

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It is a great pleasure for me as the Head of the Department of Political Science and also as the editor of the volume to place before the readers the fifth issue of the 'Journal of Political Studies' which is published annually by the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal. This volume like that of the previous issues contains commentaries on some critical issues, research articles and book reviews. The articles in the volume are the most interesting one and form the bulk of the reading. The articles are on diverse issues on contemporary Indian and International politics ranging from politics of personal laws in India, India's Look East Policy, Kashmir issue, Korea's emergence as a power, the condition of Lepchas in Darjeeling and the demand for Separate Development Board etc. Most of the articles come from young Indian scholars who are energetic and enthusiastic, and the publication of their articles in the volume will contribute significantly to the building up of their academic moral. In future I am sure that the scholars will contribute more to the discipline by way of research publications. The books reviewed are books published very recently and not reviewed elsewhere by the author. I am sure that given the quality of the articles the volume will provide some interesting and thoughtful reading.

Cinematic and Iconographic Imagery of Gandhi and Public Sphere in

India:

Some Appreciations, Some Depreciations

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The text and sub-text of contemporary nation-building programme in India and the institutionalised nationalism that it weaves is strongly anchored on ‘the cinematic and iconographic representation’ of M.K. Gandhi. Media, films in parts, conveys or reaffirms reality, and plays a crucial role in the reproduction of the same and become visual texts embedded with messages. People’s perception of media content influences the way they understand the world and react to other people. Media largely remains a symbolic representation of power and its contesting strands in a given society. The paper first looks at the cinematic representations of Gandhi from the 1950s to 2000s and unearths the variations within the same and contrast them with Gandhian world visions. Second, the paper attempts to locate Gandhi in the Statist enterprise and in the popular imagery and construe the realities of the public sphere in India. The paper observes that in this politics of representation, vocality and audibility, media has realised the weight and effect of keeping alive the image of Gandhi in the minds of the ‘aam aadmi’ (large masses/common man) in India. Consequently media, namely print, television, cinema and the ‘new media’ (internet and the virtual spaces, and also cell/mobile communications) have systematically spun and re-spun and celebrated the image of Gandhi both as ‘Mahatma’ and as ‘Bapu’.

Keywords: Cinematic, Iconographic, Imagery, Gandhi, Public Sphere

I have nothing new to teach the world

Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills (M. K. Gandhi) (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958).

1. Gandhian World-Visions In Media

The text and sub-text of contemporary nation-building programme in India and the institutionalised nationalism that it weaves (Parekh, 1989; Rothermund, in Rothermund, 2006: 53-101) is strongly anchored on ‘the cinematic and iconographic representation’ Viridi, 2003: 1-25; 26-59) of M.K. Gandhi. Gandhi both as a ‘Mahatma’ and as ‘Bapu’ continues to intrigue, amuse and bemuse the people in the sub-continent and the world at large (Parekh, 2001; Mukherjee, (Ed.) 1993; Prabhu, & Rao, 1945 (1967); Carter, 1995; Scharff, 2008; Hatt, 2002; Dalton, 1996; Byrne, 1984. 1988). Media, films in parts, conveys or reaffirms reality, and plays a crucial role in the reproduction of the same and become visual texts embedded with messages. People’s perception of media content influences the way they understand the world and react to other people (Shrum, in Bryant, & Oliver, (Ed.) 1994: 50-73). Media largely remains a symbolic representation of power and its contesting strands in a given society (James & Michael (Ed.) 1991; Fairclough, 1995; Folkerts, & Lacy, 2004; Rose, (2007; Wilson, (Ed.) 1982; Goodwin, & Whannel, (Ed.) 1992). In this politics of representation, vocality and audibility, media has realised the weight and effect of keeping alive the image of Gandhi in the minds of the ‘*aam aadmi*’ (large masses/common man) in India. Consequently media namely print, television (Wober, & Gunter, 1988), cinema and the ‘new media’ (internet and the virtual spaces, and also cell/mobile communications) (Castells, 2000) have systematically spun and re-spun the image of Gandhi both as ‘Mahatma’ and as ‘Bapu’.

Cinematic representations of Gandhi over the years have fed the public with multiple images of a ‘Saint’, ‘A Father figure’ (both at the public and the private), an overarching leader, a failed father and a person held responsible for the unwelcome partition of the sub-continent and the perils that followed and demonised Gandhi for Muslim appeasement etc. For instance, Richard Attenborough’s ‘*Gandhi: His Triumph Changed The World Forever*’ (Attenborough, 1982; Fischer, 1951 (1982); Grenier, 1983) narrates the evolution of M.K Gandhi from ‘Mahatma’ to ‘Bapu’. Contrastingly Feroz Abbas Khan’s ‘*Gandhi, My Father*’ (Khan, 2007) explores and unravels the intricate, complex, and strained relationship between Mahatma Gandhi and his eldest son Harilal Gandhi. While the former cinematic representation celebrates Gandhi in the spirit of the Indian National Congress eulogizing Gandhi as the uncontested ‘Father of the nation’, the latter narrates the story of a ‘Father that he (Gandhi) was not’ (Dalal, 2007; Joshi, 2007).

Interestingly underneath all these cinematic and popular images there is a coherent thread strongly substantiating patriarchal norms and further rooting the same as something unchallengeable and sacrosanct. In other words, Gandhi is the unquestioned final ‘Father figure of India’ and there is a strong lamenting, nostalgia associated with his assassination (Barua, 2005). The phase from the 1940s through 1980s in Bollywood is replete with instances of movies churning the imagery of Gandhi as the sole factor singlehandedly sketching and channelizing the freedom struggle in India. For instance, the soundtrack ‘*De Di Hamein Aazaadi bina khadag bina dhal. Sabarmati ke santh tu ne kardiya kamal*’¹ from Satyen Bose directed film titled *Jagriti* (The Awakening) (Bose, 1954) conveys popular

¹ Bhonsle, Asha (1954). ‘*Sabarmati ke santh tu ne kardiya kamal*’. Lyrics: Kavi Pradeep Ramchandra Baryanji Dwivedi. Music: Hemanta Kumar Mukhopadhyay. Soundtrack in Bose, Satyen, dir. (1954). *Jagriti*. India: Filmistan/Ultra Video/Sasdhara Mukherjee Productions.

imagery of Gandhi as ‘Mahatma’ and ‘Bapu’ who scripted and singly directionalised the course of the Indian national movement and sacrificed his life for the nation.

De Di Hamein Aazaadi (Gave Us Freedom/Liberation)²

De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
(Chorus) *De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal* (Gave us freedom/liberation without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
Aandhi mein bhi jalati rahi gaandhi teri mashaal (Your fame stands through the tempest)
(Chorus) *Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal* (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
Dharati pe ladi toone, ajab dhang ki ladaai (Strange were your tactics of non-violent fight)
Daagi na kaheen top, na bandook chalaai (No tanks, no guns)
Dushman ke kile par bhi, na ki tuune chadhaai (nor did you attack the forts of the enemies)
Vaah re fakeer khoob karaamaat dikhaai (Oh Fakir what a display of craft)
Chutaki mein dushmanon ko diya desh se nikaal (you ousted the enemies with ease)
(Chorus) *Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal* (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
(Chorus) *Raghupati raaghav raaja raam³* (Chief of the house of Raghu, Lord Rama)
Shataranj bichha kar yahaan, baitha tha zamaana (A game of chess was on

² All loose translations mine.

³ ‘Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram’ (sometimes called ‘Ram Dhun’) is a popular *bhajan* (Hindu devotional song) that was a favorite of Mahatma Gandhi. The version that is most common was put to music by Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, and was sung by Gandhi and his followers as they walked during the 241 mile Salt march to Dandi on 12 March 1930.

and the world a spectator)
Lagata tha ki mushkil hai, firangi ko haraana (It seemed impossible to defeat
the enemy)
Takkar thi bade zor ki, dushman bhi tha taana (The game was tough and the
enemy resilient)
Par tu bhi tha baapu, bada ustaad puraana (But you proved that you were a
grandmaster)
Maara vo kas ke daav, ke ulati sabhi ki chaal (You made a strategic move and
turned the tables)
(Chorus) Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you
have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation
without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done
a miracle)
(Chorus) Raghupati raaghav raaja raam (Chief of the house of Raghu,
Lord Rama)
Jab jab tera bigul baja, javaan chal pade (Each time you played the bugle,
soldiers marched to your tunes)
Mazadoor chal pade the, aur kisaan chal pade (Workers and peasants
marched)
Hindu woh musalamaan, sikh pathaan chal pade (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs,
Pathans marched)
Kadamon mein teri, koti koti praan chal pade (Millions followed your
footsteps)
Phoolon ki sej chhod ke, daude jawahar laal (Jawaharlal abandoned his life of
luxury and followed your steps)
(Chorus) Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you
have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation
without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done
a miracle)
(Chorus) Raghupati raaghav raaja raam (Chief of the house of Raghu,
Lord Rama)
Mann mein thi ahinsa ki lagan, tan pe langoti (With Ahimsa in your heart and
a loin cloth around)
Laakhon mein ghoomata tha, liye satya ki sonti (You travelled around
preaching the power of truth)
Waise to dekhane mein thi, hasti teri chhoti (Your appearance looked
vulnerable)
Lekin tujhe zhukti thi, himalaya ki bhi choti (But you were respected by the
world, the high and the mighty himalayas)
Duniya mein bhi baapu tu, tha insaan bemisaal (You were a person
incomparable)
(Chorus) Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you
have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation
without swords and shields)

Saabaramati ke sant toone kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
 (Chorus) *Raghupati raaghav raaja raam* (Chief of the house of Raghu, Lord Rama)
Jag mein jiya hai koi, toh baapu tu hi jiya (You lived your life to the full)
Tuune vatan ki raah mein sab kuch luta diya (And laid your life for the cause of the nation)
Maanga na koi takht na koi taaj bhi liya (You desired no name, fame, power, or glory)
Amrit diya sabhi ko, magar khud zahar piya (You gave us peace and bore the brunt of fury)
Jis din teri chita jali, roya tha mahaakaal (Heavens cried on your funeral pyre)
 (Chorus) *Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal* (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
De di hamein aazaadi bina khadag bina dhaal (Gave us freedom/liberation without swords and shields)
Saabaramati ke sant tuune kar diya kamaal (Saint of Sabarmati you have done a miracle)
 (Chorus) *Raghupati raaghav raaja raam* (Chief of the house of Raghu, Lord Rama)
Raghupati raaghav raaja raam (Chief of the house of Raghu, Lord Rama)
Raghupati raaghav raaja raam (Chief of the house of Raghu, Lord Rama)

Post 2000 Gandhi has become a topical issue for Bollywood movies. Genera of movies have been put on display celebrating, re-reading, re-locating, critiquing Gandhi and his world-visions and their relevance in contemporary times in India. For instance, the popular soundtrack '*Bande mein tha dum*'⁴ from Rajkumar Hirani directed *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* (Carry on Munna Bhai) (Hirani, 2006) describes in praise the qualities of Gandhi and laments his absence in everyday life in contemporary India.

Bande Mein Tha Dum (The Man Had The Courage)⁵

⁴ Nigam, Sonu, Ghoshal, Shreya, and Biswas, Pranab (2006). '*Bande mein tha dum*'. Lyrics: Swanand Kirkire. Music: Shantanu Moitra. Soundtrack in Hirani, Rajkumar, dir. (2006). *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. India: Vidhu Vindo Chopra/Vindo Chopra Productions.

⁵ The song is set to the tune of Dwivedi, Kavi Pradeep Ramchandra Baryanji (1954). '*Aao Bacchon tumhe dikhayeh Jhaki Hindustan Ki*'. Lyrics: Kavi Pradeep Ramchandra Baryanji Dwivedi. Music: Hemanta Kumar Mukhopadhyay. Soundtrack in Bose, Satyen, dir. (1954). *Jagriti*. India: Filmistan/Ultra Video/Sasdhar Mukherjee Productions. (All loose translations mine).

ho aaja re.. (Oh come back)
ho aaja re.. (Oh Come back)
maati pukaare tujhe desh pukaare (The nation yearns for you)
aaja re ab aaja re (Come back now)
bhoolle hum raahen (We have lost our ways)
hamen raah dikha de (Guide us, show us the way)
aaja re raah dikha de (Come and guide us)
ainak pehne laathi pakde (Bespectacled and with a walking stick)
chalte the wo shaan se (He(Gandhi) used to walk with glory)
zaalim kaanpe thar thar thar thar, sun kar un ka naam re (The cruellest of the
enemy would tremble on hearing his name)
ho ho.. (ho..ho)
kad tha un ka chhota sa aur sarpat un ki chaal re (a little man with a robust
stride)
duble se patle se the wo chalte seena taan ke (lean and thin he used to walk
fearlessly)
(Chorus) bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram⁶ (Mother, I Bow to Thee)⁷
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee).
ho bhai bhai ka dushman hai bana re, nafrat ki aandhi behti re (brothers have
turned enemies, there is a tempest of hatred everywhere)
vehshi dilon ko baapu pyaar sikha de (Bapu give these cruel hearts a lesson of
love)
aaja re baapu aaja re (Come, Bapu come)
(Chorus) bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
ho jhooth ka badhta jaaye raaj (Come, Bapu come)
o baapu.. (Oh Bapu)
Apne hi ho gaye dhokhebaaz (We have deceived one another)

⁶ 'Vande Mataram' (I bow to thee, Mother) is a poem from the famed novel *Anandamath* which was written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1882. Written in Bengali and Sanskrit 'Vande Mataram' is a hymn to Goddess Durga, identified as the national personification of India. 'Vande Mataram' became the clarion call among the nationalist during the Indian independence movement. It assumed political significance when it was sung by Rabindranath Tagore in 1896 at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress. In 1950 the first two verses of the poem were given the official status of the 'national song' of India, distinct from the national anthem of India '*Jana Gana Mana*'.

⁷ Sri Aurobindo Ghose translated 'Vande Mataram' into a verse as 'Mother, I Bow to Thee' (*Karmayogin*, 20 November, 1909). I use Aurobindo's translation for this paper knowing fully the difficulties and challenges of translations from one language to another especially from native Indian languages to English.

aaj hamen apno se bachaane (Come Bapu and save us from one another)
aaja re baapu mere (Come, Bapu come)
(Chorus) bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
paai paai mein insaan bika re (we are gullible and overpowered by money
power)
jaan ye ho gayi sasti re (human life has little worth)
soya zameer baapu (Bapu come and awaken our sleeping conscience)
phir se jaga de (come and wake us)
aaja re baapu mere (Come, Bapu come)
(Chorus) Vande Matram..
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)
bande mein tha dum (The man had the courage)
Vande Matram (Mother, I Bow to Thee)

Construing the two lyrics one from the 50s and the other from 2000s one can clearly unearth the changes in the popular imagery. While the former eulogised and gave patriotic rhetoric to Gandhi, the latter seems to look at Gandhi with awe and aspiration and historicising Gandhi as a ‘Mahatma’ and as a ‘Bapu’ all at the same time and constantly getting bemused by the enigmatic persona of Gandhi. The theme of the latter also conveys an urgency to bring back Gandhi in practice in contemporary times in India with the purpose to even out the rough edges of the contentious problems associated with the functioning of democracy in post-independence times including corruption, communalism, etc.

Strangely enough Gandhi himself during his life time refused to accept the popular images projected by his followers, admirers and critics (*Young India*, 1927). Both iconic and cinematic representations of Gandhi, anchors strongly on his much pronounced notions of

‘non-violence’ (*Ahimsa*). ‘Non-violence’ in short is considered to be the ‘mool-mantra’ of ‘Gandhian World-visions’ (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958: 85-107; Bilgrami, 2002: 79-93; Parekh, 2001: 92-110; Erickson, 1969; Dalton, 1998). Gandhi justified his *Satyagraha* through the *Gita* (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958: 56-80; Parekh, 2001: 35-48, 64-77; Mishra, 2008: 15-23) and interpreted the *Gita* to arrive towards his principles of non-violence, love, interconnectedness, duty and sacrifice, where self and other are intimately connected. Through this creative act of interpretation, Gandhi successfully transformed the *Gita* into the catalyst and cornerstone of non-violent political action against British imperialism (Soni, 2004; Gandhi, 1910 (1938)). However, Gandhi used the battlefield which forms the backdrop of the narrative of the *Gita* only as a metaphor for the struggle against evil and strongly voiced his concern over the violent connotations in the *Gita*. Gandhi’s allegorical commentary allowed him to downplay the prominent role of violence that is unavoidable in a literal reading, thereby empowering him to promote his own antithetical agenda of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) (Sharpe, 1985:118; Green, (Ed.). 1987: 72). Gandhi skilfully embraced non-violent non-cooperation as the ultimate method of fighting oppression and channelizing democracy in a given society (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958: 138-150). Non-violence sought to end the cycle of hatred and destruction while non-cooperation sought to dismantle unjust colonial institutions (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958: 81-84). Gandhi argued that non-violent non-cooperation was not a passive manner of requesting social justice, but the most effective method of demanding it (Walton Jr., (1967); Soni, 2004; Gandhi, 1910 (1938): 55-59).

2. Locating Gandhi In The Statist Enterprise And In The Popular Imagery:

Construing Ground Realities

The spectre of Gandhi looms large over the nationalist projection of the Indian state. Here in it becomes essential to interrogate and locate Gandhi and his spectre in the nation-building programme in India (Raghuramraju, (Ed.). 2006; Rudolph, & Rudolph, 2006; Lal, 2008: 4-11). Gandhi's spectre seems to be enveloping the entire horizon so overwhelmingly that a simple question 'Where do you not find Gandhi?' requires endless brainstorming. Gandhi seems to be omnipresent from currency, to posters, to picture frames in offices both Government and non-Government, Bollywood movies, nationalist songs, naming of streets and roads⁸, text books in schools⁹, textile (*Khadi*)¹⁰, social movements¹¹, movements for smaller states¹² etc. just to name a few instances. Interestingly even a simple pictorial reference to Gandhi changes the course and futures of social movements in India. For instance, on the first day of Anna Hazare's first phase of fast in Jantar Mantar, New Delhi in the month of April 2011 a Muslim leader objected mildly to the huge picture of '*Bharat*

⁸ Almost every town, city or settlement has a road named after the father of the nation. It would be very rare to locate a settlement or a township in India not having road names as M.G Marg, Mahatma Gandhi Road etc.

⁹ For instance see the section on Gandhi's Talisman quoted in the opening pages of school books used for study materials by the NCERT or CBSE, New Delhi.

¹⁰ *Khadi* has been identified with Gandhi and is considered to be close to Gandhi's visions of an empowered self sustained village based cottage economy. I would like to bring forth the idea that the 'home-spun-ness' (*Sawdeshi*-ness) of the textile and the manual labour that it involves makes *Khadi* a textile not just of self empowerment but also 'national pride'. It is interesting to note that *Khadi* has become commercialized and become a trump card for the *udyogpati/punjipati* or capitalist enterprise in post colonial nation building programme in India.

¹¹ Social movements led by activists like Medha Patkar, Sundarlal Bahugana, Baba Amte, Anna Hazare just to name a few can be conveniently clubbed under the category of movements that ostensibly claim to be Gandhian or moved by Gandhian methods.

¹² Regional parties demanding smaller states have been time and again invoking the name of Gandhi to justify their demands. For instance, the second generation Gorkhaland movement spearheaded by Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha (GJMM) under the aegis of Bimal Gurung demanding the creation of a separate state of Gorkhaland by incorporating areas in and around Darjeeling has since 2007 declared itself to be Gandhian movement. The token lip-service given to Gandhi has made it more acceptable by the public and earned political credits.

Mata' (Iconography of Mother India loosely drawn from the Hindu Goddess *Durga*¹³) placed as a centrepiece and mentioned that the movement seemed to be inclined towards the rightwing Hindu *fundamentalist*¹⁴-*nationalist* faction, the RSS (*Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh*) (Andersen, & Damle, 1987; Jaffrelot, 1998; Jaffrelot, 2007). The organisers of the Anna Hazare movement immediately replaced the controversial picture of '*Bharat Mata*' with that of a picture of Mahatma Gandhi (Pandita, & Gandhi, 2011: 20-23). In short, Gandhi has become a convenient and effective consensus building icon in post colonial India, 'a brand in itself', attractive merchandise with an ever-ready market.

On a similar note 'Gandhi' in contemporary times in India comes in variational degrees ranging from staunch Gandhities with Gandhi caps, moderate Gandhites, affectionate Gandhites, inclined Gandhites, the Congress version of Gandhi, the BJP version Gandhi, pseudo- Gandhites, Gandhi of the rich, Gandhi of the poor, Gandhi of India, Gandhi of Bharat and many other varieties. Interestingly what comes out very strongly in all the hues of 'Gandhi' that is projected publicly and made visible in contemporary times in India is that a token lip-service to 'Gandhi' seem to authenticate the ambivalent and contested polar interests/divergent claims. In short, having a mere pictorial reference to 'Gandhi' or just mentioning '*Gandhi ne bola tha...*' ('Gandhi had said...') is a case sufficient enough to attract the attention of the large masses or the state itself or command over the target audience.

¹³ See, Sarkar, Tanika (1987): Nationalist Iconography: Image of Women In 19th Century Literature. *Economic & Political Weekly*. November 21- 27: 2011-2015.

¹⁴ I use the term 'fundamentalist' with much caution knowing well the contests and contentions within the same. See, Herriot, Peter (2009). *Religious Fundamentalism: Global, Local and Personal*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group; Also see, Haynes, Jeffrey (2009). Chapter 11, "Religious Fundamentalisms"; Madeley, John (2009). Chapter 12, "Religious And The State"; Mohseni, Payam & Wilcox, Clyde (2009). Chapter 14, "Religion And Political Parties", and David Herbert. (2009). Chapter 15, "Religion And Civil Society", in Haynes, Jeffrey (Ed.). (2009). *Routledge Handbook Of Religion And Politics*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 159-173, 174-191, 211-235, 231-245.

‘Gandhigiri’, the much in vogue popular imagery of Gandhi serves as an interesting reference point in this discussion of Gandhi’s world views and its relevance in contemporary times in India (Sitapati, 2011: 39-44; Mohanty, 2011: 16-19). The ‘Munnabhai’ (Hirani, 2006) sequels outlining ‘Gandhigiri’ had the audience applauding the cine-star Sanjay Dutt re-inventing Gandhi and his methods of ‘*Satyagraha*’ and ‘*Ahimsa*’ in Bollywood style (Ghosh, & Babu, 2006: 5225-5227) to suit the sensibilities of the large masses chocked by the immediate hurdles of a nation in the making ranging from corruption, to nepotism, to reservation, to caste etc. just to name a few. “Gandhi, the man, was once the message. In post-liberalisation India, “Gandhigiri” is the message” (Ghosh, & Babu, 2006).

It is interesting to have a re-look at the word /term ‘Gandhigiri’ because in ordinary parlance we often use hindi terms such as ‘Goondagiri’, ‘Dadagiri’ (also ‘Didigiri’) to refer to brutish force or tactics employed by goons, anti-socials, thugs and cons etc. And here we are served with a new term ‘Gandhigiri’ with the suffix ‘giri’. An act denoting Gandhian methods stylized in Bollywood and served to the audience through the medium of films which claim to re-invent the teachings of Gandhi with reference to temporal and spatial needs of contemporary India. For instance, to lie or to use unfair means for a good/noble cause is considered to be an equivalent to ‘a thousand truths’. Similarly acts stylized on ‘Robinhood’ i.e. robbing the rich and distributing the booty to the poor is also seen as pious and noble and, therefore, Gandhian in tone. However, what goes a miss in these popular readings and imagery via Bollywood is that Gandhian notions of ‘means and ends’ gets brutally smashed little do we realise that the means was as sacrosanct for Gandhi as the ends (Kriplani, (Ed.) 1958: 81-84; Audi, (Ed.) 1995 (1999); Bondurant, 1958; Dhawan, 1951; Gandhi, 1958; Gandhi, 1951 (1961); Iyer, 1973; Woodcock, 1971; Sheldon, 2001: 119-120).

Coming to the issue of 'Violence' and 'Non-Violence' two themes of the 'Gandhian world-visions' in contemporary times in India one needs to confess that 'Violence' and 'Non-Violence' are interwoven and situated in a complex web of spatial and temporal social realities. The dynamics of the two is not just difficult to grasp but also challenging to glean. Posed with an array of ideological juxtapositions and definitional ambiguity both terms remain difficult concepts to delineate into easy theoretically coherent arguments. 'Nonviolence' i.e., the renunciation of violence in personal, social, or international affairs often includes a commitment (called active nonviolence or nonviolent direct action) actively to oppose violence (and usually evil or injustice as well) by nonviolent means. Nonviolence may renounce physical violence alone or both physical and psychological violence (Audi, (Ed.). 1995 (1999)). It may represent a purely personal commitment or be intended to be normative for others as well. When unconditional, '*absolute nonviolence*' renounces violence in all actual and hypothetical circumstances. When conditional, '*conditional nonviolence*' concedes the justifiability of violence in hypothetical circumstances but denies it in practice. Held on moral grounds (*principled nonviolence*), the commitment belongs to an ethics of conduct or an ethics of virtue. If the former, it will likely be expressed as a moral rule or principle (e.g., One ought always to act non-violently) to guide action. If the latter, it will urge cultivating the traits and dispositions of a nonviolent character (which presumably then will be expressed in nonviolent action). As a principle, nonviolence may be considered either basic or derivative. Either way, its justification will be either utilitarian or deontological. Held on non-moral grounds (*pragmatic nonviolence*), nonviolence is a means to specific social, political, economic, or other ends, themselves held on non-moral grounds. Its justification lies in its effectiveness for these limited purposes rather than as a way of life or a guide to conduct in general. An alternative source of power, it may then be used in the service of evil as well as good. Nonviolent social action, whether of a principled or pragmatic sort, may

include noncooperation, mass demonstrations, marches, strikes, boycotts, and civil disobedience. Undertaken in defence of an entire nation or state, nonviolence provides an alternative to war. It seeks to deny an invading or occupying force the capacity to attain its objectives by withholding the cooperation of the populace needed for effective rule and by nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedience. It may also be used against oppressive domestic rule or on behalf of social justice (Audi, (Ed.). 1995 (1999); Bondurant, 1958; Dhawan, 1951; Gandhi, 1958; Gandhi, 1951 (1961); Iyer, 1973; Woodcock, 1971; Sheldon, 2001: 119-120).

Drawing parallel with the recent wave of Gandhian movements seeking to unleash a wave of *Satyagraha* against institutionalised corruption and nepotism in India we find a strong flow towards Gandhian world-visions. Both the Anna Hazare¹⁵ and also the Baba Ramdev¹⁶ movements have triggered a series of '*chintan*' (introspection) and brainstorming across the

¹⁵ Kisan Baburao Hazare popularly known 'Anna Hazare' is a retired driver of the Indian Army. Hazare is a social activist based in Ralegan Siddhi, a village in Parner taluka of Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra, India. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan—the third-highest civilian award—by the Government of India in 1992 for his efforts in establishing Ralegan Siddhi as a model village. In 2011, Hazare initiated a Satyagraha movement for passing a stronger anti-corruption Lokpal (ombudsman) bill in the Indian Parliament as conceived in the 'Jan Lokpal Bill' (People's Ombudsman Bill). This draft bill incorporated more stringent provisions and wider power to the *Lokpal* (Ombudsman) than the draft Lokpal bill prepared by the government in 2010. These include placing 'the Prime Minister within the ambit of the proposed lokpal's powers'. Hazare began his Indefinite Fast on 5 April 2011 at Jantar Mantar in Delhi to press for the demand to form a joint committee of the representatives of the Government and the civil society to draft a stronger anti-corruption bill with stronger penal actions and more independence to the *Lokpal* and *Lokayuktas* (Ombudsmen in the states), after his demand was rejected by the Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh.

¹⁶ Swami Ramdev founder of 'Patanjali Yog Peeth', Haridwar, has been associated with the '2011 Indian anti-corruption movement' and was actively involved in the 'Jan Lokpal agitation'. On 27 February 2011 Baba Ramdev held a large rally of over 1 lakh people at the Ramlila Maidan, New Delhi to protest against corruption. Those present at the rally included Baba Ramdev, Acharya Balkrishna, Ram Jethmalani, Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, Swami Agnivesh and many others. All members spoke and explained how corruption was rampant in the country and how the government itself was indulging in it. The most highlighted topic was Indian black money lying in tax havens of Switzerland. Baba Ramdev launched the '*Bhrashtachar Mitao Satyagraha*' which was held at Ramlila Maidan, New Delhi on 4 June 2011. Baba Ramdev declared to go on an *Anshan* (indefinite fast) on June 4, 2011 at Ramlila Ground Delhi to pressure the Central Government to root out corruption from India and bring back the black money stashed away in various financial institutions abroad. After this declaration the government was said to have set up a panel to suggest steps to curb black money and its transfer abroad, in an apparent bid to placate Ramdev. See, 'Baba Ramdev Fast Against Corruption- Indiaecho.com'. www.youtube.com (accessed on 27.10.2011); NDTV Correspondent. (2011). *Baba Ramdev hospitalised given glucose, continues fast*. Haridwar, NDTV 11 June 2011. www.ndtv.com (accessed on 27.10.2011).

length and breadth of India seeking to locate Gandhi anew or at least discover or find a ‘new Gandhi’ to save India during times of crisis and turmoil (Pandita, & Gandhi, 2011; Pal, 2011: 24-27). Media has craftily scripted and directionalised the popular images and synchronised the chords of similarity between Anna and Gandhi. ‘Beyond TV bytes and debates, there is a large media strategy to project Anna Hazare as Mahatma Gandhi. From *bhajans* (Hindu devotional songs) sung to Gandhi caps, everything is well planned in strict accordance with this strategy’ (Pandita, & Gandhi: 2011). Media has in a way successfully fed the popular image projecting Anna as ‘*Aaj ka Gandhi*’ (Today’s Gandhi).

Both movements have resorted to titillate popular sentiments and arouse the passions and power of the youths who for very long time have remained largely disgruntled with the system. The message transported to the large audience post Bollywood movies like ‘*Rang de Basanti*’ (Colour Me Orange) (Mehra, 2006) has been that the youths need to take charge and change the system and set India free from octogenarian leaderships who have maintained corruptions and nepotisms. *Rang De Basanti* or RDB not only induced the public into organizing candle-light vigilantism throughout the public spaces in urban India and public protests on various issues of public interest but also motivated the youth to participate in politics (Habermas:1962 (1987)). RDB churned much debate at various levels for its portrayal of nationalism and citizenship especially amongst the young audiences. The desire to bring about a change or make a difference in society manifested itself in an exhibitionist mode of actively participating in street protests and lobby on various public interests. This youth activism not just helped revitalize citizenship and expand the scope and direction of

*public sphere*¹⁷ in India but also demonstrated the grip that Bollywood has over the masses in India.

