EMERGING PARADIGMS ON IDENTITY, SELF AND THE OTHER: AN EXPLORATION IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University for award of the degree of

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled " **Emerging Paradigms on Identity, Self and the Other: An Exploration in the Sociology of Knowledge** " submitted for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work and has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation and award of Ph.D. degree of this university.

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PREFACE

The journey of this thesis titled "Emerging Paradigms on Identity, Self and the Other: An Exploration in the Sociology of Knowledge" began with the realisation as to how little we engage with the ideas of contemporary Indian sociologists to systematically account for their thoughts and ideas. While there is no dearth of commentaries on thinkers particularly in the West, summing up their oeuvre and key ideas, there is a serious lack of such studies in India on Indian sociologists, who have written over the decades about varied issues of relevance that are debated with great enthusiasm world-over. Their writings appear to be scattered and as contextually positioned, and do not appear to us as a body of work that can be engaged with in a conceptual and theoretical manner. The lack of writings that provide an overview of their body of work often leads us to believe that we lag behind in conceptual, theoretical and methodological contributions to the discipline. It also does not allow us to consciously take cognizance of the positions that Indian sociologists take on a theme; neither does it alert us to the fruitfulness of juxtaposing the seemingly disparate body of writings of scholars writing on same issues, from within a shared social milieu. This study has made an exploratory venture to understand the merit of such an exercise by attempting to juxtapose writings on the theme of identity by four contemporary sociologists. The production of sociological knowledge involves self-image of the practitioners and is shaped by ideology. In keeping this in mind the study at hand has also tried to provide observations on the nature of scholarship of the chosen scholars.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Sociology while being one of the newer social sciences has been quite reflexive in its practice. It has been self-conscious of the nature and purpose of the knowledge that it creates. Such a consciousness however, has not been free of dilemmas and paradoxes in fact it would be incorrect to assume that this self-understanding has been homogenous and guided by one dominant, fundamental view about the discipline. As Singh puts it, "sociology in its voyage of self-discovery from the time of Comte to this day has not succeeded into realizing a unity of its paradigms" (Singh, 2004: 43). The dilemmas and paradoxes that arise from these competing paradigms are evident in the discipline's trajectory; they have caused the subject to be pulled in multiple directions and be characterised by polysemic concepts, multiple theories and diverse methodologies. These difficulties in looking for unities of paradigms aside, this study proceeds from within the framework of sociology of knowledge to understand the merit and scope of engaging with the discipline of sociology in India in a manner different from institutional histories and trend analyses, to a thematic analysis in which writings of scholars, addressing similar questions on the theme of identity, from within a shared context in sociology in India, that is placed between the 1970s and 2000s are juxtaposed. This is done to determine if these positions can qualify as paradigms; as such, they represent a shared set of concepts, theories, methodology and assumptions among the chosen scholars.

(I)

Sociology of Sociology

It was only in the 1970s that one of the earlier proposals for…

> "…a sociologically sophisticated rendering of sociology's own biography" was articulated by Robert Merton. Merton proposed an

analysis of the history of the discipline in terms of "the social context that enveloped and nurtured it, with attention to filiation of paradigms and the differential status of their advocates, their diffusion and subsequent modification and the impact of a given socio- cultural milieu at a given time" (Friedrichs, 1970: xix).

Building on Merton's call, Robert Friedrichs attempted to articulate a sociology of sociology. While doing so, he noted that the attempt was not aimed at outlining a singular and defensible paradigm for the sociological analysis of the discipline but, instead, to understand how sociology had advanced in the United States over the past few generations. Friedrichs' attempt was not so much a history of the discipline as it was an account of the imprints of the larger social milieu and its insights into internecine battles over its paradigmatic base. Drawing on Thomas Kuhn, he highlights the rise to dominance of the view of societies as systems in the 1950s, and contrasts this to the 1960s, when this paradigm and its implicit concern with social equilibrium was questioned, giving rise to a 'crisis' in the field.

Although there were several contenders for the status of 'paradigm,' the most prominent one was the conflict model. Friedrichs writes that Kuhn made an error in extending his thesis of paradigmatic revolution to social science, where interaction between scientist and society influences the very nature of social reality. He argues there is a fundamental dimension to paradigm choice in social sciences that is not present in the natural sciences. Since the social sciences have people as their subject matter (and the social scientist is a person) his subject matter includes himself; this is why a social scientist's paradigm choices are likely to be influenced by his own self-image. "The paradigms that order a sociologist's conception of his subject matter ... may themselves be a reflection, or function, of a more fundamental image: the paradigm in terms of which he sees himself" (Freidrichs, 1970: 56).

The two principal images that sociologists have had of themselves are that of the priest and the prophet. As the former, a sociologist sees him/herself as a pure scientist adopting a value-free approach to social phenomena. As the latter, a sociologist is a critic of society working within a larger social context

and committed to values external to science. Friedrichs believes that since paradigmatic disputes in the social sciences involve self-image (and those in the natural sciences do not), in order to understand the historical development of a branch on inquiry attention must be paid to both the relationship between paradigms and the subject matter and self-image of the inquirer. However, since the priest and prophet self-images continue to co-exist in social scientists, it is unlikely any single paradigm will attain pre-eminence in the future. This means the subject will likely be characterised by the ascendance of a pluralistic motif, consisting of competing systems and conflicting paradigms.

Speaking in tones similar to Friedrichs, pioneering works developed by R.K. Mukherjee (1979) and Singh (1986, 2004) in the Indian context have sought to address the imprint of social and historical forces of time on the categories of knowledge, their meaning, content and the methodology, and have given deep insights into the manner in which a paradigmatic analysis of sociology in India is possible. These seminal works, while talking about the contribution of trend reports in understanding topic-wise proliferation of the discipline, specialization and diversification, have led discussions to discern patterns within the discipline regarding place-time-people variations

Mukherjee (1979) outlines the way paradigms can be formulated to systematically understand the background to trends in Indian sociology. Such a paradigm, he writes, can be prepared by reference to groups preceding the trends in question and by asking five questions – What is it? How is it? Why is it? What will it be? And, what should it be? The differential emphasis on these questions distinguishes one paradigm from another.

At the start, he identifies four mutually distinct but comparable social groups. The first are social philosophers, whose perspectives exceed the limited scope of the place-time-people variations represented by their society. The second are policy makers and social reformers, who are only concerned with the society in question. The third are policy promoters, whose perspective, while being limited to a society, focuses on social questions different from those of policy makers and social reformers. The final category consists of proto sociologists, who emerge from already established disciplines like law,

economics, history, anthropology, etc., and whose focus on social questions is different from that of the others. These groups don't deal with the five fundamental questions in a rigorous or systematic manner, as is expected from sociologists. Therefore, the prefix 'proto' denotes the fact that they are ill equipped to undertake the task with the expertise and acumen expected of professional sociologists.

Mukherjee also suggested a classificatory scheme for sociologists who succeed pre-sociologists. This scheme saw the profession in relation to "(a) the historical periods which they represent, (b) their fundamental role vis-à-vis the discipline, and (c) their precise focus on social phenomena" (ibid: 17). There isn't much disagreement between the first two. However, the third parameter is often contested. He writes that although there are significant differences between the value preferences, theoretical formulations and research orientations of the sociologists he clubs under each paradigm, a broad-based analysis of convergences and divergences in their work brings out trends and patterns about the discipline. He begins with the pioneers who emerged through a series of structural and functional variations in society, and through variations in value preferences, due to changes in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The differential treatment accorded to resident British and Indians in terms of the conditions of living, discrimination in jobs, rights of citizenship etc., led to the Indian intelligentsia voicing its grievance. Various organizations set up by reformers, academic bodies and politico-cultural associations of Indian intellectuals sprang up in various parts of the sub-continent, and particularly in the Bengal, Bombay and Madras provinces, to provide a platform for the same. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Indian National Congress also became a platform from which they voiced their grievances. It was against such a background of economic, social and political contradictions that the pioneers in Indian sociology appeared on the scene with their focus on two questions - Why is it? And, what will it be?

Pioneers such as G.S. Ghurye, S.V. Ketkar and B.N. Seal, to name a few–were ardent nationalists. However, the range and focus of their questions extended

beyond thoughts of nationalism; they considered mankind as a whole. Indian scholars of this generation had just finished their education in Europe or the U.S. and had come to the discipline from various others. Consequently, they outlined different methodologies in their sociological investigations and laid emphasis on different facets of Indian society. They proceeded sequentially from occasional, but not insignificant expressions, of the proto sociologist's phase, a comprehensive picture of Indian society began to emerge from the attempts of the pioneers, which their successors were to portray in finer details. Despite the differences, often significant, that existed between the many pioneers, broad trends began to emerge. One of these was the statement, implicit or otherwise, that Indian society could not develop under colonial rule. Independence was necessary, then, for the society to develop. However, independence was not a goal in and of itself.

Since their discussions dealt with a wide range of phenomenon, they articulated value preferences rather elaborately and often posited theoretical formulations in a rhetorical manner. Perhaps for this reason, pioneers have often been dismissed as imprecise, speculative, unsystematic, unscientific and even other worldly in their approach to sociology as a rigorous discipline. Mukherjee argues pioneers comprehended social reality from historical, contemporary as well as futuristic perspectives, without restricting themselves to only the contemporary version of the phenomena under study. They, therefore, analysed Indian social reality systematically from different points of view in a manner neither imitative nor insular.

In the 1950s, the answer to the question, 'What will it be?' had been obtained satisfactorily. The question, 'What should it be?' was also formulated. This was evident in Jawaharlal Nehru's proposal to prioritise the economic regeneration of India. Such an overpowering ideology influenced the appraisal of social reality and consequently the growth of knowledge and action during the period. The situation in India in the 1950s produced some determining factors which influenced the development of sociology in the post-independent period. First, the political contradiction which stimulated the pioneers had been resolved and, in its place, a set of new values had been achieved and appeared to be stabilized by an enthusiasm to create a new India. As development and

economic regeneration became the main concern in this phase, social organization and the culture of people were studied in an isolated manner without taking into consideration the economic and the historical implications of contemporary social organization and culture.

In this phase, the points of contact between Indian sociologists and the West was primarily with Britain; the U.S. too, increasingly. The modernizers who came to the forefront of Indian sociology during the period were predominantly trained in social anthropology and rural sociology, following the dominant trend in British social anthropology and American rural sociology. The modernizers rejected the historical approach as pseudo-scientific and instead, adopted a structural-functional approach, guided by a positivist orientation, so as to be able to answer the question 'How is it?' and demarcate their contemporary role in society. India was an appropriate field to test the validity, relevance and efficiency of theories from the West.

Pragmatism was the dominant feature of social science research in India at the time and the modernizers were not concerned with theory formation. Instead, they chose to appraise reality in the light of theories handed down to them by their teachers and colleagues abroad. The majority of them moulded these theories to suit local conditions and describe social change in modern India. However, there was a gap between the modernizers and the pioneers that hampered the growth of sociological knowledge in India. The pioneers were forgotten by the modernizers, who portrayed sociology as a post-World War II phenomenon characterised by empirical research with limited terms of reference. The past was described as non-empirical, speculative and conjectural. Modernizers were interested in the social and ideological organisation of society and how it was operating and changing. Further to this, they were concerned with how the desired change could be induced among people. Modernizers, thus, went along with the prevalent political, administrative and economic theses. After the 1960s, statistical tools and techniques were accepted and acclaimed by leaders of the conceptually oriented modernizers. With the formation of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in 1969, scholars started to take notice of historical antecedents and economic content of social facts. There was no cataclysmic

alteration in the alignment of social forces between the 1950s and 1960s and this led to a steady reduction in the effect of the earlier prevalence of structural functional trend, and a spread towards the behavioural sciences. The period was marked by a consolidation of the cognitive-historical and Marxist trends exhibited by pioneers and pursued, although not dominantly, by the modernizers. The insiders of the 1960s were governed by both social forces in national and international contexts and, in turn, influenced social forces according to their aims and ability. An overview of this period projects the idea that the insiders of the 1960s operated in a mode and manner consistent with an appraising social reality from a decade earlier, but with a greater specialization of the discipline and diversification of thematic content. The period was, therefore, understood as a harmonious one.

However, the gradual decline in economic determinism led to a growth in attention to social relations of production and the corresponding complementary and contradictory relationships among people in various aspects of their life. This demand, writes Mukherjee, could no longer be met by the sociology of the 1950s and, consequently, there were deviations towards alternatives. Thus, the insiders emerged– from a realisation that the kind of sociology advocated and accepted by the modernizers could no longer understand the dynamics of Indian society or reveal Indian social reality. This inadequacy was pointed out at two levels – first through a critical evaluation of the success and failure of the modernizers and their followers to explain social phenomenon, and second, through an examination of lacunae in the topics covered in examining society.

The impact of the behavioural approach emerged in a marked way– it led to diversification and specialisation within Indian sociology (Mukherjee, 1979: 80). Newer specialisations, such as political sociology and analogous specialisations such as the sociology of conflict and peace, the sociology of nation-building, etc., emerged. In addition, the fields explored earlier were scrutinized from new perspectives. These alternatives, however, did not seriously affect the trend persisting in the 1960s. This is so because the concern with change remained constant and the schema of tradition to modernity propagated in the 1960s by leading Western scholars, was

acknowledged by most behaviouralists in India as providing the platform from which to appraise social reality within an inter-disciplinary framework of theories, concepts, methods and data.

The 1960s represented the incubating phase for the emergence, a decade later, of nonconformists who, in due course, began to look back and examine the question, 'Why is it?' They were prompted to do so by a growing dissatisfaction with prevailing trends in the discipline. For his part, Mukherjee distinguished between two kinds of nonconformists – those with and those without commitments.

He describes the former, as those who advocated that social research must have a social function relevant to both present and future contexts. Consequently, such sociologists (and their research) were action oriented. The study of social movements gradually gained currency in this period since they were asking after both reasons for the emergence of movements and their possible outcomes. The latter kind of nonconformists– those without commitment – subscribed to general, abstract and universal values; they were closer to the pacemakers in championing generalised ideals. Non-committed non-conformists did not conform to an ideology or support a practice and were more concerned with maintaining a critical outlook.

The second half of the 1970s raised the prospect of a resolution of ideological differences between pacemakers and nonconformists. The latter group, drawn from diverse ideological orientations, entered into a dialogue with the pacemakers and began participating in joint ventures in ICSSR and Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) projects. The reward from such collaborations was better coordination between theory and research – something evident in more critically conceived concept formations, the search for new avenues through which to appraise social reality and the reconsideration of method for study of society. For instance, instead of the earlier schema of tradition and modernity, or modernisation of tradition, the structure of tradition gained prominence.

The ICSSR planned studies to develop social indicators that could be applied to Indian social realities. Regional sociology was revived. These were

instances of attempts to coordinate theory and research on a more precise, comprehensive and unequivocal base than before (ibid: 130). However, consolidation of sociological knowledge in this manner was more formal than functional, as there was a constraint imposed by the predominant tendency in Indian and, for that matter, world sociology, to pursue first order coordination of theory and research. First order coordination could only lead to an understanding where differential ordering of cause and effect of facts are understood as producing alternative ways of explaining a phenomenon or an institution. For instance, Marx and Weber, through very different ordering of cause and effect of the facts at hand, postulated two very distinct alternatives to explain the caste system in India (ibid: 130-134). However, at the primary level of first order conceptualisation, it is not possible to infer the relative power of explanation and prediction that each alternative allows with regard to contextual reality. Instead, it is left to the subjective judgement of proponents of various alternatives to qualify the merit of one over the other (ibid: 133). In such a scenario, all alternatives appear as valid and relevant. However, at the second order, these are no longer seen as the primary units of analysis. At this level, variables are considered as units of analysis. Each alternative is seen as a distinct configuration of variables representing a distinct social space and all possible combinations among them produce an infinite, but enumerable, series of alternatives of which those under examination are samples. It is only at the secondary level of analysis of alternatives on an inductive base– making use of the null hypothesis– that their relative powers of explanation and predictability, vis-à-vis contextual reality, can be comprehended precisely, unequivocally and comprehensively.

Mukherjee writes that this kind of analysis is seldom undertaken and, for the most part, analysis is restricted to first order analysis which imposes a constraint on further accumulation of sociological knowledge and corresponding comprehension of social reality, which may even have a drastic consequence for the development of sociology in the near future (ibid: 134). If the discipline restricts itself to first order analysis, each alternative will merely appear as demonstrating oppositional value preferences. While he notes a rising concern in the discipline for meta-theory, he notes that the

methodological requirements for undertaking such an enterprise are not usually given adequate attention. It is still thought to consist of another theory rather than of a transmutation, engineered through the consolidation of all available and possible theories which is its objective (ibid: 141).

Aversion to mathematics and statistics among sociologists in India leads to avoidance of such second order analysis. Mukherjee concludes that the nonconformists of the 1970s would have to effectively attempt to bring Indian sociology back from its imitative tendency of the earlier decades and take it forward. To do so, they would have to remove gaps between theory and research in order to create conditions for a non-dogmatic, non-doctrinaire and non-metaphysical appraisal of social reality, leading to the accumulation of a body of sociological knowledge that would constitute a power in itself to influence the possible outcomes of social processes. In other words, a critical threshold of sociological knowledge, based on place-time-objects specific to the Indian context, generated through inductive-statistical studies, is an essential step for mature sociological paradigms to develop. This sociological knowledge broadens the scope for a more precise formulation of theory, something that was diffuse in the period before the 1950s and imitative or non-existent since then. The systematic and unconstrained examination of facts and values as variables would pave the way to the discovery of objective definitions of developing and developed societies and from here the development of world sociology could be examined. It would also elicit any distinctive characteristics of the Third World, which currently is understood as a mere repository of theoretical knowledge from the West (ibid: 142-3).

While Mukherjee's analysis went beyond a historical account of sociology opening up the discussion on paradigmatic analysis of sociology in India and was significant in its contribution, his insistence on the inductive-inferential approach and use of the null hypothesis to take cognizance of the development and growth of sociological knowledge was not adopted by those attempting a similar analysis of the discipline. A possible explanation for this could be seen in Mukherjee's insistence that various alternative understandings of a social phenomenon should be seen as distinct configuration of variables ordered differently and only when a few chosen samples out of the infinite

combinations were assessed could one understand their relative ability to explain the given context in the most precise way. Such an understanding of actually existent social reality is contestable, especially in a subject such as sociology, the subject matter of which, as Friedrichs pointed out, involves self-image of the practitioners and is shaped by ideology. In his search for alternatives that most succinctly explain the existent reality, Mukherjee lays stress on 'What is it?' and advocates, at the end of his thesis, the question What should it be? The ideological overtones are evident in his final consideration of praxis and in his search for an Indian sociology.

Singh (1986) presents an approach based on the sociology of knowledge framework and refers to it as the social conditioning of Indian sociology. The social conditioning of the discipline becomes evident in the choice of paradigms, substantive areas of research, definitions of the contexts, question of relevance and acute sensitivity to using the framework of history and tradition in the interpretation and construction of social reality. Each of this is shaped by the prevalent historical and social conditions (Singh, 1986: 103). His account focuses on the socio-historical influences that shaped the discipline from the period prior to independence and up to 1985.

Prior to independence, notes Singh, sociology in India had limited spread and scope. Most substantive contributions during the period were made by British administrators-cum-social anthropologists, who wrote on aspects of structure, customs and traditions, lifestyles and languages of people and their social economy. The analysis during the period was influenced by utilitarian positivistic orientations and this led to an understanding of Indian reality from within an evolutionary scheme where the tendency was to downplay the historicity of Indian institutions and civilization. The Orientalists, however, were an exception to this as they looked at Indian reality from a textual perspective and evaluated its spiritual heritage with much enchantment. The main interest of the British administrators/social anthropologists was in introducing institutional reforms commensurate with their utilitarian ideology. This enthusiasm for reform, however, mellowed after the revolt of 1857. The pioneers during the 1920s and 1930s challenged the validity of looking at Indian institutions from a universal evolutionary schematisation, neglecting

historical specificity and civilizational depth. Others found limitations in attempts to analyse Indian social structure from an atomistic-individualistic frame of reference that was incompatible with the communitarian-holistic principles of Indian social organization. The pioneers also criticised these studies for not being concerned with issues of development and social change and noted their overemphasis on continuity.

In the post-independence period, many major changes took place in the cognitive structure and substantive concerns of Indian sociology. During the 1950s, British and European influence on Indian sociology declined and there was an ascendance of American influence, both in academic and political domains. This influence was also palpable in paradigms of social and economic development. In this paradigm, the focus was on the motivational reinforcement of people for development rather than structural changes in their social and economic relationships. Substantive studies on villages, community development projects in rural and urban centres, studies of political institutions, processes of institutionalisation, voting behaviour and more emerged. All of these were broadly related to the process of social and economic development through nation-building. Theoretically, the functional paradigm of analysis of social reality reigned supreme. The quest for relevance assumed a new urgency in terms of models and strategies of development of Indian society. During the late 1950s and the 1960s, a debate began on the theme of sociology in India. This debate helped Indian sociologists reach a level of self-awareness and was carried on in the journal '*Contributions to Indian Sociology*' edited by Louis Dumont and David Francis Pocock. The original debate between Dumont and Pocock on the one hand and F.G. Bailey on the other, was primarily about the former arguing that Indian sociology was essentially a sociology of the Indian civilisation and that it ought to focus on ideo-structural categories while drawing on Indology. The latter argued that sociology must study actual behaviour patterns, social roles, and structures from an empirical perspective and not restrict itself to textual representations of Indian society. This debate continued and was construed as a debate about the choice between a particularistic versus universalistic paradigm for sociology in India.

The mid-1960s marked a significant turning point. Developmental models with a focus on motivational reinforcement began to show cracks without suitable support from structural changes in society. While the fruits of development were usurped mainly by the privileged classes, relative deprivation of weaker sections increased in substantial measure. The ensuing contradictions in society rendered the functional paradigm redundant. Functionalism, by then, had also been challenged in the West. The period coincided with a degree of alienation in Indo-U.S. relationships. These developments led to a quest for alternative paradigms for understanding Indian social reality as well as formulating a programme or strategy for India's social and economic development. This emerging identity consciousness was symbolised in sociology in the debate on a 'sociology for India'. The indigenisation of sociological concepts and paradigms commensurate with the historicity of Indian reality emerged as its major themes. The period was marked by an appearance of paradigms such as structuralism, ethno-sociology, Marxism, historical-structural paradigms and typological systemic perspectives, as opposed to the earlier dominant functionalist paradigm that was no longer found to be useful in the study of Indian social, economic and cultural structures. An important feature common to all these paradigms was the context of tradition, which was considered in the analysis of social change.

Two factors which were dominant during the early 1970s in Indian sociology, and gained strength during the 1980s, were the focus on social structure in terms of concrete processes rather than forms, and the emphasis on history and tradition. These orientations gained momentum during the 1980s, when studies increasingly began to cover the areas of social movements, processes of mobilization, re-structuration of social roles, statuses and institutions in the process of modernization and development in society. The social movement studies brought innovations into sociological paradigms and methods of observation such as techniques of sociological historiography, theories of collective behaviour, modernization and development, etc., In all these developments, the structural-historical and Marxist perspectives emerged as pre-eminent orientations. The studies on movements gave an impetus to a processual rather than a formal treatment of social structure. It has also led to a

greater degree of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary interaction, particularly with history, political science and psychology. This contributed to a greater application of conflictual or dialectical paradigms for social analysis on the one hand and necessitated paradigm mixes on the other, such as Marxism with structuralism, functionalism with phenomenology or ethno-sociology, etc.

The 1980s were also characterised by a focus on the process of restructuration in society due to technological, educational and economic forces of modernisation. The economic and educational growth in society, aggravated relative deprivation, social and economic inequalities between the rich and the poor and generated social contradictions which often took violent forms. This led sociologists to study processes of social mobility, stratification, conflict, and violence with special reference to classes, castes, and other social categories in the deprived stratum of society. Critical theory, Marxist and social history were increasingly applied to the analysis of the modernisation process.

Singh notes the social conditioning of concepts and paradigms of Indian sociology becomes visible in differences of perspectives on Indian social reality at various points in time. It also becomes evident in the manner in which issues of relevance were postulated at different periods. Singh's framework of social conditioning bears out the significance of ideology and the milieu in theorising in sociology in India.

In a later essay on *'Ideology, Theory and Methods in Indian sociology'*, he attempts a review of the growth of the discipline in India from the perspective of dominant theoretical innovations, changes in methodology and technique in the period between 1952 and 1977. He proceeds to do so from within the framework of sociology of knowledge, couched within the context of history. History, he argues, provides an essential backdrop for a theoretic, ideological and professional evaluation of the discipline and a context to understand the cognitive and paradigmatic tensions in Indian sociology.

Since its inception, Indian sociology has been marked by theoretical and ideological tensions. One such is between master theory (or general theory)

and the universalism of concepts and propositions vis-à-vis their particularism or contextuality. Sociologists' commitment to one or the other standpoint has varied, due to changing historical circumstances and the understanding of the "calling of sociology" during a given period. This is further related to the other critical tension within its cognitive structure– that of the role of ideology in theory construction (Singh, 2004: 97).

These cognitive tensions were experienced by sociology in India from the beginning. However, in the period between 1952 and 1977 they fluctuated significantly in response to the force of history and existential coordinates of knowledge. Singh reviews the theoretic direction and the changing structure of ideas during this period by dividing it into four smaller periods: 1952-1960, 1960-1965, 1965-1970 and 1970-1977. The theoretic orientations that held prominence during this span are listed as philosophical, culturological, structural and dialectical-historical, respectively. He adds that none of these existed in a systematic form. In fact, most operated as styles of analysis or quasi-formal systems of conceptual schemes (ibid: 98). While Indian sociology in the stated period was characterised by the predominance of one or the other of these theoretic and ideological systems, the discipline, like other parts of the world, did not show a succession of paradigms. Instead, there was co-existence of competing paradigms and theoretic orientations. During the stated period, Indian sociologists were preoccupied less with constructing master theories and more with using conceptual schemes for analysis of social problems. Most remained satisfied with…

> "…using conceptual schemes and where they did use general theoretic systems their writings did not show any awareness of it, as for most part they emphasized and remained focussed on the comprehensiveness of substantive analysis from an ideological position, rather than paying attention to the relative power of theoretical systems" (ibid: 98).

Sociology in India has been characterised by a tendency among its practitioners to self-critique and self-assess subjective and ideological issues

that shape their choice of tools and techniques and research strategy[1]. However, he adds that despite being conscious of their ideological positions in operationalisation of concepts and theories in research designs and techniques, they do not quite reject the norms of scientific methods. The use of history, documentary data and reflexive insights are preferred in more recent sociological research. Indian sociology has had a close interaction with other social sciences, and this has influenced its orientation. In particular, it has had close relations with political science, social anthropology and history.

It becomes clear from Singh's account that there are normative and ideological constructions about societal reality at a particular time period from which sociology draws its categories and domain assumptions. He refers to this as the worldview, which, for him, provides a suitable entry point into the question of the relationship between social thought and sociology (Sujatha, 2010: 38). The historicity of the location of the social processes, values and institutions constitutes the foundation on which a sociological worldview is grounded. However, theory requires some kind of analytical abstractions and, because of this, a tension between grounding conceptual and theoretical formulations in the domains of values and the need to understand and explain the nature of social realities always plagues the task of a sociologist. This is an inner tension which continues within the discipline (Singh, 2004: 28).

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[1]Methodological orientations in Indian sociology raise ideological issues just like theoretical ones. The logic of inquiry, philosophy of science, techniques of operationalisation of concepts, tools of research, problems of measurement, verification and validation and issues of universality and particularity all raise ideological issues. Ethical issues also shape methodologies. In the 1960s, sociology in India was dominated by participant observation and survey research and, to some extent, historical methods. Like Mukherjee, Singh writes that while survey design using statistical models were common, the use of mathematical models was rare. Between 1960-1970 and 1970-1971, there was a trend towards structural analysis from a historical and comparative perspective. These types of study relied more on observational case historical and documentary data. Marxists studies on agrarian structure by economists of the period used higher mathematical techniques but, in sociology, quantitative methods never quite gained popularity. In fact, in studies on social movements there was a negative reaction against using quantitative techniques of research.

Both Singh's and Mukherjee's writings show how responding to the changing dynamics of society tempered the theoretical preoccupations, methodological preferences, interaction with other social sciences and professionalization of sociology in India. It was, by then, quite clear that an Indological approach based on Sanskrit texts gave an inadequate and limited view of the Indian subcontinent and a field view offered a closer view of Indian realities and the social processes set in motion, and that it was high time attention to state formation, urbanisation, industrialisation and economic growth become the focus of sociological envisioning in this part of the world. The view of Indian civilisation as a Hindu civilisation in the structuralist view of Dumont and Pocock was not only oblivious to its plural religious culture – Jain, Buddhist, Christian and Islamic – but also undermined the significance of economic and political institutions in this part of the world.

Experiments with co-operatives in Maharashtra (Baviskar, 1980), the Bhoodan movement (Oommen, 1972) and the non-Brahmin movement in South India threw up issues of economic and social organisation conventional Marxism could not envisage.

By now, sociology in India had gone past both Sanskritic / Indological impulses as well as nationalistic orientations. Historians, meanwhile, were busy reshaping Marxist premises to understand peasant movements and tribal struggles in colonial India, giving rise to the subaltern school of thought. This led some to question Indian modernity and draw from other disciplines and engagements, such as subaltern studies, post-colonial studies, etc. Alongside this, theoretical positions emerged from feminist and Dalit studies to question and refashion some basic categories of sociology. Important questions also emerged from North East India, which challenged categories of nation and caste. Mukherjee's and Singh's frameworks give us an idea about the developments until the 1980s, by which time the debate in the '*Contribution to Indian Sociology*' journal on the formal significance of caste system to the understanding of Indian society was over.

The post-modern and post-national turn in global academia has led to an overt recognition of diversity. Chaudhuri writes that this can be discerned most

tangibly in the rise of cultural studies in the West. Closer to home, the nationalist framework has been critiqued from the margins, either from the vantage point of caste, religion, region or tribe. These critiques have exposed the dangers of cultural nationalist hegemonies as well as posited professionalism against nationalism[2]. Till the 1970s, the modernisation paradigm held its ground and shaped sociology in India. It was assumed then that there would be a natural progression towards the secular and the rational. However, since the 1980s and the 1990s, due to the emergence and growth of a liberalised Indian economy in a globalised market, there was a growing assertion of identity politics raising questions about an "unmarked nation and a secular modernity" (Chaudhuri, 2014: 105).

Another distinct attribute of the period after 1990s has been the rise of multiple sites of sociological research outside of universities and state-funded research institutions. Corporations and development sectors today are active producers of sociological knowledge. Such a development has made the context conducive to the growth of practical methods of data collection oriented to serving specific research problems. While analysis gains salience in such a context, theorisation might take a backseat (ibid: 94). Another crucial development that is essential to take note of in a discussion on the contemporary backdrop providing insights into the social conditioning of the discipline post-1980s to the present is the presence and rise in western Academia of people from erstwhile colonies. This has led to an increasing visibility of the Indian diasporic communities in the production of sociological knowledge. This has added more formulations of theory and method beyond Western postcolonial theory and cultural studies, which have their limits (ibid: 120). The practice of sociology is an approach that seeks to understand the discipline from pedagogic practices and institutional histories and agendas. While this is important to set the context of the discipline, a theoretical exegesis bringing out the conceptual thrusts and developments in sociology is also urgently needed as the discipline was inaugurated at universities in this subcontinent a century ago.

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[2]T.K. Oommen remarks that the main concern of the pioneers of Indian sociology was to Indianise sociology and not professionalise it. (Oommen, 2007: 122 c.f. Chaudhuri and Jayachandran, 2014: 94)

The contexts from within which sociology emerged should not be simply understood as a background but should be seen as being constitutive of knowledge as articulated seamlessly in Singh's social conditioning framework. It is here one finds that while several accounts of disciplinary history and mapping of research trends within the discipline in India have been attempted, little has been done to take into account and consolidate, from within the existing body of sociological research, the theoretical orientations, methodology and conceptual tools formulated to understand Indian society.

A review of available literature reveals most of the earlier disciplinary histories being written as completely coalescing with institutionalisation of the discipline in the country[3], especially so in case of the earlier accounts mapping the growth of the discipline. These accounts focused on how the discipline separated itself from the erstwhile shadow of social anthropology and established itself as an independent discipline with a separate department.

There have also been accounts which, starting with the rise of the discipline in India in 1919 and its rapid institutionalisation and visible presence in several Indian universities thereafter, have tried to engage with and provide critical insights into the discipline's core claims and contradictions, which are essentially related to the specificities of its origin and growth in the Indian context. Patel (2011) highlights two distinct and dominant positions that have structured sociological traditions in India – colonialism and nationalism– and the related methodological and theoretical questions that have characterised sociology owing to its antecedents. The essay, using sociology of knowledge perspective, presents events, processes and institutions that have influenced and structured historical and spatial differences and similarities across intellectual traditions within the discipline.

In another volume, she examines the discipline of sociology and tries to clarify, evaluate and reconcile contradictory claims concerning its identity. She asks whether that identity is to be viewed in terms of the methodological

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[3]For instance, Dhanagre, D.N. (1993) *Themes and Perspectives in Indian Sociology*, Rawat Publications; Atal, Yogesh, (2003) *Indian sociology from Where to Where: Footnotes to the History of the Discipline*, Rawat Publications; Motwani, Kewal. (1971) *Towards Indian Sociology*, Satish Book Enterprise, to name a few.

traditions of social anthropology and theoretical orientations of sociology or, alternatively, as an interdisciplinary social science. Will this identity follow sociological traditions constructed in Europe and the U.S. or will it create indigenous perspectives? Is the subject's professional orientation a question of academic discipline restricted to teaching and research within academic institutions or is it a discipline committed to public or radical political concerns and its geographical compass (Patel, 2010: 281).

Institutional and intellectual practices in sociology in India, which are distinctively skewed particularly with regard to teaching and research, have also been mapped systematically[4]. In these accounts of disciplinary history, "doing sociology" in India has been emphasised and an engagement with everyday practices and an active involvement in broader questions has been discussed extensively.

Some of the more recent discussions have tended to revolve around institutional legacies. The histories of various "schools" of Indian sociology have been outlined, demarcating their dominant frameworks and the contributions of the thinkers associated with these schools. However, D.N. Dhanagre notes that most such departments can be placed in the category of schools only as centres of study and research and neither as schools that have developed a distinct and unique theoretical approach and perspective of their own nor as centres or departments in which faculty and students have engaged themselves in paradigmatic research (Dhanagre, 2011 c.f. Patel, 2011: 152-3).

In close relation to these accounts emerged discussions on relevance and identity of the discipline. The initial years evoked among the Indian thinkers either a need to reject the discipline as a colonial product or, alternatively, the need to contextualise it in the Indian milieu and make it more relevant for Indian society. Debates about indigenisation thus gained prominence and a plea for contextualisation of the discipline in the Indian context was made. Such engagements have continued well into the present.

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[4]Maitreyi, Chaudhuri. *Sociology in India: Institutional and Intellectual Practices*. Rawat Publications, 2010.

Madan (2011) discusses intellectual traditions in Indian sociology. He writes that Indian sociologists have generally been more concerned with social forms and processes rather than cultural traditions, with interests rather than values. This is due to the separation of sociology from cultural anthropology; a division he considers a Western import (Madan, 2011: xiv). He sees intellectual traditions evolving approaches to their study, in the context of sociology in India, and in that rejects the idea of a universal sociological tradition. This he outlines through a discussion on the approaches of four exemplars of sociological tradition in India– Radhakamal Mukherjee, D.P. Mukerji, M.N. Srinivas and Louis Dumont.

Thakur (2014), writing on the quest for Indian sociology, dwells on the work and approach of Radhakamal Mukerjee and, in doing so, writes that his work provides a different narrative of sociology in the years preceding and following independence. It gives insights into the fact that we may need to rework what generally passes as proto-sociological or pre-sociology of sociology in India in the mainstream histories of the discipline (Thakur, 2014: 175). He argues it would be more fruitful to look at intellectual history and the social history of ideas in demarcating a debate for Indian sociology. He turns to some of the recent debates on indigeneity of sociology in India. The discomfort with various implications of the term he observes has led sociologists to 'flatten' varied knowledge traditions.

> "A mere recognition of the matrix of power that has organized global divisions is no substitute for the collective quest of indigeneity in individual and national traditions. The presence of the various voices and the plurality of traditions do not automatically render any search for indigeneity precarious and culturally hegemonic" (ibid: 167).

The quest for indigeneity must foreground reciprocity in intellectual exchange and knowledge production. It must move beyond the realm allotted to us by the West. It is essential to not be overcautious and circumscribe the validity of our studies. Instead, one must write with their own societies in mind but look at analytical conclusions derived as applicable to all societies.

Uberoi, et. al., (2007) have attempted writing disciplinary histories by writing the history of the institutionalisation of the subject through the life and professional activities of twelve pioneers and, by doing so, have drawn specific attention to the development of sociology and social anthropology in the Indian context and the role played by these individuals in remaking the discipline in a different socio-cultural locale. The essays bring out the richness of the contribution of pioneers, their trajectories and their shared concerns. These life histories reveal the wider social contexts in which the disciplines grew and reflect the upper caste and gender bias in the kind of people who came to occupy positions of influence in the discipline, with almost no sight of Dalit, Christians or tribal sociologists and only one woman among the pioneers. The account provides a non-linear discussion of the discipline's trajectory and does not attempt to tell a story about "successive 'paradigm shifts' from one form of 'normal' knowledge to another" (Uberoi, et. al., 2007: 10). Like many new histories of the social and behavioural sciences, which were written as guided by the Kuhnian discussion on the history of science, the volume drawing on Edward Shil's formulation that no Asian intellectual is so Westernised that they wouldn't have traces of "the indigenous traditional culture in their outlook, in their tastes and social relations, in their self-identification, or in their loyalties" (Shils, 1972: 377 c.f. Uberoi et al. 2007: 25) He notes this is what distinguished American or European anthropology of the same period from the kind of sociology and social anthropology practised by the scholars under discussion.

Accounts of disciplinary history, then, need to be distinguished from ones which seek to attempt a paradigmatic analysis of the discipline in order to understand its conceptual and theoretical orientations. In the likeness of what Robert Merton writes, histories of the discipline should be distinguished from its substantive, theoretical, conceptual and methodological content. In the words of Merton, it is essential to separate the history of the discipline from systematics of its theory. Simply put, systematics of theory is understood as utilisable sociological theory and while histories do provide a context to understand the growth and development of theory, concepts and

methodologies, they can't substitute for the insights into extant theory and nor can they provide a prelude to theory development in future.

> "If sociologists are to be effective and not merely pious, if they are to use earlier formulations of theory rather than simply commemorate them, they must distinguish between the scholastic practice of commentary and exegesis and the scientific practice of extending antecedent theory. And, most important, sociologists must distinguish between the distinctive tasks of developing the history of sociological theory and developing its current systematics" (Merton, 1968: 38).

In our discussion above it has become evident that history is essential to understand the larger backdrop. Further to this, it is argued by some that Indian sociology is at times afflicted by amnesia and while there is too much reflection on current practices, there is too little focus on historicising. It can, therefore, be safely concluded that a systematic study cannot be attempted without an understanding of that history; albeit this is not a history that merely outlines a chronological account of growth and development.

It is clear from the foregoing account that while we have a sociology of sociology and the history of sociology in India, apart from works on doing sociology in India, the attempts seem to stop short of a theoretical exploration into substantive contributions as distinct schools of thought. The feeling or belief that there are no major conceptually distinguishable schools of thought due to the eclectic and metaphorical approach to theorisation in Indian academia could be a reason. It is also possible the belief that theorisation is valid only if it is indigenous, i.e. not drawing or referring to Western frameworks, is another reason.

(II)

Proposed Study

Sociology in India has from its very beginning been characterised by a disciplinary angst regarding a lack in theory building and concept making.

Singh's account on theoretic orientations between, roughly, the early 1950s and the late 1970s, as discussed above, brings to the fore quasi-styles rather than formal theory. A.R. Vasavi (2011), in her review of the state of the discipline in India, points out the discipline has been unable to generate new and comparative theories and, in this regard, has fared poorly as compared to more innovative and creative social sciences like political science.

A. Raghuramraju (2011) makes a similar argument writing in the context of modernity that Indian social theory has not quite been able to rise to the occasion and capture the complexity that pervades Indian society. There are differences between Indian and Western society and much of the theorising in India has failed to account for this. The use of social theory in India has remained skewed as Indian social theorists have used Western theories without properly grasping their background philosophy. Oommen (2007a), writing about sociology for India, opines the effort has been with regard to postulating a set of concepts and theories suitable to study Indian social reality. Some of the recurring questions posed by sociologists have been around what the appropriate units for sociological investigations in India would be. How far have Indian sociologists succeeded in developing a conceptual baggage and a set of theoretical propositions which are relevant for India? Do Indian sociologists give adequate attention to the specificity (historicity) of Indian social reality? To what extent have Indian sociologists been victims of academic colonialism? So on and so forth.

Oommen (2007a) writes that the response to these questions can be broadly classified into five kinds – traditionists, nationalists, nativists, cosmopolitans and radicals. Each of these responses, in Oommen's view, represents varying perspectives and multiple orientations of the discipline's practitioners. They reveal an identity crisis faced by sociology in India. To escape this crisis, he suggests sociological knowledge needs to be contextualised. Reflecting on the reasons for lack of innovativeness and the consequent crisis of relevance in Indian sociology, he writes that while it is widely accepted developments in social science in the West largely occurred as a response to transformation in Western societies, in the Indian case, while secular trends such as *Lokayats* and

Carvakas, which denied the existence of soul, or the *Samkhya* school of thought which was initially atheistic, emerged, they largely stayed as museum pieces and never quite became social forces and powerful ideologies (Oommen, 2007a: 38). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the anti-imperialist movement gained a footing but, as a corollary to this, it was important that indigenous values and institutions be sacralised, "as is evident from Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj*, Bankim Chandra Chatterji's *Ananda Math* and Maithili Saran Gupta's *Bharat Bharati*" (ibid: 39). While the Western was being demonised, the sacralisation of the indigenous values was only partially functional in that the sources of sacralisation were Hindu texts. This did not appeal equally to the Adivasis, Dalits, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Dravidians and Sikhs (ibid). While post-independence, on the one hand, led to the rejection of Western political dominance, on the other the political institutions of the West, their economic and social values, ideals of secularism, democracy and socialism gained salience and acceptability. Oommen writes that at this point it was important to desacralise ancient Hindu institutions and values and re-sacralise constitutional values, "so as to bring about a judicious and creative reconciliation among the two" (ibid). It is in the failure to achieve this that he locates the crisis that sociology in India is facing. In other words, the failure of sociology in independent India is because it has not been able to adequately anchor itself in a set of relevant issues. If sociology is to be relevant for India as a discipline, it must endorse, and its practitioners must internalise, the value package contained in the Indian constitution. "Indian sociology can and should play a critical role in the process of national reconstruction as a part of its commitments to broader human concerns" (ibid: 40).

This is possible through contextualisation. The process of contextualization in sociology in India, according to Oommen, involves recognition of the fact that tradition and past contain both assets and liabilities. People should reject the liabilities and accept the assets. It also means India must not resist learning and adopting appropriate values and institutions from other societies and cultures and should judiciously graft them on to its own society. It must be also taken into consideration that the tendency of Indian society is to change through gradual adaptation and reconciliation and that such an ethos is capable of

bringing about social transformation only at a very slow pace. Finally, social engineering involved in the selective retention of traditions and informed borrowing from other civilizations and judicious mixing of the two would have to be a process peculiar to India (ibid: 40-41).

Chaudhuri says there is a pattern in the way theory has been discussed in the Indian context, whether it is for the discipline at large or with regard to conceptual history of feminism in India or Dalit scholarship, which expresses anxiety regarding lack of theorisation about the specificity of their predicament. Such a concern, she observes, is indicative of the discipline's self-reflexive nature and demands an engagement with conditions and modes of knowledge production and not just an examination of knowledge as an end-product (Chaudhuri and Jayachandran, 2014: 88-89). A useful way, then, to address such concerns is to make explorations in substantive areas and their analysis for instance, caste, gender, religion, community and modernity in India, all of which provide rich grounds for engaging with theorisation and conceptualisations.

However, a survey of substantive works after the 1980s suggests there are convergences on the central object of analysis and the most suitable framework to study these objects in Indian sociology. These discourses emerged from the realities and socio-political thought of the times, even as they allude, refer and draw on conceptual frames and schools of thought from the West. There is intellectual innovation and cognitive realignment in analysing and explaining macro trends and entities in the social arena, choosing relevant facts and relating or interpreting them in terms of broad conceptual frames from outside. Several dimensions of these exploratory discourses on themes such as state, culture, structure and subjectivity have been creatively synthesised to address the emergence and social experience of the Indian and South Asian region. This thesis is an attempt to engage with such creative conceptual works in sociology since the late 1970s.

Newer substantive areas open up newer theoretical and conceptual interrogations and forms of analysis and, while Indian sociology is seen as lacking in exclusive writings on theory, its search for categories that can

articulate the "Indian reality" and provide analytical insights which are universal, is not absent. Therefore, there is a need to highlight the kind of theory and methods at work in varied substantive areas. How are these theories and methods are linked in actual practice and how are concepts appropriated and nuanced?

It is imperative, before proceeding any further, a discussion on the study at hand is provided. The present study does not attempt to provide an exhaustive review of trends in the discipline nor an attempt to trace the history of the discipline; this does not mean the nature of analysis is ahistorical. Instead, it attempts an exploratory investigation into writings on a chosen theme, so as to understand the merit of paradigmatic consolidation of writings on that theme in an attempt to take cognizance of theoretical orientations, role of ideology, location of scholars, individual orientations and differential responses to similar events to map the cognitive and the extra-cognitive factors that influence production of knowledge.

(III)

<u>'Identity': Trajectory of the Theme in Indian Sociology</u>

Partha Nath Mukherji observes we begin with the widespread belief that Indian sociology has not theorised, and has not produced, its own sets of concepts and tools. Increasingly, however, this view has been questioned. Distinguishing indigenisation from parochialisation, he writes India has much to offer to global theorising. There is a popular but mistaken notion among social scientists and civil society actors that theorising in the social sciences is a waste of time - that it is remote from ground realities as facts speak for themselves. This, he notes, is…

> "…a dangerous fallacy which needs correction. Modernity, nation-state, multiculturalism, pluralism, democracy all provide a rich ground for examining and discerning lack-of-fit (or the goodness-of-fit) between the explanatory power (or the power of comprehension) of extant theories and paradigms, and the empirical ground realities. It is

important to remain steadfast in our efforts to comprehend and explain reality through ever-more efficient theoretical abstractions and methodologically rigorous empirical research that would help us to conceptualise and generalise beyond the context" (Mukherji, 2008: 276).

Drawing from Indian historical practices, he revisits many concepts critical to any comparative study, such as rights, nationalism, nation-state, globalisation, democracy, multiculturalism and social movements, to argue the West could gain from South Asian realities, particularly from India. Sujatha and Sengupta (2014), talking of a case in point, refer to writings by Chattopadhyay (2004) and Uberoi (2003), in which they note the author's discussions about notions of justice, ethics, democracy, human rights and civil society, respectively, have broken the dichotomy between modern and pre-modern (Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014: 173) and studies that seek to make an exploration and consolidate such thoughts, stand to gain much from it.

As stated above, the present study proceeds to make an exploratory investigation to understand the merit of paradigmatic consolidation of writings on the theme of identity that have not only gained centre stage in discussions of Indian sociology over the last few decades, but are linked to discussions on modernity and tradition, social movements, democracy, nation-state, culture, citizenship and civil society, all of which have been identified as sites for theoretical and conceptual explorations in Indian sociology (Mukherji, 2008; Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014; Chaudhuri and Jayachandran, 2014). It is imperative to begin by drawing the backdrop against which the chosen thematic emerged.

Between 1980-1990, which the ICSSR report on social movements states as a "decade of maturing dissent of the contending collectivities and their assertive expressions in Indian society," a wide range of questions and issues on peasant, tribe, gender, worker and industry, ecology, regional autonomy, sub-nationalism, etc., were seen bursting on the social scene of Indian society. The studies on social movements during this period contributed to the understanding of polymorphous expression of claims and contestations in

democratic struggles of various groups who contested for equality and social justice. While many forms of classical old movements, such as peasantry and tribes, continued to persist during the period, the transforming representation of contemporary Indian society threw up 'new' forms of conflicts and social structural conditions. The struggle of women and Dalits against structures of domination, demands of sub-nationalism and ethnic identity and those in defence of environment and human rights expressed some of the emerging 'new' forms of movements and collective mobilizations in Indian society (Singh, Rajendra, *Third Survey of Research in Sociology and Social Anthropology*– Volume 2, 2000: 102).

Most studies during the period suggested these movements were a specific form of social, cultural and symbolic upsurge, directed not so much towards materially determined class goals as towards non-material values of social equality, status and recognition, dignity and justice in a democratic set-up of the welfare-oriented society of contemporary India. The issue these brought up were far removed and could no longer be conceived as matters of economic relative deprivation nor be addressed or studied in the conventional economy-centred frameworks of modernisation.

During the decade before, i.e. starting from the 1970s, there were already discussions on crises of governance, ethnicity and politics, rural agitations and farmers' movements in India. These recognized the combined effects of Emergency and post-Emergency rule, as well as the undermining of certain institutionalised forms of politics. However, despite nepotism, corruption, casteism and communalism, there seemed a general acceptance of certain codes of political behaviour, the most important being the reliance on adult franchise. It was clear that caste, race or religion would not be eradicated as a consequence of liberalism but instead be strengthened to function as pressure groups. It also became clear that policy mediations could take place through cultural representatives without directly featuring in the individual. Modern states found this to be a far easier way of conducting political negotiations, especially when dealing with the problems of the underprivileged. In fact, the category of the poor, or the people, seemed to have been effaced and replaced by communities of various kinds and denominations (Gupta, 1995b: 74-75).

The very nature of democracy is such that questions of rights framed in languages of identity gain salience. As Charles Taylor (2010) writes, "modern societies no longer understand themselves as embodying an order which is rooted in the cosmos, or which comes to us since time out of mind. They are self-consciously created in founding moments when constitutions were designed and adopted. They see themselves as established through choice to serve the interests and aspirations of their members. These societies are the fruit of what one might call "mobilization". In an age of mobilization, societies are seen as built by a conscious, rational process. For that genus of modern societies which see themselves as entrenching the norms of democracy, equality, and human rights, exclusion is an obvious evil. Democracy, or popular sovereignty, generates its own kind of pressures towards exclusion. In the democratic age individuals identify as free agents that is why the notion of popular will plays a crucial role in legitimating ideas. This means that

> "the modern democratic state has generally accepted common purposes, or reference points, the features whereby it can lay claim to be the bulwark of freedom and locus of expression of its citizens. Whether or not these claims are actually founded, the state must be so imagined by its citizens if it is to be legitimate. So, a question can arise for the modern state for which there is no analogue in most pre-modern forms: what/whom is this state for? Whose freedom? Whose expression?" (Taylor, 2010: 13-15).

This, then, provides a counter-narrative of democracy whereby the growth of modern political identities actually creates new forms of divisions and conflicts, leading to new kinds of oppression or exclusion. The rise of interests and research on the thematic of identity, therefore, needed for it to be located within the context of modern democracies, nation-states and questions of citizenship.

Jodhka (2001) writes that questions of culture, community and identity, which came to the forefront of social enterprise in India because of the rise of "new" social movements, made it clear that studies in identities were to be couched in the interplay between social structure (studied in different ways) and culture by

factoring in the state and its various projects in the decades following the 1980s. Such a shift was dealt within two very distinct frameworks. First, that of state-perpetuated development, wherein it was argued these movements are merely problems of transitions which would eventually disappear with the spread of development. Secondly, within a framework of culture and civilisation where it was argued that state-guided development projects were alien to, and disruptive of, virtues of traditional culture that have held things in balance for centuries. So, the search was for more effective civilisational resources which were to be found in traditional structures rather than institutions of modern state, in order to understand identarian assertions and disputes, and allowed for the development of better adjusted and accommodative personality. These two frameworks assumed paradigmatic status as most of the writings about identity during the period were framed within these.

The first of the two frameworks that addressed the questions of identity can be seen as resonating in the writings of Preston, who, speaking from within a classical tradition of European social theory, writes that the notion of identity is central to the classical social scientific tradition with its concerns to analyse complex change within the system in order to advance the modernist project. Notions of human identity and political-cultural identity more particularly, are a part of socio-theoretical analysis since they form the basis of provisional claims about the nature of humankind on the lines of which analysis of complex change within the system are made. If identity is understood as the way in which we more or less self-consciously locate ourselves in our social world, the substantive business of identity can be unpacked in terms of ideas of locale, network and memory. Identity is the outcome of a complex series of social processes. It does not arise spontaneously but is learned and re-learned over time. Understood as such, identity does not express an essence but an acquired set of characteristics. It becomes clear from this that aspects of identity have multiple readings and presentations. Since identities here are understood to be socially constructed, it is assumed they can either be changed through intervention in locale and network or through reordering of memory. Seen in this light, identities are understood as tied to fundamental structural

patterns of social organisations and matters of personal choice and disposition. In the historical shift to the modern world, political identity and institutionally secured order and legitimacy came to revolve around nationhood, statehood and citizenship. The modern state emerged as a sovereign juridical institution laying claim to a specific territory within a network of states and citizenship stressed membership of a community of political equals. In sum, paradigmatically a modern polity came to be a state within whose boundaries a nation of citizens lived. Hence, all questions of identities then needed to be cast in the language of the nation-state and its intervention in reshaping them to forward the project of the nation (Preston, 1997: 10-11).

The second of the aforementioned paradigms framed the discussions on identity by privileging traditions and communities over structures of the state. Jayaram (2004) observes that in a country that has functioned for centuries with the "material and ethical superiority of the collective over the individual, the contradictions resulting from its encounter with Western liberalism and individualist philosophy" have complicated the dynamics of identity. The conscious acceptance of this philosophy, namely the idea of the individual as a social atom, a citizen with the franchise as ingrained in the liberal democratic ideology, has made it difficult to ignore the constraints of collective orientation of Indian culture. Despite the adoption of a liberal democratic framework based on individual rights, the collective community identity has continued to be important in India. Then there are the perils of the fixity of community identities and this needs to be juxtaposed with the fact most people in India continue to see themselves as having plural selves. The bicultural identity of communities such as *Meos* and *More Salam* Rajputs undergo stress in the light of Hindu-Muslim identity politics and the growing assertion of fixed identities. In the Indian context, therefore, more than multiculturalism and syncretism, what seems to come to the rescue is the notion of a society where identities cross-cut each other and "others" are telescoped into one's own self (Jayaram, 2004: 140).

What is noteworthy is that identity has been invariably discussed in conjunction with community, even as community has become a fuzzy concept far from the definitive one it once was in sociology. The play of community

identities when resources and symbols are involved often results in frequently violent conflict. Conflict between communities reinforces their identities and hardens community boundaries. It is the burden of the state to ensure community identities and interests are protected and communities do not engage in conflict with each other. However, given the nature of democratic politics, the state and its machinery either cannot or does not act as an impartial referee, often acting in a manner that serves its political interest the best. This dynamic of identity with relation to community and conflict is illustrated by the studies in India over the past three decades (Jayaram, 2012: 44-55).

The notion of tradition has become intertwined with notions of identity politics and has gained newer strands in the recent years. While studies focusing on relationships between modernity and tradition have been present in sociology in India since the 1960s, the manner in which questions regarding this were raised in earlier decades is distinctly different from how they have been raised in the last decade of 20th century, when confidence in notions of progress and development have been shaken. When aligned with the notion of modernity, it has been debated if traditions should be thought of as having an antagonistic relationship with modernity refusing mutual translatability. Or should it be understood as giving insights into different ways of evolving strategies of survival? There is increasingly an emphasis on culture which is not alien to, or dismissive of, the way of life of the ordinary people. An influential body of literature has suggested tradition is central to the organisation of democratic polity and creation of a public culture[5].

In recent years, the thematic of identity has also been discussed through concerns raised regarding marginality and belongingness vis-à-vis the state. Emotional connections, it is argued, are critical to our sense of being. Thapan (2010) writes a sense of belonging is shaped by affective relationships within the family and the community but also by state-sponsored institutions and activities. Marginality maybe experienced through differences based on gender, race, ethnicity and social or economic status, as well as religious and

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[5] For instance, Madan's critical writings on secularism and fundamentalism in contemporary India.

linguistic affiliations. To experience marginality is to experience exclusion, in some form, from the mainstream. That states implement exclusionary practices in conferring citizenship in their treatment of new citizens or minorities of various kinds is well documented. Both, body and emotions, as well as cultural representation, may be deployed in actions of resistance by those who are denied access to the collective identity of the nation. Das and Poole write about narratives from margins of the state, as stories of exclusion and beyond it. Anthropology of the margins, they note, offers a unique perspective to the understanding of the state not because it captures exotic practices but because it suggests such margins are a necessary entailment of the state (Das and Poole, 2004: 4)

The construction of identity is pitched at different and often overlapping levels – the nation, region, language, religion and caste/tribe. Depending on the context, individuals invoke different identities at different times. An individual may be ascribed/denied a given identity, irrespective of whether s/he agrees with it. Bilgrami (2006) articulates notions of objective and subjective identities. While objective identity is how one might be viewed independently of how they see themselves in the light of certain biological or social facts about them, subjective identity is what one conceives oneself to be. Only those subjective identities become important which are a part of intensely held self-conceptions. He, thus, formulates a working definition of identity as "politically relevant and intensely held desires that their possessors reflectively endorse- this looks like a good, initial working definition of 'identity'" (Bilgrami, 2006: 7). Bilgrami looks at internal and external reasons for identification and discusses conditions by which something becomes an identity, imparting characteristic in a subjective sense.

Sujatha and Sengupta (2014) point out that concepts of subject and selfhood seem to be a point of convergence for various concerns, relating to polity, culture and community, which could be understood simultaneously. A good number of writings focus on the emergent subject in relation to the state, ethnic background and cultural orientation, outlining the dynamics of concentric and conflicting modes of selfhood and subjectivity. This idea has led to insightful conceptualisations in this part of the world, which have enhanced the notion

further by contextualising it in the complex socio-political terrain of postcolonial societies. This notion, they explain, has been explored by researchers within everyday life and critical events, and through experiences and memories of violence. Through the writings of Das, Chatterji and Mehta, they address the question of the emergent self as it negotiates violations and violence of "events" which are beyond the ordinary, "holding the poisonous knowledge of violation, betrayal and the wounded self from seeping into the sociality of everyday life" (Das, 2007: 102 c.f. Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014: 180). Chatterji and Mehta's account of the riots in Dharavi, following the demolition of the Babri Masjid, juxtaposes the narrative of the local against images of nation-state and Hindu-Muslim animosity, and delves into how sociality is made possible at the level of everyday life amidst violence. In this, they look at the community as an open-ended association rather than a fixed social group (ibid). Closely linked to this, and in contradistinction to the notion of a situated subject, is the discussion on the creation of the "political subject," striped of any identities and reduced to bodied subjects in relation to the state. The authors also discuss how the issue of subjecthood and identity is shaped when elements of the life-world of ethnic and tribal communities is presented in relation to the state and nation, and how political identity gets delineated from the lived experiences of the life-world. Experiential knowledge, rooted in ontology, is also invoked in the debates around whether lived experience of oppression is essential for anyone to take the cognitive/intellectual position of Dalits and the counterview that denies essentialisation, suggesting theory has been ontologically blind (ibid: 180-183). Sujatha and Sengupta (2014) point out how problematic the tension between lived realities of different communal and ethnic groups in a given space, and the administrative, public or political construction of that identity is found in many writings after the 1990s, foregrounding the notion of a subject poised in the interface of polity, culture and the community. It remains to be seen whether any one aspect will take precedence over the others. This discussion on subjectivity brings to the fore the various dimensions within which issues and questions related to identity and selfhood have been articulated in the Indian context in recent decades.

Most recently, between the years 2003-2010, one observes an increase in focus on issues of identity and culture and studies of its various emerging dimensions with use of new conceptual and theoretical paradigms, as well as studies of the interface of globalisation with emergence of new social, structural and cultural formations such as the Indian diasporas, its linkages with international mobility of communities and classes and its emergence of new self-consciousness of identities (ICSSR Research Surveys and Explorations-Volume 3, Singh, 2014: 18).

(IV)

Emergence of Paradigms on Identity, Self and Other

It becomes clear from the previous section that discussions on identity unlock a gamut of related sites where explorations can be attempted to nuance our understanding of theorisation, conceptualisation and methodological innovations in sociology in India. It is, therefore, a potent site for exploring the stated research questions. It also becomes apparent from the foregoing discussion that over the decades the discussions on identity in the Indian context have diversified. However, addressing each of these varied contexts is a task beyond the scope of this study. Thus, while the study proceeds with the awareness that questions of identity have been and continue to be posited and explored in sociology in India in ways other than in relation to the nation-state, it delimits itself to the decades between the 1970s and early 2000s because it is in these decades that questions of identity were predominantly posed within the context of the nation-state vis-à-vis that of tradition and culture in the most pronounced way, as to suggest the crystallisation of distinct paradigms. This is not to suggest discussions on identity in this context were exclusive to the period under study. Such discussions have continued well into the present, as is evident in the aforementioned discussions on marginality and belongingness vis-à-vis the state and in the creation of the "political subject," stripped of any identities and reduced to bodied subjects in relation to the state. The socio-political ramification of identity questions in India were brought forth sharply, and most creatively and polemically, through different perspectives on the

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same object of analysis first during the mid-seventies. Identity was no longer conceived of as a fallout of economic and development related inadequacies.

Scholarship on identity in India has been vast and disparate, depending on what level it has been couched in with regard to the interplay of social structure and culture, modernity and tradition and the focus on objective or subjective identity. In the decades under study, identity became a key concept in negotiating between the state and its citizens. Even as they alluded to international, specifically the Western historical experience, these studies were alert to the situation in India and ingeniously wove them into broader conceptual frames. Questions of tradition and modernity were discussed within the larger framework of the nation-state as either trying to modernise traditions in the face of new identity-based claims, as emanating from sense of deprivations, or alternatively trying to argue for a culture-centric or tradition-based approach which could discuss the category of nation-state as alien and disruptive to the ethos of Indian culture and search for more culturally relevant models of state which had traditionally been a part of the Indian civilization.

