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CONTENTS

Editorial

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Throughout the ages, education has been the catalyst in transforming and improving the standard of human well-being. Education includes the overall development of an individual and is the backbone of everyone's life. Since education is constructive in nature that helps an individual to improve his/her status of mind, body and spirit, it is imperative for every academic institution to play key role in providing the proper environment for academic researchers and students, with unlimited sources of new knowledge and platform to display their innovative and transformative skills and solutions. In that way, it would set the creative wheels of the student's mind into motion and challenge them to think critically with creativity. And for all these to achieve, quality becomes the defining elements of education.

In the modern era, the technological revolution has given birth to new waves of great inventions and discoveries, which have enabled humanity to reach beyond the horizons. Thus, in the 21st century, one of the most important technologies would be the introduction of the internet, which literally put all the information available in the world at our fingertips and allowed the people to communicate globally. Technologies in the form of e-learning play an important role in continuing the communication of education by exchanging knowledge and broadening one's ideas necessary for building a promising future.

Overall, in today's fast changing world, education is one fundamental means by which a dream of an ideal society with a desired social change and upliftment can be realized. Not only does it provide us the knowledge about the world and the different issues happening in the world, but it also helps us to think, reason, interpret and develop opinions. In a nutshell, education leads to enlightenment and thus, it is my utmost anticipation that this issue will benefit all the readers from the papers provided by scholars ushering into new frontiers of research and academic discourses and deciphering them as well.

Resenmenla Longchar

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Life Worlds: Earth and Beyond

CHARLES P. ALEXANDER

Abstract

The twenty-first century is considered to be the one where a revolutionary convergence of Science, Philosophy, and Spirituality would occur. This convergence is expected to take the human understanding of the self and the cosmos to the highest level of human civilization. Man has always been on the lookout for the roots; the root of the self. This paper attempts to address this aspiration of man by merging the epistemic domain of those three areas- Science, Philosophy, and Spirituality. My argument, in this paper, is that all religions are mere perspectives, and the truth is far promising than mere perspective. It is conceivable that the life on earth was planted by some sentient beings from other planet, and that all the humans are ethereal selves. The paper is aimed at universal oneness where Spirituality replaces Religiosity.

Keywords: *Thosene; Disembodied; Nowhere man; 'X' Chromosome; Intertwined Wave-dynamics*

Religion has always been a bone of contention, all over the world. In its original intents, all religions were meant to comfort the spiritually and the physically helpless mortals, through eschatological hopes and positive thinking. The two most important elements of a religion are Spirituality and Faith. The dual dynamics of Spirituality and Faith does not imply that one should be intoxicated with an overdose of one's religions ideology; as seen in today's religious culture.

Spirituality entails the meaninglessness of one's lustful clinging to the bodily activities. It, in fact, implies the existence of a disembodied being in the form of "I" who is an aggregate of *thoughts, sentiments* and *energy* (*Thosene*). Thus, the "I" is an ontological entity. The conglomeration of the intangible "I" in any possible world constitutes the Spiritual realm. The spiritual realm, being a non-spatial and non-temporal universe of frequencies, is in no requirement of language for communication, because

all sort of communication is intrinsic and spontaneous in the spiritual realm (Alexander, 2005). However, the biochemical pile of the corporeal bodies, with its biological sensuality, often limits the sphere of communication to the range of bodies.

Thus, what we call the "I" (the receptacle of all experiences) cannot be identified with any individual component of the body. This is vivid in one's everyday expressions such as *my* son, *my* hand, *my* body, *my* father*, I am* happy, *I am* suffering*, I* love..., *I* hate... and so on; where the terms "my" and "I" implies something over and above the biochemical pile of the corporeal bodies. The corporeal bodies are the by-product of, several ever-evolving, tangible and intangible elements such as the physical proximity between the organic and inorganic entities; the dominion of one over the other; the quantum movement of energy and astrophysical entities; the environmental determinants, and so on. This, in other words, means that the body is a conglomeration of several factors and, as a constitutional whole, emanates certain electromagnetic energy with a field of quantum energy. It is this quantum energy that falls within the domain of spirituality.

The idea of spirituality, though often linked to religiosity, has deeper connotation than the one attributed from a pure religious point of view. It is the case that although a religion necessarily has spirituality as an attribute, it is not the case that spirituality is an exclusive property of any religion. What is deemed spiritual is essentially the spirit of *being*. Spiritual in this sense is the holistic sum of the ephemeral organism; it is the *Thosene*. In this sense, a moralist with positive intentions could be a perfectly *spiritually-religious* being. Thus, the term spiritual, from a human perspective, could be taken to mean the *humanness;* the driving force that propels the forward motion of the human organism to higher levels of thoughts and achievements. This is vivid from the common phrases such as the *sportsman spirit, game spirit, team spirit, spirit of unity* and so on.

The attribution of spirituality to religion, or rather the religious blurb on spirituality is an outcome of the development of religion as an organised system of social enterprise. Interestingly, no God-man (the incarnate) has ever created any religion. All religions are the outcome of the handy work of the followers of a certain incarnate, over several centuries. The human civilisation has seen several *God-men*. In fact, they were the need of their time; probably the outcome of the deep seated unconscious wishes of the people of the time. A careful analysis of their life history reveals that they were born out of the necessity of the time, as most of them were revolutionary

social-reformers.

The ancient God-men's objective was that of socio-cultural and economic reformation of the society in which they lived. They aimed at the liberation of men from the clutches of superstitious conditionings, by activating and re-forming the spiritual domain of man. Their teachings were in tune with the laws of nature and based on the topography of the location where they lived. They knew that certain kinds of consumption habits are detrimental to individual health and social security; they knew that certain form of believe system would create tranquillity and order in society; they taught the art of trust and believe in the inner strength of oneself and the cosmic spirit, of which the individual spirit is a part. The ancient God-men need to be applauded for their wisdom, courage and the intellectual temperament, which later triggered curiosity among the empirical oriented man. Since the way of life suggested by the ancient God-men challenged the then existing socio-ethical codes, they had also invited several political enemies. Here, it may be noted that the organised form of religion, or religion as a social institution, is a much later development. It is the creation of the followers of the God-men, mostly the outcome of the greed for power and supremacy – as seen in the *Crusades* of the medieval period. The game of supremacy and power germinates, at first, in the land of God-man; where the ideology of the God-man gets cloaked in religious language and logic.

This greed had accentuated as trade and commerce with other nations begun to take shape. Along with the sales and marketing of commodities through barter system, they also began to transport belief system as a bonus. Over a period of time, the alien traders could influence vast majority of those unassuming natives to adhere to those norms for lasting trade and commerce relationship. This implicitly had buttressed the alien nations in enhancing their power -- politically, culturally, and economically. But, one significant attribute of religion is its culture. All religions begin in a cultural context, and re-create its own peculiar religious culture with specific religious language. This, in other words, means that the religious language has two important aspects: (1) the cultural context in which the religion originated, and (2) the unique in-culturated way of life and cognitive perspective that is peculiar to a particular religion. This, further points out that language is not only the route to the inner dynamics of religion, but also that which forms a culture; entailing that language shapes culture. The human language is an intentional creation of the herding Homo sapiens as a tool of signalling the potential dangers in the primordial times. It is,

thus, apparent that without language a culture becomes impossible, because language is the conglomeration of the socio-physical signals that arouse out of the changing frequencies of the human needs. This is vivid from literature, as the vocabulary, the jargon, and the meaning intonations of each era vary significantly throughout the history of human civilisation; obviously as seen after 17th century paradigm shift in the context of understanding the world and the things therein. Thus, understanding the religious language is to understand the dynamics of a culture; probably as Wittgenstein argues in *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus.*

The scientific data from the relentless search of palaeontologists indicate that life on earth began some 560 million years ago, as a single cell organism; which the religious patrons denounce for the fear of losing the authoritative grip on the religiously trance-formed humans. Palaeontologists claim that the clues to the origin of the nature and characteristics of the first living organism could be understood from the imprints in the ancient Leicestershire rocks in the Charnwood forest, in England. Life kingdoms seem to have evolved, gradually, through various processes, in various forms such as bacteria, amoeba like creatures, fungi, plants, and so on. It is believed that the first living organism on earth was a marine creature called *Charnia* – an entity whose gender and species is undifferentiated. It lived at the bottom of the ocean and lived for about 560 million years ago (Attenborough, 2013). But, one contesting question of all other enquires is: *How did we get in here?*

Life, as such, must have been an offshoot of the right combination of the right matter in right proportion at the right temperature in the right time – certainly not as Darwin thought, by an accident! One can -- given the present scientific evidences -- construe that life on earth might have been the outcome of the experimental activities of *beings* from other plants. It is known to every school boy that there are innumerable Galaxies and that there could possibly be other Milky Way similar to that of ours, apart from the ones known to the empirically driven humans. If infinity is a possibility, then possibility cannot be denied infinity. Every possibility has infinite number of possibilities; and every possibility depends on a precision – no matter how entropic it might seem. But, every precision is subject to spatio-temporal specifics; and the spatio-temporal specifics are infinite!

The argument that the living organisms on earth are the offshoot of the research outcome of *beings* located in other planets attract further questions such as: Is there other possible mode of living in other planets? To find some

reasonably convincing answers to this question, one has to look, indubitably, into the progress report of the NASA scientists (Portree, 2001), (Bizony, 1998). In 2015, NASA reported to have received pictures depicting alien life on moon, along with the visuals of some alien artefacts; could it be the aliens from the moon itself or from other planets? The pictures posted by NASA's *Mars Curiosity Rover*, from surface of Mars, reveals that (1) Mars had some form of moving entities (if one does not qualify it to be called as *beings*) with its own unique civilisation, which was destroyed due to certain unprecedented and unpreventable cosmic arrogance, (2) Mars still has some form of moving entities (with some form of artefacts and machineries that are appropriate to the cosmic temperament of Mars), (3) Mars has been subject of investigation by intelligent beings like the humans, from other planets. Strikingly, on August 13, 1996, the fossil of a humanoid creature was found in Russia (which they named as Kyshtym alien); and, in October 2002, another tiny humanoid creature (measuring 7.2cm) was found in Chile. The scientific investigation on both these creatures points out that their DNA structure does not match with the DNA structure of the creatures inhabiting the earth!

The next point of importance is that if there are intelligent realms of existence in other planets, then it is plausible to think of multiple cosmic-civilisations; as the civilisations of earth. However, it is incommensurable to think of one of these civilisations as superior or inferior to the other, as each of the cosmic civilisations are the subsets of the prevailing topography and the cosmogony of the planet in consideration. Moreover, it is not logically persuasive to ascribe such an evaluator status to a 'nowhere man' (Nagel, 1989), who does not belong to any of these civilisations! Nonetheless, it is comforting to posit that a cosmic-civilisation churned by *disembodied beings* would stand out to be the highest form of cosmic-civilisation; where everything works within the principles of electromagnetism alone; where the sound (*sabda)* is mere the manifestation of the creative dimensions of the disembodied beings (as advocated by Bhartrhari in *Sabdha Brahman* or the *let there be....* of the Semitic religions); where the communication is non-local (without the space-time barrier and without any transmitting medium of communication), without the a spoken language – as exactly as the capacity of an electronic device transmitting and receiving messages; as exactly as the extrasensory perceptions such as telepathy and clairvoyance. The spoken language as a human construct was perhaps the epistemological necessity of the embodied *thosene*, to ventilate the inner thoughts. Incidentally, language and body, though has its advantages, has also created

the sense of *the other*, as seen in the 16th century European cosmology, where anyone other than the European were considered as the paragon of the 'evil other' – thus inferior to them in all respects.

Thus, it is a reasonable hypothesis to think that life was planted on this planet by some sentient beings from other planet. Astrophysics of our times vindicates the fact that there are billions of galaxies and Milky Way, possibly, similar to that of ours. Thanks to Galileo, Newton and Einstein for their groundbreaking theories of planetary motion, gravitation, and relativity; which were, actually, the outcome of chance-discoveries that lead to the furtherance of the human understanding of the cosmos. Evidentially, astrophysicists are on the lookout for the discovery of more planets with the aid of modern technology; with little variation in the mathematical paradigm. Nonetheless, one fact that exuberate the inquisitive mind is the fathomlessness of the cosmic enigma. There is nothing certain; neither the number of planets nor the light years, nor the space, nor the time. Perhaps, if there is a shift in the mathematical paradigm, then that which is held as the facts about the universe would crumble down. Perhaps, new knowledge would emerge if the hackneyed comfort zone is sacrificed; if the cognitive perspective is changed; and if the fundamental assumption about the universe is changed. Howsoever, given the present state of affairs, it is reasonable to imagine a timeless black hole or an orbit that leads to a timeless-space; a space that contain all energy, all thoughts, and all sentiments in its original (disembodied) form; because neither matter nor energy is created or destroyed – the Platonic world of Universals.

Scientists believe that there could be about 40 billion earth-like planets orbiting in the inhabitable zones of the sun-like stars and red dwarf in the Milky Way. It is also an astrophysical conjecture that planets such as Kepler - 62E, Kepler - 62F, Kepler - 186f, Kepler - 296f, Kepler - 438, Kepler - 442b, Tau Ceti E & Tau Ceti F, Gliese - 832 C, Gliese- 667 Cc, KOI - 3010.01, and KOI - 1686.01 are some of the planets those could have life forms; although they are several light years away from the earth. It is also held that KOI – 1686 .01 is the closest twin of the earth, located about 1033 light years away. Some of the astronomers believe that this planet is more suitable for human habitation than earth, as there is enough evidence for the existence of goldilock zone[1], where the climatic conditions, and the availability of water, are conducive for sustaining the (earth like) life forms.

Given the above, it is a possibility that on a certain day, at a particular period of time, some beings from other planets might have taken a research voyage to earth, as the men of the present day do in Mars or other planets. The atmospheric conditions of the planet earth might have been in some form similar to the planet of those beings. However, one remarkable phenomenon might have been that in those planets *time* is rather *timeless*; no yesterday, no today, no tomorrow, but only the *here and now*. It is also conceivable that the meaning of intelligence and ingenuity might be varied for those *beings*; because these terms are empirical constructs, and those *beings* were beyond the purview of empirical laws and scrutiny. Thus, being thousands of light years away from earth, not subjected to the laws of earth and the laws of gravitation, being disembodied, and conceivably as quantum of thoughts, sentiments and energy, they might have undertaken an inter-planetary voyage in their unique space craft; the visual description of which is found in several religious texts. In the processes of their inter-planetary excursion, one thing that attracted their attention to earth could have been the *gravity*; presumably, their space craft might have stood firm on a location; although they did not have a body that could possibly hold on to a local-space on earth. Inquisitiveness and curiosity abound, they configured the elements to constitute a physical mechanism where they could lodge themselves. Thus, the body was created, and one of the sentient beings had lodged a segment of itself (a progeny) into the body thus created. However, since the body is under the grip of gravity and other physical laws that are peculiar to the planet earth, the being that was lodged inside could not come out of it, and could not remember his original form; he had to wait until dislodged from the physical body, through the decease of the body. Alternately, the being inside the body might have refused to come out of the body, as he experienced a new mode of existence in his embodied state. This is evident from the human behaviour till date as men would go to any extent to protect his body from sickness, enemies and so on; because annihilation of body implies the liberation of *Thosene* to the state of timeless disembodied state. This also vindicates metempsychosis, parthenogenesis of Christianity, and the notion of *Aham Brahmasmi* in Indian cosmogony.

Hence, it is my contention that the life on earth is the by-product of the experimental outcome of *beings* from such highest form of civilisation, over several years. They might have successfully created a recyclable and self-sustaining system on earth (the Garden of Eden), wherein, finally, the *thosene* (*His* own image) was encapsulated in the body that was constituted out of the natural elements (as the cloning of our times); and further they

kept on gracing their creation with the supporting visitations, especially in such difficult times as flood and natural calamities. These visitations might have been by different teams from the same planet, or from different planet, to the different parts of the earth; thus giving rise to the notion of different God(s). Isn't it amazing that when a person talk of God, s/he always point towards the sky? The Semitic[2] religions also speak of the creation of female from the rib of man (Adam); the pictorial cave-inscription of rib in consideration might possibly be the 'X' chromosome of man being used in the creation of 'XX' chromosome of female -- probably as a final test on the recyclability and sustainability of the *life-world* that they have created on earth! Here, one significant point for attention is that one cannot overlook the importance of 'X' chromosome in the replication of *Thosene*. Perhaps, future research on 'X' chromosome might sequel more revealing truth on the cosmic dynamics of *Thosene*. Thus, the body being subject to the gravitational laws of the earth is subject to the evolutionary process. But *thosene* is eternal; it cannot be described in terms of any physiological attributes -- it can be explained only in terms of the *neti...neti*[3] description of the Indian cosmogony.

Why can't that be a possibility? Every possibility is a potential actuality. A perceived fact is only one of the actualised possibilities. This, in other words, means that all empirical knowledge is dependent on the subjective elements of the one professing that particular piece of knowledge. This being the case, every knowledge claim pertaining to the origin of the world, and different species therein, are mere perspectives. Thus, every such epistemological claim is based on the fragments of information, on the infinite possibilities of the universe, presented to the cognitive system of the propagator of a particular cosmogony.

Needless to say that most of the texts pertaining to creation theory, and thereafter, are derived from cave inscriptions and folklores. It is reasonable to assume that the early men (Adam) did not have language. The early men's understanding of the world was through pictorial representations -- although, over a period of time, the scripted language(s) evolved out of these representations. There are tendency among the empirically minded to brush aside those early tales and narrations as mere superstition and baseless folly. But, the truth is far beyond. There cannot be any history if an event is not first reported by someone, somewhere. Further, once it is reported in any language (to that extent even in a pictorial form) the reported message travels down to generations, either through further pictorial representations or through oral

narrations. In fact, this was the method of dissemination of messages and socio-cultural values in the ancient societies; the modus operandi is same in the present times, although we have advanced technology to spread the message faster. This being the case, it is logically sound to assume that there must have been a *being* that had the first hand experience of what has been depicted in the cave inscriptions. The history of a civilisation or a culture or a society, and its activities are supposed to be a descriptive account of a state of affairs from a period in time till another period in time. Nonetheless, no matter how accurate the description is, it becomes highly difficult for the descendant to accurately recapitulate the contents in its original vivacity. This is so, because, as the human society is in the dynamic process of change, the descendents living in a different socio-cultural terrain of a civilisation, with a different set of concepts, categories and vocabulary would find it too strenuous to re-live the context of the ancestors; as seen in the present times. Hence, anything that is not amenable to their comprehension would be termed as mythology or superstition. Significantly, the civilisation goes in circular motion; what is admired to be the most advanced civilisation would be turned around and would be cast into the granary of history for the future generation, living in an altogether different socio-cultural context.