However, these popular social movements which have relied heavily on media (old and new) and ‘youth power’, ‘youth networks’, though very vibrant and mobile have failed to follow the Gandhian footsteps and have instead zoomed to spontaneous mob-frenzy and exhibition or outburst of violence. The following transcripts of a report on Anna Hazare’s movement in Ramlila Maidan, New Delhi by Jay Mazoomdaar strips bare the bones and the flesh of the Team Anna movement and the Youth activism it claims to re-generate post JP Movement of the 1970s and also the outburst or ‘displacement of anger’ among the activist citizenry:

There is strength in numbers and numbers add easily at the Ramlila ground. A sizeable anti-Congress, pro-BJP crowd is conspicuous. There are school students in uniform and the youth have come prepared with face paint and flags, much like they would for an IPL match at the Ferozeshah Kotla stadium not far away.

And there are the *others*. I sit down with a group of five friends and they smell of alcohol in the afternoon. All smiles, they tell me they do nothing and were getting bored whiling away time in their Shastri Park bylanes. “*Idhar music hai, masti hai. Bas hit gana suno, aur ladki dekho*” (It’s fun here, Just sit back, listen to music and check out girls). On cue, the loudspeakers blare yet another *Rang De Basanti* number.

Many young couples have walked in too; one can tell because they avoid the cameras. Families are regulars in the evening and also after dinner. The police

¹⁷ In ‘*The Structural Transformation Of The Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into A Category Of Bourgeois Society*’ (1962)(1989) Habermas sketches the degeneration of media from print-based journalism to the electronic media of the twentieth century in an analysis that, as his critics maintain, tends to idealize earlier print media and journalism within a democratic public sphere contrasted to an excessively negative sketch of later electronic media and consumption in a debased public sphere of contemporary capitalism. For Habermas, the function of the media have thus been transformed from facilitating rational discourse and debate within the public sphere into shaping, constructing and limiting public discourse to those themes validated and approved by media corporations. Hence, the interconnection between a sphere of public debate and individual participation has been fractured and transmuted into that of a realm of political information and spectacle in which citizen-consumers ingest and absorb passively entertainment and information. ‘Citizens’, thus, become spectators of media presentations and discourse which mould public opinion, reducing consumer/citizens to objects of news, information, and public affairs. See, Habermas, Jurgen, ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’ in Calhoun, Craig (Ed.). (1992). *Habermas And The Public Sphere*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 438; Habermas, Jurgen (1962). (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*, Burger, Thomas & Lawrence, Frederick trans. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Pusey, Michael (1987). *Jurgen Habermas: Key Sociologists*. London: Routledge; Kellner, Douglas: *Habermas, the Public Sphere, and Democracy: A Critical Intervention* (<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/kellner.html> retrieved on 16.01.2011).

should take credit: it's their host-like graciousness that has made this middle-class family entertainment possible. With so many of them deployed here, mob aggression is naturally under check, though one constable did get slapped around (nobody was really sure why)¹⁸ till his colleagues rescued him (Mazoomdaar, 2011: 28-30).

A section of Television journalist has been quick in applauding the restraints maintained by the youths in both the Team Anna as well as Baba Ramdev's movements and patting the back of the "Indian youths" in juxtaposition to the "Youths in London".¹⁹ However, what these TV journalists fail to read is that the former has ostensibly claimed and projected itself to be non-violent and Gandhian in spirit. And it is here, that we witness the paradoxes within movements claiming to be inspired by Gandhi and yet, remaining muted on the issue of the use of 'Non-Violence' as a lived mantra in a democratic environment.

¹⁸ The Civilian Police in India always seem to bear the brunt of the mob. The *proximity* of the Civilian Police makes them the closest and most easily identifiable face of the Government and the State, and therefore, the first to bear the mob fury. I emphasize on the point of proximity because of the simple reason that people in India get to interact at least facially or non-verbally with the civilian police on an everyday basis. The interaction with the military police is very limited and channeled by what Sanjay Barbora calls the 'garrison mentality'. The Army Jawans seldom exchange words with the local community and spend years in their camps without interacting or learning the local languages/customs and think/suffer from superiority complex. By speaking in Hindi (Official language of India) and maintaining their North Indian/Gangetic lifestyle within their camps in the North-East, they think they have upheld Indianness and recreated a mini-India within their camps/garrisons. *See*, Barbora, Sanjay. (2006). Rethinking India's Counter-Insurgency campaign in the North-East. *Economic & Political Weekly*. September 2-8: 3805-3812.

An interesting point to be observed here is that though the interaction between the civilian population and the military police is very limited thanks to media projections the military personnel are elevated to the positions of 'heroes' defending the nation while the civilian police is demonized (Ed.). Media feeds the public with the image that the civilian police unlike its counterpart the military police is not dedicating their lives for the 'nation'. Media thus feeds and sustains the common perception that the civilian police is highhanded, corrupt and eating the nation from within while the military police is projected as protecting the frontiers of the nation i.e. '*ekta and akhandata*' of Bharat/India.

¹⁹ A rally organised on 6 August 2011 in response to the fatal shooting of Mark Duggan by Metropolitan Police Service firearms officers on 4 August 2011 turned violent and a riot began in Tottenham, North London. In the following days, rioting spread to several London boroughs and districts and eventually became uncontrollable. The riots were characterised by young people actively participating in rampant looting and arson attacks of unprecedented levels. *See*, O'Brien, Paraic (2011). London riots: Looting & Violence continues. London: *BBC Radio 5*. 8 August 2011. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-14439970 (retrieved on 27.10.2011); London riots: The third night. (2011). *The Guardian News Blog*. 8 August 2011. www.guardian.co.uk/uk/blog/2011/august/08/london-riots-third-night-live (retrieved on 27.10.2011).

III

Some Closing Observations

To bring my arguments to a closure I would revert back and say that celebrated as it is, the ‘Gandhian world-visions’ remains thoroughly contentious generating much academic as well as non-academic murmurings ranging from total acceptance to strong rebuttal to an uncomfortable chocked acceptance (Parekh, 2001:111-126). The chocked acceptance of iconography of Gandhi can be best illustrated by the popular saying: ‘*Majboori ka naam Mahatma Gandhi*’ (Compromise, thy name is Mahatma Gandhi).²⁰ People in contemporary times in India are compelled to accept Gandhi uncritically as the convenient and effective icon for consensus building in a fragmented and contested socio-political terrain. Whether we want it or not Indians fall back on Gandhi, making Gandhi over the years in post colonial India ephemeral, infallible and godlike. The cinematic projections and the statist enterprise in unison have put Gandhi on a pedestal and isolated Gandhi from contemporary ground realities in India. So much so that in general there is a strong feeling that had Gandhi been born a few years ahead of the Indian National Movement he could have well been declared a ‘God’ by the large masses in India.

While gleaning ‘Gandhi’ in popular imaginations and in the statist enterprise it becomes crucial to reconceptualise ‘Violence’ and look at it as a lived experience construed and contextualized against temporal and spatial realities of a given society. There is an urgent need in India to re-look at ‘violence/non-violence’ and engage not just academicians, and activists but also the larger citizenry in this project of understanding ‘violence/non-violence’. ‘Violence’ is not just about physical coercions, or force, or statist armed enterprise but comes in variational degrees and so does ‘non-violence’.

²⁰ All loose translation mine.

And closely related to the above understanding is the need to consider 'Voice' or 'Audibility' as the capacity of individuals, communities and civil society to influence the government's decisions on issues that affect their lives. It also refers to a wide range of measures such as complaints, organised protests, lobbying and participation in decision-making and product delivery. This voice is often political in nature and content; in other words it takes the form of activist citizenry. The quest for inclusion of these 'voices', remains the core theme of the process of decentralisation since the early 90s. Issues of effective people's participation, accountability and responsiveness of the state, and citizens as stakeholders of development still plague our visions for social transformation. New strategies, innovative programmes and advocacy with the governments continue to be the under-lying theme to achieve greater people's participation and true democracy in India. And in this sense Gandhian World-visions encounter innovative enterprise in terms of interpretation, applicability and end results in contemporary times in India.

Also in drawing a closure to my arguments on the popular imagery of Gandhi over the years, I would say that in contemporary times, there is an urgent need to read, re-read, unread Gandhi spatially and temporally. The wave of Gandhigiri that has gripped and encapsulated the public in India while substantiating the Habermasian conceptualisation of the public sphere, where private people came together to form a public whose 'public reason' would work as a check on state power, where the public sphere consisted of organs of information and political debate such as newspapers and journals (Dahlgren, & Sparks, (Ed.) 1991; Stevenson, 1995) , as well as institutions of political discussion such as political clubs, public assemblies, meeting halls, and other public spaces where socio-political discussion takes place (Calhoun, (Ed.). 1992; Habermas, 1962 (1991); Pusey, 1987; Goode, 2005). It doubly

accentuates the factors that eventually resulted in the decay of the public sphere, including the growth of a commercial mass media which turned the critical public into a passive consumer public; and the welfare state, which merged the state with society so thoroughly that the public sphere was squeezed out (Goode, 2005:120-141). It also turned the ‘public sphere’ into a site of self-interested contestation for the resources of the state rather than a space for the development of a public-minded rational consensus. The rise of the Internet and social networking- *Facebook, Tweeter, You Tube* just to name a few has expanded the realm for democratic participation and debates further enhancing the possibility of new public spaces for political intervention.²¹ The ‘new media’ just as the ‘old’ has produced ‘new public spheres and spaces’ for information, debate, and participation (Gitlin in Liebes, & Curran, (Ed.) 1998: 168–175).

The methods of the neo-Gandhian movements in contemporary times though ostensibly claiming to be ‘Non-violent’ and peaceful, exhibit traces of anger and disgruntledness against and towards the ‘System’. The youth force that Gandhigiri attempts to channel and tap remains largely distanced from the teachings and perplexed by the ideologies and methodologies of Gandhi. In short, the youths fail to read Gandhi in spirit and in letter and contextualize Gandhi against and within the ambit of the constricting as well as expanding realities of contemporary times in India. Through these appreciations and depreciations of the popular iconography of Gandhi in India we find that ‘brand Gandhi’ and its shelf-life relies heavily on the manoeuvrings and ‘media management’ of the manipulative market (Chatterjee, 2004; Damodaran, 2008; Fernandes, 2006; Srinivas, 2011:31-33).

²¹ Such spheres and spaces contain both the potential to invigorate democracy, increase the dissemination of critical and progressive ideas as well as new possibilities for manipulation, social control, promotion of conservative positions, and intensification of differences between people. Participation in these ‘new public spheres’ reflects the emerging sphere of ‘cyberspace democracy’. See, Habermas, Jurgen, ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’ in Calhoun, (Ed.). 1992:438; Habermas, 1962 (1991); Pusey, 1987.

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Korea's Use of 'Smart power': An Overview of Historical Development in the 'Late Industrialisation' Countries

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Abstract:

This paper aims to analyse the historical process of Korea to escape from the socio-economic backwardness, whereas other late industrialised countries are still in the process of development. The wise use of Korea's 'hard' and 'soft power' synthesis gives birth to the new mode of power known as the 'Smart Power,' which plays the vital role in escaping Korea from 'backwardness'. Korea not only stops at the phase of the 'developed States' in the field of late industrialization, but also creates the advanced State in the 'techno-scientific' field in the 21st Century. The literature or analysis of this issue tends to focus on the Statist perspective from International Political Economy and Post Colonialism ideas of cultural imperialism. State's strong engagement in the market and the leadership ability to hegemon in the domestic politics basically leads to the development; whereas other late industrialisation states are unable to catch up because of their policies and weaknesses. However, it clearly ignores that it was not only the State enforcement but 'power' was used alternatively in the process of development i.e., the use of 'smart power'.

Keywords: backwardness, development, hard power, soft power, smart power

1. Introduction

When did the actual development take place? Or what are the key factors for Korea to go beyond the catch-up? It is the wise use of Korea's 'smart power'¹ which determines the

Korea became the victim of Cold War and was divided and given the two names of North and South Korea. In this paper I mean unified Korea in the historical context and South Korean development in particular in the present context.

¹ A smart power strategy combines hard and soft power resources. Beyond hard power and soft power, smart power is defined as the capacity of an actor to combine elements of hard power and soft power in ways that are mutually reinforcing such that the actor's purposes are advanced effectively and efficiently. See Ernest J. Wilson, III, 'Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power', *Annals of the*

outcome, growth and smart moves to escape from the ‘backwardness.’² Korea has been using the combination of both ‘hard power’³ and ‘soft power’⁴ from the late Yi Dynasty. Power usually means the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want. Korea has used power to affect others behaviour in three main ways: threats of coercion (sticks) for their own domestic politics, inducements and payments (carrots) for the labour and business groups who work hard, and attraction to the outside world especially in terms of attracting FDI and exporting goods, that makes others want what you want.⁵ Many countries try to use both the power according to the situation. So other country may be attracted to this kind of power politics because other countries want to follow it, admiring its values, emulating its example, and aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness. In this sense, it is important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force them to change through the threat or use of military, but also use of economy as weapon.⁶ Korea has also adopted the culture of Confucianism long back ago. However Korea was so much influenced by the Confucian ideas that it adopted it as the State ideology side-lining the Buddhism in Yi Dynasty, which was the State religion in practice. In July 1392, when Yi Seong-gye seized

American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 616. Public Diplomacy in a Changing World (Mar., 2008): pp. 110-124.

² Backwardness to the States usually means economic backwardness; Whole world was divided into two groups developed and underdeveloped or the developing countries in terms of industrialised process. The difference between the West and the eastern peripheries was not just a matter of delay and backwardness in terms of time, but also one of a distinct order, rhythm, and sequence of development. Korea was the country except Japan to be well industrialised in the Eastern Countries. See Hanak. Peter (Jun., 1994), ‘Studies in East European Thought’, Vol. 46, No. 1/2, *Nationalism and Social Science*, Published by Springer: pp. 33-45.

³ Here I mean to refer Classical version of Realist hard power and Neo Realist understanding of the Economic power to achieve the political gain. See B. Michael and D. Raymond, ‘Power in International Politics’. *International Organization*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Winter, 2005): Pp. 43

⁴ Soft power is the ability to affect others to achieve the goals or outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payment. A country’s soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies. Nye. Joseph S (Autumn, 1990), ‘Soft Power’. *Foreign Policy*, No. 80. Twentieth Anniversary, Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive. LLC Publication.

⁵ Carrot and Stick Approach also carrot or stick approach is an idiom that refers to a policy of offering a combination of rewards and punishment to induce behavior. See James Andreoni (University of Wisconsin), William Harbaugh (University of Oregon and NBER), LiseVesterlund (University of Pittsburgh). ‘The Carrot or the Stick: Rewards, Punishments and Cooperation’. March 14, 2002. Also see John R. Freeman, Carrots, Sticks, and Liars: Information, Incentives, and Entrepreneurial Politics, Source: *Political Methodology*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1977), pp. 185-193, Published by Oxford University Press.

⁶ Nye. Joseph. S (March, 2008). ‘Public Diplomacy and Soft Power.’ *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Sage Publication.

power, the Office of the Inspector-General proposed an ideological roadmap in which ten items were suggested for consolidating the foundation of the new power. One of them was the ‘weeding out of unqualified Buddhist clergy’⁷ and in accordance with this suggestion, King Taejo Yi Seong-gye (1392-1398) promulgated the Founding Edict indicating that Confucianism had become the governing ideology (Yeonsik.Choi, 2007:111).⁸

1.2 Historical Overview

It was the birth of soft power in Korea which was in the form of Confucian culture to its citizens. Apart from Confucianism, Buddhist philosophy was the State religion in Korea’s Silla Dynasty,⁹ which was side-lined by the strong force of hard power in the Yi dynasty. It was also the strong hold of Yangban system, which used the Confucian culture to rule the Korean society. Yangban were the landed aristocracy, who concentrated the land, economy, and political power in their hand. It was because of this Confucian culture which acted as the power to be used as, what Joseph Nye called ‘soft power’, which indicated ‘*an ability to want what onewants*’. Actually, Confucius and his school have much to say about the morals of the public administration and the market institutions in a more macro level. While Weber emphasizes the role of culture on the development of the economy, and Marx, the determining influence of the material base on ideology, here we see an interaction between culture specifically Confucian business ethics and the economy.¹⁰ Korean Confucian culture means society based on hierarchy and it was during the time of Yi Dynasty, who introduced State religion by force because followers of Buddhist philosophy were being more secular concentrating more focus on temples economy.

⁷It is common knowledge that tension existed between Buddhism and Confucianism as two of the three major systems of thought in Chinese history.

⁸The Great Anti-Buddhist Persecution initiated by Tang Emperor Wuzong reached its height in the year 845 CE. Among its purposes were to appropriate war funds and to cleanse China of foreign influences. See Choi Yeonsik, ‘To Survive as a Buddhist Monk in a Confucian State: Gihwa’s Response to Jeong Do-jeon’s Critique of Buddhism’, *Korea Journal*, Vol.47. No.3 (2007):Pp111.

⁹ Early Yen was defeated by Early Chin (334-394) and Koguryo had friendly relation with early Chin, who introduced Buddhism to Koguryo in 372 B.C, the second year of king Sosurim’s reign. See also Yi Hong-iik, ‘Historical Transition of Three Kingdoms’, *Korea Journal*:Pp 6

¹⁰ Confucianism Culture has served the Korean Nations as the soft power. When it comes to the trust in the economic terms, hierarchy construct the trust game. See Kit-Chun Joanna Lam (March 2003), ‘Confucian Business Ethics and the Economy,’ *Journal of Business Ethics*. Vol. 43, No-1,2. Business Ethics in the Global Knowledge Economy.

Also Korea was always under the threat of insecurity, and was forced many times by the neighbouring countries to open up the trade for their own benefits. Firstly Korea was lobbied by China to open trade with the Western countries, mainly the United States, which brings Korea under the threats. It was also during the time 1592, Japanese tried to occupy Korea, which was followed by the Manchus of Manchuria in 1627 with severe attack. All this led Korea to adopt 'policy of isolation', which has been commonly known as the 'Hermit Kingdom'¹¹ until 1980s. Korea lost its supremacy during the time of Japanese imperialism (1910-1945), as they was subjugated and dominated by the Japanese cultures.¹² Korea was forced to adopt the Japanese name and Korean was taught in Japanese language. Korean like Park Chung Hee was serving under the Japanese army in Manchuria. It was also during the time of 1945-1948 Korea was going under the US occupation, whose aim was only to stop spreading of communism in the Southern part of Korea.

It was only after the Park Chung Hee government from 1960s Korean government began to exercise its hard power in the economic field. However it was the hard power of authoritarian government who started thinking in the Export Orient Industrialisation from the Import Substitution Industrialisation which led to the economic growth in the development process. If it was Korean dynasty who takes the support of Yangban's to rule the government, it was the later Korean state of modern phase that supported the Chaebol's to move upward in the development process.¹³ Korea also suffered in the 'Asian Financial Crisis' (1997) but also learned to move upward beyond the understanding of development. Korea uses the strong back up (hard power) of the state, to push the Chaebols by funding it in strengthening the state economy (hard power), which also builds the military equipment's for the future state

¹¹ Rev. WM. Elliot Griffis (1881), 'Corea: The Hermit Nation'. *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. 13: pp. 125-132.

¹²Economic preponderance in the independent kingdom of Korea (85,613 square miles) was granted to Japan in 1905 as a result of the Russo-Japanese War. Formal annexation came in 1910. Korea is mainly agricultural, the chief crops being wheat, barley, rice and the soya bean. In 1910 the population was 13.3 million; in 1932 it was 20.5 million, of whom only 2.5 percent were Japanese. Here, too, the Japanese colonists or imperialist dominate the political and economic life. See Edgar Packard Dean (Apr., 1935), 'The Expansion of Japanese Rule', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 13, No. 3: pp. 519-52.

¹³ Big push from the Korean government to the business firm Chaebol's. It can be seen as win-win situation. See Bruce Cumings (1997), '*Korea's place in the Sun: A modern History*,' W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London: Pp. 134

security. To mobilise the Chaebol's to work hard in the competitive market, Korean State uses the culture Neo Confucianism, which bids them to work hard and it was bounded by their rationality. It is because of this well-structured powers, Korea not only escapes from the 'backwardness' by following imitation, learning process, but also goes beyond the catch-up and stands as the innovation for the upcoming late industrialisation countries.

2. Three Forms of Power in the Korea's development

Korea is stronger in "hard power" than "soft power." Hard power encompasses natural resources, economic power, sciences, technology and information. In contrast, soft power is the combination of governance, political power, diplomacy, culture, credit standing and the capability of how to cope with economic changes. Korea has always been using alternatively both the 'hard power' and 'soft power' according to the situation, what it faces. However the sudden development can be understood only by the 'hybridity'¹⁴ of both the powers to form a new power which is known as the 'Smart power.'¹⁵

To survive in the international system, power is essential to survive, but too much reliance on one power brings weakness which leads to the fall. Leaders like Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Gadhafi, all focused in the hard power to survive. Similarly countries like Thailand, Indonesia only rely on tourism for their survival using 'soft power'. It was the US who uses smart power, with 'soft power' as the aid and 'hard power' as military engagement in war against the international terrorism. Korea also followed the same method of using 'smart power' but applied it in the different context, which brings Korea to the success in many fields. Also unconventional threats and enemies can only be anticipated and overcome through the multidimensional and flexible application of smart power, the balanced synthesis of hard and soft power.

¹⁴ Hybridity was used by Homi K. Bhabha in defining post Colonialism, rethinking questions of identity, social agency and national affiliation, Bhabha provides a working, if controversial, theory of cultural hybridity, where one that goes far beyond previous attempts by others. But I tried to develop this idea in different context defining; two power hybridity that gives birth to the different power, but have the both characters in it. See *'The Location of Culture'* (1994), Routledge Publication, London and New York: Pp. 18-22

¹⁵ Smart power has been used by Joseph Nye to define the US character in terms of fighting for the international terrorism. Smart power means use of both the power (hard and soft).

2.1. Use of Hard Power in Strengthening Korea

Hard power is the capacity to coerce the other to do so. Hard power strategies focus on military intervention, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions to enforce national interests. In academic writing, the neorealist approaches tend to emphasize hard power, especially the hard power of states. While Liberal Institutionalism emphasizes soft power as an essential resource of statecraft, along with the power to write the rules of the game, a curiously missing element in contemporary conversations of hard and soft power. According to Morgenthau 'National Interest' is a power, which can be defined as both military and economic power. In Neo Realist understanding of international system as anarchic, the State has to be fully secured by building security in terms of military and economy. In the beginning Korea had difficulty in developing the hard military power, so Korea was under the rule of Colonial masters. In a survey of G-20 nations published in the newspaper *ChosunIlbo*¹⁶, South Korea was ranked 13th in the world in terms of national power by the Hansun Foundation, 9th in hard power resources but performed more poorly in terms of soft power. In the newspaper's words, "*state of the art factories, high-tech weapons, advanced information communications infrastructure are the key components that a country must have for stronger international competitiveness.*" But for these "hard power" ingredients to become true engines of the country's growth and prosperity, they must be backed by more sophisticated and highly efficient "soft power" which goes hand in hand in shaping the action of the actor.¹⁷

Korean State under the Japanese influence was transformed from relatively corrupt and ineffective social institution into highly authoritarian, penetrating organisation, capable of simultaneously controlling and transforming the Korean society. Korea thus used its hard power from only the time of Park Chung Hee government,¹⁸ learning the methods from Japan to control the government. Park Chung was the military leader who controlled the State system by its authoritative nature, where some character of Japan's hard power was seen in

¹⁶The_ChosunIlbo(English Edition): Daily News from Korea. english.chosun.com/

¹⁷ South Korea's Growing Soft Power, <http://www.newsart.com/>, /World Bank/South Korea's Growing Soft Power by Joseph S. Nye - Project Syndicate.htm

¹⁸ President has the authority to deal with hard power and is guided by the principle of the Korean Constitution.

him. It was his idea of export led industrialisation which changed the Korea into the advanced country. This export led industrialisation was also strongly supported and forced by the Par Chung Hee government. He was the man of Japanese colonial Korean army, trained in Japanese military academy in Manchuria. Chong-Sik Lee, one of the leading Korean scholars in the United States, describes him as a “*Japanophile*,” fascinated by “*Meiji Model*,” and bent on steering Korea along the Japanese path to modernity. Korea also moved towards the science and technology field using its capability of hard power.¹⁹ Korean State forced Chaebols to produce more efficient product, which can compete in the international market, in which only best were picked and were rewarded. Focusing in this Chaebols started developing its own weapon for the State. Some of the weapon built by Korean company in supporting their military hard power is the following-

‘The K1 assault rifle developed circa 1983 by the South Korean company Daewoo Precision Industries Ltd (a division of the large industrial corporation DAEWOO International Corp.) as a replacement for the license-built M16A1 rifles, which was used by the South Korean Army during the 1970s’²⁰(Popenker, Max R, 1991-2010)

In this way Korea used its soft power to the Chaebol cultures to develop its hard power. The modern science and technology was imported to Korea in the eighteenth century by intellectuals who were introduced to Western philosophy through their interactions with Qing China. In the late nineteenth century, missionaries had brought to Korea modern scientific knowledge; however, fundamental development of modern science and technology was started through Japan after its colonization of the peninsula. Thus, despite the demise of the Japanese Empire in 1945, Korea’s science and technology remained deeply influenced by Japan. But no doubt Korean labour were good learners, so they gave main focus to achieve the knowledge through education in the science and technology which in turn became the innovation for the other countries.

“South Korea has also outsourced its defence industry to produce various core components of other countries’ advanced military hardware. Those hardware include modern aircraft such as F-15K fighters and AH-64 attack helicopters which will be used

¹⁹AtulKohli, (1994) ‘Where Do High Growth Political Economies Come From? The Japanese Lineage of Korea’s “Developmental State”,’ *Princeton University*, New Jersey

²⁰ <http://world.guns.ru/assault/skor/daewoo-k1-and-k2-e.html>

by Singapore and Japan, whose airframes will be built by Korea Aerospace Industries in a joint-production deal with Boeing. South Korea's defence exports were \$1.03 billion in 2008 and \$1.17 billion in 2009, and South Korea aims to increase the figure to \$1.5 billion in 2010.”²¹ (Sung-ki, Jung)

South Korea has skilled labour from the ancient history due to its Confucian culture of hierarchy, to obey and apply in hard work. South Korea also has been important in armaments, both for the use of domestic purpose and for export. During the 1960s, South Korea was largely dependent on the United States to supply its armed forces, but after the engagement of President Richard M. Nixon's policy of ‘Vietnamization’ in the early 1970s, South Korea started to manufacture many of its own weapons. Korea knew the role of State to influence both in domestic and international field. In the domestic level Korean State controlled the Chaebol by using hard power in terms of competition to produce economic growth.

2.2. Soft Power in Supporting Korea’s Relations

In contrast to coercive power, soft power is the capacity to persuade others to do what one wants. A powerful formulation first introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990, and expanded in his later works, soft power has become a central analytic term in foreign policy discussions. Nye defined it as the ability to get what one wants through persuasion or attraction rather than coercion. It builds attraction and encompasses nearly everything other than economic and military power. Joseph Nye stated, “*In terms of resources, soft-power resources are the assets that produce such attraction.*”²² As noted by US professor Joseph Nye, there are three sources of soft power that a country could use to its advantage: culture, sports, political values and foreign policy. South Korea has been able to proactively incorporate all in a remarkable cooperation.

Korea had its close relation with the China, where China was seen as the elder brother, in which ‘*sadae*’ or serving the superior was given importance due to its culture. During the

²¹ http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/08/205_67771.html

²² Ernest J. Wilson, III, (Mar., 2008) “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, Public Diplomacy in a Changing World: pp. 110-124

Three Kingdoms Buddhism and Confucianism were introduced and the civil service exam in the Koryo dynasty, based on Confucian texts, played the dominant role in the later phase of Korea. *'AnHyang brought some writings of the celebrated Sung Neo-Confucian, Chu Hsi, from Yuan China to Korea; in 1305 Paek I-chong also brought works by the Ch'eng brothers. It was the soft power of Confucian culture which dominates the ruling pattern also in the civil services. During the early Choson dynasty Buddhist doctrine was criticized from the standpoint of Neo-Confucianism, most notably by Chong To-chou in his 'Against Mr. Buddha' (1398). Sejong the Great ordered the construction of a royal academy by the name of 'Chipyonjon' or Wise Men.*²³The Korean culture is and was based on Confucian cultural values which embody respect for authority, honesty, devoted loyalty, commitment and hard work, which is added by today's internet revolution. Another is Confucian culture based on hierarchical system, where one has to be subordinate to others. Culture was used as the tool of soft power to unite the whole Korean masses to fight against the foreign power. It influenced their own people and their leaders were bound to the led.

Korea attracts most foreigners who firstly interact with them. The Korean culture of pali-pali (quickly-quickly) at the work place exemplifies efficiency, which shows time sensitivity and mixes with other societal ethics of truthfulness, sincerity and an in-built hatred to compromise on quality. It is this efficiency driven culture that has thrown a poor, war-stricken South Korea of 1960s into an economic centre within decades which is a smart move with the help of soft power.

In terms of products it claims of the world's best brands of television, cars and other electrical appliances that are increasingly popular in many developing and advanced countries such as Samsung, LG, Hyundai, Kia, and Daewoo. Korean model of success acts as valuable soft power for Seoul as it attracts other countries to emulate it. Korea Culture 'hallyu' or Korean wave has not only reached the neighbouring Asian countries but has earned national prestige by crossing the Pacific. Recent South Korean pop artist PSY video-song phrase "*Gangnam Style*" is a Korean neologism that refers to a lifestyle associated with the Gangnam, District of Seoul, for which the news agency 'Agence France-Presse', considered it as part of the Korean Wave. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon hailed the

²³ <http://www.madisonmorrison.com/topics/confucianism/korea/the-reception-of-confucianism-and-neo-confucianism-in-korea.html>

song as a “*force for world peace*”.²⁴ Moreover, its food popularity and historical heritage are other soft power tools. While the food is delicious, nutritious and keeps obesity at an arm’s length, it requires some effort and time to acquire its special taste for South Asians. Korea organized a three-day C-20 meeting in Sept 2010 to showcase its culture ahead of G-20 Summit in November 2010.²⁵ The Korean First Lady, who is honorary chairwoman of the Steering Committee for Promoting Hansik (Korean food) is vibrantly pursuing the promotion of Korean food and is internationally known for “food diplomacy.” These are the Korean soft power which have influenced the regional and global actors in the process of development.

3. Smart Power in defining Korea

Korea has been using its power to survive in the colonial period to the crisis situation. During the time of Yi Dynasty it was the State which accepted the Confucianism as the State religion. It was this culture in Korea which supported them to follow the same norms and also help the State to build its policy for the same. A conceptually strong and policy related framework for smart power should be built on a few additional core considerations²⁶.

- 1) The target over which one seeks to exercise power- its internal nature and its broader global context. Power cannot be smart if those who wield it are ignorant of these attributes of the target populations and regions.
- 2) Self-knowledge and understanding of one’s own goals and capacities. Smart power requires the wielder to know what his or her country or community seeks, as well as its will and capacity to achieve its goals.