We identified distinct and polarised positions on similar issues amongst a set of scholars who were more or less contemporaries and who influenced their next academic generation. In the thesis we focus on this small set of scholars in order to highlight details of their conception of the object, intellectual positioning, articulation through conceptual language; this by no means implies others were not writing on these questions but that a comparable pattern was discernible in the writings of these chosen scholars as to indicate an intellectual conversation or debate though it was not wholly overt and explicit. The four scholars whose writings are identified for the purpose of this study as representing the varying facets of this debate are Ashis Nandy, J.P.S. Uberoi, André Béteille and Dipankar Gupta.

Nandy writes that the idea of nation-state, progress, and development arrived in India through colonialism. Over the decades, the idea of liberal democratic governance has been accepted by several countries in the world. India has been no different. It has been argued that liberal democracy is the suitable form of governance both for managing the modern state and for mediating the forces of

rapid economic and cultural change in all societies. Such a view has ensured the third world is at the receiving end of the global system and has no option to opt out of the global system; the best it can do is try to adapt. Many of these societies have had their own civilisational pasts of evolved, complex forms of governance where the rulers, though not directly dependent, retained the legitimacy of their rule through a layered structure of authority that accommodated various interests and identities in the society. These political and cultural traditions, however, have been marginalised due to the processes of colonisation, Westernisation and modernisation. These societies have not been able to use their own traditions in developing political institutions of democracy but have had to make a break from their pasts and choose forms of democracy evolved elsewhere. In Nandy's writings, culture emerges as the critical force shaping selfhood. Purging cultural and religious values from public life and polity could lead to distortions by which it returns in a clandestine manner.

The second position is represented distinctly in the writings of Ubeori, who has articulated a non-dualist reading of modernity in Europe and India and proposed to understand the self-other beyond the dualist framework. He proposed a graded and continuous relation between the self and the other, expressed best in the language of "oneself," wherein the small others are understood not as being different but as parts of the self. As a position, then, Uberoi's writings represent a non-dualist reading, i.e., a rejection of the simple principle of opposition between homogeneity and heterogeneity often understood as equality and inequality (understood as such in the other two paradigms) and acceptance of the other pair of possibilities – that of mutually active cooperation and complementarity. It is this principle of cooperation and complementarity that has been neglected in discussions on European modernity and needs to be brought to the fore, as he does in his oeuvre, through a discussion on Sikhism and Gandhism, which he refers to as integral to understanding Indian modernity, as it is in this that the alternative way forward is articulated best since it rejects state-established religion and religion-established state as enemies of civil society and proposes an indigenous combination of religion and politics.

In distinct contrast to the aforementioned thinkers, this study posits the writings of Béteille and Gupta, who are seen as representing a largely structural reading of identity wherein questions of self and the other are seen as mediated through the language of the 'Big Other,' or the state and its institutions. These thinkers, while differing in their understanding of democracy and its modalities, questions of ideology and social movements and the role it plays in a democracy, largely subscribe to a framework marked by subservience of culture to the state. Their writings on the theme are consolidated and examined carefully to outline what we refer to here as the 'statist' paradigm.

In addressing these three distinct articulations on identity, self and the other, and in the larger questions of culture, traditions, nation-state, citizenship, civil society, communalism and secularism in India, this study, as an exercise in the sociology of knowledge, tries to address how and why scholars writing on similar questions, often using similar empirical contexts, have developed different approaches and schools of thoughts on the subject. It seeks to understand if it is possible to identify, delineate and consolidate paradigmatic positions on identity, self and the other in the socio-political context in India after the 1970s. The study, in juxtaposing them, tries to delve into questions regarding the substantive aspects of theory in sociological writings in India. Such a paradigmatic analysis of a thematic is explored to understand if it could be fruitful in accounting for theoretical, conceptual and methodological growth in the sociology in India.

The theoretical, methodological and conceptual orientations that emerge provide nuanced insights into the distinctiveness and shared quality of these positions and the tacit dialogue between them, which is often neglected by accentuating one aspect of the position at the cost of the other. The study does not claim to be exhaustive in its scope and limits itself to the discussion of a select set of writings, which allows delineation of distinct theoretical, conceptual and methodological orientation.

(V)

Framework of the Study

The study is organised within the wider framework of the sociology of knowledge. While the study undertakes a thematic mapping, simultaneously there is also an understanding of overt and covert categories, domain assumptions and ideologies that have shaped these discussions. Singh's (2004) idea of worldview gains relevance in this context and provides a suitable entry point into the question of relationship between social thought and sociology at any point in time. In the course of his essay, Singh shows how beyond importing concepts from Western sociology, Indian sociology has also developed its own distinctive discourse. The present study attempts to travel beyond the histories of the discipline of sociology in India, the systematic of sociological theory or use of theory in research (used here in the Mertonian sense), both as borrowed as well as contextually tempered categories, within the particular thematic of identity, self and the other, and, in doing so, hopes to provide insights and a way forward with regard to growing concerns regarding fragmented or dearth of theoretical development in the discipline, as pointed out by some scholars over the recent years.

As Ritzer (2000) writes, such a systematic study of paradigms may lead the way to attaining a deeper understanding of extant theory and provide a prelude to theory development in the future. Keeping this in mind, the purpose of this study is neither attempting a disciplinary history nor the development of a new sociological paradigm, but the delineation of already existing paradigms in order to attempt an analysis of the discussions on identity in Indian sociology in a coherent fashion, through a review of select texts of chosen thinkers who have written extensively on identity and in whose writings this theme came to be articulated clearly and in distinct ways from earlier periods.

(VI)

<u>Research Questions</u>

The broad research questions are:

- ➢ Have approaches in Indian sociology crystallised around key positions on certain themes? In other words, could we talk about schools of thought and paradigms in Indian sociology?
- ➢ Can identity be understood as a theme which has been explored in multifarious ways through various substantive studies in India in the past decade?
- ➢ What are the major schools of thought on identity and how do we classify them?

(VII)

<u>Research Objectives</u>

Following from this then, the key research objectives for the study are as follows:

- ➢ This study seeks to understand the wider contexts in which identity in India has been written and discussed about in the period between the 1970s and 2000s.
- ➢ It seeks to understand if, following from sociology of knowledge framework, one can identify scholars and groups of scholars who write about identity in a similar way, sharing vocabularies and conceptual categories.
- ➢ It further seeks to identify, isolate, explore at length and consolidate these writings into distinct positions on the subject.
- ➢ The study, therefore, does not attempt an articulation of new positions but tries to delineate existing ones in order to understand the merit of juxtaposing similar and different articulations on the subject to get theoretical and conceptual clarity and insights into distinctiveness and overlaps between seemingly disparate writings on the subject.

> The study proposes to be an exploratory exercise in providing an alternative way of reading disciplinary trajectory beyond intellectual histories and institutional moorings.

(VIII)
Rationale for Selection of Thinkers

As discussed above, the study delves into paradigms that emerge distinctly on the theme of identity, as articulated vis-à-vis culture and nation-state in sociology in India, during the stated decades. It is imperative to add here that this sample is not exhaustive, as the theme has been discussed in varied ways by several other thinkers during the stated period. The study at hand, however, restricts itself to a search for paradigmatic positions on the subject and, in that, chooses four thinkers whose body of work represent three paradigms that address questions of identity, self and the other within the framework of nation-state and culture in India beginning from the 1970s. The writings of the chosen thinkers engage with themes of modernity and tradition as co-opted by discussions on nation-building and its challenges encountered by the nascent Indian nation-state. Culture appears in each of their writings as a counterpoint to the nation-state. The writings of the first thinker -Nandy- engages with culture as a resource and site of alternative politics, and brings back into the discussion the resilience and importance of rejected Indian selves who have been marginalised by the dominant and hegemonic discussions of westernisation, modernisation and development, but who, nevertheless, provide resources to the masses for everyday negotiations with the draconian state and its alien ideology. The writings of Uberoi examine the pluralist ethos of the Indian society and offer a discussion on religion, state and civil society where the three are not conceived as separate spheres, independent in their functioning, but where religion and politics are seen as coexisting and interacting in non-dualist, non-Western avatars in the sphere of civil society. Uberoi's discussion of continuity in these spheres draws on multi-dimensional self-development where self-transformation contributes to world transformation. The sphere of civil society, understood as such, no longer

remains a modern invention but a sphere where individuals through service and sacrifice contribute to the collective good. Such a discussion offers a middle ground between Nandy's culturist position and the position of the next two thinkers – Béteille and Gupta – whose writings represent a paradigm which articulates identity, self and other as mediated by the modern state and its democratic institutions. In their theorisation, tradition and culture compromise the 'telos' of modernity as they carry within them primordial ties and hierarchies which, when brought to play in the domain of the Indian nation-state, lead to the undermining of democracy and its institutions. This compromises the ethos of democracy. In Gupta's writings, then, the other becomes a part of one's self not through categories of religion, tradition or culture but through a shared fate which is possible by achieving fraternity as citizens within the institutions of democracy. The three paradigms together bring to fore the interplay of culture and the nation-state and offer insights into the innovative use of categories to offer a robust explanation of the Indian experience with state, democracy, civil society, multiculturalism and secularism. The sample is not representative of the universe of sociological writings on identity, self and other in the period under study but it offers specific case studies within each paradigm.

There were many other developments in the nineties with regard to discourses on identity of tribal and Dalit communities and feminists problematising gender identity. This study has only been able to account for them in a limited manner through the writings of the chosen thinkers. It must also be added that the four thinkers, their career biographies, institutional affiliations and location are not too diverse and that the omissions and silences on their part at times reveal a shared background.

(IX)

Methodology of the Study

The research methods best suited for conducting the study at hand included extensive library research and sequential sessions of in-depth personal

interviews with the chosen scholars over a period of 10-12 months, after reading their body of work. The interviews mapped the career biographies of the scholars so as to provide a background to their location as a scholar and take account of their professional associations, both academic and otherwise. Following a broad mapping of the trajectory of the scholar's oeuvre, the contexts from within which the thinkers explored the theme of identity were identified. Texts were selected on the basis of their relevance to the thematic under study. The selected writings were read carefully in order to understand the varied contexts and the overlay of the thematic in that context. This allowed for an understanding of larger debates within which these works could be located. Simultaneously, it also allowed for terms, concepts and neologisms, if any, to emerge sharply from within these contexts. The interviews with the thinkers helped discuss the contexts of their writing and the debates they were responding to and clarify the relevance of the concepts used in the texts addressing the thematic at hand. It was found that while some concepts were carefully arrived at through mindful deliberations, others were not. On some occasions, concepts were found to be borrowed and used only in selective connotations. However, this is not to suggest that newer concepts were not introduced by the thinkers. While some concepts have been used consistently in their writings, many others appear in varying connotations, denoting different meanings at different points in their writings. Furthermore, selective and complete allegiance to intellectual influences appears and renders their writings interesting for an exercise in the sociology of knowledge. The study engaged with selected essays and analysed them thematically rather than chronologically to reveal a clear structure of the thinker's trajectory that allowed for an understanding of their specific concern within the contexts in which they have written about identity politics.

It is imperative to mention here the interviews were conducted with Béteille, Gupta and Nandy. However, to outline the non-dualist paradigm the study primarily used selected texts by Uberoi and the LUCE transcript on '*The Role of Religion in Global Civil Society: A South Asian Perspective*', dated September 2010 (available online) as it outlined Uberoi's position on civil society and religion, which was of interest to this study. The study also does

not provide a detailed career biography of Uberoi as it does not engage with his oeuvre at length, so as to make any in-depth observations on the nature of his scholarship.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed and themes were identified and organised to address various facets of the thematic of identity, self and other as it appears in their paradigm. The interviews provided insights into how the themes appear in conversations and how they were foreground by the writers in their texts. The use of interviews and published works helped in filling in the gaps between what was published and available and what was important, but not available to the readers. An attempt was also made to ask thinkers about their response to the alternative position, thereby bringing to the forefront any tacit debate that they were engaged in. The chosen methodology allowed for a comparative framework to evolve where the positions of these thinkers could be organised along three key axes of society, culture and state. While the centrality of culture, personality and society emerged clearly as the organising principle of discussion in Nandy's culturist and Uberoi's non-dualist position, the statist paradigm revealed a focus on state, society and culture in addressing questions of identity, self and the other.

(X)

Chapter Summary

A brief overview of the chapters of the thesis is warranted at this point to understand the layout of this research work. Chapter Two- *Paradigms as Heuristic Tools: Outlining the Framework* - reviews the literature on Thomas Kuhn's concept of paradigm and its usefulness in understanding developments in the discipline of sociology. Mapping the discussions on paradigms and sociology, the chapter reviews various debates raised with regard to the relevance of the term paradigms for the social sciences and, in particular, the discipline of sociology. The discussion then moves to the definition of paradigms and subsequently the distinction between theoretical orientations, schools and paradigms, and the meaning in which it is used in this research. A

brief prelude is offered into the insights a paradigmatic analysis can provide in understanding the thematic at hand.

Chapter Three- *Culture, Tolerance and Resilience: 'Others' as Intimate to the 'Self'' -* engages with Nandy, who writes that political theory must try and transcend its temporal and spatial limits and push against certitudes. To generate such time-space-bound theory means to acknowledge the elements of self-destructiveness within it; if not this theory acquires complete autonomy from the voice of its beneficiaries. His writings span a variety of themes, each of which is interwoven by a resistance to homogenisation and management of cultures in order to sustain the scheme of modernity, a product of which is the nation-state. He is not opposed to change but articulates a position that state is an instrument of civilization and not the other way around, and that culture needs to be understood as the accumulated wisdom of indigenous people. He articulates critical traditionalism as way of negotiating with modernity from within. Although he does discuss "open pasts" and "open futures," he warns against the oppressiveness of utopias as not only do utopias provide theories of salvation, they also tend to shape the social consciousness. The crusade he writes is against institutionalised oppressions as unleashed by modernity. The ideas of victimhood, humiliation and human degradation are only complete when the self operates with hostility towards one's own culture and it dissolves when the dyadic bonding and the culture that scaffolds it is disowned by at least one of the two sides. The search for human potentials and possibilities of survival are the mainspring of his scholarship.

Chapter Four- *Between Culturist and Statist Paradigms: A Non-Dualist Reading of Self-Other through the Language of 'Oneself'' -* looks at the writings of Uberoi, who attempts a non-dualist reading of modernity. Uberoi begins with a search for alternate forces in the discussions on modernity, which have been very much a part of early European modernity but have been sidelined by dominant ideas of dualism. His writings map the search for unity in variety rather than the positivist search for homogeneity versus heterogeneity. He looks at neglected European texts to find unity and struggle of opposites and the forms rather than their simple opposition. He articulates the principle of cooperation and complementarity and tries to illustrate this

through Sikhism and Gandhism, which he refers to as integral to understanding Indian modernity. While his analysis is largely structural and he locates the principles of reciprocity and solidarity as basic to social structure, he does not privilege the state and, in contrast to the statist paradigm, it does not seek to explain modernity as a disjunction between state, religion and society, but as an on-going dialectical process between the three as mediated not by religion nor state but by civil society, where individuals come together both for self-interest as well the reproduction of society. It is through self-management civil society manages questions and problems common to human beings. Uberoi, thus, redefines nation as representing that collective subjectivity that has taken the responsibility to resolve, with or without the state, issues of inequality and difference, and of stratification and segmentation common to human beings everywhere.

Chapter Five- *Nation-State, Democracy & Citizenship: Negotiating Self-Other through the 'Big Other'*- begins with a discussion on writings of Gupta, whose discussions on identities and primordial affiliations are expressed within the format of liberal democracy. Gupta discusses the idea of nation-state as a root metaphor within the broad framework of which the nation-state seeks to take account of its various cultural diversities. He argues that cultural identities in contemporary times cannot be understood without nation-state and elaborates on the value of citizenship where primordial affiliations take a backseat. The lifeline of democracy, he argues, lies in furthering the concept of fraternity. The chapter moves on to a discussion and analysis of select texts and personal interviews of Béteille, whose writings premise itself on the distinction between pluralism and liberalism. While India has been a pluralistic society, writes Béteille, it does not automatically qualify as a liberal one since, for the most part, this diversity has been organised hierarchically. While the "tolerance" of diversity can, and generally does, contribute to the sustenance of the liberal outlook, it is not by itself sufficient to constitute a liberal social and political order. He articulates a liberal framework and nuances the challenges the liberal state faces with regard to individual citizens. Since democracy in India emanated because of its interaction with the west rather than emerging from its own past, the contradictions have continued to be a part of the Indian social

order and have given Indian democracy a different character to that in the West. Questions of identitarian assertions that characterise Indian society are, then, to be understood within the institutional frameworks of democracy in India. As a paradigm then, both scholars, through their writings, prioritise the nation-state, citizenship and democracy, and delineate and further a position that privileges the character of the state and its institutions. And though they talk of civil societies, they argue that civil societies only flourish under liberal, pluralist and secular regimes and not under the totalitarian ones. However, the scholars differ in their understanding of the role played by civil societies. While one argues it ought to be more responsible in its support of causes and not indiscriminately support movements because they are popular, the other writes civil societies cannot substitute for the state and its responsibilities. Unfortunately, however, in the Indian scenario such a substitution seems to have taken roots, letting the state and its agencies off the hook. The chapter shows the centrality of the structures of state and how it provides for a format for reconciling differences but not at the cost of complete neglect or elimination of culture.

The concluding chapter tries to take cognisance of the themes that have emerged from the writings of these select thinkers and seeks to draw inter-linkages between them, not necessarily through comparisons alone, but also by articulating how these different paradigms complement each other and can be read together for a clearer understanding of the theme at hand. It also draws attention to newer emerging trends but does not quite expound on them. However, in discussing these newer shifts, the chapter hopes to open up discussions and a way forward for further research on the subject whilst providing a conclusion to the discussion at hand.

We now move to a discussion on paradigms in sociology with special reference to sociology in India.

Chapter Two

Paradigms as Heuristic Tools:
Outlining the Framework for the Study

(I)

This thesis premises itself on the multi-paradigmatic character of sociology. In this chapter we briefly review the literature on Thomas Kuhn's concept of paradigm and its usefulness in understanding developments in the discipline of sociology. Mapping the discussions on paradigms and sociology, this chapter reviews the various debates that have been raised with regard to the use of paradigms for analysing social sciences in general and sociology in particular. It begins by reviewing Kuhn's notion of paradigms and his response to the various issues that were raised around his writings. The section that follows reviews and discusses instances where sociology in India has used paradigms in order to outline schools of thoughts and theoretical orientations, and carry out a meta-paradigmatic analysis of the discipline of sociology. This is followed by some submissions. The nature of these submissions are exploratory and they lead to various questions about paradigms. What are the various ways in which they can be defined? Would it be fruitful to use them in the analysis of trajectory of growth and of sociological knowledge in India? If yes, then how? Finally, how can they contribute to analysing the growth and development of sociological knowledge, or of sociology as a discipline, in India?

(II)

Paradigms: The Kuhnian Framework

Scientists wrote and presented the history of their disciplines as an account that progressed neatly and developed steadily to its most polished form. Such accounts of histories of sciences, remarked Foucault, were an exercise within and internal to the sciences themselves, especially in those which had reached

a high level of formalism[1] (Nasim, 2012: 10). It was in the 1960s that Kuhn's writings challenged those of the philosophers of science. Scientific knowledge, argued Kuhn, does not progress cumulatively. While there had been disputes about the relationship between the history and philosophy of science earlier, Kuhn's writings brought to the fore the notion of paradigm–shift, which revealed and established a discontinuous picture of science's history. This discontinuity urged the philosophers of science to first acknowledge and access older and other forms of science before they could evaluate them. Post Kuhn, philosophers of science have continued to confront the question of whether concepts, statements, and problems of science have remained the same regardless of place and time[2] (ibid: 12).

Kuhn starts out by discussing the route to "normal science," by which he means:

> "research is firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice may appear clearly accounted for in science textbooks today, but this is not quite the original recounting of the process by which an overriding framework that normal science provides comes into being" (Kuhn, 1996: 10) [1962].

Citing the instance of history of physical optics, he writes that the characterization of light as photons, based on which research proceeded in the

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[1]In becoming a science, a discursive formation crosses a number of thresholds - that of positivity (when it is first put into operation), that of epistemologization (when it begins to dominate and systematically rearrange knowledge), that of scientificity (when it formulates its own rules of articulation) and that of formalization (when it fully formalizes its own principles, axioms and methods). This series does not, however, obey strict chronological laws and neither does it maintain this order of thresholds. Archaeology comes in to describe the variations in the sequence. Archaeology, however, does not deal with disciplines excepting as starting points for description of discursive formations (Nasim, 2012: 11-12)

[2]These questions have been formulated within the approach of historical epistemology, which has been a remarkably influential approach to the history of science. Historical epistemology begins with scientific concepts or styles of reasoning which seem inevitable today and analyses the conditions of possibility for their emergence. It is also, mindful of the fact that emergence of new concept may also signal a new style of reasoning and does not concern itself with evaluation of validity of theories, concepts, beliefs, statements etc. but instead concerns itself with how these were made possible by normative regimes (Nasim, 2012: 25-27)

field of physical optics, was only half a century old before it was developed by Planck, Einstein etc. In the period between remote antiquity and the end of the seventeenth century there was no single commonly accepted point of view about the nature of light. Instead, "there were a number of competing schools and sub-schools, most of them espousing one variant or another of Epicurean, Aristotelian, or Platonic theory" (ibid: 12). Each group, or as he calls them "schools," had a different understanding and

> "derived strength from its relation to some particular metaphysic, and each emphasized as paradigmatic observations, the particular cluster of optical phenomena that its own theory could do most to explain. Other observations were dealt with by ad- hoc elaborations, or they remained as outstanding problems for further research" (ibid: 12-13).

At different points these schools made contributions to the body of concepts and techniques and the phenomenon at large from which Newton eventually went on to draw his paradigm of physical optics. Thus, Kuhn writes that the others before Newton who surveyed the field of physical optics were scientists but their activity fell short of what qualifies as "science" proper because none felt the need to employ and explain a standard set of methods or phenomena or take a body of belief for granted. Instead, each practitioner felt the need to build the field anew from its foundation. Such a pattern, he writes, is observable in many creative fields today and is not incompatible with significant discovery and invention. However, this pattern is different from what the other natural sciences reveal today (ibid: 13). Kuhn writes that the history of science reveals the path to a firm research consensus is an arduous one. In the absence of a mutually agreed-upon paradigm, all the facts pertaining to the field seem equally relevant. Thus, early fact gathering is a rather random activity as opposed to how it operates in the later stages of a science; it is not guided by any pre-established theory and is usually characterised by juxtaposition of descriptions. Only rarely do such collected facts provide the base for the emergence of the first paradigm. Thus, the initial stage of development of science is characterised by "schools" and, at this stage, scientists confronting the same phenomena describe them in different ways. However, it is only in the field of science that eventually such

differences disappear completely. It is the end of interschool debates that puts an end to constant reiteration of fundamentals and gives scientists the confidence that they are on the right track and motivates them to undertake more "precise, esoteric and consuming sorts of work" (ibid: 18). Collecting facts and articulation of theory become directed activities with the appearance of the first paradigm in science. The new paradigm attracts most of the practitioners from the next generation and the old schools disappear. However, some still continue to cling to the older views and, after a point, do not attract the interest of others in the profession. A new paradigm implies a new and a more rigid definition of the field. The reception of a single paradigm leads to the formation of specialized journals and societies. One thing, then, that clearly emerges from Kuhn's writings is this-he links the growth and development of paradigms with expertise and maturity of knowledge. He says it is hard to find any other criterion that proclaims a field a science as surely as the emergence of a paradigm. A paradigm is an accepted model or pattern and gains it status because it is more successful than its competitors in solving problems identified as acute. However, at the time of its emergence, paradigm is limited in both its scope and precision. Citing the instance of grammar, Kuhn writes that paradigms function by permitting replication of examples, any one of which could replace the other. In the domain of sciences, however, "a paradigm is rarely an object for replication. Instead, like an accepted judicial decision in the common law, it is an object for further articulation and specification under new or more stringent conditions" (ibid: 23). One of the things a scientific community acquires with a paradigm is the criterion for choosing problems believed to be solvable by the application of the paradigm.

In the years following Kuhn's work, several issues around his writings were raised and debated. In the postscript to the third edition of '*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*' (1996) [1962], Kuhn responds to some of the points raised by his critics. This section discusses some of these debates and responses in order to understand the relevance and consistency in the manner in which Kuhn used paradigms.

The first issue that is discussed in the postscript concerns the two different meanings in which he uses the term paradigm. Kuhn responds by noting that

most of these differences are due to stylistic inconsistencies e.g., Newton's laws are sometimes referred to as a paradigm, sometimes as parts of a paradigm and sometime as paradigmatic, but such inconsistencies can be eliminated with relative ease. But, with that editorial work done, two very different usages of the term remain and they need to be articulated separately. The first meaning that Kuhn uses paradigm in is this that it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, etc., shared by members of a given community. He calls this meaning of the term sociological. Kuhn writes that the way in which he introduces paradigms as that which is shared by the members of a community and community as those who share a paradigm, is a source of problem. He begins to untangle it by noting that a scientific community can be identified first without taking recourse to the notion of paradigm and paradigms can then be identified later- by scrutinizing the behaviour of a given community's members. The second sense in which he uses paradigm is in it denoting some sort of element in that constellation- the concrete puzzle solution which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science. Most practicing scientists readily respond to community affiliations and most practitioners see themselves as following a scientific speciality; in fact, most have similar educational backgrounds and undergone same professional initiations. As a result, they have absorbed the same literature and drawn the same lessons.

> "The members of a scientific community see themselves and are seen by others as the men uniquely responsible for the pursuit of a set of shared goals, including the training of their successors. Within such groups, communication is relatively full and professional communication across group lines is sometimes arduous, which often results in misunderstanding and may, if pursued, evoke significant and previously unsuspected disagreement" (Kuhn, 1996: 177).

The members of such communities share paradigms. Kuhn goes further to note that the members of all scientific communities, including those from schools of the "pre-paradigm" period, share the sorts of elements he refers to as

"paradigm."[3] However, there is a change as the science matures and this change reflects itself not in the presence of a paradigm but in a change in the nature of the paradigm. With maturity, paradigms make possible puzzle-solving research. He also adds that any study of paradigm–directed and paradigm–shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups. The members of such communities might account for the fullness of their communication because of a shared theory or set of theories. Kuhn notes that though in the original text he uses the shared paradigm, or set of paradigms, as a basis for the unanimity of professional communication and judgements rather than theory, what he finds most suitable is the term,

> "'disciplinary matrix': 'disciplinary' because it refers to the common possession of the practitioners of a particular discipline; 'matrix' because it is composed of ordered elements of various sorts, each requiring further specification. All or most of the objects of group commitment that my original text makes; paradigms, parts of paradigms, or paradigmatic are constituent of the disciplinary matrix, and as such they form a whole and function together" (ibid: 182).

Kuhn notes various components of matrix as symbolic generalization- shared commitment to a belief and values each of which, he argues, constitutes an important component of a disciplinary matrix. Values are widely shared among different communities and, as compared to other components of the disciplinary matrix, values, despite the fact they are shared, maybe applied differently by those who share it but remain important determinants of group behaviour. The individual variation in the application of shared values serves functions of science, as the moments at which values need to be applied are also moments at which risks need to be taken. Science can neither progress if everybody thinks it is a crisis each time an anomaly appears nor if no one reacts and probes further when an anomaly or new theory is articulated. Since

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[3]Here Kuhn discusses how those interested in development of contemporary social sciences must note that they might find elements similar to those that he labels collectively as paradigm in their disciplines as well. It is not the presence of a paradigm that makes a science mature but the nature of the paradigm that its practitioners share that determines its maturity.

the community of scientists share values and not rules, it is possible for scientific revolutions to take place.

The final, and in some senses, one of the most important components of a disciplinary matrix which led him to choose the term paradigm is that of shared exemplars. Kuhn notes that by exemplars he means the solutions to concrete problems that students encounter right from the start of their scientific education in their books, laboratories and examinations and, with it, technical problem solutions found in literature that scientists come across in their post-educational research career. These examples show scientists how they should do their job. According to Kuhn, more than other sorts of components of the disciplinary matrix, differences between sets of exemplars provide the community fine- structure of science. The most important role exemplars play is in ascertaining the fact that the student, without help from his instructor, can see a problem as akin to a problem he has encountered earlier and is able to understand the analogy and is able to interrelate "symbols and attaches them to nature in the ways that have proved effective before" (ibid: 189). The scientist, as part of his training, learns and assimilates a "time-tested and group-licensed way of seeing[4]" (ibid). Thus, the scientist learns to see problems as similar to earlier problems and subjects it to the same scientific law or law sketch (ibid: 190). Before scientists learn the rules they learn by "doing science" and by solving concrete examples. Kuhn borrows from Michael Polanyi and refers to what results from this process as "tacit knowledge." Kuhn's writing has been criticised by some for his characterization of science as resting on un-analyzable individual intuitions rather than logic and law. In his defence, Kuhn writes that his reference to intuitive and tacit learning is hardly individualistic. If anything, he refers to "tested and shared possessions of the members of a successful group and the novice acquires them through training as a part of his

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[4] Here Kuhn cites the example of Galileo's observation that "a ball rolling down an incline acquires just enough velocity to return to it the same vertical height on a second incline of any slope and he saw and understood the experimental situation as pendulum with a point–mass for bob." Huyghens then "solved the problem of the centre of oscillation of a physical pendulum by imagining that the extended body of the latter was composed of Galilean point-pendula, the points between which could be instantaneously released at any point in the swing." Daniel Bernoulli "discovered how to make the flow of water from an orifice resembling Huyghens pendulum" (See Kuhn, 1996: 190).

preparation for group membership. Second, they are not in principle un-analyzable" (ibid: 191).

(III)

Are There Paradigms in Sociology?

Following Kuhn's writings, there was a debate about how paradigms are in principle inapplicable to the social sciences at large. However, it must be clarified right at the outset that Kuhn, by his own admission, states that to the extent his thesis portrays scientific development as a succession of tradition-bound periods punctuated by non-cumulative breaks, it is applicable to other fields as well. And that it should be so, as the idea is primarily borrowed from historians of literature, of music, of the arts, of political development and of many other human activities, all of whom have long described their subjects in the same way. Periodization in terms of revolutionary breaks in styles, taste and institutional structure have been among their standard tools. The only originality with respect to these concepts that Kuhn accepts is by applying them to the sciences, since the sciences, for the most part, had been widely thought to develop in a different way (Kuhn, 1996: 208).

Owing to different reasons that Kuhn attributed at different points in time to the immaturity of social sciences with regard to the nature of paradigms in social sciences- sociologists have taken different positions on the application of Kuhn's thesis to their discipline. Byrant lists three such variations in Kuhn's judgement about paradigms and the nature of their relations with social sciences. Broadly speaking, Kuhn alludes to the immaturity of the social sciences but gives different reasons for it at various times,

> "he vacillates between associating maturity with the hegemony of a single paradigm and associating it with the presence of exemplars. (a) In the context of the first edition of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) sociology is pre-paradigmatic (i.e., no one paradigm is shared by all members of the discipline) and therefore immature (though it does possess competing schools which bear some

resemblance to paradigms in the way they orient the work of their adherents). (b) In the context of the postscript to the second edition (1970) sociology is *multi*-paradigmatic (but also immature in as much as its paradigms lack exemplars). (c) In the context of '*Reflections on My Critics*' (1970) sociology is *multi*-paradigmatic (with each paradigm offering its own exemplars) and immature (because no one paradigm is shared by all members of the discipline)" (Byrant, 1975: 355).

These variations reflect differently in the writings of sociologists, Friedrichs (1970) argues that sociology has paradigms and rejects the pre-paradigmatic nature of sociology. Martins (1972) writes that sociology possesses a multiplicity of paradigm-candidates rather than a multiplicity of paradigms proper. He also notes that the difference between paradigm candidates and paradigms is that while the paradigm candidates engage in polemics, adherents to paradigms do not. Martins furthers the discussion on differences between paradigms in sciences and social science and writes that while Kuhn's paradigms in the natural science relate to segments of the discipline, paradigms in sociology are discipline wide and, at times, even more than that; an example is the case of historical materialism, behaviourism or action theory. This, according to Martins, is a category mistake which arises from the fact that in his thesis Kuhn either refers to social sciences in general, or to particular social sciences, but not to segments of social science disciplines. Dixon (1973) notes that while there are works in sociology which discuss sociology as having multi-paradigms with and without exemplars, sociology is still in a pre-paradigmatic stage, i.e., it has no accepted paradigm for professional practice. In a tone similar to this, Urry (1973) raises the doubt as to whether sociology is in fact at the point of embracing a single paradigm in sense of puzzle solving? He objects to the positivist implications that arise by considering sociology in Kuhnian terms. Eckberg and Hill (1979) write that many sociologists who have attempted to apply Kuhn's argument in analysing the status of sociology have misunderstood, or have refused to accept, the central meaning of his paradigm concept. Sociology has relatively few exemplars, lacks a clear-cut puzzle-solving tradition and tends to operate from discipline-wide perspectives. In this

regard, sociology is not a mature science; attempts to treat it as such within Kuhn's framework are misdirected. Byrant, however, challenges such a view and writes that while it is wrong to model sociology on natural sciences unreflectively, it is not wrong to consider, with due deliberations, the possibility of similarities as well as differences between them (Byrant, 1975: 355). Byrant writes that the concern is not to assess the maturity of sociology by comparing it with natural science and seeing how the use of paradigms can be replicated in sociology, but to see whether despite the dearth of many exemplars in sociology, and precluding the notion of paradigmatic accumulation that has been long admired in natural sciences, if sociology could still stand to profit from the use of paradigms.

Masterman reduces the manifold use of the term paradigm by Kuhn to three broad ones:

> "firstly, there are meta-paradigms, or whole ways of seeing; secondly, there are sociological paradigms, or concrete scientific achievements recognized as exemplary by scientific communities; and thirdly, there are artefact or construct paradigms, which consist of 'anything which can cause actual puzzle–solving to occur' such as a particular research instrument" (Masterman, 1970: 67).

Kuhn acknowledges the influence of Masterman's idea of sociological and artefact paradigms in his account of exemplars and it is with respect to exemplars that he discusses seeing things in a particular way and about *gestalts* (Bryant, 1975: 357). Bryant's essay discusses this idea of seeing things in a particular way. This, he notes, can be done without exemplars as well, as there are other elements in the disciplinary matrix besides exemplars which entail particular ways of seeing, such as the concepts. In order for this to be effective, the concepts must be presented with examples of their use; the proper application of a concept is neither self-evident nor something which can be achieved by following rules and so some other processes need to be at work as well (ibid: 357).

Kuhn has discussed how basic terms such as force, mass, cell etc. have changed their meanings at some time or the other in natural sciences. When it

comes to sociology, Bryant writes, the list of terms which have no agreed meaning is almost endless. While sociologists have advocated elaborate sets of basic concepts, none has commanded a universal assent. This then reveals conceptual pluralism in sociology. Furthermore, this diversity makes comparability of findings difficult, as different researches use different concepts and it is difficult to compare like with like. Byrant further argues that it is also hard to discriminate, in Popperian fashion, between competing hypothesis whenever these are couched in the different terms suggested by different paradigms, because there does not exist in sociology any neutral or universal observational language in which the results of tests may be expressed (ibid: 357). This, however, does not mean paradigms cannot be demarcated in sociology or that the paradigms are necessarily incommensurable. It does mean that the difficulties which attend comparison are similar to those that characterise translations between language communities. Kuhn remarks,

> "a good translation manual, particularly for the language of another region and culture, should include or be accompanied by discursive paragraphs explaining how native speakers view the world, what sorts of ontological categories they deploy. Part of learning to translate a language or a theory is learning to describe the world with which the language or theory functions" (Kuhn in Lakatos and Musgrave, 1970: 270).

The response to Kuhn's paradigm among sociologists has been differentiated by Urry into non-radical and radical. The non-radical response to Kuhn in sociology argues that competition from rival schools must be ended and a single paradigm must be established. The radical response advocates that the crisis-ridden hegemonic paradigm of structural- functionalism needs to be overthrown and, in its place, a conflict theory or action theory must be put (Urry, 1973 c.f. Bryant, 1975: 357-8). Urry rejects both these responses and recommends that the positivist practice of discussing sociology in Kuhnian terms be jettisoned altogether. In contrast to this, Bryant argues that discussion on paradigms in sociology may not necessarily be positivist and articulates a pluralist approach instead, which states that exemplars in sociology are few and that sociology is multi-paradigmatic and likely to remain so, given that

agreement on concepts is elusive. Conceptual variation is attributable to multi-faceted character of social relations and their differential interpretation, which enables both laymen and sociologists to interpret the same relations differently. There are unending variations in forms of social life and each social context enlarges sociology's subject and provides a new occasion for theorizing. Conceptual variations constitute and reflect differences in social life. Thus, conceptual variation is not always a matter for regret even though it does not lead to culmination of paradigms in the way it does in the natural sciences (Bryant, 1975: 358).

It is evident from the discussion above that there are definitional differences regarding paradigms among sociologists, which has stemmed from Kuhn's varied use of the term. This has led to differential understanding and appropriation of paradigms in sociology. The concern about whether sociology might, despite the differences, still profit from it depends on how it is understood, i.e., either only as a puzzle-solving exemplar or a disciplinary matrix. And at what levels in the discipline should paradigms be identified? In this regard, it is imperative to refer to the debate between Ritzer on one hand and Eckberg and Hill on the other as they raise these concerns.

Ritzer (1981) argued that Kuhnian understanding of paradigms as exemplars hardly serves the purpose of understanding paradigms in sociology. If understanding of paradigms as exemplars is taken literally, sociology would have thousands of paradigms and this would be of no value to understand and describe the status and immediate future of the discipline of sociology. Instead, he proposes a four-level scheme of the objective (real), subjective (existing in the realm of ideas), the macroscopic (large-scale) and the microscopic (small-scale). This scheme, he argued, helps us understand the extant paradigms and points out the need for a new and more integrated sociological paradigm, a meta-sociological tool of a sort. While Ritzer argued that the main question was about which definition of a paradigm is best suited for the analysis of sociology, Eckberg and Hill argued that choosing which definition is best suited for analysis in sociology was not as simplistic as it appeared, since there were implications of substituting one definition of paradigm with another. They argued that if Kuhn's definition of paradigm as exemplar is not adhered

to, then his argument regarding the nature of discourse in science is weakened. This is so because Kuhn's primary interest was in the concrete ways in which ongoing research is structured. Eckberg and Hill note that Ritzer misunderstands the centrality of the concrete example, and of the community of practitioners, and indicates that a de-communitized disciplinary matrix is the most useful form of paradigm for the analysis of sociology. In doing so, he denigrates the usefulness of the exemplar for the structural analysis of the paradigmatic structure of sociology (Eckberg and Hill, 1981: 249-51). According to Freidheim, Ritzer's theory types are overlapping perspectives rather than empirically distinct paradigms and bear more resemblance to theorists from outside their group than to fellow perspective members (Freidheim, 1979: 64). While Ritzer argues for paradigms at the level of the discipline and notes that exemplars are not useful when one is interested in meta-sociology, Eckberg and Hill argue that Kuhn was clear about the centrality of exemplars in his scheme and that paradigms understood in any other way cannot justify the use of Kuhn in social sciences. Further to this, they argue that it is possible to identify exemplars in specific areas of research that are guided by concrete examples of scholarship and that help in puzzle-solving, e.g., political socialization, status attainment and ethnic relations, all of which qualify as potential exemplars. Eckberg and Hill advocate the use of paradigms as exemplars in various substantive areas but not necessarily by omitting other key elements of the disciplinary matrix. They also argue against Ritzer's statement about exemplars being of no value at the level of meta-sociology, as one can quite easily demonstrate metaphysical assumptions tied to concrete research and demonstrate the sources of these assumptions. Further,

> "if one deals with an area in which there is not an on-going research tradition, exemplars will not be useful and, in such a case, a Kuhnian analysis is inappropriate in its full sense. If one wishes to study schools of thought, one is still obligated to work from the communities to their unique collections of beliefs. If one decides not to do this, then one is obligated to not give the aggregations of elements he/she collects the name "paradigms." These may be called various things- themes,

perhaps, but even a term like "commitment" is inappropriate until it is shown there is some group for whom a theme is an article of commitment" (Eckberg and Hill, 1981: 251).

The varied understanding of paradigms and its usefulness in sociology continues to be debated. However, writings which have attempted paradigmatic, or what one could refer to as quasi-paradigmatic, analysis continue to appear within the discipline. The following section looks to review some prominent instances of such analysis in sociology in India.

(IV)

<u>Paradigms in Sociology in India: A Review of the Discussions</u>

In reviewing the use of paradigms in sociology in India, it becomes clear that while Indian sociology has had limited occasions where a paradigmatic analysis has been attempted, the discussions provide insights into the varied appropriation and merit of paradigms as heuristic tools in sociology. Such a discussion also enables us to contextualise the study at hand and its relevance. Ramakrishna Mukherjee's (1965) discussion of the pioneers, the pacemakers, the non-conformists and the insiders in his book '*Sociology of Indian Sociology*' qualifies for a paradigmatic discussion of the discipline, as it groups sociologists by use of theories, methods and broad commitments in relation to the prevalent socio-politico-cultural milieu in India at various points in time. Mukherjee writes that although there are significant differences between the value preferences, theoretical formulations and research orientations of the sociologists he clubs under each paradigm, a broader analysis of similarities and differences among them brings out certain trends that allows for the examination of various phases of the discipline. The essay can be read as an instance of understanding paradigms as a disciplinary matrix. However, the groupings do not form around identifying exemplars. The essay discusses these within the larger framework of the sociology of knowledge.

Y. Singh in his essay '*Ideology, Theory and Methods in Indian Sociology*', reviews the growth of the discipline in India between the period 1953-77 from

a sociology of knowledge framework. While predominant theoretic and ideological systems for each period can be identified, Indian sociology during the period under review like sociology in general, does not show succession of paradigms as it moves from one period to another. What is obtained in the analysis is the co-existence of competing paradigms and theoretic orientations. Singh shows that Indian sociologists throughout the period were less concerned with constructing 'master theories' or general theories but were more prone to using conceptual schemes. Where they have used general theoretic systems, such as in dialectical or Marxist sociology, their writings do not show its awareness, as the emphasis throughout remains on comprehensiveness of substantive analysis from an ideological position rather than on the relative power of theoretical systems (Singh, 2007: 98) [2004].

Singh's theoretic orientations are formulated on the basis of cognitive tensions that the discipline has been experiencing from the beginning but which have fluctuated in response to the forces of history or external coordinates of knowledge. He marks out these theoretic orientations in sociology in India in order to review the theoretic directions and its changing structures of ideas. The four-fold periodization is identified with certain predominant theoretic and ideological systems. In delineating these theoretic orientations, Singh collates writings by scholars on different topic that were guided by the dominance of similar theoretical orientations; for instance, the dialectical historical orientation was related primarily to Marxist methods and propositions for the analysis of social reality. The structural theoretic orientation was characterised by a pre-eminence of concepts and models which helped in identifying and abstracting consistent elements from the data. Its other important attributes were related to the nature of problems it undertook for observation and analysis, such as the processes of structural cleavages and differentiation in societies, problems of equality and inequality, study of power structure, social stratification etc. These studies operated from a macro-structural and historical perspective and focused on comparative categorical relationships (ibid: 111). The culturological orientation approached the study of social change through concepts like Sanskritization and Westernization, which led to an understanding of changes in cultural styles, customs and ritual practices. The

culturological orientation differed from the structural in that the latter did not restrict itself to abstracting consistent elements from popular thought but went farther, making abstractions from behaviour or non-verbal information and using concepts and models to do so. Thus, while the culturological orientation in Indian sociology had a holistic character and social structure was studied at the village level, it was still more descriptive and sociographic from a theoretical explanatory point of view (ibid: 110). It is in the discussion on philosophical theoretic orientation that Singh discussed scholars associated with the 'Lucknow School'. This orientation, writes Singh, did not make a major impact on the theoretical character of Indian sociology. The reason probably was attributable to the lack of an integrated or unified perspective in the contributions of the sociologists whose writings were thought to be seen as largely belonging to this orientation. The theoretic tensions in their writings were not homologous and the three sociologists who were seen as belonging to this orientation were seen as being positioned on a continuum representing extreme of universalistic orientation to the extreme of particularism (ibid: 99).

These theoretic orientations in Indian sociology, which have shown varying degrees of ups and downs on the formalization criteria of theory, have not existed in a systematic form and most of them have evolved as styles of analysis and even quasi-formal systems of conceptual schemes. Singh's analysis refers to related methods and to areas of studies in which the use of these theoretic orientations increased during the period under study. The socio-historical condition under which these theoretic orientations gained salience and grew rapidly is also discussed. For instance, the dialectical theoretic orientation is seen as being related primarily to Marxist methods, the use of which was seen to be subsequently increasing in studies of political structure, agrarian formations and social movements. The dialectical-historical theoretic orientation in Indian sociology grew rapidly in the seventies when, in addition to macro-structural studies of social, economic and political institutions, micro-structural realities at the empirical level were also submitted to closer observations. This development also coincided with more analytical sophistication in the study of macro-social problems (ibid: 117-118). The theoretic orientations have been analysed in relation to the insights they

provide in understanding basic processes in Indian society, the innovations in conceptual categories, methodologies, paradigms of analysis and their contribution in bringing sociology closer to other disciplines (ibid: 115). Discussing the future of the discipline in India, Singh writes that a greater degree of innovativeness and reflexivity will be required in sociological research in order to address new issues and problems of social change. However, the direction of these researches is bound to remain cumulative rather than show leaps and bounds (Singh, 2007: 166) [2004].

Hegde (2011) writes that the work of the founders of *Lucknow School* represents, in a paradigmatic sense, a type of social science strongly committed to holistic tendencies. In his discussion on the *Lucknow School's* intellectual legacy, Hegde refers to the writings by Mukherjee, Y. Singh and T.N. Madan but furthers its paradigmatic scope by articulating at length the school's set of shared commitments. Mukherjee (1979) writes that founders of the *Lucknow School* systematically analysed Indian social realities in a non-imitative and non-insular way. Singh (2007) forwards the claim that the *Lucknow School* modulated the transition from 'pre-sociology' to 'sociology' and Madan (1994) discusses Radhakamal Mukherjee's social reconstruction, which was oriented towards a renewal of rather than a break with the past and D.P. Mukherjee's engagement with Indian modernization. However, none of these accounts, according to Hegde, takes cognizance of the tendency internal to the work of the founders of the *Lucknow School*, i.e., to constitute a more encompassing ethic of indigeneity for social and historical research and theorizing.

Hegde writes that the leading intention of the ethic of indigeneity, as articulated by the *Lucknow School*, was to demonstrate that the whole of India's social reality, in all its different manifestations, must be understood as the result of a process which "consists in the self-explicating activity of a culturally resilient social order" (Hegde, 2011: 53). He discusses three of the most important claims that, in his opinion, constitute the fundamental convictions of the *Lucknow School*. The first is the ontological claim -that Indian social order needs to be conceived of as a field of historicity which, in the context of the 1930s and 1940s, when the school took shape, meant

scholars associated with it wanted to account for both forces of conservation and assimilation as epitomized in Indian traditions, as well as get a measure of the new, as brought in by the colonial encounter and the post-independence effort at national planning and development (ibid: 54). The second claim that the school made was methodological, wherein the founders of the school believed that to get insights into the forces impinging on Indian society, and to redirect them along progressivist lines, it is important to think in terms of a new logic whose possibility is found in the idea of history. They did not see planned development as incompatible with India's traditional ethos of continuity within change. The third claim, central to the intellectual programme of *Lucknow School*, was an epistemological claim that said knowledge in proper sense consists in attending to the thing changing, i.e., the traditional and valuational components rather than the change *per se*. The *Lucknow School's* legacy was not received well by the "modernizers" of 1950s and created a sense of unease among them. It was accused of being steeped in parochialism and as being geared towards ethics and philosophy (Hegde, 2011: 54-55). So, after the *Lucknow School* nobody wanted to give this strong sense of a holistic approach in sociology a chance. However, as this essay shows that in the contributions of the work of the founders of *Lucknow School* what one finds is not a fetishist attitude towards the traditions of people but an empathy and earnestness to articulate cultural visions in harmony with them (ibid: 64).

Hegde then looks at the legacy of the *Lucknow School* as spanning vast topics in almost any area of knowledge and as providing a certain type of perspective which can enrich questions in the present. The *Lucknow School* recognized that it is possible for a plurality of national cultural traditions to work together under the idea of a relatively nation-neutral master-tradition of rational discourse, science and the philosophy of history. The founders discerned that master-tradition model of internationalism is consistent with the existence and recognition of different national traditions. Once the larger context of the *Lucknow School's* ethic of indigeneity is understood, there are fewer doubts about the grounds of their intellectual practice and it is less likely that it is seen as influenced by the rhetoric of nativism that has come to be attached to their work (ibid: 63). The essay then dwells on use of pasts and historicity within

the *Lucknow School* and its basic assumptions, and uses it not to attempt a history of the discipline but, instead, makes an effort at individuating intellectual tradition to address questions of internationalism and indigeneity.

Momin (2013) writes that the Lucknow and the Bombay schools, two of the oldest centres for teaching and research in India, shared certain basic concerns in common, such as the critique of colonial ethnography and the indigenization of sociology in the Indian context. However, they developed distinctive traditions of their own. The *Lucknow School* focused on philosophical underpinnings of social reality and became famous for its engagement with questions of post-colonial social and economic reconstruction, and its concern with grass-root issues. The Bombay school made a pioneering contribution to sociological research by emphasizing fieldwork and by ingeniously synthesising the sociological, Indological and historical perspectives. It, therefore, played a pioneering role in fostering a sociological orientation that was inspired by nationalist sentiments. One of the important features of the Bombay school was its sensitivity to the historical context of social research, which is immensely significant for the study of Indian society and which has great relevance for sociology and anthropology in general. The credit of the Bombay school in particular and of Indian sociologists and anthropologists in general is that they have established the legitimacy, relevance and value of the study of one's own society. The legacy of the school has been selectively appropriated, critically interpreted and reinvented by alumni in the light of their own researches, reflections and experiences.

Dhanagre (2011) in his discussion on the legacy of Bombay school of sociology and its impact on pedagogy and research in other universities of Maharashtra asks if the Bombay school has a legacy of its own and, if so, whether it is necessarily the same as that of Ghurye– the founder of the school? Or whether there are multiple legacies? He articulates legacy as a body of material as well as non-material things, values, ethical codes and preferred orientations in teaching and research handed down by a predecessor or predecessors to generations that follow (Dhanagre, 2011: 130).

He goes onto show that the Bombay school has two separate legacies-the first is the one associated with Ghurye's style of research and method of understanding Indian society and social change. Ghurye's students adhered to pure ethnography and fieldwork tradition and their studies tended to be more of a narrative… descriptive and less analytical. The other legacy, according to Dhanagre, is the one developed by A.R. Desai as a distinct stream of theoretical and methodological thinking; this had a scientific rigour (ibid: 135-6). The essay then goes onto show that the development of sociology in Maharashtra demonstrates that these departments of sociology had some links with the Bombay school and Pune but the manner in which these links appeared were not necessarily analyzable in terms of a shared legacy. In the department of sociology of Aurangabad, for instance, the allegiance to Bombay school was more emotional than intellectual.

Dhangare engages at length with the term "school." He notes that the use of the term "school" in sociology in India has been limited to a few departments, namely those in the universities of Bombay, Lucknow and Delhi. Any other school, such as Jaipur, Nagpur, Kolkata and Chandigarh are unheard of. Dhanagre argues that the reason for this is attributable to the manner in which these few departments managed to acquire a stature of academic excellence and evolved as an epistemic community. This, he shows, has been related to the historical process of growth of these departments of sociology and the manner in which they developed. Each of these departments had to be carved out of departments of economics and other related disciplines in which they were located and it was this that led them to evolve a distinct identity of their own. Further to this, certain ideas, approaches and perspectives got personified with stalwarts in these departments- Ghurye in Bombay and Radhakamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji and D.N. Majumdar in Lucknow – adding to their distinctiveness. Though the manners in which "schools" in sociology can be understood are multifarious, in the context of sociology in India, they appear to have been used in very specific ways.

Dhanagre observes that there are four ways in which the term "school of sociology" can be understood and used. Firstly, it may refer to an unwavering commitment to a particular social thought, theoretical framework, a shared

research perspective, explanatory device and methodological orientation. In its second usage, a school may be used to refer to a well-established and widely acclaimed centre of study whose members are involved in "paradigmatic research". Thirdly, schools could be understood as an "epistemic community", which implies a "knowledge institution" that is an organisation whose members are engaged in seeking, acquiring and producing knowledge. In the fourth and final sense, a "school of sociology" could be a department of research and postgraduate studies set up in an established university or a similar academy. In Indian academia, this happens to be the most common way of using the term; i.e., most of the departments of sociology in Indian universities qualify as just centres of study and research and only a few of them, like Pune, JNU and Bombay, have, despite fluctuations in academic production and teaching, have fared well and managed to attain a stature that qualifies them as "epistemic communities". These departments thus combine in them the third and fourth meanings of the term "school" (ibid: 152). But sociology and sociologists in India have not been able to produce a school in the first and second strands of meaning, where a school that has developed a distinct and unique theoretical approach and a perspective of its own has developed, so others could emulate it or one in which students and faculty could engage themselves in paradigmatic research and be able to sustain it over the years. Dhanagre cites patronizing culture and structural restraints on academic freedom among departments in sociology in India as a reason leading to failure in engaging in paradigmatic researches.

A review of discussions in sociology in India reveals varied references to paradigms, theoretic orientations and schools, all of which have been used to broadly talk about the sharing of perspectives, categories, commitments, ethics, values and methodologies, and as responding to the prevalent social thought at a given time. Instead of subscribing to restrictive definitions of paradigms proper, the varied engagements show the usage of paradigms as heuristic tools. It is noteworthy to mention at this juncture the distinction between theories, orientations and paradigms, as articulated by David Bell. Bell differentiated between the logical and the empirical aspects of sociological theory. He denoted the logical aspects of a theory as its theoretical

orientation, which is potentially applicable to all empirical situations because there is nothing about a specific orientation that specifies whether or not it applies to a given empirical situation. All concepts in an orientation are universal terms and are not restricted *a priori* to specific empirical situations or entities. For example, many mathematical models are orientations when divorced from specific empirical applications: the law of supply and demand and its derivations (based on a process of utility maximization); psychological learning models (based on conditioning mechanism) etc., A theory only results when a specified scope has been asserted for an orientation, i.e., when the universal abstract concepts of the orientation are given general empirical referents by specifying the scope conditions. Although a "pure" orientation involves only assumptions and their logical derivations and contains no reference to any specific set of empirical settings and a "pure" theory contains abstract concepts as applied in specific sets of empirical settings, the classification of a specific statement by a sociologist into one of the categories maybe rather difficult (Bell, 1979: 312). Furthermore, if the scopes of two orientations do not overlap then their theories cannot be compared. A specification of the manner in which the orientation's relevance and applicability vary across empirical situations can help understand the different results that maybe produced, although multiple processes are active in the research settings.

As in contrast to an orientation and a theory, a paradigm is defined largely by its sociological properties, writes Bell. As illustrated by Kuhn (1970), Masterman (1970), Friedrichs (1970) and Ritzer (1975) a paradigm is a way of looking at a phenomenon that is shared by a community of scientists. It is in this view of paradigm as a shared product that this concept differs from that of orientation. This suggests the heuristic equation: paradigm= theoretical orientation + community (ibid: 312). Thus, while paradigms in sociology in India have been broadly discussed in the meta-sociological framework, to talk about the broad directions and prospects of the discipline what seems to be amiss in these discussions is a community[5] of people who work in and around

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[5]The most compact definition of community, as discussed by Kuhn and appropriated in discussions on paradigms in social sciences, is found in the writings of Eckberg and Hill, who

shared theoretical orientations, concepts, shared methods and commitments, i.e., a school or a paradigm in the sense of shared values and orientations in a sustained way over a period of time. Even when such a discussion is engaged in, it is not done so self-consciously by the practitioners. This makes looking for exemplars difficult. It also makes it difficult to look for paradigmatic researches among a self-conscious community of practitioners overtly committed to a particular social thought, theoretical framework, a shared research perspective, explanatory device and methodological orientation.

The idea of a paradigm creates discomfort among practitioners of the discipline and often evokes a discussion about the pre-paradigmatic nature of social sciences. However, while sociology in India is not characterized by sharp and distinct orientations, schools, approaches and paradigms, it does reveal overlaps in conceptual, theoretical and methodological interrogations. A possible manner in which this commonality can be explored is by juxtaposing varied and seemingly disparate writings on a thematic within a substantive area. It is imperative to locate such discussions within a substantive area as this ensures the scope of these writings overlap and render them comparable. These seemingly differential articulations, inspite of appearances, may not be incommensurable and may reveal commonality and a tacit dialogue. Such an exercise allows for the possibility of paying close attention to the manner in which theoretical, conceptual and methodological inquiries and innovations maybe linked, appropriated and nuanced in actual practice of research. It also offers a corrective to the idea that the lack of exclusive and conscious writings on theory and concepts in sociology in India indicates a complete absence of the same. The focus then shifts from an examination of knowledge as an end product to an engagement with the conditions and modes of knowledge production. It is imperative to problematise whether these crystallisations of positions qualify as paradigms proper or whether a different label can be arrived at. For the purpose of this study, however, such positions are referred to as paradigms or paradigmatic consolidations, the merit of which remains to

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write that community would entail a group of people who have a unique collection of beliefs and for whom a theme is an article of commitment (Eckberg and Hill, 1981:251)

be seen in the course of this research; i.e., could we talk about schools of thought and paradigms in Indian sociology to denote approaches that have crystallised around key positions on certain themes?

It must also be noted that every substantive area will have multiplicity of themes. However, not all themes will be characterised by discussions that are distinctive and in which paradigmatic positions can be delineated. A suitable entry point into identifying themes that allow for theoretical, conceptual and methodological exploration of the kind that are proposed in this study are the disciplinary trend reports that provide insights into growth, proliferation and centrality of themes in the discussions over the decades under review. The following section delves into the preoccupation with the thematic of identity, self and other in sociology in India, in the decades between 1970's and early 2000's, and examines the manner in which it gained absolute centrality in the discussions on processes of nation building, democracy, citizenship, culture and social transformation in the period under consideration.

(V)

Paradigms on Identity, Self and Other in India- A Prelude

Society in India has time and again undergone periods of major socio-structural change and this has impacted, altered and created a set of new social hierarchies and social formations. These hierarchies and social structures shaped and reshaped the nature and character of Indian society and its various institutions. A tradition of reflection on socio-cultural and politico-economic institutions had always persisted in indigenous intellectual traditions. The pre-sociological groups gave way to the pioneers of Indian sociology. Singh (1986) writes that a growing scepticism regarding the merit of Western categories in describing Indian reality appeared in the writings of the pioneers of Indian sociology in the 1920s and 1930s. They expressed angst at the focus being on issues of continuity and static aspects of Indian society rather than on development and social change. In the 1950s, a rise in American influence was visible in the influence on paradigms of social and economic development of

Indian society. During the period the focus was more on reinforcement of people for development rather than on structural changes in their social and economic relationships. Most of the studies during this period were on villages, analysis of community development projects in rural and urban areas, studies of political institutions, voting behaviour etc. The mid-1960s marked a significant turning point in this process, as, by this time, there was a decline in Indo-US relationships and the contradictions and skewed effects of development became increasingly evident. The central concerns revolved around formulating a strategy for India's social and economic development. These emerging contradictions raised doubts about the theoretical value of functionalism and its ideals of consensus and stability in being able to explain the social reality which led to a quest for alternative paradigms and an emerging identity consciousness in the discipline at large. Writing about the role of the nonconformists, who dominated the scene in Indian sociology in the 1970s, Mukherjee says that it was upon them to free Indian sociology from the imitative tendencies of the earlier decades and move forward against dogmatic, doctrinaire and meta-academic interests. So, in the 1970s in contrast to the functionalist paradigm which had been dominant all through the 1950s, newer perspectives of structuralism, ethno-sociology, Marxism, historical-structural and typological–systemic perspectives emerged in the study of Indian social, economic and cultural structures.

The combined effects of Emergency and post-Emergency rule, as well as the undermining of certain institutionalised forms of politics and the increasingly skewed effects of development, led to the beginning of discussions on crises of governance, ethnicity and politics, rural agitations and farmer's movements in India during the decade. Culture entered discussions on statecraft as it became clear, in the face of the crises of governance, that policy mediations could take place through cultural representatives without directly featuring in the individual. The modern state found it to be a far easier way of conducting political negotiations, especially when dealing with the problems of the underprivileged. In fact, the category of the poor was replaced by communities of various kinds and denominations. Singh notes that two trends that continued from the 1970s and gained impetus in the 1980s were an emphasis on history

and tradition and the focus on social structure in terms of concrete processes rather than forms. There was a rise in the number of studies dealing with social movements, process of mobilization, re-structuration of social roles, statuses and institutions in the process of modernization and development in society. The core questions were not merely those of distribution and economic prosperity but that of identity and culture as the theory of relative deprivation was no longer thought to be helpful in explaining dissenting voices. Identity as a topic of academic interest intensified in India due to the rise of the new movements in the early 1980s, when several of the issues that came forth could not be answered adequately in the modernization/development framework.

The sociological concept of identity, which has its origins in the American Pragmatism of the 1890s, enjoyed its first efflorescence in the West in 1950s, when intellectuals raised questions about the survival of the individual in mass society, which was largely the agenda of intellectuals at that time. It was in the 1960s in the United States that identity became practically relevant and social groups sought recourse to traditional identity-securing concepts such as those of race and ethnicity, gender or even nationality (Welz, 2005: 2-3). In the Indian context, the discussions on identity in sociology date to the 1970s, when, inspite of the conscious acceptance of the liberal democratic ideology which held the idea of the individual as a citizen central, the importance of collective community identity continued to hold dominance. These collective identities played an integral role in articulating claims and contestations in democratic struggles of various groups who contested for equality and social justice. The discussions on identity assertions intensified in the 1980s and were seen as a distinctive concern within sociology in the study of social movements during the period. These movements were seen as a specific form of social, cultural and symbolic upsurge directed not so much towards materially determined class goals as much as towards non-material values of social equality, status, recognition, dignity and justice in a democratic set-up of the welfare-oriented society of contemporary India.

