, in January 1823, John Adam by issuing the most abhorrent laws against the proprietors and editors of newspapers and periodicals directly targeted the increasingly vocal vernacular press. (Stark, 2008, p.84)

What really opened the floodgates of printing in India for native printers was the removal of the obnoxious Press Ordinance of 1832 by Charles Metcalf in the year 1835. In his brief period of governor generalship, he liberated the Indian Press. The government had also conducted a survey and reduced the subscription of some of its own presses, thereby, though indirectly, ultimately benefitting the natives. Nevertheless, the British government had quite an ambiguous attitude towards censorship of the printing press, for instance, in response to the complaint from the minister of *Awadh* against the editor of the Persian newspaper, *Jam-i Jahan Numa*in 1831, Secretary to the government replied that the British Government had stopped interfering in the matters pertaining to newspapers published at Calcutta in native and English languages[8]. However, in June 1835, when the in habitants of Calcutta made a petition to repel the Press Laws at their City and the Presidencies of Bengal and Agra[9], the appeal was accommodated through the above-mentioned resolution of Charles Metcalf. Hence, one can observe an ambiguous stance of the British government with respect to censorship of press, wherein, it did accept an appeal from the inhabitants from adjacent regions on one hand, while on the other

hand, denied to help the King of *Awadh*. One may say that the government either did not want to help the native king or buy selectively adopting the policy of non-interference in the affairs of one or two vernacular newspapers, the system paved way for its own newspapers! The said statement can be validated with yet another example. The Second Report of the Press Commission of India stated that liberal concessions were granted to the papers published by the Serampore missionaries and ones under the patronage of the government. However, only nominal concessions were given to the Indians owned vernacular language newspapers[10]. To further corroborate this discrimination, J. Natarajan in the Press Commission Report of 1955 quotes Thomas Munro, "we could think to grant liberty to the printing presses, if they were owned by our Countrymen. But as they were not Our People we cannot provide them Freedom" (cited. in M.A. Siddiqui, 1957, p. 111).

Despite all checks and official restrictions on the use of printing technology by the colonial administrators, the 'natives' were making an optimum use of these facilities. Eventually, printing by the locals became so popular that there were approximately twelve thousand publications by 1832. (Wadley, 1995, p.22) In spite of the safeguards used by the government, the Indians especially the Muslims made full use of the new technology, owning numerous printing units and publishing a number of newspapers, polemical tracts and works of theologian literature. There used to be a time, when people would shut their eyes to the printed books because they thought that the printed books conveyed only Christian religion, and would offend their religious susceptibilities. However, in the new times, print gave way to their own thoughts. The educated middle class of the society played a significant role in bringing forth this change. Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1822, for instance, started '*Mirat-ul Akhbar'*, the first Indian newspaper in a vernacular language (Persian) to address the populace of North India. He was the first Indian who through his writings[11] initiated a stand against the Christian missionaries.

II

Once the natives had started using the printing technology, there was an overwhelming response to the printed reading material. Nevertheless, it is worth asking why the North Indian Muslim readers or the class of Muslim intelligentsia initially showed no apparent interest in printing press?

Undoubtedly, the great guilds of *Khatibs* (Scribes) would have been opposed to printing, as this mode was sure to take away their means of earning from them, says Francis Robinson. He further suggests that the reasons for negative response to printing were much deeper than this. Modern technology of printing was incongruous with the very heart of Islamic systems for transmission of knowledge that was done through the *Quran*. The *Quran* was always transmitted orally even if it was written as well. Writing was considered as only an aid to memory and oral transmission of knowledge from one person to another was the backbone to the Muslim education system. Robinson suggests one more probable reason for the Muslim aversion from printing. Since, printing press was an invention of the non-Islamic Civilization, the orthodox "Ulema considered this technology as a brainchild of the infidels and hence were reluctant to embrace it" (*Proceedings, Home, Public* (Oct. 17, 1822), pp. 221-259). Therefore, in the beginning, the technology of printing did not attract the Muslims, who for their educational and academic needs, used only Persian and had a good taste of the art of Calligraphy. However, contrary to F. Robinson's assertions, it may also be argued that the uniqueness and the artistic value of their art of Calligraphy and penmanship that the Muslims took pride in, made them initially somewhat reluctant from embracing the technology of printing press[12]. The ornate designs used for beautification of the hand written copies, and distinction between certain Arabic letters such as '*dal*' and '*dhal*' could not be carried out by using the printing technology in its initial phase of availability. However, introduction of the Lithographic press in India which facilitated printing in the Persio-Arabic character made this technology readily acceptable to the Muslims. Moreover, the improved printing technology now also provided re-employment to those professionals who had earlier been engaged in the production of manuscripts, and certainly constituted the bulk of Muslim population in India[13].