²⁴ “*Gangnam fever ‘just the beginning’ for new Korean wave*” ,See

<http://www.france24.com/en/20121018-gangnam-fever-just-beginning-new-korean-wave>

²⁵ <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=135052>

²⁶ These assumptions insist on the importance of the context of power. What is ‘smart’ in one context may not be smart in the next. A smart strategy in Korean War may not be a smart strategy in Dokdo issue. A strategy that is smart in April may turn out to be not so smart in May. Each of the instruments of power has its own timetables- soft power often takes many years to work, while a hard power air strike can take place in a moment’s notice. The imperatives of time and geography largely determine if a strategy will be smart. Combining soft and hard power effectively means recognizing their interrelationships as well as their distinctiveness. These influences can flow in both directions. For example, hard power can and typically does amplify soft power. One is more likely to listen very carefully to nations with nuclear weapons. Japan is likely to listen carefully to Korea, a contiguous neighbour with both a large conventional standing army and ample nuclear assets. At the same time, the effective use of soft power can amplify hard resources.

- 3) The broader regional and global context within which the action will be conducted.
- 4) The tools to be employed, as well as how and when to deploy them individually and in combination.

The use of Smart Power in Korea helped them to escape from the backwardness. Korean Culture, Neo Confucianism, was the backbone of soft power in the Korean society in supporting the leaders. Korea enjoyed the development status when State highly controlled the economy, and in the contemporary era, it goes beyond the developed state to the techno-scientific State in post development State again building hard power, example being shipbuilding, explosive etc., one power supporting the other, which can be known as use of smart power.

Hard + soft= Smart power is the result of Korea's development.

Korea was smart enough if they changed the policy from import substitution industrialisation to the export led industrialisation. Growth rates differ among late-industrializing countries, but in all cases industrialization has come about as a process of learning rather than of generation of inventions or innovations. Korean State articulates the Confucian culture in the labour to learn honestly and quickly. For the nation economic power becomes the prominent issue in context of hard power. They implied that development would have to be based on labour-intensive industrialization, which would capitalize on Korea's existing comparative advantage and result was the quickest poverty reduction. The use of Smart power can be seen as interventionist state, with large diversified business groups, an abundant supply of competent salaried managers, an abundant supply of low-cost, and well-educated labour.²⁷

But first smart move was seen when Korea chose export led industrialization. Its activities ranged from non-discretionary market-oriented measures to direct presidential pressure on individual firms, which can also be seen from the power vested to the Korean President from the Constitution of Republic of Korea.²⁸ To favour new industries, manufacturers of exports were granted a protected domestic market. The system resulted in service specific effective exchange rates that varied widely. The government also established

²⁷Amsden. A, (1989), "*Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialisation*," Oxford University Press

a number of government-financed institutions for trade promotion, set ever rising export-targets for each firm and used both 'carrots' and 'sticks' to see that the export targets were met. Park Chung Hee, himself took a keen interest in export performance by firms and held monthly meetings with large exporters to hear their complaints and honour the best-performing firms. Both articulation of soft and hard power were utilized by both State and Actors in the field of developmental process.

Economic strength is one of the important hard powers in supporting military hard power from the centuries. The Korea's economy grew very rapidly during the initial phase of export-led growth averaging with an annual rate of 9.6% (1967- 1972). Per capita GNP increased by a factor of 2.5. Exports expanded at a phenomenal rate of 46% annually and the share of manufacturing in exports rose from 60 to 70%. The labour-market became tight and the average wage of unskilled workers increased into tripled. The distribution of income became even more equal, with increasing of income-share of the poorest ten per cent. Social development rose rapidly, with school enrolment rise by 25% primarily due to an expansion in secondary education. Infant mortality dropped by 30% and life expectancy rose by five years, which highly shows the growth of Korea.

Korea not only used the smart power in export led industrialisation in the light industries but it also changes its policy towards heavy and chemical industry (HCI) promotion plan. The heavy and chemical industry (HCI) promotion plan was initiated in 1973, just as the world economy was hit by the first oil crisis to which it responded by tightening import-restrictions. With the withdrawal of one third of US troops from the Korean peninsula, development emphasized was in the need for import substitution in the HCI sectors. Specific investments to be undertaken under HCI were in the manufacture of steel, non-ferrous metals, machinery, shipbuilding, electronics and chemicals, which were the essential components of hard power in building nation.

During 1963-1990 Korea was accompanied by rapid build-up of human capital. Every late industrialisation country was in the way towards the catch up with the developed countries. But it was Korea which had developed into industrialisation by learning process from Japan and the West. Unlike other late industrialisation countries Korea not only stuck towards the developmental process but moved beyond the catch up process and developed its skilled labour towards the techno scientific state. It was in the 1980s that the government

introduced two schemes for direct funding of private R&D: one, the 'National R&D Projects' (NRP), administered by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) in new technology areas focusing primarily on future problems, and two, the 'Industrial Base Technology Development Projects' (IBTDP), administered by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI) in existing technology areas focusing largely on current problems. By 1999, Korean government introduced the 'Brain Korea 21' (BK21) project, which is a major reform project in higher education that aims at cultivating creative and quality human resources necessary for the forthcoming knowledge-based society. To accomplish this aim, the government has decided to invest 1.4 trillion won (about \$1.2 billion) in universities over seven years.²⁹Korea's high focus on the smart power proves that use of smart power can not only reach to the development phase but can change the nation into different phase of post development.

4. Conclusion

The Smart power of Korea helps to find out the solution to escape not only from the backwardness and crisis, but also moves towards the new form of development in the field of science and technology in the international level. The 'hybridity' of both hard and soft powers is the reason for Korea's development. Korean Culture, Neo Confucianism, was the backbone in the Korean society, supporting the leaders. Korea enjoyed the development status when State highly controlled the economy, and in the contemporary era, it goes beyond the developed state to the techno-scientific state, again building hard power, example shipbuilding, explosive etc., one power supporting the other, which can be known as use of smart power. Korean State tries to develop its national interest by using 'hard power' (military and economic power). Korea can also be seen, from the historical perspective, using power much more in terms of 'Soft power' (actor's values, culture, policies and institutions) which also helps business group 'Yangban-Chaebol' for their own developmental process. Empirically, Korea has learned from both Sino-Japan and the US to 'hybrid' new forms of ideas of hard and soft power, which has given birth to the 'strong state' and smart power in the development process.

²⁹Uttam, J. (September 6, 2012) "Korea's New Techno-Scientific State: Mapping a Strategic Change in the 'Developmental State'" *China Report*.

Korea always tried to develop itself through learning process which also becomes innovation to the other countries. Historically, later phase of the Josean dynasty was weak because of the weak leader and the class conflict of Yangban system which brought about uprising of the people. This all attracted the neighbouring countries specially Japan and China. Japanese rule was the most authoritarian, though they created such facilities only for their benefits, but the high control over the market and masses was followed by the later leader of Koreas. Korea became authoritative for the growth of their nation, unlike Japanese authoritarian rule which was for the Japanese benefits. Korea learned the ruling pattern from Japanese to work hard but developed it into its own pattern. It was also the Confucianism of China which influenced Korea toward a hierarchical society, but Korea also developed it into certain fields. It was not only the Confucianism of hierarchical culture but the neo Confucianism which was rational in the economic culture.

The wise use of Korea's 'hard' and 'soft power' synthesis gives birth to the new mode of power known as the 'Smart Power', which plays the vital role in escaping Korea from 'backwardness'. This paper has aimed to analyse the historical process of Korea to escape from the socio-economic backwardness, whereas other late industrialised countries are still in the process of development. Korea not only has reached the phase of the 'developed States' in the field of late industrialization, but also creates the advanced State in the 'techno-scientific' field in the 21st Century. The literature or analysis of this issue tends to focus on the Statist perspective of International Political Economy and Post Colonial ideas of cultural imperialism. State strong engagement in the market and the leadership ability to hegemon in the domestic politics basically leads to the development; whereas other late industrialisation states are unable to catch up because of their policies and weaknesses. Some analysts or historians also believe that the colonial master, China in implementing Confucian culture successfully in Korean State, and later on Japan's authoritarian rule gave birth to the leader like Park Chung Hee. They believe that he was trained in the Japanese military, which brought the authoritarian characters with him, and was successful in the policy changing process of the State which leads to the development. However, it clearly ignores that it was not only the State enforcement but that power was used alternatively in the process of development i.e., the use of 'smart power'. Korea has always been using alternatively both the 'hard power' and 'soft power' according to the situation, what it faces. However the sudden development can be understood only by the 'hybridity' of both the powers to form new power which is known as the 'Smart power.' To survive from the neighbouring

countries, to compete with the global world and to move towards the 'post developmental state' or 'techno-scientific State', it was the smart power which helps Korea to survive, compete, and bring success in the international relations.

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Kashmir Conundrum

Attar Rabbani

Abstract

The problem of Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir henceforth) is apparently one of the most complex of problems that we witness in the world today and its genesis arguably lie in the manner of subcontinents' partition in 1947. Both India and Pakistan claim full sovereignty over Kashmir, citing historical, geographic and demographic reasons. Irrespective of what now holds on the ground in Kashmir, Delhi and Islamabad still holds possession of it as a matter of national survival. But concurrently also emphasize willingness to pursue its resolution and say, are prepared to traverse extra-mile to alleviate sufferings of the people of Kashmir. Their resolve is usually captured in phrases like 'composite dialogue' and 'cross-border commerce' in specific and 'people-to-people-contact' in general. This has surprisingly however not effected any change in their fundamental position - neither Delhi nor Islamabad has formally budged from their old positions on Kashmir. Given this fundamental reality, the calls of early resolution of Kashmir look as doubtful as ever because without effecting fundamentals no solution is realizable. This paper attempts to shade light on prevailing Conundrum in Kashmir as a result and highlights the plight of ordinary Kashmiris sandwiched between two warring factions – the Indian security forces and Pakistan backed militia.

Keywords: Kashmir, Kashmiris, and warring factions.

1. Introduction

The contemporary India and Pakistan have unique peculiarities that hallmark them – some very different while others similar; and both differences and similarities have been pounding their politics/policies. Today India is held to be one of the fastest growing economies, attracting foreign capital investment and political appreciation. The World Bank elucidates: “With a population of more than 1.2 billion, India is the world’s largest democracy. Over the past decade, the country’s integration into the global economy has been accompanied by impressive economic growth. India has now emerged as a global player...”¹ In fact, erstwhile-colonial powers, these days, hardly show a sign of pausing and praise Delhi’s political maturity

¹ The World Bank: “India Overview”, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india/overview>, (accessed on 27 September 2012).

and argue that if India continues the path of economic reform & structural adjustment, can further accelerate its growth and prosperity. Recently the US President remarked: "And as India makes the difficult reforms that are necessary, it will continue to have a partner in the United States" and added "there appears to be a growing consensus in India that the time may be right for another wave of economic reforms to make India more competitive in the global economy."² More importantly India is also being held as rare examples, where democratic system of governance been pretty successful, besides instilling a strong sense of belonging and participation among its masses to such an extent that elections are not just political events but political 'festivals' - having momentum of its own.

As far as major human development indicators go – education, health for instance – India has shown, it is argued, striking movement forward and has managed to lift millions of its people out of destitution. According to official figures poverty has declined from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 29.8% in 2009-10. Rural poverty declined by 8 percentage points from 41.8% to 33.8% and urban poverty by 4.8 percentage points from 25.7% to 20.9% over the same period. And this is arguably an outcome of government's pioneering investment into basic services to the poor: elementary education, basic health care, rural employment, roads and connectivity etc. Additionally, investment in vocationalization of education at middle/higher level - about 8 to 9 million people joining the labor pool each year³. On individual freedom and human rights front, India is being cast as a 'good polity' that can turn things around, if not else, but on account of the values propounded in Indian constitution.

² For more on the story see, "US Stands with India as it undertakes difficult reforms: White House", NDTV, <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/us-stands-with-india-as-it-undertakes-difficult-reforms-white-house-269229>, (accessed on 27 September 2012).

³ The figures have been sourced from "The World Bank: India" home webpage, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india/overview>, (accessed on 27 September 2012).

India however has a flip-side too. The ruling elites - the major beneficiaries of economic reforms, have been practicing questionable tactics and consciously ignore or turn blind eye towards the plight of millions of fellow Indians - enduring inhumane conditions, not very different that we witness in sub-Saharan Africa. India has a rare distinction of being home for the sizable number of billionaires⁴ and destitute, at the same time, unmatched by any other. According to the UN (2011), India ranks a low 134 among 187 countries on human development index and its standing is way behind several economically backward countries like present-day Iraq and the Philippines. The ruling millionaires, the historical upper castes, have over the years acquired political and financial conceit at the peril of commoners, leading to profound repression and violation of human rights of the masses. The entire political, corporate and cultural 'haves' have turned their backs on the commoners who bear all kinds of problems; at times even threat to subsistence, emanating from none other than State agencies. Tribes, Dalits, Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians have been enduring state violence in some form or the other, instigated by some factions of elites, for political or economical profits⁵. Ongoing repression and violent campaigns against the Naxals in central, eastern and southern parts of the country⁶; secessionists in Kashmir

⁴ According to the Fobs list of world's billionaires, 2012, India has 48 'US dollar billionaires' after the US, China and Russia. The complete list can be read at http://www.forbes.com/billionaires/list/#p_1_s_a0_All%20industries_India_All%20states_, (accessed on 5 October 2012).

⁵ For instance, politically motivated communal violence against Sikhs in northern India, including national capital New Delhi (1984), anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat (2002), and anti-Christians violence in State of Orissa (2008) in which thousands of innocents lost their life and livelihoods and till date no meaningful convictions took place.

⁶ For detail on actual nature, cause and effects of the ongoing Green Hunt offensive against Naxalism, see reportage by Shoma Chaudhury, "Weapons of Mass Desperation" Tehelka, Vol. 6, Issue 39, 03 October, 2009. Also see a report titled "Campaign against Operation Green Hunt" (2009), by Bannedthought.net, <http://www.bannedthought.net/India/MilitaryCampaigns/Condemnation/TamilnaduCampaignAgainstOGH-091228.pdf>, (accessed on 5 October 2012).

and north-eastern region, by the security forces⁷ is an indicator of the perception of ruling elites on people's issues. The issue whether of Naxalism or secessionism, according to critics, is a popular anger against repressive policies of the state and would not die down any time sooner⁸. The recently acquired economic prosperity has actually made the ruling elites not humbler but more repressive, leading to more violence and popular protest against it. It is in this contemporary context that we should view and appreciate Kashmir Conundrum and its non-resolution. The increasing economic prosperity led by handful of corporate in connivance with their political clones; ever widening gap between the haves and have-nots; and perceiving political problem of disenchantment with governing institutions merely a 'law-and-order-problem' are the behavioral pointers that need to be kept in view as we go on appreciating Kashmir Conundrum.

Present day Pakistan, on the other hand, is more insecure and unsettled than anytime in the past and the extent of insecurity runs across the system - top to bottom. An expert remark: "Pakistan is the most dangerous country on Earth. It has enough nuclear material for 60 to 100 bombs, an unstable government, a fragile economy, strong extremist influences in its military and intelligence agencies, and Al Qaeda & a half dozen similar groups operating inside the country. It is not a question of the security of the weapons; it is a question of the security of the government..."⁹ The ruling elites not only control economics and but command politics, by

⁷ The security forces operating in J&k and the North Eastern region of the country have been bestowed with swiping powers in the form of infamous acts like, the "Armed Forces Special Powers Act" and "Public Safety Act" and reportedly have led to excessive use of power and have caused thousands of deaths.

⁸ See for instance Roy Arundhati: "Walking with the Comrades", Outlook, 29 March, 2010 <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?264738>, (accessed on 6 October 2012).

⁹ The full text of interview titled as "Pakistan is the most dangerous country on earth", (2012) on Forbes; <http://www.forbes.com/sites/rahimkanani/2012/05/09/expert-pakistan-is-the-most-dangerous-country-on-earth/>, (accessed on 5 October 2012).

manning bureaucratic, security and media agencies. Even civil society groups are not beyond their influence, barring a very tiny element¹⁰. This has cumulatively affected badly the performance of governing institutions, leaving the commoners to their own fate - endangering safety and security of their life, liberty and property. Political institutions have been held to ransom by a minuscule 'haves' with active connivance of corporate that own a very large part of the national wealth. In fact, politics has become an enterprise to seek patronage and perpetuate existing power-relations and the political parties which meant to serve public interest actually now serve interests of the powerful. No political party in the country has remained unaffected from the virus of self-preservation, leading to national-decay, which is so apparent that many scholar now discuss/comment upon not as to whether Pakistan regain control of its future but on whether it can really survive in the short run¹¹.

The forces that command and control means of production, distribution and exchange are so powerful that they have now come to occupy prominent position in almost every walks of life notably, means of mass communication, the security apparatus and religious denominations - influencing popular beliefs, preferences and perspectives. The cumulative result of all these can be seen in the way governing institutions brazenly suppress, marginalize and terrorize ethno-religious minorities, civil rights activists, and women. The 'United States' International

¹⁰ This can be gauged from the fact that in the face of brazen atrocities committed against religious minorities like Christians, Hindus and Ahmadis, by the extremists; there has been no outcry. In fact, some lone sane voices that had emanated from the likes of governor of Punjab (Salmaan Taseer) and a federal minister for minority's affairs (Shahbaz Bhatti) were silenced; and the civil society did not adequately respond to it. This is so because of similar social character of ruling elites and civil society.

¹¹ Congressional Research Service (CRS): "Pakistan's Political Crises" authored by K. Alan Kronstadt, Federation of American Scientists (2008) <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34240.pdf>, (accessed on 5 October 2012).

Religious Freedom Report', March 2012 catalogues: "The government of Pakistan continues to both engage in and tolerate systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of freedom of religion or belief. Pakistan's repressive blasphemy laws and other religiously discriminatory legislation, such as the anti-Ahmadi laws, have created an atmosphere of violent extremism and vigilantism. Sectarian and religiously-motivated violence is chronic, and the government has failed to protect members of the majority faith and religious minorities. Pakistani authorities have not consistently brought perpetrators to justice or taken action against societal leaders who incite violence. Growing religious extremism threatens the freedoms of religion and expression, as well as other human rights, for everyone in Pakistan, particularly women, members of religious minorities, and those in the majority Muslim community who hold views deemed "un-Islamic" by extremists."

The frequency of violence against religious minorities like Hindus, Christians, and Ahmadis has actually weakened nationalism and strengthened crisis of national identity and as a consequence, Pakistan for many, has literally cease to exist as a modern progressive Islamic state they can do business with. Religious intolerance has moreover become its only national hallmark, giving lease of life to several fundamentalist groups which stand accused of fomenting terrorism in the region and beyond. It is indeed a widely accepted fact that State of Pakistan had used and still using religious radicalization as national and foreign policy instrument which has caused death of millions inside Pakistan while creating disturbances in the neighborhood.¹² It is

¹² Javaid Umbreen (2011). "Genesis and Effects of Religious Extremism in Pakistan", International Journal of Business and Social Science, Vol. 2, no. 7, Special Issue April, http://www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_7;_Special_Issue_April_2011/30.pdf, (accessed on 5 October 2012).

this backdrop prevalent in Pakistan that we must keep in sight, as we analysis and appreciate current Kashmir conundrum and Islamabad's promise to abet its early resolution.

2. Kashmir of India

On 13 December of 2001, India's then Minister of External Affairs Mr. Jaswant Singh responding to a pointed question on Kashmir had this to say: "India's position on the State of Jammu & Kashmir is well known. The State is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan. Under the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, which are the cornerstones of India-Pakistan relations, both countries are committed to resolving all issues peacefully through direct bilateral approaches. There is no question of any third party involvement in any aspect of India-Pakistan relations"¹³. This statement makes clear India's Kashmir policy and three major strands can easily be discerned from: (a) an integral part (b) internal matter and (c) bilateral issue.

It is an integral part on account of its lawful accession to India - duly formalized and signed by the King of Kashmir, Raja Hari Singh¹⁴. After signing 'instrument of accession', India propelled the rise of a native leader, Sheik Abdullah and a democratically elected assembly endorsed 'instrument of accession', leading to finalization of Kashmir's integration into the nationalistic ethos¹⁵. It is because of all these; Kashmir has become and would continue to

¹³ Singh Jaswant: "Third Party Intervention in Jammu and Kashmir", Rajya Sabha debates - 113, December 2001:[http://rsdebate.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/23919/1/PQ_194_13122001_U2654_p105_p105.pdf#search="kashmir"](http://rsdebate.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/23919/1/PQ_194_13122001_U2654_p105_p105.pdf#search=) (accessed on 6 October 2012).

¹⁴ The full text of Instrument of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India (26 October 1947), (Historical Documents) at http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/documents/instrument_of_accession.html, (accessed on 6 October 2012).

¹⁵ Sheikh Abdullah's opening address on 5th November 1951 to the J&K Constituent Assembly in which he had articulated practical side of accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India and its full text can be read at, Jammu &

remain 'non-negotiable' issue. The national parliament has consequently held Kashmir a 'jewel of secularism' and has declared it an inseparable part of the nation. By logical extension whatever happens in Kashmir therefore is an internal matter and it is nobody's business to lecture on as to how to administer it. As far as New Delhi is concerned there is no problem between it and people of Kashmir. It believes that there is as much democracy as in any other parts of the country, and moreover granted an internal autonomy as was permissible under the law (Article 370). The people of Kashmir for New Delhi been ruling themselves by chosen representatives and it hadn't has any unconstitutional role to play in its politics. On top of it, if there happens to be any popular grievance the Central Government is always prepared to address it - within constitutional limits. Putting it mildly, Kashmir is purely an internal matter of India and no other country, near or far, has any business to meddle in it.

Surprising however is the fact that it was New Delhi which took the Kashmir dispute to the UN Security Council, which is now refusing to go away or difficult to wish away. The UN Security Council has several resolutions calling for peaceful resolution of Kashmir, specifically pointing towards conducting a popular plebiscite to decide eventual fate of Kashmir. The UN resolution of 13 August 1948 reads: "The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan reaffirm their wish that the future status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people and to that end, upon acceptance of the truce agreement, both Governments agree to enter into consultations with the Commission to determine fair and equitable conditions whereby such free expression will be assured."

Kashmir: Historical Documents, <http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/documents/abdullah51.html>, (accessed on 6 October 2012).

But till date neither New Delhi nor Islamabad create conducive condition to hold the plebiscite, citing the pretext of 'x' or 'y'. Significant nonetheless is the fact that there is an international dynamic to Kashmir dispute which cannot be forgotten and the world community could not turn the blind-eye and shut the door permanently for the people of Kashmir. Given the fact that New Delhi and Islamabad now possess weapons of mass destruction and having expressed their desire to use them against the other; and Kashmir being the fueling cause behind ongoing arms race between the two, the world community cannot but be involved in Kashmir's ultimate peaceful resolution. It is an open secret that it is Kashmir dispute, none other, which has been holding India and Pakistan to ransom, due to which, still they have not been able to normalize bilateral relations and struggling to make sense of it.

Islamabad did attempt to resolve the dispute militarily in 1964 and 1972 but could not succeed. On the contrary it had to enter into an arrangement, known as the 'Simla Agreement', which effectively transformed the terms of engagement. The Agreement reads: "ii) that the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and both shall prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations..." It is this very agreement that has been cited repeatedly by New Delhi as more appropriate and productive. It is precisely because of this agreement that New Delhi sees Kashmir, as a 'bilateral' issue and there is absolutely no room for outsiders' involvement.

3. Kashmir of Pakistan

For Pakistan Kashmir is a territorial dispute, surfaced due to the manner British India was partitioned. According to Lt. General Talat Massod, a former Secretary for Defense Production: “The conflict over the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir has its origins in 1947 when British India was partitioned into two successor states of India and Pakistan, based on the acceptance of the two nation theory. Muslim majority states under dominion rule were allowed to exercise the right to join either India or Pakistan, but in case of the 565 princely states the decision rested with the rulers. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), a Muslim majority state with a Hindu ruler geographically lay between the two countries. When in October 1947 an indigenous uprising supported by Pakistan tribesman occurred in J&K, and the freedom fighters were advancing on the then capital Srinagar, India rushed its forces and made the ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, sign the Instrument of Accession. From the resulting Indo-Pakistan war of 1947-48, Kashmir was divided between Azad Kashmir and the Indian administered Kashmir which constituted nearly two thirds of the state”¹⁶.

Put differently, Pakistan believes that Kashmir’s absorption was an illegal act and the so called ‘instrument of accession’ a fraud. It points out that the people of Kashmir have not been consulted or gave their consent to amalgamation of Kashmir into Hindu majority India and therefore it is an open question - politically, legally and philosophically, yet to be settled. New Delhi too has accepted the fact of Kashmir’s ambiguous political fate, by asking the UN to intervene and committed itself in resolving it by a popular plebiscite. Eventually there happened ceasefire between the two armies and a ceasefire line emerged – the ‘Line of Control’ (LOC).

¹⁶ Massod Talat (2006). “Pakistan’s Kashmir Policy”, Central Asian-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Vol. No. 4, pp – 45-49.

The LOC is a military line not political and hence cannot be accepted as a border between the two countries. A final political settlement is still pending and such settlement is to be arrived at by holding plebiscite.

Talat Massod again: “The right of self-determination was promised to the Kashmiris by India and when it decided to take up the matter to the UN, this pledge was reaffirmed by it through two Security Council Resolutions, UNSCR 47 of 1948 and UNSCR 80 of 1950. It was presumed that the control of the state of J&K to India was an interim arrangement and the ultimate fate of the state was to be decided through a free and impartial plebiscite to determine the wishes of the people. India, however, on one pretext or the other, has since reneged on its commitment of holding a plebiscite. India wants total control of the region. Pakistan’s position has been that J&K is disputed territory and India is in unlawful occupation of it and that the right of the people to determine their future on the basis of UN resolutions must be granted to them.”

In other words, Kashmir for Islamabad is not only a fostering territorial dispute but an international one; which can only be resolved with willing and meaningful participation of the people of Kashmir. The UN Security Council had taken the note of this and has passed several resolutions which can, if accepted sincerely, and executed adequately, resolve the dispute. Highlighting significance and relevance of the resolutions, Pakistan President, Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, while addressing UN General Assembly on 26 September 2012 said: “We will continue to support the right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to peacefully choose their destiny in accordance with the UN Security Council’s longstanding resolutions on the matter.” Moreover, Islamabad holds that India occupation of Kashmir is illegal and holding its people for ransom-using fear, suppression and denying the right of self-determination. For Islamabad, Kashmir is not an internal matter but very much an international territorial dispute and the international

community has legal as well as moral obligation to see its early resolution - third party involvement is a viable alternative that can and should be explored. The often cited bilateralism as 'more appropriate' approach may be true; but this does not however mean, according to Pakistan, international dynamic is rendered futile or forgotten. On the contrary, both parties can jointly pursue resolution and willingly invite a third party to mediate.

4. Kashmir of Kashmiris

The important aspect of Kashmir often inadequately highlighted and understood is as to what actually the people of Kashmir want or expect from Delhi and Islamabad. As we have seen, India and Pakistan have made possession of whole of Kashmir a national-pride and have been indulging in all sorts of antics to keep it that way but hardly have attempted with some degree of sincerity to comprehend ground realities inside. Things have indeed gone too far to revert back to 1989 and/or 1947. Violations of civil rights and freedoms of Kashmiris is a routine affair marked by events like: forceful abduction, invasion of privacy, kidnapping, rape, psychological trauma, outright encounters and daylight killing of peaceful protesters. An Amnesty International report reads: "Impunity for abuses and violations remained pervasive. Despite ongoing protests in... Jammu and Kashmir, the authorities remained unwilling to repeal the Armed Forces Special Powers Act 1958, or revoke the Disturbed Areas Act, which grant security forces in specified areas the power to shoot to kill even where they are not at imminent risk... There was little political will to use existing special laws to prosecute perpetrators of such violence... Impunity prevailed for violations in Kashmir, including unlawful killings, torture and the disappearance of

thousands of people since 1989 during the armed conflict there. A majority of the killings of more than 100 youths by the security forces during protests in 2010 also went unpunished.”¹⁷

This is been a result of New Delhi deploying heavily armed security personnel in civilian areas, coupled with draconian laws like Army’s Special Powers Act and Islamabad abetted militancy in the state. Both Indian security agencies and Pakistan backed militia have indiscriminately been using force to oppress/suppress legitimate will of the people on excuse of preserving national interest. Using live rounds of firing on peaceful protesters, blowing people’s homes off just because they could not prevent surprise entry of some alleged militants into it; and planting explosive devices at public places including religious shrines and blowing off limbs and lives of innocents have been often reported modes operandi of Indian security agencies and Pakistan backed militias respectively. The Chairman of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, an amalgamation of groups that have been fighting for freedom writes in his letter to the UN Secretary General: “During last 20 years more than 100,000 people have lost their lives due to conflict. More than 7000 women have been molested and raped. 10, 000 men have been disappeared. 50, 000 children have been got orphaned. 30, 000 women have been got widowed. 200, 000 people have been tortured. And thousands buried in the unmarked graves and the mass graves of Jammu and Kashmir.”¹⁸ This may somewhat be an exaggerated account of the reality and is open for debate; what is nevertheless undisputable is the fact that thousands of people died

¹⁷ Amnesty International: “Annual Report 2012 (India)” <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/india/report-2012>, (accessed on 8 October 2012).

¹⁸Geelani Syed Ali, All Parties Hurriyat Conference J&K, <http://www.huriyatconference.com/?JgBEAHUAcgBhAHQAaQBvAG4APQBVAE4ALgBhAHMAcAB4AC0AMwAxAA%3d%3d-V862AhGjk%2fg%3d>, (accessed on 8 October, 2012).

or disappeared under questionable manner. Recently even the State Human Rights Commission has acknowledged existence of mass graves in the state and has started investigating them.

There is one additional aspect to the saga of Kashmir that we must not lose sight of - Pakistan administered part, fashionably described as Azad (free) Kashmir. In Azad Kashmir Islamabad has not ironically allowed or ensured flowering of democratic aspirations of the people there. It neither promoted democratic governance nor has granted meaningful democratic rights to the people of the area. On the contrary has entrenched its central rule and disempowered local communities and consciously kept the area underdeveloped and underrepresented. The Human Rights Watch reports: "Power in Azad Kashmir is exercised primarily through the Pakistani army's General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, just outside Islamabad, and its corps commander based in the hill station of Murree, two hours by road from Muzaffarabad. It is widely understood in Pakistan and privately admitted by virtually all politicians from Azad Kashmir that the corps commander in Murree is known to summon the Azad Kashmir prime minister, president and other government officials regularly to outline the military's views on all political and governance issues in the territory."¹⁹

Islamabad incongruously though continues to accuse New Delhi of denying and violating civil rights of Kashmiris living under its control. Similarly New Delhi has maintained a façade of democracy in the state, while undermining it when suited its interest. This radiates vividly a fact that both New Delhi and Islamabad are more interested in land of Kashmir not necessarily the people - land is the main bone of contention than plight of people living on it. This reality is

¹⁹ Human Rights Watch: "With Friends Like These: Human Rights Violations in Azad Kashmir", 21 September 2006, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,HRW,COUNTRYREP,PAK,,4517b1a14,0.html>, (accessed on 8 October 2012).

aptly revealed if we look at sheer number of forces deployed by both and vow to maintain them in face of growing resentment among the people of the state.