The distinct vantage point that studies on identity in social sciences in India offered during the 1970s was not in its preoccupation with questions of the value of the individual in a collective society but the fact that the collective

orientation of Indian culture continued to play an important role and the primordial identities were mobilised within the liberal democratic state and thought of as an adequate way of communicating with it. Such a context then led to scholarship about how, in spite of seemingly disparate logic, governance in India was being phrased in a cultural parlance. Thus, the discussions on identity in India in these decades cannot be segregated from discussions on the nature of Indian democracy and nation-state, the idea of citizenship, the questions of minorities, civil society and most importantly culture and tradition, as the adoption of a liberal democratic framework only helped to accentuate the collective community identity which continued to be important in India.

One of the themes that appear in the review of literature on social science scholarship on various levels, dimensions and aspects of the dynamics of identity, is that of nation, nationalism and sub-nationalism. Jayaram (2012) writes that what is noteworthy is that theoretically the analysis of identity as a sociological phenomenon is intrinsically tied to the idea of ethnicity and community on the one hand and conflict and violence on the other (Jayaram, 2012: 46). Identity has been invariably discussed in conjunction with community, even as community has become a fuzzy concept far from the definitive concept that it once was in sociology (ibid: 55). Infact, according to him the definitional criterion of the concept of community revolves around "identity," which has to do more with imagined commonalities even among people who may not be personally acquainted rather than with face-to-face interactions among people living in physical contiguity (Jayaram, 2009: 395 c.f. Jayaram, 2012: 46). The play of community identities when resources and symbols are involved often results in conflict. Conflict between communities reinforces their identities and hardens community boundaries which had traditionally been fluid. It then becomes a burden of the state to ensure that community identities and interests are protected and that communities do not enter into conflict with each other. However, given the nature of democratic politics, the state and its machinery cannot or does not act as an impartial referee. Either it tries, in vain, to please all communities, or sides with one that serves its political interest the best. This dynamics of identity in relation to

community and conflict is well illustrated by studies in India over the past three decades in various social sciences. There are several facets to identity when discussed in this light. However, some of the core concerns that guide the writings under consideration in this study pivot around communities, their diverse traditional identities on one hand and the homogenous identity of citizenship on the other. This opens up discussions about the significance of history, culture, tradition and primordial identities; ethnic strife; secessionism, fundamentalism and communalism; justice and reconciliations; secularism, minorities, citizenry and civil society.

The review essay observes that there is a presence of exegetical works among scholars, dealing with concepts such as nationalism, secularism and multiculturalism at the most general level and that these discussions tend to be polemical. Alongside these, there are also intensive field-based studies exploring issues of identity and community at the micro level. These studies yield insights into identity and community dynamics at the ground level. However, the generalisations they yield are socio-historically circumscribed and unable to provide any comparative analysis of the contexts (Jayaram, 2012: 56). Such an absence suggests the significance of and the need for comparative analysis of writings on identity (both empirical and conceptual), in order to attempt an understanding of generalizations which are beyond contextual specificities and this is what the study at hand hopes to attempt. The scope of the study, however, limits itself to discussions on identity in relation to the Indian nation-state, the idea of citizenship vis-à-vis traditional identities, as amplified by adoption of the liberal democratic framework, and seeks to demarcate distinct paradigmatic positions in this. The study thus discusses the manner in which, within the broad substantive area of political sociology, the thematic of identity which was linked inextricably to nation-state, democracy, citizenship, community, culture and civil society, provided a fertile ground for engaging with theorization, conceptualizations and nuanced use of extant theories to explain empirical ground realities.

Jayaram (2004) writes that liberal democracy presumes the existence of a rational, autonomous, self-directing individual as an atomized unit in a nation-state, but in the Indian context such atomized individuals are rare. Thus,

democracy and its institutions, like elections are subordinated to collective identities. For instance, the choice of a candidate for contesting an election, the formation of a ministry and key political appointments are all based on collective primordial identity considerations. In spite of the forces of modernization and modernity set in motion by the colonial rulers and the adoption of a liberal democratic framework after independence, the collective community identity has continued to thrive (Jayaram, 2004: 138).

The theme of identity politics in India is then mediated by community, conflict and a gamut of other terms such as nation-state, democracy, civil society, citizenship and culture in sociology. A close review of the writings of selected authors reveals there are at least three distinct positions on the issue of identity in sociological writings in India, namely the statist, the culturist and the non-dualist. The statists argue the notion of citizenship and building strong institutions are key to building a strong democracy. They also argue for the role of the nation-state which was to be added as a third axis in the dyad of the self and the other making it a triad. This is to say that for them identity politics is largely mediated by the nation-state. On the other hand, the culturists seem to argue that factoring in culture for tokenism makes democracy alien to its own people. Culture should be given free hand in a democracy because culture is the antidote for homogenization. The sacrosanct notion of the state is questioned by them. They raise questions about who is a citizen and what determines his audibility in a democracy? Whether selfhood and subjectivity could be exhausted by the secular identity of citizen? They write that nation-state is an alien notion with no relevance for the masses. The state has never been the pervasive component in the life of the people in India. It is community that takes precedence in their writing. They also hold key the notions of civil society as an actor between the state and the citizen. Added to these two is the third paradigm, which represents a non-dualist reading, i.e., a rejection of the simple principle of opposition between homogeneity and heterogeneity often understood as equality and inequality (understood as such in the other two paradigms) and acceptance of the other pair of possibilities-that of mutually active cooperation and complementarity. It is this principle of cooperation and complementarity that the paradigm locates in unity in variety

that has characterised India and it is from here that it suggests an alternative way forward which rejects state-established religion and religion-established state as enemies of the civil society and proposes combining religion and politics.

Each of the three paradigms represents different views about democracy and when one looks at the finer nuances of each, it is revealed that each presents a distinct constellation of values, concepts, methods and basic assumptions which constitute their object world of sociology and indicates the work which needs to be done. Their basic assumption regarding human nature varies. While statists offer a strong position about cultural diversity only being negotiable through the nation-sate, culturists offer a position of inbuilt psychological resilience of people which helps them negotiate conflict and everyday living. The third paradigm looks at the dualism between state and religion (diversity) as being a constraint and instead focuses on the unity of variety rather than binaries as a better way of understanding questions of plural traditions in India. The writings on identity identified for this study under these paradigms translate theories of self into understanding the outer world and the collectivities, i.e., the writings move from individual to the collective and from the self and the other to explain state and civilisation.

It must be added that each paradigm is not discrete and that elements may be abstracted from different paradigms to create a discussion. Kuhn spoke of inter-paradigm dialogues and wrote that practitioners representing different paradigms may not necessarily have any communication. They can start by recognizing each other as members of different language communities and then become translators who take up differences between their own intra-and inter-group discourses as a subject of study. Beginning by identifying and isolating terms which are used without a problem within a community but which are troublesome for inter-group discussions they can proceed to share everyday vocabularies in order to elucidate their troubles. Once they can get past the point where the response of the others seem like mere anomalies arising out of whims and fancies, over a period of time people are able to discover and predict well how others might respond or answer when presented

with a certain stimulus to which their own responses would be different. There has been a tacit debate between the statists, the culturists and the non-dualists.

While identity in Indian sociology has been a matter of everyday life and has been regulated and negotiated through marks and symbols for ages, it has seldom been discussed as a concept. That is to say, the concern with identity has been more practically oriented rather than being a matter of intellectual analysis.

> "As if in reflection of this, most Indian languages have no word conveying the idea of identity; the words used as equivalents convey the meaning of uniqueness or identification! In the light of the increasing scholarly concern with the idea of identity, most of these languages have adopted the Sanskritic root *asmita* to refer to identity, for instance, *asmita* in Hindi, Konkani, and Marathi, and *asmithalu* in Telugu. Such new coinages are yet to gain currency in popular parlance. This is indeed intriguing considering the preoccupation with "individual", "self", or "person" in many a traditional system of Indian philosophy. Different philosophical systems have advanced and analysed diverse views on this subject. Complex philosophical arguments about the nature and significance of the individual, self or person aside, the Hindus, by and large, demand strict conformity to social norms and conventions from the individual" (Jayaram, 2004: 134-135).

This was probably related to the fact that India's social structure emphasized the primacy of the group that the individual draws upon, from a repertoire of collective identities in order to address questions about who s/he is.

(VI)

Identity, Self and the Other: A Conceptual Overview

As an analytical category, identity has been integral to psychology. However, Jayaram (2012) notes that even in psychology in India, intensive research on

the themes of self and identity is of recent origin. In their review of psychological research for the Indian Council of Social Science Research on the subject, during the period between 1993-2003, there was no particular essay on the theme of self and identity as such and the presence of the theme was marginal. Interestingly, in spite of this peripheral presence the reviewers in surveying the literature on the subject chart out a route from the individual to the collective and social affairs (Jayaram, 2012: 45).

Jonathan (2001) writes that personal and social identity has been studied from a variety of academic angles which has resulted in highly differentiated literature that often appears to cover almost as many different types of identity as there are social groups. Freud did not use the term identity explicitly but he formulated a theory of consciousness and the self that had a profound influence on the understanding of concepts that were later grouped around the term identity. In his schema it is superego that represents conscience and self-reflection – as a representative of reason and the constraints it ensures consistency and continuity of the self by uniting the various aspects of the personality into a coherent organization of mental processes (Jonathan, 2001: 768). Erickson developed these ideas into a theory in which the specific concept of identity was paramount. According to him, identity is a multifaceted concept formed by individuals with their social surroundings and refers to sameness within oneself and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others. Ultimately, the continuity of this sense of self ensures that whatever happens to individuals during their lifetime, and however traumatic the transition is from one phase to another, there always remains a fundamental sense of who they are and do not consider that to be substantially changed. As opposed to the individualistic nature of identity proposed in the psychoanalytic movement in the symbolic interactionism of Mead, the self emerges out of dynamic social interaction with others. In the same tradition, Goffman demonstrates construction of identity through face-to-face social interaction. He analysed forms of social interaction and the manner in which they influence and are influenced by the interrelations and role-playing of their individual members. He likened all forms of social interaction to ritual and drama, in which the individual adopts various roles and

techniques whose ultimate aim is the maintenance of the self. Fragmentation of identity has become a central issue in the study of modernity, post-modernity and post-traditional society. This has been so because of a breakdown of traditional social structures and the emergence of pluralism and uncertainty as defining features of modern life. According to Bauman, the modern individual faces anxiety as he has to choose an appropriate and acceptable identity and this is the main problem he faces in his quest for self-identity. Giddens writes the individual is engaged in the reflexive project of the self. It is the self-conscious examination of how to live in the modern world, out of which emerges their sense of self or, as he puts it, "narrative of identity." Such a narrative is created by individuals interacting with their surroundings and integrating their relationships and experiences into an on-going "story" of the self. Although constantly subject to revision, this narrative is coherent and continuous across time and space, linking the self in the past with the self in present and future.

Welz (2005) writes that in the globalized world the real experience of alterity and the other, i.e., the experience of different identities (rather than identity in the singular) renders essentialist interpretations of identity obsolete. In this context, his essay explores why the theoretical and practical discourse on the other and cultural recognition has become extremely popular in contemporary social and human sciences and newer approaches have made it imperative to rethink identity with regard to the more recent phenomena of people and groups articulating their concerns in identity politics. It is in the face of contemporary identity politics that putting the concept of identity to practical application has rendered it important to bring in and discuss more centrally the notion of the other and alterity. Methodologically speaking, the category of the other relativizes the relevant category of the self. Identity reflects the affirmation of who we are by contrasting our way of life with that of others, the continuous reference to many versions of alterity which can be understood as discourse on the otherness of people, institutions and beyond one's own horizon relativizes one's belief in the uniqueness of pre-determined identities (Welz, 2005: 3). He starts with the classical phenomenological approach of Husserl, which emphasizes transcendental ascendancy of the first person, and

does not leave any space for the other. In contrast, Alfred Schutz's scheme presupposes an understanding of the other. Schutz proceeds with the notion that it is the process by which meanings are constituted that interest an interpretive sociology. In these processes of meaning, constitution the concept of the other gains value. In his understanding this other stands as a precise analogy to the phenomenological transcendental Ego. In contrast to this phenomenological understanding, a sociological view of the subject does not start with the individual; it is concerned with the social origin of the first person subject identity and, according to them, the subject is not a pre-existing substance. Here the other becomes constitutive of identity and identity is not just there but develops itself in interaction with the other. This is what Mead propounds- where the approach takes its origin in the world of social action. Here it is not the first person subject which typifies the other or the first person subject's own action. Instead, it is the other, whose views on the first person subject are the material for the latter's conceptualization of itself. This is what continues into Cooley's concept of the 'looking glass self" of interactionism, in which the self finds itself in the viewpoint of the other, as if in a mirror. A shift to this symbolic interaction perspective is offered in the writings of Luhmann, who notes that identities do not exist but can be generated recursively and identities are not primordial but can be defined negatively through differences from others. So identity is manufactured only as relative to the standpoint of the observer. Welz moves from Luhmann's radical constructivist conception to Bourdieu. Bourdieu's "habitus," he writes, is peculiar to each subject and is not to be derived straightforwardly from the social attitudes of others or from society, i.e., it is not reducible to passive perceptions. It is an active center of action with its own characteristics. Practical identity constitutes itself in the practice of individual life histories and, understood as such, identity becomes a dynamic category. It becomes a life-long project of coming to terms with constantly changing situations. Practical identity constitutes itself in the practice of individual life histories. Thus, in order to understand identity, relational recourse to the other is unavoidable. It is this that prompts a rethinking of the concept of identity and investigate its social construction further.

Self is conceptualised as a set of discrete identities or internalized role designations with persons potentially having as many identities as there are organised systems of role relationships in which they participate. Identities require both that persons be placed as social objects by having others assign a positional designation to them and that the person accept that designation. By this usage, identities are self-cognitions tied to roles and, through roles, to positions in organised social relationships. The self is multifaceted and also postulated to be organized. Identity theory takes hierarchy as a principle mode of organization of identities; in particular, it assumes that identities, given their properties as cognitive schemas, will vary in their salience and that the self is a structure of identities organised in a salient hierarchy. Identity salience is defined as the probability that a given identity will be invoked in a variety of situations; alternatively, it can be defined as differential probability, across persons, that a given identity will be invoked in a given situation (Borgotta and Montgomery, 2000: 1255). From the point of view of structural symbolic interactionism, structures of class, ethnicity, age, gender and so on operate as social boundaries, making it more or less probable that particular persons will form interactional networks; in such social structures enter identity theory directly through their impact on commitments. However, the relation of such structures to identity processes clearly goes beyond this direct impact. The links between identity theory processes and the wider social structures within which these processes are embedded need more adequate conceptualizations (ibid: 1257).

(VII)

Conclusion

The submissions of this chapter, then, are that paradigms are extant in sociology and it is possible to use both disciplinary matrices and exemplars for the benefit of analysing and identifying them. Though, for the most part, sociology in India has restricted itself to disciplinary matrices, paradigms can be conceived of as heuristic tools that help take cognizance of multiple co-existing positions in a given substantive area and help explore any new

theoretical or conceptual innovation or the dominance of theoretic–orientations. Substantive areas, when reviewed paradigmatically, may reveal commonality among seemingly disparate views of those writing on a shared subject. A paradigmatic analysis of substantive area can give a thrust to discussions on the status and prospect of the discipline by enabling us to consolidate scattered scholarship on a theme. While schools in Indian sociology have been discussed around institutions and departments, paradigms open up the possibility to explore shared commitments beyond such horizons. In this thesis we seek to look at length into the writings of the four selected thinkers to understand their works as representing the three paradigms on identity, self and the other.

The discussion on identity in the context of the Indian nation-state project began as early as the 1970s, when discontent among the masses regarding the unequal distribution of resources of the state was on a rise. The theory of trickledown effect of development was beginning to fall flat and it was argued that culture in India was not conducive to the realisation of a democratic state and constrained the project of development. It was therefore thought to be necessary to engineer and streamline this culture to aid in the growth of the Indian nation-state and its welfare projects. The Western liberal democracy model was widely accepted as an ideal and the traditional, primordial and cultural ideologies and practices in India were seen to be at direct loggerhead with achieving this ideal. Against this background, social science literature emerged which argued about the viability of western import of theory of nation-state and liberal democracy in the Indian context which was one of the older civilisations with a tradition of pluralistic state structures and where traditionally state was never an apparatus of monitoring the entirety of civic life. In the following essays the various facets of the debate are explored at length through a detailed engagement with the culturist, non-dualist and statist paradigms on identity, self and the other. The discussions will show in detail why the thinkers have been placed in the chosen school of thought.

Chapter Three

Culture, Tolerance and Resilience: 'Others as Intimate to the 'Self'

(I)

In the culturists framework the thematic of identity is central to understanding the processes of resilience among common people. They delve into the psychological mechanisms and socio-cultural resources that people draw upon, to resist, negotiate and reconcile with events in their everyday life. The discussion on questions of identity as articulated within the framework of the nation-state and culture in the culturist paradigm begin by positing culture and traditions as resources available to common people upon which they draw, although not necessarily in a conscious way, to live their lives. These writings therefore turn their gaze inwards; to translate theories of self into understanding of the outer world and the collectivities i.e. they move from the individual to the social to explain societal categories. The writings belonging to the paradigm, position the relationship of individuals with the state and communities on the intersections between personality and society. The inner world is in a processual flux and does not have fixity of nature like the categories of expert knowledge. Keeping this in mind, the paradigm proceeds to not theorise in a scientific way about the thematic, instead, provides a case of drawing upon various source material such as literature, popular culture, myths etc. to understand multiple, co-existing and pluralist worldviews of communities. In the context of the discussion outlined in this study, the culturists resist the sacrosanct notion of the nation-state and its manner of fixing the selves of its subjects into the straightjacket category of citizenship. They problematise the idea of nation-state and citizenship without discarding democracy as a political arrangement because of its inherent acceptance of plurality. They argue that state has never been a pervasive component in the life of the people in India and that it is the

community instead, that emerges as a more central category in their formulations. They also key in the notions of civil society as an important actor between the state and the citizen. One of the central thinkers, who argue for such a position on the questions of identity and selfhood, as understood in the larger debate about cultural identities and nation-state, as it unfolded in the decades of the 1970s in India, is Ashis Nandy. This chapter examines his selected writings and draws upon the personal interviews conducted with him as a part of the study, in order to carefully delineate the culturist paradigm that he represents. It is imperative to mention here that Nandy resists labels and definitions. His commitment to plurality extends to his disciplinary loyalties, rarely has he written about a subject by limiting himself to one discipline. Neither is he interdisciplinary or trans-disciplinary in the conventional sense of the term, as he operates in a manner where he considers and works with all sources of knowledge, methods and modes of inquiry as equally useful (Sardar, 1997; Deftereos, 2013).

(II)

Colonisation as Civilisational Encounter and a Narrative of Shifting Selfhood

In the decade of the 1970s, the social science discussions in India were on the one hand, shaped by a Marxist preoccupation with economic and class analysis in addressing the project of modernization and on the other hand, by enthusiasts of the Nehruvian state and it's promises. These enthusiasts of the growing Indian nation-state vis-à-vis the adherents of left politics offered the two principle pivots around which the development discourse revolved. Socialism and democracy were offered as the two political models for discussing questions of equality and distribution. These discussions highlighted the differences between the advanced societies of the West and the backwardness of the Indian society, which owing to the continued presence of its cultural traditions gave rise to inequalities, which were not compatible with the vision of the Indian nation-state. It was in such a climate of political debate that one of Nandy's first few essays made an appearance.

One of the earlier essays by him was on the practice of *Sati*[1]. The essay sought to analyse the resurgence of the practice of *Sati* in the light of the social mobility that British rule had made possible for certain caste groups in the districts neighbouring Calcutta. It was however, received as a non-serious engagement with colonialism among the Marxist intellectual circle in Calcutta, as it did not engage with questions of class (Chakrabarty, 2018: 2). At a time when the questions of equality, distribution, statecraft and democracy were the order of the day, Nandy's writings appeared primafacie as a nativist plea and as a call for return to "traditions"[2].

Andre Béteille, in his essay *'Inequality Among Men'* (1977), argues that, the terms equality and inequality have a very significant position in society of the modern world. The two principles of socialism and democracy on the whole are regarded as the ideology of equality constructed for human beings. On the other hand, inequality has its deep roots in human societies which is created by human social behaviour. There is a difference between the advanced societies and backward societies, as advanced societies are advanced both economically as well as ideologically while societies, which are backward, have traditional and cultural ideologies, where inequalities emerge as a result of old ways and conservative conceptions. Nandy was asked to write a piece discussing inequalities, for Béteille's series on inequality:

> "*...the first section of 'Intimate Enemy; The Psychology of Colonialism' was written for Andre Beteille's series on inequality*

[1]A later piece on *Sati* titled "Sati as profit versus sati as a spectacle: The public debate on Roop Kanwar's death" In Hawley (Ed.) 131-149 discussed Indian feminists as setting up "a new form of internal colonialism"- the feminists according to Nandy are westernised, Anglophone city-folk rubbishing the India of the villages and small towns as backward and barbarous because they feel threatened by it (Nandy,1994(b):142). Nandy's earlier piece and this longer essay on *Sati* received a lot of criticism from the Indian feminists and it was argued that Nandy was less interested in exploring history and instead, was more inclined to make a polemical case for tradition. This argument was made most cogently by Romila Thapar in her essay "Perspective in History", Seminar magazine,342, February 1988. pp.14-19). In the preface to the second edition of 'Intimate Enemy' published in 2009 Nandy states, that the possible 'sexism' of his language that those who are offended by his language must remember that the language in which he thinks has traditionally looked at males and females differently (Nandy,2009:xx) [1983(a)].

[2]It will be clearer in the course of this essay that Nandy's position is not reducible to a simple defence and advocacy of primordial traditions. And so the label "nativist" denotes a very narrow reading of this scholarship.

however, he said this kind of colonial inequality that you have written about would not do. So then I sent it to the Journal called Psychiatry, and they immediately took it" (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

In '*The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*', Nandy offered a distinct perspective on the then prevalent discourse on modernization and development; different from the on-going Marxist-Liberal debates of his contemporaries. In contrast to the prevalent liberal and Marxists discussions on nation-state and it's challenges of nation building and development in India, Nandy's position in this early essay emerged out of an awareness that, behind the rhetoric of progress and development, existed a second order colonization which subverted the cultures of erstwhile colonised societies and tried to make them compete with the West on the strength of their acquired westernness (Nandy, 1983a: Xiii) [2009].

He carefully studied the Indian experience of colonialism and its encounter with the West to understand how the process of colonialism released forces in the colonised societies that altered the cultural priorities of the colonised society once and for all; generalizing the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal category into a psychological category that continues to colonize the minds even after empires cease to exist. His analysis of the response to colonialism made him move away from questions of political identity which had begun to gain relevance in the scheme of Nehruvian statecraft and the nascent social movements that had started appearing on the scene towards the end of the 1970s to the broader more encompassing notion of the self. He notes,

> *"Identity as a psychological term is not identity politics. It's a much richer term into which a lot of work has gone. If you read Erickson on Gandhi you will see how complex this term identity is. He is dealing with identity of somebody like Gandhi; it's extremely sophisticated and subtle. I am personally uncomfortable using identity. Even back then when I was writing 'The Intimate Enemy', I was uncomfortable about using it because people will take it in that standard political science sense, in the newspaper sense, rather than the rich*

connotation that it carries. So I would rather use the word 'self'
because it's built into an ambiguity, just as, in the Indian concept of
self, there is the practice of writing self both with small 's' as well as
capital 'S'; which indicate different kinds of self and there the play is
more and I wanted to maintain that although at times its use is
difficult" (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

The category of self allowed insights into modern forms of oppression, where the encounter was not simply between the enemy and the self, the good or the bad or the ruler and the ruled but where the battle was between the dehumanized self and the objectified enemy, the pseudo rulers and their fearsome other selves projected onto their subjects; where the oppressor too is a self-destructive co-victim. The text delved into the psychological structures and cultural forces which supported or resisted the culture of colonialism. Nandy made an enquiry into the cultural and psychological strategies which helped the Indian society to survive the experience of colonialism with a minimal defensive redefinition of its selfhood (Nandy, 1983a: xvi) [2009].

Colonial rule in India, according to him, had two phases; the first phase can be dated roughly between the years 1757 and 1830, when the British middle class were not dominant among the ruling class and rulers mainly came from a feudal background and a later phase after the *Sepoy* Mutiny of 1857. The beginnings of British rule in India was characterised by the traditional Indian lifestyle where the rulers were respectful of the Indian way of life. This however changed following the growth of middle class British evangelical spirit, where both the sides in British Indian culture of politics i.e. the colonisers and the colonised began to ascribe meanings to British domination. The *Sepoy* Mutiny of 1857 further led to the end of the shared 'universalism' of yesteryears between the ruler and the ruled and gave way to a phase where it was feared that a second mutiny could break out anytime. This marked the beginnings of colonisation proper, where newfound colonial roles were perpetuated and internalised by both the rulers and the subjects. A homology between sexual and political dominance was established as central to the colonial rule wherein, the British rule was manly and colonised Indians,

effeminate. The subsidiary homology between childhood and the state of being colonised also gained currency. A line was thus drawn between the Indian culture as infantile and immoral and the British culture as adult, austere and self-controlled.

> *"The British conquest of India during it's first phase showed all signs of being integrated into Indian society in a manner in which Memmi in his 'The Colonizer and Colonized'[3] describes the Manchau conquest of China, where the small group of conquerors had become integrated into the Chinese society over one or two generations and where the colonisers did not show any intention of a civilisational mission. Although during the more recent Japanese conquest of parts of China, there were some efforts to do so but this too failed to produce a theory of civilisational mission. Interestingly, one of the main themes in these efforts was the stress on Japan's greater modernization and on her responsibility to modernize other Asian societies. The whole process was part of a larger picture which involved the rejection of Europe's pre-modern conceptualisation of the East and reincorporation of the East into European consciousness according to the needs of colonialism. I am a voracious reader so I used to read novels and accounts, for example the Spanish and the Portuguese thing used to be basically a matter of looting and they did not have this idea of superiority and inferiority like the English did not have in the beginning and I wanted to find out what is the way in which it came? And I understood that, when I related it to the larger systemic forces, psychological forces and saw how they determined the western knowledge systems and what our responses to it were. In Europe, slave trade is a forgotten endeavour but that was the first attempt to globalise! It was a four continent business venture and many of the famous universities and famous names were involved. On one side you have Thomas Jefferson's ringing prose on democracy but then there are slaves in his own house! How do you live with these*

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[3]Albert Memmi.*The Colonizer and Colonized*. Translated by Howard Greenfeld, New York: Beacon,1967.

things? What is the logic? What kind of peace you make with yourself? There was a difference between Spanish and Portuguese colonialism and English and French colonialism. The Spanish and Portuguese they use to go loot, get women to marry them and there was no racism there, the only moral thing they talked about was Christianized; that too it was catholic in temper. It was different from the protestant ethics, which comes in from Luther onwards, which was also supposed to have the spirit of capitalism. It is from there that capitalism, protestant ethics, protestant Christianity, establishment of nation-state, treaty of Westphalia emerge. These things I saw emerging more or less around the same time one begins to see the emergence of the child as a different category. Don't forget that the discovery of Americas and subsequently the history of the American Indians suggest that it was one of the most successful genocide of all times, estimated 120 million people died and once when you have built something on that kind of violence and that kind of experience you have to have a different.... you cannot live with it. Societies become extremely brutalised and they were brutalised. The only way they could justify what they did in Americas was to think of them as infra-human, as something in between the human beings and the flora and fauna of the country. So later on, those epithets were transferred to the colonies, so Cecil wrote of half savage half child. The savage equal to the child equal to the colonised and along with those two countries which had literate cultures; China and India were seen as senile, decrepit and old. This was interesting ...as for European philosophers of the eighteenth century men like Voltaire for example, China was the most advanced culture of the world but by the nineteenth century the Chinese had become for the European literati, primitives" (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

Selfhood and identity thus become central to the understanding of the politics of the asymmetrical relationship under colonialism. How the colonisers and colonised responded to this asymmetry and how their selfhood was shaped and articulated, then becomes Nandy's core argument linking self, culture

and politics. The disjuncture in the manner in which colonialism operated in two phases in India and the split between the colonised and the coloniser mirrors, among other things the protestant separation between spirit and form, mind and matter which has been discussed by JPS Uberoi in his discussion on European modernity. Both Nandy and Uberoi allude to Europe's pre-modern conceptualisations which was not violent in its ends and which engaged with East, unconstrained by specificities of the needs of colonialism. Uberoi's observation that the dualist modernity leads to new hierarchies, a new relation between the self and the other, the knower and knowledge, resonates with Nandy's discussion of the emerging homology between the colonised and the infant and the homology between sexual and political dominance[4] in the second phase of colonialism in India. The inherent violence in this disjuncture is evident in Baconian worldview of modern science and it's vivisectionism as well as in the civilisational mission of the British colonial rule in India.

The legitimacy for colonialism, writes Nandy, can be found in the writings of the Utilitarians such as Jeremy Bentham and James Mill and in the socialist thinkers conceptualization, who saw colonialism as a necessary step to progress and as a remedy for feudalism, it was also evident in the writings of those who tried to fit the colonial experience within the mould of the doctrine of progress. Marx used childhood innocence as a prototype for primitive communism and this was one of his main contributions to the theory of progress, which he conceptualized as a shift from prehistory to history and from infantile communism to adult communism. India in his conception was a country of semi-civilised communities where colonial rule of England played the role of an unconscious tool of history. Similar cultural role was

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[4]The growth of this ideology paralleled a cultural reconstruction in the West. Philippe Aries argued that the modern concept of childhood was a product of the 17th century Europe. Earlier the child was seen as a smaller version of the adult but now it became an inferior version of the adult and had to be educated by the adults. A parallel development in Europe was the emergence of the modern concept of womanhood influenced by the changing concept of Christian godhead, which had become more masculine under the influence of Protestantism (Nandy, 1983a: 14-15)[2009]. These ideologies reconfigured the traditional Indian concept of manliness where the Brahmin in his display of cerebral self-denying asceticism was the traditional masculine counterpoint to the more violent, virile and active Kshatriya- who traditionally represented the feminine principle of the cosmos (ibid, 10).

played by some of Freud's early disciples, who studied the primitive societies and pursued the homology between primitivism and infantility (Nandy, 1983a: 13) [2009]. Colonialism imbibed the ideas of growth and development and drew a parallel between primitivism and childhood. The theory of social progress was thus, not only telescoped into the individual's life cycle in Europe but also into the area of cultural differences in the colonies (ibid: 15).

Nandy notes,

> "*during writing 'The Intimate Enemy', I had not thought through the whole thing about the ideology of Enlightenment, although, incidentally if you see different essays written around that time these things become clearer. For example, the essay Critique of ideology of adulthood that is very clear and sharp and states exactly what I wanted to say. I should have done a similar piece a systematic write-up… I could have written a comparable thing on the elderly idea of age.... what is the concept of civilisation and why some civilisations are seen as decadent and so on and so forth and a third one, more directly on the issue of gender. The place of androgyny.... so I should have written the three essays that would have made it clearer but that is not my style because whatever I write I always leave it to the reader to allow him the play the space to construct it in his own way I think all great writings should allow that… I am not a great writer if I was I would be more confident...*" (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

The category of civilisation and the self were central to Nandy's discussion on colonialism in India. Colonialism was a process where two civilisations encountered each other leading to mutual alterations in their worldviews and selfhood. Such exchanges which Nandy refers to as civilisational borrowings, have always taken place, and on most occasions they have been unconscious. However, in the case of British colonialism there were attempts to perpetuate the domination of a singular civilisational universal and this unleashed a violence which Nandy recognizes as the problem underlying the project of modernization, which continues in postcolonial India. This is not to imply that there have been no resistance to such a project of western colonialism.

Nandy is interested in these psychological defences against the hegemony of western modernity and states, "*I want to partly de-legitimize this slavery to the dominant categories because dominance is not the proof of finality*" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

Domingues (2010) notes, Nandy understands Indian civilisation as accommodative and flexible, capable of borrowing from elsewhere and living with ambiguities without losing its identity. Indic civilisation is capable of accommodating modernity and lending new meanings to its older experiences. This is due to the internally pluralist nature of this civilisation (Domingues, 2010: 5). In such a formulation, Nandy moves away from binary oppositions that may arise from civilisational exchanges to more plural ambiguous processes of accommodation. Indian civilisation is seen as contiguous with its neighbours and therefore, bigger than the state or nation. Nandy's use of the term civilisation has been, until recently, ambiguous. It was pointed out by Satish Kumar the editor of *Resurgence &Ecologist,* that Nandy could better convey his position by using the term culture, instead of civilisation, as culture is a more modest term and does not carry the concept of civility like the term civilisation:

> "*I thought about it. Civilisation means civic, civil, it comes from root, from the same thing as sabhyata, so there is an automatic hierarchy. No one for instance, will talk of Santhal civilisation! So I did compare in one of my writing that, it is a bit like language and dialects. Winston Churchill said those dialects which have army, navy and air force are called languages. Same is with civilisations so those who have clout in the world are called civilisations while others are not. Therefore, I use it less and in very limited cases. I use it when I come across very large entities of cultural confederations where the diversity of cultures after a point is so enormous that it also works as a different kind of system, where each culture is correcting one other. And you can say that a civilisation has all potentialities. You don't learn from other civilisations you interact with them and from within it the changes come. Without being self–conscious you have changed but civilisations don't borrow because they have something akin to*

that and that need was there ...so cinema came into our civilisation it does not look like a western import, novels came into so many civilisations. No Japanese, no Chinese talked of dialogue of civilisations when Buddhism went there. The man who took Buddhism there was supposed to be a Tamil called Namo (which must not have been his name he must have had a huge Tamil name) they worship him also. I went to Shaolin a couple of months ago it is fantastic. Not only do they have a statue and acknowledge him but this is in the biggest sthan of Buddhism in China and also Kung Fu as it is also a Buddhist art. Like Zen in Japan, it comes from there but Japanese don't know it, they are not self-conscious in their borrowing. Even Kung Fu and Karate are supposed to have come from martial art in south India. So there are a lot of such instances. So I use the term civilisation less now and more self-consciously, no doubt about that, I have become conscious of it so, I also deliberately talk of the entire set of adivasis as cultures; two hundred fifty odd of them as an underside of Indian civilisation. There have been interaction with them since our Vedic times, Arjun marries Ulupi or Chitrangada or Bhim who went to hell and came back… here hell and heaven are also open-ended you come and go.. I am talking less and less about civilisations, more and more about cultures in order to give back cultures their dignity, particularly the smaller cultures which don't make a difference to people, if they live or die… that is why. (Personal Interview, November 27, 2013).

Although Nandy admits that his usage of the term civilisation has reduced over time, he still admits that there is an irreducible minimum where one has to fall back on 'civilisational' categories. Civilisation is by definition a confrontation of cultures and it has all the strengths of a confrontation; people live by culture, but sometimes they fall back on civilisations. Plurality is built into civilisations, while culture may or may not be plural (Lal, 2000: 84).

Indian civilisation has traditionally had faith in the view that, greater self-realization leads to a greater understanding of the 'not-self', including the material world. The more man understands his ego or his praxis, he would

say, the more he understands the universal dialectic of history. However, this traditional worldview of the non-modern civilisations which gave primacy to self-realization had gradually begun to exhaust its critical and creative possibilities to some extent, when it encountered western modernity. In such a scenario, the modern European worldview which proposed, that the self (ego) can be understood and controlled best by controlling the 'objective', not-self including the not-self within the self i.e. id, brain processes, social and biological history etc. succeeded in gaining an upper hand. However, it was evident in the emergence of the critical traditionalists like Thoreau, Tolstoy and Gandhi that modernity had over stated its case. These critical traditionalists re-emphasized the worldviews which, through self-control and self-realization, sought to understand and change the world (Nandy, 1983a: 62). This strand of thought has been able to successfully provide a counterpoint to the dominant western modernity. Uberoi uses Gandhism as a case in point to discuss non-dualist position on self and other, and of continuity of being and Praxis. Nandy observes that, fidelity to one's inner self as one translates and to one's inner voice as one comments, may not be the norm in some cultures but in others, they are. However, for most part there has been an increase in and a predominance of the control and management of the self, leading to a marginalisation of subjectivities within Indian civilisation. He notes,

> *"I am more and more convinced that the space for subjectivities in human civilisation will shrink. Indian civilisation has always been very open to human subjectivities and considered them as crucial to understanding human being how (s)he functions? What makes them tick? Particularly when it comes to human collectivities… however, in our preoccupation to search for objective, predictable, manageable, quantifiable behaviour which would apparently yield laws of history, laws of social change, laws of development and so on and so forth, a whole series of laws almost corresponding to the laws of nature and physics.... we have increasingly shed our concern with the subjectivities and we have come to fear it. They are increasingly seen as noises and not the real thing, artefact of political economy,*

reflections of larger empirically measurable, quantifiable human behaviour and so on and so forth. So I do foresee further shrinkage of this part of Indian civilisation in India on human subjectivities. Inner world you know, inner person and I think that this insane search for controlling of human behaviour and making it predictable will continue. The control is partly mythical because for each of these things in which people are considered to be natural is almost an automatic default position, so called social, economic and political laws… for each of this you can also show that there are spirited subversions and resistances by human beings" (Personal Interview, November 27, 2013).

In Nandy's view, selfhood and subjectivity are far more fundamental than any other social entity and their mutual shaping through cultural resources in a communal setting is a process of creative adaptation that cannot be contained in linear theories of development nor in simple categories of typification. Cultural assimilation happens widely but where it is enforced in a hierarchical relationship as in colonial relation, the colonised tend to lose the grounds of their subjectivity. The civilisational mission of Western colonialism and its idea of progress has proceeded to gain dominance on India's civilisational selfhood. The discussion on westernization and development in India and the contestation with cultural identities in making of the Indian nation-state need to be contextualised within this wider civilisational mission which began with the second phase of Western colonialism.

Nandy's discussion on colonialism as a way of life and as producing strange anomalies and the peculiar, esoteric boundaries it sets up, rose from the realisation that, while the oldest civilisations in Asia; Indian and Chinese had denied that the process of colonisation affected the inner lives of the colonisers and the colonised and led to collision of their cultural selves. Six Francophone intellectuals, all of whom had an African connection; Franz Fanon and Octave Mannoni both of whom were psychiatrists, and Aime' Ce'saire, Albert Memmi, Amilcar Cabral and Leopold Senghor, who were

writers and thinkers, were not anti-intraceptive[5] in the manner of Indian and Chinese and looked into the way colonialism had changed them as persons and cultures. They confronted the colonial power which was grounded in an unfailing faith in Enlightenment values and fanatic commitment to reason and Cartesian clarity. Nandy notes, that a possible reason as to why Francophone scholars wrote about colonialism in such a way might be that, as opposed to their educated Indian counterparts they seemed to care less for 'mature' scholarship and sane, normal adult criticisms (A Postscript- The Intimate Enemy after 25 years, 2009: 115-117).

The central arguments in the *Intimate Enemy* are made through persons and personalities than through social strata or political aggregates. This is in keeping with Nandy's interest in self and the manner in which it negotiates with the world at large, changing in the process. Nandy uses prototype personalities to study these changes. He looks beyond identity to understand deeper impacts among both the agent of change and those who are at the receiving end of the change. In this text too he offsets Rudyard Kipling and his psychological double Aurobindo Ackroyd Ghose[6]. Nandy shows how Kipling's 'sanity' included a worldview that excluded, stratified and dehumanized the others, whereas Aurobindo's 'insanity' by default worked with the idea of an inclusive humanity capable of self-transcendence. In Nandy's opinion it is in this contrast between dehumanised sanity and a humane insanity that one can identify the clues to an impoverished West. His

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[5]Nandy noted that he wanted to resurrect and revive the concept of anti-intraceptiveness. Anti-intraceptiveness is a term denoting a quality of not wanting to introspect or look within one's self. This term was very popular in the 1930s after Henry Murray introduced it but then it became a cliché and fell into disuse. This is one term he feels which had a shorter life span than it was meant to (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

[6]Kipling was brought up in India as an Indian child and, after a blissful childhood, was sent to an oppressive boarding school in England. There, as an outsider with a strange cultural repertoire, facing rejection and humiliation, he learnt to cope with his suffering by moving towards a this worldly theory of power and domination – an aggressive imperialist ideology that muffled and silenced his other self by fitting it in a new hierarchical and psychological order. Aurobindo Ghose, in contrast, was sent to England for proper education and was brought up as an English child, strictly protected from everything Indian. He had to learn to be an Indian as an adult and even rediscover his mother tongue when he returned to India. Yet, his efforts to integrate his fragmented self, first through nationalism and then through a mysticism allowed him to develop a magnificent and impressive, other-worldly theory of power over self and, finally over the cosmos.

thesis audits some of the price that the colonisers paid as a result of the process of colonialism. He writes, colonialism created among the dominant, a crippling fear of the feminine and the frozen gender hierarchies that maimed masculinity, they experienced the loss of childhood and saw it's re-emergence as only a preparatory stage of adulthood and a target of pedagogy, the desacralisation of the living cosmos through absolutised, secular ideas of progress and productivity, and a cramped self that cannot easily host radical diversity and plural visions of the futures (ibid: 124-5).

Nandy's discussion then does not posit the West as the Oriental's antipode. The colonised societies don't represent the anti-self of the colonising societies, nor do the colonising societies represent the ideal self of the colonised societies. Each culture has it's own patterns and peculiarities and when one looks into process of colonialism it becomes clear that colonialism is a state of mind which leads to situations, where colonised become accomplices in their own subjugation even though they seem to be resisting and challenging it, but they end up doing so, within the psychological limits set by colonialism and through an alteration of their cultural priorities; Nandy believes that human subjectivity reflects most pronouncedly the state of politics in a society, as the self absorbs and telescopes the social conflicts.

In the Indian subcontinent, the self, individual and collective are not well defined, nor are they clear-cut categories; "others" appear as telescoped in the very self as part of it along with the parts of the self. The self therefore, has the capacity to host ambiguities. This is one of the particularities of subjectivity that characterises Indian culture (Domingues, 2010: 7). Nandy thus presumes that, certain continuities exist between personality and culture and tries to see in them political and ethical possibilities. The locus thus shifts from a purely psychological to the psycho-political, as selves are seen as holding in them, traces and parts of cultures that help and provide resources to negotiate with the wider social dynamics of the outer world.

Culture and Tradition as Negotiation Between Selves and Others:
A Case for Multiple Universalism

Nandy in his book '*Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias: Essays in Politics of Awareness'* (1987c) writes it is not easy to live with an alien culture's estimate of oneself, to integrate it within one's selfhood and to live with that self-induced inner tension. If there is an inner dialogue within one's own culture which is triggered off by the dialogue with other cultures, it becomes even more difficult a project, as on such occasions it is difficult to keep up any cultural defences against disturbing dialogues or insights that emerge from these dialogues (Nandy, 1987c: 16-17).It is the discomfort of having to host the "others" within one's own self that leads to push and pull within the self and for Nandy, it is this tug, induced by diversities, that reveals creativity of cultures, civilisations and personalities. Being able to host diversities, negotiate and reconcile with them, is the spring bed of creativity. Nandy notes,

> "*…this is one of my projects, how to live with radical diversities? I think we have better clue about that than they (West) have. They are uncomfortable with diversity and increasingly Indian middle class is becoming uncomfortable with diversity. Living with diversity is one of the primary movers of creativity. Then that creativity is defined in terms of what we produce in music or films or we produce in terms of social science theories and scientific experiments or as creativity that finds itself in social and political spheres in public life in some way. That is the crucial thing, unless you import that tension within diversity, that inner dynamic, it becomes a part of your personality system, I think your creativity is cramped and that is why the great creative minds of our times, even the contemporary times once they are in a project...they are actually doing their job and don't bother or are not apologetic about how far it is Indian or western? They recognize both, and import that tension within their selves, Satyajit Ray is a very good example in many ways, he is a pioneer in world*

cinema many of his categories are Indian and western. In Intimate enemy this is what I discuss, the west is more impoverished because they have tried to excise the rest from the self, traditionally or when the rest do come in, they allow it to come in five or six standardized forms. They eat Chinese food, see Beijing opera and can see Ang Lee's films and become cosmopolitan even though they don't know anything about China, about Chinese categories or their people but they can talk blibly about Yin and Yang and acupuncture that's all done! That is the puriya form, the packaged form there is no other place for them in the west, they are in the packaged form... (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

This then is the vantage point at which Nandy pitches his writings on culture. The crusade is against homogenisation and against management of cultures and diversity. It is against the selective denial and acknowledgement of parts of culture that help sustain the grand scheme of modernity; piggy back on which, come development, expert knowledge systems and nation-states all of which bear the mark of a "white man's burden". Rationality, which is a product of European Enlightenment tries but fails to, and is incapable of, taking over the whole lives of individuals. People live by feelings, emotions and institutions and any desire to live solely by reason is a pathology promoted by 19th century Europe. Vast areas of life continue to exist where there are no well thought out empirically grounded responses available and people tend to fall back on traditions. Traditions come in whenever one is not fully organised intellectually, for instance a physicist would follow traditions of physics but in his life in general he would abide by the traditions of the society that he is a part of. Traditions and cultures are like guides to life. This is the reason why culture and tradition continue to shape people's lives and it is in this living, thriving, active versions that traditions and cultures provide insights into a society, not in their fossilised state (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 61).

Nandy writes that post World War II, state oriented attitude to culture became the only way of looking at culture the world over. In the 1950s and 60s a component of cultural-engineering was almost always built into any study on culture. This was true with regard to most science and culture studies during

the period and also regarding the studies on cultural contexts of economic growth which discussed cultural elements that needed to be discarded in order to achieve economic growth.

Culture: The Critical and Polysemic Concept

In his essay, '*Culture, Voice and Development: A primer for the Unsuspecting*' (1994a) [2012a] Nandy writes, there are primarily three meanings in which culture has been used and understood. He opens the essay with a discussion on these varied meanings of the word "culture". In its first meaning culture can be understood as a resource. In such an understanding, culture is first segregated from everyday life and then viewed as a form of cultivation or entertainment or as a sum of expressive forms. It is then reincorporated into everyday life on the basis of a new set of justifications for instance culture in a concrete, packaged form as public expression of a community's artistic self as seen in a museum or a performance. Understood as such, culture can be studied by both insiders as well as outsiders at leisure or professionally. When a professional takes interest in art and culture of an 'underdeveloped' society it becomes ethno-museology, ethno-musicology, expertise in ethnic arts etc. Understanding culture as a resource means that a socially –useful mode of self-expression can no longer be used for cultural criticism and creative intervention in politics and society because it disjuncts itself from life and is incorporated back on a set of different and new principles. The meaning of culture thus becomes depoliticized i.e. to say that while culture can still be seen as a possible political instrument, such an understanding of culture as a resource does not acknowledge that culture may have a subversive presence in the society (Nandy, 2012a: 305-307) [1994a].

The second possible meaning of culture is borrowed from anthropology and while there are several important meanings of culture in anthropology, the one that has shaped Southern world is the one in which "culture refers to the organizing principles of a way of life or a tradition of social living" (ibid: 307). It is typical of anthropologists to stress on two particular aspects of culture, one being that a culture must be described with the help of native or

emic categories internal to the culture and two, that a culture should be understood as self justifying i.e. the principle of cultural relativism. Anthropologists hierarchise cultures for popular consumption and for social and political engineering and rate cultures as primitive, modern, little, great, simple and complex. Over time however, they have eschewed such evolutionary classification of cultures and have learnt to give trans-cultural meaning to cultures. Their voices have become the official, audible voice of culture marginalizing and silencing the voice of the natives. The language of cultural relativism that anthropologists speak in does not provide a way forward in countering hegemony by stating that marginalized don't share the categories of the dominant. The hegemony can be countered only through the language of awareness of the other cultures being on the horizons, shaping and in dialogue with the self. Nandy argues that, cultures must not be limited by the understanding of only their categories but should be able to recognize and accept the manner in which it is understood by the other cultures.

Gustavo Esteva and Madhu Suri Prakash (2012a) write Nandy never quite falls into the trap of cultural relativism which often, goes on to become another kind of fundamentalism. The authors while agreeing to this, reject Nandy's proposition that 'true values' of different civilisations are in terms of their basic bio-psychological needs, already in reasonable harmony and capable of transcending the barriers of particularist consciousness (A dialogue with Ashis Nandy by Esteva and Prakash, 2012a:8) Instead, they opine that it is only a sustained and deep intercultural dialogue of a kind, that has not yet been attempted, that can discover or create such a harmony. They write, "we cannot accept, as yet, the existence of these 'core values' that may or may not, be uncovered by inter-cultural dialogues" (ibid: 8). They doubt that when people in non-western and western culture talk of humankind, they in most likelihood don't talk of the same thing.

The final meaning of culture that Nandy discusses is that of culture as resistance. This meaning, writes Nandy, is the least influential of the three. In this connotation culture is "simultaneously a form of political resistance and the 'language' in which such resistance is articulated" (ibid: 308). This meaning has been shaped by politically sensitive thinkers and activists such

as Gandhi, Amilcar Cabral etc. Since 1850 or so, many in South Asia have used culture in this meaning without being fully aware of the ideological implications this has, such as the Chipko movement, Santhal rebellions in east India etc. The privileged feel uncomfortable with this meaning of culture as this language of the victims often excludes the self –proclaimed vanguards and even their own westernized leaders. In this sense culture is itself resistance. It is incongruent with the language of modernity and resists anything that comes packaged as "historical necessity", namely, scientific history, technological growth, national security or development (ibid: 309). Culture used in this sense is not a language of resistance; it is resistance itself. Those who use culture in its third meaning are hostile to those who use it in the first two ways. This is because the people who patronize, study and promote culture are not exactly protector of culture unless they are alert about the devastation that has been unleashed by forces of urban, industrial and mega technology and sensitive to politics of cultures and the politics of cultural survival. The proponents of culture as resistance understand that while culture is the victim's version of the truth they are not automatically less contaminated by violence. Culture may at times be the 'false consciousness' of the resister, whose voices have been taken away and on whom silence has been imposed. The cultural decadence of the defeated is a fact of life but still they insist on using the language of 'false consciousness' because at least it re-values the voice of the victims. Nandy notes, that the politics of culture, attempts to delink the problems of these victims from their interpreters, representatives, and well-wishers and then, empower both the victims and their categories and theories. The ideologues he notes,

> "…actually hate their targeted beneficiaries always. I have written about it in the essay on nationalism. The idea of ideology is such that ideologues always hate their beneficiaries, always. You know, no proletariat in the world can meet the expectation of the revolutionary because people always seem less ardent to them than they should be. They don't learn that proletariat lives his normal regular life, has a normal rhythm of life etc. etc. and so the ideologues are never satisfied, to them everything is imperfect. So the human quality the

human frame has no place in their thinking. There is no scepticism for instance there is no Marxism of Marxism, there is no Gandhism of Gandhism. There is no Gandhian interpretation of Gandhism. There is no truly robust sceptical interpretation of many things which have over the centuries become sacred" (Personal Interview, October 21, 2013).

Therefore, it is essential to understand culture as resistance among the ordinary people away from those who champion their cause. Closely related to his discussion of culture is his idea of tradition. He gives three meanings to tradition. First, tradition is that part of culture which ensures continuity of a collective and personal sense of being over time and in that is something more than a cognitive structure. Tradition implies a concept of 'self' which maintains some continuity with the past and would continue to maintain so in the future. Collectivities share a sense of perceived continuity, understood as such "tradition is a common, compatible or remembered set of beliefs, values, occasionally character traits and above all a mythos that serves as a frame to determine how if there are differences, to resolve them" (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 58). In its second meaning tradition is the sum of culturally inherited systems of knowledge and has a cognitive core to it, although tradition is much more than just a cognitive structure. Such a meaning however, make the moderns uncomfortable; this is so because while the Enlightenment vision and secular ideologies allow to pluralise in the domains of spirituality and religion, as these domains are less relevant, belonging to private whims, it feels threatened when it sees plurality of knowledge in science. Tradition in its second connotation then is seen as dangerous, subversive and a challenge to the intellectual and moral status of the elites.

There is a third meaning in which the meaning of tradition converges with the meaning of culture at some point. In this meaning tradition is the negation of modernity. After the initial wearing off of modernisation theory it has been argued that modernity and tradition are not antonyms as many traditions can be modern. Likewise many elements of modernity are good because they are

traditional, although the tradition they have in mind is the Hellenic[7] one. Modernity is also a tradition. Modernity must not be understood as contemporaneity[8]. It has a time and space specific meaning and cultural baggage and linkages with changes that took place in the 17th and 18th century Europe (ibid: 64).

Tradition as Resistance

Nandy opines, that the growing sterility of modernity post- Auschwitz and post-Hiroshima world, led him to resurrect the older, sharper division between modernity and tradition; rediscover tradition and use it as resource for resistance and for alternative visions of a desirable society.

> "The idea of tradition in my works is thus a form of negation, in Herbert Marcuse's sense. I can give an example. It is now obvious from political sociology of Indian democracy that Indians never really found the competitive democratic system alien to their culture. As a matter of fact, the system is facing a lot of problems nowadays, yet it's legitimacy remains intact among ordinary citizens. These citizens don't necessarily understand the intricacies of the Westminster system, nor do they care for such intricacies. They are quite happy that the system seems to recognise diversity, the right of those living with this diversity to survive, and gives them a framework within which they can resolve conflicts between the old and the new, and

[7]Hellenic tradition includes polytheist's worship of the ancient Greek Gods, or the Hellenistic pantheon including the Olympians, nature divinities, underworld deities and heroes.

[8]Nandy's distinction between modernity and contemporaneity is premised on the notion that modernity is not a product of the now and the present it must be seen as a culturally rooted, temporally specific product which has it's own baggage. The distinction between modernity and contemporaneity is also made by Dipankar Gupta. Gupta's writings are discussed in the chapter on statists paradigm in the thesis. He writes all societies have non-hybrid time span. So while there might be modernity there would also be many other kinds of contemporaneous time scales that exist simultaneously. As modernity moves through these different contemporaneous time scales it gains different kinds of salience.

renegotiate the relationship between the powerful and the weak. Empirically speaking, modernity and tradition here are clearly not in opposition; I have written on that part of the story too. However, at the ideal-typical level, I have tried to protect the idea of an adversarial relationship between the two for the reasons I have already given" (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 59)

Traditions, he notes, can be oppressive too and oppression must always be fought whether it is traditional or non-traditional. In his essay *'Cultural frames for Social Transformation: A Credo'* Nandy writes, a theory of culture foregrounds the categories of the victims in the face of post-Renaissance European faith and its modern idea of expertise that demands that, even dissent should be uncontaminated by the inferior cognition and consciousness of the oppressed. Culture is thus posited as the language of the oppressed and repudiates the emphasis on rational, sane, scientific, adult manner of dissent that is the only acceptable version of dissent for the modernists. The linkages between culture, critical consciousness and social change in India therefore, has been a general response of societies which have been the victims of history and who are now trying to rediscover their own visions of a desirable society (Nandy, 1987a: 114).

Nandy notes, the response to modernity in complex societies like India are hardly about binary options or choice between unmixed modernism and traditionalism. Even in the modern world unmixed modernism is no longer in trend. The ultra-Positivists and the Marxists, who once proclaimed themselves proudly as anti-traditional, have begun to produce schools, which criticize crucial aspects of the modernist vision. Modernity, he states, at its most creative, cannot do without its opposite anti-modernity. Nandy does not use tradition as a category here, but chooses the term anti-modernity, this makes it evident that his understanding of tradition and culture represent alternately, any category that does not subscribe to European modern rational logic and has a worldview of its own.

He distinguishes between internal and external criticisms of modernity, stating that, if criticisms about modernity abide to the values of European

Enlightenment and assume that modernization is the way to realise these values the criticisms are internal to modernity, if however, the criticisms to modernity reject the Enlightenment values, they qualify as external criticisms to modernity. Nandy names Blake, Carlyle, Emerson, Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy as some of the best-known external critic of modernity in the West. He also names Gandhi as one of the most consistent and savage critic of modernity and of modern West. Gandhi rejected modern innovations such as the nation-state system, modern science and technology and the traditional idea of the state, science, civic living and social transformation (ibid: 115). Interestingly, many of his followers find it really hard to reconcile with this aspect of Gandhi's thought. The criticism of modern innovations however did not mean that Gandhi pleaded for a complete return to traditions. It is here that Nandy distinguishes between Anand Coomaraswamy and Gandhi. Referring to their writings on caste, for instance he notes that while the former defended the pre-modern caste system and argued that it was less oppressive than the class system, the latter too saw it as such but sought to re-order the hierarchy of the skills i.e. he re-legitimized the manual and the unclean and delegitimized the Brahminic and the clean. Nandy notes that, to say that one must abolish both the categories of Brahmin and the non Brahmins is to fight for the Brahminic world-view in the short run or to say for instance that poverty must be removed without bothering to touch the super-rich is as good as collaborating and helping the super-rich. Unlike Coomaraswamy Gandhi did not want to defend traditions he lived with them. Gandhi's framework was traditional but he did criticize some traditions ruthlessly. He was willing to include in his framework some elements of modernity as "critical vectors". Gandhi did not find a dissonance between

> "his rejection of modern technology and his advocacy of the bicycle, the lathe and the sewing machine. Gandhi defied the modern world by opting for an alternative frame; the specifics in his frame were frequently modern (The modernists find this hypocritical but they do not object to similar eclecticism when the framework is modern. Witness their attitude to the inclusion of *Sarpagandha* in modern

pharmacology as reserpine, even though the drug has been traditionally a part of *Ayurveda.*)" (ibid: 116).

Nandy understands that no culture can remain unchanged but what he advocates is that each culture must embrace the tensions induced by other cultures and understand this other on its own terms. Therefore, Nandy in no way defends cultural relativism where each culture is seen as being coherent only on its own term. Nandy is not against the Western understanding of Indian worldviews and knowledge systems as strands in it's own framework but such co-opting by the western frameworks must also be attempted by other cultures who should try to co-opt ideas and frames from west and others. What he is against is, the Western framework being the only available and used framework that provides the cultural parlance for societies world over. This becomes clearer in what he says,

"*Many American Universities teach aspects of Indian traditional Psychology much better and much more systematically than most Indian universities. That does not solve the problem as in doing so Indian psychology becomes a kind of an esoteric, but understandable strand within contemporary psychology. This is a psychology that most of us have to live with… but somebody is getting it in a packaged form, when he goes from India to America to study in a particular University. I think it is useless… There have been days when people have mechanically copied some fashionable western painter or western school or a western sculptor's style, but those days are past. Modern Indian artist are in search for an idiom which can simultaneously be understood in terms of Indian aesthetic theory, as well can be understood according to western aesthetic theory, and, that is how it should be. Let them understand it in their way we cannot understand it through their eyes and they cannot understand it through our eyes. Priorities are different. Many people, who they think are great in western traditions, may not appear as such to us and many people we think are great in our traditions, they might not think them to be so… This is all right, as I am willing to live with these radical diversities*". (Personal Interview August 23, 2013).

The extension of this argument politically implies that, traditions and cultures in the sub-continent like that of many other societies and civilisations, offer ample scope for prejudices, stereotypes and hostilities but always have a space which makes it possible to live together in a situation where these hostilities and prejudices while not fully erased are balanced by other kinds of hostilities and prejudices. The Indian self reflects the blurred boundaries of this civilisation[9] and because it has always had an open ended understanding of self and the other and of good and bad, demonic and divine it presumes that people can live together despite differences, diversity, and even hostilities. In such an arrangement there is no necessity to share fraternal sentiments as hostilities and distances do not lead to a desire for destruction of these others. For instance in India people believe that the secessionists; Kashmiris, Nagas, Sikhs, or Tamils-should not be ethnically cleansed. The idea that people might have to be forced to live with those they don't like and those who are different from them are not issues that culture in India faces but they certainly are seen as issues of the Indian nation-state (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 57). The statist paradigm discussed later in this thesis, particularly the writings of Dipankar Gupta emphasizes on fraternity as one of the key attributes of citizenship. It argues that, fraternity needs to be attained through deliberate measures of statehood, as it is only in doing so that the state can think of structures that may overcome differences between the members of a nation-state and give them a commonality that is more permanent.

Another very crucial aspect of Nandy's discussion on culture and tradition is the frame of critical traditionalism that he articulates. "Critical traditionality refers to the living traditions which include a theory of oppression, overt and /or covert. No tradition is valid or useful for our times unless it has, or can be made to have, an awareness of the nature of evil in modern times" (ibid: 117). This is because tradition is understood as a frame within which conflicts between the new and old and between the weak and the dominant are negotiated. Nandy notes, that the formulation that Indian civilisation needs to

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[9]Nandy notes, that this formulation of a blurred self is not his unique formulation. Scholars like McKim Marriott, Sudhir Kakar, Medard Bose and Alan Roland, have all arrived at roughly similar formulations". (Jahanbegaloo,2006:56)

constantly upgrade its theory of the evil has been partly shaped by his awareness that India's civilisational frame lacks adequate sensitivity to some forms of evil that have emerged in the last century. As a result, it has no clue about some pathologies that have intruded into Indian society today. The kind of industrialised, assembly line killing that began in the twentieth century led to a particular version of evil and according to him this kind of human violence has never really had a place in South Asian consciousness or in other civilisations. European civilisation has defined evil more concretely whereas Indian civilisation has always worked with an ill-defined, open-ended concept of evil, and therefore it finds it more difficult to grasp fully the nature of this kind of evil.