However, despite the contextual mismatch, and the tendency to obviate the need for reckoning such descriptive oral narrations, there are certain behavioural traits that are persistent and predominant in all life forms, since antiquity. Looking at the behavioural dispositions of the creatures of earth, it is a valid proposition to assume that all the creatures have one thing in common, i.e. the desire to perpetuate one's embodied existence on earth, either by procreation or by the destruction of the potential predators; thus giving way to the two of the most prominent instincts – *Eros* and *Thanatos*[4]. However, *Eros* and *Thanatos* are only subservient to the decrees of *Thosene*. Had this not been the case, then moral and legal codes would have been devoid of any value. The major premise on which the moral and legal codes of a society rests is that it is the responsibility of one(self) to restrain from excessive indulgence in Eros and Thanatos that it curtails the rightful survival liberty of other humans. This, in other words, implies that *Thosene* (the self) must exercise restraints on its indulgences in its endeavours to sustain its embodied existence on earth. *Thosene*, thus, does not belong to the ephemeral sphere of mundane existence; it belongs to the sphere beyond the empirically conceivable galaxy.

Moving a step further, *Thosene* is the driving *being* of the humans. It is beyond the jurisdiction of space-time dimensions. It is the *being-in-itself*; a *disembodied being* whose sphere of existence is a planet, way beyond the conceivable milky way. In fact, it is nameless and quality-less; it is just the *being*. It is the being caught entangled in embodied existence. Thus, the term *life* is not applicable to it; because for it the life was created, by its primogenitor; for its experimentation on earth. The term life is a linguistic construct to explain the biological activities of certain form of creatures; and ironically the search for life in other planets are also carried out with the paradigm used in understanding the life on planet earth. The life on planet earth needs water, oxygen, sunlight and so on; but it is not necessarily the case that the same is true for life elsewhere. There could be different forms of life, depending on the environmental conditions of a planet. One cannot deny that when the environmental conditions completely change, the old forms of life may become extinct and a new form of life may emerge. This is neither the Darwinian evolution nor the story of Noah's ark, but a supposition of life form in extreme heat or extreme cold – the fact is that *Thosene* is neither affected by the heat nor by the cold, but the body is! The body is a vessel that maintains the required gravity to prevent *Thosene* escape into to its original state of affairs – this gravity is often misconstrued as the energy of the physical particles of the body. *Thosene* is, thus, a consciousness-frequency of *waves* imprisoned in the *particles* of the body. Hence, this could be a reasonable explanation for the *non-local communication* – communication bereft of any physical medium – such as telepathy, thought transference and so on.

It is held that at the subatomic level things are simultaneously *particles* and *wave*. This paradox is further complicated by the theory of *quantum mechanics* and the g*eneral relativity*, which gives different descriptions of one and the same world. The quantum theory describes the subatomic events in terms of the activities of individual quanta; whereas the general relativity explains things in terms of universal relations. This, not only shows that the existential realities, at the universal level, can be explained in different ways, but also that the mundane physical realities of the macro and the micro worlds need to be explained in different ways. However, my argument is that both of these explanations are the offshoot of *waves* weaved in such a way as to make it appear like *particles* – the primordial cell, from where the physical life on earth had evolved.

The living cells are constituted of vacuum substances. There is no

Matter; only an intensely closed cluster of waves that appears like Matter. A careful reading of Stephen Hawking's seminal work *A Brief History of Time* would render impetus for further work in this area, as he sates:

> At the big bang itself, the Universe is thought to have had *zero size,* and so to have been infinitely hot (Hawking, 1988, p.123) – [italics author's]

Hence, matter is an illusion, which will fade way when an adequate technological knowhow impose a new paradigm in understanding the subtle world of *intertwined wave-dynamics*. These waves are intertwined like the nest of a weaver bird; where each of the strands is connected to the other so intensely that the pattern of the interconnectivity and the significance of the strands are overshadowed by the nest itself. To a great extent, the current research on the biological organisms is moving in this direction – with research in bio-photon emissions, nano technologies, and so on. However, my proposition is that the pattern of the configuration of the *intertwined wave-dynamics* has certain subtle gaps, which is the seat of *Thosene*. This is the reason why men are not able to fully comprehend *Consciousness;* because the current paradigm inclines one to look for consciousness in the gross and the tangible – as done in Neurophysiology. The brain and the central nervous system are only an intermediary between *Thosene* and the external world. This indicates that everything around us – such as the food we eat, the animals we see, the fluid we ingest – are all *intertwined wave-dynamics*, which are connected to each other in a certain peculiar manner, depending on the frequencies. When the frequencies of the interacting *intertwined wave-dynamics* are conducive in sustaining the *gap* and the *gravitation*, then well-being prevail; but when it is inimical, the *Thosene* feels *dis-eased*. However, *Thosene,* being endowed with intrinsic wisdom, has the power to *ease* the *dis-ease*. Perhaps, this is the reason behind the age old aphorisms, *look within, know thyself* and so on.

The scientific epistemology seems to indicate that there is no knowledge; or at least what we consider knowledge is only highly probable hypothesis. In fact all the human endeavours are based on the human disposition for occupation and the disposition to cover up boredom. The primordial humans were as free animals as their other animal counterparts. However, being the weakest of all (and being the most mischievous of all), they had congregated several enemies; and survival strategy had become their main existential agenda. But, one thing that might have distinguished humans from the rest of the animals must have been their ability to ask questions; about

themselves, the world around and other creatures around them. This ability to question has been an innate property of the primordial *Thosene;* an ability that surged out of the necessity of sorting out their existential predicaments; the first and the foremost of all predicaments being the sustenance of one's embodied existence on earth. The desperation to find an answer to this existential predicament had led to the descend of mathematically precise empirical sciences.

The work of De Lacy O'Leary (1949), titled *How Greek Science passed to the Arabs*, depicts the painstaking, and yet noble, journey of empirical sciences, through the mediaeval period to the times of William of Occam in the fourteen century. William of Occam could be thought of as one of the founding pillars of the empirical sciences. He advocated the importance of material world and that of sense experience in acquiring knowledge about the material world. He argued that the Platonic world of *universals* exists only in the human mind, and what exist in reality are just the material things- this was the plot on which Occam's razor was born. Inspired by this scientific temperament a new world order was perceived, through what one would now call the *scientific method,* founded on the principles of mathematics. Thinkers like Roger Bacon, and Francis Bacon thought that the complexities of the material world can be understood only through mathematical precision, as everything is precisely mathematical. Thus, mathematics by default became the Language of Science (especially Physical Sciences). This triggered, as it were, a new culture – the culture of scientific world view and scientific way of life. In other words, had mathematical assumptions been not the building blocks of science then the humans would have had a different world order and a different perspective about the self and the Universe. Mathematics is merely a method of limiting the tree of possibilities of human thought, in an organised manner; and science being dependent on mathematics is only a perspective restricted to the tangible and ostensibly verifiable.

Thus, whether one believes in God or not; whether one is an atheist or a theist; whether one professes this or that religion; whether one is ready to die for a religion or evangelise a religion, the truth is that everyone will die one day; and what we call death is the liberation of the *Thosene* (the "I") from the gravitational force of the *intertwined wave-dynamics*. All religions are mere perspectives, and the truth is far promising than mere perspective. Hence, understanding the self (*Thosene*) is the beginning of spirituality; because it invariably links every one of the humans into the world of sameness –the ethereal selves. Perhaps, the world could be a better

place to live in, if religiosity is replaced by spirituality. After all, the bone of contention is not the bone at all!

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Notes:

[1] **Goldilock zone:** The area of a planet which is neither too close to its star that it becomes too hot nor too far away from its star that it becomes too freezing. The temperature in the goldilock zone is just right for the sustenance of life as that of ours.

[2] **Semitic religions**: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

[3] **Neti…Neti:** According to the Vedic schools of Indian philosophy, the ultimate reality (Brahman) can be described only in negation; as *not this… not this….* (Neti…Neti)

[4] **Eros** and **Thanatos:** A Freudian expression, indicating procreative and destructive instincts.

Debating Caste in Academic Discourse

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Abstract

Caste is the most debatable discourse in Indian academics. There is an enormous body of academic writing and political polemic on the issue. These are basically the part of debate on the transformation of Indian society under the impact of colonialism and its ideological streams. Some scholars' that pre-colonial social-structures have been existed without any changes and others stress the colonialism is the colonial modernity and it was responsible for qualitative changes in Indian society. In this context this paper critically asses the different views on the ideology of caste in Indian society. It is not my aim to present only contemporary academic discourses of caste rather understanding the caste from critical perspective that has been existed caste as an academic discourse. It is argued that the caste discourse has undergone significant changes during different historical periods especially during the colonial and post-colonial. It has also been said that in different historical phases the socio-economic discourses are responsible for the changes occurring in the caste system, and it is through articulation with this alone that the changes take place in the internal structure/ideology of the caste system.

Keywords*: Colonialism; Brahmanical Values; Ambedkar; Untouchability*

I. Concept of Caste

The term 'caste' is derived from a Portuguese word '*casta*' meaning breed, race or group. The English word 'caste' is an adjustment of the original term '*casta* (S. V Ketkar, 1909).' In English there is a use in the sense of 'race' in 1555 and the Indian sense is encountered at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the French spelling *caste* is, scarcely found before 1800 (Louis Dumont, 1966). The word 'caste' is used in everyday life and uses it to distinguish from one person to another. The first literary traces of the caste system were found in *Rigveda* and *Pursasukta hymn*. In the *Bhagavad Gita* the caste system is sought to be justified on the basis of the idea of *Guna Karma* (deed) and Dharma (Religion) (Ranjit Rajadhyaksha, 2004). In the

age of *Simritis* and *Sutras*, the society had been divided into various castes. They had framed hard and fast rules regarding occupation, food conduct and marriage. In the same age, these castes became so diversified that they could not meet together in course of time. The feeling of untouchability also grew in this age (Sunder Lal Sagar, 1975).

The twin concepts of '*varna*' and '*jati*' have remained influential throughout in the history of Hindu society, because they have together shaped social relations between various segments. Literally the word *varna* refers to colour and it is often confused with *jati*. It is accepted that there have been four *varnas* dividing Hindu society into four classes of which three Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya are considered as the twice born and fourth namely, the Shudra was denied the right of the initiation ceremony (*upayana*). The below Shudra were the groups of out-caste or untouchables. In the Rigvedic society the four *varnas* were represented as the priests, warriors, traders and functionary groups. It is believed that the four *varnas* were represented in the descending order of four colors namely, white, red, yellow and black, corresponding with Brahmin, Kshatriya, Viashya and Shudra. The *varna* not only constituted division of society into four classes but also provided a system of social stratification. Each *varna* was placed in the social system, at a particular position in the hierarchical order and was assigned specific tasks and duties. However, *varna* remained closely linked with caste. In several contexts, even today, has remained a caste like phenomenon. According to G.S Ghurye (1969), the *varna* model has acquired some kind of religious sanctity as he calls it as the Varna-Dharma (moral duties of caste). However, *varna- dharma* is more of an ideal rather than reality. M.N Srinivas (1962 and 1966) writes: "It is not merely that some castes… for example, the *bharbhujha* (grain *parcher*), *kahar* (water carrier), and the *bartos* (genealogists) are to be found only in some parts of the country, or that the position of a few occupational castes varies from one part of the country to another, but that caste mainly exists and function as regional system." In fact, all the Brahmins speaking the same regional language, let alone all the Brahmins in India, do not form a single endogamous group. There may be a dozen or more endogamous groups among them. Again, even within a small region a caste normally interacts with only several other castes and not with all. However, a few castes are found spread over wide areas, and thus usually mean that there are cultural differences between its various sections.

An important concept in *varna* model is hierarchy. Louis Dumont (1980**)** deals with the concept of hierarchy in Hindu society accepting the theory of *varna* as his main tool of analysis. While upholding the view that there

is a primacy of values and ideas in Hindu society, he considers hierarchy as all- embracing comprehensive concept. Hierarchy and *varna* are found to be in consonance like *varna and jati*. Hierarchy refers to religious ranking and classifying things as 'beings' based on the divinity. He considers *varna* more as social practice rather than all India ideology. The understanding of *varna* as social practice underlines its wide ranging influence at all levels of social life. However, this indicates that Dumont considers the ideology of *varna* as a social practice of caste system. The ideology of caste operationally and existentially is different from the *varna* ideology. However, he neglected the implications of the socio-economic categories to the study of caste and *varna*.

Gerald D.Berreman (1967) has defined the caste system as a "system of birth-ascribed stratification, of socio-cultural pluralism, and of hierarchical interaction. G.S. Ghurye (1969), has defined caste and enlisted its six outstanding characteristics: Endogamy, Hierarchy, Restrictions on consensual relations between castes, Restriction on choice of occupation, Civil and religious disabilities and Privileges of certain groups, and Untouchability. It follows that membership is fixed for life, because the individual cannot alter his caste by any effort of his own. Further he makes a distinction between caste societies and class societies by arguing that the status of a person in a caste society depended not on his wealth as in the classes of modern Europe, but on the traditional importance of the caste in which he had the luck of being born. S.V Ketkar (1909) defines a caste as social groups having two characteristics (i) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born (ii) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group. Each one of such groups has a special name by which it is called several of such small aggregates are grouped together under a common name, while these larger groups are but subdivisions of groups still larger which have independent names.

Structural-functionalist theories highlighted the integrative role of caste. In structural-functionalist writings, caste is viewed as a system of interdependence and reciprocity, and not as inequality or exploitation. The same emphasis is also found in the structuralist approach of Louis Dumont (1980). His famous book, *Homo- Hierarchicus*, constructed an image of caste based on Hindu texts. In this image, two opposing conceptual categories of purity and pollution are the core elements of caste- structure. These unique core principles of caste-hierarchy, according to Dumont, are observed in scriptural formulation as well as the every-day life of all

Hindus. In other words, these values separate Indians culturally from the Western civilization, making India a land of static, unchangeable, 'Oriental Brahmanical values'. According to him, Brahmanism represents a core civilization value and caste is the central symbol of this value. It is the basic expression of the pre-colonial traditions of India. Dumont (1980) and Michael Moffatt (1979) argue that the lower castes share with the higher castes the basic assumptions and values of the caste structure. They recreate among themselves the entire set of institutions and ranked relations from which they have been excluded by the higher castes. Michael Moffatt thus sees cultural consensus at work from the top to the bottom, which includes the principles of inclusion and exclusion, complementarity and replication.

In order to counter Louis Dumont's view of caste a number of studies also conducted from the perspective of lower caste that demonstrate the difference between the socio-religious ideologies of the lower castes and the upper castes (Gerald D. Berreman, 1979). They point out that lower caste do not accept the unclean and demeaning status assigned to them in the caste hierarchy. The lower caste have diverse notions of their own as to how and why the caste system developed, most of which refer to the superior wealth and power of the higher castes rather than their purity. Due to socio-economic compulsions, therefore, lower castes seem to subscribe to the dominant ideology rather than being in consensus with it.

However, it is necessary to go into a detailed discussion regarding the nature of caste system that have already documented by different schools of thought in academics. It helps us to understand the ideology of caste and changing nature of its ideology in academics. In this paper I would argue that caste is an ideological institution that has been playing an important role in exclusion of lower caste people ever since it originated. The different definitions mentioned above, show that only one or two factors cannot be indicated as probably contributing to the emergence and development of the caste system in India. To sum-up, the caste system is a segmental division of society into endogamous and hereditary descent groups. These groups constitute a hierarchy in which the Brahmins occupy the top position and the lower caste the bottom one.

II. Colonial Construction of Caste

Colonialism reconstructed cultural forms and social-institutions like caste to create a line of difference and demarcation between themselves as European

modern and the colonized Asian traditional subjects. In other words, British colonialism played a critical role in both the identification and production of Indian 'tradition'. The colonial modernity devalued the so-called Indian traditions. Simultaneously, it also transformed them. Caste was recast as the spiritual essence of India that regulated and mediated the private domain. Caste-ridden Indian society was different from the European civil society because caste was opposed to the basic premises of individualism as well as the collective identity of a nation. The relevant of this pre-colonial identity and sense of loyalty could easily be used to justify the rule by the colonial modern administrators. For this reason, according to Dirks, it was the colonial rule of India that organized the 'social difference and deference' solely in terms of caste.

The Portuguese travelogue, Duarte Barbosa's work, *"An Account of the Countries Bordering on the Indian Ocean and their Inhabitants* (1518) and translated it by M.L. Dames (1916) was among the first works to examine the social institutions of India. But the first to envisage 'the caste system' was the French Missionary, Abbe J.A Dubois (1816) in his work entitled, '*Description of the Character, Manners and Customs of the People of India, and of their Institutions, Religious and Civil'* (1816). It was translated subsequently by Henry K. Beauchamp as *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (1906). Abbe Dubois had referred to the caste system of India. He said, 'I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism and that she preserved the arts and sciences of civilization whilst most other nations of the earth remained in the state of barbarism.' Other Christian missionaries did not share his favourable view of the civilisational value of caste and the Madras Missionary Conference of 1850 held caste to be 'one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of the gospel in India.' Indian social reformers, while unwilling as yet to condemn the caste system as a whole, also dwelt on some of the harmful social consequences of the institution.

The colonial construction of India began by the early Orientalists with their own cognitive maps and with texts explained by *pandits*. Their social model was *varna* based Brahmanism of Manu. The early admiration of a golden age gave way to a condemnation of Brahmanical tyranny. William Jones translated and published *Manu Dharma Sastras* or The Laws of Manu (1794). Manu was concerned with such topics as the social obligations and duties of various castes (varnas), the proper form of kingship as upholder of varna, the nature of sexual relations between males and females of different castes and ritual practices related to domestic affairs. It became the main

authority in imagining of Indian tradition as based on *varnasrama- dharma* (social and religious code of conduct according to caste and stage of life). Scholars have questioned the attempt to codify Indian social relations according to this single, orthodox Brahmanical text. The text, compiled by Brahman scholars, depicted a caste society under the exclusive domination of Brahmins who reserved for themselves pride of place in the caste hierarchy. The prescriptive text also became the basis of actual description of Indian social order. James Mill, in his *History of India* viewed caste as a prime example of an Indian social institution based on priesthood and adapted to oriental despotism. Mill borrowed from Jones' work despite his attack on the Orientalists. Max Muller also based his interpretation of caste on textual sources. He suggested that the caste in Vedic period was different from caste in the later degraded periods. For Muller, the soul of Indian civilization was that of the Vedic age, while the later distortions began in the time of Manu. Orientalists saw the Hindus as victims of an unchangeable, hierarchical and Brahmanical value system. However, the basic objective of the colonial state was to procure data about Indian social life so as to frame the laws and policies for India. The British colonialism played a critical role in both the identification and production of Indian 'tradition'. It did serve the colonial interests as by condemning the 'Brahmanical tyranny', colonial administration could easily justify their codes to 'civilize' and 'improve' the 'fallen people'.