M. Ogborn in his *Indian ink: Script and print in the Making of English East India Company* says that the Company had introduced printing in India not simply to facilitate trade but more importantly to consolidate the empire (2008, p. xviii). However, the missionary aspirations were essentially in conflict with the implementation of Company's policy. The British had this carking fear in mind that the missionaries by spreading their religion would

agitate the 'natives' against the British Imperialism[14]. Does it imply that the government was in opposition to missionary attempts? In reality though, both the parties reciprocated the evangelical sympathies. William Carey, a missionary could not have functioned in Bengal before the Charter Act of 1813 without the Company license, had he not been supported by the Company officials. Further, William Lee, an agent of London Missionary Society, wrote to its Director, Charles Grant that 'because of the courteous treatment he had received from the acting secretary of the Government at the Fort William, he was saved from the considerable inconvenience and delay in travelling to Vizagapatam'[15]. The printing technology that had been initially introduced by the Company to facilitate their trade in India, was now being used by the missionaries to appropriate their task of evangelization.

How the British Government killed two birds with a stone can be understood by reviewing Macaulay's Minutes on Education (1835). From here on, there was a clear shift in the education policy of the Company, wherein not only education in English language was introduced, but all funds for education were also appropriated for printing English literature alone.[16] The objective was to gradually and indirectly do away with the study/ learning of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit languages, and to introduce the Bible, not as a holy book but as a secular text. This would obviously result in a gradual disconnect of the people from the knowledge of the principles of their own faith, accompanied by their attention being directed towards books containing the principles of Christian Creed and Western learning. This approach helped not only the government to procure the '*Angrezi Baboos'*[17] for the functioning of Company office, but also paved the way for the Christian missionaries in attaining the *'Kala Padris'*[18].

Therefore, the new education policy which emphasized on learning of English language and teaching of Bible and other texts from the West, gained support, both manual and financial, from all evangelists, that is from a Church militant[19] to the English and American State, and from the British government to the Christian in habitants[20] within India. Consequently, one witnesses a stupendous rise in the financial resources of the missionaries operating in India in the nineteenth century, for example, income of the Church Missionary Society had increased from thirteen hundred dollars in the year 1815 to one lakh dollars by 1850[21]. The missionaries had now started making a profound impact

on the popular imagination of the masses. The missionaries were also willing to incorporate changes in their already written and translated books/ tracts, which till now, had aroused feelings of suspicion and mistrust from the natives. These novel approaches, for instance, comprised of inclusion of eye-catching illustrations and comments in the books to attract the attention of the natives. The Indian Report prepared by the joint committee of Foreign Mission opined; for those we cannot use the power of verse e.g., the people of rural communities, the illiterate and semi-literate class our narrative should be simpler in form than the current translation of the Gospel. We should tell them the Bible histories, books about missions and Christian ethics in colloquial and easy rhyme with colored pictures.

There was also an attempt to imitate the Muslim way of writing in these printed books; every tract in Urdu invariably began with a *Quranic* verse and concluded with some suitable poetry. For the female readers, they introduced women's page, such as *Nur Afshan* (at Ludhiana).[22] In this context it is interesting to quote Sir William Muir, "On the running of the Bible, brief notes, lithographed in the margin, and would prove invaluable; such a work should be executed so as to accommodate the native taste. Take the Lukhnow Coran with its running marginal Urdoo notes as the model." (Muir, 1897, p.51) The intent was obviously to make the reading material Muslim friendly.

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III
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Shah Abdul Aziz (1746-1824) of Delhi, one of the greatest religious scholars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, used printing technology to publish his reformist literature and promote Islamic Education amongst the Muslims. But he and his descendants, like Sayyid Ahmad Rai Bareli of *Tariqah-I Muhammadiya*, through their thoughts and by the medium of their early reformist literature, *al- Iman* and *Sirati-Mustaqim,* not only developed their own religious literature, but also used the printing facility to advance their objectives of education, reform and polemics against the Christian missionaries. The Muslims had now begun to use the same printing technology to their own advantage, with which they had been earlier manipulated by the Christian missionaries. With the recognition of Urdu as an official language in 1837, the Protestant missionaries vigorously began to use Urdu language to translate, write, and preach. Their stated intention was to undermine the

authority of religious elites, the *Ulema* and the Brahmans but their main agenda was to reach the lingua franca of the masses, while the government by this policy tried to wean away the remaining particles of the Mughal power.