Cultures and traditions in Nandy's frame then appear as those inner resources that a common man draws upon in his everyday life to constantly negotiate with diverse worldviews and larger socio-political structures. It thus becomes the locus for versions of selves that emerge from these processes of confrontations, negotiations and reconciliations. Pluralising the realm of ideas as well as of everyday practice is what he proposes. Each culture has its own universalism:

> *"Whatever is cultural relativism? I would define it as another form of universalism each culture has its own form of universalism and western universalism is also a cultural form. It is ethnic... it is ethnocentric form of universalism and I think the west has a right to its ethnocentric form of universalism as we have a right to ours. I call it multiple and plural universalisms. Multiple and often competing not always, but sometimes competing universalisms of various civilisations and cultures"* (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

Diversity and pluralisation does not suggest a lack of choice to selectively include or exclude aspects of culture. As he puts it,

> *"...of course you have a right to select elements of culture according to your priorities and so on. You don't have to love all cultures, it is not that I can give you many instances where other cultures have a*

passive presence on the horizon, but it matters" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

To the extent to which his writings restore to each culture their claim to alternative universality, he thinks his writings on possibilities of reinterpreting traditions would have relevance for cultures which are under attack of domination by Western universalism. Nandy's theory of civilisation, culture and selves then, represents a position in which the selective denial and appropriation of elements of traditions and cultures and the universalising principles of the idioms of nation-state are not in synchrony. The cultural clashes, ethnic violence are all products of the superimposed structures of nation-state and it's corresponding ideas of development and expert knowledge systems. As far as cultures are left to themselves within pluralist structures of a state that is not interventionist and which is not essentially a nation-state, they have a better understanding of living with plurality and differences.

(IV)

Social Change Over Progress:
Reviving Civilisational Dialogues and Plural Utopias

All civilisations world over have had their own version of a desirable society. This desirable society was open to interpretation depending on their civilisational needs. Nandy's discussion on altered selfhood of Indian civilisation becomes clearer when looked at in the light of the predominant concept of progress. While social change is inevitable in every human society the dominance of scheme of western modernity, which brought with it notions of development, expert knowledge systems and nation-states has appropriated the idea of social change and made it a linear project of progress. Progress, notes Nandy, is a result of excessive growth of a kind of reasoning where organisation of means has become independent of the reflection on ends. Such reasoning makes men the masters and possessors of nature and is based on the value of "efficacy". Linear progress is conceived by the West as growing efficacy even as it destroys nature and people (Nandy, 2013: ix) [1987c].

In Nandy's words:

"Social change is inevitable and every human society undergoes it. You have different ways of controlling it or fighting for it, different ways of showing concerns about it, different ways of cornering of others by a small group of people who might be oppressive and can fight it out... there is no problem there. There are so many ways in which social change has been initiated in the different societies. Everybody has different ways of conceptualising social change I have no problem with that. No problem at all. But I have problems when they formalise it in such a way and sanctify it in such a way that social change becomes something unavoidable, inevitable, inescapable, where all societies and all human beings have to undergo it finally to reach beatification. I don't want to beatify. Any kind of social theory because they also are human theories built by human beings, is likely to go wrong. After sixty five million deaths, not deaths but killings revolutionary Soviet Russia collapsed and today they have capitalism which they opposed for all these years in a much worse form than other capitalist societies in their neighbourhood. For instance the Scandinavians have a much more human version of capitalism. Soviet Russia in the process of fighting capitalism in that fashion, in the process of having a revolution that was ruthless and in the process of living a ruthless natural law of social change introduced a concept of brutality, a criminality that has not left them ultimately and has turned their society forever so much so that even after changing paths they have remained as brutal and as cynical, and as ruthless as in the past. So in eighty years the society did not progress (that is also a dangerous word, a poisonous word). So society did not progress instead it regressed. Probably a dramatic trade union movement would have contributed more after the collapse if they opted for a kind of social welfare or democratic socialism of the kind many European societies have of which Scandinavia is a good example. Soviet Russia would have a more human society and a less ruthless capitalism. It's very difficult if you try to convince your

left fronts about this. None of them will accept it because for them the idea of revolution is prior, while humanisation of a change is secondary, it is a good myth thrown up by capitalist. Yet, in Soviet Union ultimately after end of revolution the capitalists and the plutocrats have more power, than in any western society. Some of the most dramatic social change has been initiated by people who are not developmentalist" (Personal Interview, November 27, 2013).

The appropriation of futures of societies and making the narrative linear has firmly established the concept of progress and relegated any other manner of conceiving social change as obsolete. The concept of progress came as a way of justifying annihilation that the colonisers unleashed in America. The first phase of colonialism was mainly looting and raping and destroying. The second phase of colonialism was about refining enlightenment values. It was argued that the futures of mankind is following a linear trajectory and while, some societies have gone ahead some are still lagging behind. The idea of the desirable future came from the West. This meant that a society would be seen as progressing and developing only when they were economically powerful and militarily secured. It is in such a context that development became the predominant framework to articulate social change.

Development does not annihilate culture but draws upon it and exploits it to strengthen itself, this becomes evident when one sees the victims of development who have tried to articulate their misery through representatives but these representatives whether liberals or radicals, have represented only those aspects of victimhood that make sense to the modern world such as material deprivation or destitution, absence of modern healthcare, physical dislocation, loss of employment etc. These representatives have had less patience with victim's ways of life for instance, physical dislocation leading to loss of psycho-ecological balance, loss of employment leading to loss of vocation and art forms and lifestyle etc. Thus, writes Nandy the victims firstly, become victims of systems of modern knowledge, which takes away from them, even their right to interpret their plight in their own terms. The victims need to be empowered along with their categories and theories (ibid: 323). It is only by emphasizing on cultural traditions and a defiance of the

modern idea of expertise through the theory of culture and the categories used by the victims that this hegemony can be resisted.

The societies of the third world can transcend the voices of its so called "well wishers" in the following ways; firstly, by collectively representing the victimhood of man-made suffering everywhere in the world as experienced presently and in all past times. Secondly, these societies can move ahead by internalizing or owning up the outside forces of oppression and, then coping with them as inner vectors. Finally, they could counter the hegemony by recognizing the oppressed or marginalized selves of the first and second worlds as civilisational allies in their fight against institutionalised sufferings that have been unleashed in the name of progress (Nandy, 1997: 21). The need to rediscover civilisational dialogues and involve recessive aspects of other civilisations as allies in one's journey of cultural self-discovery along with reinterpretation of one's own traditions can lead to a search for civilisation's utopia (ibid: 55).

He notes that at a time when most visions are struggling for survival a dialogue of vision must be the first statement against uniformity followed by a civilisational dialogue with different civilisations so that other manners of envisioning societies may emerge:

> "That we understand the spirit of Chinese civilisation, the spirit of Islamic civilisation in various ways…they are also not singular; there is a lot of diversity even there, and find out in what way it allows us to understand each other better... only then from within that will emerge our visions and sharpened new, edited versions of our concepts and visions of a desirable society and it is that model that we should actualise instead of trying to fit in with the global model" (Personal Interview, February 4, 2014).

However, some utopias, remarks Nandy, can never be brought into a dialogue; they can only be themes in a dialogue this is because

> "..some people don't want to come in a dialogue… I had a fight about this with my friend who believed that only fascists don't want to enter dialogues. Fascists have entered dialogues may times honestly or

dishonestly but the Ongez of Andaman they don't want to enter into dialogue because they know that their whole thing is fragile and their experience of other human society has not been pleasant throughout the last two centuries. Therefore they don't want a dialogue and I think we should respect that wish, if someday in the future they are willing to have a dialogue they would have a dialogue. Like I have stated earlier I use civilisation less and less than I use cultures. Sub-cultures... these adivasi civilisations are the underside of our civilisation, they are the counter self of our civilisation which we host within ourselves and we are the counter-self that they host within themselves so, that way their presence is known to both sides. The presence of the counter world is always there. You should know how to host the other in yourself only then you can learn how to be creative. It's an old and running theme in my writings..." (Personal Interview, February 4, 2014).

Nandy's discussion on utopia cannot be comprehended without his understanding of the conception of dystopia. The appropriation of futures by the dominant idea of progress has rendered the other versions of social change as obsolete. Reclaiming the right to envision it differently is critical to Nandy as it is through the imagination of alternative narratives for the future that a critique of the contemporary can be attempted. In societies like India which has always had an understanding of open futures and un-historicised pasts, fuzzy boundaries of the self allows a constant movement from present to pasts in a dialogical interaction.

Seeking to bypass history, being interested in cultural and political psychology, Nandy reads past, not as an objective account of an individual or a collective but as a "record of marks left in the form of memories, experiences, scars and adaptive resources within personalities" (Nandy, 2002d: 1). In a clinical case history he notes,

"The patient's self mediates between the past and the future and pilots the time travel between the two. Diagnosis thus, becomes an attempt to read the past as an essay on human prospects, and health as the

ability to live with one's constructions of the past and deploy them creatively" (Nandy, 2002d: 1).

In this sense then, study of past is not merely a study of the archival but also creation of new and unique dialogues with those who live with their distinct pasts. Furthermore, in societies with non-historicised pasts where myths, legends, epics and unofficial memories dominate, "clues to future lie scattered in diverse pasts created by human ingenuity" (ibid: 2). History is one of the ways of enslaving the present, by limiting the interplay between reality and imagination, experience and hope, the inner and the outer. "The fear of demystifying and underrating history is the fear of dissolution of a carefully constructed modern self; it is the fear of living with the fuzzy boundaries of a self that is less historical and less individuated" (Nandy, 2007b: xvi).

Like history closes the past, the future is closed by experts who make predictions based on empirical data and their expertise. Nandy distances himself from such articulations because he sees them as an extension of the enlightenment project that not only controls the pasts through history in much of the southern world, but also controls their futures, through notions of progress and development. He envisions opening up pasts and pluralising futures, in doing so, the future can serve as a language of distancing oneself from formal thoughts of the politically and academically correct and move closer to experiences and semi-structured knowledge that exist at the margins of selves. While the future outlined by the enlightenment project is being lived out by the developed societies,

> "the recovery of the other selves of cultures and communities –selves not defined by dominant global consciousness –may turn out to be the first task of social criticism and political activism and the first responsibility of intellectual stock-taking in the first decades of twenty-first century" (ibid: 175).

It is within the boundaries of the nation-state system that these utopias of progress and economic development are harboured. The nation-state has the onus of demarcating a territory and perpetuating a culture that most often

than not, disregards completely any shared civilisational ethos which may not be easily demarcated geographically and limits itself to a territorial boundary hoping to create a culturally homogenous population that takes pride in its achievements and development, seeped in sentiments of nationalism. Nandy approaches the question of such territorial allegiance as an alien concept in the Indic civilisation and many other civilisations in the world. While a sense of belonging to a particular region may invoke sentiments it is impossible to imagine a population that is bound only in its identity as citizens of a nation, showcasing nationalist fervour above cultural sharedness that they might have with their neighbours in the adjoining countries along with whom they might be a part of a civilisation. The following section then proceeds to understand Nandy's critique of the nation-state which holds above all the utopia of being a nation revered by its citizens bound only in sentiments of nationalism at the cost of excluding any other cultural ties that it's people might have held previously or still continue to hold and cherish presently.

(V)

Reclaiming Plural State Structures and Civilisational Continuity: Challenging the Nation-State and National Culture

India shares some essential features with its neighbouring countries but has to treat them as foreign countries. Nation-state, it is argued by the loyalists in this part of the world, must have a national culture. In this context a mention of Dipankar Gupta's discussion under the statist paradigm outlined later in this thesis, can be juxtaposed to understand the other side of the discussion, Gupta talking about the nation-states argues that, *"every country in Europe came to nationhood differently and contrary to the popular belief, Europe was not mono-cultural at the time when nations came out of its empires; like in the case of France only 17% spoke French and after Italy was formed Massemio d' Azeglio found that only 2% people spoke Italian and remarked, that now that Italy had been made, it was time to make Italians. Every nation comes to nationhood differently but once it becomes a nation it has to make*

its territory sacred on the basis of shared sentiments among its people" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013).

Nandy writes that the desire to comply to the ideal-type version of nation – states is more sacrosanct among those who have imported it, this might be because India feels that if it had a national state it may have faced less humiliation in the hands of the colonial rulers. The newly converts are always more fanatic. The concept of Indic civilisation is a more encompassing entity because it allows us to own up to our continuity with the neighbouring countries, in not acknowledging our closeness with people of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal or Sri Lanka, we disown our continuity with our own pasts and in that, crucial aspects of our contemporary selves. Civilisations cannot be territorialised, they are living entities and they have the capacity to destroy a nation-state if its principles clash with that of the state (Nandy, 2012b: 111-114 [2003]; Nandy, 2006; Jahanbegloo, 2006: 77-79)

In the opening of his essay *'The A, B, C, D (and E) of Ashis Nandy'* Ziauddin Sardar (1997) writes, "if Nandy stands for anything, it is the traditional *Hindustani[10]*; that is someone who is much more than a mere 'Indian', a citizen of a nation-state called 'India'; someone whose Self incorporates a civilisation with its own tradition, history (however defined), life-styles and modes of knowing, being and doing" (Sardar, 1997: 649).

> "After all the less than 'masculine' and 'scientific' Indian has survived centuries of colonization and decades of modernity and instrumental development – and survived with his sanity and identity more or less intact. Even now, in the closing years of the western millennium, the *Hindustani* seems to demonstrate a stubborn

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[10]It must be added that Nandy does not quite have a notion of a quintessential *Hindustani* nor does he agree about having a notion of a quintessential Indian Self. The term as used by Sardar then does not suggest that Nandy essentialises Indianhood. It can however be used with reservations to suggest modes of thinking, knowing and feeling that may not be rationally explained in available vocabularies but exist nevertheless as parts of another worldview. Although, increasingly now he does think there has been an emergence of a pan-Indian middle class, globalized, modern, English educated section of Indians which dreams of being as close as possible to it's Western counterparts in mannerisms, conduct, aspirations and articulations.

resilience in the face of the all embracing embrace of post-modernism and 'globalization', and appears ever ready to preserve his or her Selfhood from whatever else the twenty-first century may throw at him or her" (ibid: 649).

Nandy's core interest is resilience, that of people and of cultures. He is intrigued by "*what makes them tick*?" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013). Not just the *Hindustani* as Sardar writes, but any culture, any community that has refused to partake in the dominant game, and who are apparently the "non-players", but who in their refusal to participate, debunk the idea of the dominant and challenge its legitimacy, are of interest to him.

In '*The Illegitimacy of Nationalism: Rabindranath Tagore and the Politics of Self*' (1994) Nandy writes that it is imperative to note that the ideology of nationalism first grew to critique colonialism. However, Nandy indicates that nationalism was a restrictive political outlook which hardly addressed the socio-cultural ramifications of colonialism. Both Gandhi and Tagore, according to Nandy, belonged to the anti-imperialist tradition but their positions could in no way be reduced to that of the nationalists, this was so because Gandhi evolved a severe critique of nationalism and Tagore opted for a cultural universalism which transcended the boundaries of the nation. Located within a civilisational order, they did not delink politics from culture and society. For in their scheme of things, morality and civilisation were intertwined. Nandy explored Tagore's political ideology through a reading of three of his novels, *Ghare Baire* (The Home and the World), *Gora* and *Char Adhyay* (Four Chapters). These novels delved into Tagore's understanding of nationalism and outlined political statements. The chief protagonists in all the three novels— *Bimala, Gora* and *Atin* are attracted to the nationalist movement but this leads to a loss of the 'self' among them Tagore pits these characters against embedded traditionalists like Anandamoyi (Gora's mother), Nikhil's grandmother and Pareshbabu who showed their commitment to traditions in a manner entirely different than the ambivalence encountered by the first three protagonists which was akin to the fragmentation experienced by the modern nationalists. Through these readings Nandy sought to recover the dialogue which Tagore carried on with the nationalists in particular,

Brahmabandhab Upadhyay. Nandy argues, nationalism; patriotism and anti-imperialism were interlinked with one another and show that in nationalism one could discern attempts to mould the Indian concept of the public realm to the requirement of standardized western categories, whereas patriotism was a non-specific sentiment based on an idea of territoriality, which is held by a number of other species. Nationalism is based on the premise that state is central to public life whereas patriotism makes no such demands. Nationalism needs undivided allegiance to the state, whereas; patriotism does not require any such singular loyalty. Nationalism insists on the primacy of national identity over identities and is suspicious of other identities and thinks of them as subversions. Nationalism is essentially an ideology and like all ideologies it is more concerned with the abstract notion of the state and has a disdain for the people and the communities who constitute the state (Nandy, 2006: 3502-3503; Nandy, 2012b). The discussion on the ideology of nationalism opens up a discussion on the specificities of the damages that were unleashed by the nation-state in India. Unfortunately, the creative responses of Gandhi and Tagore were not used to understand and negotiate with the confrontation that Indian society experienced towards modelling itself as a nation-state.

The emphasis on state oriented culture was an outcome of the response to the colonial rule when around the middle of the 19th century Hindu religious and social reformers claimed that Hinduism lacked the space which gave primacy to the state. As in contrast to this they opined Islam and forms of post-medieval Christianity had a built in space for the subtleties of the nation-state system. Hindu way of life and personality thus needed to be engineered and corrected and this is what the social reformers of the 19th century sought to do (Nandy, 2012b: 93). The mainstream Liberals and the official Marxists went on to build upon this tradition of social reform, however, they ended up ignoring the nuanced checks in the frameworks which were advocated by the pioneers (ibid: 96). For instance, Rammohan Roy wrote that the pathologies of Hinduism that he was fighting could be found only among those Hindus who had been exposed to colonialism, he therefore, proposed although quite crudely that, portions of Indian society that had not come into contact with

colonialism did not need the reforms and nor did they need the new Hindu sect he was advocating for. As Nandy puts it, Roy wanted to integrate modernity into Indian culture and not quite the other way round, but this strain of his thought was neglected, and he was declared to be the father of modern India and therefore by every implication a mindless advocate of everything western (ibid: 96).

It was the ideological framework that was popularised by Hindu nationalism in which the modern nation-state acquired absolute primacy over the needs of the Indian civilisation (ibid: 97). However, Nandy writes there has been always a different intellectual current that has understood the needs of the society differently. This alternate strain has regained some ground in the writings of "young and not-so young scholars- traditionalists, counter modernists, post-Mao Marxists, anarchists and neo-Gandhians" (ibid: 97-8). Nandy outlines a few features of this strand; firstly, it believes that state is an instrument of a civilisation and not the other way round. The advocates of this approach don't object to the idea of India as a single political entity because in their opinion such an arrangement may actually help Indian civilisation resist the global nation-state system and the homogenizing thrust of the culture of the modern West, but they are unwilling to continue their support if statist forces try to dismantle Indian civilisation and de-indianise it in order to make it into a proper modern nation-state. The conventional role of the nation-state as providing national security is seen as detrimental to democratic governance within the country and to India's neighbours, who are seen as parts of Indian civilisation. Thus, while this strand of thought does not suggest an absence of the state, it does not see the state as the all-pervasive aspect of life. The non-modern theories of state that it draws upon look bottom up, from the people to the state's perspective. The approach thus distinguishes between political participation and participation in state oriented politics i.e. between *lokniti* and *rajniti* and stresses the former. Such participation, they argue seeks to bring different sections of a society within politics, without bringing different aspects of the society within the scope of the state. For proponents of this view the need for democracy is as important as the need for a strong state. To them the politics of the nation-state is only

a part of the story what is most important is the story of democratization. They thus refuse to accept state's definition of civic culture and forward principles of democratic governance by affirming that culture lies primarily with the people. Culture in this context is understood as something much more than 'high culture'; it is understood as including indigenous knowledge, theories of science, education and social change. The defence of culture, according to those who stress cultural survival, is also the defence of these native theories. The state is seen as not committed to one language, one culture and one religion for India, nor do they think that such unification advances the cause of Indian people. Unlike the modernists and the Hindu revivalists the advocates of this approach, believe that it possible for a state to represent a confederation of cultures, including a multiplicity of religions and languages; wherein each of these cultures are an internal opposition rather than an external enemy, to the other cultures. Cultures in this approach therefore does not emphasise the classical and museumized, frozen-in-time version but a defence of native theories, the accumulated wisdom of people, which challenge the hierarchy of cultures, the evolutionist theory of progress and the historical awareness with which the modern mind works.

In talking about the statist and the culturist strand in India Nandy writes that, if one was to look at the two sets of worldviews, one which harps on the primacy of the state and the other that looks at centrality of culture, it becomes evident that the possibility of the two coming into a dialogue is impossible. This is so because the world view are rooted in different theories and have different meanings (ibid: 106). While the statists believe that the emphasis on culture is a product of the frustrations of those who were uprooted by modernity and can only be rectified by more modernity, the culturists believe that parts of modern vision can survive only as post-modern vision and as more rooted in Indian vision. It is possible to see modern west as part of the larger native frame. Seen in such a light modern west can thus be useful but it can also be dangerous if it's excessive. When asked about whether he would classify himself as a statist or a culturist? Nandy responds by saying:

"...it is difficult to say, I mean I believe in plural state structure. I don't think the whole world needed to be organised in the nation-state structure. If I have to say where I will locate myself I would say in a loosely defined, decentralised, more humane, compassionate state without this much stress on navy, army and air force. We need a much more humane, compassionate state system where people can experiment with different kinds of state with much higher level of decentralization with much more freedom to envision different forms of civilisations. There are states which do it by default for instance look at the Bolivian constitution it is such a human constitution"(Personal Interview, November 27, 2013).

The essay delineates the statist and the culturist approaches but it does not go on to address some issues, for instance, Nandy does not dwell on what is to the full implication of when, he writes that state is seen as an instrument of civilisation? Nandy writes about non-modern theories of state but he does not elaborate on what these non-modern theories are, except a brief description of the Mughal state in India. Nandy advocates against a state promoted culture and in such a context, then categories such as citizenship gain newer connotations which he does not quite dwell upon.

This then brings into fore two things, one that Nandy looks at diversities as counter forces that enrich the Self. Furthermore, what he really stands against is a mechanical criterion for judging cultures and yet, as discussed earlier he moves away from cultural relativism which he thinks is another kind of fundamentalism and which does not acknowledge that civilisations always share some basic bio-psychological needs. Citizenship is a homogenising category which seeks to erode all other identities but the alternative to it is not a forceful advocacy of diversity, leading to another kind of dominance. This explains his position of a softer, open state that provides the space for people to envision different forms of civilisations. Nation-state with its armoury of nationalism, military and citizenship are incapable of allowing such a space.

Nandy is comfortable with India as a civilisation and not as a nation-state. While India had state structures, the idea of a nation-state entered only in the 1830s as a part of a full-fledged framework of superiority of West, their worldview, sciences, laws and political institutions. As a case in point he discusses the Mughal Empire which lasted for almost 400 years and which accepted different levels of allegiance. Some were entirely autonomous and were thought of as allies rather than enemies of the state while some other units were under Mughal suzerainty. This system was used by the British rule for nearly a hundred years but after the *Sepoy* Mutiny of 1857 they gradually shifted to direct rule. This was the beginning of British rule meddling with matters of Indian social institutions and cultures. Nandy writes, while in Europe the nation-state grew out of the experience of the people, in South Asia this state system was imported in its textbook *avatar* and was contaminated by the imperial state. The concept therefore was hollow and that it was a baseless one became more evident in the time to come.

The decolonised countries got the modern territorial state without there being a politically constituted 'nation'. The modern state however, always exists on behalf of a collectivity called the 'nation'-imagined or constituted. The source of its identity as a political authority is that it represents the will of a territorially and legally designated nation which is usually not culturally homogenous. Such a state therefore has to constantly strive to create a nation which shares cultural homogeneity and the sentiment of nationalism. The state therefore cannot limit itself only to governance but also takes conscious steps to create a homogenised national society. This is in contrast to the traditional forms of governance which sought to protect established social codes and not transform it through conscious legal and policy interventions to transform these to create a national society. The modern state seeks to serve as an engine of economic growth, a vehicle for fulfilling 'national aspirations' which are its own creation and without which it cannot function. The modern state then is necessarily interventionist seeking to relentlessly homogenise and trying to search for a fairly stable national-cultural basis for its rule over society.

India's multi-ethnic character and its past experience with fluid cultural interactions among the communities and systems of governance which only maintained larger social and economic codes without actually governing the society has made it difficult to cope with such an interventionist state. While India has also had a past where it faced subjugation and was dominated periodically, Nandy and Seth argue that, within these hierarchical orders of domination they still managed to govern themselves and express themselves culturally. What prevailed in these societies before the nation-state model intervened was not a single unifying state, but a single political –civilisational system (Nandy, 1996b: 20). Under the modern nation-state system, the idea of the single territorial polity and the pursuit of centralised governance, transformed the pattern of civilisational co-existence of diverse communities into competing and conflicting political identities. Against such a backdrop while liberal democracy continues, the faith in formal institutions of representations have reduced significantly. Identity assertions and conflicts have begun to undermine the growth of a political community through expansion of effective citizenship rights.

Nandy proposes indigenizing the discussion on democracy in India. One of the ways he suggests to do so is by bringing back the Gandhian concepts like that of *gram swaraj* at the micro level held by a 'trusteeship' at the macro level within the national political discourse. Alternatively one could look at the grass root movements and their terms of discourse on democracy in India (ibid: 22). Nandy and Seth write,

> "The challenge in India, as in other parts of the world today, is to discover and press on the softer edges in the space within which the transformative, democratic movements find themselves enclosed. In this sense, the challenge for these movements is as much intellectual as political" (ibid: 23).

The political culture of India is not any longer one where the traditions and modern are in contestation. Strands of schools of thought propounded by Gandhi and Tagore who offered possibilities of engagement with modernity creatively, by using modernity as a vector within the self, have been side-

lined. In India the modern is now used to openly attack and bypass the tradition. Here traditions are used instrumentally; for instance religion is used as an ideology rather than as a faith. This, notes Nandy, has opened up the space for popularity of Hindu nationalism. A case in point is his discussion on the *Ramjanmabhumi* movement which was an instance of organised communal violence with instrumental motives.

<div align="center">

(VI)

***Ramjanmabhumi* Movement:**
An Instance of Instrumental Politics and Communitarian Survival

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The communal conflict around *Ramjanmabhumi* is understood by Nandy et al. (1995b) as guided by three processes; firstly, the breakdown of traditional social and cultural ties, secondly, the emergence of modern, massified and paradoxically elitist version of religion that acts as a political ideology and compensates for the deculturation, rootlessness and loss of faith in massified sections of the urban population and thirdly, the emergence of a politicised modern and a semi-modern middle class that seeks to access political power that is disproportionate to its size and needs the state to legitimise that access (ibid: 22-23).

Prior to the incident on December 6, 1992 there was no evidence that *Ayodhya* felt strongly about the *Ramjanmabhumi* issue. This was a concern for those leading the movement for the temple as they were worried that while the issue had generated passion among people in other parts of the country and abroad why was it that Ayodhya remained almost like an island of peace? (ibid: 27). A large proportion of the crowd that attacked the *Masjid* were what onlookers described as ill-educated, partly massified urban youths. The authors note that karsevaks'[11] attitude towards the police was soft, as was evident in their sloganeering. These Karsevaks seem to be recognising the police as partners in the same enterprise as theirs (ibid: 30). At the forefront

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[11]A term which was usually used by the Sikhs, although in this case it had more to do with destroying, rather than building a place of worship (ibid: 39) .

of the movement were the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad*, backed by the *Rashtria Sangh Sevak*, the *Bhartiya Janta Dal* Party and their youth fronts *Bajarang Dal* and *Durga Vahini*. The *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* had launched this agitation by the early 1950s. More than thirty years later in 1986, the Congress (I) regime trying to appear impartial after a section of Muslim religious and political leadership had forced its hand in the Shah Bano case, allowed for the lock on the disputed shrine to be open.

In December 1992 the day the mosque was attacked, it was evident that the purpose was to humiliate the Muslims and thereby affirm Hindu potency (ibid: 38-39). Interestingly, the religious men i.e. the priests opined that their job was to offer prayers and that they would refrain from making any comments on the situation. They opined that if Hindus and Muslims were to practise their religion in true faith, there would be no problem at all (ibid: 46). A journey through *Ayodhya-Faizabad* during the time revealed a diversity of opinion on the temple issue. Discussing the propaganda on Ram *janmsthan* started by *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* the authors note that, Hindus and Muslims in India have never quite constituted as distinct ethnic groups in the conventional sense. Nor do they qualify as distinct socio-economic formations. While divisions in India exist, religious divisions at times are less significant than other kinds of divisions. For instance, the Pranami sect in Gujarat (The one in which Gandhi was born) is in many ways closer to Islam than it is to many other sects in Hinduism (ibid: 51). Such variations then make it evident that Hindu-Muslim mobilisations could only be attempted by concentrating on broad ideological issues and subjective configurations of cultural differences, memories and grievances used especially for mobilisational purposes.

Ramjanmabhumi movement was a direct outcome of propaganda based on a fairly recent version of *Hindutva*, the origins of which are traceable to second phase of colonialism when one of the many reactions to the Raj was a result of ego- defensiveness that sought to project Hinduism as a proper religion which devalued the little cultures of India and crafted a version of Hinduism which was primarily classical, Brahmanic and Vedantic so as to be acceptable to semi modern Indians who were in touch with civilised parts of the world.

Hindutva found immediate takers among the uprooted, urban, semi-modernised sections of Indian society. *Hindutva* in Nandy's view, is an abstracted a version of Hinduism which was closer to an ideology than to a faith. This was done in order to be able to use Hinduism as a vehicle for political mobilisation in the style and manner of European national ideology rather than a repertoire of religious, cultural and moral categories. It consciously rejected cultural and moral definition of Hinduism which was later developed by Gandhi (ibid: 59). *Hindutva* also martialised and masculinised the self-definition of Hindus in the manner of western notions of masculinity. It rejected the openness of pasts and alternative constructions of it, as was available in Indian civilisation and instead, worked with a historical closure which upheld its identity.

The attitude of Hindu nationalism to Ram was defined by the major 19th century Hindu reform movements which was determined by political strategy and cost calculation, not by religious fervour or theology or fundamentals of faith. It was a perfectly instrumental choice in an environment where the dispassionate, cynical use of faith of others has acquired certain political legitimacy (ibid: 99). Such choice of figures for political mobilisation as discussed by Dipankar Gupta in his writings of *Shiv Sena* movement in Bombay starting in the decades of the 1970s which appear in the discussions in this thesis on the statists paradigms on identity, also alludes to secular well thought out rationales of selections rather than religious choices. Both Nandy's and Gupta's discussions on communalism indicate the idea of instrumental politics however, there was a large section of scholars working on communal violence in India whose writings emphasised that, it was communalism, which was the cause of communal riots and not a part of core theology[12].

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[12]For instance, Nandy mentions works like Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhiaand Bipin Chandra's *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House,1969); papers included in Ashgar Ali Engineer (ed.), *Communal Riots in Post–Independence India (*Hyderabad: Sangam Books, 2nd ed., 1991); and S. Gopal (ed.) *The Anatomy of a Confrontation: The Babri Masjid- Ram Janmabhumi Issue* (New Delhi: Viking, 1991) to name a few.

Discussing instances of violence in Ayodhya, Ahmedabad and Jaipur, Nandy et al. write that they found that the themes of community and survival kept remerging. The inner resilience of those who refused to be a part of the violence and hatred held community life, and community obligations in esteem. However, the places where the traditional codes of conduct had weakened through processes of social change and massification such communitarian sentiments took a back seat. The answer to why these riots occurred and were mitigated were not to be found as a part of objective histories of these places but in the shared traditions and moral universe of the residents (ibid: 180). Hindu Nationalism they noted has its territorial limits. It cannot spread beyond urban westernised India.

The "new Hinduism" that had little to do with lived traditions and much to do with relatively recent phenomena of *Hindutva* was utilized initially as a nationalist instrument of political mobilization. The ensuing discussion emphasises on the role played by the urban middle class citizens of modern India and shows in its detailed analyses, their participation in and rationalization for the communal rioting stimulated by the *Ramjanmabhumi* Movement in Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Ayodhya. In this context, Nandy et al. argue, that the struggle between tradition and state-sponsored modernity is only one aspect of contemporary India's political culture. Particular interpretations and uses of religious tradition are also available as instruments to achieve a modern secular goal.

Majority of the writings on communalism in South Asia are articulated under the ideology of secularism. As modernisation and secularisation has increased in India so has communal violence. Few social processes have contributed to communal violence as much as the demands of competitive mass politics. These demands have turned communal violence into another form of organised politics. The modern ideas of nationalism and state have sanctioned the concept of a mainstream national culture that is fearful of diversities and which cannot tolerate dissent unless it is articulated in the language of the mainstream. It is also fearful of any self- assertion or a search for autonomy by the ethnic groups. This culture believes that legitimacy of the nation-state can only be achieved on the basis of steam-rolling concept of nationalism that

promises to eliminate all fundamental cultural differences within the polity. The modern state can occasionally make compromises with ethnicity or religion on political grounds but that is seen only as a temporary compromise (Nandy et al. 1995b: 19). In this context the proposition made by Ziauddin Sardar and Meryl Wyn Davies, that fundamentalism is in fact a direct creation of secularism is important (Sardar and Davies, *Distorted Imagination*, 242, c.f. Nandy et al. 1995b: 20). The state believes that communal problems can be contained primarily through politics. Democratic politics allows the resistance to communal violence that exists at the level of communities to assert itself. Understood from such a perspective, Indian secularism given its strong statist connections, is itself a part of the disease (ibid: 21).

Nandy's position on communal violence locates itself in the breakdown of inter-community ties and traditional socio-economic and cultural interdependence of communities. Under the modern state, these gaps are mediated only through impersonal administrative and political structures, new consumption patterns and priorities set up by the process of development and through reordered ideologies, which conform to the needs of a centralised market and the culture of the modern state (ibid: 21). The increase in instance of communal violence in India is closely associated with the breakdown of cultural self of the people and its subjugation to the larger processes operating in Indian political culture. Communalism and secularism are not opposite forces, indeed in Nandy's analysis secularism is in fact a part of the larger breakdown of more traditional forms of tolerance. Even though the non-modern ambiguous cultural self continues to exist as a latent part of the Indian political culture, the homogenising dominant secular identity tries to foreclose it. In '*Anti-Secularist Manifesto*' (1985a) he writes that, there are many potent and resilient ideas within the repertoire of cultures and religions, which can provide resources for religious and ethnic co-survival. He distinguishes between the two different meanings of secularism, that are present as a part of the contemporary Indian political culture; in the first meaning, the ideology of secularism is defined by separating religion from politics which is how the term is also understood in the Western context. This

understanding of secularism is based on the normative understanding that the more secular a state is, the more tolerant it is going to be. There is a second, more localised understanding of secularism which suggests that secularism is opposed to intolerance. Deftereos (2013) writes that, while in the first meaning secularism can be understood as opposed to sacredness in the second meaning this is not so, here secularism can be understood as not against the sacred but against the "pathologies of intolerance" such as ethnocentrism, xenophobia and fanaticism (Deftereos, 2013: 37). In order to function the ideology of secularism presumes an individual who clearly defines his religious allegiances according to the classifications of census and "does not confuse religion with sect, caste, family traditions, *dharma*, culture, rituals and *deshachara* or local customs" (Nandy, 1998c: 293). The language of secularism is not understood by the majority of people who have traditionally lived with inter-religious understanding and tolerance with thousands of other communities. The co-existence was not seamless and there were violent clashes yet the level at which these clashes occurred were more localised as opposed to modern religious conflicts, which involved inter-religious violence between Hindus–Muslims-Sikhs at a more general level. The localised character of the conflicts in the past enabled the communities involved to see it as cutting across religious lines, which were ill defined and fuzzy and the language of their reconciliation was understood by those involved, unlike the alien language of secularism which is unclear to most. Nandy writes, it is only when there is a breakdown of traditional understanding of religions that secularised, planned and organised religious violence takes place. These instances of religious violence are calculative, rational and organised and must be therefore understood as instances of pathology of rationality rather than that of irrationality.

> "Religious riots or pogroms are getting secularised in South Asia. They are organised the way a rally or a strike is organised in a competitive, democratic polity and, usually, for the same reasons, to bring down a regime or discredit a Chief minister here or to help an election campaign or a faction there" (Nandy, 1998c: 285).

Secularism, in Nandy's view is an inadequate framework and cannot take on board the pre-modern ways of religious identification and reconciliations. The top down approach of the state to intervene and enforce modes of compliance with secular consciousness among its people has not been successful in engineering India to become a non-communal political culture. The presence of alternate conceptions of tolerance continues, even if it is peripheral and it does challenge the state enforced secular political culture. These practices and subjectivities within which tolerance is embedded are a part of the concept of Indianess, which is not officially recognised and is seen as having no political value. Deftereos (2013) discusses the question of tolerance in Nandy's writings and locates it within the complexities of subjectivity, and therefore within the dyad of the self and the other without the need for an external state mechanism. This is critical, because it is in contrast to the externally and mechanically imposed concepts of toleration and it critiques their viability and efficacy. Deftereos writes, Nandy's tolerance for other and otherness, can be distinguished by its analytic foundations. For as he affirms, "it is closer to the concept of understanding, and presumes cultural interdependency of the kind which encourages that tolerance of others because that tolerance represents the tolerance of less acceptable aspects of one's own self" (Nandy, 2002d: 36, c.f. Deftereos, 2013: 41).

Thus, Nandy comes to the conclusion that Hindu nationalism and Secularism reflect deculturation of the Indian socio- political climate. It is essential to re-conceptualise political, social and cultural ends by bringing into the discussion subjectivities and openness, as they operate at the boundaries of the selves. Nandy's writings represent a position that is both inward looking and political, in its understanding of the alternate possibilities that continue to exist as a part of the psycho-cultural resources available, outside the state dominated normative discussions.

(VII)

A Note on the Politics of "Alternatives"

The notion of alternatives has a central position in Nandy's writings and these alternatives are not ready and given out there. But are often unseen, unheard undercurrents which allow individuals to creatively play with their situation. The self is layered and always open to engage with the "other" which may exist not only as external to the self but also as parts of the self as in the case of anti-selves and rejected selves:

> "*Rejected selves are those part of our selves which are unacceptable to us which can be partly conscious, partly unconscious. I have started using the term anti-selves very recently; its usage in my writings is not as old as the other terms. I have been using it for only about one decade or so. Anti-self is something where you are setting up an "other" to your "self" and that self is in negation of this self but in dialogue with it. New possibilities are released by the dialogue... that's the anti-self.... so creative persons usually have an anti- setup, an anti-self.... and that anti-self often comes from the rejected self but it's much more active than the rejected self because it is not pushed into the dark, repressed part of the self ...it is used also, as a constant presence, it is challenged*" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2014).

From Individual to the Social Self

This theme runs through Nandy's early writings starting from the *Intimate Enemy* to the more recent writings such as the essays in his books *'Time Warps and Time Treks'*. In extending the insights from studies of creativity on individuals to larger aggregates Nandy shows that, social creativity is perceptible in the life worlds of the oppressed as they have to negotiate with the life world of the oppressor, who however can choose to live in denial of the oppressed. Theoretically then it is the study of the oppressed that is

insightful to Nandy's larger interest in theories of creativity. He writes that the oppressed is never a "pure victim" while a part of him

> "collaborates, comprises and adjusts; another part defies, 'non-cooperates', subverts or destroys, often in the name of collaboration and under the garb of obsequiousness. The second part of the story creates problems for the social sciences as it is not easily accessible. The modern tradition of social criticism is unidirectional. It can demystify some forms of dissent and show them to be non-dissent" but "it has no means of demystifying some forms of collaboration to discover secret defiance underneath" (Nandy, 1987c: 43)

Denial in Nandy's view is no longer restricted to the clinic; it is the predominant culture of our times. The moderns protect themselves against all kinds of strange knowledge. This explains why criticisms are shaped by the same rhetoric and fail to make their way past the dominant culture of state, democracy, science and development. For instance, while democracy gives the right to vote to everyone it does not give everyone the right to bring "their odd cultural ideas and morality into the public sphere" (Nandy, 2002c: 4). These defences limit the play "with self-definitions, ego boundaries and identity fragments that is needed to unleash the potentialities of a culture of participatory democracy" (ibid).

The idea of nation-hood in most Afro-Asian countries is built on the dreams of bringing citizens into the realm of global processes such as development, progress, secularisation etc. The elites of these countries feel that collaborating with the dominant culture is the way forward and Nandy writes that this often arises from a sense of "humiliation" wherein they feel that they or their cultures are not good enough. This leads to pathological cultures, a good instance that Nandy gives is that of militant hyper –masculine Hinduism of *Hindutva* which was the result of a feeling of shame that likes of Savarkar felt regarding the effeminate, sensitive Hinduism. In such instances the self can be seen as going through a complete identification with its "other" trying to better them at their own game. The alternate to this is what Nandy discusses in his essay on '*Humiliation: The Politics and Cultural Psychology*

of the Limits of Human Degradation' (2011). Writing about humiliation Nandy notes that for humiliation to succeed those who are being humiliated need to accept the humiliation. Furthermore, humiliation can destroy people by bringing them closer and inducing them to share categories and establish common criteria with the perpetrators. But, "Humiliation dissolves when the dyadic bonding -and the culture that scaffolds it –is disowned by at least one of the two sides" (Nandy, 2011: 150). Nandy links his discussion on humiliation to dissent and defiance. Humiliation he writes can open up new creative possibilities.

> "While the capacity to feel humiliated presumes minimum self esteem the capacity to withstand it presumes ego strength and a sense of mastery over one's environment. The fear of being humiliated too shows low self- esteem. Humiliation as an experience questions and recasts one's relationship with oneself. There have been instances when attempts to humiliate someone has lead them to expand their self instead" (ibid: 145).

Nandy cites the instance of Gandhi being thrown out of the first class compartment of the train by a racist conductor. This event woke him as if from a stupor and led him to create a new political weapon. The consequences of humiliation thus depends not only on the nature of humiliation but also the nature of the victim (ibid). This experience at Pietermaritzburg may have also sensitized Gandhi to the pedagogic possibilities of milder forms of humiliation as he sprinkled the salt that had been illegally made on the snacks that was served to him by the Viceregal kitchen. Removing humiliation completely seems doubtful but it may at times be "a means of re-education for both sides in an unequal relationship" (ibid: 146). The counterpoint to humiliation is empathy and not respect and empathy cannot be inculcated institutionally. It is in distant tolerance and not in increasing closeness that societies hope to survive. The only way of countering hegemony is to make it explicit that the marginalized do not share the categories of the dominant that there is an alternative imagination however feeble and undernourished it may appear. This however is not the same as the language of cultural relativism that anthropologists speak in, it is

the language of awareness of the other culture being on the horizons, shaping and in dialogue with the Self.

(VIII)

<u>Key Themes in the Culturist Perspective</u>

This section seeks to discuss the emerging themes on self and other from within the various contexts in which Nandy discusses them. It is imperative to add that these themes are not exhaustive but they emerge as significant to our understanding of the culturists discussion on identity, self and the other in the Indian context.

Self as Telescoping the Larger Socio-Cultural-Politico Dynamics of Society

In Nandy's writings the category of self and its subjectivities are central. Since his writings stand at the intersections between personality, culture and society, the category of the 'self' is understood by him as a microcosm of the larger societal processes. It is engaged with in order to provide an understanding of how inclusions and exclusions are posited in the subjectivity of the individuals. Such an understanding brings back into the discussions on identity the layman's processes of confrontation, negotiation, reconciliation and distanciation in relation to his/her others. The boundary between the selves and the others, in such an instance is conceived as changing and fluid rather than being firmly demarcated. Identity then becomes an instance of *atmaparichay* (self-identification) which is contextual and which presents only one way of introducing oneself. Whereas the selves are seen to be deeper and darker; not always apparent and clear to the observer; and in processual flux constituting and reconstituting themselves not only in relation to the others who are present, but also those others, who maybe absent now, but whose memories are etched in the subconscious and unconscious of the

selves. An equally important role is played by those parts of the selves which have been disowned and discarded.

One of the distinguishing features of Nandy's scholarship is his use of an "improper" reading of psychoanalysis in analysing politics and society at large. His main interest has been to rediscover everyday life and ordinariness as sources and clues to human potentialities (Nandy, 2002c: 5). The common themes that guide his writings have been his basic interest in a deep analysis of human agency and its innumerable possibilities arising out of its endless potentials to negotiate with the given. His writings are guided by explorations of looking inwards and bringing back into discussions and incorporating those aspects of human self which fall outside the purview of social sciences that are most often defined by the canons of positivism and linear rationality.

Nandy moves from the psychological biography of a person to psychological biography of society, institutions and even ideologies. Nandy talks of the push and pull between the self and the anti-self, which has a constant presence as the spring bed of creativity and as an integral aspect of world-view of the global South which has had a culture of hosting the others, not necessarily in close proximity but at a comfortable distance[13]. This is what he draws upon to set an alternative premise for discussion of culture as a resource in articulating a position which challenges the state established dominant parlance in political life of India.

Then, there is also the more casual usage in Nandy's writing of the non-selves; "*non-selves which are not a part of yourself, but some self which you may not be aware of at all... not your repressed self or rejected self but a self that does not even enter your world view in any way*" (Personal Interview,

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[13]It is in purging the 'Self' of the 'Other' or in bringing it too close to the 'Other' that leads to disruption and violence. Bose (2014), refers to the four stages which are discussed in psychoanalysis, which begin with complete identification with an object, often followed by a sense of betrayal, wherein one distinguishes oneself from that object that they once completely identified with, leading to the third stage where the self tries and purges oneself from the other and defines one's self as anything but the other. When one reads Nandy's writings against this backdrop, his notion of the Intimate enemy, purging the self of the "other" selves and his discussion in the context of ethnic strife about the self and other being so deeply intertwined in the sub-continent that a ethno-religious strife essentially becomes violent; it becomes immediately clear as to what he means (Conversation with Jayanti Bose, June, 2014).

August 23, 2014). Nandy does make a distinction between the complex web of interpersonal relations that the people of this subcontinent are used to, in contrast to the people of the West, who he believes hardly see as much diversity. Nandy's notion of self then is that of one in transition, and in continuous processual flux, negotiating the mundane. In his scheme then, unless one sees multiple selves and their interplay they are missing out on something very complex and unfortunately that has been the case with discussions and theorisation on identity vis-à-vis nation-state in India.

Social Self and the Language of Continuity

Unlike the language of identity, which appropriates a part of the self to introduce or identify itself and therefore maybe a temporal construct, the self actually is always characterised by a language of deeper continuity. Since Nandy's understanding of self differs from the post-Enlightenment western concept of self, as evolving through mastery over nature, it is essentially seen as a non-evolutionary, non-linear category which constantly moves between the pasts and future; using them as it needs to, in a free flowing ahistorical language of continuity. The category of history is seen to be oppressive and fearful of ambiguities[14]; it tries to limit and exhaust the understanding of pasts and is therefore understood as countering this language of continuity. In reclaiming these ahistorical pasts Nandy writes, the selves of these societies can claim back their rights to present and futures. Because, "those who own the rights to shape the pasts of our selves can also claim part-ownership of our present selves" (ibid: 54). Since the language of continuity is central to the selves of ahistorical societies, it is imperative to quickly add a caveat about forgetfulness. Nandy notes, historical consciousness rejects the principle of forgetting as irrational and incompatible with historical sensitivities. History assumes that remembering is superior to forgetting. The

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[14]The dominance of historical consciousness has led to an embarrassment among societies who have lived for centuries with ahistorical pasts. These societies have internalized the tacit modern understanding that, their ahisorical constructions are meant for private use or for fantasies useful in creative arts (Nandy, 1995c: 45). The certitudes of history imply the inevitability of a certain future and this is what sanctions, newer forms of violence.

moderns since the times of Freud and of Marx feel that forgetfulness is not random "there are elaborate internal screening devices, the defences of the ego or the principles of ideology, that shape our forgetfulness along particular lines"[15]. Such unprincipled forgetfulness is acceptable (ibid: 47) but when it comes to principled forgetfulness, it seems to be directed against the very heart of the enterprise of history. The distinction between principled and unprincipled forgetting seems to be normative, in which, if principled forgetting is adaptive, unprincipled forgetting is to do with righteousness and ethics. "Forgetting", one suspects should have different connotation for the "ahistoricals", something beyond the principled and the unprincipled or alternatively, since the ahistoricals live in multiple time frames simultaneously, "forgetting" may not quiet be correct vocabulary to talk about them. The continuity of self must also be understood in the manner in which it extends to the outer world; it is in this that the self provides a language of intervention. It must be noted that, in many non-western traditions society and nature are subsumed in the self.

Self as Language of Intervention

Following Gandhi, Nandy writes that self correction and self-realization include principles of intervention in the external world for instance the purifying of the self as a means of serving the world, as articulated by Gandhi in his discussion on caste system in India. The language of the self is in continuity with the outer world and this is the case with most of the sensitive traditional self-in –society theories. The language of self has an implicit understanding of the non-self, oppression and social transformation. For Nandy then, the understanding of others as hosted within the self provides the

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[15]It might be useful to juxtapose this with Dipankar Gupta's discussion on forgetting in *Learning to Forget: The Anti-Memoirs of Modernity* (2005). Here Dipankar Gupta articulates an instance of principled forgetting, which is normative as well. The memories of the past he writes, need to be done away with and made irrelevant to the future to further modernity and this can be achieved not through mere will power but also needs to be supported with political structures and social processes.

resource for mitigation of cultural confrontation. It is through theories of the social self that does not foreground and emphasise dichotomy or disjunction of one from the other that the political crisis of the modern world and its institutions can be mitigated.

(IX)

<u>Outlining the Culturist Paradigm</u>

Nandy's writings are understood as representing the culturist paradigm not because they simply privilege cultures over state and their structures but because, from within this paradigm culture appears as a resource which enables one to envision alternatives to institutionalised and dominant western structures which have hegemonised the manner in which societies are organised and managed, globally.

Culture and traditions in this paradigm, appear as wisdom accumulated by people over centuries and carry in them overt as well as tacit possibilities for pluralising the homogenisation imposed by post–Enlightenment modern, western categories. Like Ethnomethodology, Nandy's writings engage with these cultural and traditional worldviews as they are available in the selves of the common man and not in the textual versions. These possibilities are not just alternatives but are political in their very implication, as they seek to provide *utopias* that are outside and beyond the nation-state and its grand narratives of nationalism, secularism, development and rationality. The potential available in these overlaps between cultures, personalities and society are held as far more superior than the grand-narratives of modern ideologies. In order to understand the underlying complex reconciliation of differences and coexistence it becomes essential to draw upon indigenous theories of self in society which constantly negotiate with others and with parts of selves repressed and non-selves. Culture is not seen as a final finished product but a living, thriving negotiation with everyday life for survival. The paradigm does not suggest a return to past or tradition, unlike how at times it is labelled as a '*traditionalist*' or '*nativist*' position, but

instead looks at past as being in continuity with the present. Its engagement with present and future are equally relevant to it, as is its understanding of the past. The position it must be added is not anti-modernity, as the paradigm can be understood as articulated, well within the parameters of a modern world.

A faint but palpable intellectual strain has existed in India, which while accepting that, state oriented politics could be a way of renegotiating traditional social relationships refused to accept it as underlying the existence of the Indian civilisation. Nandy's writings are closer to this intellectual strain though not fully encompassed by it. He is clear that such a culturally oriented approach does not mean a lack of theory of state it just so implies that, the state need not be committed to one language but may represent a confederation of cultures and a multiplicity of religions and languages. In such a position they seek to reconcile with these differences and understand them not as external enemies to one another but as, being in internal opposition to each other.

Nandy articulates his position as one in which state is loosely defined, decentralised more humane and compassionate with much more decentralization he cites the instance of the Bolivian constitution. He writes cultural diversities must not be understood as existing for the sake of diversity, instead they should be seen as part of a shared landscape. Formulating one scale for measuring them is not useful. He however, adds that his position is not about diversity in everything. There is a unity of human needs which pervades all cultures. The necessity of the modern nation-state, values of citizenship, secularism etc. are needed as ideologies in the face of the erosion of faiths and beliefs. Ashis Nandy foregrounding culture as the core of a civilisation's existence and as something that is always becoming, suggests that there is something natural and spontaneous in how communities orient and adapt to each other in a space. The nation-state in his view is also an institution emerging from a social need but it is only one limited aspect of the cultural fabric of the space. It cannot be the overarching force determining the identity of the people living in the region. In other words Ashis Nandy would accept citizenship in the manner in which the statists talk about it, as a core aspect of self because its boundaries are

hardened. Hence in our view Ashis Nandy represents the culturists paradigm in which the state is reduced to a part of the whole, unlike those writing from within the statists paradigm who argue citizenship is the core identity within which cultures should accommodate themselves.

Nandy's discussion on the culturist position provides a prelude to Uberoi's articulation of a non-dualist position on identity, self and the other, which moves beyond the framework of European modernity and dwells on the strands within Western modernity, which premised themselves on a continuity of society, self and nature. Uberoi's thesis on identity takes the specific case of overlaps between religion and politics as a marker of Indian modernity. Read together, both Nandy and Uberoi contribute to a discussion on cultural politics that is unique to selfhood in this part of the globe. The following chapter explores the writings of Uberoi to outline what has been identified by this thesis as the non-dualist position on state, politics and culture.

Some Observations on Ashis Nandy's Scholarship

This section attempts to outline some of the core premises that guide Nandy's scholarship and intellectual self-conception.

(I)

Othering the Academic:
Coming into Being of a De-Professionalized Intellectual[1]

Nandy began his training at a medical college in Calcutta but, unhappy about having a predictable future, switched to humanities at Hislop College, Nagpur, where he completed his undergraduate in the social sciences and received a Master's in Sociology. He was introduced to social psychology during the latter period and went on to apply for a training and research fellowship at a psychoanalytic clinic in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was here he submitted his Ph.D. thesis on economic fantasises centred on money and economic hierarchies; it was a means of entering and understanding Gujarati upper-caste consciousness. He was not as politically active in Nagpur as he had been in Calcutta, his hometown, where mealtimes were characterised by political discussions. However, while in Nagpur he met several interesting people and that played an important role in heightening his interest in human nature. Meanwhile, his passion for psychoanalysis surfaced in Ahmedabad and it was through such works on war, violence, authoritarianism, human potentialities and creativity that his interest in politics found a voice (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 9). After submitting his thesis he joined the Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations, where he worked for a few months as a research methodologist. He then joined the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, where he researched political and cultural values (ibid: 37). At the centre, he was free to choose the course of his intellectual career. He notes:

> "I had never had any formal training in political science and this was an institute of political studies, so my clinical psychological frame, which was in search of appropriate political content, gained much from the political edge given to it by the Centre's concerns. The political

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[1]A term Gustavo Esteva uses for Nandy. (Jahanbegloo, 2006: 14)

element you see in my work is, to a great extent, a result of my early socialization at the Centre" (ibid: 12).

The various projects at the centre exposed him to "studies of Indian and comparative politics, of politics at the grass root level, and democratic choices as they impact upon or are influenced by cultures and other forms of subjectivities"(ibid). These, he notes, taught him a lot and gave him "an inkling of the way the minds of ordinary people function" (ibid).

The period of Emergency in the mid 1970s was a reflection of the dominant culture of politics in India. It was a reflection of the mind-set of the majority of India's Brahminic elites, who believed they were at "the forefront of a movement for rational, scientific, secular, public choices; that they have a right to lead the masses, who are stupid, ignorant, superstitious, and prejudiced" (ibid: 38). This discomfort with democracy among the elites, who thought the masses too incompetent to think for themselves, was a part of Indian political culture; the Emergency just capitalized on this sentiment. The dominant culture of politics in India did not allow one to negotiate with the passions, sentiments, beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices of ordinary people from within their world. Most learnt to hide these sentiments and mouth the standard, liberal and once-fashionable democratic-socialist slogans when talking about Indian politics. Nonetheless, they all nurtured an inner self that they indirectly brought into public life.

As all this was happening on a large-scale, an awareness dawned on some Indian intellectuals that this problem had to be dealt with and some manner had to be found by which the politics could get in touch with the common people, the way they looked at or conceptualized the world and thought of politics, and their expectations from public life. The Emergency sharpened this realisation. That period brought home the lesson that one had to look for inner reserves of strengths and resources of traditions and cultures in this part of the world. Only then could one hope to mobilize people for a cause and only then could one work with the people to resist an onslaught on their liberty (ibid: 37-38). It also brought out in the open the fact very few intellectuals were against this suspension of democracy. Most willingly bowed to censorship and even

tried to sway public opinion in its favor. This passive endorsement by most intellectuals led to a guilty conscience, one over-compensated for in the years that followed (ibid: 41). Nandy's identity as a public intellectual was shaped by this episode. During the Emergency years he, like many others, turned to Gandhi. He notes:

"....like all Bengalis I was taught to kind of dismiss him. My encounter with Gandhi began… from hostility… I became more open to his ideas in the 1970s… during the Emergency it became a matter of self-confrontation for me because I could see that many of the things I'd thought about Indian politics weren't as simple and clear-cut. You cannot say you have to protect your freedoms aggressively and cannot afford to be less vigilant by invoking cultural factors conducive to an open society. I found the relevance of Gandhi in that kind of context; even the nature of protest during Emergency was Gandhian in many ways. It was totally decentralized and that is why we cannot handle these kinds of movements.... now people are cursing AAP but such things happened with V.P. Singh and before that with the Janta Party… after Emergency also the same thing happened… because the system was that. Now what is an AAP party? If ten people in Bangalore say 'we are AAP' and 'we have formed a cell,' AAP is just that. If they are intelligent they will keep this style. You don't need to have clear-cut ideologies that you need not have a consensus what you stand for even though others believe that you should have one, because after all you are a party! What is the consensus on Gandhi? Nehru didn't believe one word of Gandhi. He has explicitly said and I have used it so many times – 'Bapu you are far greater than your little books' – but what difference did it make? Gandhi had the political will to push the Congress to accept it but that is that, nothing more than that. Patel was.... do you think Patel believed Gandhi's concept of the state? He was an out-and-out statist" (Personal Interview, February 4,2014).

"...it has been said Gandhi's struggle with reality was deeper than those whose ideas were different from him. That creativity comes in society, from androgyny, from tolerance of ambiguities… these all are

correlates of creativity, of high creative value, so many schools that are run for specially privileged children, especially all the good ones they all work on these principles; tolerance of ambiguities, no premature closure, no concept of perfect clarity and logical thinking and the importance of the outsider. The fear of the outsider can imply not only the immigrant coming into the society but also how a sociologist would feel studying history or a historian would feel studying psychology… that kind of thing where you are partly outsider.... For instance there are eight subdivisions of psychology and if you see, each of these is a contribution of an outsider…even Freud was a neuro-physician and a doctor" (Personal Interview, February 4,2014).

In the early years of the mid-1970s, it was the use of Gandhi in a non-Gandhian way that shaped Nandy's intellectual life.

"Gandhism, notes Nandy, is the exploration of some kinds of human possibilities. The tendency to make such explorations universally is associated with that part of human personality that has been repressed by the dominant structure of global common sense. In that sense, Gandhism predates Gandhi. Whenever such explorations are made, whenever someone dares to defy conventional wisdom to actualize certain specific kinds of human potentialities, to go back to the basics of human existence and life affirmation, it becomes a Gandhian act. You do not have to be a Gandhian to be Gandhian" (ibid: 36).

He notes:

"I have specifically fought for ideas, theories, worldviews, ideologies that looked like lost causes but which I thought deserved support, and it is in that context I call myself an intellectual street fighter" (ibid: 14). Nandy, then, theorizes with reservation and thinks of himself as an intellectual committed to intervening in the here and now. He challenges the dominant as truth merely because it is louder and visible. He distances himself from the world of academics:

"...intellectual is always is a 'public intellectual,' you don't have to say it separately. You have to say the two things separately in America because Americans have categorised all intellectuals to intellectual academics. So there is no public intellectual without academic candidate, except one or two rare exceptions and their numbers have diminished drastically. The last one to die was Susan Vonda, who was not an academic but was an intellectual and recognized as such independently. You can see it in many countries in many ways. For instance, in post-World War II France all major public intellectuals were non-academics- Sartre, Camus, just to name a few. In America...one of them is not that public...neither of the two are...one is Woody Allen and the other is, perhaps, Wendell B. Perry, the farmer-philosopher, and you have exhausted the list; the others are dead now. There, the public intellectuals also come from the academy - they have an academic base like Noam Chomsky and Edward Said...here in our country it is not like that, here in my country there is still scope for saying that I am not an academic. Vandana Shiva has done pioneering work she is not an academic she is a public intellectual. Intervening in public they are not only writing I mean people can also write only. Immanuel wrote all his life but he was not part of any university. He was not an academic but he had written... he had an influence on the intellectual life of academy and he intervened in public debates" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

Furthermore, he adds:

"I don't want to exhaust a subject by preparing a full-length bibliography systematically and write one masterpiece for the next generation. I want to intervene in what is happening here, I mean that kind of thing. Next generation might choose better but, in the meanwhile, you are a passive witness to your times. Watching the news on television and writing a blog if you are very angry doesn't really add up to much" (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

The first and foremost commitment he makes is to the spirit of dialogues - by bringing to light alternatives to what is obvious and available. He believes in opening spaces for exploring these alternatives. The commitment to plurality extends to his disciplinary loyalties – rarely has he written about a subject by limiting himself to one discipline. As Sardar (1997) states,

"Nandy has no respect for disciplinary boundaries. Indeed to accept the disciplinary structure of modern knowledge is to accept the worldview of the West. But his scholarship is not interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary in the conventional sense; he is no 'Renaissance Man.' He is a polymath in the traditional sense, operating beyond the disciplinary structure of knowledge, and regarding all sources of knowledge- revelational as well as non-revelational, traditional as well as modern, tacit as well as objective– as equally valid and all methods and modes of inquiry as equally useful" (Sardar, 1997: 2).

Deftereos (2013) writes:

"…if disciplinary fidelity or even inter-disciplinarity is a measure of scholarly acumen, then Nandy's defiance as a non-player and the ambivalence his work embraces continue to disturb. The deceptive simplicity of Nandy's writings, unburdened by the weight of epistemic abstraction or fidelity, is a source of territorial anxiety and debate" (Deftereos, 2013: 4).