5. Kashmir and the International Community

One more associated strand of Kashmir dispute is the interest and involvement of the international community in general. While New Delhi detests involvement of international community; Islamabad continues to hold Kashmir as an international issue. The Kashmiris also have occasionally expressed desire of international community as potential mediator, leading to eventual resolution²⁰. The UN still maintains its presence in the region and can play more vivid and active role in facilitating resolution, if allowed. More significant and alarming also is the fact that both India and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons. In fact, a cursory look at their respective nuclear doctrines makes it plain that they are not really averse to press the N-button in the face of existential threat. A Pakistani analyst: “Nuclear weapons are a vital part of Pakistan’s military strategy. They have not only helped neutralize the military disadvantage as a result of the increasing conventional disparity vis-à-vis India, but have also prevented several wars in the region. In the first 25 years of its existence, Pakistan fought three full-scale wars with India, which eventually led to its dismemberment in 1971. In the following 40 years since work on the nuclear weapons programme started and subsequently when Pakistan acquired nuclear capability, there have been no wars between the two neighbors, except for the 1999 Kargil crisis that does not fall under the category of a conventional war.”²¹ Similarly, a former National

²⁰ The Hindu: “Third party mediation on Kashmir possible: Hurriyat”, The Hindu 20 May 2004, <http://www.hindu.com/2004/05/20/stories/2004052006561100.htm>, (accessed on 9 October 2012).

²¹ Sultan Adil: “Nuclear Weapon and National Security”, Editorial and Opinion, The Express Tribune, 27 May 2012, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/384907/nuclear-weapons-and-national-security>, (accessed on 9 October, 2012).

Security Advisor, Mr. Shivshankar Menon observes: "On at least three occasions before 1998 other powers used the explicit or implicit threat of nuclear weapons to try and change India's behavior... Since we became a declared nuclear weapons state in 1998, we have not faced such threats... We do think that we would be more secure in a world that is truly free of nuclear weapons. But until we arrive at that happy state, we have no choice and a responsibility towards our own people, to have nuclear weapons to protect them from nuclear threats."²² There may apparently be some difference between nuclear doctrines of India and Pakistan but the documents leave enough room for alteration, if required. Given these facts it is more than apparent: South Asia seats on nuclear short-fuse. Potential nuclear flash in the region is what bothering the international community and the dispute of Kashmir is 'the' fueling factor of it, directly and indirectly, both.

Besides nuclear worry, India and Pakistan together house largest number of destitute, homeless people, who have been enduring political violence. The governing institutions are extremely weak and have repeatedly found to be hand in glove with militant tendencies, producing much of the socio-political instability that we witness today. Of course, there has been noticeable progress, especially in India, but has not meaningfully debased caste/religious dominance. It is the upper caste 'haves' who successfully siphoned off major chunk of the pie, leaving the majority lower castes to their own fate. Communal violence is also very much alive and kicking, especially in urban centers. Pakistan too has largely failed in protecting its minorities on account of political expediency, leading to large scale persecution of Hindus,

²² Menon Shivshankar: "India subjected to nuclear blackmail before 1998 Pokhran tests: NSA Shivshankar Menon", The Times of India, 21 August 2012, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-08-21/india/33301915_1_nuclear-weapons-nuclear-blackmail-pokhran-tests, (accessed on 9 October 2012).

Christians, Shias, Ahmadis and women. The ruling elites in Pakistan have not really bothered to bring in lower class/caste people into the mainstream and share national wealth; on the contrary fanned religious fundamentalism and pitted weaker sections of people against huge odds - blocking their access to corridors of power. More striking and shameful is the fact that both New Delhi and Islamabad have been diverting scarce national wealth to security establishment, at the peril of inclusive social development. Billions of dollars have already been invested in defence machine and more is promised to be invested, if needed be. The ongoing nuclear weapons development and missile programs and resultant arms race in the region are a testimony to this fact:

India's still unfolding and celebrated - the Ballistic Missile Defence Programme – is aimed at deploying multilayered defense system to prevent a ballistic missile attacks emanating from countries like Pakistan or China. The system is a double-tiered and consists of two interceptor missiles, known as the Prithvi Air Defense missiles and the Advanced Air Defence missiles for high altitude and lower altitude interception, respectively. It is claimed that such two-tiered shield would most certainly intercept any incoming hostile missile launched 5000 kilometers away. Responding to India's successful missile program, Pakistan started its missile programme in 1989. The first project was the Hatf-I, a ballistic missile with an inertial guidance system, having range of 80 km and payload capacity of 500 kg. Later its improved version called Hatf-II with same payload but extended range of 250 km was produced. The latest battle-field range system to be produced is the Hatf IX *Nasr*, which can also carry a nuclear payload. However, Pakistan's first larger missile systems called the Hatf –III Ghaznavi with a range of 600 km and payload capacity of 500 kg was test fired in 1997 and being held as a major breakthrough. Beside it launched Ghauri series, liquid-fueled ballistic missiles - the first two

variants, being Ghauri-I and Ghauri-II, completed in the 1990s. The Shaheen series are solid-fuelled ballistic missiles - two Shaheen variants have so far been completed and made operational - the Shaheen-I and Shaheen-II; the Shaheen-III is believed to be under development.

It is this discomfoting context that bothers the world community which might easily lead to open conflict and can jeopardize regional security. The international community therefore ought to play not just 'active' but 'pro-active' role in resolving Kashmir – the single most important nuclear flash-point.

6. Conclusion

There is no doubt that Kashmir is one of the most dangerous and heavily militarized zones which can engender human and environmental catastrophe, if not diffused sooner - whether bilaterally or multilaterally. Both Delhi and Islamabad apparently aren't fine-tuning policy frameworks to resolve it in a time-bound manner, in spite of the fact that their policies have not produced any productive outcome so far. On the contrary have unsettled normalcy, destroyed socio-economic infrastructure, and undermined faith of the people in existing governing institutions. In fact, the presence of thousands of armed forces in civilian areas in both parts of Kashmir have fostered resentment on account of alleged crimes committed by security forces - kidnapping, fake-encounters, forced disappearances, sexual harassment of women and blowing off peoples' homes on mere suspicion. The manipulation of prevailing conditions by governments in Delhi and Islamabad for perceived advantage has also led to frightening level of distrust with regard to capability of governing institutions in addressing popular grievances, giving rise to militancy in the state.

The on-again–and-off-again trade & commerce happening over the LOC and some avenues of people-to-people contacts that have been opened up so far notwithstanding, Delhi and Islamabad have not really budged from their historical positions on the dispute raising several doubts. In fact, there is noticeable dearth of comprehensive, accommodative debates raging on eventual peaceful resolution of the dispute - both within political circles and in civil society groups, which has to happen if resolution of Kashmir were to come closer. Besides, both have consistently denied adequate and productive opportunity of participation to the people of Kashmir and sandwiched them between security establishment and the militias. As it is known, without willing and active support from the people of Kashmir, no solution can endure, even for a day. Given this fundamental reality, the calls of early resolution of Kashmir seem as doubtful as ever; because without effecting fundamentals no solution is realizable. Ordinary Kashmiris are paying the cost of (proxy) war between the two countries - with life, limb and livelihood, day in and day out. ‘THINK’ India and Pakistan ‘THINK’, before the night falls.

Muslim Women and Politics of Personal Laws in India: Are Laws for Justice?

Esita Sur

***Abstract:** In our society, laws have always been considered as agents of social change, especially for women. . However, women's access to laws to get justice has been subjected to several factors. Especially Muslim women's access to justice has always been determined by their minority community identity, class location and religion. In India, personal laws govern Muslim women and its interpretations by several agents (community as well as religious) seem to be discriminatory to Muslim women. The role of the state has remained obscure. Therefore, the paper will attempt to assess the role of personal laws as well as Indian state in either constraining or enabling Muslim women to exercise their rights. Therefore, the paper will try to review the role of the state as well as laws to facilitate gender justice in our society.*

Key Words: Public-Private Distinction, Social Change, Instrumental laws and Gender Justice

Personal is Political - Carol Hanisch

1. Introduction:

In our society, laws are defined in instrumental terms and as the potential source of equal rights for women. Society being steeped into the patriarchal values and practices, the law and the state were seen as the only agents with the power and legitimacy to bring about egalitarian social transformation. However, gradually, especially by 1980s, the experiences of women's movement all over the world have led to an increasingly critical engagement with the legal discourse. After 1980s, feminist activists realized that most legal systems have features, which are actively discriminatory to women, denying them equal rights to property or certain kinds of employments. Nivedita Menon (Menon, 2004) has argued that laws in its actual

functioning discriminate against women because legal agents interpret laws in patriarchal ways. Even laws treat men and women unequally. It is discriminatory to women, because men and women are located in an unequal and hierarchical manner in cultural, social and economic formations. Therefore, it is unjust to treat unequal equally (Hasan, 2000). In this sense, law is essentially male in nature.

In India, the role of law in struggles to improve women's status has been a recurrent dilemma because the gap between women's formal legal rights and their continuing substantive inequality has not gone unnoticed by those who are involved in the campaigns for law reform. Especially when it comes to the role of laws promoting social change for Muslim women¹, personal laws² are one of the factors, which contribute to their substantive inequality and oppression in private as well as public domain. In private domain, misuse of personal laws subjugates them and in public, these laws deny them their legal equality. In the secular, democratic India, Muslim women remain unequal citizens. Therefore, these laws play a great role to construct Muslim women's identity as the bearer of community honour at the cost of which their rights and quest for justice are sacrificed. In this context, the paper will try to raise few questions: 1) Are personal laws gender just? What are the interpretations relating to triple talaq, polygamy, inheritance in the Quran? 2) How should the role of the state be viewed to ensure justice for Muslim women? 3) Do personal laws hold promises to challenge existing power relations resulting in gender justice? In this way, the paper will try to uncover the dynamics of Muslim personal law and identity construction of Muslim women in India.

2. Public-Private Dichotomy and Personal Laws:

Traditional notion of what is 'political' locate politics in the arena of public rather than private life. However, Kate Millett (Millett, 1970) defined politics as power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby another controls one group of persons. Therefore, the relationship between men and women as well as women's experiences

¹ The term Muslim women may appear as homogeneous entity but in reality, they do not constitute the unitary category because their experiences may vary on the grounds of class, educational attainment, as well as regional location. All these factors shape their identity.

² Personal laws govern spheres of marriage, divorce, inheritance, custody of children etc. In India, personal laws are product of the British rule, which made a clear separation between public laws (secular), and personal laws (religious).

in private lives (family and community) are political in the male dominated society. To understand the impact of personal laws on Muslim women's rights, significance of the term 'private' has to be comprehended. Generally, the term private ensures individual freedom and no intervention by the state and this sphere is supposed to be non-political. However, for women including Muslim women, the term private or personal is political because this private domain is not at all free from the influence of power-structured relationships, which places women in a subordinate position. So re-examining the relationship between legal discourse and the public-private dichotomy revolves around two contestations: 'the private' is personal because law cannot interfere and influence it; by refusing to intervene in private, law itself constructs 'the private'.

So relationship between personal laws and Muslim women's rights becomes crucial because laws are not only instruments of protecting rights and securing women's well-being but also may become the mechanisms through which domination is reinforced. Muslim personal laws relating to triple talaq, polygamy, inheritance remain confined to the private domain beyond public scrutiny because of two dimensions. The First, only the religion leaders, ulemas, and mullahs have the authority to interpret the religion texts, the holy Koran, and to set the boundaries of women rights. Secondly, personal laws in India are considered as the minority identity makers so it is beyond the control of the state. The state considers Muslim women as the responsibility of their community and never intervenes in the private domain to ensure justice. Personal laws remain an indicator of women's oppression in the private as well as the public domain (Mukhopadhyay, 1992).

2.1. Development of Muslim Personal law: Subversion or Protection of Muslim Women's Rights?

The term 'personal law' is derived from the ancient distinction between territorial and personal laws. Before the introduction of British law in India, no distinction was made between territorial and personal laws. English administrators who, early on, decided to leave the personal laws of the native undisturbed; ostensibly, because these formed a part of the religion of the natives first introduced the division between personal and other spheres of law in India. So in colonial India, the British government not only defined communities based on religion but initially also followed the policy of non-

interference in 'personal' matter as it provided the British rule with acceptability and stability. Laws relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance and custody of children have normally been thought to be part of 'private sphere' and therefore to be 'non-political'. But the above stated process and demarcation were never free from the power play of the patriarchal institutions (local and community based) which ultimately resulted in subverting women's rights in society. Apart from this, in post-colonial India, personal laws have become minority identity maker for the religious communities including the Muslim community and an exclusive zone of community control, beyond the purview of the state.

If we see the development of Islamic law, the four material sources of law are, the Koran, the Sunna, the consensus of the community (Ijma) and the analogical deduction (Qiyas). According to this theory, these four sources of law and the theory of *Shariat* were laid down from the beginning of the Muslim exegesis. The Koran, which is considered the word of Prophet, is the highest source of law. The Sunna, or tradition, is the second source of revealed law. Ijma or consensus is the orthodox view means the general agreement of all Muslim scholars who lived in the period immediately after the Prophet (Schacht: 1964). Qiyas or reasoning by analogy entails the exercise of individual reasoning, which is variously referred to as personal opinion, or reasoned inference, Ijtihad is to be used as a source of law only in the last resort (Kapoor, 1996).

Asghar Ali Engineer said that Islam is an egalitarian religion but the interpretation of verses has subverted Muslim women's rights (Engineer, 1999). The art of interpretation is not free from the influence of patriarchal society and culture. Certain verses relating to polygamy, triple talaq, veiling, and wife beating constitute the core of the Muslim Personal law and not free from the politics of interpretations. While discussing about the impact of Muslim personal laws on the lives of Muslim women, it can be illustrated by taking up the question of the polygamy and divorce. It has been said that Muslim men can have wives up to four. However, it is important to say that polygamy has been permitted by the Quran in a concrete social context in order to do justice to the weak and it is subjected to the condition that equality of treatment would be ensured. It is very clear from the wordings of the Prophet on polygamy that in order to ensure justice to the orphans, war-widows Muslim men can have four wives

(Ahmed, 2011). Another issue, which constitutes the core of Muslim personal law, is divorce or triple talaq

According to a precept of the Prophet, divorce is condemned as the most reprehensible of all things permitted. There is nothing more displeasing to God than divorce. The right to dissolve a marriage is given to the husband as well as the wife. Women have to observe 'Iddat' for three months to ascertain paternity. The Quran does not permit any outsider to separate a couple who want to live together even if one of them has a physical defect, though this can be a legitimate cause for divorce. The Quran emphasizes that divorce should not be a hasty impulsive act but should be finalized only after a period of waiting during which time the couple is counseled and given a chance to rethink on the decision. *Talaq* is a procedure that can be initiated by the husband alone without the consent of his wife. Besides, the exercise of *talaq* is extra-judicial and in no way subject to external check. Technically, therefore, the power of the husband to divorce is absolute. *Talaq* may be pronounced in a number of ways, e.g., (1) *Ahsan* (2) *Hasan* (3) *Bid' ah*.

The *Ahsan* form of *talaq* is *Talaq-I-Sunna*. The repudiation does not take place at a single sitting nor can it take place during menstruation. *Iddat* is observed during the period following menstruation that is *tuhr* or the purity period. Two arbitrators from both sides are appointed to bring about reconciliation. During the *iddah* period the marriage is not dissolved. If reconciliation takes place, the marriage is saved and no *nikah* is needed. In *Ahsan talaq* even after the third pronouncement of *talaq*, after the 'iddah period, the marriage is revocable. The man can remarry his divorced wife. This practice is in accordance with the teaching of the Quran and according to *Sunna* Rules. Both Sunni and Shia schools approve of *talaq-a-ahsan*. The *Hasan* form is *talaq-a-Sunna* but is not as commonly accepted as *talaq-a-ahsan*. The man is supposed to pronounce *talaq* during the successive periods of purity or *tuhr*. A couple can live together as husband and wife if the husband so desires before he pronounces the third *talaq*. On the third *talaq* the marriage is dissolved and the *talaq* is irrevocable. Therefore, he cannot remarry her. If she wants to remarry, she has to perform *Halala*, i.e., marry another man, consummate the marriage, consequently dissolve it, and only then remarry her divorced husband. Prophets and Caliph Ali condemn this process of *Halala*. All Shia and Sunni schools of thought have approved of *Talaq-a-Hasan*. Since it is not irrevocable, it is not very popular; yet, the Hanbali Sunni School gives it more importance than to other types of *talaq*. *Talaq-a-Bidah* is a

form of divorce, which is severely criticized since it goes against the rules laid down by the Quran. However, the Sunna approves it. In this form of *talaq* the husband unilaterally, without the consent or knowledge of the wife, pronounces *talaq*. Husband can pronounce *Talaq* once or three times simultaneously, without paying attention to the fact whether wife is in a state of *thur*. The Prophet did clearly not approve of this form of divorce.

Apart from this, women's right to inheritance have also been violated in practice. As for property, movable or immovable, generally very few Muslim women work and earn (though this trend is increasing among educated middle and upper-middle class women). Islam does not prohibit them from working at all. The Quran allows her to earn. She has the right to own property in her own right. Thus, Islam recognizes her individuality and her being as a legal entity. In Islam, there is no concept that she has to confine herself to domestic duties alone. This clearly shows that bringing up children is not her responsibility alone but is a joint one. The husband is equally obliged to arrange for rearing children. However, in traditional society a man usually expects his wife to confine herself to domestic duties and disapproves of her working in order to earn. It is only in some enlightened families where women are allowed to work. Therefore, the way Islam ensures rights to women and the way it has been interpreted shows huge difference. It is quite clear that the status of women has deteriorated because the legal interpretations are always subject to patriarchal influences (Engineer, 1995).

3. The State, Muslim Women and Personal Laws: A Feminist Critique

Above discussion, shows that the development as well as interpretation of Islamic law is exclusive preserve of community, which is obviously patriarchal in nature. However, it does not mean that the state has no role to ensure justice to women. In recent times, reliance on the efficacy of law and legal reforms to initiate changes in the social order towards a gender just and egalitarian society has increased. In this context, the role of Indian State as an instrument for ushering social change has become significant. However, feminists share doubts regarding the transformative role of the postcolonial Indian State as well as laws. Cases like Mathura Rape case³

³ Mathura, a 16-year-old tribal girl from Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, was taken to the police station by her brother and other relatives as they were concerned that she was under age and yet was attempting to elope with her

(1972), Shah Bano (1986) case raised the question whether legal reforms are capable of bringing about gender justice. Have laws been instrumental in ushering any change in this gendered society? Feminists have argued that laws have in fact been often used to reinforce the social subjugation of women (Menon, 2004). Not only this, Ratna Kapoor (Kapoor, 1996) said that law is seen as an instrument of patriarchy. Therefore, the role of law to address the oppression of women remains incomplete without sufficiently problematizing the role that law can play in overcoming this oppression. A powerful and influential critique of rights, law and the state has come from Catharine Mackinnon (Mackinnon, 1989) who argued that the state guarantees rights to women but in reality, the state is male in the feminist sense and authorize the male experience of the world. As a result, a feminist understanding of the world is patriarchal and oppressive.. Therefore, the role of the postcolonial Indian state as well as laws as transformative agents is not beyond scrutiny and criticism.

Specially if we pay attention to the role played by state to facilitate social justice for Muslim women, Indian state has always been faced the dilemma of following sameness versus difference approach. Sameness approach upholds the equality principle between men and women and ignores the politics of difference. The problem with difference approach is that it cannot distinguish between 'differential treatment that disadvantages and differential treatment that advantages'. It is perhaps because differential treatment disadvantages women when it has been protectionist and considers that women are naturally weaker than men and then they, are onus of the community as well as the state (Jaising, 2005).

The legal discourse on Muslim women's identity always projects her as passive as well as weak and emphasizes the need to protect them. In India, the question of Muslim identity is integrally related to personal laws. These laws are not only

lover. The two policemen on duty said they wanted to record Mathura's statement when she was alone. They raped her, while her relatives waited outside. The Sessions Judge held that since she had earlier eloped with her boyfriend, she must have been habituated to sex, and, hence could not be raped. The High Court reversed the judgment, sentencing the policemen to six years in prison. In 1979, the Supreme Court again reversed the order. The judges felt that since Mathura had not raised any alarm, and since there were no visible injury marks on her body, she must have given her consent. The Mathura rape case galvanised the women's movement into asking for reforms of the criminal law that dealt with rape. In 1983, the government passed the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which created a rebuttal presumption in cases related to custodial rape. The government also made amendments stipulating that the penalty for custodial rape should not be less than seven years' imprisonment; and it provided for in camera proceedings and made the disclosure of the victim's identity a punishable offence. These amendments were not enough to stem the rise in the number of cases of sexual violence against women. One crucial defect in the law was the definition of rape under Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which took into account only penile-vaginal penetration. Other physical and mental injuries were left to be dealt with under Sections 354 and 509 of the IPC as 'outraging the modesty of a woman'.

discriminatory but also protectionist. However, it is also worth mentioning that this protectionist approach adopted by the state as well as community does not problematize the way in which laws treat women and accord them the subordinate status in society. These institutions, moreover, act as agents to reinforce their subjugation. So this leads to one of the most pertinent question as to whether law is to be considered as instrument of domination or justice?

4. Role of the State: Constructing Muslim Identity

Since Independence, Indian State has tried to protect the identity and culture of the minority groups by not intervening into their private domain, especially in personal laws. This is one of the reasons, that religious leaders had played a significant role to define Muslim identity. The application of the personal law is often a complex matter and the interpretation of the Sharia is the monopoly of Ulemas. Through these principal mechanisms, Ulemas and mullahs maintain control over Islamic Society. Here the purpose is not to blame the state but to understand the puzzle for which women fail to get access to laws and justice. This was visible in Shah Bano Case (1986)⁴. While all other Indian women may claim the legal right to spousal support after divorce, Muslim women can not. While other women criminally prosecute their husbands for bigamy, Muslim women may not. According to the Sharia Act, a divorced Muslim woman is entitled to a reasonable and fair provision of maintenance within the period of Iddat; two years of maintenance for her children; mehr and all the properties given to her by her relatives, friends' husband and husband's relatives. If she does not get it at the time of divorce then she can apply to the Magistrate to direct her husband to follow the order. In response to this, Shah Bano, 73-year-old woman filed a case against her husband and the Supreme Court granted her appeal for lifelong maintenance from her husband.

⁴ According to Shariat Act (1937) Muslim women cannot demand lifelong maintenance after talaq. It is generally supported on the ground of minority community identity, religion and culture. In 1986, when Shah Bano went to the Supreme Court for by demanding her lifelong maintenance, it gave rise to a clash between the collective rights of the community and individual rights and identity. The Supreme Court gave its verdict in favor of Shah Bano. However, Muslim fundamentalists protested this move vehemently on the ground that any change in Shariat Act by the state is against the identity of Muslim community. So the Shah Bano case (1986) shows that women's claim to equal rights is treated as a betrayal to community, the culture and the religion. In addition, the Indian state very consciously institutionalizes gender inequality in personal laws on the ground of minority identity and culture (Hasan, 2000).

Nevertheless, this judgement was not a simple one rather opened the floodgates of debates and discussions on the tricky relationship between gender, community and the state. In response to the *Shah Bano* case and the subsequent legislation, Muslim community leaders split broadly into two camps. Conservative leaders considered the judgment as an attack to Muslim identity as well as Muslim personal law. Progressive leaders felt that the Supreme Court judgement was in accordance with the basic tenets of Islam and thus it was not an intrusion in Muslim personal law. Although they did not agree with everything the judgement said, they supported the substantive conclusion: that Muslim man should provide adequate maintenance for destitute, divorced women beyond the period of *Iddat*. Constitutional scholar Granville Austin has argued that conservative opposition was not only imbued with ideological factors but economic and political factors. The judgement, if it stood, threatened not only the sacred text of Islam but economic interests of Muslim men who might otherwise be faced with maintenance payment to ex-wives. Additionally, the political interests of the conservative Muslim leadership were threatened as well. If personal laws were codified, the religious leaders would lose their power to interpret the Quran. To soothe ruffled feelings, the Rajiv Gandhi Government enacted the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, 1986. This bill explicitly excluded Muslim women from the right to maintenance available under the CrPC (Hasan: 1994).

The government's response to this judgement was also very crucial as it rests on the need to provide protection of minority identity defined in terms of religious and cultural terms. The government argued that it was against imposing a single pattern on all. The government argued in favour of differentiated criteria of citizenship as against universalistic criteria. It is important to mention that differentiated citizenship is mainly concerned with the inter group equality, not with intra group equality. That is why it leaves many structures of discrimination untouched. The government also asserted that the impetus for change must come from within the Muslim community. Therefore, the government championed community rights, which gives priority to community's self-defining and self-determining character (Jayal, 2002).

Indian state very deliberately never intervened in the private sphere of minority community. It is not only because of preserving their culture and identity but also for maintaining its own vote bank. It was quite clear in *Shah Bano* case (1986). The state could not guarantee the right to maintenance after divorce because the Muslim

fundamentalists perceived it as an intrusion into their culture and religion. Muslim religious leaders and ulemas issued a fatwa (proclamation) that guaranteeing maintenance right was against the teachings of Islam. Within few months the whole issue took the form of communal agitation claiming that Islam was in danger. Modern Indian State intervened in the religion of the majority community through Hindu Code Bill but it has never intervened in the religion of minority. There are two problems behind this issue. First Indian interpretation of secularism on the basis of which Indian state devises policies rests on a 'principled distance' between the government and religion. Second is the conflict between the claims of cultural communities and women's rights of equal citizenship. The state never tried to reform Muslim personal law not only for guaranteeing citizenship rights to all communities but the political leadership realized that respecting religious sensibilities was more important.

So the problem for contemporary radical politics lies in what Menon refers to as the 'paradox of constitutionalism' - "...the tension in which the need to assert various and differing moral visions comes up against the universalising drive of constitutionality and the language of universal rights" (Menon,2004,2). In this vein, Menon argues that "the language of rights and citizenship is thus no longer un-problematically available to an emancipatory politics" (Menon, 2004, 2). So entitlement to rights and justice through laws is not always possible because society is characterised by unequal conditions based on gender, class, caste etc. Muslim women's experiences are not beyond this.

In post-colonial India, the role of the state to create minority identity is unavoidable. The state did this not only by maintaining a 'principled distance' from minorities but also by refusing to intervene in the domain of personal law. The modern state has become the institution through which personal laws have to be negotiated and gender has become the site on which they were negotiated. In 1980s, the state had an important role in cementing a particular perception of the Muslim community as inherently conservative, resistant to reform and oppressive of women's rights by accepting the conservative position on this issue (Williams, 2012). The progressive interpretation would have granted greater rights of maintenance to Indian Muslim women within the framework of Islam. In this case, the role of the state was critical in sanctioning one set of views as representing the view of all even most Indian Muslims. In addition, far from protecting and enabling the dissident, vulnerable

voices within the Muslim community, the state sanctioned and authorized the voices of and an androcentric interpretation of the Muslim personal law of maintenance.

5. Politics of Reform and Social change:

The elaborate discussion of personal laws echoes a demand for reform in personal laws for greater gender justice. Laws can be meaningful only if they serve the needs of the society. However, the reform in Muslim personal law has remained a complicated issue. Asghar Ali Engineer said that Muslim theologians argued that Muslim Personal law is divine and immutable. Therefore, there is no place for any change or reform through human agency. On the other hand, reform in personal laws remains a crucial issue because religion is subject to various interpretations and in today's complex situation the predominant interpretation is often determined by political rather than purely religious considerations.

The question of reform has become very complicated because this issue has always been addressed in close connection with the Uniform Civil Code⁵, which poses a challenge to minority identity and culture. For example, Hindu communalists in India asked for uniform civil code because Muslims take four wives and produce innumerable children and it may soon outnumber Hindu population. So the entire debate on common code has become controversial. Not only this, it is hardly possible to define 'uniformity' as well as 'just laws'.

Therefore, the important task is to think about an alternative to the uniform civil code. In this context, codification of Muslim personal law can be considered as an alternative to reformulate gender just laws. In fact, the original essence of Islamic law, which is quite progressive, and gender just, must receive importance. However, codification in Muslim personal law is also a complicated issue because there are several schools in *Sharia* law, which offers different interpretations on the holy Quran. It is important to understand that Quranic verses are normative as well as contextual. Therefore, the principle of *Ijtihad* (creative interpretation) must be counted as an alternative. However, conservative leaders within the community provide an inner defense mechanism for an 'externally perceived threat' (Shirazi, 2009). The case of

⁵ The constitution in Article 44 provides a Directive Principle that the state shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India. It means the dissolution of all religious and customary laws and a uniform code of marriage, divorce, inheritance etc. for all communities.

Indian Muslims is complex as they are quite backward both socially and economically. Recent Sachar committee Report (Sachar Committee Report , 2006) has elaborately discussed that the socio-economic condition of the Muslim community is worse than Dalit communities' backwardness in India. Such an atmosphere can hardly be congenial for the needed change. So bringing about reforms in Muslim personal law is not an easy job. In this context, creation of a gender just Muslim personal law is subjected to several constraints. Every society imposes special roles on women. Not only this, women are also bearers of community honour as well as symbols. Therefore, any reform indicating change in women's position although it is positive, is not free from opposition. So reform in Muslim personal law is definitely necessary but as Zoya Hasan argues that, the process of reform is very complicated. In spite of reforms it is unlikely to radically improve the status of Muslim women by giving them equal and improved access to important social goods such as education and employment (Hasan Z. R., 2005). So not only reforms in personal laws but structural disempowerment, which includes lack of educational-employment opportunities demands attention.