However, the Muslim reformers used the same convenient tool of Urdu language to implement their basic goal of creating consciousness among the Muslim individuals and to make them competent to stand against the challenges posed by Christianity. In the Pre-Mutiny era, print had become the main forum for religious debate; it was an era of religiously partisan newspapers and pamphlet wars. By 1820s, the emergence of Urdu newspapers, particularly in north India, made it quite evident that printing and publishing was widely accepted among Muslims and also used for the advancement of knowledge and proliferating social reforms. According to the report of *Akhtar Shahanshahi*[23]*, Matba-i Rahmani* of Delhi (1813) and *Matba-i Sultani* of Lucknow (1819) were among the first few Urdu presses established by the Indian Muslims. Another printing press in Urdu language, though unnamed, was established in Kanpur in the year 1830. Printing presses in Agra, whether in English or vernacular language, were instituted a bit later, i.e., in 1845[24]. However, within a short span of 12 years, twenty-three papers were printed and published from here only. Very soon the erstwhile capital of the Mughals had become the hub of printing and publishing. The city of *Nawabs,* Lucknow till the year 1843 also had at least twelve printing presses. India's first Hindi newspaper, *Udand Martand* by Pandit Jugal Kishore Shukla was also getting published from May, 1826 onwards.[25] Thus, the subcontinent saw a host of indigenous papers and journals being published in vernacular languages. This helped the Indians to resist the evangelist proclamations of Protestant missionaries and their ally, the Colonial Government.

The missionaries' antagonism not so evident in their earlier publications, now was undoubtedly visible in their polemical literature. It is worth observing that while there were usually no profane references to Christianity in Muslim literature, one could often find offensive depiction of Islam and its Prophets by the evangelists.[26] Now it became apparent to the natives that the aim of the Christian missionaries with the aid of government support was to convert the whole nation to Christianity. Hence, the *Jihadi*[27] *Ulama* like Syed Abdullah of Serampore, who in order to counter the missionary activities, had established a

printing press *Matba' e Ahmadi* in Calcutta in 1824, (Qadiri, 1988, pp. 197-98) along with the other Muslim activist, issued *Fatwa* for *Jihad* against the British in the great uprising of 1857.

The Muslim press had become very active. The newspapers had begun to question and challenge the objectionable practices of missionaries. J. Natarajan's assertion that 'the Vernacular newspapers played no role in the uprising of 1857' seems rather foolish and uninformed. (1956, p. 66). Role of the press in the First War of Independence could be well understood by referring to what Lord Canning said on 13 June, 1857; "the vernacular Akhbars by publishing the latest khabars, fill the heart of every Indian with plenty of valor and fearlessness that now they are ready to revolt." (cited in Siddiqui, 1957, p.111) Though these newspapers claimed to have an apolitical tone, even the simplest of news published therein, directly or indirectly, targeted the encroachment by the imperial power.

Urdu and Persian newspapers like *Miratul-ul Akhbar, Sultan-ul Akhbar, Delhi Urdu Akhbar, Sadiq-ul Akhbar* or *Tilism-i Lucknow,* had to suffer after the revolt, because of their anti-British stance during the Mutiny[28].

Conclusion

One may conclude that despite experiencing the most rigid period of proscription, the Indians and specially the Muslims had realized that printing technology could be used as an important tool to gain freedom from the colonial rule. Therefore, the British government in order to exercise control over the publishing activities by the natives and check formulation of any strong public opinion against the colonial rule devised several tactful strategies. Apart from the prohibition and censorship laws, the government also provided patronage to the native press to garner a closer relationship with printing in vernacular languages. The aim was to win the allegiance of some loyal editors and publishers, who could disseminate 'useful literature' in vernacular languages (an indispensable means of communication) in support of the colonial administrators and also help in gaining access to the public beliefs in future. However, some of the Indian publishers used this colonial strategy reciprocally to their own benefit. For instance, the Naval Kishore Press of Lucknow is considered as a mile stone in the history of printing and publication in India. Even after the Mutiny, Munshi Nawal Kishore's press continued to be the

largest national publishing house and played a significant role in the preservation and dissemination of Islamic textual knowledge. (Stark, 2008, pp. 86 & 225)[xxix] Contemporary scholars and *Ulema* held high regard for the publications of this press and used the same to once again assert their identity and stand against the Proselytization. Thus, it is not surprising that Francis Bacon named printing technology along with gunpowder and compass, as one of the three things that had changed the appearance and state of the entire world.

End Notes

1.   Serampore Mission translated *The Bible* in more than 45 languages of which 38 were translated at Serampore; W. Carey himself translated it in 29 languages. In 1800 came the Bengali version, in 1805 Marathi, in 1811 Persian, in 1812 Hindustani and in 1813 Arabic.(B. S. Kesavan, 1958, p. 254).

2.   By translating their Scriptures into the native languages.

3.   By commenting on vernacular religious literature.

4.   This information came from the catalogue of books, courtesy; Vidyajyoti, The theological Institute of Christian Learning, Delhi.

5.   As to import types from London was 7 times expensive than paying the local labor.

6.   *Home, Public*, No.2, August 29, 1799.