Much of this tension, the author goes on to discuss, can be explained by Nandy's relationship to disciplinary knowledge and, more specifically, his critical encounter with political psychology (ibid). The field of psychology in India is marked by two broad divisions -'mainstream validational' research and 'oppositional-indigenous or reactionary and nativist' perspectives. Nandy and Sudhir Kakar are seen as belonging to the latter (Kumar, 2006). "Nandy's appropriation of psychoanalysis and the perspectives generates challenges to the boundaries of critical psychology, though in different ways to Kakar, whose use of psychoanalytic concepts is arguably more explicit" (Deftereos, 2013: 5). Nandy's status as an outsider thus carries over into the field of academic psychology (Kumar, 2006: 236). Deftereos argues that Nandy's

nonconforming appropriation of psychoanalysis is never quite understood or seen as a defining feature of his work that enables him to produce open-ended perspectives. Nandy, she states, looks at psychoanalysis as a tool for critiquing that can challenge certitudes he despises rather than as a "psychotherapeutic technique of normalization arriving with colonialism" (Deftereos, 2013: 6).

Nandy's intellectual self–conception, as that of a critique, and his "inconsistent" use of psychoanalysis can be better understood in the light of his essays *"The Savage Freud: The First Non-Western Psychoanalyst and the Politics of Secret Selves in Colonial India"* (1995) and *"Towards an Alternative Politics of Psychology"* (1983). In the first essay, Nandy discusses the cultural meanings psychoanalysis gained in the early years in India and, in doing so, tries to reveal the ambivalence psychoanalysis, as a school, experienced in its attempt to lay bare the normative and institutional anomalies of the Enlightenment and demystify the bourgeois culture that instituted the anomalies, and build into its theoretical frames Eurocentric critiques of non-Western cultures and thereby own up to its cultural roots of origin (ibid: 339). Typical of his method, Nandy approaches the subject through biography, personal experiences, intellectual concerns and meta-psychology of the first non-Western psychoanalyst, Girindrasekhar Bose, who pioneered the discipline in India.

Nandy resists self-definition by all means. He rarely agrees with the labels he is known by. For instance, on many occasions he is introduced as a political psychologist but, as he puts it,

> *"I was once approached by a Scandinavian TV crew that planned to make a documentary on me. Post the shoot they had left and, as planned, I headed out to lunch with my friend Satish Kumar, Editor of Resurgence and Ecologist. As we settled down, the crew re-appeared and apologetically asked if they could ask a question they'd missed the last time around. They asked me, 'what are you?' 'What do you mean?' I replied. 'Are you a sociologist? Or, a psychologist? Or, a political scientist?'. After a lot of deliberation I replied, 'I am a political psychologist or a social theorist, or a political theorist.' The answer*

was basically whatever I could think of at that time, you know. Having found an answer to their question the crew left looking satisfied. Satish Kumar, a witness to this episode, however, got upset about it. He remarked that upon being asked such a question I should have simply asked them what they thought I was. Whatever their perception about me was, I should have simply agreed to it because whatever impression they had would be truest to them so why not live with it? Satish asked, 'How do you care what disciplinary cocoon they fit you in? How are you concerned?' That is the thing you see… I don't want to call myself anything but if I am forced to say something I will say I am psychoanalytically oriented...I know psychoanalytic psychology better. I know cultural studies better, at least from contemporary perspectives, and I know future studies better, People want to know what I am… they want to introduce me as something and, over the years, I have found that calling myself a political psychologist is a way out. However, I am aware I use atleast two other disciplines - anthropology and political science." (Personal Interview, August 23, 2013).

Vinay Lal describes "Nandy as the principal exponent, if not the originator, of *modern Indian criticism*" (Lal, 2000: 16-17). Lal goes on to write that although pre-modern India had "an analytical and exegetical tradition," as is evident from Hindu, Buddhist and Jain texts, criticism as it is practised today is Western in its origins and traceable to Enlightenment (ibid: 17). "Nandy remains the most insightful of the handful of those Indian writers who have developed a language for Indian criticism, such as Rustom Bharucha, D.R. Nagaraj and Shiv Viswanathan" (ibid). While post-colonial theory, subaltern history and feminist theory have been critical in changing and shaping the contours of scholarship on colonial and modern India, at the larger level India and South Asia are far away from developing a tradition of what might be termed as 'criticism' (ibid).

Before concluding the section it is imperative to discuss how Nandy accounts for intellectual influences that have shaped his thinking. Nandy notes,

"Frankly, I have gained very little from Marx's theories of social structure… not in the structuralist sense of structure but in the old structuralist-functionalist sense of structure. I have never been too impressed by Marx's theory – it is too mechanistic a model and even when I was much younger, when I was into mathematical statistics and things like that, even then it seemed to me a rather naive model. I was always deeply influenced by, and deeply aware of, Marx's theory of alienation –some of his psychological sensitivities were more obvious to a psychologist and I would also consider Marx a major theorist of psychology, independently of his status as a thinker in economics and politics. Many of his observations and interpretations of human subjectivity I have resonated to; for a number of years, my model was quite close to that of the Frankfurt School of Marxism or psychoanalysis, whichever way you want to think of it. I found them very useful" (Lal, 2000: 28). "Mainly Adorno and Marcuse, less of Erich Fromm, very little of the others" (ibid: 29).

Lal remarks that Marx is visible in Nandy's writings only "in a very amorphous sense, certainly not markedly" (ibid).

Nandy notes: "In the case of Marx, you will sense his presence if you do not think as much of Marx himself, as of Adorno or Marcuse. My sense of how modern science has become a sign of violence in our times obviously owes much to Marcuse, the resort to subjectivism, and the critique of objectivism and the scientific nature, derive from Adorno. Marx, after all, was 'hard' with his own theories of subjectivism, being driven by a secular model whereas these people were less burdened by such an attitude" (ibid: 29-30).

Sigmund Freud, the other major influence on Nandy, notes Lal, appears much more intuitively and metaphorically in his writings (ibid). This, notes Nandy, came of his rather long engagement and exposure to Freud. More than anything else, Nandy opines he has always been in a debate with Freud and Marx as they are two people in "the pantheon of Western Knowledge" who need to be seriously debated with (ibid: 30).

> *"I can tell you I was very much influenced by the critical theory school – the Frankfurt school. The first thing was this – that they combine politics and psychoanalysis. I was always conscious because I was working in a psychoanalysis clinic… that is where it all started from. My Edge of Psychology is heavily influenced by it but, over a period of time, I found there was a limitation to them because their commitment to enlightenment values was total. They considered themselves children of enlightenment, like Freud or Marx, I was not satisfied with it because I noticed the world's most successful genocide ever– 120 million dead in America over a period of a hundred years– was post-Enlightenment. The slave trade was also post-Enlightenment when Jefferson wrote his first democratically informed constitution Jefferson is supposed to be a representation of Enlightenment vision, so when he wrote this document it did not strike him that he himself had slaves in his house. So I knew I had to go beyond that… I had to provide a critique of Enlightenment vision because in this Enlightenment vision there were certain things which were deeply flawed in systems of knowledge. Francis Bacon's 'knowledge is power' kind of thing in very obscene ways. Besides this, I have learnt a lot from Thoreau, Blake and Ruskin (Gandhi called them gurus). Did you know D.R. Nagraj used to call me a left Gandhian? This would indicate there is a built in theory of compassion and scepticism about mega-projects headed by the state… which are seen as inescapable projects… which are, by definition, good for human beings… which smother the cries of pain of ordinary citizens and have no grounding in democracy and no grounding in compassion…. I don't call myself a left Gandhian. I do, however, give a lot of importance to violence because I think the means by which you try to attain a thing determines its fate. You cannot say 'after the violence, I will be benign.' The process brutalises people, so much that the brutality is there and then you can export the brutality"* (Personal Interview, November 27, 2013).

Paul Feyerabend and Nandy's immediate circle of colleagues at the Centre for Studies of Developing Society in Delhi also shaped his ideas. Nandy also notes

that when he started to study the politics of psychology, following the idea of Jit Singh Uberoi, he was pushed towards exploring African, Asian and Latin American scholars writing from outside of the given structures of knowledge. This had its own challenges, as most did not prioritize the art of writing. For instance, he notes that Sunderlal Bahuguna– a prominent and one of the most articulate environmentalists in India – was unable to articulate his philosophy of the Chipko Movement. To understand such forms of knowledge and get what he is saying in totality one also had to take part in the venture (Lal, 2000: 30; Personal Interview, October 21,2013).

Over the years, Nandy has been requested to write a paper outlining his theoretical position. However, he has always refused the idea by arguing he wants to maintain some kind of open-endedness in his writings. He says, "in many parts the work has an element of a projected test – people read in to it what they want to read." He doesn't want to restrict this by providing a theoretical frame which would inevitably close it (Lal, 2000: 40).

> "I thought I would basically be a person concerned with describing life. If certain points are made, well and good. I never conceived of myself as a theoretician… though many have begun to think of me as one. One of the reasons is that there are huge gaps both in my thinking and reading. The thinking is almost a by-product – '*Traditions, Tyranny, and Utopias'* is almost a by-product of '*The Intimate Enemy'*. I am a thinker by default; most of the things I have thought of I have been pushed to do so" (ibid: 61-62).

(II)

Limitations to Theoretical Certitudes: Creativity and Resilience

Decades ago Nandy took an interest in human creativity and potentialities. At the time it was an important sub-discipline within psychology.

> "*One lesson that long exposure taught me was that human creativity is not the monopoly of particular cultures or social class or knowledge systems. Human beings are perfectly capable of devising new and unfamiliar means to express their creativity and actualize their*

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potentials. This is true of the arts, the sciences and also of the methods of resistance to oppression and violence and the cognitive frames from which such resistance comes" (Personal Interview, February 4,2014).

His interest has been in diverse sources of defiance and how they shape our world without us being conscious of it.

"A flip side to this is the limitless human potential to turn emancipatory ideas, ideologies and categories into new tools of violence and oppression. There is no system of knowledge, cultural or social theory that can't be contaminated by human greed and cruelty but this awareness does not deter people from building new systems of knowledge and worldviews or abandoning theorization. This is perhaps so because human beings constantly feel the need to make sense of the cognitive wonders and existential anxieties by continually creating new systems and worldviews" (Nandy, 2007b: ix-x).

There are only two available alternatives in this regard. One is to help a social and political theory transcend its spatial and temporal limits by 'making a science of it, so it represents the human search for certitudes and security. The second is to accept the transience of social theory and build upon that transience and introduce checks against a theory acquiring time-and space-transcending qualities and perhaps even an element of self-destructiveness. To generate theory and social and political ideas that are time- and space-bound does mean the desire for immortality is compromised. However, the danger of a theory acquiring complete autonomy from the voice of its beneficiaries is all too well known.

In over three decades,

"my concern has been to frame my arguments in a way that makes sense within the public culture that shapes the politics of knowledge; though often my methods push me towards a clearer hermeneutic or phenomenological approach. As a result, when grappling with live issues, I tend to address those who intervene in the politics of

knowledge and, through such politics, in public life, rather than to the professional social sciences" (ibid: xi).

Chapter Four

Between Culturist and Statist Paradigms: A Non-Dualist Reading of Self-Other Through the Language of 'Oneself'

(I)

Ashis Nandy's culturist position argued that the self evolves its strategies of survival and emerges resilient through its encounters with the others. The other too undergoes a change in the process. This other could be the idioms of western modernity that have sought to colonise the worldview of civilisations world over. Encounters such as these have not always succeeded in generating compliance, even though they have at times been extremely violent in their outcome. What Nandy's position engages with, is this process of clash and the hosting of other within the self and the creative possibilities that emerge thereof. Nandy's formulation of the self and the other is one where the two are in a processual dialectics and his use of categories like non-selves, anti-selves and rejected selves indicate the presence of constant conflict, negotiation, reconciliation and rejection of possibilities within oneself and within collective selves of communities.

Modernity is a temporally specific product of the West, which in its encounters with civilisations elsewhere, is nuanced and accommodated within the "self" of the non-West. However, such encounters have not left the West untouched but have also affected it's own self-understanding. The civilisational pasts of the non-Western societies have been relegated to obscurity and deemed unimportant in the face of westernization and modernization. However, it is this failure to utilise the traditions and the native theories of social change ingrained in their worldview, which has led to a sharp break in these societies, where the oppression of the Western notions of modernity has increased multi-fold. The hope for negotiation with the hegemony of West, therefore, lies in

the language of the 'self', which carries the resource for mitigating the political crisis of the modern world and it's institutions. This language of the self is one of continuity and provides a counterpoint to hegemony of the West by making explicit that there is an alternative imagination where the other or the West is at the horizon and in dialogue with the self. Nandy's position then is critical of western modernity but its critique of western modernity is an external critique from the vantage point of multiple non-Western selves. In the words of D.R. Nagaraj (2010), Nandy does not attempt to critique the project of modernity from intellectual, symbolic and semiotic structures which exist beyond its reaches. Uberoi's engagement with modernity however, attempts an understanding of modernity as an object of inquiry. He begins with a study of European modernity and identifies its central premise as a dualist vision of the world where there was no longer a unity in man's being, knowing and realisation of self. This however, was a specific version of European modernity that had garnered clout but alternatives to which, existed even within European civilisation. Uberoi's problematic was this specific dualist version of European modernity which had manifested itself in every domain of man's life since the Protestant reformation and was violent in its logical culmination.

Uberoi's contribution is sociologically nuanced and grounds foundationally, the discussion on the split between the self and other in the epoch of modernity in Europe. Uberoi's search for a non-dualist, non-binary European ontology led him to a structural semiological study of systems and practices that emphasized on principles of symmetry, complementarity, cooperation and continuity. His discussion on Indian modernity embarks on a search for non-dualist relationship between the spheres of state, religion and civil society and nuances what Nandy indicates as a language of continuity. In Uberoi's writings, categories of self are realised in self-rule and self-discipline in a continuous pursuit of truth, sacrifice and service to others. It is in such a pursuit that he brings together his discussion of the non-dualist worldview of "Other Europe" and that of the "external others" of Europe. In Uberoi, self denotes the collective, social self; that is his starting point. His thesis read in continuation with Nandy's writings further nuances the discussion on alternatives to western categories of knowledge, nation-state, civil society and

secularism as he outlines the Gandhian notion of *Satyagraha* and the non-dualist modern Sikh religion as methods of uniting with the whole through active reflection in consciousness, lexis and praxis and a consequent realisation of the self.

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(II)

Genesis of the Disjunctive Modern Self in Europe:
New Religion and Dualism of Mind and the World

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Uberoi's engagement with European modernity is essential to his conception of identity whether applied to the individual or to the collective because he views it as a breaking point in which dualist and binary identification develops. Uberoi's book '*The European Modernity: Science, Truth and Method*' begins with European modernity as an object of inquiry. Here Uberoi delineates the context of European modernity and establishes it as a specific temporal, spatial and cultural product of the period associated with Protestant Reformation of early 16th century. In spite of its contextual specificity; and it being an outcome of certain socio-cultural processes, European modernity managed to hegemonise the discourse in Europe and in other parts of the world since its inception. Uberoi observes, that the modern version of western civilisation was not visible so clearly in the development of capitalism, nor in the period of Renaissance as it appeared in the reformation at Marburg and the counter-Reformation at Trent in the years between 1529-1545 A.D.

Modernity emerged in Europe over the question of god and the nature of his value in the worldview and the life world of man. At the heart of the reformation and counter-reformation movements were the questions of the nature of presence of divinity in Christian rituals along with the question of faith and church hierarchy. The protestant reformation marks the originary moment of the separation of matter and mind especially the debates on the actual presence of body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist (Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014: 148). The Eucharist ceremony i.e., the Christian service or sacrament commemorating the last supper in which bread and wine are consecrated and consumed was the point of departure which marked a break

between old and new forms in European civilisation. Uberoi sums the chief arguments that took place between three imagined parties -the Pope, Luther and Zwingli - and noted that each represented three distinct positions namely, transubstantiation, consubstantiation and non-substantiation[1] with regard to the Eucharist ceremony. Uberoi pointed out that in spite of their differences, each of these views was marked by a common underlying assumption characteristic of modern times. That is they all embodied an alienation of truth from reality and of spirit from the form. The two worlds of spiritual and inner truth were disjuncted from the apparent reality. It was established that these two spheres; one of mundane existence and the other of experience, i.e., the inner and the outer would never come together for man as there no longer remained any common medium for their interaction. This was the beginning of the phase of an unending dualism.

New relationships, categories of thought and attitudes emerged from the positivist modern dualism as it questioned and dismissed the, synthesis, transcendentalist and immanentist in the sphere of religion i.e., in relation to divinity or spirit and it's symbols. It was this that marked the period of disjuncture between medieval and modern period in Europe as representing two distinct worldviews. The new structure was premised on a dissociation and autonomy of fact and value in the field of knowledge and the disjunction and independence of lexical truth and applied praxis i.e., theory and technique of consciousness and conscience or belief and conduct in the field of life. The fields of knowledge, truth and method and the interrelations between were left open.

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[1] While transubstantiation as a term is employed in Roman Catholic theology to denote the idea that, during the ceremony of the mass; the bread and wine are changed in substance to flesh and blood of Christ though elements remain same. The manner in which this changes according to the Church is a mystery. The Lutheran concept of consubstantiation is the idea that in the communion the body and blood of Christ and the bread and wine coexist. Both these explanations are challenged by Zwingli's notion of non-substantiation in which he argued that the bread and wine signify but do not literally become body and blood of Christ. It was this difference of opinion between Zwingli and Luther that failed to bring about unity among the two protestant leaders at Marburg Colloquy meeting which attempted to solve the dispute over real presence of Christ in the Lord's supper. The real presence of Christ in Eucharist is used in Christian theology to express the doctrine that Jesus is really or substantially present and not merely symbolically or metaphorically.

The theory of modern practice and the practice of modern theory emerged and flourished along with a new and powerful regime of sciences and culture; philosophy and politics and economics and ethics, which continues to last till date. The logic of European modernity shaped the relationship between philosophy, science, technology economics and politics and advocated that the relations between them were to be arbitrary and one in which each of these catered to their respective domains. The modern dualist separation of the mind and the matter helped in producing the modern man and the modern world in relation to the new imagery of God. It also led to the new idea and a new structuring of human knowledge. It became important to determine as to within which domain of knowledge a given object of inquiry would fall (Uberoi, 2002: 38). The coming of age of European modernity happened when its threefold separation of science from religion and politics and of faith, knowledge and action was officially and formally established in the institutions of civil society, the church and the state.

Thus, while the earlier non-dualist godly emphasis of truth and method was on the unity of conception that linked the truth of every part of man's existence with the reality of the whole externally, as well as for the subject. The new dualist regime's emphasis was on the separation, autonomy and independence of the separate and different segments of the cosmos, the inner and the outer. This demolished the unity of man's being as "a vision and a perspective to be realized in thought (truth) and in life (method) led to the dissociation as well as the independence of its parts" (ibid: 41).

Man had now proclaimed that the outer world which was objective and concrete could be understood as a fact whereas the inner word or the subjectivities were unfit to be a part of scientific discourses. The modern scientist felt responsible only for dividing, understanding and conquering the outer world. It was established that truth could only be known in several parts and fragments and so modern science undertook as one of its earliest task, the systematic unfolding of the diversity, separateness and difference of things in the world i.e., heterogeneity. The only manner in which modern science addressed the world was either through this heterogeneity or through "finding or forcing uniformity, similarity and resemblances in nature or between nature

and himself i.e., homogeneity (ibid). Positivist dualism therefore "changed the relation of the whole and part (structure) as well as the relation of the subject and the object (discourse)" (ibid).

Uberoi traces the career of dualist epistemology from its most creative to its most destructive manifestations, over a period of four centuries starting in the 1500 AD, where the industrial and the French revolutions marked the most creative phase of the dualist truth, while colonization and the world wars, marked the worst phase culminating in holocaust which marked its internal limit and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki[2], which marked its external limit (Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014: 148). These were the last great civilisational events of the European modernity and it's military–industrial-scientific complex. It is in the break between science, knowledge, values and the disappearance of ethical questions, that he identifies the end of possibilities of European modernity. Vivisectionist science and the manner in which modern knowledge was gained, were bifurcated and violent; such a process unleashed the inherent violence in these methods on relationship of humans with each other as well as on relations between humans and non-humans. Nazism, holocaust, world war were events that emphasize on the fallout of this heightened dualism[3]. By reducing the universe and the cosmos to knowable facts, through the positivist methods European modernity prepared the grounds for conquering nature for meeting human economic ends. In this, the non-

[2]Uberoi refers to the Manhattan project as the instance of the logical culmination of the violence of dualism that modern science unleashed. The Manhattan engineer district was set up in 1942 to help shorten the Second World War and deliver the atomic bomb within three years the project had spent a whooping amount of funds and had deployed several scientists, designers and technicians. The combination of science, the military, bureaucracy and politics in the Manhattan project was completely successful objectively, but it's subjective effect was hardly noticed at the time. The responsibilities were distributed between the physicist (Oppenheimer), the general (Groves) and the President of United States in a way that no one had to bear completely the onus of subjective, moral and ethical questions of power. The alliance between science, industry, labour and politics was seen only as a marriage of convenience. The dualistic separation of a value-neutral technical science and organisation from all questions of politics or philosophy, ethics and ideology was fundamental and permanent (ibid: 82).

[3]Sujatha and Sengupta (2014) note that for Uberoi the notion that, science is good but that it can be put to bad use, is a characteristic statement of the positivist dualism between science and values and the key scientists working on the Manhattan project returned to rework on the hydrogen bomb post bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as they found creative theoretical work on the subject satisfying (Sujatha and Sengupta, 2014: 149).

dualist and cyclical structure of knowledge with culture and nature overlap, is transformed into one where nature like the rest of the cosmos, is merely reduced into means to an end.

The official European science of modernity was determined from the very beginning till the end, never to recognize any cosmological theories of "the trans-systems unity of matter, life, mind and spirit or of nature and culture or grace" (ibid: 75). It only allowed for dualistic theories between sets of things which could be explained either as homogenous or as heterogeneous. However, as opposed to this the radical European underground writings of Goethe, Paracelsus for instance wanted to show how one ordered system extended through a phenomenon representing correlation and expressed their mutual relations as varying between competition as cooperation, homology and symmetry and complementarity or the dialectics of equivalence, correspondence and reflection. According to the underground radical science then,

> "the purpose for the self is not to know and then conquer, or alternatively to destroy, the world, but to cosmologically unite with it through active reflection in consciousness, lexis and praxis" (ibid: 75).

Uberoi extensively discusses this "Other" Europe which existed but was marginalized. The point of origin ascribed to this tradition by the author is platonic/pythagorian cosmology by opposition to the Aristotelian cosmology. While platonic cosmology emphasized the unity of a whole single unified world internally divided into two incomplete halves related to each other by homology, the latter emphasized discontinuity separateness, difference and analogy relation. The ruling principle of the platonic/pythagorian cosmology can be found in the Hermetic tradition[4], which shows unity in variety in the

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[4]The Hermetic tradition refers to that body of religious, philosophical and cosmological teaching which was reduced to writing around 300 AD and assumed it's present form as a compilation in the fourteenth century becoming known through a compilation known as *Hermetica*. The corpus of texts in Greek and Latin embodies the non-dualist mystical theosophy of Hermes Trismegistus (the thrice greatest Hermes). It teaches and celebrates unity in variety in the relations of God, man and the World, the single 'chain of being' or fabric of existence by which the totality of creation obeys the creator. It comprises essentially of a composite blend of early opinions on what is called natural science and it's underlying principles, written down in the period of struggle between 'paganism' and 'Christianity' (Uberoi, 2002: 7).

relations of God, man and the world and builds a new dialectic of the microcosm and macrocosm. These principles also appear in Dante's Divine comedy. The author discusses works of Paracelsus which contained elements of hermetic cosmology. This Paracelsian method was later revived in the scientific writings of Goethe. In "Goethe project", the human science of nature combined with the natural science of man and formed a single symbolical view with the human subject or body at its centre, man knows the world only in himself and knows himself only in the world (Tulkens, 2003: 293). Uberoi's discussion of these underground knowledge practices is significant not only in understanding the simultaneous presence of other lesser known alternative knowledge systems in the context of European modernity, but also to nuance the discussion on "unity in variety" which forms a guiding principle in Uberoi's search for non-dualist ontological possibilities. As a corrective to the dualist western modernity and it's polarised politics, Uberoi searches for a structure of national and international cultural and political pluralism which can combine differences with equality.

According to Uberoi, in order to grapple with non-dualism in life and in thought, it is imperative to dwell upon the definition of interrelations of whole and the parts and the dialectical relation of the subject and the object or of self, the world and the other. The following section discusses three instances of non-dual relationship of the self and other and the connectedness of parts to the whole in a Non-European context.

(III)

'Others' to the Modern European Self: Examining Non-Dual Possibilities

Uberoi writes that his structural semiology views a custom or a rite from two interrelated aspects; one, its theoretical and ideological meaning within a particular cultural or symbolic mode of thought and second, its effect or social function within a particular code of conduct and social system of groups and categories in order to attempt an articulation of principles of personality,

culture and social organization. The custom is not studied in isolation but in the context of other customs with which it is associated in thought as well as in life. The understanding proceeds by seeking to relate the part to its larger whole, the piece to the pattern. It sees all customs, rites and ceremonies as expressing, embodying and communicating abstract meanings, facts and values in concrete shape. The repetitive performance of customs and rites gives definitive expression and forms people's collective life and thoughts. It affirms the structural coherence of their particular pattern of culture, thought and social organisation as an ordered whole and helps in transmitting, maintaining and developing the pattern from generation to generation. A custom or a rite is not easy to decipher as they embody several abstract meanings and social references which makes the task of understanding them complex. The manner in which attempts are made to understand its meaning, effect and social function are almost similar to ascertaining the grammar and syntax of a language i.e., it's structure against its lexicon (Uberoi, 1999: 3) [1996].

In discussing a possible non-dualist modernity and to build alternative models to dualism, the author uses three cases of 'external others' which appear disparate at the outset, but converge in their discussion on the principles of reciprocity and solidarity thereby breaking the simple dichotomy of the self and the other and allowing for the emerging plurality of "we" and a much wider, embedded conception of the self which does not emerge in opposition to the other, nor is it only the "other of the other" but is interchangeable with the other, in the common language of "oneself".

Uberoi begins outlining his non-dualist framework by analysing the *Kula* system[5]. He writes the *Kula* of Melanesia is essentially an institution of

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[5]"Kula exchange or the Kula ring is a ceremonial exchange system in Melanesia. It is an inter-island system of ceremonial gift exchange as a prelude to or at the same time as regular trading. Participants travel at times hundreds of miles to exchange Kula valuables which consist of red shell–disc necklaces that are traded to the north (circling the ring in clockwise direction) and white shell armbands(*Mwali*) that are traded in the southern direction (circling counter-clockwise). If the opening gift was an armband then the closing gift should be a necklace and vice versa. The terms of participation vary from region to region. Kula objects , which sometimes had names and histories attached , were not owned in order to be used but rather to acquire prestige and rank." (Source: www.Britannica.com)

lifelong alliance and reciprocity set up between men who have allegiances and solidarity to two separate and distinct societies with different cultures. All the giving takes place at "home" whereas all the receiving takes place "abroad". The two paired conceptions of home and abroad, gift-giving and gift-receiving, red and white shells are not mutually exclusive but are brought together by the *Kula* system of exchange, its symbolism and ceremonial language into a strictly reciprocal and complementary relation in space, time and action showing how each of these are two opposed aspects of a single unity in duality. *Kula* as a system seeks to establish common humanity of each in indebtedness to all. In contrast to the lifelong formal ritual alliance of mutual trust, hospitality and long-term reciprocity, there also takes place under the *Kula* system an exchange of utilitarian objects in an open bazaar or market (*Gimwali*). This exchange is organised by other rules which requires each single transaction of profit or loss to be immediately completed after haggling and matching in barter. Interestingly, this trading is kept apart from as well as complementary to the symbolic exchange and this is done by adhering to the rule that visitors may *Gimwali* with those natives who are not their respective *Kula* partners, allies and hosts. Uberoi equates this arrangement with the familiar principle of cooperation among a group, in order to compete better with others who are strangers. Each of the two groups remain essentially the same in self-identity, separate and different at the end of the transaction as they were, except that their recurrent utilitarian wants of the self, individual and collective are met in the meanwhile (Uberoi, 2002: 111). The two processes work out simultaneously allowing for mutual co-existence of two kinds of exchanges within a single unified *Kula* system. The unity in duality of the *Kula* system is unlike the money system, as it does not seek to establish a general rational medium or common denominator for all varied individual transactions. The message of *Kula* is that,

> "in all human life, society and ceremony, whether it be the aspect of symbol or utility, one exchanges with the other, not only or merely things and signs of the world, messages or values, but also oneself in status, role and self-identity, which are thereby renewed or changed in the process" (ibid: 112).

Uberoi then turns to a discussion of the non-duality of the self and the other as mediated through the *language of oneself* (emphasis added) in his discussion on the languages of the child. The simple unity of self and the other is already lost or misunderstood, as he cites through the instance of mother giving birth to the child and the child also giving birth to the mother. Both the mother and the child are born of one and the same complex event which is a "dialectical moment of the unity in the duality in its meaning and effect" (ibid: 114). Following this original moment of birth, rebirth or creation, the development of the opposition of self and the other, and the separation and differentiation of *'you'* and *'I'* is accompanied by the development of a solidarity of the plural 'we', this dual process splitting and proceeding in two opposite directions is reconciled by the emergence of other self or selves. While the emergence of individuation and differentiation of *you* and *I* is the principle of reciprocity the corresponding processes of identification and classification of *I* and *we* is the principle of solidarity[6]. 'You' and 'I' have an ability to interchange places with one another and even to exchange their respective selves, one for the other, through the conception of oneself, the use of the impersonal pronoun 'one' as employed in English language can be used to refer to either 'you' or 'I' or to both of them simultaneously (ibid). The outline becomes clear by looking at the following diagram:

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[6]He writes that reciprocity and solidarity are two paired and irreducible principles of society as against all the other principles of power, hierarchy, authority, domination and exploitation which emerge much later in the history of human species perhaps along with the emergence of state, classes etc. (Uberoi, 2002:114)
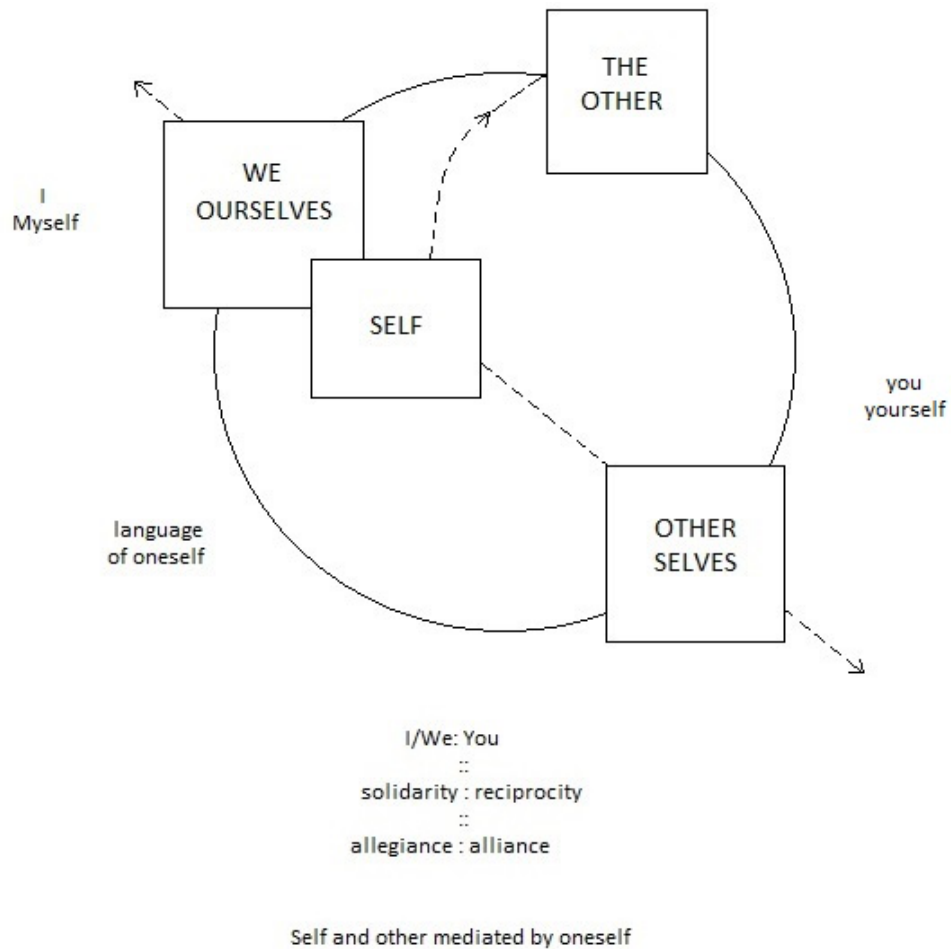
Figure 1: Self and Other in Exchange Theory

Source: Uberoi, J.P.S. (2002). *The European Modernity: Science, Truth and Method* (pp. 108).
New Delhi: Oxford University Press

The figure shows how 'I' and the 'other' are mediated through the language of oneself.

To further his discussion on self-other and the creation of I, he turns to a discussion on the Lacanian discourse of the mirror stage. Lacan in contradistinction to Freud wrote in "*The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason Since Freud*" (published in 1977 book *Ecrits*) that the unconscious resembles and is organised in the manner of language. It is as structurally differentiated and complex as the conscious mind. Therefore, the unconscious mind must be understood as a formation that is much more sophisticated than merely being a discrete part of the mind, separate from the conscious mind. Some of the most important contributions that Lacan makes to the field of psychoanalysis are this understanding of the unconscious mind as

being structured and organised, and the notion of the 'mirror stage,' which he sees as being constitutive of the *'I'*. However, by the 1950s he did not consider the 'mirror stage' as a mere moment in the infant's life instead, he saw it as a critical stage or point in development of the child's mental faculties which signifies a significant relationship with the 'body image'. The mirror stage then describes the formation of Ego via the process of objectification. When the child reaches the age of six months he is not capable of coordinated bodily movements but can still identify himself in the mirror. The image in the mirror leads to a sense of control that the child imagines he has over his body movements. It is at this point that he starts seeing his own image as a complete 'whole'. This creates a sharp contrast to the otherwise uncoordinated body that he has. This stage then leads to a sense of tension and stress between the subject and his mirror image, and in order to clear out the tension, the infant identifies itself fully with this image. This identification with the counterpart constitutes the Ego. This stage of identification is also a point of exuberance which results into a sense of imaginary control but when this infant contrasts his own sense of control with that of the omnipotence of his mother he experiences a sense of pessimism. This process includes the "ideal ego" which works in anticipation as future promise of ego in a holistic sense. The mirror stage involves an important symbolic dimension where the symbolic order is represented in the image of the adult who is carrying the child. The child looks at and calls upon this big 'Other' in order to affirm this image. This adult represents the big 'Other'. Lacan distinguishes between the big Other (A) and the little other (a). While the little other is the projection and reflection of one's ego and in that, is not really an 'other'; but other people in whom the ego perceives a similarity or alternatively one's own reflection in the mirror, is inscribed in the imaginary order. The big 'Other' transcends the illusory otherness of the imaginary and cannot be assimilated through identification. The big 'Other', then represents a radical alterity and Lacan likens this with the notions of language and of law. Big 'Other', then belongs to the realm of symbolic, in that it is particularized for each subject. The first big 'Other' for a child, is the mother who understands the cries of the child and sanctions them as a message. However, soon the child realises that this big 'Other', the mother

is not complete and lacks something, this lack (manqué) in the Other appears in Lacan's discussion as the 'barred Other'.

The mirror stage of Lacan, which Uberoi draws upon, then characterizes the period in which the child begins to distinguish between the self and the other. This is the period when the child's sense of self and the beginnings of the acquisition of language emerge. The "I" finds an image of itself reflected in the mirror (i.e., other people or objects). The "mirror" is at once self and 'not-self'. Following from this, he writes that from a non-dualist standpoint, the opposition of self and other is mediated by the emergence of the other self and the common human language of 'oneself'. According to Uberoi, it is this human language that should be understood as the non-dualist locus of culture, labour and politics. Self–identity is never self-explanatory but a gift of the other and the unity of the self does not exist in itself but instead, it is reducible to the other of its other(s) (Uberoi, 2002: 115).

He further expounds his thesis on unity in variety through his analysis of plurality of languages in the Indian context. Using the method of semiotics he takes the instance of languages, which represent people's system of customs. The diversity of linguistic forms and the sheer number of languages in the Indian subcontinent is an interesting statement about the society. Empirical studies show that written as well as spoken languages live, grow or spread not by staying insulated nor through officially sponsored standardization but because of on-going processes of exchanges, interactions, contacts and reciprocity with other languages in a pluralistic context; national and international (ibid: 128). This is in contrast to the accounts of the European writers who make a case for only two kinds of forces at work in history and society, namely, the centripetal and the centrifugal and see them as mutually opposed and unmediated. The Indian subcontinent, opines Ubeori, shows a field of four possibilities that make up the logic of pluralism as the mediation of one and the many, unity in variety. Thus while modern Europeans can imagine two entities to be related either as similar and together producing homogeneity and equality, or separate and different producing heterogeneity and inequality, they ignore the other part of the logical and empirical possibilities that the two entities might be in a relation of correspondence,

equivalence and competition i.e., separate but similar or else of complementarity and cooperation i.e., different and together. An instance of multilingualism when seen in the Indian context as a way of life, is produced, sustained and made functional or articulated and integrated by the simultaneous operation of two general tendencies and reveals the distribution of differences into complementary rather than only competitive domains of activity or contexts of situation. Furthermore, it reveals the convergence of underlying structures and not their mutual divergence in history and society through the free human acts of communication, interaction and exchange (ibid: 129).

> "…some people have got the idea that one land, one language, one faith, and one state is the best way to be strong, this is the way forward, and anything less than that is a sort of weakness. But against that - and it is not about South Asia, it's not about the United States or the new Europe or whatever - but against that, as a student of mankind, we are proposing something quite different. We are proposing that human beings, by nature, are bicultural and bilingual, and I do not know if we are bi-religious, but there may be something like that. Civil society is that locus of pluralism, it doesn't have to be more than that. But, it is opposed to those who think that the principles of civil society, and the state, and Religion, are all one consistent and strong unit. So, the argument for pluralism, is not that it is good for something, but it is human nature" (LUCE Delhi Transcript, pp.45, September, 2010) .

Uberoi concluded that all variations of customs like language, can be untied in a single systematic field of cultural and political pluralism or unity in variety. One of the most important effects is the mutual convergence as well as divergence and the emergence of varied, but not necessarily disparate modes of human articulation and communication. Thus, in a regime of pluralist non-dualism, all human differences and partitions are negotiable in civil society as a "community of sovereignties" as no one truth falsifies another. It is the non-dualist categories, attitudes and dialectics of negotiation which can together explain the processes in history and society of the convergence of underlying structures and the distribution of differences into complementary domains. He

thus, outlines a four valued logic of truth and method rather than a two valued system of dualism from European modernity where the opposition between homogeneity and heterogeneity identified as equality and inequality gains prominence at the cost of the other pair of possibilities namely the distribution of entities in relation of their mutually active cooperation and complementarity. This pair of possibilities is almost completely absent or ignored in the modernist age although no one has logically or theoretically objected to it. It is this four valued logic of truth and method in place of the restricted two valued system of dualism that has been inherited from European modernity where the possibilities of pluralism lay, in this regard his discussion on Indian modernity and it's engagement with plural traditions is significant.

(IV)

From Binaries to Plurality: The Case of Indian Modernity

Plurality and the variety of traditions has been a part of Indian heritage in both medieval as well as modern times. The manner, in which it has been acknowledged and negotiated with, has been different from an imagined homogeneity and uniformity, nor has it been through a framework of domination and hierarchy; majoritarianism and minority. India therefore, presents an important case for understanding reconciliation of differences with equality in its embodiment and participation in the logic of pluralism. Uberoi then is one of the few scholars who have dwelled extensively on Indian modernity looking for possibilities that it has to offer to the world at large. He posits the possibilities of Indian pluralist tradition as against the Western dualist reconciliation of difference with equality. Uberoi suggests an understanding of the relationship between modernity and tradition, state and society, religion and secularism through a multi-valued logic of interpenetration and connectedness rather than through the dualistic logic of modernity.

In his book '*Religion, Civil Society and the State: A Study of Sikhism*' (1996) using his structuralist, semiological method he studies and compares the

underlying medieval structures of Hinduism and Islam both of which revealed similarity in terms of their underlying structures, principles of logic and language of self-identity. This analysis provides a prelude to his discussion on Indian modernity which he locates in the beginnings of Sikhism. Like in the manner of his discussion on European modernity here too, he uses the semiological method to reduce periods of history to signs, structures and symbols. His structuralist semiological method is based on the argument that,

> "the *reason d'etre* of ritual behaviour and symbolic thought lies in denoting a definite expression to people's collective life and thought within the structural coherence of their particular pattern of culture and social organisation as an ordered whole, a language" (Uberoi, 1996: 3).

In keeping with this he divides his work into three parts. Firstly, determining the theoretical or ideological meaning within a particular cultural or symbolic mode of thought appeared. Secondly, looking at the effects or social function within a particular code of conduct and social system of groups and categories and thirdly, hoping that the two would conjointly explain the principles of personality, culture and social organisation (ibid: 2).

The discussion begins by drawing a comparison between Hinduism and Islam as two alienated facets of the same dualism between the priest (religion, tradition) and the prince (state, law). Within the Hindu culture of India one can see a clear division between the king (who represents social but a religious power) , the Brahmin (who represents the religious and social virtue) and the *Sanyasi* (who represents the religious but asocial virtue and power) the corollary of this in Muslim culture of India is seen in the division between *Hukumat* (who represents social but a religious power), *Shariat* (who represents the religious and social virtue) and Sufi *Tariquat* (who represents the religious but asocial virtue and power). Both the Hindu and the Muslim culture contain within themselves the axis of this external world and the other internal world. He studies the relations between the three nodes in each case (king:*Hukumat,* Brahmin:*Shariat, Sanyasi:* Sufi *Tariquat*) bringing out the facets of alienation between them thereby positing dualism as the striking feature of medieval structures of Indian culture (See pictures below).

Figure 2: The Hindu Culture of India

Source: Uberoi, J.P.S. (1996). *Religion, Civil Society and the State: A Study of Sikhism* (pp. 20). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

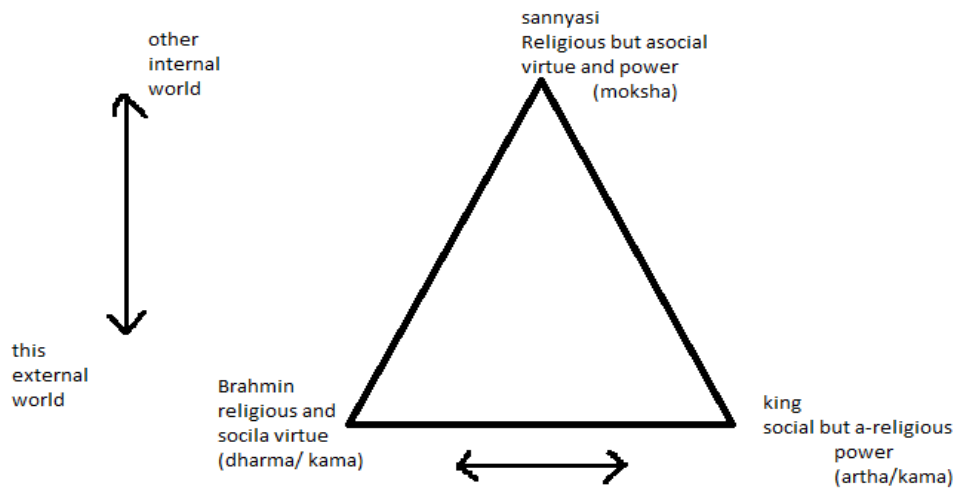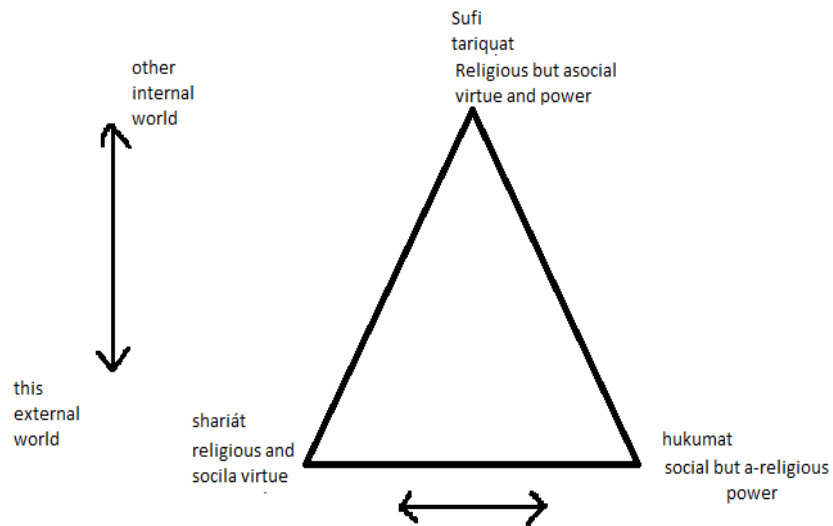Figure 3: The Muslim Culture of India

Source: Uberoi, J.P.S. (1996). *Religion, Civil Society and the State: A Study of Sikhism* (pp. 36). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Unlike in the case of Europe, where modernity marked the beginnings of dualism, the dualist principle of organisation in India demarcating the separation of the state and religion characterised the medieval period. The

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beginnings of Indian modernity however, sought to mitigate this dualism and reconcile the spheres of religion and state in their unity in the configuration of civil society. He proposes a movement towards new modernity in India through his analysis of Sikhism. Sikhism is not a synthesis of the two systems and therefore a higher form of religion, rather; it is an attempt at the integration of the medieval dualism in the two traditions. While Sikhism is in a relation of opposition, competition to the culture of Muslims it is in a relation of complementarity with the Hindu tradition thereby producing a negotiation, mediation or reconciliation in history with both the traditions in a manner completely different from western homogeneity. The emphasis on separating the *Sanyasis* who has status from the society provided the ground the author to study Sikhism as a project of modernity which ended the separation emerging from dualism of creator and his creation. Sikhism as a method and praxis attempted to integrate the medieval dualism of the pursuit of gnosis, *Bhakti*, *Sufi* or *Sant* and what might be called the material interest of the world, specially the labour of production, property and the family life of production. The project of Sikhism was that of a society for salvation, unitarian in religion, vernacularist in culture and democratic in politics.

> "The society is a sacred and joint construction of the guru and the Sikh, and it is not a pragmatic or a contingent one; it has a history of freedom and not of determinism... the first institution of Sikhism is the worship of the name of God in and by the local congregation; and all three commandments together constitute it as a society for salvation, aiming to achieve self-realisation through self-abnegation and self-sacrifice in this life and world, sealed by the signature of the serene and unshorn martyr " (Uberoi, 1996: 99).

Discussing the Sikh initiation rites and it's five symbols Uberoi writes, that the Sikh initiation rite should be understood as a specific inversion of the custom of complete renunciation as undertaken by the *Yogis* and the *Sanyasis* and the other mendicant orders that preceded Sikhism. While Sikhism too was instituted as a religious brotherhood open to those who sought salvation, it's spiritual and social aims were a direct contrast to the other orders. Instead of the social death that their renunciation rituals signified, the new Sikh affirmed

the social world as the battleground of freedom. For instance the meaning of being unshorn can be seen as a negation of negation i.e., it signifies renunciation of renunciation as a principle. Similarly the five K's or symbols of Sikhism lie in ritual conjunction of two opposed forces or aspects for example the unshorn hair (*Kes)* is associated with the comb (*Kanga)* which performs the function of constraining the hair and keeps it in order. The *Kes* and *Kanga* then form a unitary pair where each evokes the meaning of the other and their mutual association explains the meaning of *Kes* fully which unlike *Jata* or a clean shaved head does not symbolize the renunciation of social world but instead symbolizes it's orderly assumption. Each of the five symbols reveal in pairs (*Kanga/Kes:: Kara/Kirpan::Kachh/uncircumscribed state*) reveal aspects of assertion and constraint, which show that Sikhism is integrated into the social world and society and reveals it's characteristic of non-dualism (Uberoi, 1996: 12-13).

Sikhism marked a departure in that it dismissed the categories of the medieval world which had articulated dualist oppositions between that of a householder and a citizen or that of a ruler and the renouncer. It does not consider these as distinct and modes of existence. Unlike the traditions before it, Sikhism acknowledged the,

> "powers of three spheres of *rajya, sannyas* and *grihasta*, but sought to invest their virtues conjointly in a single body of faith and conduct, religion -in- society and history inserted by grace and effort as mediation between heaven and the world, or the *atma* and *paramatma* , the individual and the All, as the modern Indian form of non-dualism of self, the world and the other" (ibid: 17).

The total human emancipation of the religious man and not mere synthesis or reconciliation was Sikhism's endeavour from the very beginning and this, according to Uberoi, marked the opening of the modern period of history in Punjab (ibid: 18). While in medieval India state, religion and society were walled off from each other it was the specific project of Sikhism to bring the three spheres together so as to bring in centrally the importance of civil society and in that, a unity in man's being. The chief problem that Sikh history

encountered was that of trying to create an Indian modernity out of the prevalent medievalist dualism without denying the national heritage. It's intent was however, persistently misunderstood by the modernist scholars both liberal and Marxists as trying to mix religion with politics which they opined was bound to create conflict or alternatively trying to set up a third tradition besides the two existing ones i.e., Hindu and Muslims. The outcome of the project of Sikhism was therefore misinterpreted as trying to create a state within a state or a theocracy within a theocracy and creating conflict. Uberoi writes that instead of such an understanding it should be viewed as a movement towards a new, modern and Indian system of unity in variety, pluralism and civil society distinct from our habitual practice of trying to keep separate rather than combine a multi religious nation, a modern pluralist society and a federal secular state. Sikhism proposed a Unitarian i.e., asserting the unity of God and rejecting the Trinity. For a modern plural society the solution forwarded by Sikhism can be understood through the analogy of vernacularism i.e., how languages can be used simultaneously by the individuals without one being privileged over the other and for the federal secular state, Sikhism suggested a democratic alternative. This is in contrast to the modern European paradigm of an overarching state governing people only as citizens relegating other aspects of their self to the private sphere of communal and primordial identity[7].

(V)

Religion to Politics: Martyrdom and *Satyagraha* as Non-Dualist Principles

In sharp contrast to Western modernity, Indian modernity achieved the continuity from religion to politics. While Sikhism articulated martyrdom since its fifth guru, Gandhism brought forth *Satyagraha*. Both Martyrdom and *Satyagraha* premised themselves on models of truth which was non-dualist.

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[7]Uberoi notes, Antigone a European woman who preceded Socrates and Jesus wanted the integration of religion and society to be upheld by her freedom of conscience and custom of civil society while Creon the king wished his state to be separate from and override religion and society and it is difficult to determine which of these two points of view is modern for Europe but certainly Antigone's position was closest to Sikhism and Indian modernity (Uberoi,1996:88).

The truth was seen as non-dualism of self, the world and the other in history, religion and society (ibid: 88). Guru Arjun (d.1606) the fifth guru of the Sikhs by example of his life, work and non-violent self-sacrifice or martyrdom,

> "folded up, as it were, the structure of the medieval regime and it's intersecting dualisms of status and power, the collective and the individual, the exoteric and esoteric, and found for good and all the true centre of freedom, self-rule and self-reform (*Swaraj*)" (ibid: 89).

Guru Arjun however, met his end in the hands of the Emperor Jahangir at Lahore, the capital of Punjab. He met such a fate partly because of his politics and partly for his religion and it's new scripture, which imperialism found intolerable.

> "Guru Arjun himself laid aside the garments of a *faqir*; indeed he wore a sword in his belt, and he turned the voluntary offerings of his Sikhs into a treasury of the community (as still today), which enabled him, among other things, to take soldiers as well as officials into the Sikh employ in the future. The fifth guru may not have meant to give offence to, much less to wage war upon, the emperor, but he was effectively urging the claims of pluralism versus imperialism or one single central rule in culture as well as power, religion, civil society and political economy, as a matter of conscience. His infant son and successor, Guru Hargobind, the sixth guru of the Sikhs, put the challenge of pluralism, freedom and responsibility in matters of religion, civil society and politics even more plainly" (ibid: 93).

Sikhism based on the philosophy of God and a perfect discipline of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice therefore attained more maturity under the fifth guru who added the conflict of martyrdom versus kingdom in defence of pluralism to the Indian modernity at the turn of sixteenth /seventeenth century AD. In 1699 on the new year's day of Baisakhi at Anandpur, 1699 Guru Gobind Singh "instituted the *Khalsa* as a society for salvation through the baptism of the spirit and the sword of gnosis, and conferred on it the freedom and the responsibility of both spiritual and temporal self-rule". Wherever five Sikhs were to be present, they would be priests of all priests and wherever

there encountered a sinner, five Sikhs could give him baptism and absolution. "This completed the edifice of Sikhism as the work of the gurus; and the mutual identification of Guru, Granth and Panth through their reciprocal embodiment and participation" (ibid: 96).

Uberoi notes,

> "there can be no better summary than this of the cause of an Indian modernity, the cause espoused by the Sikhs in history and society in three steps of continuity or discontinuity, beginning with (a) the foundation of Sikhism in a plural society as the one tradition and the tradition of the one, in c1500. (b) Aspiring for participation in history and politics through the society for salvation, self sacrifice and ethical discipline, which we may now back-date as the moment of revolution to 1606, seeking non-violent martyrdom versus the kingdom of powers. (c) The embodiment of reciprocity in the relation between the 'master of the name' and the 'pupil of the name', the guru and the Sikh, individual and collective, finally achieved in institutional form through the event of 1699" (ibid: 103)

The affinity between *Satyagraha* and Sikh notion of martyrdom on one hand and *Swaraj* and Sikh event of constitution of *Khalsa* which had the freedom and the responsibility of both spiritual and temporal self-rule on the other hand, bring together the tenets of Gandhism with Sikhism, both of which, in Uberoi's understanding, stood as markers of Indian modernity. He writes, Sikhism and Gandhism came together in the 1920s, especially in the Akali Dal party and the gurudwara agitation which was completely non-violent and at the successful conclusion of which Gandhi remarked that the first decisive battle for India's freedom was won. Uberoi notes that, although the British were surprised as they had always mistakenly identified the Sikhs and Afghans as examples of martial races, but it was in fact no coincidence that Sikhs were the first to pursue a non-violent struggle. The problem of religion, politics and history or of their interrelation was always in the background of the mind of all writers on Sikhism and that is how Sikhism without denying India's medieval heritage changed its configuration anew. Gandhi said, "'politics concern

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nations and that which concerns the welfare of nations must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined, in other words, a seeker after God and Truth'. 'Therefore, in politics also we have to establish the Kingdom of Heaven'" (Gandhi in *Young India*, 18 June 1925, c.f. Uberoi, 1996: 103).

The encounters with British colonialism, however, altered the non-dualist modern Indian ethos of seeing religion as having its own conception of society and politics as a part of man's religious duties. Uberoi's discussion on the western notion of a strong nation arising out of homogeneity of race, language, religion etc. unlike the modern Indian ethos of pluralism, represents the diametrically opposite ideas of Savarkar and Gandhi. Ashis Nandy also discusses the militant hyper–masculine Hinduism of *Hindutva, which* positioned itself on dualist separation between the domain of religion and politics and led to a situation of complete identification by leaders like Savarkar with the Western notion of a state sanitised of religion. Nandy also argues that the modern secularists share and collaborate with the basic assumption of *Hindutva* as both devaluate and suppresses local beliefs and myths in favour of homogenized worldviews that the state normally propagates.

Uberoi discusses the differences between Savarkar and Gandhi and writes that, Savarkar argued that the strength, cohesion and progress of India depended upon the strength of *Hindutva*. The strength of any nation according to Savarkar then was based on its homogeneity i.e., coincidence of its land, race, language, religion etc. culminating in the state (Uberoi, 1996: v).

Uberoi's thesis distances itself from Savarkar's homogeneity and moves towards a discussion on unity in variety. In agreement with Gandhi he tries to combine religion and politics in the realm of civil society. According to him politics in the sense of self-management occupies the primary role in both Sikhism and Gandhism. Thus, it is not the rule of the state, but the self-rule of the community under divine guidance and guru's example that differentiates a true Sikh understanding as compared to the Western theologist's dualist notions of tradition and modern.

"In the Indian modernity, the state must learn to live and let live under a regime of pluralism, and even to tolerate other sovereignties, free and responsible, besides its own society" (ibid: 110).

By the means of pluralist ethos both the cases taken up by Uberoi, namely, Sikhism and Gandhism, transcend the inherited dualisms of the collective and individual, state versus power and discloses the true-centre of self-rule, self-sacrifice and self-reform (*Swaraj*) in order to re-establish for the future, unity in variety in relation to self, the world and the other through the method and practice of non-violence.

Gandhi's reconciliation of the spheres of state-civil society and religion through self-management was in dialogue with both the modernists as well as the traditionalists. The Indian traditionalists while accepting him as an exemplar of Hindu traditions were uncomfortable and in disagreement with his attempts to suspend laws of *Karma* through suffering and redemption as they thought this to be almost in the manner of a Christian Martyr. Gandhi was not fully rejected by the modernists either, who saw his practice of *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* as the bedrock of democracy. Dipankar Gupta argues that, Gandhi's notion of 'perfect friendship' was not based on tolerance or equidistance, but on an active involvement in each other's lives as full citizens. The Gandhian position on religion and politics is seen by them as being in harmony with secularism. Gupta writes, that keeping with his position on secularism, Gandhi said that the state has nothing to do with religion and must concern itself with secular welfare, health, currency, foreign relations but not with its people's religion. This should put to rest the idea that Gandhi saw politics only in purely religious terms. The separation of the church and state could not have been stated in more forthright a manner. The tone of Gandhi, insists Gupta, recalls the great liberal tradition that goes back to Kant, Hegel and Mills (Gupta, 2008: 10)

He further writes, much is made of Gandhi's adherence to religion and to Hinduism in particular. But Gandhi himself was wary of Hinduism, though this was a religion he prized above all others. In fact, his practice of Hinduism and non-violence along with his comment about Jesus Christ being a king of

passive resistance made many believe that he was a Christian in disguise. In the 11 August 1920 issue of *Young India* Gandhi says the following about Hinduism,

> "There is, on the one hand, the Historical Hinduism with its untouchability, superstitious worship of stocks and stones, animal sacrifice and so on. On the other hand, we have the Hinduism of the Gita, the Upanishads and Patanjali's *Yoga Shastra*, which is the acme of Hinduism" (C.f. Terchek, 2000: 180 by Dipankar Gupta, 2008: 10).

The modernists then saw the Gandhian position on religion and politics as compatible with secularism and the liberal democratic ethos. In Uberoi's framework, Gandhism like Sikhism, stood in opposition to the separation of state-civil society and religion and articulated how to combine religion and politics and when to keep the two separate for making the common morality of self -rule (*Swaraj)* the condition for self-reform and self–reform as a condition for self-rule at the level of individual, community as well as the nation. Uberoi therefore sees religion as contributing to civil society by the way of contributing to its public welfare, charity and policy discourse. Civil society here emerges as a site where religion, society and politics intersect.

(VI)

<u>Religion and Civil Society: Emerging Sites for Self Development</u>

Anant Giri (2006) in his discussion on Civil Society observes,

> "One can say that the history of civil society begins only when the institution of the sacred or the divine kingship begins to dissolve into two differentiated institutions at the dawn of the ancient, or at the very latest the medieval, period out of the past. (...)even if this civil society was indeed the child of the modern world, still it is the Christian society and its early modern reform that we may also have to consider, and not only the bourgeois society of modern capitalism. By this wider

definition, the modern civil society was established or revived in Britain at any rate by the struggle of the Nonconformists, the new Christians, who together severed connection with the established Church of England when it accepted royal supremacy at the time of the Reformation (…). The new Christians wanted instead what we may call salvation through religion in society, with pluralist freedom of conscience and worship for all" (Giri, 2006: 378).

In the Indian context, the beginnings of civil society can be traced to *bkakti* movements, writings of Kabir, Nanak, Mira Bai, Sri Aurobindo and Gandhi. Each of these instances signalled the necessity for self-development and self-transformation; where the ethics of service rather than pursuit of power were seen as an important marker of being modern. Understood as such, civil society was not any more a site for struggle and empowerment but also a provided a site for realization of the self, development of the self and social transformation. The discussion of civil society from within pluralism of traditions and customs in Uberoi's framework marginalises the role of the state. Uberoi redefines nation as representing that collective subjectivity which has taken the responsibility to resolve with or without the state, issues of inequality and difference and of stratification and segmentation common to human beings everywhere.

Giri (2006) contrasts this open ended approach to civil society, as outlined by Uberoi, to writings of André Béteille (2001) and Dipankar Gupta (1997) who argue that civil society is a feature of the modern world, and so looking "for alternative forms of it in the medieval or ancient world is not fruitful" (Béteille, 2001: 294). For Dipankar Gupta, if tradition gains an upper hand then it does not qualify as a civil society (Gupta, 1997: 141). Civil society must be understood as adjunct to the state. In such an articulation civil society must operate in a manner that is supportive of the state and not as an independent sphere which lets the state off its hooks and allows for it to be lax.