5.1. Muslim Women, Laws and Social Dynamics:

The paper argues that state as well as laws are instruments of social change but the question, which needs to be addressed: are laws beyond the influence of society? In fact, it is not only laws, which affect the society rather social forces and institutions (cultural practices, norms, values) also impact the formation, and execution of laws. So while addressing the issue of gender justice through laws, it is vital to mention that women's access to laws has not only been determined by her locations in family, class as well as community but also by her overall status in society. Dominant discourse and the popular culture always project Muslim women's image as passive victims. Factors like multiple marriages, divorce, veiling etc. have bolstered this portrayal. All these factors influence their status in society. While discussing about their socio-economic marginality, there has been a tendency to define their backwardness in terms of religion and personal laws by overlooking other factors like their under representation in labour force and meagre educational attainment etc. Sachar Committee Report (2006) also highlighted that the issues of socio-economic marginality of Muslim women are explained increasingly by religio-cultural factors and the impact of other factors like their representation in jobs, education and issues

relating to security are overlooked. Eminent works by Hasan, Menon (Hasan Z. R., 2005) have showed that Muslim women in India are under-represented in workforce, politics as well as education. Therefore, the laws as instruments of social change cannot function in vacuum rather the persistence of socio-economic inequalities may be regarded as obstacles, which influence the Muslim women's access to laws and justice. What remains crucial is to find out the mechanism of assigning weightage to these factors. Now the puzzle is whether we require more gender sensitive laws to combat socio economic inequalities or the socio-economic inequalities itself hamper the functioning of laws. It is fact that social change is not possible without the guarantee of formal equality, rights and laws because these are definite requirements to fight against discriminations and has symbolic importance too (Parashar, 1992). However, mere assurance of formal equal rights is not enough to address the persisting socio-economic inequalities faced by Muslim women. The prevalence of personal laws only exaggerates the situation. Social transformation will seem to be a less costly dream when the idea of substantive equality will be properly addressed by the state. An attempt must be there to make laws more sensitive to a more complex notion of equality, which takes into consideration the comparative disadvantages of persons existing unequal conditions.

6. Conclusion:

At last, this paper calls for a revisit to the meaning of justice and law from a different perspective. Is the idea of justice gendered? Justice stands for the principle of distribution of rights, social, political and material resources amongst members of society. The concept of justice has two dimensions. First, procedural justice signifies justice as per law and procedures established by law. Secondly, substantive justice, which seeks redistribution of material resources and public opportunities in such a way that it results in equality of outcomes. The two dimensions also connect to legal and ethical or moral correctness. Variety in interpretations of justice emerges due to different conceptions of what is moral or ethical and is desirable as different religious and moral frameworks have different meanings (Abbas, 2012). It also varies due to different factors like class, caste, religion or gender. In Indian context, women's access to justice depends on the intersection of class, community, caste as well as religion. Muslim women are citizens of India but the state treats them differently on

the ground of their religious identity. Therefore, their quest for rights and justice is trapped in the matrix of formal equality and substantive inequality. These substantive inequalities (including economic and political disempowerment) are not only product of the failure of procedural 'just' institutions but ingredients like cultural influences, patriarchal domination also create unequal conditions for women. Personal laws have become the site, which controls women's experiences. Another important question is, are laws for domination or justice? It is quite clear from the above discussion that state as well as community as the protector and interpreter of laws are patriarchal in nature and it ultimately results in the reinforcement of women's subjugation in society. Nevertheless, it also has to be mentioned that law can not be the entire answer. Changes in socio-cultural attitudes are must and it must challenge the entrenched attitudes from the bottom as well as top (society and state). We should make a stronger effort to search these answers.

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Social Movement Decomposed into State: Understanding the West Bengal Experience

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Abstract

Indian politics has been passing through a transitory phase and social movements have become the major fulcrum of such changes. West Bengal has seen two massive transfers of power in post independence period – in 1977 the Left parties came to power and in 2011 the Left parties were ousted by Trinamul Congress. On a comparative note the paper argues that after coming to power, the Left Front for over three decades and the Trinamul Congress in its one and half a year regime have failed to translate their revolutionary zeal in the state structure in a sustained manner and concludes that the character of a social movement changes after its decomposition into state power and the story of social movements remains a story of political illusion.

Keywords: - social movement; state; West Bengal; Left Front; Trinamul Congress

Social Movement Decomposed into State: Understanding the West Bengal Experience

“...There is an eerie sense of panic in the air, a silent Fear and Uncertainty that comes with once reliable faiths and truths and solid institutions that are no longer safe to believe in....” (Thompson, 2003)

1. Introduction

West Bengal has been in the whirlwind of changes for the last couple of years and as such attracted a wide scholarly attention relating to the end of an entrenched Left regime¹ and the alternate regime, at times whimsical, building by the Trinamul Congress. The present paper approaches this ‘field’ from a different route – through the theoretical paradigm of social movements. The paper highlights the ways in which the Left and the Trinamul Congress utilized the mass sentiments of the time against the State per se and came to power with thumping electoral verdict and how from the palatial heights of state structure misunderstood or misinterpreted the expectations of the mass sentiments itself and thereby a promising social movement got decomposed into a distant state apparatus. The situation becomes interesting for a social scientist to analyse when the vanguard of these movements, i.e. a particular party in turn

¹ Throughout the paper ‘Left’ and ‘Left regime’ is used indicating the coming together of the Left Front coalition in post 1977 years but the phrases also carry the way CPI(M) led social movements like agitation against one paisa tram fare hike in the years before 1977.

becomes the ruling party through a change in electoral verdict. Does it stick to its own goal and promises? Does it welcome movements against? Or does the state with cobweb of power restrict its own brand of emancipatory potential? In the background of these queries, the present paper tries to capture the experience of West Bengal that has literally saw 'history repeating itself'. The first section deals with variations within social movement vis-à-vis the state, sections II and III mention about the journey of the Left and the Trinamul Congress from street politics to management of state politics respectively and a concluding section highlighting the similarities in the experiences of distantiation between declared promises and achieved targets and how the 'pathway' from social movement to state remains the same even with changes in the character and composition of the 'travelers'.

Discussion on social movements- both in its 'old' and 'new' avatar – centers round a constant tug-of-war with the state per se. Social movements spring mostly from civil society space and call for transformation of the distributive policies of the state and constantly criticises the state not to live up to the expected standards of their 'just' demands and gradually a situation erupts when social movements become political in its objective to transform not the policies of the government but the government itself that functions in the name of the state and turns into a socio-political movement. Simply put, a movement that strikes chord with every nook and corner of society through its agendum can be seen as a social movement in its truest sense. These movements seem to be repository of supreme wisdom identifying the fault lines of the state and presenting a roadmap for a well equipped state. However sanitized, these movements appear as the argumentative face of the society, the direction of grievance is not the state structure per se but the political party in power. In recent past 'new' social movements, i.e. single-issue based

movements with procedural change as its focus seem to be superimposed over 'old' social movements, i.e. 'multiple-issue based movements with structural change as its focus. In its both variants, social movements negotiate with the state with a new vision and hope for betterment mainly in democratic/developmental milieu.

The position, place and role of social movements, in the ultimate analysis, depend upon the nature of the state, the level of social protest and the sensitivity and consciousness of the people in general. Of all these factors, the state factor is very important. The thinking and philosophy in state circles, particularly the coercive apparatus is that the constitutional norms and legal niceties are meant only for the law abiding citizens rather than law violating forces. In fact the repressive laws are passed only on those assumptions. The state carries a unifying propaganda against the social movement whose activists are powerless and helpless in the face of massive state apparatus. The people- particularly the oppressed- take the initiative and strive and struggle to reorder and restructure the society. The state, given the monopoly over force and power, reacts with repression and terror². (Balagopal, 1998)

Social movements have repeatedly acted as a force for social and political change: the agrarian movement and labour movement altered the course of Western development, and the American civil rights movement reshaped basic aspects of social relations in the span of a single decade. Old social movements arose to represent the particular interests of a clearly defined social aggregate and the movement depended on an organizational network that integrated members of

² In this paper repressive power of the state in the context of West Bengal indicates how the state structure has been used to negate the dreams, aspirations and demands of the society that was inspired by the political parties' vanguarding the movement.

the class collective. Social movements were a vehicle for groups that lacked access to political power through other political channels. New social movements signify a shift from group-based political cleavages to value-and issue-based cleavages that identify only communities of like-minded people.

The New Social Movement concept probably originated among West German social scientists because these movements marked a dramatic new development for West German society that captured the attention of political observers and because the German movements accentuated the traits identified with new social movement concept. The new movements and organizations usually begin by addressing people's immediate problems of survival and development on the local level. This is in contrast to previously dominating leftist ideas of first trying to get hold of political power, which could then be used to redistribute essential means of production such as land (Tronquist, 1998). The challenge that new movements pose to the political order springs from within. It is not a revolutionary attack against the system but a call for democracies to change and adapt. The challenge comes from individuals and new social groups demanding that democracies open the political process to a more diverse and citizen-interest lobbies. It is claimed that new social movements challenge the contemporary political order on several fronts. (Dalton, 1990)

New politics parties serve as a political vehicle for those movement supporters whose grievances have been ignored by the larger established parties. New politics parties give assurance to their voters that they are doing something on a parliamentary level about the causes of their discontent. By making themselves the spokesmen of the discontented, New Politics parties, however, additionally promote the process of change of party loyalties and prepare the way for increasing volatility and for a de-alignment within the party system. New movements and

movement parties seem to undergo a process of partial detachment owing to the differentiation within the movements and the need for movement parties to achieve greater coherence. Movement-related parties provide the link between the movement and the established political system. Their policies are (not necessarily truly representative) manifestations of the latent and often rather vague general goals of the movement. Parties engaged within social movement are committed to changing societies. However while socialist parties seek system change through reform policies addressing the traditional conflict between capital and labour, the New Politics parties ask for a fundamental rethinking of the economic growth theory (Muller-Rommel, 1990).

The 'new social movements' in India arose as single-issue or 'one-point programme' movements, have been increasingly expanding, overlapping, engaging in mutual dialogue and moving towards more encompassing ideologies and campaigns moving to become a critique of the development path of the state as such and call for 'alternative' or people's development. It seems clear that 'these' popular movements have had a central role in recent historical events (Omvedt, 1998).

West Bengal has the distinction of having longest ruling democratically elected Communist government in world history. The task facing the Left Front government on assuming office in 1977 was fraught with difficulties, despite its massive majority in the Legislative Assembly. The problems posed by the transition to socialism in the conditions of West Bengal were hardly amenable to easy solutions. The victory of 1977 was a result of a long and protracted period of peasant struggles and mobilizations based on the unity of classes, castes and communities

constituting the toiling rural poor base in West Bengal. It is necessary to note some differences between the struggles of the post 1967 era and earlier ones. The most important difference was in its leadership. While Tebhaga was very largely spontaneous and as such ill-prepared for the repressions facing it, the post-1967 struggles were much better organized and led with determination. The communist leadership, especially of the CPI-M, was relatively clear in its perspective. This is reflected in the speeches of H. Konar, the leader of CPI-M led Kisan Sabha as also the United Front and Left Front minister. The transition from issue-based struggles to capture of power seems to be fairly well delineated in his writings and speeches (Bandopadhyay, 1998).

The United Fronts of the late 1960s, under pressure from the Maoist left, had attempted rapid radical change only to be brutally repressed in its active phase. Initially radical activity helped the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to gain a larger base, but the party's inability to withstand dictatorial government arrested it. Only the return of democracy after the Emergency enabled the CPM to show that its popular following had been enhanced during the years of semi-fascist terror. Surprisingly even the Communists never expected to win all but sixty-three of the 293 assembly seats when they ran for election in 1977. Their unexpected victory left them without an articulated strategy for directing their new-found power. Their ad hoc reactions to problems indicated where their interests lay and the groups they were most oriented to promoting. It was these policies which insured their popularity and consolidated their base in the state (Mallick, 2003).

The vision of the Left Front regarding political empowerment of the poor rural folk leading to their economic wellbeing through participatory democratic practices at the grass roots has pushed the opposition forces to such a political margin where they have been struggling to prove

their viability and relevance in West Bengal politics. The trend continued smoothly and unabated till the 15th Lok Sabha election of 2009 and more particularly in the state assembly polls of 2011. In these elections the Left Front in general and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in particular have witnessed the most dramatic setback in their electoral fortune.

In West Bengal Left domination seems to have greatly contributed to dispirit civil society initiatives in the state. Stepped in the notion of the totality and charged with the dream capturing state power for revolutionary transformation, the communists have never been very differential to micro efforts and incremental changes. In fact, they have often viewed local-level constructive works as reformist endeavour impeding revolutionary change. The CPI-M led Left Front which continuously ruled the state for about three decades has started with party-mediated mobilization for implementing its agenda. A relatively efficient blend of administrative activism from above and regulated people's initiatives from below earned the government considerable success in its early days in areas like land reform and institutionalization of the panchayati raj system. This initial success, however, has not matured in sustained grassroots activism. While the party and its mass organizations mobilized large number of rural people, all-pervasive party mediation also alienated a very significant section of them. With the phase of land reforms over and its dividends exhausted, the government went in dire straits to explore other ways of economic growth. The varied, and sometimes conflicting, demands of economic growth and political hegemony seem to be pushing the party to disparate directions (Chakroborty, 2007).

A critical scholarly effort concludes as early as in 1993 that the Left Front was a dismal failure should no longer be a matter of debate. What is more significant is the nature of its failure. This failure took three forms: (a) transformational and development reforms that failed to achieve their objectives, (b) non-policies which merely continued the status quo or followed Congress

precedents, (c) regressive policies which were more elitist than the Congress policies. The first category of failures falls under the theme of agrarian reform, namely Operation Barga, land redistribution, and rural input credits. Operation Barga was largely a repeat of an earlier recording operation in the sixties under the Congress regime, and in any case proved ineffective in preventing evictions or ensuring legally specified crop shares. Under the land reform programme land was distributed but at a rate not sufficiently different from previous regimes and no better than what was taking place elsewhere in the country. Even what was distributed could not be supported by provision of rural credit and inputs, leaving the beneficiaries vulnerable to loss of newly acquired assets. Under the category of non-policies, were policies that a Communist government might have been expected to promote in order to advance the class struggle, namely mobilization and legislation in favor Scheduled Castes and Tribes, add agricultural and industrial labour. In the case of Scheduled Castes and Tribes the Left Front was content merely to implement largely centrally initiated and funded programmes, though much of this remained only on paper. Most surprising of all were the regressive Left Front policies, namely demanding lower agricultural taxation and going along with the central CPM policy of higher food prices. Agricultural taxation was initially sponsored as a progressive form of taxation but was watered down in Select Committee till it was virtually non-existent. Likewise the state CPM despite initial misgivings went along with the policy of higher food prices which the central party was demanding as a means of enlisting the support of the rural rich, at the expense of the poor. The original CPM position as formulated in the resolution of the Central Committee on Tasks on the Kisan Front of 1967 and on Certain Agrarian Issues in 1973 is as far different from the CPM policies in the latter half of Left Front government (Mallick, 2003).

Analysts mention that the over-reliance of mass organisations on the party and the conviction of the latter that economic upliftment will drive away all such evils have resulted in neglecting the problems of such an important support base of the Left Front. The womenfolk in West Bengal, like their counterparts elsewhere, tolerated the neglect, and remained pro-establishment, that is, pro left for a long period of time. The LF has also lost a significant amount of its support base in the production sector of the rural area, comprising mainly the skilled and semi-skilled workers. The shifting political allegiance of the two important pillars of rural economy, the farmers and producers, probably reflects the LF's failure in providing the much required breakthrough, technological as well as institutional, for its further development (Basu, 2009). The impetus for societal and structural reform which the victory of the Left Front in 1977 seemed to herald, ceased after a brief flurry. The lack of reform only served to disillusion the rising expectations the Communists helped to foster when they were in opposition. (Mallick, 2003, p. 40)

The Trinamul Congress evolved out of a break up in the West Bengal unit of the Congress. The TMC came into its formal existence on January 1, 1998. A significant part of the TMC's prehistory in the Congress must be tracked down to Mamata's own rise to political prominence. TMC's rise in West Bengal has exposed the lacunae of a Left increasingly bereft of its radical protestations, and of a rudderless Congress that failed to embody the anti-Left sentiments of a substantial electorate. The 2009 national polls and 2011 assembly polls has shown a remarkable shift in the support base of the LF in West Bengal. Particularly, the rural electorate has revealed their skepticism to the ruling alliance.

Mamata Banerjee's triumph can be attributed to her skill in tapping into (i) the reservoir of accumulated mass anger against the outrages committed by the CPI(M)'s arrogant leaders, cadres and panchayat heads in the vast countryside; (ii) the desperate need of the urban middle class to get out from the CPI(M)'s stranglehold on civil society, which determined every stage of their professional careers from appointments to promotions, and commandeered every step in their quotidian existence from buying a house to selling it; and (iii) in the absence of a better alternative, the ultimate choice for both these unhappy sections of the electorate to vote for the only available option – the Trinamul. In 1977, the West Bengal electorate was offered an alternative political package of socio-economic reforms and restoration of democratic rights that was presented by the CPI (M)-led Left Front (as opposed to the Emergency-tainted Congress). But in contrast to the political ethos of the Left programme in those days – however deficient – today's Trinamul leadership lacks any ideological vision of change either in politics, economics or culture. Unlike the ideationally bound homogeneous multiparty Left Front of 1977, the Trinamul is a party based solely on the charisma of a single personality who has usurped some of the Leftist slogans, and drawn a heterogeneous medley of supporters ranging from ex-Congressmen, disgruntled Left intellectuals and opportunist Maoist cadres to retired senior police officials and Right wing representatives of big industrial interests. In fact, her election campaign represented an interesting unique selling proposition (USP) in the West Bengal electoral scene, marked by a deft mix of a populist image of a pro-poor leader (dressed in a crumpled sari and living in a humble house in a crowded middle-class locality) and simultaneously of a media-savvy politician adept in the modern technological gimmicks of press-button solutions and instant recipes – like her slogans assuring ten lakh jobs (aimed at the skilled unemployed), and the reported promise to change Kolkata into London (to meet the tastes of the

upwardly mobile upper middle class youth). Despite all her claims of loyalty to *Ma-maati-manush* (mother, the indigenous soil and their people), the colonial model of London still prevails over the mindset of the chief minister of West Bengal. That provides the key to the future contours of the state's economy under her rule. The two electoral trends – the negative vote of a rejection of the Left Front, and the positive vote for the promise of a better governance under the Trinamul – coexist in an ephemeral zone where the popular mood hovers between hope and fear about the new government. 'Poribarton' or *Protyaborton*? These were the two terms that were bandied about between the Trinamul and the CPI(M) during the election campaign – the former promising to bring about a “change” from the three-decade old failed Left Front monopoly of power, and the latter urging the voters to “return” it to power to enable it to fulfill its long-forgotten promises that were made in 1977. Now that the Trinamul has won on the platform of *poribarton*(change), the new government will have to live up to the aspirations for change inspired by Mamata Banerjee. The popular expectations can be summed up in the following order of priorities: (i) immediate restoration of the much-needed peace in the countryside – which had been ravaged by years of violent intimidation by power-hungry local CPI(M) leaders and cadres; (ii) end to the prevailing corruption in the operations of the public distribution system, the panchayati administration, and the centrally-sponsored schemes like the rural employment programmes; and (iii) a reconstruction of West Bengal's economy and society on the basis of provision of jobs, guarantee of social justice, and delivery of civic services. In fact, rumblings of discontent against the Left Front had started reverberating within a few years of its assuming office, though less publicised and confined to a few areas of concern. One such issue was human rights³ (Banerjee, 2012) . Soon after forming Trinamul Congress, in an

³ Incidents like Marrichjhappi, Ananada Margis, Rizawanur Rahman etc.

interview to Suman Chatterjee, a noted journalist from *Anandabazar Patrika*, Mamata explained what she understood by sacrifice. “Sacrifice means not automatically grabbing whatever comes your way...every public thinks as the correct decision” because “instead of getting trapped by the seduction of power the public wants us to work for them. They especially want us to work from the soils of Bengal. I have talked to many people; from housewives to office clerks, teachers, and freedom fighters... everybody tells this to me.” (Bhattacharyay, 2004).

After the lapse of a year and a half such expectations have not been fulfilled and the main causes of this annoyance against not the government but ‘Mamata Banerjee are: (i) her administration’s moves to serve the interests of her party’s local bosses in the procurement of paddy from farmers this year, (ii) persecution and atrocities by the security forces in the Jangalmahal area – which exposes how she has reneged on her earlier promise to stop such acts, (iii) widespread violence in college campuses, marked by assaults on teachers by the Trinamool’s student activists, (iv) the issue of an ordinance that curtails the autonomy of universities and vests the bureaucrats with power over them, and (v) the appointment of a committee of

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social activists who backed her to the hilt during the last elections now shamefacedly admit that they should not have gone the whole hog, but still feel that she should be given some more time. But the “more time” that they want to allow her may be used to continue the same old authoritarian policies and partisan practices that were followed by her predecessor, the CPI(M), during the closing decades of the Left Front government. It will only go towards reinforcing the more violent forms of institutionalisation of her party’s control over administration and society in West Bengal (Banerjee, 2012).

Witnessing the early tendencies, a commentator on West Bengal politics has noted in 2004 that Trinamul Congress is a party that is focused on elections, more specifically, on unseating the Left Front in West Bengal for which it is not chary of using its varied alliances even at the cost of its long-term credibility. Mamata, however, could not capitalise on them, she could not give her party a durable and depersonalized setup to enable it to play a critical role in connecting the state and the civil societal institutions with the everyday aspirations of the economically, socially and culturally marginal population. Whenever she stood by the urban toilers, the illegal slum dwellers, the displaced population or even the rural poor, her voice – in absence of a systematic attempt to build up such linkages – appeared as sporadic, unconvincing and, ultimately, driven by the urge to buy quick attention. The paradox remains: the tag of ‘trinamul’ in the party’s nomenclature continues to underscore the enduring absence of a robust grass roots politics. The TMC, therefore, failed to translate its electoral promises into a social presence, which could have been its only guarantee against a premature demise (Bhattacharyay, 2004).

Election in West Bengal is neither a one shot affair nor grossly a spectacle of community mobilisation by the political parties the way religious, ethnic or linguistic groups is allegedly forged into 'vote-banks' in some other parts of the country. Land reforms has largely broken the 'moral economy' of the peasant community, and a robust system of participatory democracy in the rural areas made everyday politics of conflict and dispute, association and negotiation, defiance and discordance highly charged elements of West Bengal's political culture. So to be effective over a period of time a leadership must engage with the life processes of the people on an everyday basis, producing a politics that keeps alive the promises of protecting the underprivileged from all kinds of adversaries, social, economic bureaucratic or political, and should work this out through an organisational grid that has the requisite skill and depth to press itself adequately at the local level. No political formation fits this description better than the CPI(M). One of the greatest paradoxes of the politics of the TMC is that the party always took pain to prove that it is not lured by the positions of authority and can readily 'sacrifice' such positions to protect the interests of West Bengal, or the poor, or the victims of the CPI(M)'s 'atrocities', yet it never dithered in its attempt to invoke the strong (and undemocratic) arm of the central authority at the slightest pretext (Bhattacharyay, 2004).

Various rural development programmes and their effective implementation had given the LF a political mileage sufficient enough to rule West Bengal for such a long period of time. The successful implementation of the land reform programme allowed the left to have a stronghold on the rural segment of the society. To uphold and consolidate these gains, further innovation in the field of agriculture was perhaps required, which could guarantee the generation of agricultural surplus so vital for the development of rural society. Instead, the industrialization

drive of the LF, probably, has acted as an impediment against this. The dwindling rural economy in the face of such a process of growing de-peasantisation, thus, reached a point of stagnation. Hence, “Maa, Mati, Manus” (mother, land and the people), the catchy slogan of the AITC floated during the campaign for the 15th Lok Sabha and following assembly election in West Bengal, perhaps became too contextual and matched the sentiments of the rural electorates. The victory of the AITC in this sense reminds the people of West Bengal about those days in 1977 when the LF had assumed power in a similar way, depending on widespread support of the rural populace. The electorate has shifted the mantle from the LF to the AITC. They have ultimately found an alternative to the LF in the form of AITC. With this, a change in the political leadership in West Bengal is apparent. Such transformation notwithstanding, the driving impulses of the electoral behaviour have probably remained largely unchanged. The issue of land and other aspects of rural agricultural population have acted as prime movers behind the electoral choices of the people as usual. This is very much in tune with the heritage of peasant movement in West Bengal. Such a mandate, hence, is not a fundamental change in the ethos and direction of politics in West Bengal (Banerjee, 2011).

Why is it that the new popular and democratic development efforts within civil society have not generated more widespread and dynamic politics of democratization? It is the central question this paper raises in the context of West Bengal. An authority on civil society in India addresses this question in the following terms: - “Compared to the grand revolutionary imaginaries of an earlier era, the demands of civil society campaigns in India today are practically tame, limited as they are by the boundaries of what is politically permissible and feasible. They do not demand ruptures in the system, all that they urge is that social issues be regarded as of some import and

something be done about them. Perhaps campaigns for the efficient delivery of social goods belong to a post-ideological era: an era where the State is no longer seen as the object of political contestation, but as a provider of social goods. And the citizen is seen as the consumer of agendas formed elsewhere, not as the maker of his or her own history. ... Human beings are political animals, but the kind of politics we do depends on the political context that offers some choices and not others. So when Anna Hazare raises the banner of corruption people rush to acclaim him simply because he has taken on the state. That democracy is more than the eradication of corruption is forgotten, because few civil society organizations have put forth “big ideas” before them. And that is the irony of civil society in India today.” (Chandoke, 2012)

In West Bengal both the Left Front led by CPI (M) and Trinamul Congress has emoted the public opinion in favour of immediate state power seizing. However they have not been able to put forth long term policy oriented vision in a sustained manner. A commentator on Left regime in West Bengal analysed that – “The three decades before 1977 had marked its rise on the political landscape of West Bengal as a ‘Party of Struggles’. In the following three decades, abiding scrupulously by the Leninist principle ‘Party Above All’ and this was also the phase of its consolidation as a ‘Party of Establishment’.” (Gupta, 2010). The Trinamul Congress seen as a ‘New Politics’ party has been a ‘Party of Struggle’ and probably in the way of becoming a ‘Party of Establishment’.

The political theory and rhetoric of new social movements often proclaim their anti-establishment views with unbridled enthusiasm. The Left parties in the pre 1977 period acted like socialist parties demanding systemic change of society through various reform policies which it reflected after coming to power through land reform measures. On the other side even the Trinamul Congress got new lease of life with its Singur movement in late 2006 questioning

the growth paradigm of the state government after it went ahead with single point agenda of ousting the Left Front from power since its inception in 1998. The political opponents of new social movements may be even more vocal in stressing the challenge these groups pose to Western industrial democracies. Michel Crozier and his colleagues (1975) maintain that the social forces represented by new social movements do not represent a challenge to democracies but a *Crisis of Democracy* (Dalton, 1990). Remembering Emmanuel Levinas' favourite phrase 'difficult freedom', scholars argue that those who practice and proselytize human rights (read right based movements) engage in the most difficult of all difficult freedoms since, above all, they owe an accountability to the victims of violation of rights, who should never experience the possibility that human rights advocacy or action may in turn re-victimize them. The leitmotif of human rights movements in India, and elsewhere, is to resurrect the sovereignty of victims against that of the state (Baxi, 1998).

Jump cutting to West Bengal experience suggest that crucial element of democracy – trust- is hard to repose upon any two alternatives – the Left and the Trinamul- after they are seen within the state – even if their movement potential spread across various frontal organization remain so catchy. Movements are transient phenomenon by their very nature; all movements ebb and flow. It is more important to determine whether, and how much of, the impact of a movement on the pre-existing sociopolitical system persists even after it passes its apex. During periods of high activity a movement is typically able to reach some of its goals before subsiding into a latent, submerged state. The achievements of previous cycles of high movement activity may serve as a starting base for the ensuing one. Again it is hard to deny that both the Left and TMC led opposition inspired social movements in West Bengal against the state of the day were successfully completed. However instead of a marking a 'new age' the experience shows it as yet

‘another cycle’ of low ebb in a movement. In the coming years it will be of sheer interest to see whether history repeats itself or not - whether the Left and Trinamul Congress regains their movement potential to gain popular support – accepting that power alternates between these two political groups in West Bengal.

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Revisiting India's Look East Policy: Analyzing India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

Saheli Bose

The trajectory of India's Look East policy is often lauded for producing positive results over past two decades of its existence. The conclusion and implementation of the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement can be considered as another milestone achieved by this policy. However this agreement has come under stress right from the beginning of its negotiation, where concerns for adverse consequence have been voiced from all layers of the Indian society. This article therefore undertakes a survey of the India's Look east policy along with the free trade agreement, highlighting the positives and negatives, along with the potentials in the future.

Key words:

Look East, Southeast Asia, ASEAN, Free Trade Agreement.

1. Introduction

Flagging down the India-ASEAN car rally, in December 2012 the Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh commented that the India-ASEAN relations have entered an “exciting stage”ⁱ, indeed it is exciting to note India's journey from being an insignificant power to one of the most important regional and global player to be reckoned with. The transforming pattern of relation between India and ASEAN since the end of the cold war has curved out a diplomatic niche, cherished by both sides signaling a *volte face* approach to understand and exploit each other better through robust and deeper cooperation. India journey from being a mere dialogue partner to present summit level partner unleashes the potential of the Look East Policy adopted since 1992.

The “Look East” policy adopted in 1992, by the Rao Government was a strategy to mend the old linkages that were lost during the cold war period. India's deteriorating economic condition along with the external debt burden created situations for the opening up of the economy. The period marked the end of autarkic nature of India's economy, where India would be interested in undertaking measures to get the advantage of the growing trade and investment around the world. The “Look East” policy sent a strong signal that ‘the region would no longer be

overlooked, as it had been by India's previous foreign economic policy' (Zhang 2006). Since then India has been deeply engaging with Southeast Asia in all fields, especially economic. The magnificent economic development of the ASEAN countries has given India all the new impetus to engage with Southeast Asian economies to learn and replicate their process of growth and development. The fact that succumbed South Asian economic integration has remained below the potential and faced vagaries of political unpredictability, like perpetual India-Pakistan conflicts, instability in Bangladesh and Nepal have led India for a search to engage with a destination more promising and stable, which India could see in Southeast Asia. The growing middle class along with the search for new fields of employment has been also instrumental for India to look in its extended neighbourhood.

For ASEAN too it was becoming important to mend its relation with India and reaffirm the close civilization and cultural link that India had for centuries with the countries of Southeast Asia. The result was that India was made a Sectoral Dialogue partner first and then a Full Dialogue partner in 1996, in the same year India was given a membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum, which was India's first multilateral security engagement apart from United Nations Organization. The growing proximity between the two was aided by the financial crisis of 1997, leaving the Southeast Asian nations to look beyond their traditional sources of economic engagement and it was natural for them to turn towards India which was booming economically and also consisted of a lucrative market consisting of diverse and huge population. Therefore the signing of the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement needs to be evaluated in this light and underline the importance of the FTA from Indian perspective. The Free Trade Area (FTA) puts us in league with the other countries like China, Japan and Korea which have already gone for FTAs with ASEAN much before India. For a closer understanding of the FTA, it is necessary to have preliminary look at the most important provisions of the Free Trade Agreement.