The colonial administrators and scholars have also taken initiative a systematic study of the social structure of Indian society as it follows.

The foremost among the initial representative works was "*A Brief View of Caste System of North-Western Provinces and Awadh*" by J.C. Nesfield (1855). Nesfield, on the basis of his studies, proposed that the determination of occupations on the basis of heredity is the basic foundation, on which the edifice of caste system stands. After this, several colonial administrators and the western scholars of that era tried to define and interpret the caste system. Among them French Indologist Charles Emilie Marie Senart (1896) was the first person who formulated a distinction between *varna* and caste. He considered the motion of *varna* to be more akin to that of class, while caste was an autonomous entity to a certain extent. Later, however, the castes got assimilated into the *varnas*. Whereas the hierarchy of castes was a real phenomenon for him, he considered the hierarchical organization described in the *varnasharma* system to be unreal and conceptual. Senart thinks that the Brahmins included the various Indo-European lineages in the *varnashrama* system and had given them a subordinate status, so that

their own hegemony remained intact. However, this opinion of Senart was rejected by most of the historians. But the greatest contribution of Senart was that, he made a distinction between the *varna* and the caste system.

Herbert H. Risley (1907), the colonial administrator who started carrying out the Census in India, gave his own idea on the caste/varna system. According to him, the predominant factor in the evolution of the castes was the racial factor. He used the nasal index (the length of nose) in order to distinguish between the Aryans and non-Aryans. The caste system got considerably consolidated after Risley started a caste-based Census, besides; it got ossified as well in its contemporary form. After Risley the western scholar who left a marked influence on the studies of the caste-system, was the French sociologist Celestin Bougle (1971) who also collaborated with Emile Durkheim in early 20th century. The interpretation of the caste system which Bougle gave had a major influence on other French sociologist Louis Dumont's thoughts. Celestin Bougle opined that caste-system can be identified by its three characteristic manifestations. Firstly, a heredity determined occupation; secondly, hierarchy and thirdly, repulsion, i.e. the alienation of one caste from another. Bougle did not subscribe to the idea that it was the Brahmins who framed the caste-system. On the contrary, the caste-system came into being due to the socio-economic changes; the Brahmins gave it a legitimating only. The idea of purity and pollution was the main factor behind the hierarchy present in the system.

Thus, Bougle completely rejected the racial interpretation of the caste-system given by Risley. Bougle's study on the caste-system can be counted among the most serious and effective studies of his time. Bougle also accepted the idea of Senart that the varna-system is an idealized concept, while caste is a reality.

Denzil Ibbeston (1882) has presented this evolutionary theory of the origin of caste system. The theory implies that the caste system did not come into existence all of a sudden. It is the consequence of a long process of social evolution. The caste system emerged slowly and gradually. The factors which contributed to it, included desire for purity of blood, devotion to a particular profession, theory of karma, conquests of one army by the other, geographical location and isolation. However, this theory failed to provide a correct explanation for the origin of the caste system, though the same condition existed in other parts of the world, caste system did not evolve there.

J. H. Hutton, whose book '*Caste in India*' came into print in 1946, was the last among the foremost scholars of the caste system before 1947. Hutton considered the existing theories interpreting the caste-system inappropriate, as these did not properly grasp the reality of caste. He enumerated fifteen characteristic features of caste; prominent among them were environmental segregation, magical beliefs, totemism, idea of purity-pollution, the doctrine of *Karma*, clash of races, the prejudices concerning complexion of skin, and the tendency to exploit by dint of hierarchy. But there were numerous inconsistencies throughout Hutton's theory. On one hand, he does not put any causal explanation about the emergence and development of the caste-system and on the other hand, for him caste becomes an aggregate of different social groups. Hutton was altogether unsuccessful in comprehending their interrelationships. Louis Dumont, Pocock and all the later sociologists rejected Hutton's theory. It was a kind of an eclectic theory that made a compilation of the different apparent manifestations of caste.

Some thinkers are of the opinion that not race but political convenience and manipulation by those wanting to retain authority resulted in the origin of caste system. The Brahmins were solely responsible for creating and maintaining this system so as to retain authority. In the words of Ghurye, "caste is the Brahminic child of Indo-Aryans culture cradled in the land of Ganges and hence transferred to other parts of India by Brahminic prospectors." Abbe Dubois (1816) argues that caste system is an ingenious device made by the Brahmins for Brahmins. Brahmins imposed restrictions on food and social intercourse to preserve their purity necessary for the sacerdotal functions. They also accorded high status to themselves and declared all others inferior to them. The salvation of individuals or society lied in the performance of religious rites by the Brahmin only. The Brahmins even added the concept of spiritual merit of the king, through the priest or *purohit* in order to get the support of the ruler of the land.

However, Hutton has made scathing attack on the Brahminical theory of the origin of caste on two counts. First, it is not possible to accept this theory unless it is confirmed that Brahmins must have got the political power to implement such a scheme. Second, such a deep rooted social institution, like caste, could hardly be imposed by an administrative measure. Of course, both the arguments of Hutton appear to be illogical because Kshatriyas have ruled over the land through the entire period of history and furthermore imposition of superiority over others by the Brahmins may not be possible through administrative measure.

III. Post Modern Views of Caste

It is also very important to note that Ronald Inden (1990), Nicholas B.Dirks (1987) and other subaltern scholars like Partha Chatterjee (1989) have challenged Dumont's notion of caste. They argue that it was the colonial ruling class which established the caste system in its ossified form. In order to break Indian people's resistance, the colonial state used knowledge and culture apart from economic and political means. According to this view power-relations and command over men and resources were more important. Dirks's *Castes of Mind* (2001) argues that caste is a product of 'colonial modernity'. By this he does not mean that caste did not exist before the advent of British. He is simply suggesting that caste became a single, unique category under the British rule that expressed and provided the sole index of understanding India. Earlier there were diverse forms of social-identity and community in India. The British reduced everything to a single explanatory category of caste. It was the colonial state and its administrators who made caste into a uniform, all-encompassing and ideologically consistent organism. They made caste as a measure of all things and the most important emblem of traditions.

Susan Bayly (1999) has criticized this line of thought of Nicholas Dirks from her point of and has argued that Brahminism and its hegemony was not a product of colonialism, though they were certainly strengthened by it. The Brahmins played a significant role in construction of this colonial knowledge, and the collaboration of the colonial state and native elites could be discerned throughout this entire process. The collaboration between the colonial state and the native elites and feudal classes were neither an imagination, nor a construct, but was a stark reality.

Abhinav Sinha (2013), in his recent article vehemently criticized the line of thinking of Nicolas Dirks and other subaltern studies arguments. He argues that orientalist/colonial construct of caste is a kind of subjectivism. No state can ever make a construct of any such divide from the above, unless that division has a history of its own. It must certainly be accepted that the fetish of the British ethnographic state to count, enumerate, classify and systematize the castes did indeed shake the division and hierarchy in the castes once and made it rigid in a new way.

The celebration of the pre-colonial past by historians of Subaltern Studies and the academics motivated by Orientalism of Edward Said (1978) and post-modernism in the name of opposing modernity and Enlightenment, is a flight of imagination and a mental construct of these historians (Cited

by Abhinav Sinha , 2013). Sumit Sarkar (2005) argues that this cultural critique of colonialism ultimately aligns itself with the revivalism of the extreme Right, though it superficially terms communalism also as a colonial construct (which is more accurate in this context as compared to caste). This whole logic is a circular and a self-defeating one.

However, Caste has not been identified or institutionalize by the colonialism but also foreign travelers have described the nature of Indian society in their works. Even in the works of the Greek ambassador to the court of Chandra Gupta Maurya, Megastnese, in the 3rd century B.C and Alberuni, the historian –companion of Mahmud Ghazni in 11th century have reflected in their tour writings about the social structure of India. This shows that caste has been existed in India since time immemorial. Magasthenes, the Greek traveler in the third century B.C. to India, mentions two of the features characterizing the institution of caste. He says "It is not permitted to contract marriage with a person of another caste or to undertake an occupation other than ancestral nor for the same person to undertake more than one, except if he is of the 'Caste of Philosophers', when permission is given on account of dignity (G.S. Ghurey,1969). The term 'caste' has been defined differently by different people.

IV. Ambedkar's Idea of Caste

Ambedkar has become relevance in the discourse of the study of caste in the present academics. He has widely conceptualized the caste and critically presented various ideological discourses while giving a new shape to the Indian society. Let us explore Ambedkar's idea of caste and his relevance in the present academics.

Ambedkar's idea of caste can be seen in his works, *Caste in India*, *Annihilation of Caste* and *Who Were the Sudara?* In these works he has critically analyzed the caste system from historical and sociological perspective. While framing his own understanding of caste he has referred Ketkar, Senart, Nesfield and others definitions of caste. Finally, he said that 'everyone failed to encompass its various facets in one single definition'.

Referring to Ketkar's views, Ambedkar pointed out that Ketkar thought that caste as "a social group" had two characteristics: first, membership was confined to those who were born of members and included all persons so born; and, second, members were 'forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group'. Ambedkar has clarified Senart's definition that

caste as: "a close corporation, in theory at any rate rigorously hereditary: equipped with a certain traditional and independent organization, including a chief and a council, meeting on occasions in assemblies of more or less plenary authority and joining together at certain festivals ;bound together by common occupations, which relate more particularly to marriage and to food and to questions of ceremonial pollution, and ruling its members by the exercise of jurisdiction, the extent of which varies ,but which succeeds in making the authority of the community more felt by the sanction of certain penalties and , above all, by final irrevocable exclusion from the group". According to Nesfield, "a caste is a class of the community which disowns any connection with any other class and can neither intermarry nor eat or drink with any but persons of their community.

While analyzing above definitions of caste Ambedkar has developed his own understanding of caste. He defines caste as "an artificial chopping off the population into fixed and defines units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the customs of endogamy." The essence of the caste, according to Ambedkar, is endogamy; caste is not merely a division of labour. It is a hierarchy in which division of labourer is graded one above the other. Caste system involves an attempt to appoint tasks to individuals in advance, selected not on the basis of trained original capabilities, but on that of the social status of the parents. i.e., absence of intermarriage. In a system where intermarriage is prohibited, it tends to alienate itself from others and convert itself into an enclosed social unit having an independent identity of its own. According to Ambedkar, "the problem of caste, then ultimately resolves itself into one of repairing the disparity between the marriageable units of the two sexes within it. The husband may die before the wife and create a surplus woman, who must be disposed of; else through intermarriage she will violate the endogamy of the group. In like manner, the husband may survive his wife and be surplus man, whom the group, while it may sympathized with him for the sad bereavement, has to dispose of, else he will marry outside the caste will break the endogamy. Thus both the surplus man and surplus woman constitute a menace to the caste if not taken care of for not finding suitable partners inside their prescribed circle very likely they will transgress the boundary marry outside and import offspring that is foreign to the caste."

The study of the caste problem by Ambedkar emphasizes that it is to be noted in four points: 1) that in spite of the composite make-up of the Hindu population, there is a deep cultural unity; 2) that caste is a parceling into bits of a large cultural units; 3) that there was one caste to start with; and 4) that

classes had become castes through initiation and excommunication.

He further said that, caste did not result in economic efficiency. It had not improved the race. It had completely disorganized and demoralized the Hindus. He found that there was no Hindu consciousness as such. In every Hindu, the consciousness that exists was the consciousness of the caste. Hindus did not even form a federation. Their habits and customs, beliefs and thought were not enough to constitute them into a society. Men constitute a society because they had things, they possessed in common. The caste system prevents common society and by preventing it, it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and a consciousness of its own being. There is only individual share or part in the associated activity. According to him, castes are autonomous and there was no authority anywhere to compel caste to admit a new corner to its social life. The Hindu society being a conglomeration of castes and each caste being a close corporation, there was no place for a convert. The Hindu religion ceased to be a missionary religion when the caste system grew up among the Hindus. Caste was inconsistent with conversion. So Ambedkar said, "So long as castes remain, Hindu religion cannot be made a missionary religion and shuddhi will be both a folly and futility."

Ambedkar vehemently refused the racial theory for the origin of Varna/ caste. It is commonly accepted that the Aryans came from outside India and they are racially different from the natives. But Ambedkar argues that the terms *arya,* which occur in the Vedas, had not been used in the racial sense at all. So far as the Rig Veda was concerned, there was not a particle of evidence suggesting the invasion of India by the Aryans. The theory of the Aryan race is just an assumption by Westerners. The theory of invasion is an invention is necessary because of a gratuitous assumption, which underlies the Western theory. The assumption is that the Indo-Germanic people who are the purest of the modern representative of the original Aryan race. The distinction between the Aryas on the one hand, the Dasa and Dasyus, on the other, was not a racial distinction of colour. It was the European scholars who held that the white race is the best race and insisted that the word varna meant colour. He concludes that there is no evidence in the Vedas of any invasion of India by the Aryan race and there is no racial distinction between the upper caste Hindus and the lower caste people.

Ambedkar also presented his views on Varna System and the Origin of Sudras. He argues that there were only three classes in the past and at that time a member of one clan had the freedom of changing one's clan.

The origin of the varnas may be traced back to the well known struggle for supremacy that took place in ancient past between the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, the conflict is conflicted in the allegorical story of the many long wars between them which was rooted in the question of and is superior in matters relating to the institution of priesthood. In this conflict Raja Sudras, the supporter of Viswamitra, held the key position. However, Visista was the ultimate winner and the celebration of his triumph was followed by the degradation of the progeny of Sudras to menial ranks that led them to occupy the lowest place in the social ladder. The technique employed by the Brahmins for the degradation of the Sudras, according to Ambedkar, was that the Brahmins refused to perform *upanayans* ceremony for them.

Ambedkar also gave his arguments for the causes of the origin of untouchability. According to him there are mainly two reasons for the origin of untouchability. They are; concept of Buddhism and beef eating. The emergence of Buddhism and beef eating are said to be the cause of the origin of untouchability. Since Hinduism had practice of caste system broken people left Hinduism and embrace Buddhism. Their acceptance was only to get rid of the caste system and practice of untouchability. When there was a large number of a conversion into Buddhism, Brahmins could not digest it. Then Brahmins began to hate both, the untouchables as well as the Buddhists. They considered untouchables very low caste because of beef eating. Since then the concept of the untouchability came into existence. The untouchables hated the Brahmins because the Brahmins were enemies of Buddhism. Since lower caste was called untouchables they converted to Buddhism. Hence it is possible to conclude that the root cause of untouchability is Brahmins themselves and their jealousy. In this opinion, beef eating is the reason for the spread of untouchability. Ambedkar quoting various instances from early Hindu scriptures asserts that the slaughter of the cow was not prohibited in the early Vedic period. *Yajna* of the Brahmins was nothing but killing of animals. Manu too did not regard cow as a sacred animal, on the other hand, he regarded it as an impure animal whose touch caused ceremonial pollution. He had whatsoever no objection at all against the killing of the cow. The reason why lower caste people were untouchables was only because they were eating beef, which Brahmins did not like. Brahmins worshiped the cows. In order to putdown Buddhism and to regain their lost position, the Brahmins gave up the habit of beef eating and made the cow a sacred animal. Thus the goal of the Brahmins in giving up beef eating was to snatch away their social prestige from the Buddhist. Having adopted this means, the Brahmins declared all those who eat beef

as untouchables. The untouchables having no choice left behind continued their beef eating.

Further Ambedkar denies that untouchables were originally non-Aryans. In fact, he argues that in the Indian society, we find a mixture of various races. Hence, the idea that the untouchables were belonged to some inferior or defeated race was untenable. He provides a sociological answer. Originally there existed a number of unsettled tribes. They came into conflict with other wandering tribes. These, wandering tribes were defeated and their members scattered. These scattered people finally became attached to various settled tribes. However, their status in the tribal societies remained subordinate to the settled tribes. Thus, the wanderers stabilized as outsiders. The next round of conflict between these outsiders and the settled tribes took place on the issue of religion and subsequently beef eating. Ambedkar argues that to meet the challenge of Buddhism, Brahminism adopted complete non-violence, total renunciation of meat-eating and deification of the cow. The outsiders who were followers of Buddhism traditionally ate meat of dead animals including cow. Since they did not suspend the practice of beef-eating, they were ex-communicated by the settled tribes under the influence of Brahmins. This ex-communication was later justified by incorporating it in religious scriptures. Thus, untouchability became a permanent and sacred part of religion.

Although some of Ambedkar's interpretations have been debatable, nobody denies that untouchability first came into existence and then became part of religion. Moreover, the most important task that Ambedkar's research has fulfilled is to create self-respect among the lower castes and untouchables. He convinced them that there is nothing shameful in their past, nothing inferior or inglorious in their heritage. He convinced them that their low status was not due to any disability on their part, but it was a result of social mechanism under the influence of Brahminism. His interpretations, above all, convinced everyone that a scrutiny of the religious foundations of Hinduism was necessary.

However, Ambedkar knew that all this involved a total change in Hinduisin which would take a very long time. Therefore, along with this suggestion for basic change, he also insisted on many other ways for the uplift of the untouchables. Under the influence of tradition the untouchables had completely surrendered to the domination of the upper castes. They had lost all spirit to fight and assert themselves. The myth of inherent pollution also considerably influenced the minds of untouchables. Therefore, it was

necessary to arouse their self-respect. Untouchables should realize that they are the equals of caste Hindus. They must throw away their bondage.