In a discussion '*On the Role of Religion in Global Civil Society– A South Asian Perspective*', held in New Delhi in 2010, Uberoi observed, that the way some see it is that, there is religion and society and then there is religion and politics

and they try to connect these and discuss their relationship. But society itself is a religious idea and secularism as an idea has been invented by religion and is not opposed to it. He opines,

> "Religion has its own definition of society, and it starts with the definition of a congregation. This concept is being developed in India, more by Buddhism and Islam, and not so much by Hinduism, that's my reading. But if you look at the religious reform movements of the last hundred and fifty or two hundred years in India, every one of these movements, whether it is Hindu or Muslim, they have the word "society" in their self-understanding. For example, the RSS, *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*, the term *sangh* is part of their name and then, of course, the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, and then in Sikhism the chief Khalsa Diwan, where *Diwan* is also a notion of society in India. This has infected even the Theosophical Society, it calls itself Theosophical *Society*. I mean why is it such? They all have this. And of course, in Islam, *ja-ma-'a* is there in all these terms. *Jum'a* is for Friday for congregation, *jameh* for the mosque where you congregate, and then *Tablighi Jamaat*, all these, have this word "society" there. That tells us something, that it's not that they are contributing to society but they have their own idea of society. Now sometimes this idea is quite ridiculous, any idea can be made ridiculous, or pathological, depending on the circumstances. But the idea itself is there in all these movements, and it is to be taken seriously in my opinion. What they do is actually opposed to tradition. The largest Muslim reformist movement in India is not *Tablighi Jamaat*, but it is rather in Uttar Pradesh, the *Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat*. *Sunnat* is tradition, and *jamaat* is society, so they call themselves the society of tradition, and they are opposing society and tradition. They actually are asking, which one is the real instrument of self-realization? Is it tradition, which is the orthodox position, or is it the congregation, which is the reform position? I look upon the Sufi movement like that. In Hinduism, there is a contrast, of course, between caste and sect. If we look not at church and sect, like European sociology has, but at

caste versus sect, then you can see that caste upholds tradition, not society. It upholds birth, it upholds what is passed down, it upholds the authority of tradition, and it upholds also hierarchy, of course, and exclusiveness. But, in the same Hinduism, we have sects, and for all the sects birth is not important, what is important is *dikśa*. What is important in this? Re-birth, to be born again in America, there are also lots of Christian sects who call themselves born-again Christians. That is really what is important; *religion is not dependant by birth, but by rebirth,* and for re-birth, you are not determined by birth you can have husband and wife with different sects, just like in India husbands and wives vote for different political parties, brothers and sisters can vote for different political parties and can have different gurus, and similarly, with two brothers or whatever it is. In the beginning, these sects promise individual self-realization." (LUCE Delhi Transcript, pp. 30, September 2010).

The notion of religion and society seen as such, are no longer separate, as each religion has its own understanding of society. Furthermore, not tradition but reformist congregations or sects may act as instruments of self-realization. Contributing to the discussion on role of religion in global civil society he further notes that, religious institutions should not restrict themselves to extending humanitarian help in times of need but must also participate in mundane activities like making investments in society or even taking responsibility for the economy. Uberoi's formulation of civil society then is markedly different from the western idea of civil society where it is understood only as a mediating category between state and society that is guaranteed by the state and which acts as institution for mobilization. Uberoi focuses on the conscious aspect of society that strives to create a space for critical self-reflections and public deliberations and refers to it as the civil society. The self-sacrifice of the martyrs, he writes, is crucial to the work of civil society. The aim of a non-dualist modernity should be to establish civil society in culture, as in power; "under a regime of pluralist non-dualism, all human differences and partitions are negotiable in civil society as a 'community of

sovereignties' because no one reality or truth falsifies another" (Uberoi, 2002: 130).

According to Gandhi's conception of civil society the self will always look at the other as its second self and engage in dialogue and conversation without possibility of any threatening consequences. The freedom movement for *Swaraj* is meant for self-reform and self-rule of the civil society and his ideal of *Ram rajya* was supposed to bring the rule of salvation, which can be understood as management of the self in the arena of politics. While stating that our 'non-cooperation is a retirement within ourselves', he created out of tradition and the customs of India a breed of modernity which was peculiar to Indian society. So that India could emerge with its own distinct identity on the world stage with its own version of pluralism, which Uberoi terms as vernacular democracy (ibid: 30).

The logic of national pluralism makes the common usage of civil society prevail over or along with the authority of inherited tradition, and perhaps this is the normal and the proper condition of modernity. Concepts of custom and its common usage along with a consciousness of its sensibility remains the hallmark of human civil society. A nation which exists within a network of nations could be seen as civil society where the collective subjectivity resolves within itself the problems of inequality, difference, stratification and segmentation which are problems faced by humanity as whole (ibid: 137).

Giri (2006) extends upon such a notion of civil society and suggests that some of the challenges encountered in self-development in the sphere of civil society include overcoming domination and "creating a condition for critical reflection, and establishing relations of non-duality, non-domination and non-violence, not only between self and other, but also as a foundation of social order. These challenges are for individuals as well as the institutions" (Giri, 2006: 380).

(VII)

<u>Outlining the Non-Dualist Paradigm</u>

To conclude, Uberoi's writings like that of Nandy, attempts to delineate and understand the principles behind the coexistence of diverse socio-cultural formations but in doing so he uses the case from Indian modernity. Uberoi is one of the few scholars who has written about Indian modernity. In his discussion he shows that it was the violence specific to dualist European modernity that led to a break between the self and the other. Indian modernity however, brings forth a non-dualist ontological possibility, a different logic which allows for a continuity of thinking and being, which is a critique to the deterministic constraint of history. Identity, understood as such, is a continuum between the self and the world in which multiple forms of selfhood namely myself, oneself, herself/himself and the other unfold.

He uses instances from India to nuance his four fold outline of logic of truth and method rather than a two valued system of dualism from European modernity where the opposition between homogeneity and heterogeneity identified as equality and inequality gains prominence at the cost of the other pair of possibilities namely the distribution of entities in relation of their mutually active cooperation and complementarity. The discussion of State, Religion and Civil society from India, the shift from medievalism to modernity and the emphasis on separating the *Sanyasis* who has status from the society provided the ground the author to study Sikhism as a project of modernity which ended the separation emerging from dualism of creator and his creation. Sikhism and Gandhism are seen as representing the Indian modernity of combining religion and politics rejecting state established religion and religion established state as enemies of civil society. Gandhism and Sikhism, the two discerning positions of Indian modernity which advocate self-rule and self-restraint at the individual as well as the collective level. This brings back into the discussion the worldview that self-realization leads to greater understanding of the 'not-self'. Indian modernity in the manner of Hermetic tradition of Europe looks at a continuity of being, knowing and practice.

The discussion of civil society from within pluralism of traditions and customs that are the mainstay, marginalises the role of the state as Uberoi redefines nation as representing that collective subjectivity which has taken the responsibility to resolve with or without the state issues of inequality, difference and of stratification and segmentation common to human beings everywhere. Uberoi's work does not seek to explain modernity as disjunction between state, religion and society, but as an on-going dialectical process between the three as mediated not alone by religion, nor state, but by civil society where individuals come together both for their self-interest as well as for the reproduction of society. Civil society has practices which affirm the project of the state and those which challenge it. It is through self-management that civil society manages questions and problems common to human beings. Customs and traditions are understood as the mainstay of collective conscience or sensibilities of civil society.

Uberoi's reading of Sikhism as the base of Indian modernity has however been critically looked upon and scholars such as Louis E. Fenech (2000) have criticised Uberoi's selective reading of Sikhism and his idealist reading of martyrdom, which Uberoi sees as culminating in Akali Sikhs who took part in Gurudwars reform movements 1920-25. Fenech writes that Uberoi overlooks the changing nature of martyrdom in Sikh tradition and ignores the more militant and violent forms of Sikh martyrdom which makes it difficult to draw a parallel between the non-violence of Gandhi and Martyrdom among Sikhs. Much then remains to be questioned about the structuralist semiology that Uberoi uses as a methodology to draw similarities.

The chapter that follows stands as a testimony to the statist paradigm which moves away from the discussion on cultural politics to politics of the nation-state. The contrast that this statist paradigm offers on the thematic brings to fore sharply, the polemical discussions on identity and nation-state in the period between the 1970's and 2000's. It is in positing the earlier culturist paradigm and the non-dualist paradigm against this statist articulation that the tacit debate on the thematic becomes most pronounced and visible.

Chapter Five

Nation-State, Democracy and Citizenship: Negotiating Self-Other Through the Big 'Other'

(I)

This chapter begins with a discussion and thematic analysis of select texts of two thinkers whose writings in the period between 1970-2000 best represent the position on Identity as articulated and mediated by the nation-state and its institutions. The themes cut through various contexts and time and highlight the way questions of culture, diversity and identity are addressed within the framework of the liberal state. The position widely articulates the centrality of the nation– its structural and sentimental boundaries and how it evokes shared meanings within which identarian assertions are framed and understood. The chapter delves into related themes of culture, history, time, memory, civilisation, democracy, citizenry and civil society. Understood together, the writings of these thinkers provide an outline of the framework of what we refer to as the statist school of thought that dominated the understanding of identity in the two decades leading to 2000. As mentioned in previous chapters, the scholars who have persistently contributed to the significance of democratic institutions in organising Indian society and the imperative to mould Indian selfhood in accordance with the requirements of secular citizenship are many. Here we discuss the writings of Dipankar Gupta and André Béteille. This chapter is based on the selected texts of the chosen authors which were found to be most distinct in their discussion on identity in the Indian context, vis-à-vis nation-state and culture in India during the stated period. The chapter also draws on interviews with these thinkers which were conducted to further clarify and nuance the categories that shape the statist approach to identity.

(II)

Since we are concerned with identity, the works are read in a way that gives centrality to the theme under review. This section, thus, cuts across a range of subjects that Béteille and Gupta have written about and attempts a thematic, rather than exhaustive or descriptive, account of their writings, privileging their engagement, both overt and tacit, with the theme of identity. The section, through a discussion of their select writings, seeks to put together key points regarding aspects of identity they articulate in their writings. Let us begin by discussing the various contexts they have written in and which have been identified by this study as having a bearing on understanding the theme of identity in their works. It must also be added that the discussion does not quite follow the chronology of the writings as published. Instead the concern has been to juxtapose their writings in a way that is fruitful in understanding the trajectory of the theme of identity in their writings. Selected works are discussed briefly and key points that emerge from them, and are relevant for understanding identity, are listed.

Shifting Contexts, Shifting 'Others' and Changing Ideologies

Gupta's earliest research interest was in studying identity politics which gained prominence in the state of Maharashtra starting with the 1960s. Maharashtra witnessed assertions of Marathi identity over several episodes even before the '60s. The state has a long history of celebrating its distinctiveness vis-a-vis the rest of India. The tradition of summoning the legend of *Shivaji*, a warrior king of the seventeenth century, has provided, and continues to provide, a basis for instigating Marathi pride. Gupta writes that the Maratha Empire was in existence till as late as 1818. The success of the empire was not the work of a "single political adventurer" but the result of an upheaval of the population bound by common affinities of language, religion, literature (Gupta, 1982b: 41). The downfall of the empire was a blow to Maharashtrians, and they longed for a return to former glory.

In the early 20th century, the Marathas sought to reassert themselves in the mainstream of India's national and political life under the leadership of Gopal Krishna Gokhale and under Tilak. The latter re-emphasized the high points of Maharashtrian history and regenerated the pride Maharashtrians had for their culture and tradition. Between 1920 and 1940, Maharashtrian leaders kept reviving this history and the legend of *Shivaji*. Tilak expressed his desire for a united Maharashtra in 1918 by demanding the Congress Democratic Party constitute a unilingual province of Maharashtra. The *Samyukta Maharashtra Samithi* fought for a unilingual province of Maharashtra between 1955 and 1960 and was successful in giving direction to Maharashtrian regionalism. During its time, the main enemies were the Gujaratis and *Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee*, whose members were mostly non-Maharashtrians and opposed to the idea Bombay be made the capital of Maharashtra. The lines between the Maharashtrians and the others was clearly demarcated. The communists widened their base with the *Samithi* to win the 1967 general election. They demanded Belgaum and Karwar be included in Maharashtra. After the Bombay Municipal elections of 1968, this *Samithi* was dissolved. Gupta writes the *Samithi* enjoyed whole-hearted support from the people of Maharashtra despite differences of class and political backgrounds. This movement was…

> "…bolstered by the pride and consciousness among Maharashtrians of their culture and history. This consciousness, as well as the glorification of Maharashtrian heroes of yore, the struggle for the inclusion of Belgaum and Karwar, and the feeling Maharashtrians were being discriminated against by the Central Government, were excited and ingrained among the Maharashtrians by the *Samyukta Maharashtra Samithi*" (ibid: 45).

The *Samithi* provided the *Shiv Sena* with the "regional idiom and a frame of reference which was conducive to the functioning of the latter" (ibid: 42). The *Shiv Sena* was formally launched in 1966, six years after the unilingual state of Maharashtra was formed, and quickly gained favour among the masses, especially in the Bombay and Thana industrial areas of the state. Its programmes and policies targeted the urban metropolis of Bombay. It

primarily organised itself around the idea that Maharashtrians were being deprived of jobs and economic opportunities by non-Maharashtrian migrants to the city. In order to forward this agenda, the *Shiv Sena* too invoked the "glorious days of *Shivaji* Maharaj, of the Maratha empire and the *Hindu Pad Padshahi*" (ibid: 45). To better understand the specificity of the rise of the *Shiv Sena*, Gupta highlights the economic, demographic, migration, occupational and literacy structures of Bombay.

He draws on Althusser's notion of the "historically specific conjuncture." According to Althusser, "accumulation of currents and events lead to a historically specific conjuncture" which needs to be understood in order to "account for the appeal a particular movement has in a specific social setting" (ibid: 58). Gupta dwells on this question – Why did the *Shiv Sena* gain the mass following it did? To answer this, he shows the role of selective influences that favoured the ideology and politics of the *Shiv Sena* to flourish. The political situation in Maharashtra in the years between 1966-67 was characterized by inflation and an unstable political scenario in the state and the country at large. The Congress was losing its grip and there was chaos. It is in such a situation that the *Sena* appeared and offered to fill the vacuum by "promising militancy, integrity and a solution" (ibid: 58). Unlike the *Shiv Sena*, the communist parties, however, were unable to attract the masses because during the years 1956-65 there was a spurt in growth of factories and mills, and this led to an increase in employment. There was a general feeling that mill owners and the government were friends of the working class (ibid: 59). In such a situation, it became difficult for the communists to gain a foothold. Further, the split in the party in 1964 aggravated its impotence which led to its failure to capitalise on the crises of 1966.

The *Shiv Sena* thus came up at a time when the entire country was undergoing a political crisis and economic deprivation. The nativist element was at the core of its ideology and this ideology was favoured by the occupational and migration structure of Bombay and the ascriptive and regional style of politics in India, and particularly, in Maharashtra which "heightened Maharashtrian chauvinism by emphasizing that their culture and tradition were superior to that of other linguistic groups. This engendered a dominant attitude among

Maharashtrians that they were being persecuted both on the national and the regional plane" (ibid: 60).

The fact affluence was higher among non-Maharashtrians in Bombay, because of their domination over trade, and because they were proportionately better represented in well-paid jobs due to better education and expertise, gave rise to the feeling migrants were getting the lion's share of Bombay's bounty, which lawfully belonged to the natives (ibid: 60-61). But, by now the Gujaratis were not the main enemies. The Gujaratis constituted the majority of financers and industrialists in the city and *Shiv Sena* head Bal Thackeray had nothing against the industrialists. The South Indians were portrayed as the new enemies. The bone of contention was the white-collar jobs and by picking on the South Indians and their higher visibility in such jobs the *Shiv Sena* struck an instant cord with the middle and the lower middle classes. Gupta writes that if the hostility towards Gujaratis had continued it would entail some amount of animosity with the industrial capitalist class and this, in the present Maharashtra, would not have struck a right cord as much as the chosen ideology that *Shiv Sena* worked with did.

The "ideology of a movement is vital for it postulates the platforms and goals of the movement, mobilizes people into action and provides a cognitive map of expectations and a hierarchy of values in which standards and imperatives are proclaimed" (ibid: 119). Gupta, following from Karl Manheim (1966), writes that Manheim draws attention to the fact that while a class or individual seem to express a range of ideas which appear to be diverse, they have a unity in "an underlying spiritual matrix" (ibid: 119). Edward Shils (1968) too writes, "(Ideologies) are interpreted around one of a few preeminent values, such as salvation, quality or ethnic purity" (ibid: 120). Franz Schurmann (1971), however, contests the notion that unity is to be sought in the "spiritual matrix" and instead argues that "organisations are different from classes and individuals in that they are products of conscious creation therefore the unity cannot be in an underlying spiritual matrix but in a conscious conception of unity" (ibid: 120).

Gupta found Schurmann's opinion to be valuable for understanding "organisational ideologies that are exhibited in political parties and social movements" (ibid). Schurmann distinguishes between two components of ideology - pure ideology (theory or *weltenschaung*) and practical ideology (or thought). The pure ideology or *weltenschaung* states values, morals and ethical conceptions about what is right and what is wrong, while practical ideology states norms and rules that have direct action consequences and which prescribe behaviour (ibid). Basing his analysis on the distinction between these two components of ideology, Gupta discusses both *weltenschaung* and the practical ideology of the *Shiv Sena*.

What is interesting for our discussion is that he shows how certain components of ideology get more pronounced, or even modified, with time and that is acceptable if "conscious unity" is maintained. In the case of the *Sena*, its worldview was informed by *Shivaji's* life and legend and served as its major points of reference. However, many aspects of its practical ideology evolved as time went by and it grew as an organisation. Gupta writes that he idolization of *Shivaji* guided the worldview or *weltenschaung* of the *Shiv Sena*. Central to it were notions of patriotism, justice and a conception of man as free and entitled to spiritual and aesthetic freedom. Each of these components needs to be discussed briefly. Writing about patriotism, Gupta notes, in the view of the *Shiv Sena*, that "man's supreme duty is towards the nation. One should be proud of one's culture and tradition and serve to make it stronger. Therefore, in the view of the *Shiv Sena*, to be a good Hindu is to be a good patriot. Pro-Hinduism is equated with patriotism" (ibid: 121). Discussing justice, he writes that the *Shiv Sena* disagreed with the caste system and condemned exploitation, in any form, of one man by another or of one state by another, but if there is an instance of exploitation then "one must fight against them and pay back the wrong doers in their own coin. One must not hesitate to use violence and extreme punitive measures to aid a just cause" (ibid: 122). The *Shiv Sena* did not endorse anarchism but advocated the liberty of man from "any structure that curbs the basic liberty of man is morally improper". Thackeray "does not advocate anarchism for he believes that this liberty should not be

wantonly misused to weaken the foundations of the nation and of society" (ibid).

Gupta goes on to discuss the practical ideology of the *Shiv Sena* and shows how the components that inform its worldview reflect in its everyday activities. The primary category of practical ideology of the *Shiv Sena* was the position of Maharashtrians in Bombay and the deprivation they faced in Bombay. Besides this, other categories such as "anti-South Indian and other non-Maharashtrians; anti-other political parties, including the Congress; anti-communist; anti-Russia and anti-China; pro-Hindu and anti-other religion; and finally pro-dictatorial and autocratic elements, guide the *Sena's* practical ideology" (ibid: 122-3). The *Shiv Sena* cast its opponents as being anti–Indian. The South Indians, communists and the Muslims were all described as being unpatriotic and conspiring against India and her interests. The *Shiv Sena* advocated putting the nation's interests above regional interests to emphasize the manner in which they reconciled their nativist ideology with patriotic fervour they claimed guided their organisation. Gupta quotes Thackeray as saying "First Rashtra then Maharashtra" (ibid: 147).

> "By postulating nativism and patriotism as non-antagonistic, Bal Thackeray was not only placing patriotic sentiments on a higher plane but was also deriving from them the justification for the *Shiv Sena's* existence. Not only did Thackeray utilise this combination to denigrate the *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam*, but he also used it as effectively against the Muslim League and the communists, who according to Thackeray were agents of Pakistan and Russia and China respectively" (ibid: 147).

It is unclear, notes Gupta, as to who was a bigger enemy of the *Shiv Sena*- the communists, South Indians or the Muslims. While it is a hierarchy that is unclear for the most part, it is the Muslims that have emerged as the biggest enemies of the *Shiv Sena*.

> "*I used the term nativism because it is a legitimate term and not a neologism. It is not something that is new, and it refers to people who feel strongly about a connection to their root. This connection is also*

posited in somewhat aggressive terms to those they consider not quite related to the geography they occupy. So that is why I used the term nativism - it seemed to fit with the Shiv Sena because they kept saying we want Marathi parentage and Marathi parentage was like nativism of sorts. And if you were to add to it the fact the Shiv Sena was primarily influential in Bombay, Bombay Thana area and perhaps in a way to other parts of Maharashtra, but in a tenuous sense, then Maharashtra and Bombay… these become the ground in which nativism breeds for them. Territory, earth, soil, history, tradition, that kind of thing... and I didn't want to use the term nationalism right then because nationalism can also have similar meanings. Nationalism is also territory, blood, soil, history, but in nationalism there is another dimension, which is that of national unity. So, when I talked of the Shiv Sena I used nativism because it was not national unity they were talking about, though they often said, 'we natives of Maharashtra are the best Indian nationals.' They put it across that way but 'we natives of Maharashtra' resent the fact natives of other places don't respect our native rights over Maharashtra. I also don't use the word autochthonous as that is a word you use if you were to think in terms of people who have been historically even archeologically related to an area, and that would be bit of a problem. The other thing is that because the Shiv Sena says 'Marathi parentage,' there could be large numbers of South Indians who have lived there for longer periods than many Maharashtrians, perhaps because people have been migrating all the time. So maybe they view their thing as being autochthonous but, in conceptual terms for academics, it would not be autochthonous. Nativism could come under ethnicity… it could come under communalism. For example, let us say the Shiv Sena argues that South Indians should go back to South India because what they are doing is wrong in this part of the world and without making the claim that South Indians are not Indians… then that would be kind of communalism. Or let us say the Shiv Sena, for some reason states, that scheduled caste people are misbehaving as they did, there was a communal element later. They are not behaving correctly, and they should be taught their

place… then that would be a communal thing. But the original ideological grounding of the Shiv Sena will remain nativist and it will take this slant or that slant." (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013)

From this discussion of Gupta's writing on the *Shiv Sena*, certain points emerge that might be relevant to the understanding of identity in his frame of things. Although the *Shiv Sena* was primarily a nativist movement that premised itself on a certain construction of Marathi identity, Gupta, as can be seen from the above discussion, focussed little on identity *per se*. Instead, he dwelled on the ideology and organisation of the *Shiv Sena* and the specific context in which it came into being and functioned. The following points emerge from this work. First, that the absolute criticality of context in understanding the rise, growth and popularity of a movement is established. This contextualization clarifies the point culture has a minor role in assertions of identity. Instead, culture is summoned to make plausible the ideology of a movement and its core assumptions. Second, history, tradition and culture cannot be entry points for a sociological understanding of a movement. It is fair to take a note of this, but they cannot explain the genesis and trajectory of a movement. Third, it is critical to focus on the processual aspects of a movement because, in doing so, it is possible to understand how ideology gets modified and elements get added as a movement goes along. The process of "othering," as is evident in the course of the *Shiv Sena's* trajectory, is a continuous process. South Indians, communists and Muslims were portrayed as enemies and, interestingly, all of them were portrayed as enemies of the Indian nation-state. Thus, the nation-state is central to the way primordial identities in India are to be understood. If the *Shiv Sena* had not portrayed its enemies as anti-national, the movement would not have been ethnic in character. The *Shiv Sena*, he noted, interestingly posed the outsider as the outsider to the nation-state as well. "Not all nativist movements are ethnic but in the case of the *Shiv Sena* it was both" (Gupta, 1996b: 8). This was a later observation that he made in his study on ethnicity in Punjab. It is only in his book '*Ethnicity in Punjab: Sikh identity in a Comparative Perspectiv*e' (1996b) that he dwells on the centrality of nation-state in understanding ascriptive mobilizations. He notes a heuristic distinction must be drawn

between communalism and ethnicity, based on whether the "other" is portrayed as an enemy to the nation-state. It is only when the nation-state is brought into the picture that a mobilization gains an ethnic character. Ethnicity, thus, requires the "other" to necessarily be anti-national or secessionist in character. In communal movements the other is not cast as being anti-national but is seen as receiving better deals from the government. Here the concern is with government and administrative handling of distribution of resources and not with territory or sovereignty (Gupta, 1996b: 5-6).

We now go on to discuss key arguments that shape his study on Punjab and the insights it offers into the way Gupta formulates identity in the context of ascriptive mobilizations. Many of the nascent arguments forwarded by him in his study of the *Shiv Sena* get substantiated and clearer with his study on Punjab[1].

Context Over Culture and the Fate of Political Conspiracies

Gupta notes:

> "*I had gone to Punjab because I wanted to look at the Sena problem and understand how the Shivaji legend was used for this and now for that? ('this' refers to the Shivaji legend as used by the Samyukta*

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[1]Gupta's initial response to the Punjab crisis was an article titled "The Communalising of Punjab 1980-85," published in Economic and Political Weekly in 1985. Gupta noted Punjab offered a unique case for sociologists and social anthropologists who had, for the most part, worked under the impression that warring dyads of communalism were, in some senses, pre-ordained by traditions and seeped in inherent antagonism. Punjab, over the period of six years, changed any such conception and provided a scope for comprehension of the problem from close quarters. In 1988 he, with others, wrote another article- "Punjab: Communalised beyond Politics." It was here the authors discussed the reaction of the people to Operation Black Thunder, which indicated quite clearly that the common sentiments of the people were not one with that of the extremists. The situation was ripe for reconciliation and, if the state wished to, it was here that the crisis could be ended. All that was needed of the situation was that the Centre treated the extremists as a law and order problem. Further, the Centre needed to stop politicising the Punjab situation. It was, by then, a known thing among the people of Punjab that the government had a plan that would reveal itself over the course of the next two years and it was because of this that the situation in Punjab was left hanging. Around this time in Punjab it was clear that popular sentiment was neither in line with that of the moderates nor was it in complete sync with the extremists. The masses in Punjab hoped for an end to what it was convinced were state-initiated vindication. Their only desire was that the law took its course and those at fault were brought to charge. In 1990, Gupta wrote "The Indispensable Centre: Ethnicity and Politics in the Indian Nation-State." It was here he discussed the centrality of the Indian nation-state and the centripetal force that held it together. Unlike the writings then, he argued that the Indian nation-state was not withering away. The sequential development of arguments is interesting.

Mahrashtra Samiti and later by the Sena). I asked myself this question - how come the Sikhs, who were once considered by non-Sikhs as the sword arm of Hinduism, become enemies of the Hindus? How did it happen? So again the malleability of culture, and there were a whole lot of people writing at that time about how Sikhs were actually anti-Hindu and Sikhs were writing how Hindus are naturally against us and things like that, and all of these were recent problems… so I was trying to gauge the same story in a different way" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

The distinctive feature about Punjab was that it was for the first time India came to witness secessionist demands. "Although it is true that majority of the Sikhs were not in favour of a Sikh homeland (or Khalistan)[2], the Sikh extremist demand nevertheless figured centrally in India in all political issues and debates for well over ten years. This was probably because Punjab was always an integral part of the country and the demand for Khalistan compelled scholars and laypersons in the country to think profoundly about the nature of nation-state" in India[3] (Gupta, 1996b: 53-54).

"The comparative perspective that appears in the title of the study on Punjab suggested that while earlier there was one kind of Sikh identity, now there was another kind. Very often you can do a comparative study within the same culture. Sometimes you think comparative studies should be Sikhism versus Hinduism versus Islam and things like that, but sometimes you can do comparative studies within Hinduism... concentrating on different times, phases and types. A lot of literature was appearing on the question of Sikh identity. It was not only coming from Sikh literature and tradition… there was so much more of it that was being written by different kinds of people. Interestingly, there were

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[2]Gupta's observation is based on fieldwork in Punjab, where he observed that the majority of Sikhs attached themselves only vicariously to militant ideals of separatism; giving the impression the demand for Khalistan was broad-based and widespread among Sikhs (Gupta, 1996b: 71).

[3]While, on one hand, Gupta in his study of ethnicity in Punjab was hoping to understand the nature and character of identities, especially so in moments of strife, on the other he was responding to popular opinion around that time which questioned the authenticity of the Indian nation-state.

some foreigners who wanted to look at Sikh culture in an exotic fashion… some Sikhs who saw it that way, some Sikhs who didn't see it that way… so there was a lot of writing going around at the time" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

Gupta's book '*The Context of Ethnicity: Sikh Identity in a Comparative Perspective*' (1996b) opens with the observation that the point of departure for scholarship on language- or religion-based ascriptive movements in Europe was the development of nationalism and of nation-states. Most European nation-states had overlapping religious and linguistic frontiers and, for most of them, it was language that provided a basis for carving out sovereign entities while other ascriptive differences were nearly stamped out (Hobsbawm, 1990: 36 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 3). In the case of India, however, this was not a possibility as it was characterized by too much cultural diversity. The Indian case, thus, challenged much of the received literature on nation-state that came from the European context. Judged in the light of this received literature, India was understood as waiting to break up into several nation-states. Gupta challenges this assumption and proposes another point of view on the Indian nation-state… one which he notes would respect India's career as a nation-state for almost 50 years and analyse the reasons for its success. His work thus challenged the received notion that nation-state sentiments could not co-exist with sub-regional identification and, as he goes on to show, that this was not so in the Indian context[4].

Thus, the cultural logic that informed and inspired many earlier theories on the nation-state needed to be tempered by contextualization in specific settings and

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[4]He discusses three kinds of ascriptive mobilizations - linguistic, regional and nativist - which characterized independent India and were understood by many as an expression of an original and restless cultural disaffection of different nationalities, which had been forced to cohabit in the Indian nation-state (Gupta, 1996c: 55). This, notes Gupta, is an inadequate understanding because in all these episodes the Indian nation-state was held sacrosanct and was not breached. Thus, the superficial similarities seen as characterizing the linguistic, nativist, and regional movements in independent India vanished the moment one looked at the different sets of nexuses each of these movements activated. Every nation-state "is constructed and there is a certain self-consciousness that must accompany all imaginings of the nation-state, Indian or western" and these three instances - linguistic, regional and nativist movements- helped further the idea that "for any mobilization to function in political mainstream of India it must deliberately stay in line with this self-conscious sentiment that upholds the sanctity of the Indian nation-state and its geographical frontiers" (ibid: 67-8). It also became clear that economic unevenness was more a cause for these movements rather than cultural diversity (ibid: 67).

locales. Such contextualisation would then make clear that cultural differences do not run identical trajectories and also explain that how they work themselves out on the ground depends on their contingent sociological correlates:

> *"Context and sociological correlates are more or less the same where you, as an analyst, are looking at the context and the correlates. The context is the situation in which you are placed… the situational aspect… you know, definition of situation is very important in understanding the context… so, if I were to take any particular phenomenon out of one situation with different kinds of correlates in action somewhere else… for example, I take the Sena out of Bombay to Pune, it doesn't work...."* (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

It was religion rather than language that played a divisive role in India. Partition between India and Pakistan in 1947 was based on religious differences. Thus, the proposed primacy of linguistic identities in demarcation of nation-states did not hold valid for India. There was no yellow brick road to nation-state formation (ibid: 14) and it was meaningless to look for one. Instead, attention needed to be paid to the result of the nation-state.

In the Indian case, the partition in 1947 "seared the lineaments of India's territorial boundaries deep into the national consciousness. The partition in that sense was instrumental in lending to India that critical variable which makes for a modern nation-state, viz., the popular sacralisation of territory" (ibid: 17). The centripetal forces that held India together, in Gupta's opinion, were not merely civilisational unities of geography, tradition and customs. These on their own account did not create nation-states. Gupta refers to Nehru's Discovery of India, where Nehru alludes to not one but many reasons that made the Indian landmass distinctive.

Gupta writes that Nehru's descriptions are compelling but are relevant only at a civilisational level. However, "civilisations do not necessarily realize themselves as 'terminal communities' or as nation-states" (Schwartz, 1993:218

c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 13). Distinguishing civilizations from nation-states, he notes that while nationalist ideologies dip into 'civilisational reserves to legitimize their historical claims" it is "not the same as being bound solely by civilisational grids" (ibid). For example, according to Huttington's characterisation, German, English and Greek nationalists belong to the Protestant–Catholic civilisation but German, English and Greek have all claimed separate political identities (ibid: 14). There is something else… an "intangible tangle of sentiments arising out of multiple factors, some cultural, some civilisational, some historical, that provide the binding force to India's popular self-awareness as a nation-state" (ibid: 17). Gupta finds Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" useful in describing the centrifugal forces that bind a nation together. These are hard to define or describe and, for the most part, are ineffable sentiments.

Gupta goes onto to describe at length the impact of partition nationwide. This, he notes, would help understand fully

> "…why nation-state sentiments in India are so fiercely and uncompromisingly fixated to territory. It was in the light of this coming into being of Indian nation-state that the Punjab crisis needed to be contextualised. The focus thus had to shift from warring dyads of Sikhs and Hindus and attention needed to be paid to how secessionist demands emerged from the heartland of a country that had enjoyed unanimity on the decision towards no further partition of the country? It was difficult to imagine "Sikhs who dominate Punjab would ever be prone to secessionism given their painful experience during the partition of 1947 and their traditional status as 'sword army' of Hinduism" (Banga, 1988: 244 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 70)

Gupta writes that while in the 1970s "the secular and regional character of mobilization in Punjab was clouded over by a communal coloration as the *Akali Dal* was the principal agency behind it," it was only in the starting of the 1980s that the movements in Punjab came to be seen as wholly ascriptive and ethnic in character (ibid: 69). There was a new Sikh minority consciousness which emerged. The reasons for this could not be found in culture or economic

factors but in political conspiracies that had been hatched. Neither the cultural history of Sikhs nor the presence of a communal party like the *Akali Dal* could explain the scenario in Punjab in the 1980s. Instead, it was political choices and decisions that created the ethnic and communal tensions. The crisis in Punjab was not inevitable. Political conspiracies usually do not run the charted course and Punjab is an instance of that (ibid: 72-3).

The *Akali Dal* had a career graph marked by peaks and troughs. If the Sikhs were communal then it is difficult to explain, for instance, why the *Akali Dal* lost in the Sikh majority district of Ludhiana, badly, to the Congress in the 1980 election (ibid: 74) or why leaders who began their careers with the *Akali Dal* but moved to the Congress (well-known among them are Swaran Singh and Pratap Singh Kairon) did not fall from grace. Gupta writes that it was only after 1980 the *Akali Dal* began to gain credibility. This was because of two reasons. First, this was because of transparent demands made by the *Akali Dal*, namely the demand for Chandigarh to be the capital of Punjab, the demand that territorial disputes between Punjab and Haryana be settled by a territorial tribunal, and that the distribution of river water between Punjab and its neighbours be settled by the Supreme court. Second, the *Akali Dal* gained credibility among the masses because the Congress did not face these demands (ibid: 73-4).

All these demands were secular and regional issues whose validity the Congress could not deny. However, instead of resolving them fairly it reduced them to issues of ethnicity by stating the Sikhs wanted a separate state and the Anandpur Sahib resolution was a secessionist document. Alongside this, there were a small number of Sikh militants, under the leadership of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, demanding a Sikh homeland or Khalistan. This militancy was a fringe movement and would have continued to be so with the Akalis at the forefront and the extremists behind if Operation Blue-Star had not happened in June 1984. The Sikhs were unanimous in their condemnation of Operation Bluestar, in which several innocent Sikh pilgrims lost their lives, the Akal Takht (the traditional seat of temporal power) was destroyed and the leader of extremist Khalistani activists Bhindranwale was killed. The Sikhs

believed that such a massacre by the Indian army at the Golden temple was unnecessary and that the army could have gotten to the militants in other ways. In October 1984 Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards. This led to the widespread massacre of Sikhs in Delhi and elsewhere. Gupta notes that the Sikh anguish was aggravated by the realisation that most of these killings were endorsed by Congress functionaries and that the government was reluctant to bring those guilty to trial. It is starting at this point that many "recalcitrant individuals began slipping in behind fundamentalist ramparts and ideologically barricading themselves. The credibility of Sikh militants grew, and the enemy was not so much the Congress (I), as the Hindu *sarkar*" (ibid: 77).

It was in such a climate that the appeal of the militants grew steadily; Gupta talks of "source credibility" to describe the increasing appeal. For source credibility to function, an organization, or an individual, gains absolute credibility on some issues and is seen as an absolute and unimpeachable source of credibility… so much so that pronouncements coming from them are accepted without scepticism. "Exhortations towards martyrdom, towards traditional obeisance to the temporal authority of the *takhts*, towards the defence of Sikh religion and traditions, in short, exhortations towards *dharma yudh*, began to possess a credible ring" (ibid). Punjab in the 1980s was not a result of traditions of the past. Rather, it was the way the Akalis and then the Sikh extremists gained source credibility that "revived tradition as an ideological rationale for activism" (ibid).

The Hindu consolidation against Sikhs was no backlash. The raw material of popular Hindu perceptions was carefully worked on by the Congress (I). The anti-Sikh sentiment grew because the Hindus feared the Sikhs were out for another partition. This was the result of the non-reading of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, pumped up by a planned Congress ploy to misrepresent the situation. In the years between 1980 and 1984, the government refused to talk with Akali leaders. On three occasions the Akalis were ready to negotiate but had to come back humiliated because, at the last moment, the government retracted. This reaction of the government gradually cut into the moderate and

majority section of Sikh opinion. In 1985, elections took place in Punjab under the Rajiv-Longowal accord. These demonstrated the moderates were still in majority. However, when Chandigarh was withheld again on earlier grounds that it had to be linked to Abohar and Fazilka (the disputed territories), the influence of the moderates fell and that of the extremists rose; the extremists claimed all along the election was a hoax and that the Indian government was quintessentially the Hindu *Sarkar*. The moderates offered no alternative and it was clear the *Akali Dal* and the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Barnala, were powerless and not in a position to strike a deal. While Barnala was busy complaining it was difficult for the *Akali Dal* to deal with both militants and the Centre at the same time, other moderates were focusing on how to get to the post of Chief Minister. The *Akali Dal* thus stood splintered by factions.

These factors, by default, helped militants gain credibility as the cynicism among those who had just voted for the *Akali Dal* ministry in 1985 grew. Gupta also notes that Operation Woodrose, launched by the Congress between 1986 and 1987, fuelled the fire of terrorist militancy. It terrorized youth between the age group of 16 and 20 and drove them to an extremist point of view. In 1988, the operation was withdrawn. This led to a soft-state approach towards militancy and led to an escalation in militant activities. In the early months of 1988, the Congress government at the Centre also began pushing the case for the 59th Constitutional Amendment. This was done to convince the nation the Congress was trying to control the situation in Punjab as efficiently as it could and that it needed the support of the rest of the country to do so. While this tactic of the Congress struck the right cord nationwide, in Punjab it led to further alienation of the general Sikh sentiment and revival and strengthening of extremism.

The situation in Punjab was thus a result of political calculation of the Congress (I). The aim was to secure Congress (I) domination in Punjab by disgracing the *Dal*. The idea was to achieve this domination by portraying them as secessionists (ibid: 85). The issue of secessionism, once raised, gained an all-India character. The Congress (I) lost the Sikh sympathy but gained

sympathy nationwide by raising anti-partition sentiment. This, notes Gupta, is what gave rise to ethnicity in Punjab in the 1980s (ibid).

Gupta emphasizes throughout the book that Sikh militancy did not enjoy popular support in Punjab. Although, as discussed above, the moderates were losing ground and extremists were gaining, there was no mass movement which emerged around the Khalistani programme. Most offered their support to the Khalistanis with reservations. The perception was that the "Khalistanis were misguided and often reckless, but they were nevertheless uncompromising partisans, untainted by the machinations of the Centre" (ibid: 83). The identification with Sikh militants was vicarious.

> "Support for Khalistan as an ideal has never been popular for its own sake with the Sikhs. Some have taken to it on the rebound, but most are opposed to it. Even so the Khalistanis possess an aura of being daredevil oppositionists. This image allowed them to carve a soft niche for themselves in the minds of most Sikhs already disenchanted with the wheeling dealing of politics" (ibid: 85).

Gupta thus brings home the point that the secessionist trend in Punjab was an outcome of a political conspiracy and not a result of pre-ordained cultural or primordial antagonism between Sikhs and Hindus. In explaining Punjab in the 1980s, Paul Brass' instrumentalist view can be seen to be more pertinent than the culturological view propounded by people like Radhakrishnan, McKim Marriott and Louis Dumont, to name a few. The culturological view looked upon people as mere bearers of culture:

> "*Radhakrishnan is a prime example of the culturological school. Take the whole lot of people like Louis Dumont… in sociology, anthropology, most of these guys are culturological. McKim Marriott, he went to the extent of saying we can only understand India through Indian concepts. Then there is a famous debate by Francis Robinson on the two-nation theory where the argument was basically this - that Hindus and Muslims are destined to kill each other and there is no way out as its cultural*" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

While the instrumentalist view brings to notice political calculations that various political organisations indulge in and Gupta notes that although the instrumentalist position is superior to the primordialist or culturological view, it has its limitations as well. The instrumentalist view…

> "…conceptually over-emphasizes the machinations of political leaders giving the impression that the mass of followers are always gullible. In this version, it is really an updated elitist theory, where the elites are always in control. It tells us little as to how certain political activists become elites. Before their political elevation neither Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, nor Bal Thackrey were elites in any meaningful sense of the term" (ibid: 137-8).

Surely it is necessary to ask how such ordinary figures could become important political personages. There are, therefore, two major shortcomings in the instrumentalist view. The first is that it espouses "a somewhat unabashed version of elite theory, and second, they must consequently emphasize the advantages that these elite leaders have in fashioning ideologies to dupe the people, the ever-gullible followers. The elites, therefore, use cultural symbols cynically but the masses are helplessly enthralled by them" (ibid: 138). This formulation sounds very close to Pareto's understanding of elites.

Instead of the culturological and the instrumentalist framework, Gupta forwards what he terms the triadic contextual approach. The triadic approach privileges the context and so can avoid the pitfalls that characterize the other two approaches. It "accepts that the political leaders create demands, but the trajectory of these demands and the accompanying ideologies are not decided in advance" (ibid). For instance, in the case of Punjab, Bhindranwale achieved success in his career as the moderates were constantly sidelined and marginalized by the Centre (ibid). Further, another instance was the popularity that Bal Thackeray, to his surprise, received on the inaugural meeting of the *Sena* that gave him impetus to carry forward his proposed idea of the *Shiv Sena*. Thus, the triadic approach acknowledges there are no charted ways or predetermined career of an ethnic or communal movement and, for the most part, even the leaders are in for a surprise. The triadic framework thus proceeds

by contextualising human agency and culture in a dynamic holistic framework. The triadic approach is also insightful because it moves beyond the warring dyads and factors in the triadic node which renders the pre-ordained dyadic antagonism as propounded by the culturologists null and void, and also negates the instrumentalist logic that there is a cultural recipe for the elites to exploit. The third node is the Indian nation-state and it is only by factoring in the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Indian nation-state that the situation in Punjab could be fully comprehended.

In times of ethnic strife, self-images thrown by communities are exaggerated and appear "farcical, misplaced and unreal". Most scholars are glad to leave it as such, but such an approach does not allow us to understand why ascriptive self-images and perceptions are the way they are in times of strife. This problem is shrugged away by attributing it to manipulation by the political leadership of the respective communities. Gupta notes:

> *"I don't see the self and the other in general terms. I have always seen the self and the other in contextual terms. There is a whole series of writing on self and other, which you probably know and which you have read about in Sociology. I don't put my understanding of self in an introspective mode either… which some people do… or in a dyadic mode. That part of the self I take as granted. But for me, as my studies have been largely on the issue of conflict, it is the triadic aspect that interests me the most. I am looking at self and other in a particular context… that context is where the self and other relationship becomes antagonistic, you know! When the otherness becomes an antagonistic otherness… so, therefore, I see self and other not in times of peace but in times of war and, in doing that, what I try and explain is that all the plenitude in times of peace suddenly becomes minimalised in an angular frame in times of war. Again, the same old problem of how can culture become this malleable? So otherwise, we will say Hindu and Muslims… we are peaceful people… I have this culture, you have that culture and we would go on and on… but the moment we are in conflict, all of that was forgotten. You eat beef, I worship cow. You*

don't mind Pigs, I hate Pigs. Things like that… and you can pull out anything. The Shaivites and the Vaishnavites, they use to pull out these one or two points to kill each other in the Kumbh Mela in the early days, you know. So, where I try to ask why is it that all of that stuff we talked about in times of peace disappear. Where did it go? So when Fredrick Barth talked about cultural boundaries, and people quoted Fredrick Barth (1969), I said you know that is all very well but the fact of the matter is that none of this holds when you are actually in conflict" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

The Real and Imagined Self: Significance of the *Correlative Space*[5] in Understanding Self-Image

Gupta begins by distinguishing between collective ascriptive identities in times of peace and those that prevail in periods of unrest and strife. He labels primordial or ascriptive identities in times of strife as *imago* and refers to identities in times of peace as *cultural constitution*. While *cultural constitution* is a placid term which, according to him, indicated "the heavy materiality and poor tactical/logistical mobility" of primordial identities in times of peace, "the *imagos* are, ironically, somewhat impoverished in comparison to the many characteristics that go into the making of 'cultural constitutions,' but are tactically effective as social mobilisers" (ibid: 94). This distinction between *cultural constitution* and *imagos* is critical as it brings home the fact rivalry among groups on ascriptive identities cannot be analysed by regressing into in-depth history or by reconstructing "tissue by tissue, as it were the cultural constitution and 'fundaments' of a community" (ibid: 94-5). This distinction between *imagos* and *cultural constitutions* helps incorporating, at an analytical level, the idea that identities generally, and more particularly in times of strife, cannot be understood as timeless constructions (ibid: 95). To understand the historical and social specifics that accompany each instance of identity

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[5] Gupta uses the term 'correlative space' in writings on Sikh identity in Punjab. According to him, every *Imago* (a Lacanian term) needs its correlative space and it is something people bring about unconsciously in trying to make a case for themselves. It, therefore, denotes the accompanying perceptions of social reality.

formation in moments of strife, it is essential to look at ethnic and communal identities as not static.

Gupta borrows the term *imago* from Lacan to talk about to self-images in the times of conflict and 'correlative space' to discuss the related perceptions of reality. He notes one cannot be understood without the other. *Imago* has its accompanying 'correlative space,' which is different from objective reality. It is an imagined space which provides a smooth outline to the *Imago*. By employing the triadic framework at the micro-processual level, he goes on to show this framework not only helps enliven the macro domain but also helps in understanding how meanings are internalized at the ground level (ibid: 93-4).

During his fieldwork at some Punjab villages in the Amritsar district, near the India-Pakistan border, in 1990, Gupta came across a rather inexplicable and difficult situation. It was alleged that these villages were in sympathy with militants promoting Khalistani separatism. The militants here were considered by many not as Sikhs but as *singhs* (lions). There were differences between a good *singh* and a bad Sikh. A true and youthful *singh* was known as *munda* and was characterised as political and were known to kill selected political targets at great risk to their lives. They were believed to be armed with AK-47s and portrayed as being moral and more elegant than the *looteras*,who were seen as indulging in meaningless killings of innocent people and known to wield a 12-bore blunderbuss or a rifle. Gupta notes there were stories about a parallel government taking over in these villages after 4:30 in the afternoon. The parallel government implied the *singhs* took over and engaged with the policemen or the *looteras* to avenge Sikh pride. Gupta, during his fieldwork, was warned by his informants about being caught in a crossfire but, as he stepped out, he realised no such event took place and life went on normally even post-4:30 in the afternoon. Further, there was also talk of a large-scale exodus of Sikh youth from these villages and, on enquiry, Gupta found only a total of five youths had gone missing from the village. Of the five boys who went missing, three were *Mazhabi* (or untouchable) Sikhs, one a *Baazigar* (a caste occupation of roadside acrobat) and one a *Jat* boy. This Jat boy was

reported as being a true-blooded *munda*; the boys from the other castes were thought of as being engaged either as *looteras* or truck drivers. The *munda* image was thought to be a Jat Sikh construct but since the Jats dominated these villages, both numerically and politically, the popular image was that portrayed by the Jats.

The belief in the efficacy of a parallel government and the view youth had left villages in great numbers were all *prima facie* absent and appeared to be untrue and illusionary. To explain these incongruent versions, Gupta took resort to Lacan's notion of the *Imago* and correlative space. This Sikh *imago* projected the view the "Sikhs were just, religious and humane people, but there was a limit beyond which they would not allow themselves to be pushed" (ibid: 105). The Indian nation-state, through the Congress government working in the interest of the Hindus, violated the Sikhs and pushed them beyond the limits of endurance. Thus, the Sikhs were left with no choice but to retaliate. The accepted way of retaliating as per the *imago* was to join the *mundas*. While this betrayal of the Sikhs by the Indian nation-state needed to be avenged, at another level, the concerns were of those with practical everyday chores like farming, tending poultry, etc. Identification with militancy was, therefore, vicarious.

> "*There were* a *whole lot of people writing at that time about how Sikhs were actually anti-Hindu and Sikhs were writing how Hindus are naturally against them and things like that and yet all of these were fairly recent problems, you know, of recent origin. So, I was trying to gauge the same story of malleability of culture like I did in my study on Shiv Sena in a different way. With Shiv Sena I was told the study was a bit dangerous, but I didn't really encounter any danger, you know, maybe once or twice, some skirmish here or there. But the study on Sikhs in Punjab I was told was very dangerous. This was more so because the state was also involved. There were police people walking around and you didn't know if they were terrorists or policemen, there were guns in the air, you know, and I was told different kinds of dangers were lurking. I went to a village and I was told terrorists were*

taking over and no police was coming around and so the terrorists were fighting, shooting this and that. But then I realised all this was not really happening. They were talking about it, but it was not happening. So, I asked myself how to handle this? And, you must believe me, for several months my pen wouldn't move… I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what sense to make of this. I knew that these guys were not purposely lying to me and yet what they were saying was not true. How was one to make sense of that? I really didn't know… I thought this is the end of my work and I would never make any progress... and I was reading around wildly everywhere. At that time, I was also teaching in North America for a bit… I was reading anything that came my way and I was looking for some answer to solve this problem and then I came across Jacques Lacan, quite accidentally. I read a lot of Habermas those days and then Lacan made sense to me you know and its Lacan's idea that how you project your Self, you know, you create a mirror image and you want to make it completely smooth without any wrinkles and then the correlative space that you create with it that holds the thing together, that was my reading of Lacan. There are many other Lacanians, for example the Feminists look at Lacan - the Big O and a small O in a very different way… they see it in castration, in this and that and a whole lot of other things that I don't think is of any use to me. Lacan also lends himself to multiple interpretations because he enjoyed it, you know… different people were saying different things about him… that he had a good time… but I think in keeping with my natural vanity I believed probably I have interpreted him correctly.I disagree with Zygmunt Bauman's and this another fellow, a Yugoslav, interpretation of Lacan. I don't agree with it at all… I think I have mentioned it in my footnote somewhere. So Lacan helped me understand how you are saying something which is not there but you think is there… and then perceptions build on perceptions, you know, and then that is the way in which the triadic node comes up and the triadic node was also useful for me because Lacan was talking about representing your Self, your voice and language particularly. For me, triadic node became important because I realised that when

we are politically engaged we are talking a political language, the political language must have a triadic character and Lacan's notion of triad was useful for me" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

The Sikh *Imago* discussed so far thus needed the correlative space to appear smooth. "Ascriptive (ethnic or communal) *imago*, as proclaimed by a certain community antagonistically facing another such *imago,* activates those correlative social spaces with which it is in harmony. Other *imagos* would activate other social realms" (ibid: 98). It is essential to take cognizance of both the real and the unreal ingredients that contribute to the activated social realm and perceptions.

Accepting Lacan's position fully then, Gupta writes, "Lacan was therefore quite right when he said that not only is the *imago* prone to change, but the self is made up of contrary and 'alienating images' with their many 'imaginary exploits'" (Lacan, 1977: 70 c.f. Gupta, 1996c: 105). Sociological theory, writes Gupta, is rich in the study of stereotypes and typifications[6] but it neglects the processual dynamic aspects of ascriptive identities. While this is not observable during moments of peace, when changes take place very slowly, it becomes evident in times of communally and ethnically volatile situations, when changing *imagos* are evident. The focus of sociological theory being centred on understanding stereotypes and typifications obviously implies that "the concern has been with stable constructs of the self, of institutions, and of collective egos" (ibid: 100). Perhaps, notes Gupta,

> "…the belief in a biologically determined *id* has left a deeper impress on sociological thought than many sociologists would like to admit. Lacan, however, provides an interesting alternative with the help of a radical reading of Freud. With some modifications, this can be internalized in sociology and anthropology, especially with reference to studies of ethnic conflict" (ibid).

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[6]Sociological and anthropological theories have been effective in understanding the process of stereotype formations. The writings of phenomenologists such as Schutz and Luckman(1973) and that of Peter Berger and Luckman (1971) have dwelled on the importance of typifications in routine life activities. Levi Strauss in *Totemism* (1969) also writes about how humankind looks for stability and order and is uncomfortable with a changing world.

It is Lacan who notes that identities are not stable. In his writing '*The Freudian Thing',* he asks, "In what way, it this ego that you treat in analysis better than that desk I am" (Lacan, 1977: 135 c.f. Gupta, 1996b). Lacan's reading of Freud is different from the general reading of Freud, which suggests the ego develops in a sequential manner till it is fully formed. Such a formulation on self continues to develop in the writings of George Herbert Mead as well. Different from this, Lacan argues, "that the self is made of a series of alienated images. Lacan in his essay '*The Mirror Stage as Formative in the Function of the I'* notes that the first recognition of the self occurs in children between 6 to 18 months. This recognition happens when the child looks at a mirror for the first time. The child jubilantly beholds his image in the mirror and thinks of it as a part of his self. The first understanding of the self is, like every subsequent imaging, a specular one: the image in the mirror round and smooth" (ibid: 101). According to Lacan,

> "…the specular image has a 'surface *sans accidents*' i.e., without breaks in uniformity. In the mirror, the child overcomes its motor incapacity and its nursing dependence and is delighted by its precocious maturity. According to Lacan, this is the beginning of a child's understanding of itself and from the first step itself there is *meconnaissance* or misrecognition" (Lacan, 1977: 6 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 101).

"On account of this a transformation takes place in the subject 'when he assumes an image-whose predestination to this phase is sufficiently indicated by the use, in analytic theory of the ancient term *imago*'" (ibid: 2 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 101).

The imagery of the self, notes Lacan, does not develop independently but in a space that is socially mapped. The specular image as noted above is based on a misrecognition which allows it to appear rounded and unruffled, but

> "…for the image to appear smooth and without breaks the image needs coordinate points outside in the social field. The child's first notion of the self is based on the mirror image but subsequently it develops in

social setting, which too is imaged as a correlative sphere. Both the *imago* and the imaged social sphere proceed simultaneously, for if the *imago* is to be specular then it needs to be smooth and taut by drawing on its imaged or 'mirror projected' social/human world. The *imago* and the social human world it projects are horizontally, or metronomically, linked. As the images keep changing (hence *imago*) the correlate social spheres and realms also change and, therefore, Lacan calls the correlated social sphere '*kaleidoscopic*'. Therefore, those who do not partake of a particular *imago* find its correlate social space illusory or fantastic" (ibid: 101-2).

As Lacan notes in his essay '*Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis,*' "…the first object of desire is to be recognized by the other" (1977: 58 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 107). "The dyadic relationship between self and other is premised on a *meconnaissance* where the desire to be recognized is not fully satisfied. The chain of misrecognition and counter misrecognition continues and stretches out in a metonymic fashion" (ibid). This is the reason why Gupta refers to "this volatile relationship, where specular images (i.e. images plus projected social space) react incessantly on each other, as that of ethnic or communal *jouissance*" (ibid).

In the case of contemporary Sikh self-identity or the Sikh *imago*, which emerged in times of ethnic strife in Punjab in the 1980s, the Sikh self was reacting to its perceived 'other' - the Hindus - who they believed had wronged them and misunderstood them. The Sikhs felt their contribution to the Indian nation-state was devalued and their patriotism looked upon with doubt by the Hindu majority. The Hindu self-image too grew out of a sense of misrecognition. They felt the Sikhs would let them down and bring on another partition of India to create Khalistan. Hindus saw the general Sikh opinion to be pro-militancy. "At the root of the creation of ascriptive, in this case ethnic, imagos" lies misrecognition and a desire to be recognized (ibid: 108).

It must be mentioned that Gupta's triadic framework is also borrowed from Lacan. It was Lacan who noted that the triad is the 'Other' (with a capital 'O'). This 'Other' for Lacan is the "support for symbols, for law, for society, for

language, and could well be extended to include the state as well." While initially Lacan encouraged the interpretation that the 'Other' could only be conceived in phallocentric terms, later he distanced himself from this view and proposed the 'Other' need not only be seen as father but "should be understood more in terms of a 'lack,' a symbolic source of all symbols. According to Lacan, the 'symbol manifests itself first as the murder of the thing'" (Lacan, 1977: 104 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 109). In this sense, even if the 'Other' is seen as the phallus, the phallus 'can play its role only when wielded" (Lacan, 1977: 288 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 109).

Gupta writes that symbols stand for something. In language, words signify something that is not there. However, "if the language or the legitimacy of the state is internalised no one asks where is the state?" (ibid: 109). As Lacan puts it, 'I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object' (Lacan, 1977: 86 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 109). The function of the symbolic 'Other' (capital 'O') is 'fundamentally to unite (and set in opposition) a desire and the Law (Lacan, 1977: 321 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 110). "If the 'Other' resigns and the triadic frame collapses, dyadic oppositions get started in limitless *jouissance*" (ibid).

In the case of Punjab, those who held the militant view believed the triad had collapsed and the Hindu had become one with the state.

> "The militant Sikh *imago* was consequent upon the breakdown of this triad. This is why, as per that *imago*, it was legitimate to roar, or to cry. As the source of symbolic representation had disappeared, the dyadic 'other' (the Hindus) had merged with the once triadic 'Other,' or the state. The legitimacy behind language, law and Constitution no longer existed. The triad, as we know, functioned best when it was veiled. But with its collapse questions like: Whose state is it? Who has the state? emerged. Time and again one heard among the Sikh in Punjab the term 'Hindu Raj,' and, not so often 'Congress Raj,' as was the case till 1984. The 'murder' of the triad added a correlative dimension to the Sikh *imago*, for it was now justified to indulge in excessive dyadic

jouissance where the only mode of communication left was the 'cry'" (ibid: 110-11).

Thus, as mentioned earlier, it is only by factoring in Hindus, Sikhs and the Indian nation-state that the situation in Punjab could be fully comprehended.

This is not to say, "there may not be situations of pure dyadic ascriptive mobilizations, but the character, career and contour of such conflicts are different from the variety we see in Indian and most other situations" (ibid: 97). Stating an instance or two of this order, he notes:

> "...*you know somewhat like what is happening in Palestine, you know, it's just pure dyadic fight and there is no triadic node to put it place... or what is happening between the Kurds and the Turks, you know. So Lacan called it Jouissance - just endless tempestuous play - so that's what I mean when that happens... or the Vietnam war, you know, was dyadic America versus Vietnam... there was no third party. The World War II was dyadic, you know. There was no constraining feature then once the victor was announced then the triadic node came up*" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

Let us summarize some of the key points that emerge from this study and are relevant to our discussion on identity. Gupta's writings in the context of ascriptive mobilizations in India provide significant insights into the way the self and other need to be understood in instances of strife. Gupta's study furthers his thesis about malleability of culture and traditions and emphasizes the centrality of contextual analysis to understand how identities get articulated in given contexts. While Gupta rejects the understanding of primordial identities as being timeless, he does not quite suggest that collective identities are inchoate with unclear boundaries. Gupta, thus, carefully distinguishes his position from post-modern understanding of identities. "For the postmodernists, all identities are intrinsically equivocal and, hence, unknowable. They are not just weakly defined but are essentially incapable of even the feeblest, inter-subjective accord" (ibid: 171). This view, he opines, does not help understand how "equivocal identities" have "ideologically

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charged multitudes to death and defiance" (ibid). Collective identities change over time, but identities are not fuzzy or lack definition (ibid: 141).

It is argued by some that ethnic and communal conflict in modern India is due to a recent rise of tightly knit social identities. These scholars opine that there were fewer clashes on these lines during medieval times because identities had uncertain boundaries (Sarkar, 1993: 46; Pandey, 1990: 150 c.f. Gupta, 1996b: 142). This view is contested by others like the cohort of Hindu fanatics who argue scores from the past needed to be settled in the present. Professional historians try to demonstrate the absurdity of these claims with the help of objective factual evidence. What characterizes modern day rivalries is that they use history for ideological and symbolic legitimacy. Gupta writes about the recently emerging idea of historical consciousness and how it "…periodizes and breaks time into discontinuous units and provides the basis for delving into the past for winning the present" (ibid: 167).

This separation has led to evaluation of different ages and epochs. In pre-historical consciousness, the past flowed into the present in continuous time. Therefore, in medieval intellectual productions the past never stood separately as a standard against which the present could be evaluated. Historical consciousness came to India with the equalization of communities, which set the stage for competition and contending histories. Gupta, however, goes on to add that historical consciousness also has a "'progressive' ring… it is a valuable aid towards realizing a 'better future,' free from the encumbrances of the past." Historical consciousness makes us realise that religious and other ascriptive animosities are historically conditioned and do not happen because of social and cultural forces. This realisation is essential because it provides the basis for embracing secular humanism. Gupta notes…

> "…secular humanism is undaunted by cultural logics and, by their claims to history, it can assert, with the authority of progressive historical consciousness, that religious, communal or even political differences be guaranteed protection" (ibid: 168).In other words, 'if one is to protect and consolidate

democracy then one must invest in democratic sentiments – the foremost among them being secular humanism"(ibid: 169).

Our democratic institutions are only as good and resilient as our commitment. "Democracy can be both just and humane only when its status as a nursling of 'progressive' historical consciousness[7] is fully recognized. In the ultimate analysis, it can be nurtured by nothing else, and by nothing less" (ibid).