2. India -Asean FTA: salient Points:

1. Negotiations started in 2003 and soon an Early Harvest Programme was supposed to be followed, which was later dropped out.
2. The FTA was signed in Bangkok 2009, after several rounds of negotiation stretching over a period of six year, which raised criticisms from all corners regarding the negotiating capability of the Indian negotiators.

3. The agreement which has come into effect from January 2010 included trade in goods only.
4. The FTA on goods is based on negative list approach and has 489 items on the negative list. It is indeed a matter of importance that India went to the negotiation table initially with around 1400 items to be included in the negative list, which was rejected by the ASEAN in the beginning. Further India has put 590 items in the list excluded from tariff elimination.
5. The negative list contains 302 from agricultural sector, 81 from textiles, 52 items from machinery and auto parts and 17 from chemicals and plastics. The total phasing out of the tariffs is to be completed under the two 'normal tracks' by December 2016 and gradual phasing out of the tariff will be done under the three 'sensitive tracks' by 2019.
6. Allowing 35% value addition only as against India's twin criteria of Change in Tariff Heading (CTH) and 40% value addition.
7. The much awaited liberalization agreement in service sector and investment has been finalized and concluded in December 2012, on the side lines of India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in New Delhi.

3. India-Asean trade: an analysis

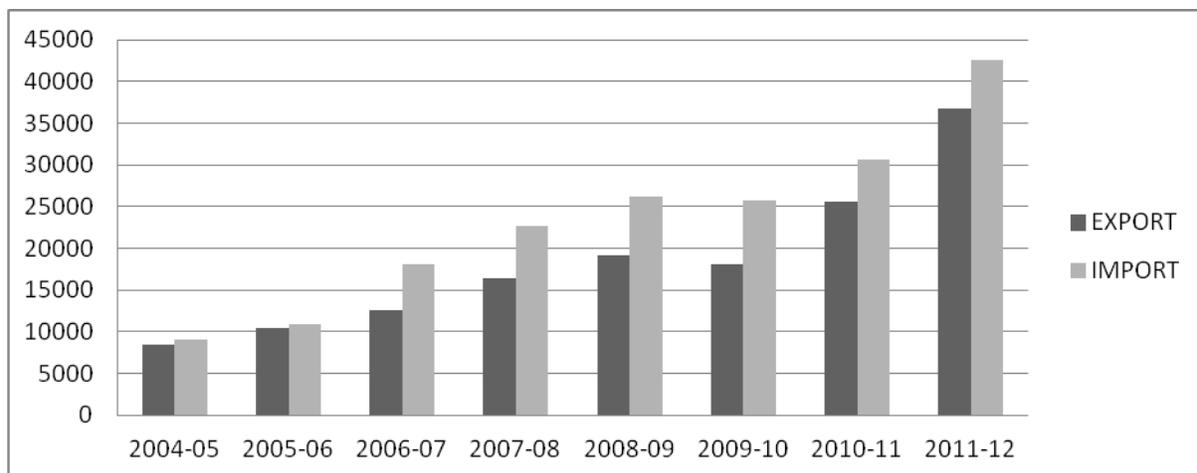
India's engagement with Southeast Asia is not a recent phenomenon; there have been close linkages between the two from the ancient time. India's 'soft power' impacted the region so much that Indian influence has become part of the very existence of the countries in the region. Religion, language, culture and cuisine of the Southeast Asian countries retain an aroma of Indian pedigree. The same colonial past along with the rich history of accommodating each other has provided India the weapon to present herself in the new light of being associated with ASEAN in its developmental progress. The very idea of Look East was to take India to the Southeast Asia with a sense of building further areas of cooperation and work together for the common problems that this region faces.

With the onset of the process of globalization, which intensified the neo-liberal strategy of domination of market, free and smooth trade has come to dominate the national life of any nation. World has become interconnected like never before, where strategic consideration has somewhat taken a backseat and economic linkages have come to define relation of one nation

with the other. India’s active engagement with the Southeast Asia, in various forums like East Asia Summit, ASEAN+1 summit signals that India will nurture and care the strong relationship which she has built over the past years. While on the other side, the faltering nature of the multilateral trade negotiation like the Doha round of the WTO still remains away from offering an acceptable solution, India’s regional economic interaction assumes an added significance. As ASEAN also strives to search for stable and promising fields of investment India with its high growth rate and stable business climate can help in developing more of closer economic relationship.

As India’s Look East entered its second phase of existence it needs to be revisited, with an aim of appraising the achievements and failures along with the prospects and challenges that it may faces in the near future. It is agreed that India’s service oriented economy is in complementary nature with that of the manufacturing oriented economic nature of the ASEAN countries. Therefore India ASEAN trade can harp on this complementary nature much need for trade to prosper. Trade between India and ASEAN have grown over the past decades, a simple glance over the Figure I will amply suggest that India-ASEAN trade has achieved new horizon in the past few years and leaders of ASEAN and India hope that the both way trade will touch a whopping figure of 100\$ billion by 2015.

Figure I: Total trade between India-ASEAN (in US million \$)ⁱⁱ



Source: Export Import Data Bank, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Government of India.

Over the years there has been constant rise in the volume trade with the ASEAN, but all the members of ASEAN do not feature as major trading partner of India, it is only the few countries

of ASEAN which features as major trading partners of India. Singapore is one of the ASEAN countries with which India has a favourable balance of trade and is India's largest trading partner among ASEAN. Singapore has become India's fourth largest export destination in 2012, after UAE, USA and China, while India become the ninth largest source of import for Singapore in 2012 from its earlier twentieth position. Singapore is also the largest source of FDI in India among ASEAN and occupying second position in overall FDI partners of India having a share of 19%. Other important trading partner among ASEAN is Indonesia followed by Malaysia. However, the balance of trade in case of both these countries is negative for India.

The above mentioned figure may be quite encouraging for India, but in relative terms India-ASEAN trade has not exceeded 2% of ASEAN's total trade, although it is much larger in India's total trade as around more than 8% of India's imports are sourced from ASEAN countries. The major items which are exported from the Indian side includes mineral fuels, mineral oil, ships, boats and floating structure, organic chemicals and others like oil seeds and medicinal plants. While the major imports in the recent years include animal and vegetable fats, electrical machinery and parts thereof, sound recorders and reproducers and others like cultured pearls, precious and semi-precious stones. This shows that the export basket of India has been shifted towards more of non agricultural products and more of industrial goods.

4. Utilizing the economic space: will the FTA benefit India?

The Indian PM on occasions has made it clear that India values its engagement with the Southeast Asian nations and hopes to make further dent into the region, while Dr. Singh has considered India's participation with ASEAN as "vital for the qualitatively enhanced engagement which India seeks with the region", he further expressed satisfaction that India-ASEAN relation is "blossoming" and showing "results on ground"ⁱⁱⁱ. An observation from Sanjaya Baru also reveals that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has been personally interested in furthering the relation with ASEAN and after returning in office in 2009, Dr. Singh gave 'explicit instructions' to the then Commerce and Industries minister, Mr. Anand Sharma that the signing of the India-ASEAN FTA should be his first take^{iv}. The significance of the FTA is political as much as economic, this FTA no doubts connects us to the most dynamic region of the world, and pushes us to the materialization of "arch of advantage" however the FTA needs to be evaluated from the

point of view of the realities existing in the economic climate of the country and in that light evaluate whether it is desirable for India and whether it will benefit India.

ASEAN being considered as one of the most successful regional organization, have always attracted the attention of the world, either for their remarkable economic outputs or for their unique strategy of “ASEAN Way”. Historically, civilizationally and politically India belongs to this region, given the fact that ASEAN is considered the manufacturing hub of the world, India would definitely try to replicate and learn from the ASEAN experience. Therefore The FTA brings for India a specially added advantage of being associated with the most successful trade bloc in Asia considering the financial crunch of the west.

For ASEAN India will provide one of the largest and growing market which has till now been not properly utilized by ASEAN members, with the Indian market emerging strongly out of the financial crunches and showing a steady growth rate, ASEAN can easily take India as safe and reliable market to invest in and export for, India is also the fourth largest economy in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). ‘India is also large market for infrastructural projects in which some ASEAN countries such as Malaysia are not only vitally interested ,but have achieved success’(Ariff and Cheen,2006).This also calls for further integration in the region.

With becoming a member of ASEAN in 1997, Myanmar has ensured the physical connectivity of Southeast Asia with Indian mainland through her north east. Given that north east houses only 3.73% of the Indian population, but has an area of 7%, calls for prudent utilization of its resources, which can ensure a lot of opportunities from the Indian side. The completion of various roadway projects like Kaladan Multi Modal project, India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway undertaken by Mekong-Ganga cooperation can become a highly valuable transport route linking the three nations at a same go. Integration of projects like Jiribam-Imphal-Moreh with Tamu-Kalay-Sagyi project has been undertaken which will further make Myanmar more accessible. It is hoped that with Indian railway corridor reaching Myanmar and Myanmar-China railway corridor materializing in short period India will have an access to china if not Russia.^v Prime Minister Dr. ManMohan Singh in the 9th ASEAN –India summit proposed for the India-Thailand-Myanmar highway and its extension to Laos and Cambodia and also emphasized to construct a highway linking further eastward to Vietnam. Emphasizing on the importance of the north east of India, Dr. Singh pointed out the feasibility of carrying out a study on the Mekong-

India economic corridor which would link corridors in peninsular and the north east of the country with the Southeast Asian region.^{vi} This in a way will add flip to the development of the much neglected northeastern region of India, an once these region starts to serve as a major physical link, other infrastructural connectivity within the country can be developed which will in turn lead to greater connectivity and development of infrastructure within the country and this can create lot of opportunities for the faster movement of goods and people.

Considering the size of Indian population, India also presents to ASEAN, a vast pool of English speaking labour force which can be utilized by ASEAN, both in skilled and unskilled sectors of the economy. Therefore mode 4,^{vii} assumes a place of special importance in India-ASEAN relation, while the presence of huge Indian Diaspora in the ASEAN countries has been one of the primary reason for strengthening the India-ASEAN relation over the period of time. India-ASEAN eminent persons' group has been constituted so that the eminent persons of Indian origin can further the interest of India to the ASEAN countries. Some countries like Malaysia, Indonesia have substantial portion of their population as Indians which helps in making contacts easier with the ASEAN's central economy.

Another area which has substantially evolved to be India's forte has been the Pharmaceutical and biotechnology sector, India has become one of the major producers of Pharmaceutical in the world and therefore many ASEAN countries have got themselves collaborated with the Indian brand of pharmaceuticals like Novartis, Dabur and Ranbaxy, which have major foot hold in the Southeast Asian countries. Thus there is great potential for further collaboration of India ASEAN in this area, as ASEAN needs to build up its indigenous pharmaceutical industry for its growing population and therefore it seeks help of India. Even a Working Group to explore more areas of cooperation in this field has been constituted, Joint workshops have been proposed for scientist from both India and ASEAN to share their experiences and expertise in the above area and also to find out further areas of collaboration like in robotics, non-conventional energy resources, and laser technology and in other related fields.

Indian IT and IT enabled industries are also one of the major areas of collaboration, Indian IT industries have marked their own distinct course in the world of IT and India has come to be regarded as software giant, this fact has not remained unnoticed by ASEAN, hence there has been regular movement of professionals from India to ASEAN countries. IT giants like TATA

Consultancy Services (TCS), Satyam, Infosys, and WIPRO are working in Southeast Asia. For instance there are 60 Indian IT companies operating from Malaysia alone with the aim of capturing the market of East Asia as a whole.

India also can benefit from the intra-industry trade that can take place with the Southeast Asian nations especially in the case of rubber, pepper; coffee and bamboo products as the yield per hectare of the above mentioned commodities are much higher than in India. Like the production of pepper is around 380 kilogram per hectare in India compared to 1000 kilogram in Vietnam and 3000 kilogram in Indonesia, so India can start to formulate policies which can increase the per hectare yield with the help and knowledge of the Southeast Asian countries. Further cooperation in Agro based industries and plantation sector can yield encouraging results.

As international trade make border invisible, it can also usher in generation of revenue through tourism in the respective countries, given that India and ASEAN are linked historically and culturally makes great opportunities for tourism. India's engagement with ASEAN is therefore expected to huge tourist inflow from the neighbouring countries. Moral liberalized visa regime, visa on arrival facilities and proper road and air link can give tourism a new horizon. For example, Malaysia occupies the eighth position in over all arrival of international tourist in India while Singapore occupies fourteenth place^{viii}. In this regard the Open Skies agreement whereby India made plans to connect with the ASEAN capitals assumes special importance. Tourism in a way will result in direct people to people contact and this will lay the opportunities for future collaboration.

After the discussion on the positive side of the India-ASEAN FTA, it has to be viewed from the other side as well. Right from starting of the negotiation to the finalization of the FTA, there has been regular speculation and counter speculation from all quarters as to what will be the future of the FTA, some even points that the FTA is too small a prize for India taking into consideration the time consumed on the negotiating table. Some other questions have cropped up as to whether it going to affect the Indian growth trajectory or will the FTA help India in penetrating further towards East Asian market making ASEAN as the base?

In answering all these questions it has to be pointed out that there were some serious reservations in the country regarding the consequences of the FTA. As pointed out by Pal and Dasgupta that

if one assumes that India will get some positive edges in the ASEAN market because of the tariff margins given in the trade in goods agreement, it is not certain as to how the Indian exporters will be able to increase their market share in the ASEAN market. (Pal and Dasgupta 2008). Further they point out that reports indicates that in the agricultural sector , the Indian agricultural producers have been complaining of the difficulty in competing with the ASEAN agricultural producers, especially with that of Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam. More over the better accessibility and coordination of the intra ASEAN markets makes Indian situation further complicated and difficult. Plantation crops like tea, coffee, pepper, palm oil are among the most vulnerable plantation crops that may be threatened from the high productivity of the ASEAN countries. For example it has been observed that the productivity of pepper is around 380 kilograms per hectare in India while it is around 1000 kilograms per hectare in Vietnam, and 3000 kilogram per hectare in Indonesia. While the production of coffee is 765 kilograms per hectare in India, while in Vietnam the production stands around 1.7 tonnes per hectare. (Batra, 2009). Under such circumstances the effectiveness and desirability of the FTA has been questioned. Even the Kerala Chief Minister V.S Achutanandan led a delegation comprising of his Finance minister and Vice chairman of the Kerala State Planning Board to lodge a complaint against the implementation of the FTA.

Secondly the FTA has also raised eyebrows in from the manufacturing sector as ASEAN has already established itself as one of the world's most important exporter of light manufacturing hub, known for the quality and the effectiveness of the manufacturing unit, under such a condition it will indeed become difficult for India to give a competition to the ASEAN countries, given that the applied tariff in the ASEAN countries are already low and ASEAN has also an FTA with China adds more difficulty to the question as to how much India will benefit from the deal. More over the recent financial crunch of the western world will give ASEAN an extra push to come close to some of the large markets like India, which will lead to more flow of goods leading to more deterioration of the conditions of the indigenous manufacturing units. Taking this point further traditionally FTA has been related to the benefits that the large market gives in form of economies of scale, which lead to greater and more cost effective production. Serious reservations has also been noticed in this area as well, as India has already gone for FTAs with ASEAN countries bilaterally like Singapore, Thailand and multilaterally like BIMSTEC, which is yet to be effective gives us a bleak picture as to how much incremental change in the market

accessibility these FTA can have for India. While some of the ASEAN countries like Vietnam, Myanmar, Indonesia can have greater accessibility to large Indian market which can help them to enjoy economies of scale leading to greater production and benefits.

There are also some reservations against the tariff commitments that India has shown in the negotiation, and the liberal Rules of Origin criteria that India has accepted in the FTA have already been criticized as all these add to the advantage of the ASEAN countries. Some critics point out that India has negative trade balance with the ASEAN countries and these FTA can even increase the gap in the trade balance. Therefore there have been reservations from the various corners of the Indian society as to how India will cope with the challenges posed by the FTA. What it looks at this point is that India is indeed at the cross roads, where she is facing the condition of trade-off with ASEAN.

5. Conclusion

In closing, it has to be admitted that while India is facing some of the challenges which are external in nature from the FTA, India too should shoulder some responsibility in the sense that investment and trade needs a backdrop of proper political and social climate, while India faces some of the major disruptions in form of terrorist attacks and ethnic and religious conflicts political drama has no less been responsible for the foreign countries to take a back step in the investing in India. While Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh describes India to be ‘investment friendly’^{ix} India is nowhere near to the extent that China has got ASEAN’s investment. Secondly while we need to analyze the negatives and positives of a deal, it becomes very important that we too take some important steps in increasing our own productive capability in order to face the challenge as it makes no sense in keeping oneself out of the emerging global trade fraternity as a solution to save the indigenous producers. Some concrete steps like increasing the productivity of the plantation crop like pepper, coffee and rubber can be done by the government by allocating some extra fund and expertise in these plantation crops.

Discussion on the negative aspects of the FTA should not lead us to draw a very gloomy picture where India will bag nothing. Today India has emerged to be one of the major exporter of services in the world and largest portion of the Indian GDP comes from the Service sector and this indeed a major area of cooperation with ASEAN, as India has already finalized the FTA in

Service in December 2012, on the side lines of India-ASEAN commemorative summit in New Delhi provides India a new horizon. It is hoped that India will massively gain from the FTA in service with ASEAN countries and also do meaningful business further in East Asia Also India is a big supplier of petroleum product, gems and jewellery, Pharmaceutical products and metal scrape. Therefore it's high time for India to understand and utilize the platform of regional trade agreements along with fresh and holistic policies which will not only preserve her interest but also provide with new opportunities.

Endnotes

ⁱ The Hindu (2012), "India-ASEAN relation at exciting Stage: says PM", The Hindu, New Delhi, 21st December 2012

ⁱⁱ 2004-12 is taken into consideration as it shows the time period after the negotiation on the FTA started i.e. from 2003.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Hindu (2007), "Look east policy is showing Results says Manmohan Singh", The Hindu, 20th November 2007 [Online Web] Accessed on 13th January 2013

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^{iv} Baru, Sanjaya, (2012), "Getting to know India's other neighbours" The Hindu, New Delhi, 19th November 2012.

^v Ramachandran, Sudha, (2007), "India's rail building challenges" ,Asia Time, 3rd January 2007 [online web] Accessed 13th January 2013, [URL: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/IA03Df01.html]

^{vi} Reddy, B, Muralidhar, (2011), " India –ASEAN connectivity is our strategic objective says Manmohan", The Hindu, 19th November. 2011 [Online Web] Accessed on 23 Januaryth ,2013, [URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2641786.ece>].

^{vii} GATS agreement covers 4 mode of supply for delivery of services; Mode 1 deals with cross border supply. Mode 2 deals with consumption abroad, Mode 3 deals with commercial presence, while Mode 4 deals with the presence of natural person.

^{viii} Government of India, India Tourism Statistics 2011, Ministry of Tourism Market Research Division, [Online Web] Accessed on 14th January, 2013, [URL: <http://tourism.gov.in/writereaddata/CMSPagePicture/file/Primary%20Content/MR/pub-OR-statistics/2011statisticsenglish.pdf>]

^{ix} The Indian Express, (2012) "India Investment friendly: Assures PM" 12th July 2012, [Online Web] Accessed on 14th January, 2013, [URL: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/india-investment-friendly-pm-assures-singapore/973344>].

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Sustainable development: - concept & contestation

Sarbani Guha Ghosal

Abstract

The concept of sustainable development is a new one in the domain of environment and development studies of our time. The concept is a highly contested one marked by the presence of several contradictory and competing ideas. Great emphasis is placed upon the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner while living within the limits of the supporting ecosystems. Sustainability is not simply an environmental concern but it has its political, economic, social, geographical dimensions as well.

Keywords: inter-generational equity, environmentalism, ecologism, anthropocentric, ecocentric

1. Introduction:

The idea of sustainable development has been specifically developed in the 1980s as a major political and environmental discourse. Since the days of the European renaissance followed by industrial revolution and the birth of colonialism the sphere of ideology of the world is dominated by the West. The last major political ideal that the developed countries persuaded the developing world to adopt was the notion of 'development'. From the perspective of the developed countries it was a devise to reduce the gap that separated them from the poor country. Accordingly, financial aids started pouring in the developing world. However, except countries like South Korea and Taiwan, the southern countries failed to realize the development ideals of the developed north. They continue to suffer from poverty, famine, uneducation and ill-health. Moreover, inequality within the countries increased in an unprecedented manner. The western dominant political ideology of development faced stiff challenge from the theorists and political leaders of the developing countries. It is in this juncture environment consciousness entered as a dominant model. Development paradigm based on nonstop conquering of nature associated with expansion, production, consumption and unrestrained growth are no longer considered as positive value for human progress and development. It is in this context the concept of sustainable development enters in our vocabulary as a linked idea of developmental and environmental concerns. In course of time gradually, the traditional notion of modern science and technology based "development" gave way to sustainable development and growth becomes "green growth".(Shiva., 1991., p. 10)Sustainable development was recommended, in particular, to the developing countries as a development path that would not replicate the environmental degradation that had been incurred in the industrialized countries. However, the leaders of the developing countries had a different agenda during the 1980s and they at that point of time were not ready to accept the western concept if sustainable development or to bear the entire load of keeping the world safe for the posterity on their own shoulder. The developed countries had become wealthy by despoiling their environments and those of the developing countries. So, it was seen as hypocritical of the former now to ask the developing countries

to protect environments and control population growth at the expense of their chance of development.(Grainger. & Purvis. (Ed), 2005., p. 4)

2.

Origin:

The notion of sustainable development emanates from the realization that nature's gift is more fundamental than financial strength for the overall development of the human being. However, the concern for environment and climate is not any new issue associated with modernity. They are seen as major determinants of growth and stability of civilizations throughout the history. The Egyptian civilization along the Nile to Indus Valley Civilization all were predominantly 'water civilizations' and they collapsed due to faulty use of the river and river-water. Similarly the Mayan civilization of the western hemisphere in the tenth century coincided with temperature rise and climatic change. Likewise, the fall of Mali civilization in Africa in thefourteenth century is attributed to severe changes in the climatic factors.(Rao., 2000., pp. 4-5)

The term sustainable development, though, is considerably newer terminology in social studies, but its core spirit, i.e., the concept of intergenerational equity, respecting the interest of those distant and yet to come is not new. In the Upanishads, the ancient Indian text for over 3000 years, it is stated that "all in this manifested world, consisting of moving and non-moving, are covered by Lord. Use its resources with restraint; do not grab the property of others, distant and yet to come."(Hulse., 2000., p. xii)Different religions like Hinduism, Islam, Taoism, Christianity, Confucianism, and Buddhism recognize restraint in consumption as an essential virtue. All have preached, in the words of the most indigenous man Mahatma Gandhi, "there is enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed". It is believed that nature is made in such a way that there will be a balance in the ecosystem and everybody gets enough what they need in proportions for them to lead a good life. Unfortunately it is our overarching greed which jeopardizes the entire arrangement.

Some scholars are of opinion that with the escalation of transboundary ecological problems from the 1970s onwards emerged as a dedicated subfield of International Relations; a new wave of green scholarship has developed reinterpreting the central concepts and discourses of International Relations and global politics. It has challenged the traditional understandings of security, development and international justice with "new discourses of ecological security, sustainable development, reflexive modernization and environmental justice." The concept of sustainable development opens up a critical inquiry on the issue of global climate change by including neglected areas of environmental domination and marginalization, such as the domination of non-human nature, the neglect of the needs of future generations and the skewed distribution of ecological risks among different social classes, states and regions. To their views, the environmental degradation caused by human activity has a long history but before European global expansion and industrial revolution it was largely uneven and relatively localized. The modern ecological crisis, in particular, has started in the latter half of the twentieth century or more precisely as "environmental side effects of the long economic boom following Second World War".(Eckersley., 2010., pp. 248-249)

3. Definition:

The buzzword in the domain of social studies regarding the genre of development since the last two decades of the past century is sustainable development. However, sustainable development is a “notoriously difficult, slippery and elusive concept to pin down”.(Williams. & Millington., 2004., p. 99)At least eighty different and often competing and sometimes contradictory definitions have been identified. The concept is often identified as “environmental paradox” for nearly all commentators on sustainable development mismatch between what is demanded of the earth and what the earth is capable of supplying.

It is evident from the various scholarly literatures that sustainable development is a concept where different actors have different perspectives and interests, so one cannot expect that all will agree even on the meaning of the term. At the same time, it is not worthy to make any attempt to provide an ideal definition. Contrarily, sustainable development is a type of concept for which instead of a “good definition” we should attempt to provide a “good description”.(McNeill., 2000., pp. 10-16)Some others believe that sustainable development attempts to meet the overall challenge presented by environment and development. Originally, in the 1950s, sustainability described the continued thriving of a biological species which might become depleted or even extinct through human activity. Later, it was extended to describe the whole ecosystem. Conservation and biodiversity are directly linked to the notion of sustainability.(Wilson., 2010., p. 7)This normative concept refers to a desirable state that refers to the robustness of something and its continuing ability to do whatever it does effectively. There are many sustainabilities, but predominantly they are grouped into three interconnected areas of concern: environment, society and economy. At the same time, it has to be accepted that sustainability is not an end state, but is continually being reinvented.

In their introductory note of their popular collection Agyeman, Bullard and Evans have remarked that sustainability is a clearly contested concept, but our interpretation of it places great emphasis upon precaution, on the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, while living within the limits of supporting ecosystems. They mention that, “unless analyses of development begin not with the symptoms, environmental or economic instability, but with the cause, social injustice, then no development can be sustainable.”(Agyeman. Bullard. & Evans., 2003., p. 3) At the same time, we have to remember that, “a truly sustainable society is one where wider questions of social needs and welfare and economic opportunity are integrally connected to environmental concerns.”

With the publication of “Our Common Future” or the World Commission on Environment & Development report (WCED), popularly known as the Brundtland report, 1987 an important shift can be noted in the traditional conservation based usage of the concept of sustainable development as developed in the 1980 by the International Union on Conservation & Nature (IUCN). It has developed a framework emphasizing the social, economic and political context of development. But WCED later has adopted a more holistic view on the issue of sustainable development. The Brundtland Report so far has provided the most popular definition of the concept by simply using the meaning of the term development in a simple way; as “what we all do in attempting to improve our lives”. The report categorically states, “...we must ensure development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs...sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the

direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with both future and present needs...” WCED does not make any pretension and thus says, “...the development process is not easy or straightforward... painful choices have to be made...and in the final analysis sustainable development must rest on political will”.(ibid., p. 5)

The concept of sustainable development, according to the green theorist like Robyn Eckersley, draws influence from the disciplines of environmental ethics and environmental philosophy., which emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s when anthropocentrism and human chauvinism have been questioned. Since the beginning of human civilization humans are considered as the apex of evolution, the centre of value and only beings that possess moral worth. Rejecting such a posture as “arrogant, self-serving and fool-hardy, the green theorists have embraced a new ecocentric philosophy that seeks to respect all life forms in terms of their own sake, and not merely for their instrumental value to humans.” From ecocentric perspective, “environmental governance should be about protecting not only the health and well-being of existing human communities and future generations, but larger web of life, made up of nested ecological communities at multiple levels of aggregation like gene pools, populations, species, ecosystems.”(Eckersley., 2010., p. 251)

To conclude this section, we can say once again that sustainable development is a normative concept. Indeed, the heart of the argument deals with “a fair distribution of natural resources available among different generations, as well as among the populations of the First, the Second and the Third World of our own generation. Though the concept is given massive support throughout the whole world, the realization of sustainable development is highly problematic.”(Dietz. & Straaten., 1993., p. 134) One of the greatest problems is the operationalization of the concept. In this respect many questions arise and remain unanswered. Our next section of the article will deal with some of those problem areas. Actually, without understanding the debates related to the issue of sustainable development and the major challenges and diversifications within the issue it is not possible to comprehend the exactness of the concept.

4. Debates and Diversifications:

The concept of sustainable development as a major theoretical devise and practical mechanism to protect the environment from depletion and degradation is marked by the presence of several interrelated debates. The major one is the debate between the issues of weaker sustainable development and stronger sustainable development. This debate is very much a part of the environmentalism versus ecogism debate and the northern interpretation of sustainable development versus the southern interpretation of sustainable development debate.

Conjoining the conflict between the demand on the environment and resources of the environment is a major political problem. The weaker and stronger concepts of sustainable development have developed in this regard as a method of conflict resolution.(Williams. & Millington., 2004., pp. 100-102)The weaker sustainable development does not see the need to transform either the predominant narrative on nature or existing prominent on economic progress and development. It continues to believe that economic growth is a valid measure for progress. It follows an anthropocentric view on the relationship between people and nature and considers that:

- a) People are separate from nature;

- b) The nature is a resource to be used for the benefit of society or individuals;
- c) We have the right to dominate over the nature.

Advocates of weaker sustainable development argue that capitalism must better accommodate environmental concerns. Thus, they advocate for provisions of better environmental management. Their overarching belief is that “economic growth and resource exploitation can continue, what is required is better accommodation of environmental issues. Actually, at the heart of weaker sustainable development is an implicit optimism. There is a confidence that people will be able to find a solution to any kind of environmental problem. They will be able to enhance the stock of resources. Technological progress will enable people to manipulate the earth to meet their enormous demands on it.

In the school of weaker sustainability two groups of scholars are identified. The first one believes in the possibility of improving the efficiency of economic growth by using fewer natural resources. This group is in favour of ecological modernization. The believers in this group, like Peter Roberts, argue to improve the efficiency of economic growth through sustainable waste practices. The second group believes that economic growth can continue but there is a need to redistribute the cost and benefits in a more equitable manner on either an intra and /or intergenerational level. The followers of this group, like Agyeman and Evans, upheld the idea of environmental justice. These weak or soft sustainability theorists accept that certain resources can be depleted as long as they can be substituted by others over time. This approach focuses on the relationship between socio-economic disparities. It believes that natural capital can be used up as long as it is converted into manufactured capital of equal value. The problem of weak sustainability is that it can be very difficult to assign a monetary value to natural materials and services and it is also a fact that some of these cannot be replaced by manufactured goods and services. (Agyeman, Bullard, & Evans., 2003., pp. 5-6)

The harder or stronger sustainability discourse implies that renewable resources must not be drawn down faster than they can be replenished. It emphasizes upon changing the demands made on the earth. This group of theorists considers the earth as finite and no habitable future is possible unless the demand side of the equation radically alters by rethinking our attitude towards nature as well as our views on economic progress and development. Stronger sustainable theorists believe that “weaker versions of sustainable development are more about sustaining development rather than sustaining environment, nature, ecosystems or the earth’s life support systems.” (Williams & Millington., 2004., p. 102) This approach tries to eliminate anthropocentrism completely regarding the relationship between people and nature. Their approach is ecocentric and they assert that “nature has similar rights that do not need to be justified in terms of their benefits to the humankind.” For achieving a better world, the stronger sustainable development commentators ask for the need to change demands on the earth. They advocate for a more small-scale decentralized way of life based upon greater self-reliance, so as to create a social and economic system less destructive towards nature.