Conclusion

Thus, the term 'caste' in India is often regarded an unchallengeable and closed system of social stratification. This term refers, paradigmatically, to a social institution in India in which endogamous descent groups, known as castes or sub-castes/*jatis*, are hierarchically ranked. It has also been used to describe hereditary forms of social stratification. Caste and Hegemony are central part of Hindu ideology. No historian / scholar could challenge to ignore this reality in Indian society. The caste and ideology have undergone significant changes in different historical periods. Modern and post modern scholars have also revealed the hegemonic ideology of Hinduism. This paper mainly argues that the socio-economic conditions are responsible for the changes occurring in the ideology of caste system in India, and it is through articulation with this alone that the changes take place in the internal structure/ideology of the caste system.

In this context what is the relevance of Ambedkar's thought today in academics? In his lifetime Ambedkar was constantly responding to contemporary issues. Therefore, his propagation of separate electorates or reservations, his views on linguistic states, etc. have a specific context. It would be wrong merely to take up the same programmes which Ambedkar had to take up in those circumstances and try to delineate the essence of his political ideology. We have seen that Ambedkar persistently held the image of society free from injustice and exploitation. Therefore, he repeatedly announced that an ideal society will be based on liberty, equality and fraternity. What are the forces operating against these three principles? Caste is an obstacle in achieving these three principles. Thus, Ambedkar's idea of caste is very useful to all the social scientist in understanding of peculiarity of caste in Indian society.

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The Status of the Unscripted: Oral Traditions of the Nagas

IMCHASENLA

Abstract

The oral transmission of knowledge and wisdom of human experience is seen as an intrinsic aspect of the Naga cultures and societies. During the modern period, although Nagas began to use the written word as a tool for documentation, expression and communication, oral traditions are greatly valued. Ideas about truth, rationality, logic, and ways of knowing the world are contextualized within all societies and are entirely valid within their cultural contexts and should be respected as such. However, the discussions of oral history have occasionally been framed in over simplistic oppositional binaries as oral/ writing, uncivilized/civilized, subjective/objective, rational/irrational. The written form is accorded greater status than the oral one and that makes unscripted form typically a statement of inferiority in comparison with the other dominant population that has the technology of writing. In such an age where writing reigns supreme, tribal people who depend mostly on oral traditions for any reconstruction of the past find themselves increasingly marginalized. On the other hand, orality and writing do not exclude each other rather they are complementary. There is a significant symbiosis between these two forms of literature. Both technologies have strengths that depend largely on the situations in which they are used and share common principles as well. Oral and written methods of recalling and recounting the past together have the potential to contribute significantly to the historical records.

Keywords: *Unscripted; Orality; Folklore; Identity*

Historically, the Nagas had no written script; their sole means of communication was in oral form. They relied on oral traditions to preserve and transmit their history, culture and accumulated experience for generations. Although these historically unscripted people have been relatively isolated in high hills and mountains until the British inventions, the folk history claims of their possession of writing in the past. For instance, the tradition holds that Ao-Nagas had a written script but they recorded history on an animal skin which was, unfortunately, eaten by a dog.[1] A similar story of

lost writing is told by many of the 60 tribal groups in North-East of India, upland Burma, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam and southwest China. It is told almost exclusively by the tribal people, mostly Tibeto-Burman speakers. Stuart Blackburn in his essay discusses the status of India's literary history and the tribal marginalization in the sphere of political and economic power and their lack of cultural and linguistic capital, and states:

Those of us who work with the long literary histories of Indian languages can easily lose sight of the fact that two-thirds of the world's 6,000 languages have no (indigenous) script and the most existing scripts were invented or adapted during the past 200 years. We are familiar with the politics of scripts in South Asian history- the Urdu/Hindi controversy, Bengali/Assamese, Tulu/Malayalam, the many scripts for Konkani; and we are also familiar with stories of lost texts: the Vedas get lost in Sanskrit and Tamil traditions, and oral epics disappear in Telugu. The loss of writing, however, is more fundamental since it is the technology required to build a culture of status (Stuart Blackburn, 2010, p. 309).

The written form is accorded greater status than the oral one and that makes unscripted form typically a statement of inferiority in comparison with the other dominant population that has the technology of writing. In such an age where writing reigns supreme, tribal people who depend mostly on oral traditions for any reconstruction of the past find themselves increasingly marginalized.

Oral transmission is not something new to the people of India. According to A.K. Ramanujan (1990), verbal folklore is the wide base of the Indian pyramid on which all other Indian literatures rest. He argues that written and hallowed texts are not the only kinds of texts in a culture like the Indian but oral traditions of every kind produce texts. Cultural performances of every sort, whether they are written or oral acts of composition, whether they are plays or weddings, rituals or games, contain texts. Thus, every cultural performance, he affirms, not only creates texts, it in itself is a text (p.15). In ancient India, oral literature has been said to have acquired greater acceptance and admiration than the written one. Even Vyasa dictated his scribe, *Mahabharatha,* to Lord Ganesh. On the whole, intellectual acumen was assessed on the basis of one's ability to memorize and recite at one's will exquisite rhapsodies mesmerizing masses and attracting encomiums of the elite.

During the nationalistic period, all over the world, oral tradition received a serious attention as it became necessary for people to prove and promote

the idea of the Nation. The collection and publication of oral tradition gained momentum. Those who were interested in folklore collected compiled and published books on oral traditions. And the best known example is the impact of Jacob Grimm's compilation of German folktales in the quest of nationalism in the face of French cultural and political domination. Even in India, oral traditions did play a role in the development of Indian nationalism. Around the end of the 19th century, when the publications of collections of folktales were increased, intellectuals like Rabindranath Tagore, Natesa Sastri and so forth also felt of a national literature for the nation. Thus, Tamil and Bengali folklore, for instance, were similarly promoted as expressions of a pre-British, pre-Mughal Cultural world, of an authentic India. People grew conscious of the value and strength of the folklore and wanted to preserve their identity and that was the foundation for nationalist thinking in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Stuart Blackburn, 2003).

However, it is also imperative to draw attention to the fact that oral traditions of the unscripted are not inscribed in the Indian literary historiography. Blackburn brings the problem to the surface that "none of the authoritative, standard reference works of Indian literary history finds any space for tribal oral narratives, that is, for oral traditions in the unofficial languages of the country" (2010, p. 310). He continues to argue that a volume of comparative Indian literature has a substantial section on folk literatures but only in the major official language.

The only Indian histories in which the unscripted people have played a significant role were the colonial documents and evolutionary ethnology. History of Nagas and other pre-literate people like Mizos began only with the rise of British period since the European accounts were the only past sources that could be objectively dated. Present day academic practice also has followed from this paradigm and flows from this, thereby neglecting the historicity's of the Nagas which was available in the form of oral history. Conflict with the Nagas in the 19th century including major uprisings and wars ensured that British colonial records gave a prominent place to these unscripted marginalized people. The tribal population of India has attracted considerable interest from the emerging fields of anthropology. For instance, the monumental "People of India" project, E.T. Dalton's book on the tribes of Bengal and Chota Nagpur and early collections of Santal folklore represent the devoted interest paid to the tribal populations in the colonial period. Thus, colonial discourse did at least include the tribals.

Western discourse has come to prioritize the written word as the dominant form of record keeping and generally considered the oral societies to be people without history. However, this could not be farther from the truth. Felix Padel contends that the evolution of the tribal societies has had a different emphasis, a unique group of people who are neither "primitive" nor "backward or less fully evolved" (1995, p. 255).

The emphasis in tribal societies, according to him, is on the sophistication of oral culture and the skills of living close to earth rather than towards the centralization and materialism that are the basic to most civilizations. The oral societies transmitted their traditional history, origin and migration of the people (tribe, clan, individual, etc.), formation of the village, events of war, peace, festivals and so forth orally through songs, poetry, ballads, prayers, sayings, stories and tales or as public oration when the situation demands.[2] So oral traditions are one way through which the community makes sense of the world in which they live. The oral tradition is taken as the main source of information to explain how things came to be the way they are in the world, or in some cases, explain how things are supposed to be. The traditions also help to teach the young generations the things they need to know to fit in with their society. Because these traditions developed over generations within the boundaries of a society, they are often unique to that society, and help to define who they are and what they believe in as a people.

During the modern period, though Nagas began to use the written word as a tool for documentation, expression and communication, oral traditions are greatly valued. The oral transmission of knowledge and wisdom of human experience is seen as an intrinsic aspect of the Naga cultures and societies. Ideas about truth, rationality, logic, and ways of knowing the world are contextualized within all societies and are entirely valid within their cultural contexts and should be respected as such. Thus, the oral traditions of the Nagas differ from those of any other people in the world, and help to keep the Nagas unique. However, the discussions of oral history have occasionally been framed in over simplistic oppositional binaries as oral/writing, uncivilized/civilized, subjective/objective. In the West, authors of written documents are often considered either as creators or as authorities over subjects of texts depending on whether they are literary or scholarly texts. Hence, ethnographic writings are considered as "fact" or "true" or "rational" or "objective" whereas oral literature and history tends to be framed as "subjective" or "irrational" or "biased" in comparison to written literature.

The inherent instability of any oral tradition and its inevitable variables/ weakness in human memory and performance are much debated on the question of authenticity and Jan Vansina has countered this when he says:

No one in oral societies doubts that memories can be faithful repositories which contain the sum total of the past human experience and explain the how and why of present day conditions.... Whether memory changes or not, culture is reproduced by remembrance put into words and deed. Through memory the mind carries culture from generation to generation. How it is possible for the mind to remember and to spin out of nothing, complex ideas, messages, and instructions for living, which manifest continuity over time, is one of the greatest wonders one can study, and is comparable only to human intelligence and thought itself. Because the wonder is so great, it is also very complex. Oral tradition should be central to students of culture, of ideology, of society, of psychology, of art, and finally, of history (1985, p. xi).

The substandard treatment of the oral tradition is wide of the mark because the existence of texts that are composed and transmitted orally is as old as the language itself. Until around 4000 BC all literature was oral yet starting in the years somewhere around 4000 and 3000 BC, writing developed both in Egypt and in the Mesopotamian civilization at Sumer. During the millennia since then the habitual use of writing extended over Asia, North Africa and the Mediterranean lands and eventually over much of the world that led to the rapid growth in the composition of written literatures. And as a result, in certain parts of the world, literature in writing, to a large extent, has become the normal form of expression for storytellers and poets. Nevertheless, during all the centuries in which the world embraced the technology of writing, there has existed, side by side with the growing written record, a large and important activity carried on by those actually unlettered, and those not much accustomed to reading and writing.

Before the invention of writing technology, nearly everywhere else, the oral storyteller or epic singer occupied a prominent position, and all of what is called literary expression was passed in the memory of the people, and especially of gifted narrators. The world knew only of oral literature since the beginning and in this sense, it is the original and persistent technology that gave the human culture a chance to build human experience over the generations in which both social values and environmental knowledge have been transmitted. It is an ongoing process and cannot be dismissed simply as a "myth" in the sense that the Western society polarizes the differences

between "myth" and "science" or "facts." In fact, orality and writing do not exclude each other rather they are complementary. There is a significant symbiosis between these two forms of literature. Both technologies have strengths that depend largely on the situations in which they are used and share common principles as well. Albert Sonny McHalsie asserts that the academic world and the oral history process share an important common principle where both contribute to "knowledge by building upon what is known and remembering that learning is a life-long quest (2007, p.82)." Oral and written methods of recalling and recounting the past together have the potential to contribute significantly to the historical records.

During the colonial period, the identities of the subjects, manipulated and created by the ruling class, were accepted by the cultural groups. The study of folklore became important in the countries that were suffering from identity crisis or national inferiority in the 18th and 19th centuries. Identity is closely connected with folklore and folklorists have been dealing with identity since the very beginning of the discipline. Many scholars of Sociology and Anthropology have also identified the close connection between folklore and identity.

In addition, since the mid-20th century, mainly as a result of growing interest in the histories of marginalized groups such as African-Americans, women and the working class, Western scholastic discourse has increasingly accepted oral history as a legitimate and valuable addition to the historical record (1998, pp. ix-xiii). The search for identity is one of the most significant creative cultural processes in which people of the developing countries, in particular, are involved. Thus, the importance of oral tradition has come to be widely recognized in the context of tradition-oriented communities of the non-western world, for whom the search for identity in the face of waves of change has become an extremely vital issue. In the newly emerging nationalities, for instance, in Africa in particular, oral tradition has proved to be not only of great academic significance but also of immense practical value in the nation-building process.

According to Herder, the soul of the people lives in their poetry and by soul he means identity. Naga culture and folklore are precious. They believed that it expresses the soul of their people and represents an integrated and holistic approach to the culture of the people who for generations have lived in the morality of a verbal dimension. However, the introduction of the British imperialism reinforced by American missionaries and re-invented by post-Independent Indian aspirations and the waves of globalization

blowing over Nagas not only led to a gradual depletion of the indigenous culture but also the literary contents and poetic language of the tradition. According to J.P. Mills, due to the introduction of modern education and Christianity there will remain hardly any memory of the stories and songs which the Nagas have handed down from father to son for untold ages. The past is being allowed to die (J.P.Mills, 2003). The National Geographic Magazine, in its Millennium Supplement: Culture (issue of August 2, 1999) has listed the vanishing cultural identities in its world map. Among them the Naga cultural identity is prominently mentioned in the map. Today, to study the Naga culture and to preserve its good traits has created in many Naga scholars a sense of urgency and a feeling of sincerity to learn more of their ancient ways of life before time caused any more diffusion and loss of the lore. Dreading the complete loss of the Naga history and philosophy, research and a progamme of collection were carried out by Temsula Ao. Her work *The Ao-Naga Oral Tradition* (1999) presented a minor project collection and translation of Ao-Naga folktales. She studied the Ao-Naga oral tradition in its entirety which has shaped and nurtured the Ao-Naga people for so many generations. Her work talks about the society of the Aos, family structure, and the customary laws using oral tradition as the source. She opines:

The Ao-Naga oral tradition is not a mere form of 'story telling' as opposed to a written, recorded version. It is indeed in many ways the source of the people's literature, social customs, religion and history. But at the same time, it is much more than that. It has evolved into a comprehensive and integrated network of indigenous knowledge system, incorporating art with reality, history with imagination, and the ideal with the practical. In this sense the tradition constitutes for the Ao the world of his origin as well as the idiom of his origin as well as the idiom of his continuance within the world (Temsula Ao, 1999, p.175).

The Naga culture and folklore are the primary roots of the tree of their racial identity. And without their ancestral identity, all political slogans of "regional identity" would be like a tall golden statue with feet of clay. So it is important that the process of the handing over as well as taking over of the cultural and folklore treasures should not be in mere age-old tradition of the oral form. The process should be supported and supplemented by writing, recording, filming and with all possible methods of available documentation. In this way, preserving of the folk culture can be ensured during this current decade before it becomes too late.

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Endnotes

[1] According to the folktale, when the earth was still young and when there was no sharp difference between darkness and light, man and beast lived together. During this age, there was a written script. The script was on the hide of an animal and was hung on a wall. One day, when the people were away in their fields, a dog dragged it down and ate it up. From that time onwards, the people had to commit all knowledge to memory and began transmitting the same by word of mouth to succeeding generations.

[2] Longkumer, Lanusashi. *Oral Tradition in contemporary conflict resolution: A Naga perspective*; https://indianfolklore.org/journals/index. php/IFL/article/viewFile/105/116. Accessed: 12/06/ 2015.

Cause and Effect of ICT on Libraries and Librarianship in an IT Driven Society

NEIKETU SIAM

Abstract

We are slowly getting more concerned with the resources that are available through the internet and networks than those that are available with us in our libraries. Though ICT has the potential for modernizing the library activities there is a wide gap between what is been told and what has been achieved. However the application of ICT in libraries in the country has gained momentum. The extent of use of ICT in libraries and those which are already using it will increase substantially. This paper describes and discusses the impact of ICT on Librarianship as a whole. For Library & Information Science Professionals change incorporates modern and information technologies and management issues. For professionals with expertise in open source software and Dublin core etc the jobs will search for them rather than they looking for jobs. Such a time has come that unless the LIS professionals understand what are the search engines and which search engine collects information on which subjects, LIS professionals would be wasting time as many of the users also do.

Keywords: *ICT; Electronic Resources; Digital Information; Born Digital; Open Access; Scholarly Publication*

1. Introduction

The most obvious factor that changes Library and information sciences activities is technology which gives challenges to the library profession. As a result, there are lots of changes in this field, such as, traditional library to digital library, library co-operation to resource sharing / library networks/ consortia, collection development to content development, conventional education to web- based education, Reference services to Information consolidation and Repackaging. Here it is pertinent to assess the following:

a) Find out the information needs of various categories of users.

b) Identify the various channels through which information is accessed.

c) Identify the level of user's satisfaction with electronic resources and services.

d) Find out the problems of users trying to use electronic resources.

e) Assess the future of printed journals.

f) Study the impact of E- resources over traditional resources.

The pre-eminent value in librarianship is of course, services. Librarians define themselves as service professionals. They create collections and provide resources to meet the needs of their patrons and their communities. The ease of retrieving information from internet leads to the thinking that the librarian, who is trained to search for information and to create front-end searching of databases is now redundant. The graphical interface and point and click navigation of the internet mean that the user no longer has to know complex commands. Navigation from one site to another can largely be accomplished by clicking a mouse, and when a good site is found, another click adds it to 'favourites' or 'bookmarks' file (Kaliammal & Thamavaiselvi, 2008). Patrons may retrieve so much information and so many 'hits' that they are satisfied with the information from the first few sites browsed. But a high percentage of web users cite the inability to find desired information as one of their biggest frustrations. In this context the emphasis will shift from technical skills in the library to communication, facilitation, training and management skills.

2. ICT and its Objectives

The LIS students who pass out of the universities should have the skills to cull out knowledge from printed and digital resources which are growing exponentially. A user does not possess information skills and generally cannot on one's own find every important resource. The LIS professionals who have the skills of conducting research and have the capacity to inquire into new issues can only go deep into this vast expanse of information and knowledge resource and come out with relevant information and knowledge for the user. Therefore, the departments of LIS have to impart training to

the students in the use of Internet and digital resources and all such issues related to it. For instance, the handling of multimedia documents in the coming years on the web is going to greatly increase in size and relevance. It is necessary that LIS professional is able to manage knowledge in various formats and forms and let users have access to the knowledge which is required by them.

3. Impact on the Profession

It appears that the library is turning its back on tangible items that have already been purchased in favour of intangible, unstable resources that are licensed or free. It is therefore only natural for some staff to question the new priorities. Certainly in the first rush to incorporate e-Journals into the library's catalog or web pages it will appear that the library is abandoning some of its quality control functions. Concerns about lower standards and abandoned process may be the most difficult in terms of morale. A sudden shift away from previous priorities can leave them feeling disoriented, demoralized and uncertain about the worth of their past and future contributions. Careful work, attention to detail, and rule- based behavior have traditionally been valued qualities in library employees. Difficult though it may be to accept, some library staff may need to be retrained to favor speed and efficiency over perfection, and to use common sense in the absence of rules.