7.   Until then on the publications of English language only some nominal restrictions were imposed. When in the year 1807, governor general lord Minto felt that the publications of the Baptists could be provocative. He did not ban or brought any censorship law but ordered them to move their press to Calcutta. *Foreign, Secret*, No.10, Oct. 5, 1807.

8.   *Foreign, Political*, No.55-57, June 17, 1831.

9.   *Home, public*, No. 38, Feb 6, 1835.

10.   Calcutta Gazette and India Gazette were under the patronage of the government; always remain postage free (J. Natarajan, 1958, p. 13).

11.   Apart from this paper, through his other writings e.g., *Sambad Kaumudi* and *Brahamanical Magazine also,* he answered the challenges posed by the missionaries. *Proceedings, Home, Public,* Oct. 17, 1822.

12.   Something similar had happened in the Mughal period also. When Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-1627) was shown a copy of the Bible in Arabic script printed in Italy by the Jesuits, Jahangir had enquired about the possibilities of converting it into the *Nasta'liq* script; Sir Edward Maclagan, pp. 2, 11and 208.

13.   *Encyclopedia Iranica,* Vol. II, 2009.

14.   As English East India Company was trying hard to establish its sovereignty on its colonies, now the Company did not want anyone to ruin it, especially the missionaries who were not even

their co-patriots but were Dutch.

15.   An Indian Bishporic was established under the same Act. (Calcutta Review, 1850, pp. 1-35). Similar information also available in *ImperialGazetter of India*.Vol II. (1908). Clarendon Press. pp.259-60.

16.   *Home, Public, No. 6-8, June 3, 1835*.

17.   *The Report of the General Committee of Public Instruction for the year 1833, Home, Public,* No. 24, March 25, 1835. From the year 1832-33, number of students in the Oriental Seminary of Delhi College decreased from 300 to 257 while in the Delhi Institution (a branch of Delhi College, where only English was taught) increased from 153 to 160. Though the changes in numbers may not appear very drastic, but gradually the natives had to learn English language as a means of earning livelihood. Very soon the study of Bible as a schoolbook became compulsory in every school. Translated versions of the religious books of Hindu and Muslim faith often engrafted with Christian teachings were also used to influence the Indians to convert to Christianity, for instance, Master Ram Chandra of Delhi College had abandoned his native religion and converted to Christianity.

18.   Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, pp. 16-19. *British Parliamentary Report of 1852* also mentions the use of Bible as a simple School book, p. 781.

19.   W. Carey, who was being paid a salary of Rs. 1000 per month for teaching at Fort William, writes in his letter of Feb 11, 1807; that his salary will be of much help for the mission, esp. for the purpose of printing the Bible and New Testament. A. K. Priolkar, op.cit, p. 62.

20.   When the famous polemical tract '*The Mizanulhaqq*' of the German missionary P fander, due to the shortage of finances was out of print during the mid-19th Century, the Christian Inhabitants of India undertook the task of printing this book as 'one of the noblest cause', *Calcutta Review*, 1845.

21.   *Indian Church Directory 1919-20*, pp. 56-82

22.   *Christian Literature in Muslem Lands; A Study of the Activities of the Moslem and Christian Press in All Mohammedan Countries,* prepared by joint committee of Foreign Mission, New York, 1958, pp. 41-120.

23.   Mohammad Ateeq Siddiqui, mentions it as the basic source of information about the earliest Urdu newspaper and press. While it also gives information about the material and techniques available in other languages, p. 265.

24.   After Kanpur and Meerut, Agra came at the third position in establishing printing presses.

25.   *O.C. Home, Public , No. 64-65, June 29, 1826*.

26.   *Home, Ecclesiastical, No.1, Sep 1, 1807*.

27.   Here the word 'Jihad' is used not in the context which was used by the colonial government, but to represent a group of people who stood against the opponents to save their religion, who strived and struggled to attain the Religious, Social and Political liberty not only for themselves but for the whole Muslim community.

28.   When Sultan ulAkhbar exposed the motives of the British Government behind the

murder of British resident William Fraser, it had to face censorship. Similarly on opposing the government policies others also had to face the worst fate; Maulvi Baqar Ali was shot dead and the editor of Sadiqul Akhbar was poisoned. (M. A. Siddqui,1957, p.340).

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Zarina Hashmi: A Critical Study on the Exhibition 'Paper like Skin'

Anshu Singh

Abstract

Indian art consisted of many distinct artistic styles where artists blended traditional and western art traditions and created art depicting the rapid change in the society and even in the art styles. Zarina Hashmi is a semi-abstract artist who stepped into the Indian art world to express the after effects of partition indicative of migration from India to Pakistan. Her relationship and engagement with paper has been very unique. The involvement of Paper in her artworks is surrounded by themes like exile, isolation and displacement evoking her inner feelings. Through paper she identifies her belongingness which she compares with skin.