In the literature concerning the environmental crisis and the ecological movement the environmentalist-ecologist dichotomy is a major area of concern. In the views of Wouter Achterberg, environmentalism is a “superficial” or “reformist” vision. It regards that environmental problems are mainly management problems and those can be resolved within the context of dominant political and economic system and “without any rigorous change in our values and culture.” Contrarily, there is a second version of ecologism or deep ecology, aiming at more structural change. It proposes a radical change in our attitude towards nature, and therefore in our political and social system also. The value perspective of environmentalism is anthropocentric and that of ecologism is fully ecocentric. However, for

Achterberg's pragmatic view, ecocentric does not mean subordination of human values to those of nature, but complete recognition of non-human intrinsic values. It is with this vision derives sustainability or sustainable development as the right path towards the solution of environmental problems. This view can be elaborated in such a way that tends towards environmentalism, and can be extended as well to include proposals that recognize nature's intrinsic values.(Achterberg., 1993., pp. 84-85)

Eminent British green political scientist Andrew Dobson has analyzed the concept of sustainable development with reference to green political theory at different points of time. In his illustrious book on green political thought he begins with a distinction between environmentalism and ecologism. The former, to him, is a managerial approach towards environmental problems with a belief of solving those without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production or consumption; while the latter holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with non-human natural world and in our mode of social and political life.

In dealing with the environmental problems, in essence, the green politics seeks nothing less than a "non-violent revolution to overthrow our materialistic industrial society and in its place tries to create a new economic and social order which will allow human beings to live in harmony with the planet." According to Dobson, "the green Movement lays claim to being the most radical and important political and cultural force since the birth of socialism". He feels this very character of the green movement will be missed if we restrict our understanding in the guise of an environmentalism that seeks a "cleaner service economy sustained by cleaner technology and producing cleaner affluence".(Dobson., 1995., pp. 1-10)

The political ecologist's view of sustainable society is of two fold. Firstly, that consumption of material goods by individuals in advanced industrial countries should be reduced. In other words, a limit to growth is impossible without limits to consumption. Secondly, the human needs are not best satisfied by continual economic growth. The deep greens further argue that truly sustainable society would replace the present consumer society and would provide for wider and more profound forms of fulfillment than provided by the consumption of material objects. The green contention is that the sustainable society would be a spiritually fulfilling place to live in. Indeed, "radical green programme can hardly be understood without reference to the spiritual dimension on which it likes to dwell."(ibid., pp. 16-18)This view is the target point for the critics of deep-greens, because since the renaissance and enlightenment, officially at least, the domain of spiritualism is separated from political life. In fact, spiritualism cannot be a mandatory principle to be obeyed for human existence.

Deep ecology or ecologism is equally critical to capitalism and socialism. It identifies "the super ideology of industrialism as the thesis to be undermined." Their perspective does not make any difference between capitalism and communism as they do not make any appreciable difference on who owns the means of production.(ibid., p. 30)To them, the high levels of environmental degradation in Eastern Europe is on no way lesser harmful than that of the capitalist world. Dobson further observes that ecologists and environmentalists are inspired to act by the environmental degradation they observe, but their strategies for remedying it differ wildly. Environmentalists do not subscribe to the limits of growth thesis, nor do they typically seek to dismantle industrialism. They believe that technology can solve the problem it creates. He elaborates three principal thoughts related to the limits to growth thesis that have come to be of prime importance to the radical green position. Firstly, technological solutions

cannot themselves bring about a sustainable society. Secondly, the rapid rates of growth aimed for by industrialized and industrializing societies have an exponential character, which means that dangers stored up over a relatively long period of time can very suddenly have a catastrophic effect. Thirdly, the interaction of problems cannot be dealt with in isolation and solving one problem does not solve the rest and may even exacerbate them.(ibid., pp. 61-62)

The landscape of political theory has been greatly transformed by the ecological challenge of the last few decades. Eruption of the environment on to the political scene has seen a palpable rise in interest in environmental political theory among mainstream political theorists. Virtually no branch of political theory has escaped the influence of sustainability. In this regard we can again refer to Dobson who has raised a very important question in this regard. He has pondered whether a sustainable society can be brought about through the use of existing institutions? To him, environmentalism and liberalism are compatible, but ecologism and liberalism are not, because a lot of liberal political theory runs counter to radical environmental ideology. Individualism, pursuit of private gain, limited government and market freedom are contradicted by radical economic commitments.(ibid, pp. 162-165)However, a more prudent theoristAchterberg believes that the political conception of sustainable development is largely based upon central elements in the political philosophy of liberalism. Therefore, it can play a legitimizing role within a liberal democracy, which is necessary in view of the radical changes connected with the solution to or control of the environmental crisis.(Achterberg., 1993., p. 99)

Ecologism is not compatible to socialism either, to Dobson, as the socialists identify capitalism as the source of all ills of contemporary society, while the ecologists condemn industrialization per se. The greens actually consider themselves to be “beyond left and right”. In a later writing Dobson has dealt with another related issue.(Dobson, 2003., pp. 83-94) It is the relationship between social justice and environmental sustainability. Initially he argues that these are not always compatible objectives, though from “political point of view there are tremendous benefits in marrying the two”. From his observations of the German situation he derives that this kind of rapprochement can be temporary and transient only. To him, the reds (advocates of social justice) and the greens (advocates of ecologism) have fundamentally different objectives and “to expect socialists and environmentalists to form a common cause is as unrealistic as to expect liberals and socialists to make a common cause.” Their difference is not merely tactical but strategic as well. He admits that social justice is as contested a term as sustainable development. However, in later part of the article he somehow mellowed his stand and states that from the point of view of providing the future generation with adequate opportunity and not to deprive them from enjoying and experiencing available all alternatives “the objectives of social justice, i.e., equal distribution of opportunities and sustainability as the preservation of biodiversity are same.”

Another important political concept, nationalism also is related to the issue of sustainable development. Nationalism, with its idea of nation as an ongoing chain of generations that is not only past, but future oriented and which extends beyond one’s lifetime into future, may sustain an obligation to future generation that overrides any time preference. This obligation is a key to sustainable development. Nationalists argue that we contemporaries must not inflict harms on our descendants, because it might risk the continuation of nation. Nationalists are therefore likely to consider environmental issues as a matter of distribution of access to environmental goods across generations and rule out any policy that arbitrarily inflicts harm on future generations.(Shalit., 2006., p. 80) However, we can say that in the practical politics many methods adopted by nationalists are often not congenial to sustainability discourse as it often encourages parochialism and destruction of environment.

The relationship between feminism and sustainability studies is another important area in academics. Since the early 1970s a growing interest in women's relations with the environment in the countries of the south emerged within the development discourse. At the Nairobi Forum 1985, held parallel to the UN Women and Development Conference, women's actions and special role in environmental management were presented with case studies that documented their involvement in forestry, agriculture, energy and so on based on the experience of the women living in the south. Women were portrayed as environmental managers whose involvement is crucial to the achievement of sustainable development. After the publication of the Brundtland report (1987) the WED (Women, Environment, Development) debate focused on the imperative for women's involvement in strategies and programmes aimed at sustainable development. Since the late 1980s the images of the poor women in the south as victims became transformed into images of strength and resourcefulness in the WED theme. In the wider debate on sustainable development women were increasingly promoted as privileged environmental managers and depicted as possessing inherent skills and knowledge in environmental care. A cultural stream of thought sees women's position as essentially closer to nature because within the sexual division of labour their work has always entailed a close relationship with nature. It perceives the women, nature relation as one of reciprocity, symbiosis, harmony, mutuality and interrelatedness due to women's close dependence on nature for subsistence needs. (Braidotti. & Charkiewicz., 1997., pp. 54-56)

In her radical form of environmentalism Eckersley has established a significant relationship between the Critical theorists and green perspectives. (Eckersley., 1990., pp. 740-743) Critical theorists, notably Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno and Herbert Marcuse were of opinion that the original emancipatory promises of Marxism had not been fulfilled because the existing development process is essentially a negative one that gave rise to the domination of both outer and inner nature. This was reflected, on the one hand, in the environmental crisis and on the other hand, in the repression of humanity's joyful and spontaneous instincts. These Frankfurt School theorists had longed for a reconciliation of the negative dialectics of Enlightenment that would liberate both human and non-human nature. While Adorno and Horkheimer were pessimistic in this as to the prospect of such reconciliation ever occurring, Marcuse remained hopeful of the possibility that a new science might be developed, based on a more expressive and empathic relationship to the non-human world.

The north-south controversy associated with the concept of sustainable development is another important issue area. It is often considered as an agenda for the developed north to annihilate all forms of possible challenges and competition from the south. The rise of the concept coincides with the rise of east after the decolonization process and particularly after the emergence of the People's Republic of China as a frontal power. The neo-imperial north never accepted the rise of the south positively. The entire UNCED process can be seen as a struggle between the developing and developed countries to define sustainable development in a way that fits their own agenda. The developed countries put the environment first. By contrast, the developing countries put development first. The term was not used in the UNCED documents to refer to an optimum path of development. "It was simply a device to reconcile the aspiration of the developing countries to develop and the developed world's desire to curb this development in order to protect the global environment." (Grainger., 2005., pp. 299-301) In the views of Grainger, sustainable development has its place only in the minds of states, a codeword for bargaining. The developed countries want a better global environment, while the developing countries was for more development, and the groups of states will trade off one against the other in course of

extended negotiations. This means that “sustainable development at the global level remains a compromise, but a different and less attractive one from that which most idealists would like.”

The concept of sustainable development is often regarded as a mechanism to further the neo-liberal objectives and ambitions. It was originally a creation of international relations, being offered by the developed countries to the developing countries as “a guide to best practice”. If the latter countries comply with the sustainable development ideals, as proposed by the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN) 1980, they would have to avoid the past development paths of the developed countries, with all the environmental degradation these caused, and not replicating them.”(ibid., p. 279)In other words, through the mechanism of sustainable development the first world countries that have polluted significantly during their development process encourage the developing countries to reduce pollution. However, till today, pollution generated, particularly in areas like carbon emission or nuclear waste disposal of the western countries is much higher than the sum total of the developing countries. Critics thus argue that for a planet where 20% consumes 80% of natural resources a scheme of sustainable development for those 20% is just not any acceptable proposition.(Brockington. Duffy. & Igoe.(Ed), 2008., p. 133)

The north versus south debate of the concept of sustainable development has its clear effect on the nature versus people issue as well. The north prioritizes conservation of nature over alleviation of poverty and the protagonists of the south desire to invert the order. It is in this context we can refer to Vandana Shiva, the eminent physicist turned environmentalist, who is of opinion that G7 can demand a forest convention that imposes international obligations on the Third World to plant trees. But the Third World cannot reverse it nor can parallelly demand that the industrialized countries should reduce the use of fossil fuels and energy. “All demands are externally dictated – one way –from North to South. The ‘global’ has been so structured, that the North (as the globalized local) has all rights and no responsibility, and the South has no rights, but all responsibility.”(Shiva., 1993., p. 154)Thus, it is not wrong to say that sustainable development establishes dualism and false dichotomies. It is completely partial in approach as different sets of rules and practices are suggested for different groups of human beings of different areas. It does not try to resolve the conflict between the life-producing and preserving and the commodity producing activities.

There is also a stream of anthropological critique of sustainability. The theorists from New Zealand Rixecker and Matua have said that the contemporary system of environmental politics enshrined in and legitimated through international and national laws premised upon western legal system and modernity. It becomes especially challenging for indigenous peoples to reclaim and control their native homes, cultures, practices and beliefs. The rise of the corporate giants has added another dimension to the challenge as multinational corporations become major economic and political power brokers in decision making previously reserved for the national governments and their respective heads of the state. In this context, the indigenous have had to become more resourceful than ever before to secure and protect their cultural and environmental heritage.(Rixecker. & Matua., 2003., pp. 253-254)

Pro-active governance is the most important prerequisite for the sustainable development plans. It is very difficult to create a system of governance that promotes, facilitates and formulates policies and strategies striving for human development, resource conservation and upholds the rule of law in allocation and judicious utilization of development resources. Feeble legal and judicial systems and inefficient administrative and implementing mechanisms undermine the entire process sustainable

development. There is no denial of the fact that the concept of sustainable development is inherently “technocratic, bureaucratic and managerial in outlook and approach”. At the same time, in its application local perspectives are largely discounted, as the actions of the locals are held responsible for environmental degradation by the developed world. The local elites of the south often take advantage of the situation as well. They, equipped with the sustainable development discourse and impression of environmental crisis, seek to acquire foreign funds for their projects related to the issue of environmental protection. For the anthropologists, emic perspectives that is knowledge, interpretation and perspectives of those within the culture are sidelined and environmental concerns are addressed ahead of basic survival interests of the locals. (Smyth., 2011., pp. 80-82)

5. Conclusion:

From a green perspective, the idea of sustainable development, particularly, the Brundtland approach represents “an artful political compromise rested on an instrumental orientation towards the non-human world and ignored the question of biodiversity preservation in focusing only on intra and intergenerational equity. Even more problematically, the Report assumed that sustainable development could be achieved by increasing economic growth rate”. They maintain that the technologically oriented discourse of ecological modernization have overestimated the synergies between capitalist development and environmental protection. The green critics also argue that a strategy of technologically driven modernization provides no means of addressing the deeply skewed distribution of ecological risks among different social classes and nations. In contrast, the Brundtland Report was concerned to promote the intra and intergenerational equity, but it relied on the “tickle-down effect” brought about by increasing growth. The recommendations of sustainable development encapsulate a paradox that, “environmental protection is best achieved by pursuing more (albeit environmentally efficient) growth, which generates more aggregate environmental problems (albeit at a slower rate). It is believed that ecological problems persist because they are generated by the very economic, scientific, and political institutions that are called upon to solve them.” The paradox of sustainable development therefore cannot be resolved by pursuit of more environmentally efficient means to pursue given ends. It is rather necessary to pursue “reflexive modernization”, which entails reflecting critically and continuously on the means and ends of modernization. (Eckersley., 2010., pp. 253-254)

In reality, sustainable development is not at all a desired project for the developing world; it is a necessity for the whole of humanity. The holistic and inclusive nature of sustainable development encompasses a wide range of issues as interconnected parts of a whole and addresses the entire population of the globe rather than the conventional differentiating state centric model. (Mirabagheri. (Eds), Nikolopoulou. Abraham., 2010, p. xx) Contrarily, this is also not a full proof method particularly when we look at issues like climate change or hole in the ozone layer. On the one hand, these are problems for the entire human race and on the other, the intensity of these problems are not same everywhere and so policy prioritizing should also be different. At the same time discriminatory policies must not be encouraged. In this context we can refer to Vandana Shiva who is of opinion that we are against transforming common natural resources into commodities and deprivation of politically weak communities of access to resources, robbing the resources of the nature and growth of the market for the privileged social groups. (Shiva., 1993., p. 154)

6. Epilogue:

The concept of sustainable development is definitely one of the most paradoxical and contested area in the domain of theoretical and practical politics of our own times. But it does not mean that we do not require it. It is about social justice, equity and human rights for the future generations. Demand for sustainability is in fact, a particular reflection of universality of claims – applied to future generations, vis-à-vis us. But following Amartya Sen we can say that, “in trying to prevent the deprivation in the future we must not ignore the deprived people of today.”* **In other words**, the notions of inter and intra-generational equity along with the discourse of environmental justice needs to be firmly placed within the framework of sustainability. These issues require to be respectfully followed both by the citizens and policy makers in order to make them practicable. Optimum use of natural resources along with precautionary principles and compensatory principles should be executed as far as possible. Polluting and destroying nature should be considered as acts of violation of human rights of the present and future generations. Furthermore, a balance has to be restored between ecological and environmental principles of development without allowing any single one to usurp the objectives of the other. It may sound impractical at the onset but the intellectual development of the world will be able to find a solution definitely. The Human Development Report has categorically stated that sustainability can be most fairly and effectively achieved by addressing health, education, income and gender disparities together with the need for global action on energy production and ecosystem protection.(UNDP., 2011.)

UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon in his address to the General Assembly on September 21, 2011 has identified sustainable development as the first and greatest imperative of the 21st century to shape the world of tomorrow. To him, “...saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth...these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate changes, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women’s empowerment...Let us develop a new generation of sustainable development goals to pick up where the Millennium Development goals leave off. Let us agree on the means to achieve them.”(UNSG., 2011.)

Finally, if we are morally obligated to assume responsibility as the central characteristic of our existence we cannot stop with the intra and intergenerational responsibility towards humans we definitely have to incorporate the biosphere. At the same time we have to remember also, on the basis of the above discussions, that consensus regarding environmental issues can never be achieved because the different stakeholders have different kind of interests on the issue. To keep the world habitable for human and non-humans we have to strike a balance between the anthropocentric / environmental issues and the ecocentric/ecological issues. Total dependence on the former will sooner or later reach a critical stage and the opposite will be a utopia. At the same time this convergence is quite problematic.

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Welfare of Weaker Sections: A Study of PRIs and a Political Dimension

V. Rama Krishna

Abstract

The process of self governance and planning by empowering the people through Panchayati Raj system started nearly five decades earlier. But 73rd and 74th amendments in the Constitution of India brought an historic change in the process of decentralisation towards the grass root level and participation of people both in the formulation as well as implementation of the plans. The paper explores how the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act (1992), provided certainty, continuity and strength to the PRI's for the welfare of the weaker sections through Decentralization, and its different aspects such as uniform three-tier level of the village, block and district levels, direct elections to all seats and at all levels, indirect elections to chairpersons at intermediate and apex levels, and reservation on rotational basis for SC's ST's in proportion to their population, both for membership as well as Chairpersonships of the PRI's. The present paper intends to discuss the political participation of weaker sections in panchayat raj institutions in Karnataka in general and in Afjalpur taluk of Gulbarga District in particular as a case study. Finally the paper discusses about the political participation of weaker sections and sought their opinion of their involvement in the process of political, economic development and social justice, with the transfer of the list of Eleventh and the Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution to the rural and urban elected local bodies, and the process of welfare activities for weaker sections through the Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Key Words: Panchayat Raj Institutions, Political Participation, Weaker Sections.

1. Introduction

Social inequalities existed in the villages and these have continued for centuries. Under these circumstances, soon after Independence the concept of social justice figured in the Indian Constitution. The constitution of India made an attempt to provide equal social opportunities for the development of all the people in the society, without any discrimination on the basis of caste, sex or race. However, social inequalities continued for a long time in the Indian society. The reasons may be several. The people from higher social strata had received education, and they controlled and managed land. They took up high income - generating activities. On the contrary, people in the lower strata people were denied education, and they were deprived of their right to manage and

control land. Thus they were forced to take up low - income generating activities. Particularly in the villages the people from lower strata took up supportive works for the people who had taken up agricultural activities, such as Carpentry, Blacksmith, Leather work, and labour.

These reasons among others, restricted upward mobility of the marginalized. Rural development is a definite strategy for the improvement of the living conditions of the rural poor. In this direction the Government of India made efforts to solve problems such as poverty, ill health, illiteracy, and backwardness of varied nature prevailing in rural areas, by giving grater attention to the upliftment of the rural poor (Shivanna N; 1990)¹.

Further, the marginalized sections, i.e., SC, ST, and OBC have become an important component in defining of the development policies because of their socio-economic deprivation in the traditional society like India. The political involvement of the upper castes is still more in institutions like Assembly and Parliament. The reservation of seats was 15% in State Assemblies and Parliament. On the contrary there was no representation from the larger sections of the marginalized castes i.e., from the backwards (Singh; 1996)². As a result of this, at present, political participation in India is limited to only a few upper castes. As they manage and control the political system, land pattern. The upper caste people do not mind in formulating and execution of welfare and developmental policies intended for the weaker sections. It can be seen in the failure of several programmes. Among these are community Development Programmes (CDP) and National Extension Programme (NEP). These programmes were implemented in tune with the upper caste people in the rural areas.

2. Review of Related Literature

¹ Shivanna N. (1990) "Panchayati raj Reforms and rural Devaelopment", Usha Prakashan Mandir, Allahabad, p.2.

² Singh, S.N. (1996). "Reservation Policy for Backward Classes", Rawat Publications, Jaipur, New Delhi.

Sukla Deb Kanoongo (1996)³ in his research on women's leadership in the Panchayati Raj with special reference to the State of West Bengal, found that many of them, in spite of being educated, in spite of having a tradition of political activity in the family and of having great support from their respective parties, are unable to participate in the whole process in a meaningful way. Many are finding the responsibilities very demanding, some are thoroughly engaged in their domestic responsibilities and some do not maintain good health. He also felt that the socio-cultural factors acted as a deterrent in many cases.

Ujwala Hiremath (1997)⁴ conducted a survey of 40 women members of ten village Gram Panchayats in Karnataka. Her studies show the same trend that is seen at the national level politics: members of influential families always seem to have an edge over the rest. Majority of the members were illiterate-thumb impression ones. However, it was interesting to note that all these women had a manifesto of development items for the village-shelter for the poor, electricity, toilets, roads, schools, water facility, doctors for primary health centers, sewing machines for young girls and many other things, including old-age and widow pensions, employment for youth, girls education, transport facilities, etc.

Nagendra Ambedkar (2000)⁵ in his book on "Panchayat Raj at Work" explained the origins and growth of panchayat raj institution in India and structural patterns of panchayat raj in Rajasthan. The author also has given importance to electoral system of the local bodies. Further, he analysed the socio-economic and political background of the panchayat raj elite, their perceptions and orientations of various issues, pertaining to the panchayat raj institution. Finally he analyzed the leadership in panchayats and the qualities, attitude of the leaders towards weaker section of the society.

³ Sukla Deb, Kanoongo, January-March, 1996, Panchayat Raj and Emerging Women Leadership, Vol. 46, Social Welfare, p. 86.

⁴ Hiremath, Ujwala, May, 1997, Women in Grassroot Politics, Vol. 44, No. 2, Social Welfare, p. 13.

⁵ Nagendra Ambedkar, New Panchayat Raj at work, ABD Publishers, Jaipur, India, 2000.

In another study Aziz (1994)⁶ found more or less the same phenomena. When he (Buch, Jain and Chaudhary; 1999)⁷ conducted Study on Women in Panchayati Raj in Madhya Pradesh. The study was conducted in three district socio-cultural zones where the ST, SC was others are numerically dominant. So far as their social profile is concerned, the study documented that maximum number of PRI leaders (307 out of 343) are from the marginalized groups. 283 women and 80 men participated in the study. Majority of the leaders are above the age of 25 years and 'they are engaged in agricultural work. In fact, either they are the wage earners or cultivators. Although, there is slight district wise variation but majority of the respondents are from below the Poverty line. More than 50 per cent are illiterate. Even in the case of chairpersons out of 72, 23 are illiterate. Most of them had no affiliation with any of the political parties in the formal sense. 53 of the respondents are landless but a good number of them (126) possess either or more than 5 acres of land. It is interesting to note that a good number of respondents have discontinued labour work after becoming PRI leaders but even today 92 are engaged in this work. The study concluded that PRI is formally imitated by the leaders of lower Socio-economic status in M.P.

Similar observation was made by Lele (2001)⁸ In course of the Comparative Study between Traditional Village Panchayat and the modern Gram Sabha in Maharashtra from the point of view of empowerment of the weaker sections, the author opined that of course platform of statutory Gram Sabha is theoretically opened for the marginalized but in the real sense it is not. In fact, alienation from the political processes seems to prevail and that is why even reservation has not helped to make the marginalized more vocal. This then creates the right conditions for the domination of traditional power of the upper castes and classes. The other factor is economic dependence of the marginalized on the dominants. For those who work on the fields or

⁶ Aziz, A. (2000): "Democratic, Decentralization – Experience of Karnataka" Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi.

⁷ Buch, N., Jain, U. and Chaudhary, S.N. (1999): Women in Panchayati Raj in Madhya Pradesh, (Mimeo) Bhopal: Mahila Chetna Manch.

⁸ Lele, M.K. (2001): "Local Government: Conflict of Interests and Issues of Legitimization", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXVI, No. 51, Dec. 22-28.

run small shops or are service providers, opposing the gavki is unthinkable. They would be digging their own graves by opposing the upper castes and rich farmers on whose fields they work and earn their daily wages. Beside personal loans are also made available by the same people, those who constitute the gavki. Thus opposing the gavki could mean starvation as a result of boycott by the rich peasants and others.

3. Committees Appointed from Time to Time

After the Community Development Programme was launched in 1952, it was realized that without an agency at the village level, which could represent the entire community, assume responsibility and provide the necessary leadership for implementing development programmes, real progress in rural development could not take place. It was against this background that a Committee headed by Balwant Rai G. Mehta was appointed in 1957 to make recommendations for revitalization for the Panchayati Raj system and define its role in the development process. The report of the Committee recommended that public participation in community works should be organized through statutory representative bodies. Community Development can be real only when the community exercises necessary powers through its chosen representatives. Therefore, it recommended the establishments of statutory elected local bodies.

The Ashok Mehta Committee Report in 1978 was influential in bringing about a shift in emphasis between the first and second generation of panchayats from development *per se* to Local Government in its full meaning. Originally, panchayats found a place only in the Directive Principles of State Policy. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments revitalized the Panchayats and Urban Bodies by giving them Constitutional status, providing for regular elections and reserving 1/3 seats for women and introducing representation for marginalized groups.

To provide the constitutional support to the Panchayati raj institutions, a Constitutional Amendment Bill was introduced in 1989 by Sri. Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister with an intention of transferring power to the people. It relates to part IX

of the constitution. This bill was passed by the Loka sabha on the 10th August 1989. However it failed in Rajya Sabha and could not become the part of the constitution. After the defeat of both the bills, another bill that is 73rd constitution amendment Bill was introduced in the Lok sabha. The attempt at extending the constitutional benefits to the panchayat raj institutions, through the 64th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1988 and 74th Amendment Bill of 1990 did not succeed. Another attempt was made by introducing the Constitutional Amendment Bill on 16th September 1991. After the series of discussions in the parliament, the matter was referred to joint select committee of parliament for detailed examination. Accordingly joint committee presented its report to parliament in July 1992. The Lok Sabha finally passed the bill on December 22nd 1992 and the Raja Sabha on December 23rd 1992. The President of India accorded this asset on April 20th 1993. Finally the 73rd constitutional amendment act of 1992 came into effect on April 24th 1993 (Panchayat Raj at a Glance: 1964)⁹.

There shall be three tiers of Panchayats at the village, intermediate and district levels. So, only those states having population not exceeding 20 lakhs have the discretion not to constitute the panchayats at the intermediate level. Under Article 243 the President can make special dispensation for Union Territories.

Direct elections: All seats in a panchayat at every level are to be filled by direct elections from territorial constituencies demarcated for this purpose, with the ratio between the population of such constituency and the number of such constituency and the number of seats allotted to it being the same throughout the Panchayat area. Reservation of seats: There shall be reservation of seats at every level for SC/ STs in proportion to their population in a given Panchayat area and *for* women to the extent of not less than one- third of the total number of seats. Likewise, the office of the Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women, to the extent of not less than one-third of the total numbers in the office of Chairpersons of Panchayats. In addition, the legislature of any state

⁹ Panchayat Raj at a Glance (as on 31st March, 1964), New Delhi, 1965.

can make provision for reservation of seats in any panchayats at any level in favour of the backward classes.

Finance Commission: It was provided that by 24th April 1993, that is, the coming into the effect the constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 and thereafter at the expiration of every fifth year, a finance commission shall be constituted in every fifth year. A finance commission shall be constituted in every state to go into the governing principles of the distribution and revolution of financial resources between the state and the panchayats at every level and the measures to improve the financial position of the panchayats.

State Election Commission: The direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of all elections in the panchayats shall be vested in a state election commission, to be constituted by the state concerned.

Eleventh Schedule: Finally, the XI Schedule comprising 29 items has been added to the Constitution which ought to provide an effective role to the PRIs in the planning and implementation of works of local significance. Activities ranging like drinking water, agriculture, land and water conservation to communications, poverty alleviation programmes family welfare, education, libraries and cultural activities, maintenance of community as sets etc.

4.1 Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act 1993-Salient Features

The 1993 Act establishes a three-tier Panchayat raj system in the state with elected bodies at Grama, Taluka, and District level for greater participation of the people and for more effective implementation of Rural Development Programmes. The three tiers of the Panchayat Raj System are:

- 1) Gram Panchayat/Village Panchayat. 2) Taluka Panchayat. 3) Zilla Panchayat.

4.2 Outstanding Features of 1993 Act

As a part from the creation of three-tier panchayat system in the state based on population as per published data of census, the features of 1993 Act are as follows (The Karnataka Panchayati Raj Act: 1993).

1. The act facilitates the constitution of gram sabha in each village.

2. It provides for reservation of seats in favour of SCs and STs in proportion of their population and subjected to minimum of 15 and 3% respectively at all levels.
3. The Act provides for reservation of 1/3 of seats to women at all levels.
4. It also provides for reservation of 1/3 of seats to persons belonging to Backward Classes.
5. The Act also provides for reservation of 1/3 of seats in each category (SCs, STs, and Backward Classes and General) at all levels for women. The seats reserved shall be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in panchayat area.
6. The office of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons are also reserved at all levels for the persons belonging to SCs, STs and Backwards Classes and Women.
7. The Act envisages the constitution of state election commission, the finance commission and district planning committee. The finance committee is to recommend periodically the policy on finance to Panchayat Raj Institutions.
8. The new law stipulates that the elections to Gram Panchayat are to be conducted on non-party basis. This is intended to minimize the local conflicts during election time. However, participation of political parties has been allowed for upper level Panchayats.
9. The new Act substantially increases the power of State governments to supervise and control Panchayat Raj Institutions. The Secretary of Panchayat Raj Department and the Divisional Commissioner are empowered accordingly for this purpose. They are entitled to issue instructions, conduct enquiry, and call for proceedings of Zilla Panchayat and performance of Panchayat Raj Institutions. The government is also authorized to add or delete any programme or scheme in the functions of Panchayat Raj Institutions.
10. All the Adhyakshas of Taluka Panchayats can be members of Zilla Panchayats. All the MLAs, MLCs, and MPs can be Members of Zilla Panchayats and Taluka Panchayats.
11. As regards to finance, every Gram Panchayat will receive annual grant of rupees one lakh towards development activities.

12. The proceeds of heavy cash levy, on land revenue and surcharge on stamp duty will be passed on to Gram Panchayats and Taluka Panchayats. The Panchayat Raj Institutions will receive resources from State Government also.

5. Objectives and Methodology

The present paper intends to analyze the involvement of weaker sections representatives in the institutions of Panchayat Raj in Gulbarga and Afjalpur Taluk of Gulbarga District. It also intends to assess the awareness, commitment, ability and problems of weaker sections representatives in the process of implementing the welfare policies for SC, ST and OBC. Both historical descriptive and analytical methods have been employed in the present study to examine the status of weaker sections in village Panchayats of Gulbarga and Afjalpur Taluks in Gulbarga District and to compare the status of weaker section's representatives with the representatives of other castes in Panchayat Raj Institutions of Gulbarga District. The objective was also to identify the education level of weaker sections representatives in Panchayat Raj Institutions of Gulbarga District. Awareness towards the working of Panchayat Raj institutions, involves policy implementations for the effective involvement of weaker section and better implementation of welfare policies for weaker sections through Panchayat Raj institutions.