3.1. Impact of ICT on Library & Information Centres

  i. ICT makes information creation in digital format possible.

 ii. ICT makes online access and file transfer possible.

iii. ICT makes networking and sharing of information resources possible.

 iv. Computing telecommunications and networking combined together made access to information anytime, anywhere possible.

  v. To provide library users the type of service which was hitherto not possible. For instance catalogue is machine readable. So it can be made interactively searchable and more flexible by way of greater accessibility.

 vi. ICT improves the cost- efficiency of library operations. This is mostly possible because a single input could be utilized in several operations to manipulate different outputs. Eg Web OPAC. However,

this does not mean that all computer application will be economical compared to manual methods (Satyanarayana, 2006).

3.2 Impact on Librarians

Information is easily available in large quantity through internet, but is generally in pieces and unorganized form. For this the library professionals need the technique for retrieving the digital information. In order to face this challenge the library professionals and also users need to acquire knowledge about the digital world which may be as follows:

- Knowledge of open educational resources

- Knowledge of digitization

- Knowledge of sources of E- Information

- Knowledge of computer technology

- Techniques of evaluating the quality of information.

- Translation skills.

- Compilation and editing skills.

- Know-how of the complex technologies within which the information is embedded.

- Communication skill

- Knowledge of copyright laws and the patent act.

- Need for continuous learning in the context of rapidly changing ICT.

3.3**. Impact of ICT on Library Education**

One of the most important activities in information society is to maintain a cadre of qualified information professionals. The knowledge and skills required by the faculty members of LIS schools can be assessed only examining the changing role their products are expected to play in their organization. It is a fact that IT has brought in unforseen changes in LIS profession. But it is not enough for the library and information professional to be a master of IT alone. In addition to the technical and professional skills,

they have to possess managerial skills too. This is all the more necessary in the context of libraries becoming large enterprises in terms of men, money, material and machines.

In this context LIS institutions and educators may have to develop need based curriculum and organize continuing or regular training programmes for the in-service professionals to grasp their knowledge in the field, with regard to technological handling and innovation in particular. Taking into consideration the profile of modern information professional, the essential skills to be imparted to LIS teachers can be summarized below (Devarajan & Vijaya Kumar, 2008):

- Department of Library and Information science should teach the use of open source library management software to students.

- More and more records are born as digital records and printed documents are getting converted into digital records. Knowing fully well that LIS students have to handle digital resources in future, creation of digital libraries has to be part of the curriculum, not at theoretical level but at practical level.

- Skill to serve as a facilitator – They have to serve as facilitators, i.e. those who can add to the experience of students using technological means and enhance discussion and interaction.

- Proficiency in content development- Teachers have to be familiar with: HTML, still pictures (GIF, JPEG etc) formats, program like C and C++, Hot Java etc. and moving pictures (Mpeg, Avi)

- Information consolidation - Involves adeptness in collecting information from variety of sources, combining it and interpreting it.

- Presentation and communication skills.

- Management skill – Critical analysis of the syllabi of MLISc Courses offered by Indian Universities show that management content is very low. Whatever is discussed under guise of management is nothing but the organization of libraries rather than planning and other aspects. It should include topics in: Financial Management, Staff management, Marketing Management, Strategic Management, Stress Management, Crisis management System, Analysis Space Management, Quality Management and Material management

3.4. Effect on Publishing World

The effect of ICT in the publishing domain has led to a concept called the open access model of scholarly publication Peter Suber(2002) an ardent advocate of the open access movement defines open access as " Online access to Scientific article without charge to readers or Libraries". Wikipedia (2007) defines open access as "Free online availability of digital content". The American Research Libraries association (ARL) defines open access as "A cost effective way to disseminate and use information. It is an alternative to the traditional subscription- based publishing model made possible by new digital technologies and networked communication".

The Characteristics associated with open access are as follows (Arora, 2008):

a) Cost of publication and distribution of articles is recovered from funding agencies rather than from users, in other words "pay to publish, not to access".

b) In open access publishing, access to publication is more democratic. Web based open access repositories are accessible to all users without any restrictions.

c) The Author rather than the publisher owns copyright in the open access model.

d) Open access journals, like traditional journals conduct peer review of submitted articles.

e) Most of the publishers of open access journals are non-profit while a few may be for profit.

3.5. Publishing Models in Electronic Era

The five models of Scholarly journals publishing can be broadly of the following types:

Subscription-based or user pay model: The Subscription based or user pay model is one wherein libraries or users pay for access to digital content publishing in scholarly journals.

Producer pay or Author pay model: Author pay is one of the models of open access publishing where the author or their employer (institute, universities etc) or funding agencies pay for the cost of publishing research

articles.

Hybrid model: Hybrid model of Scholarly publishing is one where they offer most of their content on subscription basis whereas a few are made available completely free or partially free. Considerable variations are found in this model. In some, articles are open access whereas others are accessible to subscribers only.

Differential Pricing: Differential Pricing is a means adopted by the publishers to accumulate maximum profit on scholarly journal by differentiating its prices depending on paying capacity of subscribers in different countries. This however discriminates between subscribers in developing world and those in developed countries.

Domain-Specific digital repositories or Institutional repositories: Institutional repositories focus on publications originated in a single institution in multiple subject discipline, while domain-specific digital repositories accept publications only in a given discipline from authors around the world irrespective of their institutional affiliations or country without neglecting the structure of traditional peer review process.

4. Future Scenario

The information professional will need:

- High level management skills and leadership qualities i.e., he is supposed to be well versed in planning, execution and marketing principles.

- To be highly flexible and adaptable

- To have a high level information handling skills capable of dealing with all types of information technology problems.

- To be a good communicator.

- To be proactive

- Innovative and imaginative

- Thorough knowledge in new methods and technologies

- Capability of measuring and evaluating the existing system

- To involve in collaborative work with resource sharing

among libraries

- Capability of effective exploitation of existing information retrieval services both manual and online.

- To be able to develop target information services by synthesizing information from dispersed sources.

5. How to Overcome the Challenge

Because of the change in the working environment of Libraries, the library and information science professionals are facing certain challenges which at times may seem insurmountable. The day to day activities of the libraries aside, the demands of the users and their expectations are also changing relating to ICT. In many cases the users expectations exceeds the library's capacity to fulfill their needs with regard to the documents they require, infrastructure, other required resources etc. One way to mitigate these challenges would be for working professionals to participate regularly in short term training programs to update themselves with the latest development of information technology in the field of Library and Information Science. Such type of course can prove to be helpful for librarians in learning the new developments in ICT and its use in the libraries (Dhar, 2010). Also it would do good to the professionals to attend various seminars and conferences to brush up, update and cope up with the challenges.

6. Conclusion

The skills needed by the information professionals serve as a pointer to the skills to be possessed by the LIS teachers to function effectively in the capacity of trainers. A regular updating course is the need of the hour. Just-in-time learning i.e. imbibing the skills as and when needed, rather than imparting them as part of long tern course is advisable. Otherwise there is mismatch between teaching and practicing.

ICT is changing the work of libraries and library professionals. More than ever the libraries need this technology. An increase in the number of users, a greater demand for library materials, and an increase in amount of material being published, new electronic formats and sources are some of the reasons for the growing need for ICT. Libraries need to embrace ICT fully. The role of librarians of the future would be repacking of information, even electronic publishing and some possibly hypertext engineers.

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Grappling with the Sacred: The Contemporary Discourse on *Santhara*

SREEKUMAR. V

Abstract

The Jain practice of Santhara involves embracing death voluntarily by progressively giving up everything- from food and water to emotions and bonds. Though disputed as not being a central or "essential" tenet of Jainism, it is a highly respected practice among the Jain community. A debate on Santhara was recently initiated by the judgment of the Rajasthan High Court in August 2015 which held Santhara or Sallekhana as illegal, making it punishable under Section 306 (abetment of suicide) and Section 309 (attempted suicide) of the Indian Penal Code, terming it equivalent to suicide. The bench also held that the practice was not an "essential religious practice" of Jainism. Consequently, four views emerged and articulated a discourse.

Though the judgment of the Rajasthan High Court was stayed by the Supreme Court of India, it opened up a long-drawn debate on the right to die with dignity, raising complex philosophical and legal question of state interference in an individual's right to bodily autonomy. Therefore, the paper aims to outline the major strands of this discourse in a more essayistic form. The question of whether it forms an "essential practice" is carried out within certain limits, owing to the lack of clarity regarding the concept of 'essential' tenets of a faith. Further, the paper also attempts to broadly survey the problems implicit in the various perspectives that characterized the discourse.

Keywords: *Santhara*, *Sallekhana*; *Indian Penal Code; article 21; suicide; euthanasia.*

Santhara, also known as *Sallekhana*, is a Jain practice of voluntarily embracing death by progressively giving up everything, from food and water to emotions and bonds. Commonly, it is viewed as a Jain practice of fasting unto death. The word *Sallekhana* is derived from two words, *sat* and *lekhana*, combinedly meaning "a praiseworthy process of emasculating the body" of passions (Settar, 1990, p. 177). According to the Jain scriptures

called *agamas*, *Sallekhana* is allowed only when a person is nearing his end and deems to have fulfilled the duties he is obliged to perform in that life (Settar, 1990). In other words, the vow of *Sallehkana* can be adopted when all purposes of life have been served, or when the body is unable to serve any more purpose. Though disputed as not being a central or "essential" tenet of Jainism, it is a highly respected practice among the members of the Jain community.

A discourse on *Santhara* was recently initiated by a judgment of Rajasthan High Court which held the practice as illegal and punishable, terming it equivalent to suicide (Nikhil Soni v. Union of India & ors, 2015). The bench also held that the practice was not an "essential religious practice" of Jainism (Nikhil Soni v. Union of India & ors, 2015, p. 44). Henceforth, broadly, four views emerged and articulated a discourse. The first strand in this discourse was formed by the anti-Santhara group. They endorsed the High Court ruling and cited the practice as standing in gross violation to article 21 of the Indian Constitution which granted the right to life to all individuals. They additionally rallied the instances of *Santhara* as a glorified suicide performed under family pressure to bolster their argument. The pro-Santhara advocators, forming the second strand, counteracted and argued that *Santhara* was indeed an "essential" practice and its analogy with suicide was absolutely untenable. The third strand comprising medico-legalists and constitutional law experts plunged into the discourse with a view that the whole issue reflected the conflict between India's colonial-era criminal laws and its faith-based society. Finally, the scholars on secularism and religion too joined the discourse with their view that the ban on *Santhara* poses a big challenge to Indian secularism and, in fact, also infringes upon the right to freedom of religion as enshrined in article 25 of the Constitution.

Though the verdict of the Rajasthan High Court was stayed by the Supreme Court of India on 31st August 2015, the debate is still an ongoing one. Therefore, the paper aims to examine in considerable detail the four perspectives surrounding the issue that shaped the contemporary discourse on *Sallekhana*. It also purports to broadly survey the problems implicit in these perspectives.

Background

The curtain raiser for the discourse under review, as aforementioned, was initiated by the judgment of the Rajasthan High Court on 10th August 2015.

The judgment was a result of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed in 2006 by Nikhil Soni, a practising lawyer at the same court of law. Notices of the petition were issued on 22nd September 2006. On the next date fixed on 21st December of the same year, a large number of individuals sought intervention. Against this, an objection was filed by the petitioner that they are "not true representatives of the Jain community" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 5). The court then observed that if all of them were allowed to file their respective replies, the whole exercise would turn cumbersome and unmanageable (Nikhil, 2015). Hence, it allowed the intervention of only bodies or associations pertaining to the Jain community, who were to be added as respondents, and also promised to hear the individual intervenors. Thereafter, for seven years, the litigation was "on voyage on the cause list" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 5). Hence, as the court has rightly observed, for all these years it remained a matter of curiosity for the general public and an issue of concern for the Jain community. Eventually, the litigation was heard on 23rd April 2015.

Finally after the judicial scrutiny, the court declared its verdict on 10th August 2015. In this judgment, it upheld the arguments of the petitioner and directed the state to "stop and abolish" the practice of *Santhara* "in any form" and also to treat the same as equivalent to suicide, hence punishable under section 306 and section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) (Nikhil, 2015, p. 46). The times before and after the pronouncement of this verdict witnessed the articulation of a discourse on *Santhara*. This was characterised by four perspectives and will be outlined in detail in this paper.

The Anti-Santhara Perspective

The anti-Santhara group was spearheaded by Nikhil Soni who practiced law at the Rajasthan High Court. According to him, *Santhara* was a religious practice followed by the *Shvetamabara* sect of Jainism. It involved a religious fast unto death based on the pretext that when all purposes of the life have been served, and provided the body is not able to do so anymore, the vow of *Santhara* will lead one to *moksha* or salvation. Thus, both Soni and his supporters viewed the practice of *Santhara* as nothing short of an abhorrent to modern thinking (Nikhil, 2015, p. 23).

Primarily, the anti-Santhara advocators argued that the practice militates against the law of the land. The Constitution of India guarantees to every citizen the right to life and underscores the obligation of the state to protect

the life of an individual. The group also added that the right to religious freedom guaranteed under article 25 of the Indian Constitution is subject to various restraints viz. public order, morality and health (Nikhil, 2015). Further, and more importantly, this freedom was subjected to provisions in Part III of the Constitution including article 21, which guaranteed the right to life. Therefore they stated that such a religious practice albeit flaunted as an ancient one, even if it truly was, cannot be allowed to violate the right to life of an individual.

To bolster their argument, they also drew a parallel between the practice of *Santhara* and suicide, and prayed to the court to consider the former as a form of the latter. Such an analogy ensured that the practice of *Santhara* would become a criminal offence punishable under the Indian Penal Code. According to them, suicide is an intentional act of killing oneself and *Santhara* is nothing but a similar act of intentional self-destruction. This is because the person committing it was fully aware of its eventuality. Further, the practice of *Santhara* is glorified with much pomp and glamour. The person committing it earns respect and attracts people from far and wide to witness its execution. Nonetheless the anti-Santhara group claimed that, in most cases, the practice was forced upon people who reach their old age despite their unwillingness. Such coerced *Santhara*s, they argued, were difficult to spot since the coerced and old victim may not willingly come forward to admit it owing to various reasons. Firstly, the adoption of the vow of *Santhara* was seen as a means of upward social mobility. Hence, a person was not only coerced but was not allowed to revert his/her decision regarding the vow once he/she found it difficult to fulfil. The entire family or community then conspired and forced the person to complete the process enduring "inhuman and intolerant conditions" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 26). The opposing strand further posited that the person who undertook the practice was sometimes tied to furniture nearby and was forcibly prevented from consuming anything despite the practitioner's plea. Moreover, the person committing the practice was surrounded by groups singing religious hymns which made the practitioner lose his/her consciousness. The group summed up their position by stating that the practitioner was coerced to accept the process of death propelled by religious zealotry of other members of the family. Therefore the practice was viewed by the anti-Santhara advocators as involving the "killing" of a person in the case of those who may have forcefully been asked to take up the vow of *Santhara*.

It was such cases of forced *Santhara* that actually prompted the anti-Santhara group to take the issue to the judicature. As aforementioned, it was

done in the form of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) submitted to the Jaipur bench of the Rajasthan High Court. The court upon scrutiny, found that some arguments made by the group demands merit and issued a directive to the state to bring to a halt the performance of *Santhara* in the country by treating the same as a criminal offence punishable under the law of the land.

The Pro-Santhara Perspective

The pro-Santhara group was championed by the Jain associations or bodies, notably by the Stanakvasi Jain Shravak Sangh (SJSS) of Jaipur, as well as the lay followers. The group portrayed *Santhara* as "an exercise of self-purification and a popular religious practice throughout the history of Jainism" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 10). They underscored that the practice is not one that involves killing or giving up of life, but instead, involved "taking the death in its own stride" (Nikhil, 2015, p.10).

The group defined *Santhara* as a practice aimed at putting an end to the bodily existence without consciously coveting death by fasting. According to these supporters of the practice, prior to the adoption of the vow, the practitioner was expected to give up all the feelings of love and hatred. He/she was also to part with all other worldly attachments. The practice was to be undertaken after discussing it "thoroughly and frankly [sic]" with one's religious teacher or *Guru* (Nikhil, 2015, p.10). Further, it must not be adopted to achieve *moksha* or liberation, as asserted by the anti-Santhara group. On the contrary, it provided a way to attain liberation in least number of rebirths and thus shortening *samsara*- the vicious cycle of birth, death and re-birth. In other words, the practice was argued to involve a conscious attempt to purge the karmic baggage from the soul which fuelled the cycle of *samsara*.

According to the pro-Santhara group, the practice has been "arbitrarily equated with the offence of suicide" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 11). Suicide, for them, was a result of factors like emotional stress, feeling of disgrace, fear or hatred, escapist tendency from an issue etc. Moreover, such an act was committed in secrecy and using weapons of offence. The consequent death in most cases will be sudden and causes bereavement to the kith and kin of the victim. But the practice of *Santhara*, they argued, stand wholly in conflict with all the physical and psychological features of suicide. It was a vow taken up voluntarily and cannot be equated with suicide as

contemplated under provisions of the Indian Penal Code. Hence, the crux behind the vow of *Santhara* was summed up by the pro-Santhara group as a dignified manner of death, which involved embracing one's end without panic "like a monk and not like a beast bellowing and panting and making efforts to avoid the unavoidable" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 18). Thus, notably, the passion or craving for death to arrive is absent in this case, thus making a stark contrast with suicide.

The supporting camp also asserted that the analogies drawn, on the one hand between *Santhara* and *Sati* and on the other hand between *Santhara* and euthanasia, were also equally flawed. During *Santhara*, a person chose the best way to leave his body in a noble and non-violent manner. Moreover, the person adopting the practice was not expected to seek death to approach swiftly, let alone wish to live on or desire sensual pleasures. Incidentally, the practice of *Sati* was mooted by economic motives while no such motives propelled the undertaking of the vow of *Santhara*.[1] Thus, *Santhara* was the "pinnacle of glory of life" and unlike the practice of *Sati*, it was not "immolation but promotion of the soul" (Nikhil, 2015, p.20). Further, euthanasia, even if it is active, passive, voluntary or involuntary, involved killing of a person with which the practice of *Santhara*, the pro-Santhara group argued, was not even remotely comparable.