The study enquires about the artworks created by Zarina Hashmi and related to home revolving around paper which were exhibited in the popular exhibition 'Paper like Skin' at Hammer Museum, Los Angeles featuring approximately 60 artworks. It focuses on few of the important artworks which reflect the artist's nostalgic memories back at home in India.

The concept of using Paper as the common medium in most of the artworks has been studied here. The paper also focusses on the observation that the medium Paper has been an essential element during the artist's journey. Zarina being the strong woman of her times has been able to distinguish her longing for a real home; detached from all the temporary houses she resided in. The process of her learning art depicts her attachment with Paper, whom she personifies and compares her with her own life situation.

The interpretation done through the artworks indicate that the artist did not

choose to return back to her real home in India as she could not erase the pain and suffering, she underwent during partition. The faded memories in her mind where she was separated from her home and her childhood memories are quite visible through her artworks.

Keywords: *Displacement, Exile, Home, Partition, Paper.*

Introduction

The artist, Zarina Hashmi daughter of a university history professor, was born in 1937 in Aligarh, India, a sizable city southeast of New Delhi in the region of Uttar Pradesh. She was 10 when the partition of India and Pakistan occurred. She attended the Aligarh Muslim University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in mathematics in 1958, with hopes of becoming an engineer. It was then that her family moved to Pakistan, where their Muslim faith encountered less resistance. She married a diplomat in the Foreign Services and since then lived and worked in Thailand, France, Germany, Japan and the United States first Los Angeles, then New York. During her stays at these places, Hashmi learnt about several techniques in painting and art. She studied woodblock printing in Bangkok and Tokyo, and intaglio with S. W. Hayter at Atelier-17 in Paris. The artist currently lives and works in New York.

A glimpse of her life story reveals that Zarina's artistic practice on the whole remains overwhelmingly enmeshed in the experience of political, territorial and social rupture that we know today as Partition. So do the various places that she visited in her lifetime. Themes of displacement, exile, search for home and social fracture, a result of the experiences Hashmi underwent, became the underlying theme in her work. Not only do her paintings but her choice of material also present the themes artistically. The present paper examin select works of Zarina Hashmi to study the vivid and varied ways in which her themes find expression in her work of art.

Surfaces as metaphors

Hashmi's use of surfaces; paper, woodcut etc. play a major role in the work that she produces. They seem to be integrated with the theme that she portrays in her work. The imagery in her early works derives from the material that isPaper which is typically made from wood pulp, and she printed simple designs from inked fragmentsof wood. While the remaining artworks are non-figurative, the

grainy compositions suggest elements revolving around her first home fences, screens, walls and pens, or else the shapes seem to fold back in on themselves. Throughout her travel experience, she collected paper as a souvenir. She was curious to work with unconventional printing processes and to discover new uses for paper. She explored a number of methods includings cratching, folding, cutting, knitting and sewing paper. She also experimented with pulping paper, which initiated her to create paper sculptures.

"Paper is the most organic material, almost like human skin. You can scratch it, you can mould it, it even ages." (Pesenti, 2011, para. 1)Paper is central to her as a surface to work on material with its own individualistic properties and history. According to her, the paper itself has a biography of its own and serves as a vehicle of memory. It bonds people with history, identity and a sense of commonality. Paper fixes the memory of facts and immortalizes men providing a fundamental nexus between past and present.

Paper from Khadi Gram Udyog Bhawan was used in the creation of the artworks with the intention to promote traditional craft which was quite prominent in both Hindu and Muslim cultures. She imparted an individuality of her own character to each print generated by coupling the fragile paper with the hardwood. Her motive was to transform the flaws of the paper used into virtues which was made possible through sharpened lines, tightened compositions, open spaces that gave the paper an escape to breathe freely. She considered her life with the paper and in order to fulfil her desires she allowed the paper to breathe even when she was suffocated with the happenings in her life.

Zarina used specific types of papers to express a specific sense of identity. Paper according to her understanding was fragile and resilient in literal and metaphorical realms. She merged a carver and a draftsman to bring out scratches, folds, perforation and many more physical qualities. Hashmi's ruminations on place are a central consideration of her prints: A sheet of paper functions as her portable but constant home. She took help of bold handcrafted lines and shaved surfaces to express the cultural diversity which marks notions of boundary, loss, displacement and home.

The woodcuts are wrapped in themes of home and displacement, exile and social fracture and tend to uncover the marks of her own biography. The whole process is graphically constructed in woodcuts through space and time. She has

inscribed memory through geometric lines, mapping locations and dislocations in cities that have been destroyed by political conflicts. What is new to her creation is the shift from her own identity to a shared identity. She draws an analogy between her life and the different borders on the map.