6. Political Participation of Weaker Sections

It is widely believed that the analysis of age, education, Caste, family structure, occupation, income, land holding, party affiliation, etc., are important in determining the nature of leadership. The data relating to socioeconomic background of elected respondents of Panchayati Raj institutions were collected in the % study to get an insight into the emerging pattern of rural leadership in the Afjalpur Taluk of Gulbarga District.

The socio-economic conditions play an important role in characterizing the social life and behaviour of an individual. The socio-economic status of an individual affects the patterns of interaction in the society. It is therefore, essential to analyse the socio-economic background of the relationship between the leader and the environment. In a developing society like ours where forces of caste and kinship influence the social life and acute disparity in the standard of living and sub culture among various groups and regions are existing, a study of the socio-economic conditions of SC , ST and OBC respondents would help reveal sociologically significant dimensions (Singhi, N.K. 1974)¹⁰.

Knowledge of the socio-economic, educational and political background of the leaders would also enable us to anticipate as to what they are capable of doing, what we should expect of them and how well they are equipped to discharge the responsibilities put upon them by the electorate (Sashilata Puri 1978)¹¹. Knowledge of socio-economic background of a community is an indispensable prerequisite, for the understanding of the thought or behaviors of its members. This holds good for all human communities, and more so in the case of SC/ST and OBC communities, which are intrinsically more traditional in their structure.

Table No. 1. Distribution of Respondents by Nature of Members

Sl. No.	Institution	Frequency	%
1	VP	44	58.67
2	TP	23	30.67
3	ZP	8	10.67
4	Total	75	100.00

Source : Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

¹⁰ Singhi, N.K. (1974) "Bureaucracy, Positions and Participation", New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, P. 55.

¹¹ Sashilata Puri (1978), "Legislative Elite in an Indian State: A Case Study of Rajasthan", New Delhi: publications, p. 31.

Table No. 1 is to discuss the nature of members in the study area. It is evident from the table that there are three types of members, i.e (1). Village Panchayat members are 44 constituting 58.67 %, Taluk Panchayat members are 23 constituting 30.67 % and Zilla panchayat members are 8 constituting 10.67 %.

Table No. 2. Distribution of Respondents by Position in PRIs

S.No	Position	Frequency	%
1	Presidents	10	13.33
2	Vice - Presidents	17	22.67
3	Members	48	64.00
4	Total	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

Table No. 2 is intended to discuss the position of respondents in the institutions of PRIs at Afzalpoor Taluk. The response and the study area have been grouped into three categories, viz, Respondents (10 constituting 13.33%) vice - presidents (17, constituting 22.67 %) and members (48 constituting 64.09 %).

Table No. 3. Distribution of Respondents by Sex

S.No	Sex	Frequency	%
1	Male	49	65.33
2	Female	26	34.67
3	Total	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

Table No. 3 discusses the sex wise distribution of respondents in the study area. It is evident from the table that out of the total 75 respondents, the highest number 49 constituting 65.33 % are male and 26 respondents constituting 34.67 % are female.

Table No. 4. Caste - Wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl.	Caste	Frequency	%
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No			
1	SC	25	33.33
2	ST	10	13.33
3	OBC	40	53.33
4	Total	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

Table No 4. is intended to discuss the cast wise distribution of the respondents in the study area. The table shows that out of the total sample of 75 respondents belonging to SC 25 (constituting 33.33 %) 10 to STs (constituting 13.33 %) and 40 to OBCs (constituting 53.33 %).

Table No. 5. Distribution of Respondents by Age

S.No	Age	Frequency	%
1	18-25	22	29.33
2	26-35	34	45.33
3	36-45	8	10.67
4	46 & Above	11	14.67
5	Total	75	100

Source: Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

Table NO. 5 is intended to analyse the distribution of respondents by age. It is observed from the table that the age group of the respondents has been grouped into 4 categories. Among these the highest numbers of respondents (34 constituting 45.33 %) are from the age group of 26 - 35, followed by 22 respondents constituting 29.33 % belonging to the age group of 18 - 25. Further the table shows that the lowest number 8 respondents constituting 10.67 % are from the age group of 36 – 45.

Table No. 7. Distribution of Respondents by Religion

S.No	Religion	Frequency	%
1	Hindu	53	70.67
2	Buddhism	15	20.00
3	Muslims	4	5.33
4	Others	3	4.00
5	Total	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the Data Collected from Field Work.

Table No.7 is to analyse the Distribution of Respondents By Religion. The table shows that out of the sample 75 respondents, the highest number, 53 respondents constituting 70.67 %, are Hindus, followed by 15 respondents constituting 20 % who are Buddhists. These Buddhists are converted from a particular caste among the SC. In the study area there are 4 respondents constituting 5.33 % belonging to Muslim OBCs, and 3 respondents constituting 4.00 per cent belonging to other religions.

Table No. 8. Distribution of Opinion by Caste about the Objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions

S.No.	Opinion	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Total	%
1	Yes	19	76	5	38.46	10	27.03	34	45.33
2	No	6	24	8	61.54	27	72.97	41	54.67
3	Total	25	100	13	100.00	37	100.00	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field data.

Table No 8, reveals the caste wise distribution of respondent's opinion about the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions. The table reveals that out of the total 75 respondents, the highest number of respondents across the castes does not know about the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions. The caste wise distribution of opinion reveals that there are 25 respondents from SC. Among these the highest number (76%) of respondents are aware of the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions. Where as only 24 % of respondents do not know the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions.

The respondents belonging to STs hold the different opinion than those of the SC respondents. The highest number 61.54 % respondents out of 10 do not know the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions and where as 38.46% of respondents are aware of the objectives of Panchayat raj Institutions.

Among the OBC respondents, out of the total 40, the highest number 30 respondents do not know the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions. The over all observation of the table is that majority of SC respondents are aware of the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions. And on the other hand majority of respondents from STs and OBC are not aware of the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Table No. 9. Distribution of Respondent's Opinion by Education about the Objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions

Opinion	Illiterates	%	Up to 10th	%	PUC	%	Degree	%	Total	%
Yes	9	37.5	5	17.24	3	20	7	100	24	32
No	15	62.5	24	82.76	12	80			51	68
Total	24	100	29	100.00	15	100	7	100	75	100

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field data.

Table No. 9. shows the education wise distribution of representative's opinion about the objectives of Panchayat Raj institutions. The table reveals that out of the total respondents belonging to illiterates, the highest number 62.5% of respondents do not know the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions, and 37.5% respondents are aware of the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions. Among the total, 29 respondents who have studied up to SSLC, the highest number 82.76% do not know about the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions, only 17.24% know about it. The respondents who have studied up to PUC are 15 in total, among these the highest number 80 % respondents does know the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions. It is evident from the table that the respondents who have studied up to degree are 7 in total and these respondents have understood the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions.

The overall observation of the table is that most of the respondents with lower educational level such as illiterates, and who have studied up to 10th and pre

University education (PUC) have not understood the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the study area. On the other hand, the respondents who have studied upto the level of graduation are aware of the objectives of Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Table No. 10. Distribution of Opinion by Caste Towards the awareness of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act

S.No	Opinion	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Total	%
1	Yes	18	72	6	60	10	25	34	45.33
2	No	7	28	4	40	30	75	41	54.67
3	Total	25	100	10	100	40	100	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the data collect4ed from the field data.

Table No. 10 discusses the caste wise distribution of respondents towards the awareness of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. The respondents in Panchayat Raj Institutions are supposed to have understood the provisions of 73rd Amendment Act. Because, the radical changes have taken place in the institutions of Panchayat Raj in India by 73rd Amendment Act. The table reveals that the highest number (72%) of respondents belonging to SC is aware of 73rd Act. Among the respondents belonging to STs the highest number (60%) of respondents are not aware of 73rd Act and only 40% of respondents are aware of it. So for as the respondents belonging to OBC's are concerned, the highest number (75%) of respondents are not aware of 73rd Act and only 25% of respondents are aware of it.

The findings of the table are that the most of respondents belonging to SCs and STs are aware of 73rd Act. And the majority of respondents from ST, and OBC, are not aware of 73rd Act. Therefore, it is viewed that SC & ST respondents has consciousness towards the working of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the study area.

Table No. 11. Distribution of Opinion by Education towards the Awareness of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act

S.No	Education	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
1	Illiterates	7	15.22	15	51.72	22	29.33
2	Up to 10 th	23	50.00	9	31.03	32	42.67
3	PUC	9	19.57	4	13.79	13	17.33
4	Degree	7	15.22	1	3.45	8	10.67
5	Total	46	100.00	29	100.00	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field data.

Table No. 11 reveals the education wise distribution of respondents towards the awareness of 73rd amendment Act. It is evident from the table that the highest numbers (51.72%) of respondents from illiterates are not aware of 73rd Act. And the highest number 50.00%, 19.57% and 15.22% of respondents from 10th, PUC, and Degree as education level respectively are aware of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act.

The findings of the table are that the most of illiterate respondents are working in Panchayat Raj Institutions without understanding the provisions of 73rd Act. The most important finding of the table is that the respondents with minimum level of education and above are working in Panchayat Raj Institutions with the awareness of 73rd constitutional provisions.

Table No. 12. Education - Wise Distribution of Respondent's Opinion towards the Accuracy of the Existing Reservation Provisions in Panchayat Raj Institutions

S.No	Education	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
1	Illiterates	17	58.62	7	26.92	24	32
2	UP To 10 th	10	34.48	22	84.62	32	42.67
3	PUC	2	6.90	12	46.15	14	18.67
4	Degree		0.00	5	19.23	5	6.67
5	Total	29	100.00	26	100.00	75	100

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field data.

Table No. 12. discusses the education wise distribution of respondent's opinion towards the adequacy of the existing reservation provisions in Panchayat Raj Institutions. The table shows that the highest number 58.62% of respondents from illiterate opined that the existing reservation provisions are adequate. The majority of respondents i.e. 84.62%, who have studied up to 10th opined that the existing reservation provision in Panchayat Raj Institutions are not adequate and only 34.48% have satisfied with the existing provisions. The majority of respondents who studied upto PUC and degree respectively 46.15% and 19.23% are opined that the existing reservation provision are not sufficient in the Panchayat Raj Institutions.

The overall observation of the table is that the illiterate respondents in Panchayat Raj Institutions have not understood the reservation provisions and the respondents with educational levels such as 10th, PUC and Degree have understood the reservation provisions and they want to increase number of seats for SC, ST and OBC in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Table No. 13. Caste - Wise Distribution of Respondent's Opinion Towards Specific Earmark of Allocations and Expenditure for the Welfare of SC, ST, and OBC in Panchayat Raj Institutions

S.No	Opinion	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Total	%
1	Yes	19	76	7	70	30	75	56	74.67
2	No	6	24	3	30	10	25	19	25.33
3	Total	25	100	10	100	40	100	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field data.

Table No. 13 reveals the caste wise distribution of respondent's opinion towards specific earmark of allocations and expenditure for the welfare of SC, ST, and OBC in Panchayat Raj Institutions. It is evident from the table that the majority 76% of respondents belonging to SCs wanted a specific earmark of allocations and expenditure for the welfare of SC and STs in the institutions of Panchayat Raj, and 24% of respondents opined that their should not be a special earmark for SC and STs in Panchayat Raj Institutions. Respondents belonging to STs opined that the highest number 70% wanted a special earmark and 30% does not want a special earmark of

allocations and expenditure for the welfare of SC and STs. The highest number 75% respondents belonging to OBC wanted a special allocations and expenditure where as 25% are not in favor of special earmark for the welfare of SC and STs in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

The over all observation of the table is that the majority of respondents belonging to weaker sections wanted special allocations and expenditure for the welfare of SC ST and OBC's in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Table No. 14. Distribution of Opinion by Caste towards Their Reaction if The Funds Intended for Weaker Sections is not implemented by Panchayat Raj Institutions

S.No	Opinion	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Total	%
1	Yes	18	72	8	80	25	62.5	56	74.67
2	No	7	28	2	20	15	37.5	19	25.33
3	Total	25	100	10	100	40	100	75	100.00

Source: Compiled from the data collected from the field.

Table No. 14 reveals caste-wise distribution of representative's opinion towards their reaction if the funds intended for weaker sections are not implemented by Panchayat Raj Institutions. The table shows that 72% of respondents belonging to SC expressed that they will keep quite and 28% opined that they protest in different forms in case the funds from Central and State Governments intended for the welfare of these sections are not utilized by Panchayat Raj Institutions. The respondents belonging to STs, the highest number 80% of respondents opined that they will keep quite and only 20% of respondents will protest in various forms. The respondents belonging to OBC's, the highest number 62.5% of respondents will keep quite and 37.5% of respondents opined that they will protest in different forms in case funds intended for the welfare of weaker sections by Centre or State governments are not implemented.

The overall observation of the table is that the majority of respondents across the castes in Panchayat Raj Institutions are not committed for the utilization of funds given by Central and State Governments for the welfare of weaker sections.

7. Conclusion

Social inequalities existed in the villages and these have continued for centuries. Under these circumstances, soon after Independence the concept of social justice figured in the Indian constitution. Thus the constitution of India made an attempt to provide equal social opportunities for the development of personality of all the people in the society, without any discrimination on the basis of caste, sex or race. Therefore, after Independence, India was one among the countries which went in for social and economic transformation of the rural population. As a preferred condition, rural development became a definite strategy for the improvement of the living conditions of the rural poor. In this direction the Government of India made efforts to solve problems such as poverty, ill health, illiteracy, and backwardness of varied nature prevailing in rural areas, by giving greater attention to the uplift of the rural poor.

By this case study we came to know that the representatives belonging to weaker sections are able to implement welfare policies for the development of SC, ST and OBC in the study area. Due to the illiteracy and ignorance of weaker section's representatives, several welfare policies intended for the welfare of SC's, ST's and OBC's are not being implemented properly through the institutions of Panchayati Raj. Greater effort is needed for effective implementation of these policies for the welfare of weaker sections and bring them to the main stream and provide equal opportunity as stipulated in the Indian Constitution.

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Book Review

Subramanian, S. (2012), *The Poverty Line*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp XII + 174, Price: Rs. 195

Radhakrushna Panda

The measurement of poverty has gained considerable attention among the academicians, and policymakers. The book under review has attempted to provide a broad perspective on the facts and issues involved in the measurement of poverty with insights drawn from India's official methodology for poverty estimation and World Bank's global poverty estimates with some references to money metric identification as reflected in the official poverty estimates in the United States. In this direction, the evolutions of monetary poverty lines (money-metric poverty lines) are reviewed and revisited by the author¹ in various concrete historical settings. The issues and options in the book are analyzed through six dedicated chapters.

The first chapter, being the introductory chapter sets the scope and limitations of the discussion in the book. Poverty could be measured in unidimensional or multidimensional manner. The author in this book has reserved his choice of analyzing the unidimensional measurement of poverty, because the official methodology followed by the Planning Commission, Govt. of India has exclusively remained unidimensional and the multi dimensional measurement of poverty has come later in the literature of poverty.

The issue of the measurement of poverty is technically solved in two phases. In the first phase poverty among the households is identified and in the second phase poverty line is constructed. There are three widely employed approaches to conceptualize poverty which are Subsistence Approach, Basic Needs Approach and Relative Deprivation Approach. On the

¹ *S. Subramanian is a Professor at Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai.*

basis of these approaches, the poor are identified as those with incomes (or consumption levels) below a uniquely specified threshold. However, for determining poverty line 'Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) and 'Food Energy Intake' are found to be sufficiently compatible. Against such heuristic interpretation of poverty, Amartya Sen (1983) has also suggested the interpretation of poverty in absolute and relative terms. Very recently, academicians have come out with a fuzzy view of poverty which treats the extent of poverty between two extreme values of poor (1) and non poor (0), a binary outcome of the traditional poverty measure. The author has tried to capture all these complex technical issues of poverty measurement in a more subtle and reader friendly manner in Chapter-2 of the book.

The third chapter draws the Indian experience in the measurement of poverty quite exhaustively and sequentially during the post independence planned era. The author has documented the entire period of official poverty measurement exercises since 1960s till date. The earliest attempt at identifying poverty lines was undertaken by the *Perspective Planning Division (PPD) of the Union Planning Commission in 1962* which set first poverty line separately for rural and urban areas considering the balanced diet norm prescribed by the Nutrition Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). As general acceptability of such poverty lines was not encouraging, early 1970s constituted a period of intense controversy amongst academic practitioners on the subject of an acceptable minimum standard of living as required for estimating the money- metric poverty lines. An attempt to use money-metric poverty norm with a norm of nutritional adequacy was explicitly undertaken by two academicians *Dandekar and Rath in 1971*. They settled a new poverty line against the former. The Dandekar and Rath poverty estimates came to acquire a considerable standing in the Indian poverty literature.

The issue of specifying money-metric poverty norms for India was addressed again in 1979 in a Union Planning Commission *Report of the Task Force on Projections of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand*, as a part of Sixth Plan (1978-83) exercise. While the major focus of the task force was on projecting effective consumption demand, it also laid the ground work for an identification methodology based on nutritional norm like Dandekar and Rath. Task Force employed 2400 kilocalories per person per day in rural areas and 2100

kilocalories per person per day in urban areas. The calorie values for food intake of the households were calculated on the basis of the calorie allowances recommended by a Nutrition Expert Group in 1968.

Report of the Study Group on the Concepts and Estimation of Poverty Line (Planning Commission, 1984) recommended that the money-metric poverty line be derived by fitting a bivariate log-normal distribution to the joint classification of the population by consumption expenditure and calorie consumption. Among many other suggestions, the group had also suggested for revising the poverty line every five years on the basis of the NSSO's quinquennial data on consumption expenditure. Critics and academicians were very much suspicious of the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission on the ground that the estimated poverty figures are very much prone to statistical manipulation. Subramanian has made a detailed discussion of possible statistical manipulations for alternate poverty line.

As the country entered the final decade of a millennium, and there are a large number of maladies associated with the existing poverty estimation methodologies, Planning Commission in 1993 appointed an *Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor*. The key recommendations of the group comprised that 1973-74 be treated as the 'base year' and poverty lines just be updated for price changes over time so as to un-affect the consumption basket. It also recommended that state-specific poverty lines be obtained by applying state specific prices to the all-India 1973-74 poverty line; commodity baskets derived in accordance with the 1979 Task Force Methodology. Citing a number of independent studies, the author has identified the grave shortcomings of 1993 Expert Group Methodology.

For a considerable period of time, the 1993 Expert Group recommendations dominated not only the official approach to estimate poverty but also guided the works of independent researchers. In December 2005, the Government of India appointed another *Expert Group to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty* and the Group submitted its report in 2009. As per this report, the incidence of rural and urban poverty has been arrived at 25.7 and 28.3 percent respectively, which are often criticized as being too low. The author of this book has

carefully crafted the possible lapses in the methodology for which poverty estimates are found to be very much on the lower side.

In Chapter 4 of this book, the author has explored the US and the World Bank approaches for poverty estimation. The approach to identifying poverty thresholds for the US is closely associated with the efforts of Mollie Orshansky (1965). Orshansky's food basket comprised of the two lowest food plans so called low cost and economy plans out of four food plans stipulated by the Agricultural Department of the US Government. The low cost and economy plans reflect the food consumption pattern of the poorest third of income distribution of US people. The cost of food plan (low cost and economy plans) provides the food component of the poverty line. For determining the overall minimum standard of living, Orshansky by employing Engel's law arrives at minimum threshold income which is the money metric poverty line. The empirical propositions thereof are beautifully summarized by the author. In the concluding part of this chapter, the author has substantially covered the methodological issues relating to the World Bank's international poverty line (IPL) which is based on the national poverty lines of a set of the poorest countries of the world. This is to note that the World Bank has so far come up with three sets of global poverty estimates, all of these being head count ratios measured in money-metric fashion. The first, carried in the Bank's World Development Report (WDR) 1990, employed poverty line of \$1 per day at 1985 purchasing Power Parity (PPP). The second was in 2000-01 WDR, in which poverty line was \$1.08 per day at 1993 PPP, which was the median poverty line of 10 poorest countries. The third set of estimates were released in a World Bank working paper, employed a poverty line of \$1.25 per day at 2005 PPP. The author taking note of the doubts and concerns raised by many researchers notes that the world bank estimates of poverty are inadequate and lack comparison over time and space.

The author elucidates logically the sources of confusion and controversies around the poverty identification exercise in chapter-5 of the book. He takes note of the fact that all the poverty identification exercises undertaken in India, US and the World Bank by and large tended to specify the money-metric poverty line of a certain fixed and unique normative level of resources which separates the poor from the non-poor. All these measurement exercises deals

with relative measurement of poverty. On the other hand, the absolute deprivation method in the space of functioning as prescribed by Amartya Sen is intellectually sound but practically very difficult due to several constraints. Had Sen's methodology been employed, many controversies regarding measurement outcome could have been avoided. The author also endorses the 'Quintile Income Statistic' as prescribed by Kaushik Basu to avoid possible lapses in poverty measurement. The author remarks that this method incorporates a workable notion of 'inclusive growth' which is not vulnerable to the temptations of manipulation.

In the last chapter, on the basis of his own research experience on this specific issue, the author favours for the derivation of a set of realistic capability based poverty lines and to track a statistic such as the quintile income as has been suggested by Kaushik Basu. The author expresses his deep concern over the Tendulkar Report for postulating unrealistically low and substantially meaningless poverty lines.

The book provides a highly instructive account of the evolution of poverty measures, loopholes in the measurement techniques and possible solution to avoid bias in these tools in a reader friendly manner. The book is strongly recommended as required reading for researchers, analysts and policy makers engaged in the task of poverty assessment and rural development.

Book Review: “Maoists and Other Armed Conflicts”, Anuradha M.Chenoy and Kamal A.Mitra Chenoy, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2010.

Dipti Tamang

Abstract: This book gives a very well documented and a different insight of the idea of conflicts, militarisation and security issues. It seeks to move away from the homogenised, mainstream idea of nation and to look at the different aspects of nation building that has resulted in the different parts of the country actually being in a perpetual state of conflict. It looks at the multi-dimensional aspect of conflict and the state's approach to dealing with these aspects. The broad conclusion remains that democratic decentralisation and democratisation of the security approach is the only political solution to addressing and resolving these conflicts.

Conflict, human security, democratic decentralisation, militarisation, state

After sixty five years of Independence, democracy in the Indian context stands at the crossroads. As one of the largest standing democratic country in the South Asian region, India has a lot to uphold in the name of democratic values and principles. The question to be asked is where does India stand today in terms of upholding these values and principles? Has there been a practical implementation of these principles that has been enshrined in the Indian constitution? This book is an attempt to answer such crucial questions by taking up the internal conflicts in various parts of the country that is a stark reality confronting the Indian state.

This book seeks to offer a different perspective on the armed conflicts beginning by redefining the concept itself which is very different from the state's version. Such an attempt helps to analyse and view the areas afflicted by such conflicts in a different light. It brings into focus the loopholes of the mainstream version which has a uniform homogenous definition and likewise a uniform approach to resolve these conflicts. The major limitation of such an approach is that it fails to take into account the socio-political, cultural, economic and historical aspects of the conflict. This as such results in a limited, biased discourse which has limited solutions likewise thereby resulting in no concrete solutions. The authors discuss in detail the need to move away from the mainstream, security centric discourse toward a more

broadened democratised human security approach to find genuine political solutions to the conflicts affecting various parts of the country.

The book is divided into eight chapters with each chapter focusing on every aspect of armed conflicts. The authors, based on rigorous, dedicated fieldworks and concrete theoretical groundings, have as mentioned before sought to redefine the nature, problems and the possible solutions to resolve these conflicts. They have taken up the Kashmir issue, North Eastern grievances, the class based struggle of the Naxalite movement and even the Khalistan movement in places. A detailed description of these various conflicts brings to the forefront the difference in the nature of the conflict in the first place. Such an attempt breaks the homogenous definition of the same as put forward by the state.

In doing so, the reader gets an insight into the other side of the story which paints a different picture altogether. The authors stress upon the need to focus on the context in which these conflicts have emerged and the reason for the conflicts to have come up in the first place. The book also looks at the various models of conflicts and their relevance in terms of defining and finding solutions to the same. Having cited the existing models, they conclude that there remains a degree of limitations in all the existing models because they fail to provide a holistic approach. In doing so they seek to compartmentalise the whole issue and provide solutions in the same fashion which would provide limited solutions. All the mainstream models work within the framework of security approaches which defines conflicts in terms of threat to national security and therefore legitimises the use of force by the state to curb such threats which further prolongs the conflicts. The authors conclude that it is only when genuine political solutions are sought and the security approach is redefined to include concepts of human security that such solutions can be found.

The other chapters provide a detailed overview of the conflicts in the regions mentioned above. This provides the reader with a clear insight on the difference of these different conflicts, their bases, their purpose and objectives and most importantly the nature of these conflicts. Such an insight makes one realise that there cannot be one straight jacket approach to solving these conflicts and more so the limitation of the use of force to curb the demands of the various movements. The nature of the uprising in the North East is completely different from the one in Chattisgarh or in Punjab or in the areas of J&K. The state in trying to resolve these conflicts by using force has further worsened the situation.

The state's measures to resolve the conflicts have been within the framework of national security approach as has been mentioned before. Such an approach prioritises the use of force which is apparent in the case of the North East and Kashmir which has been placed under the Armed Forces Special Protection Act (AFSPA) which gives unlimited powers to the security personnel. Such acts have resulted in gross violation of human rights in places under the AFSPA. Despite numerous protests and appeals from various section of the society the state has shown no measures to repeal such draconian laws which has legitimised use of force by the state under the pretext of threat to national security and resulted in gross violations of basic human rights at every level.

The chapter on state responses discusses in details the procedures adopted by the state to deal with the conflicts. These measures are the counterinsurgency methods, National Security acts like the Preventive Detention Act, Maintenance of Internal Security Act, TADA, AFSPA, crackdowns, encounters, enforced disappearances, special police officers, and forces like the Salwa Judum in Chattisgarh which is backed by the state and mindlessly uses force to curb any form of resistance. Peace talks have often resulted in ceasefires but remains a very long and arduous process and non-inclusive. As a result concrete results are not achieved and the human rights commissions remain very ineffective due to lack of funds and resources. Such atrocities have further resulted in worsening the condition of the common masses in areas affected by conflicts as has been described in detail in the chapters that follows.

It has been rightly put by the authors that such measure taken by state results in the alienation of the masses that remain trapped between the insurgents on one hand and the state on the other. Lack of political will on the part of the state to work for providing even basic amenities further intensifies this sense of alienation which has its own repercussions. It is the common people who have to face the brunt of such high levels of militarisation, prolonged conflicts at every level. These areas remain affected by problems of high levels of illiteracy, underemployment etc. despite having very rich resources at their disposal. Extraction of such resources remains a topmost agenda of the state and various corporate houses which have full support by the state as well. The government support to these houses in the name of promoting development has resulted in massive displacement of the various tribal groups in these regions. Likewise, any funds coming in the form of various schemes are amassed by those in power which includes the local administrators, the politicians and the leaders of various insurgent groups as well who have a stake in prolonging the conflict as well.

As has been mentioned before, the common people remain trapped between the agenda of the state on one hand and the insurgents on the other. In the absence of concrete alternatives, they are left with none neither at the hands of the state nor the insurgent groups. However, since the state shows little sympathy to those trapped between such discourses, it becomes easy for them to join or be sympathetic to the cause the movements seek to achieve. The sense of alienation inculcated and strengthened by the state provides fertile grounds for the insurgent groups to mobilise and build up their mass base. This aspect of alienation has been described in great detail in the chapter on militarisation, human rights and alienation.

Men and women are both affected but at different levels by these conflicts. The reinforcement of masculine values at times of conflict remains out of the discourse on armed conflicts. The chapter on Gender and armed conflict seeks to address this issue and also to look into the engagement of women with such conflicts. The authors very clearly conceptualises the masculine ideology which is reinforced by the state in the name of the nation. Likewise, the data reveals how the armed groups reinforce existing gender stereotypes as well wherein women are seen inferior to men. This attitude fails to give credit to women who have played active roles which may vary from an activist, peace campaigner, cadre, comrade or armed rebel in these areas of armed conflicts. As a result women's potentials and contributions remain overlooked by both the state and the insurgents. Likewise, the sexual assaults and increased levels of violence against women especially at times of conflict as a result of reasserting masculine values have been out of the discourse on conflicts by the mainstream studies on armed conflicts.

The last chapter on civil society interventions highlights the role played by the various civil society groups engaged in bringing about peace and finding genuine political solutions to the various grievances of the people of these regions. The authors argue that the civil society group in India remains fragmented and weak nevertheless their importance cannot be overlooked. The greatest success of these organisations remains its autonomy from the state and the armed forces. The interventions by such groups cannot be discounted and can genuinely act as a bridge between the people and the state. However the success of such measures also largely depends on the political will and commitment of the state to address such grievances.

In conclusion, the authors have put forward the limitations of the democratic structures and the skewed measures of development. Instead of holistically addressing the conflicts the state

has resorted to the use of force and strengthening the control of the state. This further has resulted in the alienation and a sense of deep frustration, anger, humiliation, hurt and betrayal by the Indian state. There needs to be a political will on the part of the state to address these grievances holistically in the absence of which there will be no end to these conflicts. The government stands way behind in terms of providing basic amenities like education, health, employment etc. In terms of human rights, the state has a very sad record of observing these rights with the state showing no resolve of repealing the draconian laws like the AFSPA, PDA etc.

The state has sought to work within the framework of the mainstream approach and define security in terms of the national security approach. Such an approach results in the state treating these conflicts as a threat to national security. As a result of which the use of force is legitimised and approaches like encounters, arrests on the basis of suspicion is used. In such cases, many innocents have been arrested, tortured and disappeared as is the case in Kashmir. Likewise, families are harassed, publicly humiliated and women face sexual abuse, harassment at the hands of the security personnel. Rape and sexual violence against women is a stark reality in the conflict affected areas. This approach as such further distances the people and fuels the sense of betrayal and frustration. It is only when their grievances are genuinely addressed that there can be real long term success in ending these conflicts.

The state seeks to find a solution by portraying a homogenous picture of the nation and terming any dissent as “anti-national” and thereby using force to curb such dissent. Instead the state has to incorporate and accommodate such dissent. For this the state will have to work for decentralisation of the democratic process, initiate peace talks and show commitment and the political will to work with local actors, civil society groups to strengthen the peace talks and find concrete, political solutions. Demilitarisation is the utmost necessity without which the efforts would be futile. It is only when there is a deconstruction of this homogenous image to address the voices of dissent that Indian democracy will be a success.