The pro-Santhara group therefore concluded their arguments by stating that the practice of *Santhara* or *Sallekhana* must be protected under the right of Jains to manage their own affairs in matters of their religion as guaranteed by articles 25, 26 and 29 of the Constitution. According to them, article 21 of the Constitution recognized the right to life including the right to live with dignity. This clause of 'right to live with dignity' was, in turn, expected to include right to have a dignified life until the point of death, including a dignified procedure of death. In the case of Jains, such a dignified manner of death was to be *Santhara* or *Sallekhana*. They tried to substantiate it in the court by resorting to the judgment of the Supreme Court of India in a case involving Smt. Gyan Kaur Vs. State of Punjab.[2] *Santhara*, it was argued, belonged to the "category of cases which may fall within the group of right to die with dignity as a part of life with dignity when death is certain and imminent and the process of natural death has commenced" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 14). Further, according to article 26 of the Constitution, every religious denomination shall have the right to manage its own affairs in matters concerning religion. Furthermore, article 29 of the Constitution entitles all minority religious communities, the Jains being one, to protect their culture and practices. One among the defenders of the practice even

went on to claim the litigation "as a cloak for attaining private ends by a member of the Hindu society against a religious minority community" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 8).

Notably, the state during the case argued in support of the practice. Even the court observed its stand as "mixed with respect and reverence for the religion" which is a religious community with considerable economic stake in the state of Rajasthan (Nikhil, 2015, p. 5). For its arguments, the state relied on a research work done by Justice T.K. Tukol, former Vice-Chancellor of Bangalore University, which was published as a monograph titled 'Sallekhana is not Suicide'. The state thus indicated with a protectionist flavour that the practice is "protected as a religious practice under the constitution" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 6). Finally, it prayed to the court to dismiss the writ petition since the petition was unaccompanied by any research or evidence related to the issue.

The Legal Perspective

The legal perspective, which forms the third strand, is a diverse one. Firstly, it includes the position taken by the High Court. Further, it also encompasses the views of legal experts who have aired their opinions unequivocally, in turn enriching the discourse. The legal perspective also includes the views of medico-legalists who elaborated on the questions of legality and possible connections between the practice of *Santhara* and euthanasia.

The legal viewpoint offered by the Rajasthan High Court can be gleaned from its judgment. Firstly, the court dismisses the pleas of the supporters of the practice hinged on articles 25, 26 and 29 of the Constitution. The court observes that article 25 is conjoined by certain restrictions or restraints and no practice which violates public order, morality and health, and especially article 21 of the Constitution which guaranteed the right to life, can protect a religious practice. Further, if they are not violating these restraints, only the "essential" or "integral" practices and beliefs will fall under the purview of the aforementioned protection. The court in this case also observes that "a practice can be a religious practice but not an essential or integral part of religion" and expresses doubts as to whether *Santhara* falls under this ambit (Nikhil, 2015, p. 25). The court also states that that the antiquity of a practice is not reflective of its importance or essentiality.

The High Court then proceeds to interpret a previous judgment of the Supreme Court of India on euthanasia, despite the fact that the Supreme

Court has left out the question of whether abstaining from consumption of food voluntarily with the motive of ending one's life forms a criminal offence or not, to state that the crux of that judgment is categorical on the issue that no person has a right to take his own life consciously. Such a conclusion flows from the fact that the right to life does not presuppose the right to end one's life voluntarily. Hence, according to article 21, right to life enjoyed by a citizen cannot be deprived of by anyone, including himself, voluntarily or involuntarily. The underlying principle here is quite straight-forward- if a person cannot give life, he has no right to take life, of himself or of others. Finally, the court remarks that the right to die with dignity at the end of one's life must not be confused or compared "with the right to die an unnatural death curtailing the natural span of life" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 41).

Therefore, the court concluded that the practice of *Santhara* is not protected by article 25 and nor does the right to protect the interests of the minority guaranteed by article 29 permits taking life of a person. Moreover, *Santhara* was to be treated as an optional religious practice, since not established otherwise, and is also not covered by article 25(1) of the Constitution. The court also observed that no religious practice, even if falling under the "essential practice" category, that involves the deprivation of someone of his life can be permitted to be included under article 25. Hence, the Rajasthan High Court decreed that "the state shall stop and abolish the practice of *Santhara* or *Sallekhana* in the Jain religion in any form" (Nikhil, 2015, p. 45). Such a practice henceforth should be seen as a criminal offence punishable under Sections 306 and 309 of the Indian Penal Code.

Experts in the field of constitutional law offer an outsider's take on the issue. These legal experts attribute the whole issue to the incompatibility between a faith-based society represented by India and its statutes etched by a colonial stylus. According to Shekhar Hattangadi, an expert in constitutional law, India's criminal laws are products of colonial times and remain unmodified since then. In connection with religion, he asserts, the concept of suicide is a "repugnant one" for the mainstream Anglo-Saxon west whose religious ethics and morals are grounded on the principles espoused by Christianity. The Indian Penal Code, with forms the mainstay of the High Court Judgment, is a product of the 1860s which witnessed the cusp of colonial power in India. Lord Thomas Macaulay, the pioneer behind these statutes, was a devout Christian, who according to Shekhar Hattangadi, "telescoped his personal beliefs into an official document" which came to be called the Indian Penal Code (Hattangadi, 2015). In sum, the whole issue

bears a mark of conflict between western statutes and institutions on the one side and eastern philosophies of religion on the other.

The proponents of this perspective rally various statutes of the Indian Penal Code to strengthen such an argument. For instance, the law pertaining to sedition shares a legacy of the same age and remains largely untouched. At times, such statutes function as a useful weapon in the hands of the state, which uses it time and again to silence the opposing yet rightful voices against it. The legal experts thus point out that a discord between the institutions those implement these statutes and the philosophies of people whom they are meant to benefit has inevitably led to conflicts.

For these experts, the *Santhara* case represents one such conflict in its analogy with suicide. According to the Christian beliefs, the human body is to be treated as a "temple of the human soul" whose destruction will become an act against the gift of God. On the contrary, for a devout Jain, the same body is a "prison of the human soul," from where the soul seeks liberation by destruction of bad *karma*.[3] Therefore, they contend that the laws framed in tune with the former belief and ethical systems will inevitably discord, and at times conflict, and cannot cater the people whose philosophical systems are very diverse from it. They perceive such a conflict as being very well represented by one of the remarks made by the High Court when a learned counsel appearing for the respondents elaborated the process of *Santhara* by reciting the *slokas* or hymns in loud voice in the court room. The court described the whole act as one performed at the "amusement of the general public sitting in the court" (Hattangadi, 2015).

The medico-legalists posit that *Santhara* is in no way comparable with mercy-killing or euthanasia, or even suicide for that matter. As they point out, in India, both euthanasia and assisted suicide are unlawful. Hence, the article 21 guaranteeing right to life does not include right to die. But the Supreme Court of India in a judgment has allowed passive Euthanasia, which it finds is not a "positive act of killing". The Supreme Court held that causing death of a person who is in permanent vegetative state with no chance of recovery, by removing the artificial life support system could be treated as an exception and shall not be deemed as an offence. The court added that such passive euthanasia could only be permissible on a case by case basis. Its opposite, active euthanasia, involves administering a patient with a legal drug to cause his or her death, continues to remain illegal and a "positive" step to terminate a life. In sum, the difference between active and passive euthanasia is that in active euthanasia, something is done to end

a patient's life, while the passive counterpart, something is not done that would have prolonged the patient's life. In voluntary passive euthanasia, a person who is sound and capable enough to decide for himself that he would prefer to end his life, owing to various reasons including unbearable pain or lack of money for treatment, shall not be treated as a crime. In case of an incompetent patient, the decision must be taken by the respective High Court after giving due weight to the views of near relatives, friends and doctors. According to the Supreme Court, these instances do not form "cases of extinguishing life but only of accelerating conclusion of the process of natural death which has already commenced" and hence are not in violation with Article-21 of the Constitution (Nikhil, 2015, p. 14).

At the same time, the Supreme Court has not commented anything over the question of whether abstaining from consumption of food "consciously and voluntarily with the aim of ending one's life" forms a crime or not ((Nikhil, 2015, p. 30). The crux of the court's take on the issue is that no person has a right to take his own life consciously and voluntarily, as the right to life does not presuppose the right to end the natural span of life. Hence, the medico-legalists argue that the case of *Santhara* remains a vexed question in many respects. At the same time, they also underscore the argument that euthanasia or suicide is incomparable with the practice of *Santhara*. This basically owes to the fact that there exists a wholesome difference in the inherent intention behind both the acts.

The Scholarly Perspective

The fourth and final strand that helped the articulation of the discourse is pioneered by scholars of Indian secularism and religion. According to them, the present judgment has substantially weakened religious freedom in India and is, in itself, a threat to Indian secularism. Prof. Rajeev Bhargava and Adv. Suhrith Parthasarath are some notables championing this perspective.

These scholars bring forth the fact that Indian secularism is quite distinct from its western counterpart. In the western connotation, the concept of secularism stands for complete withdrawal of the state from interfering in matters of religion. The Indian model, a unique one indeed, envisages the intervention of the state in matters of religion, at all times whenever the general social welfare or civil liberties are at stake. However, they argue that such a provision cannot be misconstrued to argue that it bestows the judicature with discretion to enlighten the follower of a faith regarding

which of their beliefs and practices are "essential".

The Supreme Court in Smt. Gyan Kaur Vs State of Punjab held that a dying man shall enjoy the right to die with dignity "when his life is ebbing out". The court also added that it must not be confused or equated with an unnatural death involving curtailment of one's natural span of life. The scholars involved in this perspective assert that, for the Jains, *Santhara* involves a dignified way of ending one's life and that it is not an unnatural way of death. They undertake the vow of *Santhara* only when they deem that the duties of present life are carried out and the body is to serve no more purpose. Thus the proponents of this perspective again point out that such a practice, to any rational observer, can strike a chord with the phrase "when his life is ebbing out" pronounced by the Supreme Court.

The article 25 which is under question here guarantees to all citizens an equal entitlement to freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practise and propagate one's religion. Nonetheless, these experts claim that a relook at the context in which the restraints of public order, morality, and health, plus the other fundamental rights, were put in place can offer interesting insights. These restraints were added to the statute books, as the debates in the Constituent Assembly prove, to overcome the problems that may hinder the attempts of the state to correct the age-old social inequalities. The Constituent Assembly never intended to bestow the institutions of the state including the judiciary "any substantial latitude in determining which religious practices deserved constitutional protection" (Parthasarathy, 2015). Instead, such restraints were instituted, as Suhrith Parthasarathy competently points out, "perhaps out of an anxiety to ensure that the state is not constrained in passing legislation to remedy social evils" (Parthasarathy, 2015). Thus, these scholars raise two basic questions here- firstly, as to whether any social inequalities arise out of the practice of *Santhara* and secondly, whether the practice violates the rights of the practitioner and any other citizen.

In addition, these scholars posit that such issues are not peculiar to the Indian scenario and are rampant in European countries as well. This partly owes to the inflow of migrants to these countries from other parts of the world. Such migrants carry with them the culture and lifestyle of their lands which would be, at times, so divergent from their counterparts in these new havens. The proponents of this perspective also draw attention to similar issues like wearing the *burqa* in France and the issue of circumcision in Germany to drive home their point.

Conclusion

An analysis of all four stands foregrounds several problems implicit in these perspectives that constitute the contemporary discourse on *Santhara*. From the legal perspective, the issue of 'essential doctrine' is one such problem. Questions as to what forms an "essential" or "integral" tenet of a religion, what are the parameters of selection and who is the ultimate authority to have a final say on the matter are all debatable and hard to fix with precision. In these cases the Supreme Court of India, yet to adjudicate the matter, is expected to bring in some clarity. As Shekhar Hattangadi aptly puts it, "at the very least", one is forced by the circumstances to "expect an informed discussion on the origin, nature, utility and applicability of some of our debatable laws and legal doctrines" (Venkatesan, 2015 September 18).

In the case of *Santhara*, the Rajasthan High Court held that the practice cannot be treated as an "essential" doctrine owing to two reasons. Firstly, it is not mentioned as the only method of attaining salvation; and secondly, that it is not followed by most ascetics or lay followers. But one is inevitably tempted to raise doubts regarding the exhaustiveness of the parameters under consideration here. While one looks for the proof to satiate oneself as to whether the court has examined the issue sufficiently, problems loom large. The bench towards the conclusion of the judgment claims that the respondents failed to prove that the practice was an essential doctrine owing to the reason that it was not. Further, the High Court do not even allude to the judgment of the Supreme Court in Jagdishwaranand Vs Police Commissioner, Calcutta where the Supreme Court upheld, though indirectly, that a religious practice dating back to antiquity could be treated as an essential practice. But eventually, the larger question of whether judiciary has the power to have the final say in this matter is debatable and has to be resolved by the Supreme Court.

The issue of conflict between the statutes and institutions modelled by colonial feather pens and imperial exigencies versus the practices articulated by the eastern ethics, principles and philosophies forms yet another one.[4] The question of *Santhara* being viewed as a mere attempt at suicide bears testimony to this. Moreover, the issue has got wider social implications as well. It is bound to affect the practitioners of various rituals and practices belonging to different religions in India, which at least vaguely conflict with the legal and constitutional provisions. For instance, the restricted or non-entry of female devotees to certain notable temple complexes and even *dargahs*, the practice of *baldiksha*[5], the use of wine in liquor-banned states

etc. are certainly a few in that array of such practices.

But the issue of coerced *Santhara* is very different from the aforementioned ones. Such a practice cannot be construed as a divergence of its ideal and normative counterpart. No actors of the discourse are in support of such instances where the decision is forced upon the victim without his/her consent. Even the pro-Santhara group categorically and effectively voice their concern to curb such instances. Such cases, they assert, could be the sole reason for the wrongful analogy between the practices of *Sati* and *Santhara*. Hence, even a slight discord of opinion between the stakeholders is absent and is not an issue with regard to the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) at all. As the statistics reflect, in a year, only 12 instances of *Santhara* are performed under the supervision and certification of the religious heads out of a total of 200 performed all over the country. Here, one again expects the Supreme Court to put in place a mechanism to prevent such occurrences performed under the unholy garb of religion.

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Endnotes

[1] Here, the *Santhara* under question is the 'ideal' *Santhara*, the one taken up voluntarily, as opposed to its new variant of coerced *Santhara*.

[2] In this judgment, the Supreme Court ruled thus, "A question may arise, in the context of a dying man, who is, terminally ill or in a persistent vegetative state that he may be permitted to terminate it by a premature extinction of his life in those circumstances. This category of cases may fall within the ambit of the 'right to die' with dignity as a part of right to live with dignity, when death due to termination of natural life is certain and imminent and the process of natural death has commenced. These are not cases of extinguishing life but only of accelerating conclusion of the process of natural death which has already commenced."

[3] I am thankful to Dr. Shekhar Hattangadi for such an insight.

[4] Such issues militate against the concept of post-colonial. To be precise, it questions the "post" in the post-colonial.

[5] It is a practice in which children take *diksha* or vow to become *Bal Munis* or Child-Saints, a role that requires them to observe a strict lifestyle. The practice has been challenged in the courts.

Experience of Social Exclusion:
A Study of Yanadi Tribe in Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh

KAKANI MADHAVA

Abstract

The present paper is developed based on the field work and it deals with the forms of exclusion experienced by Yanadi tribe in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. This paper mainly argues that although certain Constitutional safeguards are provided for the inclusion of the Yanadi tribe into mainstream society still they are experiencing social exclusion in the field of economic, health, education and politics. Contrary to scheduled castes and other backward castes who witnessed certain degrees of progress because of protective discrimination policies of the government the Yandis are remain terribly backward and experiencing different forms of socially exclusion.

Keywords: *Social Exclusion; Dominant Caste; Scheduled Tribes; Constitutional safeguards*

Introduction

The Yanadi tribe is depressed and most backward community in Andhra Pradesh in all aspects such as socio-economic, political, educational, and cultural and religiously, The Yanadi tribe lives by constructing huts at outskirts of villages, public places, field embankments, tanks and canal bunds and rarely surrounded various high caste households especially those of agriculture. This community has been engaged in utmost dirty and disrespected jobs/works like scavengers, cleaning human wastage, cleaning roads, begging, and fishing. It is just because they are belongs to Yanadi tribe and moreover most of them work for food instead of for money. Still Yanadi tribes are leading semi-nomadic existing and they have been denied opportunities both in education and employment. In this paper an attempt is made to study the experience of exclusion of Yandadi tribe in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.

I. Methodology of the Paper

In keeping view of the above this paper is designed and constructed based on the field data selected from four panchayats of the Thotapalli Gudur and Indukurpetandals in Nellore district. Tribes are 46 mandals in this district. The major tribes are in Nellore district are Yanadi, Yerukula, Konda, Lambada/ Sugali, Reddydora, Kammara, Chenchu and Mannedora. Among these tribes Yanadi is the second largest community. This paper has developed by using quantitative and qualitative research methods. The nature of this topic generally depends on primary and secondary sources. Random sampling method was used for the primary data collection. The secondary data was collected from the government agencies and direct interview method was used through structured questions. The questions are both open and close ended questions. The focus group discussion method has used for distinguish their living patterns of the respondents. The researcher has used participant observation method during the data collection and snowball technique has used to obtain adequate answers from the respondents while conducting unstructured interviews.

II. Background of the Study and Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is the process through which individuals or group is wholly or particularly excluded from full participation in the society in which they live. The scheduled tribes generally the lowest in the social rank have socio-cultural and economic dependency on the other castes. Present the greater Hindu society practicing the exclusion in some societies due to social customs, work attachment and legendry mandates by the social authorities. The tribal groups are historically excluded because they are not a part of the greater traditional Hindu society. At best may be termed as the parallel segments in a deferent domain. Scheduled caste in the contrary, apart parcel of the greater Hindu society, are excluded of neglected parts. The culture and geographical isolation between tribal and non-tribal societies continued to be till the medieval period. There was a political relationship between the tribal chief and rulers of the whole territories throughout the medieval period. The political assimilation between the tribal and non-tribal domain was very important in terms of transition of the tribal world. Whose social economic and cultural conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs and traditional or by special laws are regulations. In India reveal social groups or societies who might have some characteristics but

all of them are not denoted as the tribal groups through the Constitutional Provisions. There was a purpose to declare or recognize some societies as tribal societies of the country. Therefore we can define the meaning of tribe according to constitution scheduled tribes such tribes are tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be scheduled tribes for the purposes of this constitution.