Understanding Nation-State as Root Metaphors

In his study of Punjab, he focuses on partition as the centripetal force that holds the Indian nation-state together and establishes how the nation-state needs to be factored in to the study of ethnic strife in India. While he alludes to partition as the sentimental aspect of nation-state in this study, he moves on to develop this idea in more general terms- that of root metaphors that underlie every nation-state. In the book under discussion- '*Culture, Space and Nation-State*' (2000a) - he develops this idea to show, as he says,

> "…*partition has become a metaphor, you know, for the nation-state. So, we are using partition as a cultural space now...so, what is India, what is Pakistan? The metaphor of the partition tells us about the nation state. So this is the way I sort of looked at it...I would say I kind of developed the idea and made it a more general thing from partition and nation-state the idea that all nation-state has metaphors that root them you know? If you don't have metaphor you are not quite rooted... administration is not a nation-state. Administration can change from place to place, we can borrow constitutions...we can do a whole lot of things, you know...but the cultural space of a nation-state is something you know that is more metaphorical than syntagmatic, you know which is lex, less like a sentence more like a metaphor... less horizontal more*

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[7]Gupta furthers his thesis on progressive historical consciousness in his book *Learning to Forget: The Anti-Memoirs of Modernity*. (1995). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

vertical okay...so that is why second step in doing that culture, lex all that came in" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013).

Further, the structural aspect of the Indian nation-state interested him as he concluded the sentimental aspects. As he notes,

"*the triadic node's explanation of democracy is what interested me in a normative fashion. I had done the explanatory part of the triadic thing, you know, in a theoretical fashion. I now see the normative issue. In a democracy, what does a triad do when it does something worthwhile? And that is when I asked about citizenship and fraternity and I realised how fragile democracy really is. So, what earlier seemed to me as a theoretical explanation... that this happened because the triad collapsed or this didn't happen because the triad didn't collapse... now, in a monarchy, a triad is different. You are the king and you have different subjects right but, in a democracy, what is the triad?*" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

In his book '*Culture Space and Nation-State*', Gupta begins by arguing that the idea of the nation-state was still very strong. As he notes, "*you might remember in those days the European Union had just been formed*[8] *and there were people who were arguing that European Union is the demise of the nation-state*" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013). Gupta states

"*European Union has its root metaphors in place. There is a lex that layers it, you know, but the metaphors are still there. So, Germany is Germany, England is England and you can see that today, at that time the people didn't see it you know? In the 1990s nobody was willing to accept this. I mean there were people talking about European Union...the nation-state is disintegrating... so I was responding to a lot of that because in the 1990s it was really believed that nation-state was history, you know? That Geography is history was the point of view. I*

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[8]"The Maastricht Treaty became effective, creating the European Union with its pillar system, including foreign and home affairs, alongside the European Community. The Maastricht treaty was signed on February 7, 1992 and it came into effect on November 1, 1993, under the third Delors Commission." (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maastricht_Treaty)

was responding to that because I said that nation-state root metaphors… you can't just avoid them, they are there. Now what you can do is layer over it and one of the layers over nation-state is to move from people to being citizens, from being people of a sovereign state, to being citizens of a sovereign democratic state" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013).

Let us begin by summarizing his discussion on root metaphors and culture and how culture is best understood through root metaphors, metaphors as opposed to equivocal rules or *lex*. Furthermore, how concepts of root metaphors and of *lex* helps us understand nation-state and, more specifically, the sentiments and the structures of a nation-state.

Gupta notes that tools and concepts from anthropology must be employed to understand the nation-state. He stresses on the use of the concept of culture for understanding nation-state. In fact, he adds that small-scale societies do not make as many demands of the concept of culture as much as the studies of nation-state do. At the onset he employs the notion of *root metaphor* to understand culture. Gupta borrows the term *root metaphor* from Stephen Pepper (1942) while rejecting Geertz's (1984) characterization of culture; he notes Geertz used terms like 'recipe,' 'blueprint,' 'computer's programme,' etc. for explaining culture. In this rendition, culture is, therefore "a stabilized phenomenon without much scope for internal strains and dissensions" (Gupta, 2000a: 31) but this does not hold empirically. Geertz seems to imply a kind of cultural determinism and cultural grammar while Gupta feels that culture is best understood in terms of *root metaphor* and their dominant set of beliefs. *Root metaphors,* like all metaphors, are "polysemic or multivocal, but not equivocal" (ibid: 32). Polysemy allows a range of meanings but there is a most literal meaning, i.e., despite variations some of the central factors are same. When culture is perceived through the "optic of root metaphors, then it presumes a membership for those for whom root metaphor is meaningful" (ibid). There are several root metaphors in every culture. Thus…

"…significant overlaps between the bearers of these metaphors it is possible to draw membership groupings-though these are rarely

exclusionary. This is because there are root metaphors at different level of generality. Thus, a defined set of people may belong to a certain caste as against other castes, and then again they might at another point of time identify themselves as belonging to the category Hindu against non-Hindu, and so on" (ibid: 32). Gupta further writes, "metaphors are not just another linguistic device, but are symbols that evoke cathectivity, partisanship and aesthetic commitment" (ibid: 32-33).

Root metaphors evoke cathectivity because, by virtue of being metaphors, they can

> "address a diversity of aspects, which is why they can be made to work in a variety of settings. That they can be constant companions over vast stretches of existential experience enhances one's commitment to them. In the case of culture, the matter gets more intense because these root metaphors recall a defined space from which they get their original meaning. If, in that space, the metaphors can realize themselves multi-vocally, as metaphors should, then that is what accounts for the commitment towards them" (ibid).

Root metaphors are further explained by Gupta by positing them against *lex*- a Latin term used by Michael Oakeshott (1975) to denote rule-governed practice. Rules notes Oakeshott do not stand-alone but come in a package. He referred to "this package of rules that call out to each other for mutual reinforcements by the Latin term *lex*" (Oakeshott, 1975: 129 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 33). *Lex* is therefore, unlike a metaphor, not open to limitless interpretations. "*Root metaphors* that constitute a culture are not necessarily logically related to one another. That is how cultural grammarians would like it to be, but there is little reason to yield to this essentialist view" (ibid: 34). "*Lex* is largely denotative… its deciphering does not require any specific conditioning" (ibid). However, the ability to interpret metaphors needs prior socialization. Citing the example of language, Gupta notes that being able to speak a language does not suggest one is also adept at taking the metaphorical liberties it allows.

"The membership that cultural root metaphors create is of those who can interpret these metaphors in terms of a regnant set of meanings that resonate within a certain space of social interaction. This membership is not based on universalistic criteria, for a specific prior socialization is a necessary requirement to be able to interpret the root metaphors in terms of a certain regnant set of meanings" (ibid).

Gupta, thus, writes that culture involves membership. This membership is…

"…based on the ability to communicate agreements and disagreements that exist within a regnant set of interpretations, then obviously this cannot be attained from afar. Membership thus requires practice and enactment of root metaphors. Membership, therefore, requires a space where enactment takes place. If culture is the practice of root metaphors, then actions belonging to this genre must happen in a defined space. I call cultural space the setting for this cultural enactment between members reading off interpretation from the regnant texts of root metaphors" (Gupta, 2005d: 21).

Cultures are enacted in a space with all its dimensions. Cultures need to be enacted and expressed in a variety of existential settings. "The specifics of a space and its diacritics are reflected in the root metaphors of the culture" (ibid: 39).

In his discussion on space in understanding culture, Gupta discusses the notion of vicarious space and the diaspora. The diaspora far from their land of origin "imagine a set of cultural interactions that continue to take place in what used to be their home" (ibid: 41). In a land that is new and distant, unsettled diaspora recall their homeland and the "stolidity of vicarious space acts as an effective point of reference" for those struggling to settle down at the new site (ibid). He distinguishes between site, space and context. The context is a predicament that affects both space and non-space. When there are periods of instability, space is replaced by a series of sites. When stability returns, the sites gradually become space. Space, thus, attempts to overcome the contingency in sites and contexts. This is reflected in cultural enactments that

tend to give the impression of timelessness and don't accept their recent or provisional status. The shift from space to site to space becomes clear when seen in the context of diasporics (ibid: 43).

Culture is defined by Gupta as follows,

> "culture, then, is not learned behaviour but subscription to spatially enlivened root metaphors. This subscription is generally ascriptive in character, though it is possible for it to be adoptive as well. As the endorsement to root metaphors is generally ascriptive, it is not linked to efficiency, efficacy or means-ends rationality. A root metaphor is therefore learned behaviour of a very special kind. The learned behaviour cannot do without an accompanying space. Material and physical entry to a certain encultured space begins the process of adoption and is the necessary condition for it" (ibid: 50).

> "To speak of culture as an analytical category is to say root metaphors are enacted in space such that certain interpretations of them become regnant. Culture, therefore, cannot be seen independent of enactment, space and the domination of certain meanings of root metaphors over others" (ibid: 51). Unlike Bourdieu's concept of *habitus,* which encourages a tendency to typify cultures and see them as meaningful wholes leaving little scope for understanding dissensions and conflict, Gupta argues the focus should be on interactions between individuals as it is this that brings to the fore inconsistencies. It is root metaphors that can account for "dissensions and multi-vocality through the variety of regnant meanings attached to them. This allows communication to take place without a unified and consonant set of meanings. Behaviour, habitus and cultural capital by themselves are unable to accommodate this very essential characteristic of culture, viz. the ability to discourse and disagree" (ibid: 52).

Culture of a Nation-State and Territory: Going Beyond Geography

The nation-state, writes Gupta, is an important cultural phenomenon. The territory of the nation-state is not just geography or lineaments on a map, the territory of a nation-state is a sacralised space. As has been stated above, Gupta argues that without space there cannot be a clear conception of cultural membership and it is this argument that he extends to "include cultural membership of the nation-state and the territorial space such a membership, of necessity, connotes" (ibid: 20). Nation-state is a combination of sentiments of a nation and the structures of the state.

Gupta rejects the view that propounds the nation-state is a natural culmination of given primordial ethnic identities. This explanation states ethnic communities and sentiments have existed for centuries in terms of their 'ethnie'. Ethnie refers to "group origins, history, cultural solidarity and belief in common destiny" (Smith, 1981: 66 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 113). This view assumes that at some point the dormant sentiment was awakened and then on there has been an infinite flourishing of nationalities and ethnic consciousness (ibid: 113). Gupta differs and goes onto argue that a nation-state

> "is born out of popular participation, long-distance communication, and large-scale supra-local mobilizations along ideologies that transcend parochial boundaries. The ideology that groups people from long distances into a community must necessarily transcend local mires of root metaphors based on dense face-to-face interactions. The geography that becomes sacralised territory of a nation-state depends on precisely these locations from where activism of this sort has emerged. It is only after this fact that retrospectively territorial alignments are drawn" (ibid: 112).

Geography becomes sacralised retrospectively. For example, in the case of India it was only after partition that clear lines of territory emerged. Earlier, leaders of the Indian national movement were willing to recognize secession. It was after independence and partition into India and Pakistan that secessionism was a criminal activity and such a view was supported by mainstream political opinion in the country (ibid). Thus, he argued that root metaphor enlivens a space on account of participation and not before it. The adoption of a nation-

state sentiment is "an outcome of actual participation in a national project enlivening a given territory" (ibid). "A nation-state is thus born out of participation and thrives on an exaggerated sense of commitment" (ibid). The nation-state cannot tolerate any dissension from the root metaphors that underlie its formation and cohesion. For instance, the Indian government would never allow Kashmir to separate even if a majority forward such a demand. Similarly, the English would never give into the demands of Irish dissidents. If nation-states give into these demands, then the community will not remain the same and will need a round of new negotiations and may lead to further fragmentation. "Alienation of territory is always the most painful for nation-state to bear. This is because territory signifies the cultural space within which the community aspires towards common goals" (ibid: 121). It must be further added that the "concept of territory is based on shared participation, common grievance and a common mission." Sometimes territory is added on the premise of historic agreements and for strategic reasons, but these reasons cannot compensate for nation-state sentiment and so these regions maybe poorly integrated with the nation-state, like, for instance, Kashmir and the North-East region in India. Special care needs to be taken to involve these regions in the larger membership of the nation-state (ibid: 122-3).

Although Gupta has written at length on nation-state and ethnicity, he has not quite ventured into studying Kashmir or the Northeast. As he notes,

> "That is something I must confess… in all my writings I don't talk of the North-East because that is an area I don't know. I have not studied it myself, so I don't talk about it. So, I am talking of the areas outside of North-East, even Kashmir actually, they are two areas I don't want to make any judgements about. I will tell you why… because in my own field experience, whether it is Punjab or it is Maoism in East India or it is the farmer's movement, wherever I have done fieldwork or studied caste I have found that public reporting on the subject is usually misleading, if not actually wrong. In Punjab, the Sena had trouble spots. So, if I were write on the North-East and Kashmir without going there, it wouldn't be fair and while I do think that there is something

wrong in these two places because I do not believe that the North East was really involved in the Indian national movement and so the elements of nation-state metaphor are not implanted as firmly in the North East as elsewhere in the country, that is how I would look at it, but as of now I don't want to make any judgements I want to stay out of it..." (Personal Interview, February 24, 2013).

Some of the dominant root metaphors of the Indian nation-state are those of "anti-colonialism, the metaphor of an ancient and glorious civilization, the metaphor of equality and participation and the metaphor of Pakistan" (ibid: 121). Gupta adds, "these metaphors are not necessarily in consonance with one another. Root metaphors, when they cluster together, do not do so on account of internal consistency but just because they happen to gather in that fashion" (ibid). Along with these metaphors, metaphors of secularism and minority protection also form an integral part of the Indian national sentiment. The national movement in India proceeded by bringing together people from different classes, castes and religions. These features show up even today in Indian politics, as Gupta writes, "there maybe disagreements on what is secularism and what is anti-casteism, no mainstream political party can openly say that it is casteist or theocratic. There are different sets of meanings given to these metaphors, of course, but the conflict is really based on alternative meanings than on the metaphors themselves" (ibid: 124). The way nation-states come into being determines how sensitive they would be to maintaining harmony between different cultural groups and communities.

(III)

<u>Nation-State and Cultural Identities</u>

Once the nation-state comes into being the root metaphors of a nation-state affect a variety of practices. Cultural identities such as Hindu or Muslim, upper caste or lower caste and so forth all undergo change. For instance,

"…caste consciousness is not just based on notion of purity and pollution but has the metaphor of secularism and democratic egalitarianism added to it. In the movements for reservation, or positive discrimination, on caste grounds, the metaphors of secularism and democratic egalitarianism are invoked. It is also true that opponents of reservation too rely on these metaphors, but that is what root metaphors are all about. They can have different meanings, which can be held by conflicting groups, and yet they must discourse amongst themselves" (ibid: 125).

Nation-state, thus, alters the scope of prior cultural affiliations and memberships. The way community sentiments are expressed in modern nation-state, therefore, cannot be understood without factoring specifics of the nation-state in question. There are bound to be differences in the way community ties and associations are expressed in theocratic, fascist and liberal nation-states. Further, within each type, there are bound to be more variations. Therefore, the way cultural practices, as they extend to public life, can only be understood in the light of the nation-state. For example, the idea of being a Hindu in contemporary India is different from being a Hindu in medieval times. The identity of being a Hindu has been modified by one's membership in the Indian nation-state. Politicization of cultural identities cannot be understood without factoring in the Indian nation-state and its metaphors (ibid: 20-1).

No nation-state, however recent, has not had to resolve, issues of identity conflict, either based on religion, language or caste. It is in these times that nation-state metaphors become salient (ibid: 136). These antagonisms activate root metaphors of the Indian nation-state, as Gupta shows in his study of Punjab and the *Shiv Sena*. In the past, before nation-states came into being, the antagonisms based on caste, religion, etc. were resolved based on power. Medieval peace was, thus, established on a hierarchical principle. Cultural diversities survived but could not clamour for attention. The supra-local community of nation-state, however, bonds around root metaphors and this is vastly different from medieval or absolutist regimes. To make this bonding viable, nation-states actively seek to integrate marginal people within its

territory. Of course, a nation-state has the option of turning fascist or theocratic and deny equal rights to all, but while such options are not impossible, they do nevertheless undermine the aspect of collective membership (ibid: 138). Liberal democracy provides a format for reconciling differences. Nation-states believe they speak in the name of all and are therefore embarrassed when faced with recalcitrant communities with different cultural practices. There are different ways in which this could be handled. One is to devise a variety of laws and regulations that bring in marginals into the mainstream of the nation-state. Nation-states take account of cultural diversity by relying on its root metaphors. Cultural identities in contemporary times cannot be understood without nation-state.

In making diversities acceptable, Gupta adds that diversities in tradition blocked movement and gave rise to suspicion across cultural spaces. To be a positive value today, they must get rid of these features. Earlier, diversity suggested distinctive differences not alternative lifestyles. Diversities are compatible with nation-state sentiments if they free themselves from past and present themselves as space-less artefacts or as alternative lifestyles that maybe adopted (ibid: 143). If the root metaphors of earlier cultural spaces can make room for supra-local communities by adjusting, the extent to which it can make these adjustments will determine if the diversity can co-exist within the nation-state. Diversity by itself is not a virtue but once it is tamed and opened it may be of value. It is following from this understanding of diversity that Gupta proceeds to argue that "seen in this way the protection of persecuted or threatened minority communities is not prompted by the unqualified ambition to protect their cultures as it is to with their confidence as equal citizens in a nation-state" (ibid). The greater the diversity the lesser the success of nation-state metaphor in those spaces the more traditional and backward a society tends to be. Unqualified support of diversity for the sake of diversity is antithetical to the root metaphors inaugurated by the nation-state. "As a matter of fact, the entrenchment of the nation-state metaphors gradually grows with the development of capitalism which, over time, either effaces diversities or presents them as alternatives that exist within the territorial borders" (ibid). Citing the instance of how blacks in American society, who have differences

both based on class and race, still have neighbourhood ghettos, he points out they still have distinctive cultural spaces governed by black root metaphors. This, he notes, is not a positive feature of American society. Thus, keeping in toe with the direction of modernity, it is more desirable to undermine distinct cultural spaces with distinct root metaphors and allow "nation-sate metaphors to act as potent solvents of past diversities" (ibid: 144). Nation-state in such a scenario encourages a tendency to cultural homogenization; this has anguished many on various occasions, but Gupta feels that positive aspect of homogeneity is that it allows for a greater degree of inter-subjectivity and creation of a public sphere. Gupta carefully distinguishes his idea of a public sphere from that of Habermas. He writes that unlike Habermas's characterization of the public sphere, where only rational interactions take place, in his opinion, normatively ascribed arguments also characterize the public sphere. Debates in the public sphere are, in fact, inspired by root metaphors of the nation-state but constrained by rules of democratic conduct and dissent. The moral content of the public sphere emerges from nation-state sentiments and cannot come from anywhere else because between nations there is no ground for morality but only amoral bodies of *lex* (ibid: 145-6).

(IV)

Nation-State Structures: The Quest for Fraternity

Gupta turns his focus from the sentiment of the nation-state to its structure. The state follows a nation into being. At the time when the nation is being formed, the state structure is hardly a well thought-out or important. Once the euphoria that accompanies the formation of a nation begins to die out, the task to sustain the fraternity that was unleashed at the time of nation formation needs to be accomplished by deliberate measures of statehood (ibid: 153). "The state needs to think of structures that can overcome differences between members of a nation-state and give them a commonality that is not an evanescent one. This is where citizenship figures as an active consideration. It is through citizenship that the fusion of sentiments is sought to be sustained"

(ibid). Fraternity becomes a project and is not a given solidarity. "Fraternity must be established along lines of citizenship and within the conditions of a civil society[9]" (ibid: 154).

The fraternity thus constituted by the constitutional democracy is not of blood brothers but of citizens. It is one that is based on individual rights and not birth rights. A modern society is different from traditional one. Traditional societies are governed by fixed hierarchical principles that were complementary to a closed natural economy. In these societies, a person's status was known in

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[9]In discussing civil society, Gupta notes there has been a recent surge of interest in the term. He states that fraternity implies conditions need to be created where people can participate in common projects and realize themselves. It is to realize fraternity that conditions of civil society need to be discussed. "*Civil society is not a thing,* but a set of conditions within which individuals interact collectively with the state" (Gupta, 2000a: 159). It has been noted that disenchantment with the state has resulted in an increase in interest in civil society. Gupta notes that this disenchantment with the state has taken various forms. A set of scholars argues that the state is basically divisive in its orientation as it constantly seeks to marginalize communities and estrange them from one another. Instead of promoting unity, the state is focused on bettering its conditions and that of its functionaries. This disenchantment has led to two different sets of view. One is the call for return to tradition and the other is demand for strengthening intermediate institutions that will help realize the promise of constitutional democracies. For the most part, the concept of civil society is linked to the call for a return to tradition. This, writes Gupta, is ironic given that the term 'civil society' was coined by Locke, Rousseau and Hegel to inaugurate a break from a hierarchical and medieval past, and lead a movement into a more public-spirited era (ibid: 162). When Béteille (1996a) talks of civil society, he stresses intermediate institutions such as the corporate structure of the economy, the judiciary, the municipality, the various institutions of local self-governance, the university, etc. In Béteille's opinion, the hope for modern India lies in these rational-legal intermediate institutions. What Béteille argues is that while the rational-legal intermediate institutions are independently good for constitutional democracy, the state which originally set them up is not. He calls them intermediate because they conceptually don't belong to the realm of traditional associations and nor are, they affected by politics of the state and not because they link state with the citizens (Gupta, 2000a: 177). Following from de Tocqueville, Béteille argues that the Indian state has given into mass political pressure and to sectarian and communitarian forces. Such a state compromises the well being of the intermediate institutions. Béteille is disappointed at the fact that the Indian state has not been able to perform in a manner that the developmental goals could be met but he still thinks of the state as a mobilizing instrument. What is highest priority in his opinion is that the intermediate institutions should be kept free and autonomous from the clutches of the state. Gupta argues that in both the views the State seems to be untrustworthy. While he argues against the call for return to tradition by stating that such a call covers up the misgivings and hierarchy that characterised tradition and sounds utopian (ibid:190). About Béteille's position, Gupta notes that Béteille valorises institutional autonomy but does not consider considerations of citizenship. In his appeal for maintaining the well-being of the institution he overlooks the fact that these institutions could very well be efficient on their own account but not be beneficial to the society. As opposed to these views, Gupta, following from Hegel, writes that Hegel did not link civil society with traditions nor with rational-legal institutions. Rather he finds "instances or moments of civil society wherever the ethic of freedom (which valourizes the citizen) is manifest" (ibid: 183). Gupta insists that the state needs to be made accountable for delivering to the citizens. In India today, people, both rich and poor, are dependent on the state directly and indirectly and, in such a case, the fact the state is let off the hook either by celebrating traditional associations or by emphasizing autonomy of intermediate institutions is not a good sign (ibid).

advance and there was nothing much one could do to escape his ascribed fate. In a modern society, choice is part of the life of citizens. There is scope for both vertical and horizontal mobility and public spheres are created where…

> "…people are thrown together under conditions of anonymity. Quite naturally, rules of interaction must be re-negotiated. This time these rules cannot take the fixed hierarchical estate model as its standard but must begin with individuals. Fraternity must be constructed afresh and on principles entirely different from those based in tradition. The past is not a reliable guide in such situations. In fact, all pre-existing fraternities are extremely suspect and need to be dissolved if true citizenship is to emerge" (ibid: 190).

Civil society only provides conditions for attaining fraternity but, to attain it, it must be carefully nurtured. Some challenges in realizing fraternity, notes Gupta, are to do with "alleviating poverty, correcting historic injustices against certain communities, and tackling the issue of minority rights" (ibid: 192).

Gupta begins by noting that liberty, equality and fraternity have different logics. Following from Nozick (1976), he writes equality does not flow from the pursuit of individual liberty. Instead, it needs to be brought about by deliberate policies of redistribution (1976: 168). Béteille (1986) also argues on the same lines - that free pursuit of individual goals according to liberty principle would bring about inequality rather than equality. This is not to say that liberty and equality are always in contradiction. It is agreed that the context of liberal pursuits along market principle is possible only when there is equality before law, i.e., individuals are equal as citizens. This notion of equality of citizens, however, is problematic, as it does not consider the initial differences which exist between people. Therefore, these differences may get aggravated over time, as those who began with some advantages would continue having a head start. There need to be provisions which ensure the less fortunate have a fair chance to compete against the others. Otherwise initial differences will get perpetuated further (Gupta, 2000a: 193). Liberalism has brought the notion of individual rights to the centre stage and any notion of

social good or duty that must be incorporated has to be done in a way that is not antagonistic to individual rights.

It is in this manner that apparently divergent logics of liberty, equality and fraternity can be reconciled. Neither can the market be given a free run nor can it be stated that there must be absolute equality in terms of ends regarding economic redistribution, moral values, art or aesthetics (ibid: 195). Gupta, therefore, brings in to focus the concept of fraternity which needs to be reinforced. This, then, is the final context in which he talks about identity- the identity of being a citizen of a nation-state over identity as people of a nation-state. Let us briefly summarize his discussion on fraternity.

In discussing the principle of fraternity Gupta draws upon John Rawl's principle of justice in democratic constitutions. This, he argues, contributes to a fuller understanding of fraternity among citizens. Rawls in '*A Theory of Justice*' (1971) notes "it is possible to hypothetically imagine a situation where rational people can devise principles of justice behind a 'veil of ignorance'" (Rawls, 1971: 142-5 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 196). This veil of ignorance does not allow them to know how they will be positioned in society. They could be the most under-privileged and would, in all rational sense, devise a system from the vantage point of the most under-privileged. Rawl's formulation prioritises and pays attention to rights and overcomes any biases that they may exist due to the individuals knowing their social position, as, without the veil, individuals would rationally only demand that which advantages them and this would defeat the purpose of democracy as it would not be able to nullify the disadvantages that exist at birth. Rawl's 'veil of ignorance' then insists on the principle that every individual has the right to the extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a system of liberty for all and is of greatest benefit to the least advantaged (Gupta, 2000a: 196).

Rawls has been criticized by the likes of Sandel (1982: 94, 100 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 196) on the basis that he does not take into account clashes in rival conception of the good but assumes an agreement about how to pursue individual interests. Further, his positions assume de-ontological beings and not live sociological persons who are bound to have particularistic conceptions

of the private good. Gupta contrasts the communitarian perspective with Rawls position. The communitarian perspective takes the ontological identity as a given. Communitarians criticise Rawls on the basis that he lays emphasis on

"…principles rather than good and this assumes a homogenous political community which just does not exist anywhere. Where cultural boundaries mark out discrete entities there are not only rival conceptions of the good, but also a hierarchy of cultural communities, many of which suffer from historic disprivileges. It is contended, therefore, that Rawls' understanding of justice as fairness places far too much emphasis on principles without taking into account the fact that in society, there are communities and groups which are unequally placed" (Gupta, 2000a: 196-7). Political communities, for the most part, do not overlap with cultural communities and so a statement of principles based on deontological original position is not workable. Real political communities are internally fragmented along cultural lines. Gupta quotes MacIntyre from *After Virtue* "(T)he story of my life is always embedded in the story of those communities from which I derive my identity" (1981: 205 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 197).

He notes, therefore, that there is a basic incompatibility between the deontological position of Rawls and the ontological positions of Taylor, Rorty or MacIntyre (Gupta, 2000a: 197).

The communitarians thus believe political participation can only happen when ontological beings are aware of the sources and content of their identities and not otherwise. This communitarian position attacks the core of liberal theory as liberal democratic politics of the constitutional kind is nothing if it cannot ensure political participation. As noted earlier in the discussion on civil society, the communitarians make fraternity appear as a finished product. Gupta posits that the difference between communitarians and Rawls can be seen based on their different understanding of fraternity. Communitarians hardly ever use the term fraternity but, if they were to do so, writes Gupta, it would have to do with natural bonding that stems from cultural identity. Rawls, however, seems to be clear that liberty and formal equality before law

cannot ensure fraternity. It is only justice as fairness and the original position, where a veil of ignorance prevails, that ensures policies can be rationally devised by keeping the worst–off in mind and that fraternity can be attained.

This is how Gupta reads Rawls principles of justice and sees him as an advocate of fraternity. He, however, goes onto discuss that while Rawls begins with the deontological position he goes onto write about the community rather than citizens. Perhaps, notes Gupta, Rawls was referring to the ultimate political community that the difference principle would establish. There is, however, some confusion between what is common and what is collective, but Rawls is consistent in his opposition to purely moral postulates such as that of benevolence or the ones that argue one must love humankind. Benevolence, notes Rawls, ends when many objects of its love oppose one another, and love of humankind can arise only from a sense of justice. If this were not so, then these sentiments would be characteristic of only an exceptional few. Rawls believes in sentiments because he feels they result from difference principle (the original position). It is this difference principle that brings about a higher degree of shared final ends. The differences between Rawls and his communitarian critics get difficult to disentangle because they seem to share some views and disagree on others. Both these positions, writes Gupta, talks of shared final ends and value political participation but while for communitarians participation and fraternity are given and individual choice does not play an important role in this framework, for Rawls' conditions of justice to prevail there is an assumed conflict of interests and moderate scarcity. It is only in these circumstances of conflict and moderate scarcity that working out principles of justice gains salience. If instead there is plentiful then compulsions for working out these principles become redundant. It is as if Gupta notes that the two views are referring to two completely different worlds. The Rawlsian world is one where amidst conflicting interests fraternity needs to be established and communitarian world is one where there is already fraternity in culturally-bound communities and meaningful politics needs only to allow these groups a free play and encourage their autonomous functioning (ibid: 199). Rawls does not talk of cultural communities but of political communities. In such communities, ties between members are political and

civic and not ascriptive or moral. The communitarians take cultural boundaries as firm and unchanging throughout history. The fact cultural alliances and community identities keep changing with time are issues communitarians do not consider. The communitarian theory of identity is, therefore, more naturalistic than sociological in character. Communitarians may argue by saying "morally authentic politics does not need to worry about historical fluctuations. Cultural communities should be accepted as they are and be taken as given" (ibid: 200). This may sound reasonable, but it does not solve the problem as to how newer identities can break away from older ones. While at one point one identity may gain salience in another context, yet another may take its place and come to the forefront. For example, at a given point, certain castes in India may come together on a single platform and at another point they may fractionate to form other alliances (ibid).

Communitarian position also fails to give a convincing answer when it comes to the question of the fate of dissenters within the community. How can these dissenters be understood and what would befall them if they were to revolt against the community? It is in answering this that it becomes critical that language of rights is brought into the discussion. People should have the freedom to choose whether they want to be governed by communities or by liberal laws of a constitutional democracy. Rights alone provide the option whether one wants to live by community rules. So while communitarians complain about heartlessness of liberal enterprises in modern nation-state, they themselves have no convincing answer to give about the fate of the dissenters and neither can they answer satisfactorily problems of identity formation, fragmentation and re-alignments (ibid: 201-3).

The strength of Rawls' difference principle lies in the fact that the 'veil of ignorance' conceals what kind of hand one will be dealt. Therefore, it is important one be sensitive to the perspectives of others and be able to visualize the 'us in them' (ibid: 201). Rawls' position encourages empathy over sympathy. "It is possible to secure fraternity only after it is grounded in justice first. Only '(i)n justice as fairness men agree to share one another's fate'" (Rawls, 1971: 102 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 203). "Fraternity only emerges when one

tries to work out a solution in a deontological position when circumstances of justice prevail." While in the beginning fraternity is a by-product of the difference principle, eventually "it can be consolidated to bind the principles of justice till they become second nature through inter-generational socialization"(Rawls, 1971: 462, 470 c.f. Gupta, 2000a: 203). This understanding of fraternity gives depth to understanding citizenship. The rationale behind citizenship is that people need people and it is only in active cooperation with others that people reach fruition.

It is essential to discuss, at this point, Gupta's reading of Durkheim, which helps further his idea of citizenship. Durkheim (1933) writes that mechanical solidarity provides the basis on which organic solidarity grows. The distinction between societies which are characterised by mechanical and organic solidarity is more conceptual rather than actual dichotomy. Mechanical solidarity is guided by the fundamental principle of resemblance. It is because of this resemblance that crime against one is crime against all. It is only because organic society is based on mechanical society that one can talk of society as a collective enterprise. This collective enterprise makes society a moral order. Thus, organic solidarity in a society demands social resemblances. These resemblances are difficult to manufacture in unequal societies but, in a democratic society, they can be fully experienced. Gupta thus draws on Durkheim's conception of "minimum set of resemblances."

(V)

Caste and Other Minority Identities:
Reconciling Ascriptive Identities With Fraternity

Gupta's writing on caste (2005b, 2000b) makes a case for the contested hierarchies that have existed in the caste system. Caste as noted by Louis Dumont (1988) is to be understood as organized in a hierarchical system arranged on the principle of purity-pollution. Gupta rejects Dumont's position that caste can be understood as a continuous system of hierarchy and instead makes a case for castes as discrete entities. He writes castes cannot be straight

jacketed in an unanimous hierarchy and there has been evidence, starting with Senart (1930), that castes should be seen as units and an attempt to immediately arrange it in hierarchy must not be made (Gupta, 2005b: 411). The fact is that castes have contested notions of hierarchy and this becomes evident in the different tales of origin that vary from caste to caste and are usually in confrontation with the dominant Brahminical version of hierarchy.

It is only in this reckoning that the relationship between caste and politics can be understood. If the hierarchy principle is taken as sacrosanct it is difficult to reconcile how castes can compete in the political arena for power. To appreciate this dynamic of caste and politics it is essential to understand caste as discrete entities. Caste competition is therefore an inherent part of castes and not a newer addition. No caste thinks of itself as being inherently inferior to the others. They never really have it is just that in a closed village economy possibilities of negating the dominant caste was not a possibility and now in the light of changing agrarian relations and constitutional provisions several caste associations have mushroomed all over the country. Gupta, in conformity with his thesis of de-exoticising unique cultural explanations, forwards his position on caste and in that normalizes it.

Let us now move to the arena of caste politics and reservations and see how these can be reconciled with structures of the state in a manner that fraternity and citizenry are furthered. We now go on to see the reconciliation of these ready reckoners of ascriptive identities with the larger goal of achieving a liberal democratic state in India.

Fraternity comes about when there is a basic set of resemblances. Resemblances do not imply actual goods and lifestyles. "It ensures that certain practices are common to all so that equality of opportunity can be efficiently realized" (Gupta, 2000a: 221). Fraternity, writes Gupta, comes about only through a basic set of resemblances. Resemblances should ensure certain practises are common to all such that the equality of opportunity can be effectively realized. "The minimum set of resemblances in a liberal democratic market-oriented society would constitute of practices wherein opportunities to obtain socially useful assets are accessible to all" (ibid: 227). This means

access to education, knowledge and skills are open for all, regardless of accidents of birth. The core of citizenship is consolidated by a minimum set of resemblances made of practices that allow people to acquire socially useful skills and whatever differences then remain between individuals are results of natural abilities or a matter of choice (ibid: 223).

Indian society is characterised by poverty and backwardness among many sections of its population. In such a scenario, it is essential to bring in special policies to help in the upliftment of these sections. It is here that he discusses two divergent logics of reservation- that of Ambedkar and Mandal. While one supports fraternity the other defeats it. Ambedkar aimed to enhance fraternity and he proposed that reservations should be periodically reviewed. He was aware that if this was not done, then reservations would end up leading to fractions among citizens. Mandal, however, was only concerned with backward castes getting jobs and seats in educational institutions. Gupta writes that policy of positive discrimination would not bring about complete equality as those inequalities that stemmed from individual differences and variations of family background would still persist, but at least those discriminations that stemmed from historical handicaps would be done away with. It is this that would lead to a truly liberal society (ibid: 213). When these handicaps, would not interfere with the participation of people the need for reservation or affirmative action, will be over.

In Gupta's opinion the key variable that is essential in determining who should be the beneficiaries of these affirmative policies is poverty. He writes nothing can be more disabling in developing one's potential than abject poverty. If other ascriptive identities which have been historically marginalized are used to determine beneficiaries, then the contribution of these policies is nullified. Communities which are economically well-off but have had a history of marginalization have other means and ways to access social status and prestige based on their economic status. Reservations must not be continued in perpetuity as doing so defeats the larger goal of fraternity. To ensure fraternity, it must be ensured that people contribute to the collective social pool for the larger benefit of the community. "Positive discrimination is therefore aimed at

giving the broadest possible base to citizenship and fraternity by making it possible for everyone to acquire those skills that a liberal democratic society values" (ibid: 230). To attain this, conditions of abject poverty must be removed. While those who already have one kind of socially valuable asset but hope to partake benefits of affirmative action to convert it into another kind of socially useful asset should have no claim to reservations (ibid: 230).

Let us now turn our attention to Gupta's discussion on minority identities and their fate in the Indian context. Again, reiterating Rawl's 'veil of ignorance,' Gupta writes that when state policies determine categories of identities it is a risky business. This is so because these categorizations foster divisions on ascriptive lines and defeat citizenship. Also, such policies leave open the door for further demands of minoritization (ibid: 264). As discussed above, anyone could be the new minority and therefore it is important to step out of the framework of protection of cultural rights and communities and instead cast these discussions in the light of citizenship. The only way to mitigate the devastation of minoritization when it strikes a community is by ensuring their dignity as citizens is protected. Thus, Rawls' position where the legislators legislate keeping in mind they could be the worst-off gains salience. In the light of secularization, the veil of ignorance becomes a practical alternative and no longer a hypothetical possibility (ibid: 265). "Only one's identity as a citizen remains steadfast in the maelstrom of the secularization process. It is by protecting this identity and by not allowing it to be overwhelmed or undermined by minority and majority legislations that the ideals of secularism can be best met" (ibid).

(VI)

Rawl's Deontology to Gupta's Iso-Ontology:
A Note on the Proposed Nature of Identity in Modernity

So far, we have discussed Gupta's reliance on Rawls' notion of the "deontological being" and "veil of ignorance" in furthering fraternity and citizenship in a liberal democratic society. Rawls' key idea about sharing in

one another's fate is what Gupta's thesis on modernity furthers. It is primarily in his book '*Learning to Forget: The Anti Memoirs of Modernity*' (2005d) that he expounds this idea.

Modernity is an on-going project and so is democracy. These can never be complete and there is always room for more finesse. The first and most critical point about modernity is that it must not be confused with things. "Overt morphological attributes such as technology, urbanization and even adult franchise" (Gupta, 2005d: 1) cannot be equated with modernity. These can exist under a variety of conditions and create varied results. Thus, if modernity is understood in the light of these then it would include so many variations that it would be difficult to reconcile them all under the umbrella term of modernity. No society inhabits a non-hybrid time-span - this means that while there is modernity on one hand, there would also be other kinds of contemporaneous time scales simultaneously. Gupta refers to these as *contemporaneous diachronies*. The project of modernity "gains different kinds of salience as it moves through a stream of contemporaneous diachronies" (ibid: 2). The main argument that Gupta forwards is that the project of modernity can be forwarded through normative interventions once its goals are set.

> "While the understanding of modernity might mutate with time, a little attention will show that the changes that we see are really instances of the original telos (or idea) that seeks fulfilment, expressing itself more and more comprehensively. In democracy, for example, the rights given to women and minorities are manifestations of the original impulse in democracy; they are not in the nature of afterthoughts. Likewise, for modernity today it is important to stress the following features: inter-subjectivity between social actors; ethical anonymity in social relations; and the public constraining the private world. These result in open hierarchy; public ethics replacing private morality; transparency and accountability in public behaviour; and trust in institutions replacing trust in people. To understand inter-subjectivity, it must be seen in conjunction with its complements, viz., 'ethical

anonymity' and the domination of the 'public over the private.' In my view, these are different ways of expressing the same thing. Tautologies are sometimes useful for they bring to fore certain characteristics of the original statement that might go unnoticed. The original statement of modernity, its telos, is inter-subjectivity. While we know there are other people performing other roles, we also know their lives and our lives intersect at a number of places. We could easily be them and their lives and ambitions are not too different from us and those of our family. In other words, our collective existence is within an ontological horizon that is largely uniform. Thus, even as we are different, we all have similar starting points because these are equally accessible to all. Because of this inbuilt inter-subjectivity in modern societies, one's relationship with strangers is not predicated on one's pre-knowledge of the person's role and status. I may not know a person, but I would still accord respect in my interactions with such an individual just as if that person could be me, or very much like me. Anonymous relationships are thus marked by an ethical consideration. For these reasons, our interactions with others who may belong to a different linguistic or religious community are conditioned primarily by the principle of inter-subjectivity. This not only puts ethical anonymity in the forefront but, by the same token, also calls out to the public sphere to dominate the private" (Personal Interview, Missaglia, May, 2011).

Modernity, according to him, promises to offer a space for intersubjectivity and the potential for iso-ontology… something that past traditions had no space for as they were guided by polyontologies.

"It is necessary, therefore, to be self-conscious about this failing in earlier epochs so we appreciate the openings modernity has given us today and for the future. It is incumbent on us to appreciate this factor and employ our normative prowess to realize as extensively as possible the potentials of iso-ontology that are inherent in the telos of modernity. In this lies the scope of building an *alternative tradition* that

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will decisively free us from the burden of the past" (Gupta, 2005d: 39). To make the past irrelevant to the present and to the future is the task of modernity. Accordingly, modern statecraft strains to bring about a high degree of inter-subjectivity between citizen by enhancing the 'minimum set of resemblances' between them. Advancing the cause of inter-subjectivity does not happen naturally. Therefore, modernity's projects are spurred from time to time by deliberate reflection. It is via this deliberate reflection that the crucial transition is affected from being a fused mass of nationalist partisans to becoming an ethical body of citizens. The rights of a citizen are not equal to birth rights, as citizens have self-consciously fought for and struggled to attain these rights. They did this in all cases by going against the grain of primordial appeals and memory" (ibid: 15).

The way history is to be understood is thus critical to Gupta's articulation of modernity as a project. As he writes, "how one approaches the future then depends to a great extent on how the past is handled" (ibid: 39). "What is the role of history? If history acts as a memory-jogger, then it is of no use in building a future. If history is to relate in graphic details, what happened, when and to whom, then we are constantly stumbling over the slightest impediments in our ways as we are looking behind our shoulder all the time. Old memories, rivalries and ancient practices built on prejudices fed on ascriptive identities begin to influence our relations with others. To that extent then, inter-subjectivity and its correlate, iso-ontology, suffer reversals. It is necessary to distinguish between learning from past and remembering the past. One learns from history not when one begins with an event but rather with a problem which forces us to place events in a comparative perspective. When facts are framed comparatively, then the uniqueness of the event is lost and memory loses its drive" (ibid: 40). "Comparisons dissolve specifics and through the variations in history it is possible to demonstrate those uniformities that bind humankind. This is the most important lesson that history can teach us" (ibid). Such a position, he notes, meets with resistance from some historians like, for instance, George Fredrickson who noted "all those historians doing comparative work 'are taking a holiday'" (Berkhoffer 1995: 35 c.f. Gupta,

2005d: 40). He distinguishes between the chronicler and the comparative historian, who, according to him, does not merely look at history differently but, infact, looks at the future in very divergent ways."A chronicler cannot forget but a comparative historian learns and moves on" (ibid: 41). Comparative history requires "epistemological justification – a context within which comparisons are effective and analytically fruitful" (ibid). The context is provided by the present concerns. In comparative history, the past is not absolute, uni-linear and without breaks.

This discussion then brings us to the final context in which Gupta discusses identities. The position is normative and the project conscious and intended. In concluding this section, let us summarize what we have discussed so far. Gupta begins by discussing cultural identities and their malleability in the context of the *Shiv Sena* and subsequently in the context of ethnicity in Punjab. He discusses the manner in which these identities can be reconciled with the identity of being Indian and in that he thinks the creation of non-spaces is helpful. In Gupta's framework, identity has only been discussed in the context of the nation-state and in that primarily in the manner of citizenship versus primordial identities. The discussion has then shifted to the structures by which the non-spaces can be created, and the identity of a citizen can take over other ascriptive identities. The identity as a citizen is delved into at great length and so is fraternity, which is understood as the manner of realisation of citizenship to its fullest capacity. It is in these contexts that Gupta has contributed to an understanding of identity. Béteille's contribution foregrounded the discussion on nation-state, democracy and its institutions. Understood in this light, their writings can be seen as representing the statist paradigm. Béteille's discussion elaborates on institutions and their dynamics in a democratic state and seeks to understand how claims of citizenship can be reconciled with the language of rights based on communitarian identities.

Culture of Democracy in India:
Institutions, Their Dynamics and Well-Being

In his book titled '*Democracy and It's Institution',* Béteille writes that there has been a perceptible shift in Indian democracy from constitutional to populist. Although ideals such as those of equality, liberty and fraternity are of great value and significance in this work, Béteille chooses to dwell on institutions rather than ideals of democracy, not only because these institutions are of intrinsic value to the democracy but also because they appear to be more tangible as objects of enquiry and investigation. He says:

"*I have written about democracy and I am interested in its institutions. Culture is too broad, too generic, it includes anything and everything, so I don't think I will write a piece on culture and democracy. Institutions are important because I can point to a concrete idea and the institutions that I have taken up for study are concrete institutions, like, for instance, the Lok Sabha. You can get into a bus and go and see the Lok Sabha… it is a concrete thing. Whereas liberty and equality… you can't see these things. Say the Supreme Court, you can go there and listen to what they have to say. I prefer... in that sense I am a Durkheimian… social facts are things. Start with what you can observe and then move onto what is more difficult to see*" (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

Democracy emerged in India as a result of confrontation with a power imposed from outside rather than an engagement with the contradictions inherent in Indian society. These contradictions have continued to be a part of the Indian social order and have given Indian democracy a different character to that in the West. In the West, democracy advanced out of confronting a succession of internal social contradictions, whereas in India the political argument for democracy was adopted by the leaders of the nationalist movement from their colonial rulers in order to gain freedom from colonialism. "The building of

new political institutions and the creation of economic and social conditions for the successful operation of those institutions, such as healthcare, education and other social services, lagged behind" (Béteille, 2012a: 10). It is in this context that Béteille writes about the institutions of democracy.

Institutions, as used, by the sociologists have two related meanings. First, they can be used as a term to describe an enduring group with a distinct identity and with boundaries that mark it out from its environment. Second, they can be used as a pattern of activities that are recurrent, legitimate and meaningful. Béteille writes that he finds it convenient to begin with the meaning wherein institutions are understood as enduring groups that outlive their individual members and then move on to the regular and recurrent activities that are a part of that group's existence. Such an understanding helps one identify the institution as having a distinct physical identity and then ask whether the processes that work in it are meaningful or not. He also clarifies that in referring to the institutions of democracy he only means those that have come down from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards and, in particular, he focuses on the parliament, the state legislatures, the Supreme and High Courts, the political parties, etc. Béteille describes and then goes on to examine the relationship between the Parliament and the Supreme Court. While each has a separate sphere of operation, they are still expected to work in harmony. However, that is far from how they work. For the most part, neither recognizes the exclusive jurisdiction claimed by the other. Underlying them is the tension between the two irreducible principles of democracy- the rule of numbers and the rule of law. The tension created by the conflict between these two principles leads to disorder. He mentions:

> "*...I think the essence of democracy is that it rests on a tension. I think the most fundamental tension in a democracy is that it rests on a tension between the rule of numbers and the rule of law. One conception is that numbers count in the end... it is the numbers that matter. The other conception is that the numbers can't be allowed to be count in many things... if something is illegal and if numbers are consistent, then through procedures you can change*

the law but you can't just do it in the Jantar Mantar or Ram Leela Maidan" (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

Béteille also discusses the role of political parties in a democracy. India in all its diversity has many political parties representing all shades of ideological orientation and has seen a proliferation in their numbers over the years. He also distinguishes between factions and political parties, elaborating on the continuity of the political parties and thereby qualifying them as institutions. Parties have failed in many ways but the fact there continues to be a plurality that can express and articulate divergent views outside of and within the legislatures, in a more reasonable and constructive manner, still holds more promise than voices raised at demonstrations, rallies and more evanescent gatherings characteristic of populist politics. Furthermore, the institutions of democracy stand as "bulwarks against the dangers by which democracy is threatened… particularly in those countries where commitment to its basic principle is weak. Without these institutions, neither respect for the rule of law nor care for the interests of those at disadvantage would be sustained for long" (Béteille, 2012a: 26).

Béteille's discussion of these institutions of democracy begins with the description of the problems that characterise them in India today. However, he is careful to note this does not mean they are dispensable or that one must aspire for a more "vibrant" form of democracy in which people govern themselves by creating new social movements and new associations. He does not seem to be very positive about the role these social movements have played in deepening and strengthening democracy in India. This is apparent in his statements when he says, "*I used to be very irritated when this Anna Hazare movement started, just as I had been very annoyed with the JP movement* (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015). While indicating the character of social movements in India, he also criticises the Westminster model of representative democracy in India. While he does not have complete disregard for the importance of social movements in India, no matter how important and valuable social movements are in keeping both the government

and the opposition on their toes, he does not see them as a substitute for the institutions of democracy. He says:

"…the movement of Indian democracy has been a disordered one but it's not a bad thing…. it doesn't mean that it must be chaotic that it can't resolve this chaos. But democracy must engage with and must face a certain amount of disorder. It is only in an authoritarian regime that all disorders are buried deep underground until one day it bursts out. So, I don't think it's such a bad thing to use parties as well as social movements to articulate a dissent. I don't think it is a bad thing just because it does not correspond to the Westminster model, we shouldn't turn our backs on it. There is nothing sacrosanct in the Westminster model. It is in this respect I think democracy is here to stay in India. I don't think it is going to go away but it has moved quite far away from the Westminster model without giving up some of its good features and I don't think we should go on measuring success or failure of our democracy with regard to the Westminster model. Yes, Westminster model, but also the Gandhian model. You don't like the government. The government is acting badly… what do you do? You don't start a political party, but you go to the people, you start a movement. You make the government listen to you. Gandhi didn't bring it in as a form of blackmail, but it did become a form of blackmail. You organize a movement, you persuade the government and they will see the reason for it and that's okay... one through the system of opposition parties and one through the social movements. I think we in the end bring to the table something which is a very distinctive contribution of Indian democracy* (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

He draws attention to the difference between constitutional and populist democracy. In his essay on *"Constitutional Morality*" in the book '*Democracy and it's Institutions'* he writes that it was Ambedkar who saw most clearly that

the prevailing conditions in Indian society with regard to the hierarchical structures inherited from the past were at loggerheads with the desire for a democratic, legal and political order expressed in the Assembly. The lack of a democratic tradition in India made it even more challenging to transform what was a society of castes and communities into one of citizens based on equal consideration of individuals who would have no regard for caste, creed or gender. Against such a backdrop the constitution provided a necessary but insufficient condition for such a transformation, as it could not bring about changes in attitudes, dispositions and sentiments without which such a transition was just not possible. To be effective, constitutional laws must rest on a substratum of constitutional morality. This constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment… it needs to be cultivated. Béteille hardly clarifies the full connotations of constitutional morality but he discusses the episode of Emergency in the mid-seventies and the JP movement that also took place in the seventies and how like most populist movements it too was emancipationist and antinomian in its character. These elements of populism, he notes, have become lodged in India's political culture. While the Constitution has acquired a significant symbolic value among Indians, the trends of populism also continue to run deep in India's political life. Indian democracy, then, is marked by a constant oscillation between the two poles of constitutionalism and populism (Béteille, 2012a: 97).

The constant question of rights that mark India today is a result of the rise of identity politics, which has led to greater awareness of rights among the people on one hand and, on the other, has also led to a deepening of mistrust in public life. No society can be sustained without rights and trust, it is the balance between the two that is difficult to achieve and is a complex matter. Rights do not signify the same thing to every section of society in every social situation. A greater awareness of rights has led to an increase of conflicts among different sections of the society and, thus, the language of rights can serve as a sword in conflict between groups of citizens and not just as a shield to protect them from the state. T.H. Marshall (1977) in his book '*Class, Citizenship and Social Development'* discusses the development of citizenship in Britain from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. He writes that it was essential the

rights of workers were advanced, particularly in the early stages of capitalism, as the workers did not enjoy all the rights of citizenship. The bearers of these rights, in Marshall's view, were individuals and not classes and communities. In fact, once the rights became available to workers, any special case for the rights of the working class became weaker. "The rights of citizenship facilitate the mobility of individuals from one class to another but leave unaltered the individual's membership of the community" (Marshall, 1977).

The concern Béteille raises is that in the Indian scenario the rights of the workers as citizens are far from having been fully realised. There has, nevertheless, been a sea change in the situation and the divide between those who are a part of the organised sector and those who are a part of the unorganised sector certainly face a huge divide when it comes to exercising their rights of citizenship, with the former in a better position than the latter. Having said that he adds that while it is easier to reconcile the rights of citizenship with the claims and demands of the workers, both in the organised and the unorganised sector, the major concern in India today is how can claims of citizenship be harmonized well with the rights claimed on behalf of the communities of birth?

The rise of identity politics has surely led to more forceful advocacy of rights but though identity politics, politics of caste and community very much characterised the Indian political scenario even before independence, it has gained more impetus now. The problem that arises is that the advocacy of rights on the basis of these identities are hardly directed towards the creation of full citizenship for the truly disadvantaged, but is used more in the political contest between the various castes and communities that have come to dominate the political arena today (Béteille, 2012a: 108). This is to say that leaders have found it easier to mobilize electoral support on the basis of caste and community than on the basis of class.

The demand of rights for better representation of disadvantaged castes and communities has led to changes in the composition of the middle class but has also led to the deepening of mistrust in public life. The importance of trust in the operation of social life cannot be emphasized enough as while legal and

political machinery can ensure that people can go about their daily lives uninterrupted it cannot be emphasized enough that most social transactions take place without any rights being invoked, because people can interact on the basis of trust despite diverse backgrounds. Diversity does not lead to the failure of trust but it is the use of this diversity for claiming special rights that run into trouble with the equal rights that all individuals feel they can claim as citizens (ibid: 120).

These concerns are carried into Béteille's piece on "*Caste and the Citizen*" in the same volume, where he discusses two representations of Indian society - one as that of castes and communities and the second as a nation of citizens. Indian politics took many unforeseen turns and many people have become inured to the politics of caste and community, even though they feel uneasy about it. It is this ambivalence about what kind of society India is and what kind of society it ought to be that gives Indian democracy a character of its own. Despite rapid changes in economic and social life and the rapid individual mobility that has characterised Indian society over the last decades, democratic politics has given a new lease of life to caste. Caste has posed no less a challenge than poverty and economic inequality to the prospect of making India into a nation of citizens. Béteille notes that "with the advantage of hindsight one can see that it would have been impossible to exclude altogether the operation of caste in the political arena, but the extent to which it has penetrated and become a consideration for all political calculations is unsettling" (ibid: 138). While economic growth in the country has been commendable and individuals have been drawn into fields of activity where claims of caste and community cannot be easily accommodated, and he has become more aware of his rights as a citizen, such changes have not translated into his awareness of responsibilities. The individual would become a citizen only when the obligations of citizenship is ingrained in him, in the way obligations related to caste and community were ingrained in generation of people earlier (ibid).

Citizenship is not just a matter of rights. It is also a matter of attitudes and values. The habits of citizenship are a product of history. They grow and

mature under social and political conditions. Béteille invokes, at this point, the age-old axiom of superiority of the group, or collective over the individual, as a characteristic feature of Indian social tradition, like that of many pre-modern societies, and argues the notion of a "citizen" is above an individual and his rights and responsibilities are irrespective of his primordial affiliations. However, unfortunately these primordial identities have been leveraged by the political fraternity to further their ulterior motives but it is only by pushing beyond these that India can aspire to become and advance as a nation of citizens. The idea of citizenship is well developed in the writings of Dipankar Gupta.

He writes that while the Indian social tradition is a pluralist one, it is not a liberal one as diversity here is organized hierarchically. While "tolerance" of diversity can, and generally does, contribute to sustenance of liberal outlook, it is not, by itself, enough to constitute a liberal, social and political order. As a matter of fact, the tolerance of diversity might sometimes lead to tolerance of highly illiberal practices. The most important and integral component of liberal outlook is autonomy of the individual and his freedom to choose his own life for himself and live it in a fruitful, honourable and dignified way. In practice, of course, there are all kinds of restraints and the test of a liberal society lies in the extent to which it seeks to ease those restraints and enlarge the capacity of the individual to live his own life according to his own tastes and preferences. While some liberals accommodate a great deal of inequality arising from competition in a formally free market, they don't support inequalities based on race, caste and gender, and this is where his formulation of the distinction between "hierarchical" and "competitive" inequality becomes significant[10]. From the liberal point of view, differences of caste and tribe do not have the same moral significance as those of language or religion, and do not contribute to the enrichment of human civilization in the same way. The liberals regard them as social residues of an earlier historical epoch and hope it goes away in the same way it has passed elsewhere (ibid: 148). Inequalities do not threaten liberal ideas and institutions in the same way as the subordination of the

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[10]An elaborate discussion on these two kinds of inequalities can be found in 'Equality and Universality' by André Béteille, (2002) New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

individual to the state or the community. When this subordination is carried to a certain point it becomes a threat to equality and not just liberty. A liberal social order does not need equality in every form to be established, but what it requires most essentially is equality before law and equal protection of the laws as well as the elimination of discrimination between individuals on arbitrary grounds such as those of race, caste and gender. While liberalism is clearly opposed to hierarchy, its attitude to equality is ambivalent and it makes several concessions to inequality of outcome despite its commitments to equality of opportunity and sometimes on account of it (ibid: 145). The liberal state faces a challenge in deciding how far it can interfere with the free activities of its individual citizens to achieve such an outcome.

The unique thing about tribal and caste identities is that they have survived despite significant changes in Indian society. New groups were being incorporated as the older ones split up and became dispersed. There has been continuous rearrangement of castes, tribes and sects within the larger social order throughout India's history. Béteille distinguishes between identities of birth and identities of choice. It is hardly the case anywhere in the world that there is nation on one hand and individuals on the other with no other identity intermediating between the two. Amartya Sen (2006) argues against the 'solitarist approach' to identity. A solitarist approach singles out one specific identity and gives it a privileged status. Instead of the solitarist approach he recommends a pluralist one which favours recognition of the many different strands that contribute differently to different identities of individuals. Béteille writes that as it is agreed upon by any sociologist, the individual has multiple identities. In agreement with Sen, Béteille notes that identity is not a person's destiny and human beings have choices in the matter of determining their identity for themselves. However, the choices open to an individual in constructing his/her own identity vary considerably according to his social location. Even the awareness of choices varies according to social location and material, cultural and social capital at their disposal, and these differences influence the extent to which they construct their own identities. The very conception of 'self' is shaped by the social environment within which they act. Apart from individual variations, there are also differences among societies

with regard to dominant traditions and values. For instance, some societies greatly value the identities of birth and not all impute equal significance to individualism as a value. The bias in favour of identities of birth need not stay fixed in a social tradition; the trends of change during the decades leading to independence did not move in the same direction at all. There was some movement of individuals leading to a loosening of the hold of community over individuals but contrary trends that brought rival communities to loggerheads with each other also enhanced and did not reduce the individual's consciousness of the community of which he was a member by birth.

Despite economic development and democratic politics, India did not see the removal of castes from the minds of the people. The significance of categories of caste and communities kept growing in modern India, particularly so because of the growth of the notions of social justice, which argued for equitable distribution and parity between castes and communities. Democratic politics, then, has given a new lease of life to the politics of caste over politics of class. What remains worrisome is that a society that neglects economic inequalities between citizens to promote social and political parity between castes can hardly qualify as a liberal society (ibid: 160-62). In the same tone, Béteille also discusses the distinction and relation between laws and customs. While the laws are based on the principle of equality, the customs are characterised by hierarchical ideas, beliefs and values. The difference between laws and customs becomes clear under conditions of change. The pace of change in laws and in customs, vary. Besides, it is far simpler to understand what led to changes in the laws as it is more deliberate than what led to changes in the customs. Béteille examines how the two components of law and customs, with their divergent tendencies, co-exist within the same society. Customs, unlike laws, are not created by legislations. As a matter of fact, legislations merely drive customs underground rather than abolishing them. However, in his opinion, customs do change and legislations can play an important part in giving direction to that change but these laws cannot be effective if they are brought forth without tracking changes in public opinion shaped by currents of social and economic changes. Public opinions are not homogenous... they vary widely and a change can be brought about in social

legislation only by bringing changes in public opinion. Changes in public opinions can be brought about only by well-designed social policies. When social policies create favourable circumstances, it is only then legislations can be used to overturn customs (ibid: 184).

Making a note of public intellectuals and their role in democracy, he writes they play a significant role in democracy and may act as conscience keepers of the nation, but many, particularly in India, are inclined to adopt modes of expressions which are sensationalist and vehement, often leading them to posit themselves against the authorities and more favourably with the people and the "civil society," thereby leaving the deeper roots of political failures unattended (ibid: 28).

It is important to,

> "distinguish between social movements that act within the framework of democratic institutions and those that act because such a framework does not exist or exists only in name. In India, some leaders of popular movements speak and act as if such a framework does not exist and it is only by dismantling such a framework that democracy can exist. The framework of democratic institutions has acted as a shield against military rule and we must acknowledge the importance of the same" (ibid: 29-30).

While discussing mediating institutions in a democracy Béteille refers to civil society. Civil societies flourish only under liberal, pluralist and secular regimes and not under totalitarian ones. Béteille writes that pre-colonial India was not characterised by civil society and, in this respect, he stands in contrast to formulations of the likes of Rajni Kothari, Nandy and so on (Béteille, 2012a: 66). The emergence of civil society is a historical process and not a universal one. In Béteille's formulation, civil society is a set of institutions that mediate between the individual as a citizen and the state or nation. By institutions he means those enduring groups with definite boundaries and a distinct identity that outlive individual members… only the open and secular institutions, i.e., the ones with open membership, independent of caste, gender and so on, not

regulated by religious rules or authorities, i.e., are secular contribute positively to civil society for example schools, hospitals, Reserve Bank etc. are open and secular institutions.