Zarina's artworks are not only monochromatic, but also symmetrical and filled with geometric shapes. The artworks are the influences of exile, displacement and search for one's origin which have persistently concerned her since childhood. She consciously attempts to simply lay her concerns bare and raw to her audiences. She makes use of the starkness of paper and bronze and metamorphoses them in several ways that are embossing, casting or laminating and mixing patina with the bronze. The several combinations of paper and other materials (generally inked fragments on wood) on paper giving rise to newer metamorphoses, symbolize new identities that man acquires with every new displacement faced. The geometric shapes which are abstract in nature symbolize doors, boundary walls, floor plans, fences, jail (ornamental screens) and the archetypal house form in her works indicate a longing for a lost shelter.

Artworks:

Homes I Made/A Life in Nine Lines

Figure 1: Zarina Hashmi, "Homes I Made/ A Life in Nine Lines", 1997.

Note: Portfolio of 9 etchings and one cover plate printed in black on Arches Cover white paper, Chine Colle on handmade Nepalese paper.

It is a portfolio of woodblock prints from 1958 to 1997, which depicts the floor plans of the houses and apartments in which she has lived, mostly during those two decades of travelling with her late husband. She calls their Paris apartment Watched the Seine flow by and waited for him to come home; she deems their residence in Bonn an uncertain time; and she anoints the outline of her New York City loft A space to hide forever. (Beth, 2012, p. 115) She inks almost exclusively in black as she believes that black makes one read. In the portfolio, she has included the nine places where she has resided in with her husband right from Bangkok, New Delhi, Paris, Bonn, Tokyo, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz to New York.

The portfolio was the only memory of her stay with her husband in different parts of the world. She effortlessly withdraws attention covering the themes of home and homelessness at the same time. She conveys that one cannot have many homes but home is a single unit providing shelter and peace.

Letters from Home

Figure 2: Zarina Hashmi, "Letters from Home", folio I- VIII, 1984.

Note: Woodblock and metalcuts printed on handmade kozo paper and mounted on somerset paper, 11½ x 8¾" smallest image size, 12 x 9" largest image size, 22½ x 15½".

"Letters from Home" is a portfolio of eight monochromatic woodblock and metal cut prints, produced using original letters written in Urdu to Zarina by her sister Rani. From the letters, the artist made printing plates which she used to print onto handmade Kozo paper. The letter imprint was then surrounded or overlaid by the outline of a house, a floor plan or the map of a geographical location, using a woodblock print.

The series was made in her New York studio in 2004. As the title indicates, "Letters from Home" acts as a preserved archive of the letters sent to her by her sister over a period of time. Since her departure from India in 1958 to accompany her husband Saad Hashmi, the artist has moved frequently between cities, countries and continents. Immediately after her departure, her family was required to relocate to Pakistan, resulting in the loss of the family home. They moved from Delhi in India to Karachi in Pakistan, where her sister still lives.

The loss of the home and the birthplace as the home are the main themes. Home plays an important part in her work. She has said: 'Home is the centre of my universe; I make a home wherever I am.' (Sen, "A conversation with Zarina", 2006, p.13) It draws on a range of sources, from her childhood home in pre-partition India to her sojourns across the world. The portfolio functions as a series of maps that trace the artist's journeys and record the places in which she has lived. Working with actual geographical locations, she acts as cartographer, preserving communication from her sister within the sites of her own memories. Homes, floor plans and routes are printed onto the letters, presenting her life as an atlas, one that is both a universal document and a record of personal experience. It reveals her experience of being distanced from home and loved ones, and functions as a diary of the activities of the family she had left behind.

Text plays a key role in her work and the inclusion of characters written in her native Urdu, act as a reminder of the geo-political specificity of her cultural heritage and identity. The Partition of India not only dislodged the physical connection of north Indian Muslim families to a particular place, but it also disrupted a sophisticated cultural milieu. Hashmi has said: 'The words are in my own language, recalling a time, a sensibility of thought and feeling.' (Sen,"A conversation with Zarina", 2006, p.13) In light of the relative decline of the

literary form of Urdu in parlance in pre-partition India, which acts as an assertion of personal identity and a statement of post-partition defiance.