The tribal population in the state of Andhra Pradesh and in the country as a whole is the most deprived and vulnerable community that faces severe exclusionary practices in all aspects. Although certain Constitutional safeguards are provided no significant economic, social and political mobility has taken place across this community. Contrary to scheduled castes and other backward castes who witnessed certain degrees of progress because of protective discrimination policies of the government the scheduled tribes remain terribly backward and socially excluded still living in harsh environment. Scheduled tribes in the background of various policies of the state during the successive plan periods and had a lot of impact on their socio-economic mobility. Politically this community is the most voiceless in the state. Their unsecured livelihood position in terms of lack of legal entitlements of the resources they use both land and non-timber forest produce push them into deep economic vulnerability.

Since independence both central and state governments has initiated several Five Year Plans programs, policies and laws and has made efforts for gradual socio-economic development of scheduled tribes but they still remain the weakest sections of the society. During these various Five Year Plans there has been a considerable increase in the fund allocation for the tribal areas in all states. But most of the tribes were not able to draw benefits from the facilities provided by government because of significant corruption among officials and improper implementation of tribal development schemes. Therefore, the majority of the tribes in Andhra Pradesh suffer from the absence of proper infrastructure and communication facilities.

The way in which social collective seeks to maximize records by restricting access to resources and opportunities to a limited circle of eligible community. This involves the monopolization of certain opportunities based on group attributes such as race, language, social origin and religion. State institutions cause exclusion when they deliberately discriminate in their laws. Policies or programs, in some cases, there are social systems that decide people position in society on the basis of heredity.

Tribes are the vulnerable community which comes under this type marginalization. Typical dimensions are interwoven and to be focused in the different types. It revolves around the societal introversions and institutions that exclude, discriminate, isolate and deprive some groups on the basis of group identities like caste and ethnicity. Tribes belongs to different ethnicity so the problems from the ethnographic perspectives in the context of religion, caste and gender discrimination, the dealing hopes of the long term unemployed and lack of access to jobs, linguistic marginalization in educational institutions, constitutional failure in Indian context, tribal exclusion, lack of healthcare services and many others.

In this context these papers critically discuss the nature of discrimination among the Yandi tribe by study of their social, cultural, educational economic and political conditions. Because these factors that are responsible for the exclusion of this tribe from the main stream society in Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh. Due to the exclusionary practices Yanadi are living still under the below poverty line in all forms such as, social, political, cultural and economically. Thus, the Yanadi today have undergone drastic changes identical to those of the mainstream.

III. Experience of Educational Exclusion

Education is the basic need for socio- economic development of any individuals in the society. An ideal and customized education system that suits the special needs of the tribal children and provides an opportunity to pursue the personal aspirations and career goals, is the cornerstone to the progress of tribal communities. Government of Andhra Pradesh has established Andhra Pradesh Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society, popularly called *gurukulam* after bifurcation from A.P.R.E.I. (Andhra Pradesh Residential Educational Institutions) Society to provide a focused education to the tribal children, while building a congenial environment in which the children can faster their fullest potential to be knowledge and skillful to set off a respectable and meaningful life. *Gurukulam* transforms mind while arming students with the skills and knowledge to take leadership positions in society.

According to Government of Andhra Pradesh, *gurukulams* are committed with a vision in promoting and imparting quality and excellence in education that supports interdisciplinary inquiry, intellectual development, knowledge and skill acquisition, and student success through a diverse, fully

engaged, learner centered campus environment. Presently 284 educational institutions are functioning under the control of *gurukulam*. Out of which, 6 are functioning in Nellore district under the supervision of I.T.D.A. (Yanadi) Nellore. But based on field study the situation is completely worsen, among eight villages there are only two primary schools in the area where tribal people located remaining are very far from their houses. Education has become nightmare to the tribal children including primary education. The following data has been developed based the field data. Here we can find 84 percent of the people were illiterates out of ninety six respondents, only each one person has both primary and upper primary education. Only one, two, three and four people have completed secondary, intermediate, degree and post-graduation respectively. This above data clearly highlights the literacy rate in tribal community and poor educational status of Yanadi tribe in Nellore district.

IV. Experience of Health Exclusion

The Yanadi have been learning by experience the natural resources and use of herbs and roots, with which they treat fever, rheumatism, scorpion bites, snake bites and to otherdiseases. The health conditions of the Yanadi, according to their explanation they uses the herbals such as leaves, fruits, stems and roots as medicines to control the diseases, and also make some decoction juice for the cold and some kind of seeds as medicines. Some of their clan members know much more about the herbal medicines. In present scenario some of the Yanadi are not following their old traditional medicines instead they are using English medicines. If they got incurable diseases they have to approach only the government hospitals due to lack of economic support, and they have separate government general hospitals which are exclusively meant for tribes and their children.

Most of the samples opined that they prefer natural medicines and use of herbs etc. to cure their illness. One of the respondents named Kavaragiri Subramanyam resident of Komarika village in Indukurupetamandal, who is working as watchman for the fish ponds of his owner Gopala Reddy, says that:

> If my family gets health problems, I used to lend money from my owner to go to the hospital. After that they use to collect some interest to the money from us. If we are not able to repay the money we should work their houses without any payments.

It seems that it is too much worsen if they affected from dangerous diseases. Most of the tribal deaths mainly cause by snake bite which is too dangerous and too have quick aid but which was too difficult to them. One of the respondents, ManikelaSeenaiah from Chinnacherukuru village, says that;

> Government should look after this type of health regarding issues especially with view of tribes and most of the tribals from here maximum prefer local RMP doctors who are resided inside the villages with not fully knowledge, which is very harmful to my health but we doesn't have choice as my economic status is too weak. Women condition is too worst here in health scenario in tribal community. If we have chance to go better hospitals other community people never help us through the money or vehicles. Transport is the major problem here.

During pregnancy time most of the women delivered at the home only that to in very natural methods and during the carrying time they are not much conscious about their health and won't take much nutrition food which was very danger to the both child and mother.

V. Experience of Political Exclusion

In Yanadi society they have headman called, *PeddaYanadi* (KulamPedda). All those people are very amenable to their head man with the selection of their elders to settle the all forms of disputes and violations of customs. They have their own Panchayati system led by village *KulamPedda*. The community leader mostly uses to settle the disputes of marriage and general problems of the clan. Sometimes people get partial and impartial judgments. Since justice has not been done as people expect the village land lords, and other dominant caste peoples will take the advantageof this situation. They (land lords, other dominated caste persons) never visit the Yanadi colony to solve the problems. Only the Yanadi people must go to their houses. It is proved in the field study they resolve the problems in undemocratic way. However, in recent days Yanadis are much aware about the legal courts, if at all civil and criminal disputes arise. But due to lack of economic growth and being as slavers under the upper caste and lack of educational awareness they use to approach the caste elders and land lords.

Secondly, an important issue in the recent past that identified during the field study. Yanadis started entering into the politics. For instance, the past

Panchayath elections they elected as *surpunch* and some as Ward members in some areas of Nellore district with the help of other dominated caste persons. BatthulaChenchaiah, working as a *surpunch* for Koruturu village in Indukurupet mandal and ChinthapanduSunitha elected as a ward member in 9th ward in Chinnacherukuru village in Thotapalli Gudurumandal. However, it is shown in the field that thepolitical power has not been given to Yanadisrather they are under the clutches of upper caste. One of the respondents, KalagandalaSubbhaRatnam, twenty eight years old women from Punnur village, Indukurupetmandal in Nellore district, explained that:

> We are calling as ChallaYanadis. I am working as maid in the house of Reddies. Sometimes they will give some extra wages according to my economic situations, and we should respect owner and should call them as Kamudi[1](Asami), Kamudiralu[2] (Asamamma). They never call us in a proper way with my names always use to call Yanadi, sometimes they abuse me terribly, and me and my family should give respect and keep down my head while passing Reddies on the streets.

Thirdly, based on field study I came to know that nobody of the respondents have not aware about the government policies like MNREGA, Rajiv Aarogyasri Schemes etc. Not even single respondents have not replied properly about political awareness and political activities.

VI. Experience of Economic Exclusion

The government officials have been branding the Yanadi as criminals. But if we see their livelihood conditions and behavior they are not robbers, they maintain some self-respect. Due to the unbearable hunger sometimes used to steal some paddy, coconuts, vegetables etc. but they are not thieves. Yanadi are trying to do as a watchman job in the fields of dominated caste people under the wage of lower price for month and annual due to lack of certain resources to do certain jobs, business etc. Their income sources are worst as they don't know some other works that others do and for some works others won't choose them.

The income status of the Yanadis in both Indukurupet and Thotapalli Gudurumandals proved that among the 96 respondents 40 percent of the people are under poverty line and also too pathetic and unconditional surroundings, health conditions etc. The 30 percent of the people are having

income around Rs 50000 to Rs 60,000 per annum under the wage laborers and bonded labors in the houses of dominant caste people. The 10 percent of the people and families those have one or two acres of land having income of Rs 60,000 to 80,000 per annum. Remaining 20 percent of the persons and families those who are working in government sector and those who having four acres of land who are doing business are better having the income of Rs 80,000 to Rs 1 lack per annum. Therefore overall income scenario reflects not positive signs.

Indeed, the Yanadis have some occupations like working under the farmers, collecting sticks, fruits, and honey from the field and selling in the villages. They use to catch the fish, rats, crabs, snakes, turtles and cranes etc. Rat is the fevered item to the Yanadi. As we already pointed out that they have two occupations collecting various resources from the forests and selling them. They eat all forms of rat's cranes, turtles, pigeons, cats, wild cats, crabs, and fish and also natural leafs etc. They use to sell coconuts in front of the temples. If they do not get anything to eat, they satisfy themselves with water and sleep with hungry stomachs. Their stomachs are never filling satisfactorily because they are living by hunting gathering. The government has started giving loans to Yanadi people to get self-employment, Business, Nets, livestock and Autos etc. But lack of much awareness they do not use the opportunities in proper manner.

Thus, the Yanadi tribes of this district are still working as bonded labors under the rich land lords such as Reddies, Kammas, and other dominant caste. The dominant caste exploits the Yanodis without pay for their service. It is proved that during their ancestors' period Yanadi peoples being as slavers, pond keepers and bonded labours etc. Apart from porridge (ambali), rice, gruel (ganji), sometimes they paid paddy for day which was not enough for the maintenance of their families. Since the land lords never called them in proper manner with their names they use derogatory words like "*Yanadaa*, *Rey*, *Yanadigaa*" etc. Even their superior's children also never give respect to the Yanadi who are working under them. These peoples frequently get debts from the rich peoples. Usually they cannot repay the money so they decides to lead a life as bonded labours endlessly for generations, so especially Yanadi have been dreadfully affecting the living conditions today. As per the field observation one of the Yanadi person has commented that, usually they use to wear a single clad and double clad for women due to lack of economic growth. They do not wash cloths properly and they do not take bath regularly because they have been facing very despicable conditions in their everyday life. They built huts in circular shape with the use of palm,

coconut leafs and wood etc. which were collected from the forest, road side and in the fields of landlords.

\Manchi Yanadi (Good, and Scavengers), and ChallaYanadi (Unclean and Beggars,). In present scenario these peoples surviving as beggars and use to collect the waste papers and remained peoples are rickshaw pullers, and they have different types of surnames like Tupakula, Manikala, Tirivedi, Elugu, Pitla, Chouturu etc. From the past years they are adopting the Hindu culture to get marriages. Yanadi have been following some system like *Gotra*[3]andpersons from some house names do not get marriage each other.

Yanadi marriage customs are very simple process that turns around the auspicious hours. This hours is noon, in which arrives when a pole two feet high, stuck vertically on the marriage platform, concludes to through shadow. Sometimes the Yanadi people do not follow the favorable days for marriage. They do not consult the Hindu *Purohith*[4], if they approach *purohit* he never comes to perform marriage. They have some spiritual persons within their community. These people need not follow any auspicious day because they feel like they were born out of the blessings of Gods and Goddess. If one person gets married, the new couple should be built new hut. Yanadi have some freedoms to choose the bride to get marriage. From the past years the Yanadi began the adopt some of the Hindu marriage customs in this processes the Yanadi started forgetting their own traditions, customs and cultures. One of the respondents, Tirivedi Yenkaiah, Says that;

> Freedom has given to youth on the occasions of Marriage functions. We conduct the musical night with our own musical instruments like the Band, Drum, and Tappet singing and dancing with joyfulness. Most of the marriages are held as a reflection of the selection of boy and girl.

Yanadi still have been following some of the Hindu hierarchies like within the community they never get the marriage like Manchi Yanadi people never get the marriage from ChallaYanadi who are being as lower rank in within the sub-groups of Yanadi community. Another thing is ManchiYanadi never enter in to the ChallaYanadi house and never eat the food.

They are full fledging specialists in playing the musical instruments. They use to play *Drums*[5] and *Tappetlu* [6]while planting the crop cultivation. There is a sound which sounds they like mostly *Dubunk*[7], *Dubunk*. While playing these instruments they feels like it is their community custom and

it is necessary while doing certain work. The dancers throw heads forward and feet in rapid gain one's purpose keeping time to the uninteresting drum. Usually they have their own band troops and they should play during certain ceremonies such as annual festivals, *Jataras*, marriages and funeral times. One person leads the band troops.

Either before performing after completes the ceremony they never show the dare to enter in to the temples because of their excluded roots. To perform the ceremonies they use the *Drums* and large *Drums* and put a quality in to musical instruments. They should drink while performing dance. They use to play in streets and they should as divide groups to perform different kinds of band groups as peacock disguise *kheelugurralu*[8], as *Boppanna*[9], as dancers etc. They should apply colors to their faces, and perform thedance with the help of instruments such as drums and anklets to beg for money at every house hold.

In recent years Yanadi took a new turn to make refreshment, they are attracting to the modern celluloid and music. Usually they use to play dances together at their houses in front of all the villagers with the help of tape recorder in every day nights. The *Chencheru* (chenchamma) is goddesses of their clan play a vivacious role in their worship. They use to build a special hut to their goddesses. Usually they use to worship *Neem Tree* as their goddesses, namely *Chengalamma, poleramma, Gangamma, Chenchamma, Ankamma,Charmudamma,* and the venkateswara also will be worshipped. They use to worship different days, such as Tuesday *Poleramma*, Friday *Chenchamma* and Saturday *Venkateswara*. They should celebrate annual festivals to their goddesses, during thefestivals time they sacrifices the animals. One of the ChallaYanadi respondents, UppalaPolaiah, a sixty years old man from Kolidibba village, Peduru Panchayat, ThotapalliGuduru Mandal in Nellore district, says that:

> We have been residing without any basic needs that are why others calling us as Yanadi are instead of anadis (orphans). Most of the time dominant caste people call us to cleaning the vessels during the marriage, funeral and other ritual ceremonies. After that we will get the low wages and depends upon the leftover food items. During my childhood we used to play dance, and play music in the nights to relax themselves.

Conclusion

The study made an attempt to understand the forms of exclusion experienced by Yanadi tribe in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. The tribal population in the state of Andhra Pradesh in particular and country in general is the most deprived and vulnerable community that faces severe exclusionary practices in all aspects. Although certain Constitutional safeguards are provided no significant economic, social and political mobility has taken place across this community. Contrary to scheduled castes and other backward castes who witnessed certain degrees of progress because of protective discrimination policies of the government the scheduled tribes remain terribly backward and socially excluded still living in harsh environment. Since independence both the central and state governments have initiated several Five Year Plans programs, policies and laws and have made efforts for gradual socio-economic development of tribals but they still remain the weakest sections of the society. During these various Five Year Plans there has been a considerable increase in the fund allocation for the tribal areas in all states. But most of the tribes were not able to draw benefits from the facilities provided by government because of significant corruption among officials and improper implementation of tribal development schemes.

Consequently, the majority of the tribes in Andhra Pradesh suffer from the absence of proper infrastructure and communication facilities. In this context my field study on Yanadi tribe in Nellore district clearly shows the worst situation and conditions of Yanadi tribe in all aspects. Not even average percentage of children of Yanadi tribe have not proper education that to not even primary and higher education is seldom issue for them. In that women situation is too worsen.In spite of various efforts state has to promote education among Yanadi tribes as they are continue to be lagging behind in literacy. The better off sections of the tribal communities have only been able to derive maximum benefit of education and reservation policy while the majority of the common tribes especially in the rural areas are least benefited fromthose provisions. It is shown that improper management of schemes and inefficient implementation of suitable programs in the tribal region create a major problem. The majority of the tribal people are not even aware of the development schemes implemented by government agencies. Without creating awareness among the tribal people it is difficult to achieve better results.The various reports also brought out the delayed implementation of the development programs by the state and various departments, lacunae in policy implementation, allocation and utilization of funds, structural inadequacies at the, state, district, block and village levels.

With regard to the health issues the scenario of Yanadi tribe is completely different from general people. Still they are depending on natural health methods only, though there is a lot of advancement in medical sciences. This is because of economic instability and lack of employment opportunities.

Thus, it is proved that contrary to scheduled castes and other backward castes who witnessed certain degrees of progress because of protective discrimination policies of the government the Yandis are remain terribly backward and experiencing different forms of socially exclusion.

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Endnotes

[1] *Kamudi* means a pronunciation of workers or laborers to their owners (Males).

[2] *Kamudiralu* means a pronunciation of workers laborers to their owners (Female).

[3] *Gotra* means clan. It broadly refers to people who are descendants in an unbroken male line from a common male ancestor.

[4] *Purohit* means a priest.

[5] Musical instrument

[6] *Tappetlu* is a musical instrument which is prepared with the skin of animals like snake, buffalo and cow etc.

[7] *Dubunk* is a sound which comes from the musical instrument used by the yanadi.

[8] *Kheelugurralu* means peacock disguise which will wore by the dancers to entertain the people.

[9] *Boppanna* is a person who will dresses like buffoon to entertain the people.

Book Review

Vulli Dhanaraju. *A Textbook of Environmental History of India.* Dominant Publishers, New Delhi, 2016, Paperback, ISBN: 978-93-84161-47-7, Price: 475.

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Environmental history is a kind of history that deals about human interaction with the natural world or the interaction between culture and nature. Environmental history is one of the emerging areas in the recent past and it has been attracting students and research scholars in the recent decades and have become a new historical trend in the discourse of knowledge building. The main goal is to study the interaction between humans and the environment in the past and the relationships between humans and the surrounding world. As a result Ecology and Environmental issues have been attracting modern scholars and historians since 1980s by shaping the historical narratives of Indian history Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha (1994). There are several evidences in history where the environmental factors had changed the course of history such as a number of foreign invasions and the consequent assimilation of migrant groups from other civilizations into the Indian society that have influenced and altered its approach towards the exploitation of its natural resource and its management in different historical regions.

Of late, India has witnessed environmental degradation and crisis that led to the debates over 'notion of development', forest conservation, biodiversity, sustainable development, indigenous knowledge etc,. Such contemporary crises have to be understood in the light of environmental processes affecting flora and fauna. Given the diversity and complexity of these problems, this book intensifies to incite students to stimulate various critiques and debates. In this context man and nature interactions of the past are necessary in order to understand the changing discourses of Environmental History of India. Thus, environmental factors played an

important role in the changing discourse of Indian history in particular and had an extensive impact on the human civilization and culture in general.

Recent book of Vulli Dhanaraju *A Textbook of Environmental History of India* brings out the ideas and concepts that have played an important role in the Indian subcontinent from pre history to the present. This book opens up new perspectives with the influence of contemporary issues particularly modifications of landscape, reoccurrence of natural calamities, and conflicts over the control and use of natural resources. This book emphasize on the environmental history as crucial interdisciplinary subject in the field of social science. It is designed for the students of history background, scholars and teachers in order to relate interdisciplinary approach in understanding Indian ecology, culture and environment from the pre-history to the present period. Recently Indian Universities have introduced the course on Environmental History of India. Since it is a new course for the students there are very few works available on this subject. Moreover these books have not covered all the issues in a broader outlook to comprehend environmental history of India. Keeping in view of this the author has mentioned in his preface that the book is designed on the basis of his four years of his teaching of Environmental History that helped him to evaluate the importance of environmental history of India and find out the gaps and lacuna in the existing historiographies.

The book consists of 16 chapters based on themes which various universities have introduced for the Environmental History of India covering the period from pre-history to the contemporary history. Each chapter highlighted the importance of the man-environment interaction in history from hunting-gathering societies to the present, and addressing issues such as complex changes in use of natural resources; cultural understanding of ecology; debates over forest policies and property rights and also examines how ecology and environment have shaped cultural behavior of the communities and the effects of human activity and human ideas on non-human nature.

The first chapter entitled, *Physiographic Regions and Flora and Fauna of India* gives integrated information about evolution of the earth, flora and fauna in general and Indian physiographic information and evolution of flora and fauna in particular. It is accepted phenomenon that the history of any country or region cannot be understood without some knowledge of its geography. The history of the people is greatly influenced by the geography and environment of the region in which they live. The physical geography and environmental conditions of a region include climate, soil types, water

resources and other topographical features. These determine the settlement pattern, population spread, food products, human behaviour and dietary habits of a region. It is also true that the Indian subcontinent is gifted with different regions with their distinct geographical features which have greatly affected the course of its history. It will certainly help the readers to estimate the nature of Indian environment and its influence on the cultural behavior of the regions and communities from past to present.

The second chapter, *Introduction: Understanding Environmental History* find out the gaps and problems in the existing historiographies of environmental history that help the readers to explore the new areas, debates, concepts and perspectives and transmit these gaps for their future research in this field. These debates draw attention on the environmental approach of various historical periods and mainly on how the colonial and post-colonial Indian state, in the name of conservation, imposed several restrictions on indigenous people with support of state mechanism. Thus, the conceptual gaps will certainly help the readers to find out the complexity of the various debates raised by multidisciplinary scholars in the process of construction of Environmental History of India through a set of theoretical and applied readings from geography, economics, political science, anthropology, sociology, natural sciences etc.

The third chapter, *Environmental History: Historiographical Trends* has been divided into four parts by the author in order to understand the growth and paradigm shifts in Indian environmental history. The first part deals with general natural historical writing in India. The second part is an atempt to produce the writing on pre colonial environmental history. Scholars from various perspectives have extensively contributed for the development of environmental history as an independent discipline in study of pre-colonial India. The third part of the chapter is crucial to understand the ideological trends that have existed in Indian environmental history. One of the important parts of this ideological contribution of Indian environmental history argued that colonialism is a watershed in the environmental history of India as it disturbed the state harmony in pre-colonial India between the communities and their lived environment (Madav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, 1994). Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha argued that in pre-colonial India, resource utilization was in harmony with nature and resource sharing in the middle of several strata of the civilization was extremely cordial. The caste civilization with dissimilar claims on dissimilar possessions led to a state of equilibrium in turn providing stability to the resource demand and supply. They romanticized image of the human-environment interaction in

the context of Indian environmental history. They mainly argue that the colonial state advocated 'conservation" for its economic and strategic needs and in the process trampled upon the traditional rights of local communities which in turn generated series of peasant and tribal revolts. The last section of this chapter has brought out regional environmental writings and its relevance in the present academic discourse. The studies so far highlighted the local peculiarities and specificities and interaction with the broad agenda of environmental changes with consequence of the transformation of landscapes into resource generating zones during colonial period. Most of these micro level studies thinly documented the complex interaction between man and nature and its manifestations with regional peculiarities and specificities and interactions.

In the fourth chapter, Ecology and Environment in Pre-History he has extensively discussed environmental history of India in the light of Pre history from Paleolithic to Neolithic age. For construction of this chapter he has lengthily used the secondary sources from various disciplines. He considered the paucity in the written records for the prehistoric India to be one of the greatest limitations he has to come across while writing this chapter as the history of human settlements in India goes back to prehistoric times; yet no written records are available for the prehistoric India. However, plenty of archaeological remains are found in different parts of India to reconstruct the history of this period.

In the fifth chapter, *Environmental History of Ancient India* the author has focused on the environmental changes that took place during the Indus Valley Civilization and Vedic Civilization. One of the important debates that he highlighted in this chapter is the various environmental theories on the decline of Indus valley civilization. He also brought into our notice the nature of the state formation while focusing on the role of hydraulic despotism in Ancient India. The term 'hydraulic despotism' was coined by the German -American historian Karl August Wittfogel, in his book *Oriental Despotism* (1957). He argues that 'Hydraulic Despotism' or 'Water Monopoly Empire' is a social or government structure which maintains power and control through exclusive control over access to water. It arises through the need for flood control and irrigation, which requires central coordination and a specialized bureaucracy. Often associated with these terms and concepts is the notion of a *water dynasty*. This body is a political structure which is commonly characterized by a system of hierarchy and control often based on class or caste. Power, both over resources (food, water, energy) and a means of enforcement such as the military are vital for the maintenance of

control.

The sixth chapter, *Ecology and Environmental History of Medieval India* has highlighted the importance of environmental history to understand the nature of the state formation during medieval India. The author has mainly argued that agriculture and environment are closely related and interdependent in understanding of the medieval economy. In the Indian context the question becomes much more relevant considering that Indian economy was largely dominated by agriculture all through its history. David Ludden (1989) has argued that the environment was influencing the cropping pattern and agricultural production in medieval Indian economy. He has highlighted the role of ecology and environment in changing nature of economy in general and tribal economy in particular under various kingdoms during medieval period. Vulli argued in the last section of this chapter that it has often been assumed that tribal people and their societies lived in protected nature before the advent of colonialism in India. It is true that their economies and culture was relatively untouched by outside markets and therefore were relatively closed, egalitarian and prosperous communities. These economies were free of exploitation because they had no private property and need rather than the profit motive necessitated their relationships of exchange.

In the seventh chapter, *Understanding Ecological Imperialism* he discussed the emergence of colonialism and its form of domination that has been highlighted in Alfred W. Crosby's, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900 (*1986). 'Ecological Imperialism' is the idea that the true reason European settlers were so successful in the colonization effort was their introduction of animals, plants, and especially disease in new territories. Crosby calls the places where early Europeans settled "Neo-Europes" with special emphasis on North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand. In his prologue he ponders whether Europeans dominated their environment and other cultures because of their technology, or whether the consistent "success of European imperialism has a biological and an ecological component. Crosby's thesis argues that Europeans were successful imperialists because wherever they went their agriculture and animals thrived; and the indigenous populations and local ecosystems collapsed under their biological advance.

In the eight chapters, *Colonial Economic Policies and Environment* he critically analyzed the impact of the colonial economic policies in India. The Industrial Revolution changed the relationship between humans and

their environment. Human development, public health, energy usage and sanitation all felt the effects of the advances made as a result of the Industrial Revolution. The rise of Industrialism brought social and economic changes that transformed the agricultural society into a modern industrial society. The industrialized nations needed raw materials for their industries as well as markets for their finished good. They started the process of colonization under developed countries. As a result of the industrial revolution, the British started selling machine-made goods in India in competition with Indian handicrafts. The British conquest led to the disintegration of the village community partly by the introduction of the new land revenue system and partly by the process of commercialization of agriculture. The new land system and the commercial agriculture meant untold exploitation of the Indian peasantry and the country was consequently plagued by frequent famines.

The ninth chapter, *Debating Colonial Forest Policies* deals with the impact of the colonial forest polices in Indian subcontinent. The forest policy and management of forests has been a subject of considerable debate and conflict since the establishment of British rule in India. Vulli explicitly argues in this chapter that the debate on the forest legislation represents an example on how the formulation process of the forest policies was carried out in colonial India and how the colonial state acquired the monopolistic control over the forest resources in spite of differences within the bureaucratic structure on the one hand and imperial and provincial government on the other. An important fact here is that the colonial forest policies have evolved out of a diversified contestation within the colonial bureaucratic structure. However, it was the interests of the colonial state characterized by a system of state monopoly over forests that have prevailed upon. He has highlighted the intellectual background of the environmental policies in colonized countries. The Intellectual History of colonial lawmaking in nineteenth-century India can be written as an extended conversation with Utilitarian philosophy and Classical economics. In this chapter he has critically discussed the forest policies and its rules in order to understand the relationship between the environment and the peasant/ tribal communities. He has also analyzed the background of the forest policies while discussing the characteristic feature of these policies. He argues that colonial rule is one of the vast historical phenomenons in Indian history. The colonial rule marked a significant point especially in the cultural deprivation of local communities.

The tenth chapter, *Colonial Forest Polices and Tribal Communities* deals with structural changes due to the colonial forest policies in India. The

second part of this chapter mainly focuses on the nature of tribal response towards colonialism. Vulli argues that the Impact of the British rule over the tribal lands and forestry can be viewed as a conflict between two opposing forces. For the British it is a struggle for power and maintenance of the statuesque and for the tribes it is a struggle for their very survival. In this context K.S Singh's (1985) views are very much relevant in order to understand the colonials in tribal regions of India. He argues that the entry of the colonialism into the tribal regions of India through various philanthropic strategies of the communal tribal mode of production and attributed judicial nature of the regions by way of adopting survey and hence, the emergence of the private right on land. The very entrance of the colonial state into these areas was resisted violently by the tribals of the respective regions.

In the eleventh chapter, *Colonialism, Hunting and Wildlife Policies* he deals with the impact of colonial wild life policies and subsequent changes in the social relations in India. Colonial hunting as it emerged from the late nineteenth century reflects the changing nature of the colonial state and a new imperial ideology of dominance (Swati Shresth, 2009). This chapter mainly argues that colonial hunting played as an imperial ideology that reflects the changing nature of colonial state towards forest communities in India. A perceived connection between hunting, power and privilege played an important role in understanding the social relations in colonial India. The colonial forest policies also had huge impact on wildlife. Due to the British wildlife policies there was huge loss of human and animal life. The wildlife legislation in India started with the British need of controlling the extraction and transit of forest produce to extend their power over the forest resources including wildlife.

The twelfth chapter, *Forest, Wildlife and Conservation in Post-Independent India* is divided into two sections. The first section deals with various forests policies and related issues in the context of conservation in post independent India. The second section discuss about various wildlife and conservation project taken up by Indian government since 1947 keeping in view the new environmental concern and issues such as Biodiversity and environmental problems. It argues that though the Wildlife and Conservation polices had its origin in colonialism, the new forest policies of post independent India, continued the colonial policies and promoted the interest of the forest 'contractors, and rich communities in the name of protecting the national interests. However, in the name of national the so called Indian welfare state has been depriving the tribals and indigenous communities to access the forest resources. Thus, the colonial polices that still exists in

India has resulted in unscrupulous exploitation of the local people.

The thirteenth chapter, *Politics of Environment and Development* deals with debates over the politics of development in the context of big dams construction and tribal displacement in India. This chapter also focuses on the ideological background for the understanding the concept of development. This chapter argues that in independent India, national development has been largely equated with economic growth and surplus. Large, centralized industries, irrigation projects have been symbols of such development, which through the process of industrialization promised to set India on the path of modernization and development. One of the inevitable outcomes of this has been massive environmental degradation and development induced displacement. The human consequences of large dams are even more dramatic than the ecological consequences. Forced resettlement associated with the construction of dams and the filling of their reservoirs displaces and destabilizes communities. The unfortunate reality has been that development for some has been built upon the impoverishment of others. It has been clearly demonstrated that the impoverishment of displaced people is a major risk in development-caused involuntary population resettlement.

In the fourteenth chapter, *Ecological and Environmental Movements* he discuss the impact of the environmental and ecological polices of nation state in post independent India. These movements have been raised in the name of the peoples voices under the new social movements. Ecological or environmental movements in India are a response to the ecological challenges faced by the country since the intervention of colonialism in the name of development and prosperity. Vulli critically argued that the post–independent state failed to build up a development agenda based on the needs of the people and continued to advocate the modern capitalist agenda which led to the destruction of environment, which further led to the impoverishment and marginalization of peasant/tribal communities. He also discussed the ideological streams of the environmental movements in India. In the last part of the chapter he critically analyzed the nature of environmental movements such as Chipko Movements (1970) Silent Valley Movement, (1973), Appiko Movement, (1983), Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985) and Tehri Dam Conflict.

The fifteenth chapter, *Gender and Environmental History* is an attempt to discuss the relationship between gender and environment. In the recent year there has been growing debate about gender and environment highlighting women's role in the use and management of the natural resources. There

are number of studies which have shown that environmental degradation is a gender process, generated mainly by human exploitative activities. In the last few years the focus has increasingly being on specific suffering of the poor and marginal women especially of the developing countries. It is considered that environmental degradation influence women in movement detrimental manner because women are mainly responsible for providing fodder, fuel, water for the household. Lack of access to these resources affects women to a great extent. Women spend a lot of time in collecting the resources and hence lack of availability of these resources leads to serious implications. The last part of this chapter critically evaluated the role of ecofeminism in India. Vulli stated that Ecofeminism offers a way of thinking and organizing ourselves by encouraging interconnectedness with our environment and subjugation of women to a common goal of restoring the quality of the natural environment and for people.

In the last chapter, *Biodiversity and Environmental History* he focused on the importance of biodiversity in the present context. Human societies have always relied on biological resources for survival. Biodiversity ultimately provides us with source of food, medicines, materials and opportunities. The earth's biological resources are vital to humanity's economic and social development. As a result, there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to present and future generations. India is one of the richest nations in terms of biological diversity. India has a great diversity of natural ecosystems. But he has criticized the present situation of the biodiversity. He argues that in the recent time there has been a great loss to the biodiversity which has posed a serious threat to the survival of mankind. When humans modify an ecosystem to improve a service it provides, this generally, also results in changes to other ecosystem services.

Thus, this text book opens up new opportunities for teachers and students of history to gain a more engaging and holistic understanding of the ecology and environment from past to present period. He stated that: after going through the chapters of this book, students, scholars and teachers of history, and other disciplines would think to investigate the complex relationship between human beings and the natural world. At the same time they feel to start further research in dealing with present challenges of Indian environmental crisis that has been created by the so-called welfare state in the name of '*development*'.

In this context Gavin James Barry (2010) argues that the rapid growth of scholarship in both the U.S. and around the world would make any attempt to fully analyze all available environmental history nothing less than an impossible task. He argues that the field of environmental history is one with tremendous opportunities for further study, and is a continually evolving field with growing support from the traditional historical community as well as other branches of academic study. Environmental history provides the opportunity for students and scholars to create connections that have often been overlooked by the compartmental nature of academia.

Thus, most of the environmental historians emphasize some focused areas in the field of environment but do not limit themselves to in their analysis. While doing research on environment many environmental historians analyze these focused areas with varying levels of emphasis. When analyzing the writing of environmental historians it is helpful to compare the ways that different authors have pursued the subfields, or at times chosen not to mention their influence. Depending on the arguments and underlying purpose of the historian, the material world, politics, cultural ideas tend to carry different levels of value. The rapid growth of scholarship on ecology, nature and culture in India would make new dimension to understand Indian history by pertaining new sources from environmental perspective. It is an accepted phenomenon by many scholars that the field of environmental history is one with tremendous opportunities for further study, and is a continually evolving field with growing support from the discipline of history as well as other branches of sciences and social sciences. Environmental history provides the opportunity for students and scholars to create connections that have often been overlooked by the traditional history of thought.

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Diacritical Marks

Vowels

आ	ā
ई	ī
ऊ	ū
ए,ऎ	ē } (long)
ओ	ō } (N.B. long ē and ō are for the particular syllables in Dravidic languages.)
ऋ	ṛ and not ṛi; (long ॠ, which rarely figures, may be rendered as ṝ) .

Nasals
Anusvāra

(˙)	ṁ and not ṃ

anunāsikas

ङ्	ṅ
ञ्	ñ
ण्	ṇ (or ṇa as the case may be)

Hard aspirate
Visarga

(:)	ḥ

Consonants
Palatals

च	ca and not cha
छ	cha and not chha

Linguals

ट	ṭa
ठ	ṭha
ड	ḍa
ढ	ḍha and not ḷha

Sibilants

श	śa
ष	ṣa
स	sa

Unclassified

ळ	ḷa
क्ष	kṣa and not ksha
ज्ञ	jña and not djña
लृ	lṛ and not lṛi

General Examples

kṣamā and not *kshamā*, *jñāna* and not *djñāna*, *Kṛṣṇa* and not *Krishṇa*, *sucāru chatra* and not *suchāru chhatra* etc. etc., *gaḍha* and not *gaḷha* or *garha*, (except in Hindi)

Dravidic (conjuncts and specific) characters

ன	ḻ
ழ	ḷ.
ண	ṇ̣
ற	ṟ.