Home is a Foreign Place

Figure 3: Zarina, 'Home is a foreign place', 1999, portfolio of 36.
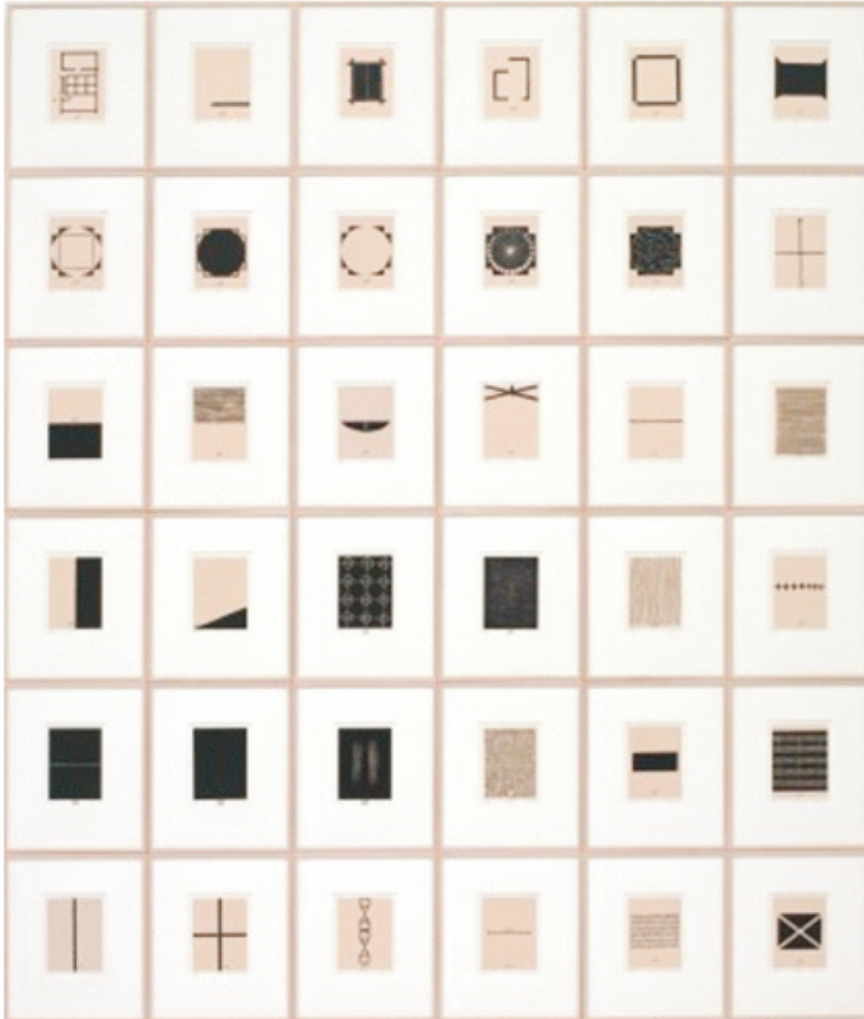
Note: Woodcuts and letterpress, mounted on paper.

The work speaks about the theme of exile. It is a work that represents a very difficult moment in Zarina's life, she made it right after she was being threatened to leave her home in New York, her working space, her life space.

What does the home mean for her? When one thinks about the title, Home is a Foreign Place, it represents so much of what Zarina's work is about. Home as a notion seems to be confusing for her. She represented India at the Venice Biennale yet she does not have an Indian passport. Her family lives in Pakistan but that country too is somewhat alien to her. In each of the 36 woodcut prints that make up the artwork Home is a Foreign Place, there is an inscription in Urdu, the language from Zarina's childhood.

The use of a single-word inscription in Urdu represents another element of Zarina's memory. It refers to the artist's notion that home can be described as a foreign concept. Language is central to the artist's work, and in the series the Urdu text pays homage to a place, she left several decades ago. Zarina said that home is wherever she is, that she carries her home with her (Pesenti, 2011, para. 2).

She experienced multiple political conflicts and their side effects such as the partition of India when she was just 10 years; the progressive loss of Urdu, her mother tongue; religious wars or displacement of borders including that of a separate India which resulted in the emigration of her family to Karachi giving rise to an irrevocable nostalgia for lost ground. Without further reason to return, Zarina in the thirty-six woodcuts demonstrates her interest in both the perception and remembrance of one's place, or in her case, the memory of the house where she grew up. The six rows of prints, to be read from left to right, depict specific sites from her childhood home and abstractions of particular moments that the artist recalls. For instance, an image of a ceiling fan, titled Afternoon, refers to the fact that the artist "can't think of an afternoon in India without a ceiling fan." (Pesenti, 2011, para.2)

Below each print is a corresponding single-word inscription in Urdu, which represents another element of Zarina's memory and refers to the artist's notion that home can be described as a foreign concept. Language is central to the artist's work, and in the series the Urdu text pays homage to a place she has left several decades ago. Zarina's portfolio comes from a deep appreciation for the minimalist sensibility she uses to communicate her personal attachment to and memory of a place.

Atlas of my World

The title,"Atlas of My World" is derived from Adrienne Rich's book of poems *Atlas of a Difficult World.* People who were exiles from their own country: Holocaust survivors, or people who had the desire to return home are part of this artwork. "I realize that if you tell your story and if someone can come and cry on your shoulder, I think that is sharing." says Zarina (Hoskote, 2009, pp. 6-13). She does not do anything that is not a part of her own life. If she makes a prayer bead, she uses it; it is not something that is decoration. She does believe in a spiritual life, and she is not embarrassed by that. That's how she is.

Through a retrospective that spans over three decades, Zarina creates a visual landscape that examines the perception of personal histories and geographies. Using delicate geometric forms and fluid composition, she reduces complex ideas to their essential and evocative elements. "Cities" is an elegy to nine cities (Grozny, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Beirut, Jenin, Baghdad, Kabul, Ahmedabad and New York) that have suffered violence or destruction in varying forms. In the black and white woodcuts, each skeletal area is delineated in eloquent tones to embody a relic of a forgotten past. In "Atlas of My World", six maps of nations and countries are drawn in arresting black lines, to exemplify the geographic territories she has made her own; "to signal her symbolic possession of those sites, on which she superimposes her own meanings, the artist identifies each nation in Urdu script. By claiming these far-flung territories for her personal atlas, the artist emphasizes the multiplicity of contexts in which she locates herself." (Hoskote, 2009, pp. 6-13)

DIVIDING LINE

The work "Dividing Line" (2001), a woodcut print on handmade Nepalese paper, represents the delineated border that separates India from Pakistan, and a period of turmoil in which Zarina was personally affected. As explained in the *Guggenheim* news release about the exhibition, "the border between India and Pakistan that was demarcated by the 1947 partition caused the displacement and death of millions of people, and eventually forced Zarina's family to leave their home in 1959". (Jumabhoy, 2011, pp. 306-307) She is, therefore, one of the few artists in contemporary times who engages with the subject of partition in her work in significant ways and who has also lived

Figure 4: Zarina Hashmi, "Dividing Line", 2001

Note: Woodcut printed in black on handmade Nepalese paper, mounted on Arches Cover white paper, 40.6 x 33cm, image; 65.4 x 50.2cm, sheet, edition 16/20 UCLA Grunwald Centre for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Purchased with funds provided by the Friends of the Graphic Arts.

through it, through the process of nationalization, the devastation and great personal loss that Partition naturally engendered in the mid twentieth century.

More specifically, Zarina's "Dividing Line" raises poignant questions around what the artist or the visual arts can uniquely contribute to the writing of partition history, to an understanding of partition in the present. It endeavours to position 'Dividing Line' as a historiographical 'threshold', as the space between "severed histories" (Zamindar, 2010), the point at which divergent histories of the subcontinent and marginal histories lost or ignored can be sutured together to constitute something new whether it be a more complete history of partition, a new perspective or merely further questioning. It exhibits

a unique capacity to both recognize and 'map', the tensions and contradictions inherent to the historiography of partition, namely, the disparity between nationalist and subaltern accounts of partition violence, although alluded to previously, yet enabling the artist to further harness them to new ends. It highlights Zarina's evolving use of cartography and abstraction in her practice on the whole in an effort to interrogate the ways 'Dividing Line' especially makes visible contending histories of partition. It is also an attempt to place Zarina's work in dialogue with the current debates unfolding around secularism in South Asia. She further negotiates the historical terrain, arriving with 'Dividing Line' at new questions and directions for the historiography of partition. It is forceful and tenuous in character, the line carves the surface of the print into two disparate sections, recalling the precision and the spatial fragmentation of a map.

Conclusion

Displacement and memory, and a keen yearning for order, are the very compelling and personal key themes running through Zarina's exhibition 'Paper like Skin'. Her first ever retrospective, spanning fifty years, presents not only a deeply felt personal commentary on a life lived in exile, but also a catalogue of the remarkable breadth of technique that has become integrated into the printer's art.

Paper is central to Zarina's practice, both as a surface to print on and as a material with its own properties and history. Her works include woodcuts as well as three-dimensional casts in paper pulp. Zarina's vocabulary is minimal yet rich in association with her life and the themes of displacement and exile. The concept of home whether personal, geographic, national, spiritual, or familial resonates throughout her oeuvre. Zarina's oeuvre explores themes of diaspora, nostalgia, and memory. Paper reveals the breadth of Zarina's vision and the versatility of her practice, as explained by Hammer director Ann Philbin. Her mature works display interventions on paper that are at once fierce and delicate; creating textured surfaces that invite intimate viewing and extended contemplation. The artist emphasizes on the sculptural sensibility that underlies printmaking, originating in the carving of a woodblock or the assembly of a relief collage. 'Paper Like Skin' presents a survey of Zarina's

career that encompasses the autobiographical topographies of distances travelled and time spent, superimposing historical events and personal experiences by way of the elusive, ineffable, yet essential, idea of home.

Zarina Hashmi's life in an undivided India, the freedom struggle, followed by independence and partition and then travels around the world inform her works. Home and exile are the issues that concern her the most in her works. Zarina's art has no temporal destination because her journey never ceases, she is always and never at home in the world.

The home is not real. The real home is where we die. That is where we will live for eternity.

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