In his essay *'Civil Society and Good Society'* (2001) Béteille painstakingly distinguishes between the two and attempts to provide conceptual clarity to the notion of civil society. Marx and Hegel wrote extensively on civil society and Gramsci drew upon it. Gramsci's contribution to the ideas of civil society is distinct because he focussed more on mediation and differentiation and, while he did understand its significance, he did not give unmixed approval to the same. Béteille's writings show his awareness of interpenetration of state and civil society. Béteille writes that in the Indian context discussions on civil society in India are characterised by either a radical disenchantment of the present or a nostalgia of the past. In the case of disenchantment with the present, the driving force for regeneration comes from social movements and not from the state and associated institutions. The framework within which he seeks to understand civil society has three basic components, i.e., state, citizenship and mediating institutions. Civil society makes it possible for individuals as citizens to circulate between institutions and associations with far more freedom than in societies based on kinship and communities. While some social movements serve to strengthen the civil society, there might be others which serve to disrupt it. Not all social movements are secular in their aims and objectives and many are also devoted to sectarian interests, although their leaders claim they are challenging the authority of the state in the cause of social justice. Béteille notes that social movements in the cause of civil society, and in opposition to the state and its functionaries, are drawing increasing numbers of educated and talented persons with experience and the likes of professionals belonging to domains such as law, civil service, journalism, etc. It is leading to a formation of a quasi-political leadership which wants to exercise influence but not as members of government or opposition and is disenchanted with not only political parties but also the electoral process. Such a trend is alarming as it goes to undermine the electoral process and, in such a scenario, the fate of institutions of democracy is jeopardised further.

In the Indian context there has been a vague discussion about alternatives "to the Western form of civil society, which maybe found among traditional institutions of Indian society, and caste has often been considered a possible alternative" (Béteille, 2001a, 284). Béteille writes that while caste does provide links both within and between groups, and is not quite the kind of institution he has in mind, institutions such as universities, libraries, hospitals, etc., all of which link individuals to each other and to institutions in distinctive ways. Despite the fact these institutions have not gained a permanent foothold in India, and their fragility has continued to pose difficulties in mediating between citizens and the state, the triad of state, citizenship and these mediating institutions are inextricably linked and it is difficult to see an alternative. Because of the disenchantment with the state, in the recent writings a lot of focus is being given to voluntary action. The significance of voluntary action and associations has been brought to light by many, and particularly by Tocqueville in the American context. In the Indian scene, voluntary action and voluntary associations are of many different kinds. Voluntary component is not absent in formally statutory bodies and neither is it equally present in all voluntary associations. The non-governmental organisations that have mushroomed world over and with equal intensity in India have revealed a different pattern than what was predicted by Tocqueville in America. The sources of fund for these NGOs are different. Some of the best ones are those which can ensure a steady flow of funds from the government or the international agencies. Such dependency for funds surely affects their contribution to the growth of civil society in India. Béteille writes that it appears NGOs in India are often caught between ideals of social movements and organized philanthropic service. Although the NGOs are a new phenomenon, they would continue to exist, besides while some of them have been successful in delivering results and others have failed they must still receive public support for attempting to do what the government was expected to do. The discussion of voluntary associations also leads him to discuss religious assemblies and associations which generously provide philanthropic support to temples, but Béteille raises the question that it still remains unanswered as to what these NGOs, or for that matter, religious assemblies and religious movements for moral, ethical and spiritual discourses contribute "to

the creation of civil society, even though their indirect contribution is extremely valuable. While civil society requires the separation between open and secular institutions from the institutions of kinship and religion, it does not require the exclusion of the latter from the society" (ibid: 455).

The main virtue of democracy, as understood by many, is that "it reduces the gap between the rulers and the ruled by restricting the powers of the former and enlarging that of the latter" (ibid: 456). In this regard, Béteille's emphasis is on the institutions of the state or institutions that are closely associated with the working of the state. This has to be seen in the context of current discussions on the failure of the state and on possible alternatives to it in the form of associations and movements of various kinds. The position adopted here is that the constitutional state and civil society are complementary and not contradictory to each other.

The following section attempts a thematic analysis of the writings that have been discussed so far under the Statists paradigm and tries to provide an overview of intersections and divergences between the writings of the two chosen thinkers whose writings have been classified as representing the paradigm on questions of identity, self and the other in the Indian context.

(VIII)

Emerging Themes on Identity, Self and Other: An Analysis

The following section discusses the broad themes which emerge from our discussions above.

Othering: A Universal Reality

"Prejudices of one sort or the other against communities of all kinds have always existed and will continue to exist. This is an anthropological truism that cannot be easily shaken" (Gupta, 2000a: 232). It is in the nature of human beings to draw divisions between them and others and state these differences in

naturalistic terms. The process of othering is a continuous one. Gupta, in his writings on Punjab and the*Sena*, shows others can only be understood when they are contextualised. Gupta, however, looks at self-other in very specific contexts of antagonism. While, for the most part, the self and the other set up cultural boundaries between them, it is only in periods of strife that the antagonism comes to the fore clearly.

"I see self and other not in general terms. I have always seen self and other in contextual terms. There is a whole series of writing on self and other, which you probably know and have read about. I am looking at self and the other in a particular content– that where the self and the other relationship becomes antagonistic, you know, when the otherness becomes an antagonistic otherness not that you are there so you look at Fredrick Barth so let us say...so therefore I see self and other not in times of peace but in times of war and in doing that what I try and explain is that all the plenitude in times of peace suddenly become minimalised in an angular frame in the times of war. Again, the same old problem I am a boring fellow how can culture you know become this malleable? So otherwise we will say Hindu and Muslims we are peaceful people I have this culture you have that culture and we would go on and on but the moment we are in conflict all of that was forgotten" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

As Béteille writes, the choices open to an individual in constructing his/her own identity vary considerably according to his social location and even the awareness of available choices vary according to social location, material, cultural and social capital at their disposal and these differences influence the extent to which they are able to construct their own identities. The conception of self is shaped by the social environment within which they must act. Apart from individual variations, there are also differences among societies about their dominant traditions and values. For instance, some societies value identities of birth and not all societies impute equal significance to individualism as a value. The bias in favour of identities of birth need not stay fixed in a social tradition. While a loosening of the hold of community over

individuals can be seen, there is also a simultaneous trend of communities being at loggerheads due to privileging of identities of birth.

Enter the Triad- Self, Other and the Big Other: Factoring in the Nation-State in Understanding Cultural Identities

In understanding antagonistic cultural identities, Gupta emphasizes factoring in the nation-state. He notes that the metaphors of nation-state are invasive and more perilous than any other cultural metaphor. To understand what is meant by a Sikh or a Maharashtrian or a Hindu it is critical the nation-state provides the framework. Gupta posits his arguments in relation to scholars who have analysed cultural strife of any kind only in the light of the warring dyads. This, he notes, is not helpful in understanding why a certain dyad was suddenly at loggerheads despite a relatively quiet past between them. Not only the context, but the context of nation-state, he argues is essential when one wants to understand ethnic or communal strife in India. This is so because the ethnic other, the ethnic enemy, is portrayed in relation to the Indian nation-state for most part as being disloyal and unpatriotic to the Indian nation and her metaphors. Gupta does not completely reject dyadic conflicts but argues India has not witnessed any. The triadic node for Gupta is the nation-state, as he notes,

"For me triadic node became important because I realised that when we are politically engaged, we are talking a political language, you know, the political language must have a triadic character and Lacan's notion of triad was useful for me. The fact you understand what I am saying is not because you have the same words but there is a centre somewhere else which governs grammar etc. to which both you and I subscribe. So its not as if we are saying the same things the same way at all times… but because the three of us, the three nodes are together, and that is why you and I are in a conversation. Now let us say, for some reason, I believe this node has now become your node and has deserted me. Then what will happen? I won't be able to talk to you and I can only shout, scream and cry! Now, if you see this thing in a different way

and take the shared grammar to be the fount of law, the state, the constitution on the basis of which you and I talk to each other. And I find that this Constitution has gone on your side, then I have no weapon, but terrorism and violence left because we can no longer talk to each other. So, this is the way in which I looked at the triadic framework. So, what was necessary, therefore, for the state was to establish its triadic node and re-establish itself as the state and the fount of law, impartial in its ways. So, while you and I discuss politics, that is the framework, within which we must have the discussion. The triadic framework is a constraining framework within which you participate. So, when you look back, the triadic framework didn't quite collapse with the Sena and the South Indians, which is why there was eventually some kind of rapprochement. However, the triadic framework did collapse when it came to the Muslims you know, and the state again had to re-establish itself. So, this keeps going on in the face of extreme ethnicity, extreme violence. It is so simple and platitudinal to say it now but, at that time, it struck me like a revelation that the state must be seen as a state. It must be something that stands above and governs all. If it is seen as leaning to either side, then language of politics – of constitutional politics – is lost. I'd like to add that when I was studying theSena I had no idea of citizenship but when I did the study on the Sikhs, the idea of citizenship was knocking on the door. The triadic thing was for citizenship, which I later talked about in greater detail in my book on ethnicity in Punjab. It is the triad constituted of the state and the other dyads that gives you citizenship and makes you a partner, just like both of us speaking a same language would. You and I now become citizens because we agree, with the fount of information and knowledge, the state is. But this concern with citizenship didn't come through at the point I was engaging with ethnicity in Punjab it came about later on, when I wrote Learning to Forget The Anti-Memoirs of Modernity and Culture, Space and the Nation-State: From Sentiment to Structure. It was then onwards that I became more conscious of citizenship and I tried to weave all of it back into my earlier work of course retrospectively" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

The increased articulation on questions of rights is a caveat Béteille adds in recent discussions on democracy in India. Many of these assertions for rights

are counterproductive to the smooth running of democracy. The advocacy of rights is based on primordial identities and they are hardly directed towards the creation of full citizenship for the truly disadvantaged but are used by communities to dominate the political arena. The demands for rights for better representation of disadvantaged castes and communities has led to changes in the composition of the middle class but has also led to the deepening of mistrust in public life and the institutions of democracy.

Gupta's thesis on revolution from above and the citizen elite is noteworthy in this context. Gupta (2013) writes that our democratic institutions are only as good as our commitment. He articulates that democracy can prosper not only through fair elections but also needs an elite of calling,' 'who force the state to deliver public services like health, education, and energy at quality levels, to every citizen regardless of class. It takes an active intervention by citizen elite to dig deep and bring out democracy's many potentials.

Arriving at Self as the Other

Human beings have an inbuilt tendency to other. Therefore, democracy is one of the most difficult and unnatural structures to organize. Democracy goes against the natural tendency of man and so does fraternity. These must be cultivated gradually, with the help of structures that perpetuate them till a point, up to when they are finally internalized through socialization. This is a long process and Indian democracy is far from it. It is therefore imperative fraternity, or sharing one–another's fate, is put in place through structures of governance. It is only in doing so that true democracy with fraternity, i.e., "seeing them in us" can be achieved. It is by putting a progressive historical consciousness in place that older inequalities can be forgotten. It is in this that iso-ontology would become a real possibility. Gupta's concept of citizenship, fraternity, iso-ontology and modernity helps us understand this conjoining of the self and the other. This is the final goal in Gupta's project.

In Béteille's writing, questions of equality of opportunity despite individual differences is the way forward for couching ideas of the self as the other through institutions and mechanisms.

(IX)

<u>Outlining the Statist Paradigm</u>

Béteille, whose writings premise itself on the distinction between pluralism and liberalism, notes that while India has been a pluralistic society it does not automatically qualify as being a liberal one, since, most often, this diversity has been organized hierarchically. While "tolerance" of diversity can and generally does contribute to the sustenance of the liberal outlook, it is not, by itself, sufficient to constitute a liberal social and political order. He articulates a liberal framework and nuances the challenges the liberal state faces with regard to individual citizens. Since democracy in India emerged as a result of confrontation with a power imposed from outside rather than an engagement with contradictions inherent in Indian society, these contradictions have continued to be a part of the Indian social order and have given Indian democracy a different character to that in the West. Questions of identarian assertions that characterize Indian society are then to be understood within the institutional frameworks of democracy in India. The chapter then proceeds to dwell at length on the writings of Dipankar Gupta, whose discussions on identities and primordial affiliations are expressed within the format of liberal democracy. Furthering the discussions from writings of the earlier scholar, he goes on to discuss the idea of nation-state as a root metaphor within which the nation-state seeks to take account of its various cultural diversities. He argues that cultural identities in contemporary times cannot be understood without nation-state and elaborates on the concept of fraternity as the lifeline of democracy. As a paradigm then, both scholars through their writings give priority to nation-state, citizenship and democracy, and delineate and further a position that privileges the character of the state and its institutions and, though they talk of civil societies, they argue civil societies only flourish under liberal, pluralist and secular regimes and not under totalitarian ones. However, the

scholars do differ in their understanding of the role played by civil societies. While one argues it ought to be more responsible in its support of causes and not indiscriminately support movements because they are popular, the other opines that civil societies cannot quite substitute for the state and its responsibilities and, unfortunately in the Indian scenario, such a substitution seems to have taken roots, putting state and its agencies off the hook.

The chapter shows the centrality of the structures of state and how it provides for a format for reconciling differences but not at the cost of complete neglect or elimination of culture. Béteille writes that democracy needs to be understood within its institutions. It is through these institutions that questions of identity need to be dwelt upon. Gupta, taking a step or two forward, writes that questions of identity or that of the self-other, when studied in conflict situations, reveal how malleable identities are and that their reconciliation is possible only in the "Big Other" understood by Gupta as institutions of state. Thus, when two scholars are seen as operating within and furthering a paradigm, then one could read Béteille as not addressing or engaging with questions of culture (though he does acknowledge its importance in his later writings) but dwelling at length on the tangible institutions of democracy and only in that looking at identities and Dipankar Gupta as navigating through culture, its metaphors and appropriations and understanding how it is reconciled in its varied meanings within the framework of the nation-state. As a paradigm then, both scholars, through their writings, give priority to nation-state, citizenship and democracy and delineate what we refer to as a statist position, though not at the cost of complete neglect or elimination of culture. The themes of public institutions, rights-trust, minorities and plurality, citizenry, civil society and activism are contextualised within the state-guided democracy. Even when there is the question of intervention and commitment to democratic values, it is top-down and through the echelons of institutions or through "citizen elites." The dyad of the self-other is mandatorily intercepted and mediated by the nation-state. It seems it is difficult, or impossible, to understand Indian society today with reference to the state and its institutions.

In keeping with the stated objective of the research wherein it seeks to understand the paradigms on identity, self and the other from within the framework of sociology of knowledge, the following section attempts to outline some of the core premises that guide the scholarship and worldview from within which André Béteille and Dipankar Gupta write.

We then proceed to summarise and conclude our study.

Some Observations on André Béteille's Scholarship

(I)

Childhood and Youth: The Early Musings of a Comparative "Eye"

Several accounts of Andre Béteille's childhood and biography have been written. He has been articulate about his biography and has several published accounts about his childhood, his early years in Kolkata as a student of anthropology and his teaching and research career. These writings and interviews about Béteille's childhood and his experiences as a sociologist over a period of nearly four decades reflect his own engagement with the discipline and is a testimony to his reflexive intellectual self.

Béteille grew up in Chandannagar and Kolkata in West Bengal. In his childhood accounts he refers to his "peculiar childhood" which he notes has made him unusually sensitive to the processes of social exclusion and which has had mixed consequences for his career as a sociologist. Such a personal background has taught him how to keep distance (Gupta, 2005a: 461). At the age of nine he was sent to the St. Michael's High School at Patna. Béteille writes even a year later he did not quite feel comfortable in the school space. At the end of two years in 1946 he moved to Calcutta with his mother and his second older brother, Nileou. There he was admitted to St. James School. The crowd here was much more diverse than at St. Michael's High school and had many Anglo Indians, Parsis, a few Chinese and a good number of Muslim boys.

He recounts the horror of the great Calcutta Killings of August 1946 and writes that in these circumstances of turmoil he just kept shifting schools till about the mid of 1947 and finally joined the Brahmo Boy's School and finished his matriculation from there in the year 1950. At this school he notes he had to adapt to a new social environment and a new programme of study. He was made conscious of his mixed parentage and although the environment was friendly and welcoming the school lacked in material resources. After his

matriculation he enrolled in the Intermediate Science (Inter Science or ISC) at the prestigious St. Xavier's College in Kolkata.

Much of his accounts of the college days revolve around the new sense of freedom that he experienced. He was finally on his own and without constant shepherding by adults. These were the days that he began exploring neighbourhoods in the posh part of the city of Kolkata. His friendship with a family friend's son Robin brought to him the realisation that the house of his friend's from Brahmo school who had visited regularly during his school days was very different from that of Robin's. He writes this is where he became aware of the various social constraints that characterised the Bengali lower middle class households and that such social constraints were not universal (Béteille, 2012b: 167)

In moving from school to college he notes he was moving from one social setting to another. The class composition of St. Xavier's was different from that of Brahmo Boy's school. The students at these institutions dressed, spoke and conducted themselves differently. However, all his friends whether at the school or at the college belonged broadly to the category of middle class. At the age of fifteen he noted these differences. In the 1950s he writes that the middle class comprised a very small section of the population. There might have been some upward mobility within the middle class but this was not very easily noticeable or openly discussed. Such mobility took place between different layers of the middle class and education played a crucial role in it (ibid: 168).

It was only when he joined St. Xavier's that he had a clearer idea about his career ambitions. He set his heart on becoming a scientist but as he writes it was at college that he realised that he had no real talent for either Physics or Mathematics (ibid: 191). In the year 1952 he enrolled as a student of BSc course in Physics and by the end of the year he realised that he was not being able to cope with the discipline and needed to change his stream of study. Béteille moved to the Science College in Kolkata by June or July of 1953 for studying anthropology where he met N.K. Bose who played a very important role in him becoming an anthropologist. Although he joined the department of

anthropology he kept Mathematics and Physics as his pass subjects as a matter of inertia. To study his pass subjects he had to go to the City College on Amherst Street. As a student of the Anthropology Department of Calcutta University, Béteille was helped and influenced by both K.P. Chattopadhyay and N.K. Bose. He got his first appointment as a research associate in the Indian Statistical Institute right after he cleared his M.Sc. examinations. Bose trained him in many things during his stay at the department. Béteille recalls his arguments and discussions with Bose and notes it was important for Bose to be able to win an argument. Bose was a Gandhian and was critical about Marxism; he would often cast Béteille as a Marxist and argue to expose the errors of Marxism before him (Béteille, 2012b: 241). Bose, he notes, had a significant contribution to his intellectual development. His relationship with Bose was never free of tension- as is the case with all intellectual exchanges between people of two generations. Bose wanted young people to argue with him… probably because it was important for him to win an argument. Béteille writes this might have been the cause of tension between Bose and himself. The other person at the department for whom, writes Béteille, winning an argument was not important was Surajit Sinha. Sinha was a favourite of Bose but not very popular with K.P. Chattopadhyay, because of his wayward behaviour. He was influenced by Robert Redfield and introduced Béteille to him. Sinha had witnessed the new direction Redfield and his colleagues were giving to the study of society and culture and, as Béteille writes, that while his discussions with Bose were on the same lines, it was his discussions with Sinha that put the whole discipline of anthropology into a new perspective for him. He notes that it is from his discussions with Sinha that he understood anthropology was not just the study of tribes but also the study of civilizations and particularly the relationship between the tribes and civilizations (ibid: 242-3). It was Sinha who introduced Béteille to the writings of Weber, who he thought to be an important thinker. Sinha was more a master of the spoken word rather than the written one. Béteille writes that as compared to his brilliance, when he spoke his publications are very few, but he unfailingly charmed with his eloquence and almost anyone who encountered him was in his awe (ibid: 245).

Béteille writes that it was at the University of Calcutta that he grew intellectual wings as he got the company of persons with eager minds. The years between 1953 and 1957 at the University of Calcutta were instrumental in the development of his identity as a sociologist. It was here that he began to develop a new understanding about himself and a new idea of the value of life at an University (ibid: 247). It helped matters that some of his most promising and bright peers such as Amartya Sen, Sukhamoy Chakravarty, Parthasarthi Gupta planned to join academics. At the university he became the part of a circle for whom achievement made in the sphere of science, scholarship, art and literature were the only real things. Béteille realised that a job in the University was a concrete achievement in the domain of scholarship. While at the University he notes that his taste for literature grew and he became aware of his deficiency of knowledge of economics and politics. He took years to recognize the limitations of economics as a policy science and of the policy sciences in general.

During his student years he noticed that affiliation to left politics gave credibility to one's scholarly acumen but he was against any such cult following. While at home he could easily argue against his mother's adulation towards Gandhi once among his peers he had to be circumspect about Stalin with his friend's from Student's Federation. It was believed that association with the Student's Federation or the Communist Party would give one distinct political and intellectual orientation. Such an affiliation was considered to be fruitful if one wanted to have an opinion on various subjects without having to put too much thought to it (ibid:259). While most of these individuals were bright they were bound by their subscription to an orthodoxy, which they did not like others to question. Many who were not members of any party or any federation found it safe to pass as fellow travellers. All this made him feel terribly uncomfortable as his instincts told him that partisanship and scholarship did not go well together but back then he had limited intellectual ammunition to substantiate his claims. His later writings about separation between value judgements and judgements of reality can be traced back to these youthful encounters in the University of Calcutta (ibid).

Béteille's childhood accounts also in a way set the premise for his early in life ability to compare different cultures. In his years as a graduate student in anthropology at Calcutta University he notes how he was never quite a political person although he was surrounded by many who were to say the least fascinated with left movements and possibilities of left politics. Béteille recalls that constant discussions about colonialism versus nationalism at his parent's home during the years he was growing up made him feel that politics was a rather tedious subject. Instead at the university he read widely and freely on prehistoric archaeology, palaeontology, French symbolist poetry and many other subjects. Books on distant subjects held his attention rather than current affairs and politics. His knowledge of French literature gave him a natural upper hand in regular conversations and compensated for his "indifferent understanding of politics" (ibid: 475). Some of the best of the intellectual circle of which he was a part, discussed with equal enthusiasm scepticism towards the Nehurivian state and it's promises, the prospects of Left politics and developments in European and Bengali art and literature. Béteille remained sceptical of both nationalist as well as left politics. He notes that his scepticism persisted due to the tone of certitude that characterised the discussions on left politics in spite of it being subtle and persuasive. Unlike many of his close friends who were Marxists he notes that he was never a Marxist, not even for a day. He recounts "Although I did not yield to the dogmatism of the Marxian system I learnt a great deal from it, for Marxism was not just about politics it was also about an intellectual approach and method" (ibid:476). While Marxist ideology had an intellectual vigour and subtlety Béteille still was outside of this. At the core of it was his dislike for utopia. As utopia would be a state where all problems have been resolved, utopia would be a dull place where conflicts would have been resolved and there would be no scope of ambiguities and tensions. He noted that the idea of the Nehruvian state was unlike the Marxists, as Nehru didn't seem to know all the answers to the big questions and wanted to build a state not on the basis of a dogma but on the basis of experiences to try new things out and take forward the common people with him. Unlike the Stalinist state based on the dictatorship of the proletariat the Nehruvian state in spite of its shortcomings was Béteille's first choice but over the years he notes that there was an

increasing disenchantment with it. Béteille writes that he laid emphasis on fair-mindedness more than on mental agility this he relates to his childhood yearning for fair mindedness between a mother who advocated most seriously the nationalist cause and a father who believed that colonial rule had brought a lot of benefits to India and his study of anthropology which made him realise that it was futile to try and prove the superiority of one form of collective life to any other form of it (ibid: 260).

Post his MSc degree which was awarded sometime early in 1958 Béteille writes that he experienced immense pressure for a job and though he yearned for a position in an academic institution he could not wait to secure a research degree (ibid: 268). He started out as a research associate at the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta where he spent fifteen months from March 1958 to June 1959. During this time he was made in charge of a project in Giridih, Jharkhand. He kept alternating between Giridih and Calcutta although he had an assured salary and the job was comfortable he was not too happy with the situation, as the job in spite of its advantages, was not what he had in his mind. The problem with his situation in the Sociological Research Unit was that he had begun to feel that there was no end in sight with regard to his work and that made him feel trapped.

Amidst this growing dissatisfaction he sent an application for lectureship in the University of Delhi and received a call for an interview. On the 4th of April 1959 he appeared for the interview and was selected for the job. He confessed to have learnt a great deal from his brief sojourn at the Sociological Research Unit of Indian Statistical Institute. It was Ramkrishna Mukherjee more than N.K. Bose or Surajit Sinha who helped him to make the transition from anthropology to sociology. Anthropology as taught in Calcutta University at the time concerned itself with matters that were archaic to say the least. Béteille was interested to find a way of engaging with the real world around him, the world of class, stratification and mobility rather than the world governed by rules of marriage, kinship and rituals. Ramkrishna Mukherjee provided him with an entry into the world and a view of sociology as a discipline with larger concerns than merely that of Indian society (ibid: 290).

In 1959 moving from Calcutta to Delhi brought a much-needed change for him as he had by then begun to feel terribly cramped by the atmosphere in Calcutta.

(II)

Delhi School of Economics:
Teaching and Coming Into Intellectual "Being"

In his article "*My formative years in the Delhi School of Economics 1959-72,*" he notes that while he was not keen on a Ph.D. it was on Professor Srinivas' insistence that he registered for his programme. Srinivas insisted Béteille pursue his research degree and sent him to Tanjore for his fieldwork. Béteille returned from his field in July 1962 and wrote his thesis over a period of seven months, despite a full teaching load. On his submission, he was awarded the first Ph.D. from the Sociology department at the University of Delhi. Srinivas was keen on building a Ph.D. programme at the department. He notes at that time the department was only beginning to acquire an identity of its own and, to sociologists outside Delhi, this had to do with an attachment to fieldwork and the admiration held for British social anthropologists. Although Béteille admired Srinivas's writings greatly, he notes that during his Ph.D. he felt that Srinivas' writings had a narrow theoretical focus and continued to feel so increasingly afterwards. Srinivas, he felt, neglected and lacked a proper appreciation of class, economic forces and Marxism. Béteille wanted to break away from narrow concerns of caste, kinship and ritual and too much focus on community studies; he was keen on exploring newer areas of work and relating them to broader theoretical concerns in comparative studies of society. He felt the need to engage with theoretical perspectives different from his own.

The department "was headed by Srinivas, who combined academic distinction with personal charm. I will not talk about his contribution to sociology, which is widely acknowledged. What is more important is the sense he conveyed to each one of us, of the value of sociology and of the dignity of the academic profession" (Béteille, 2001).

In his article titled *"Teaching and Research,"* he writes that his "professional experience and, to a considerable extent, his personal life has been shaped by his work as a sociologist at the Delhi School of Economics"(Béteille, 2001). He notes that while he values his association with institutions and individuals in various parts of the world, his view of the discipline has been marked by his location in the DSE. As an institution, DSE has responsibilities of both teaching and research, and it has been known for both outstanding research as well as teaching. There is always a tension between the two… in one's teaching one focuses on general sociology, whereas in one's research the empirical research Indian sociologists undertake are confined to India. *"Professionally I have thought of myself as a sociologist first and an Indianist next my self-image is no doubt related to the great importance I assign to teaching"* (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

He notes that...

> *"....the way sociology is taught in our country is somewhat unsatisfactory. This is so because firstly a course on sociological theories are taught where one has to read up on Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Parsons, Merton etc. and then they are exposed to courses on sociology of India where they have to read on caste, village, family, backward classes and so on and so forth* (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

Since he found the gap between these two things unsatisfactory he thought it was essential to think of a way out. Social sciences don't have theory in the way physics or economics have, but sociologists do use a distinct form of reasoning to understand the social world in which they live. This he refers to as the *sociological reasoning* (emphasis added). He discusses how this brings in a different perspective to the study of subjects that are otherwise of common interest to many disciplines. Although he has held many important positions during his career and has headed bodies like Indian Council of Social Science Research and has been a chancellor of two universities, his intellectual self-conception is one of a teacher first (Personal Interview, February 27, 2015).

Some Observations on Dipankar Gupta's Scholarship

(I)

Rites of Passage: A Sociologist's Career

Pre-Liminal Rites

At that time, he was a fresh graduate from Christ Church College, Kanpur, and a keen student of English Literature. His eyes were set on the Indian Police Service. The plan was to "*prepare for my police service examinations. My M.A. would be over by the time I turned twenty and then I could take my exam*"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). It was this plan and the sociology syllabus at the Delhi School of Economics (DSE) that sparked an interest that led to him enrolling for a Master's programme. The syllabus had topics like "*tradition and modernity, caste and Indian village. I felt like I did not know India at all*"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). This was the year 1969 and the Sociology department at DSE was only a decade old, having being set up by M.N. Srinivas in 1959. The department was still a small group of people– "…we were acquiring a distinctive identity, at least in the eyes of sociologists outside Delhi, and that identity had much to do with our attachment to intensive fieldwork and our great admiration for the work of British social anthropologists" (Béteille, 1995:60).

Gupta remembers his days at the school as being full of excitement and thrill. It was here he came in contact with a selection of bright and eccentric teachers, like Andre Béteille, Srinivas and Jit Uberoi, among others, who changed his life. At the "*age of nineteen within seven to eight months of joining Delhi School of Economics I knew what to do. That way I have been very lucky knowing at a very early age what I wanted to do*"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). Any dream of qualifying for the Indian Police Service was forsaken and Academics was now the chosen vocation. Recalling his days at the school, he notes it was here he developed an enthusiasm for the discipline… an enthusiasm still palpable as one interacts with him.

Gupta's formative years in the discipline were shaped by Srinivas, Béteille and Uberoi. Srinivas's preoccupation with caste and kinship and his reliance on

community studies, Béteille's discomfort with Srinivas's "narrow theoretical focus" and lack of "proper appreciation of class, of economic forces and of Marxism" (Béteille, 1995: 61) and exploration of new areas and problems and Uberoi's anthropology influenced him.

The emphasis on culture was suffocating for Gupta, he recalls,

> *"I was fed on all of that through my M.A. and I hated those people I was reading (refers to the likes of McKim Marriott, Radhakrishnan etc.). In my M.A. days I was very much a rebel because we had no other option; we were only taught this. The only person who came as a breath of fresh air was Levi Strauss. We were not taught Marx… the one we came closest to was Dahrendorf and Coser, and they all began by saying they were anti-Marxist. We had no idea what Marx said. In fact, Srinivas once stood up in class and said that if he was asked to teach Marx he'd resign. Even though I was only 19, I thought to myself – is this not somewhat extreme?"* (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

Veena Das writes that it was only after1972, when Srinivas had taken up a position at the *Institute of Social and Economic Change* in Bangalore that differences of opinion among the faculty came to the forefront. Up to then Srinivas had been able to keep a check on such differences. She writes:

> "…it seemed the conflicts over what constituted the foundations of the discipline had the potential of tearing away the department. At the level of pedagogy there were enormous differences of opinion on precisely which scholars should be regarded as the founders of the discipline. As a result of these debates, the writings of Marx came to be included within the corpus of 'classical sociological theory'. There was stiff resistance to Freud and though reference to him was not taboo, his writings were unfortunately not regarded in the department as part of sociological theory" (Das, 1995:128).

Gupta, by then, had completed his Masters and enrolled himself at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems (CSSS) at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

in Delhi for his MPhil in Sociology. These were times marked by the Vietnam War, counterculture movements and youth movements and *"there was an increasing thrust towards the Left movement. Even when I did have a chance to study elsewhere I stayed in JNU because there was so much happening here"*(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). Writing about the larger context of the JNU, Chaudhari notes JNU was formed at a time when "the optimism of post-1947 was waning but the Nehruvian vision was still looming large. Perhaps this contradiction led to the overpowering presence of a student-led Left movement, expressing a nationwide discontent" (Chaudhari, 2011: 161). A product of these times, Gupta reminisces,

> *"I was the General Secretary of the Student Federation of India. We use to run a Marxist study circle where we read and debated issues of our times – like the farmer's movement in west Uttar Pradesh. Both Chandrashekar and Sitaram Yechury were part of our circle. I had SFI on one hand and on the other I was close to a gentleman who has long since passed away – PC Joshi. He was the first General Secretary of the Communist Party of India. He had an office here– the PC Joshi archives, which now the Library here has housed. He took a shine to me and I was impressed by his charming ways. He was a small man but exuding charm… I can imagine what he must have been when he was young and a leader of the Communist Party of India. He taught me many things. For example, one thing he taught me was that it was all right to be doing student politics. In my time, anybody who wanted to be an office bearer of a student's union had to come first in class otherwise not good enough first of all you are a Communist which is already a lot of headwind against you and then if you don't come first in class then where is your credibility?"* (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

Joshi was a constant source of motivation for Gupta. *"It is easy to be a politician and it is easy to be a good student but it is difficult to do both… that is a challenge"*(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). Studying, writing, discussing, debating and having fun in the evenings is how he remembers his days as a research scholar in JNU.

Although the Marxist perspective was dominant in the university in the 1970s, no studies emerged out of the Centre for the Study of Social Systems which was purely Marxist in approach. This was a distinct feature of the CSSS as opposed to the other social science centres in JNU, such as History and Economics (Chaudhari, 2011: 174). Research students were influenced by Marx and critically engaged with his writings but no research was guided by this perspective alone. Thus, "while a Marxist perspective (dominant outside CSSS in JNU) was not evident in CSSS in the 1970s, those students who were influenced by Marxism were largely free to pursue their orientation" (ibid: 164-65).

CSSS was shaped by an amalgam of influences–Nehruvian visions, the liberal sociology of post-World War, modernization and development paradigm and a certain scepticism towards Marxism, closely associated with actually extant socialist states. Furthermore, a "broad anti-colonial heritage was also integral to CSSS" (ibid: 173-4). Students were trained in Marx, Weber and Durkheim– the three classical thinkers – and "even when theoretical debates focused on Parsons and Merton's contribution to functionalism, Marcuse, Poluntzas and Althusser were also part of the reading lists" (ibid: 165). Gupta felt "sociology in CSSS was never doctrinaire. Talcott Parsons was important, Levi Strauss was important but so were Garfinkel and Goffman, Mead and Blumer" (ibid: 174). While it is difficult to say what defined sociology in CSSS in the 1970s, certain features that did characterize it were "broad perspective," an emphasis on 'macro-issues,' a 'shift from a sociology of village studies to social movements', 'developmental concerns' and 'non-doctrinaire' with an emphasis on theory'"(ibid:174). Gupta "contrasted the focus of CSSS on large concerns, macro issues, social conflicts, movements with the Delhi School, which at one point was often associated with what he termed as more 'esoteric' topics" (ibid)

Liminal Rites

Picking up some parts from Levi Strauss and Karl Marx in a rather "idiosyncratic fashion," he notes *"you are what your context makes you and you change your way of thinking, your superstructure depending on the*

context"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). It was this idea and the larger debates on social movements that led him to study the *Shiv Sena* in Maharashtra. The *Shiv Sena* was an instance of a politics of identity that gained remarkable popularity in a short time. This interest culminated in his MPhil and subsequently his doctoral topic. The former was Class Orientation of Political Movements: The Case of *Shiv Sena* (1975) and the latter *The Shiv Sena Movement 1966-74: A Sociological Analysis*, 1979 which looked at the economic condition in which the *Sena* materialized, its class antagonism and class sympathies in terms of its ideology and practice, and the class of people who were attracted to it. The changing nature of Maratha identity and what it meant at different times interested him. Through his MPhil and doctoral theses, and his first published book, *Nativism in a Metropolis*: *The Shiv Sena in Bombay* (1982b), Gupta forwarded the argument that "the structure of a movement should not be viewed as a static phenomenon. It must be seen as constantly reacting in the milieu in which it is set and therefore it has to perpetually devise means 'for the defence and development of the organization itself'" (Gupta, 1982b: 196). Thus, the focus in studying a social movement should be on its organizational and ideological structures because "the internal structure of the movement is closely interlinked to the processual aspects of the movement and by making explicit the former we help to elucidate the latter"(ibid). The criticality of the context in which the movement had to recast itself each time came to the forefront with his study and it is this he wanted to understand when he set out to study the *Shiv Sena* because this, as such, was the sociological analysis that had been missing in the study of social movements. Gupta chose his theoretical framework cautiously, laying out the pros and cons of the existing theoretical frameworks to the study of social movements. The larger theoretical framework of the thesis is a Marxian framework. He adds that his emphasis is more on the actual social bases of the movement and that his study does not quite seek to explicate the entirety of the Marxist framework. Gupta's study thus followed the aforementioned "non-doctrinaire" nature of studies conducted during the 1970s in CSSS (Chaudhuri, 2011) and, while questions of class and ideology were central to his study, the reliance on Marxian analysis was not complete. In understanding the *Sena* he derived his key insights from Althusser and Poluntzas. The perspective he

employs looks at primacy of the economic domain for understanding the origin and dynamic of a social movement. He adds, however, that contradictions of the economy cannot alone lead to a situation of unrest. There needs to be an accumulation of circumstances so that it leads to a rupture (Gupta, 1982b: 27-8).

The same year he submitted his thesis Gupta wrote a piece titled "*The Political Economy of Fascism,*" which was published in the Economic and Political Weekly in June 1977[1]. This paper, notes Gupta, was an outcome of his natural tendency to theory. However, he received rather sharp disapproval on attempting to write a theoretical piece.

> "*…when I was starting, I was still in my early twenties, I wrote a paper on Fascism, I think I called it Sociology of Fascism, or some such thing, for the Economic and Political Weekly and some people were quite horrified, questioning my engaging with theory and insisting I be empirical. I was, at that time, doing my fieldwork on the Shiv Sena… that is why I thought of it, you know. And I was very upset and dispirited that maybe I am going this is not the way academic should behave and perhaps in some way by their lights I was going wrong but I couldn't help myself that was my natural tendency*" (Personal Interview, April 9, 2013).

Gupta's writings are informed by a search for unity between theoretical categories and empirical realities. One of the early ones in his batch to submit his thesis for the award of a doctoral degree, Dipankar waited a while before he got a job

> "*…around 1977 I more or less finished my thesis… P.C. Joshi wanted me to come first in class so I had to work very hard… roughly my M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. was done then it went to the examiners and they took around a year or something...whatever, that is a minor detail but I didn't get a job for a long time and there was no hope for a job either.*

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[1] The essay tried to separate popular value-laden cultural connotations and outlines the structural features of the social and economic co-ordinates of fascism.

Others were getting it and I was very upset about it so Joshi then gave me a job. The same day he gave me a job the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) gave me a job as an Assistant Professor. My first big break but Joshi said your degree is not in your hand...your Ph.D... so stay here just in case some objection is raised by some examiner or the other. So November 21ˢᵗ -22ⁿᵈ, 1977 I got a job. While the TISS job was a permanent job, here, with Joshi, it was a part-time job with no pay on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Then Joshi died...it was very difficult ...you know part time this and that and everybody around me was getting jobs...and I wondered what have I done wrong? Why don't I get one?" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

Post-Liminal Rites

Following an opening at a centre in Surat, which was run by I.P. Desai and Ghanshyam Shah, Gupta was invited by Desai to join him. Desai had already interviewed him at TISS and knew him. This is how he arrived at his first regular job with a fixed pay scale and a provision for pension. After a while in Surat poor health brought him back to Delhi, where he was asked by a friend for help regarding a United Nations project.

"While I was thinking of that and started making my move, an opening came up at the Centre for Social Medicine in JNU. I had written a piece about caste in the Marathwada riots[2] *and the chairperson, Professor Banerjee, liked the article.* He wrote, telling me of the opening. *I asked him if I should apply. He said, "why not? Everybody is applying."* So I did and I got the job and that period was another

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[2]Gupta's piece on "*Understanding Marathwada Riots: A Repudiation of Eclectic Marxism* (1979b), written in response to Gail Omvedt's (1978) article Class Struggle or Caste War?, criticizes Omvedt for advocating an understanding of Marathwada riots as caste wars and not taking into account the backdrop of socio-economic coordinates like the Mahars' aspirations for urban jobs, which led to frustration among caste Hindus, and the inciting sectarian position of Gadhe a Dalit Panther leader, which led to the riots. Gupta opposes Omvedt's overall position that caste beliefs and casteism should be seen as being de-linked from material factors that contribute to its peculiarities. Gupta found the recent assertion and visibility of members of the Mahar community in urban jobs and institutions of higher learning led to frustration among caste Hindus and thus the violence that ensued needed to be understood in the light of other socio-economic factors instead of being seen as just "caste wars."

three to four years of excitement, because I was learning so much in this field of social medicine. The first two years were a particularly steep slope… but a wonderful one. I also had a great colleague – she was senior to me – Imrana Quadeer. She was a great intellectual support. Banerjee could be a difficult man and Imrana was able to help bridge that gap." (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

At the centre, he was persuaded to look at health in a holistic fashion.

"I said that if people are going to Western medicine there must be a reason for it, you know? And then I began to compare medical systems in different traditions and read a lot about health, illness and those distinctions -tribal medicine, non-tribal, traditional, modern. What is good and bad about modern medicine? Banerjee was a critic of modern medicine, though he himself was a trained doctor and one of the most well known alumnus of Calcutta Medical College. The paper on medicine is a culmination of all those readings. I wrote that paper initially and I became more and more committed to the paper as I revised it, because my wife fell ill around 1985 and I saw things closely you know...that was my outlet, that paper. I use to think about that so it helped a lot. That was one paper in which I put a lot of emotion into. That was my first big independent venture into social medicine" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

In 1982, Gupta applied for the post of Associate Professor at CSSS in JNU. He was interviewed by Professor Ramakrishna Mukherjee. In the '80s, when he joined CSSS, studies in social stratification, particularly caste, were in vogue. It was argued that caste was a unique institution that needed to be understood differently from any other kind of social stratification, as those who were at the lower end offered their allegiance and this helped maintain the status quo. Such a discussion made Gupta uncomfortable and led him to the study of caste. He also kept up his interest and reading in social medicine through courses he offered.

"I lost track of that because all that stuff was going on in sociology - caste, kinship - I lost track of it but I used to keep up in my teaching. I

used to teach a course on science and society. It was an MPhil course in which I use to keep up this interest of mine, you know? Then, when I got a chance I wrote a piece in Sociological Bulletin on paradigms and discourses...It was about Foucault and Thomas Kuhn[3]… so then this caste thing came up and I wrote a piece on caste for the Marx Centenary and that was received well by many people. I also found that was, for me, another important turning point, intellectually. Shiv Sena, social medicine and this paper on caste which is where you know I talked about continuous hierarchy and discrete castes" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

The Intellectual Project

Over the three decades of his association with JNU, Gupta engaged with events as they were, writing in "*Engaging with Events: The Specifics of Political Sociology in India*"[4] (1996a) that political sociologists in India have always engaged with events. This sounds commonplace but, interestingly, is not the trend everywhere and in countries that immediate political events lead to scholarly output. This is not to suggest political sociologists in India only wrote about contemporary events and did not engage with the long-term view of India, but research was inspired by the flow of events. This is because "there is a profound concern with political issues among intellectuals nationwide"(Gupta, 1996a: 53). Drawing upon Karl Manheim's notion of an intellectual, he notes:

> "*Karl Manheim said an academic should not be a member of a political party, let's say Congress, because then what happens is that you become inflexible, naturally. You are a great mind, but you have to uphold the party line. An academic should be engaged with*

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[3]Gupta's article presents a case for reading and understanding Foucault's Archaeology of Knowledge and his notion of discourses in the light of Kuhn's notion of paradigms.

[4]The book reviews overall trends in political sociology in India in the 1980s. Upon reviewing the literature of the period, Gupta identifies four broad trends, which emerge in the sub-disciplines. These trends relate to (1) power structures (2) crisis of governance, (3) ethnicity and politics, and (4) peasant or farmer's movements. These, as he notes, are the four broad categories. There are, of course, considerable internal differentiation and variation within each of these (Gupta, 1996a: 24).

politics…should be engaged with social movements and change, you know, but must be engaged and not a party member, you see? ….engaged intellectually, academically, you know? You can even participate and see what's going on. You can comment on things, you can agree, disagree… but you have to be with it, in the whole thing, in the mainstream, as it were, you know, and I like that point very much– that an academic should be engaged with what's going around. Karl Marx said that before you know the essence of things or behind things you start with the superficial and what is apparent to you, to the naked eye. So Marx talked about the commodity, beginning with superficial questions – 'What is commodity?', 'Labour, what is labour?' Then you go on and on and I am just saying Marx because he has said it, but others who do the same thing. All major thinkers and scientists all start with the appearance before they go anywhere. So, I think engaging with events as they go around helps you to get a more profound understanding of deep issues" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

In continuation with this discussion on engaging with events, of which his study on Punjab[5] is an instance, it must be mentioned here that Gupta, through his career, has written extensively in newspapers and continues to do so. As he says, crafting newspaper articles takes up a lot of his time. "*I want to raise the standard of debates in my newspaper articles. The idea is to write it in a way where an academic as well as a layperson can relate to it. I try to put things in a way which has some scholarly aspect without sounding scholarly. I believe in simplifying things, you know? So, without sounding scholarly, if you can put major things across, sneak them in…*" that's the task and "*I do it very self-consciously otherwise I would be writing about things …so and so said this, he said this, she said this*"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). Responding to the comment that his main interest seems to be able to communicate sociology to a non-sociology audience, he notes emphatically:

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[5]Gupta's essay on '*Ethnicity in Punjab: Sikh Identity in a Comparative Perspective*' (1996) was a response in the same vein. The year 1984 and thereabouts were marked by a growing interest in communalism and ethnicity. This was fuelled by the rise of Sikh secessionism in Punjab.

"I think no academic should let his or her guard down. You must first address academically issues to academics to your peers before you go out. You have to have that level of professionalism. You can't say I am a great academic… I don't care for my peers… I don't care for writing in academic journals, you know. I am writing for the masses. That is utter rubbish. You have to first win the respect of your peers, write in these journals that are dull and dreary, which twenty people will read at the most if you are lucky. You know? But you have to win your spruce there and keep winning it everyday. Academics is unforgiving, you know? The moment you stop you are forgotten. So you have to keep on at it and keep winning the respect and then, when you go out, you have that much more credibility" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

In the course of his career Gupta has donned many caps - from university teaching to participating in policy-making bodies and reform committees, and being associated with the corporate sector. He notes, *"…if you say it is all academic, I don't believe it. I think academic work, the good ones tell you what to do in practical terms"* (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012). His teaching led him to simplify thinkers and theories so he could communicate with his students:

"I found that when I taught something I learned the subject better and this is because I felt that that for a good teacher you should make difficult things simpler. I taught pretty technical stuff and technical things. I taught Habermas, I taught Parsons, I taught Manheim, Levi Strauss and anthropological theory. They were all pretty heavy-duty stuff, you know? My attempt always was to make them simple, simple because these guys must be saying something which is basic, which is why they are so important. If you were saying something which is frothy you will last for two or three years, but you won't last the distance because if you are lasting the distance something you are saying is very central, basic that you know it is in the gut. And I always searched for that feeling. Once I got it I was happy. So that is what I liked about teaching a lot… When I joined the corporate world in

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1997-98, I was surprised by how much of Parsons, Levis Strauss, Habermas I was using in my corporate life because I simplified them. I could use them in any number of places. When I was, for instance, heading the division on Accounts and Business Ethics at KPMG, I realised the whole idea there from my point of view was – 'How can you establish a culture in another organisation?' I told myself - in the way the Shiv Sena established a culture… in the way a new caste established a culture… so why don't I learn from that and put it in the corporate context? Then I looked for examples from Hegel, who talked about the philosophy of the Right and about Morality and Ethics. Then I found that if you have to be ethical, you have to keep morality aside because morality belongs to tradition, ethics is modern because ethics is other people while morality is yourself. Then Parsons came in… he was important because he talked about how you are going to make a mistake. Erring is part of action and how you learn through errors and how others are so important whatever you do your cognition is very important. What is your cognizable world in which you are living so you see they are just so central, they were all sitting on my shoulders?" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

Talking about his experience with advisory committees and commissions, he notes these positions needs one to use so much of what is part of one's training in the academic world. Gupta's participation in these bodies have led him to engage with ground-level interventions that have given him insights into his research. He notes, for instance, how it was insightful for him to be writing on village India and transformations in village India and being associated with National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development. Furthermore, there are other commissions he is a part of, like the Punjab Government Reforms Commission, where he says,

"it's very interesting I am still a part of it. What we are trying to do is to extend citizenship services to everybody by bypassing political constraints… and we have succeeded to a large extent. And this is what

I think Arvind Kejriwal[6] should also think about -instead of talking about corruption you talk about what makes corruption difficult. And by looking at citizenship services like we are trying to do in Punjab and have succeeded to a large extent... not a hundred per cent but to a large extent... we have cut down on some of the sources of corruption Patwaris hold, you know? Things like that, the hold junior engineers had and the municipality has over you. If you can get over that, for example in Punjab now in six to seven areas no affidavits are required. So that immediately takes care of so many people who use to be you know parasites. They use to live off you. Now you can just do without affidavits. And these areas where no affidavits are required they don't compromise the law by the way. These were unnecessary add-ons"
(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

In an intellectual biography the location of the scholar always merits attention. These discussions on locations help contextualize the nature and style of scholarship, the audience intended and the choice of themes and theories that engage a scholar. Gupta held, for the most part of his career, the position of a professor of sociology at CSSS in JNU but he travelled widely to Europe, America and Britain, among other places, undertaking teaching and research assignments. Gupta held chairs of great repute at universities abroad. Recalling his visits to universities in the West, he says:

"*I learnt a lot about their societies. Later, in some of my works, I refer to American experiences, European experiences a lot. It was like a new world opening up for me. Going there as a tourist is one thing but going there to work... I use to go there for work, to teach and meet people. I was teaching at DSE at that time and I was going to America for some time, so J.P.S. Uberoi, another cranky chap who influenced my life in the early days, told me that when you come back from America you must present a paper... but don't present one on caste and*

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[6]An accomplice of Anna Hazare, civil society activists who have been in the news recently for their mass-based protests about corruption in Indian states and their demand for enactment of stringent anti-corruption laws like the Lokpal Bill for instituting an ombudsman with the power to deal with corruption in public places.

race… every Indian does that, you know? I want to know what white people do? So I said very well, like I use to find what P.C. Joshi use to say interesting, I found this too very interesting. Yeah, okay white people do let me see? So I went to America and I found that what white people do is that they pay a lot of attention to sport. So then I read up about it and I came to DSE and gave a whole seminar on looking at American society through sport so it was very nice. I looked at Baseball, football and basketball, and then around that time I also got interested in fashion. I was the Vice President of Chanel for some time and I learnt a lot about fashion. I was also interested in fashion which is why I came to that position. And I found that real fashion is fashion when it caters to middle class. That was in my modernity phase, you know? In modernity phase I was studying what is modernity? And I was contrasting modernity with other kinds of systems. And I found that modernity…fashion is an aspect of modernity… so is sport. Sport and fashion are aspects of modernity because in sport there are rules everybody knows. There are no favourites… if you lose a game, you lose a game. You win or lose in the open… nothing is closeted. I thought that it was a very good example of modernity. Fashion again is when you are able to link it with the middle class"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

He spoke extensively on fashion at various gatherings in Delhi but never offered a course on it as nobody seemed quite interested.

"… in JNU there was no room for that. I used to bring it in my modernity classes. When I met fashion designers I realised that those people read everything. A good fashion designer knows all about Roland Barthes! A fashion designer is basically a flâneur. Flâneur is a person who observes. The person also reads like jaywalking... jayreading and observes. Oh! Fashion is a fascinating area. I learnt a lot about their societies. I used to spend a lot of time understanding their society, read their newspapers and I found very often Indian academics in the West don't read about Western things. They are

thinking about India all the time… that's a shame!" (Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

Summing up his research interests over his wide span of career, he notes:

"I began with identity politics yes, but when I look back it is always about tradition and modernity and how the two link. It was Shiv Sena and identity politics, then came Sikhism and identity politics, you know, then came farmer's movement… also to do with identity and tradition and politics and changes in society… farmer movements then, farmer movements now[7], caste then caste now, so it is always something to do with tradition and modernity, you know? That interface and how things that are traditional quote unquote are not so traditional after all…when they are again sort of reincarnated they come forward in a different avatar"(Personal Interview, December 3, 2012).

Gupta, however, wrote extensively on the theme of modernity only much later in his career. His first full-fledged book on modernity was *Mistaken Modernity* (2000c). In his subsequent book, *Learning to Forget* (2005d), he developed the conceptual and theoretical basis for a nuanced understanding of modernity. Upon being asked why he came to write so late on a theme that had interested him so centrally, he responds:

"…it was because of the cumulative experience, number one. Number two, around that time late… 1990's early 2000's… that time India was doing well economically, or so we thought, and the talk in the air was - we have become modern… we have arrived, you know, as a society, as a country, and I found that rather disquieting because it took our eyes off the ball because I thought that here were many other things to be accomplished and this early victory, so to say, was very shallow in some respects. If you rest on your laurels and say oh! We have already arrived, we are a great country... economically rich and we have got the equation right, you know, that's what bothered me a lot…. which is

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[7]*Rivalry and Brotherhood: Politics in the Life of Farmers in Northern India*. OUP: Delhi, 1997.

why I wrote this book[8]. The first book 'Mistaken Modernity' was a culmination of several essays I had written. Then I recast them and the second one was trying to put it across in a fashion which is academically sound, in the sense that you provide a theoretical and conceptual basis for looking at modernity in many ways… first of all in terms of separating the modern from the contemporaneous, which is very important, and what you mean by modern? And if this is what you mean by modern then how do you handle history you know? That is also taken into account. So these questions were at the back of my mind and I had to handle them and I thought the best way to handle them is through a proper full-length book[9] " (Personal Interview, April 9, 2013).

Modernity, writes Gupta, is primarily about equality between citizens. A lot of onus lies on social sciences and humanities to further the cause of citizenship. Referring to the manner in which history is to be understood in order to further citizenship, he notes comparative history provides the way forward rather than a mere chronicling of history. Comparative history helps understand that historical truths are both "time-bound" and "contextual," thereby laying bare the fact that history is marked by stops, breaks and gaps. Historians should further this understanding of history and help forget the past, so the cause of citizenship is furthered. One of the enduring reasons for memories is poverty

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[8]For continuation of similar discussion on demystifying the India shining debate see *Caged Phoenix: Can India Fly?* (2009). The book is a compilation of essays on topics ranging from economic growth in India to middle class, caste and the role of the state vis-à-vis civil society organizations. Gupta rejects the myriad cultural explanation of everything Indian and notes that these explanations provide relief to those evading factual answers to problems which face India today.

[9]In *Learning to Forget: The Anti-Memoirs of Modernity* (2005) Gupta writes thatunlike previous epochs for modernity the golden age does not lie in the past but in the future. Modernity is "ultimately about relations between people and not about traits in individuals. It emphasizes how people relate to one another and the extent to which inter-subjectivity is expressed" (Gupta, 2005d: 38). "The most literal meaning of inter-subjectivity is respect for the subject and for the subject's affective, cognitive, and evaluative abilities (See, Parsons 1964:6-10 c.f. Gupta, 2005d: 32). The reason as to why "nation-states today are internally at war, it is not because modernity is at fault, or that nation-states are in themselves evil, but because iso-ontologies have not been realized in them" (ibid: 33). This allows the people in power to whip up ancient prejudices. "As modernity compels us to look ahead, every lingering prejudice, based on ascription or on accidents of birth, needs to be dissolved. Modernity is not about technology and machines but principally about equality between citizens"(ibid: 43).

and neglect. The memories of the past need to be done away with and made irrelevant to the future. This can be achieved not through will power but needs to be supported with political structures and social processes.

> "When stress is on equality as citizens, then it is also necessary to indicate the terms under which such an egalitarian status can be understood. The single most important factor that can substantiate equality of status as citizens is to make it practical and realistic for all to gain access to socially valuable knowledge and skills. Quality universal education till the highest degree should be accessible to all classes and communities. Neither poverty nor accidents of birth should force us to qualify this principle in any way. Many advanced democracies have gone further along this road"[10] (ibid: 54-55).

In recent years, Gupta's interest has been more towards policy analysis.

> "…*what actually worries me is this idea of citizenship. I am now more concerned about what kind of policies can be put in place to make citizenship work, you know, so that has brought me in recent years to policy studies which I had not done in the past... now I am thinking more about health, education, you know, this, that and the other and how policies can make a difference...how to understand Indian economy so that policies can come out you know.*" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013).

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[10]In his book *Justice Before Reconciliation: Negotiating a New Normal in Post-Riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad* (2011) Gupta discusses the fate of riot victims of Gujarat and Mumbai. The book can be read as an empirical account of what enables people to forget and move on. In rebuilding their lives, he notes the victims were exchanging one kind of poverty for another. An underlying fear continued among these people that yet another instance of riot might strike them any day and take away from them what they have re-built and restored. For most part, the "new normal" they created was no better than their earlier lives in terms of access to better occupation, education or standards of living. Gupta suggests that, "deliberate efforts must be made so that Muslims shed their old demographic and occupational specifics and are able to enter the formal sector and in government services, access educational facilities and enjoy substantive citizenship. This is not an issue that will resolve itself, nor will it disappear if we turn away. 'Hard' developmental issues have to be trained to sort out 'soft' developmental features if the trauma of affected Muslims is to be truly addressed. Only then will the 'new normal' forget the 'old normal' and embrace citizens regardless of religious differences" (Gupta, 2011a: 99).

Responding to a question about the success of the Indian nation-state in being able to deliver to its citizens he notes:

"India has performed very poorly, this is what I have been writing...my book the 'Caged Phoenix' is all about this that – how we have failed to deliver to the people as citizens you know? That book is entirely about it ... another recent book of mine, Revolutions from Above: India's Future and the Citizen Elite, is obsessed with this issue, you know? That why are we not delivering? Where have the citizens gone? In this book I don't use the term minimum set of resemblances again because I want this book to be accessible to the public. Here I argue citizenship demands things so you cannot have targeted programmes.... it has to be a programme for the society. Targeted programmes they don't work because suppose I am targeting programmes for the poor, I am not poor okay, so what interest do I have in that? So I will make the programme, give it to someone and then it will become a din of corruption unless I am involved with it. So that is why I say it should be universal health and universal education and universal energy, not targeted food for so and so and education for so and so, or health for the poor because they invariably end up as poor health and poor education. And wherever governments have done universal health and education, which is in large parts of the democratic world, they have prospered and they did not do...this I did not know then but I know now when I am writing this book ...I realise now I should have known but I didn't realise it and no one quite pointed it out to me that these universal health and education measures were instituted by democratic countries in the West and in the East like Korea and Taiwan and Japan, not when they were rich but when they were poor, you know? So very often this Montek Singh Ahluwalia will tell you we don't have money, current account deficits, all that nonsense but actually if you are talking in terms of this you were to say that there is something called the people... the citizens not people to be served...why are we doing all this? We are doing it for the citizens... we are not doing it for current account deficiency or not doing it to raise our balance for

payment or whatever it is. All those things are there but will these things help our citizens? That is our major role isn't it? We should not get caught up in the technique of it" (Personal Interview, February 25, 2013).

Coming Into Being of an Intellectual Self

A discussion on the nature of Gupta's scholarship is due at this point. Gupta notes:

"*I like committal scholarship...it's like this is it... like Durkheim says sociologicism there is no such thing called a psychological aspect to suicide there is sociological aspect...Levis Strauss talks about nature-culture and the way you can move structures around... Marx, Hegel I really like this kind of scholarship. I thought that Habermas was a weak scholar in this way so was Bourdieu because they are not saying anything new...they are saying the old thing in a be labelled way.... they are not really adding much in my view... some little things were being added like public sphere ...the public and the private this distinction these people have brought to our notice by talking about it but I am not sure if I can call myself Habermasian because as I told you the Lebenschelt (lifeworld) I have some problems with it...so you see I take bits and pieces from everybody I don't have any problems in there....*" (Personal Interview, March 20, 2013). I believe "*if you were saying something which is frothy you will last for two or three years but you know you won't last the distance because if you are lasting the distance something you are saying which is very central, basic that you know it's in the gut. And I always searched for that that feeling. Once I got it I was happy*" (Personal Interview, December, 3, 2012).

Gupta is committed to making democracy work in India. A sense of impatience prevails in his writings. An impatience to see India change and to see democracy work:

"*social change happen because of two reasons one is that there are forces which work behind our backs you know they are in operation*

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and they also happen because certain group of people and this is the Marxian in me...there are certain groups of people, some categories of people who at certain point in time feel that it is certain form of economic organization can be done, can be implemented, conditions are set and if they were to implement it, get into the act then they would benefit a lot. Now if this participation is organizationally superior to the earlier participation then those who were benefiting in the earlier times many of them may also join in right? This is something that is very interesting to me. When it (social change) comes, how it comes hard to tell. So that is why my argument is no matter where you are once you introduce these set of factors then things begin to change. Now the question is how long will it take for the rest of the society to catch up should we let it happen slowly-slowly or because we are democratic we should try to hasten the pace?" So *"there are structures ...it will happen but if you fester it for too long then other kinds of impurities as it were would seep through and then it becomes stronger and stronger...which is why a liberal democracy...democracy is firstly about people voting in their lifetime so they want changes in their lifetime. Right? Furthermore, democracy and modern economies go together ...so modern economies are very fast moving so democracy so lex (rules) must keep track of it*" (Personal Interview, March 20, 2013).

The discussion so far reveals how Gupta's trajectory of scholarship bears the imprint of the times he has been writing in. His engagement with sociology is an attempt to answer the questions of the day more specifically the concerns that plague Indian democracy today. It would not be terribly unjust to say that his writings can be organised broadly under themes of tradition and modernity[11] and in that one very particular concern with primordial identities

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[11]He has written and hopes to write further at length about the tradition of modernity. "There is a tradition of modernity and tradition of modernity which is how modernity has actually done in terms of its career. How it has succeed or not succeeded in the last so many years of its career? If modernity is about relation between people which I talk about then how has that tradition evolved? Has that tradition become more dense or have they become sparse? So if you have an idea what is modernity then you can look at tradition of modernity. And I would say that the tradition of modernity has done very well at least till the mid twentieth century you know? After that it kind of settled and has not moved further... it is moving but not very fast

versus the identity of a citizen or to put it differently the reconciliation of cultural pluralisms and citizenship in a liberal democratic society and finally the sentiment of nation-state vis-à-vis the structure of it's governance and administration with an overwhelming interest in policies and deliverance of the state to it's citizens. It must be added however, that Gupta dwells on these themes by contextualizing them and does not overlook the specifics for universals although, he does confess to having an inclination towards universalising categories.

In our discussion with Gupta and a content analysis of his various writings we proceed to make the following remarks about the nature of his scholarship, the wider questions that he raises and the methods that he uses to answer these questions. Gupta's writings are underlined by the assumption that man is essentially the same everywhere and so are the problems that characterize mankind. Following from Levi Strauss' *Totemism* (1969) he notes that man tends to naturalize differences "'Levi Strauss provides us with all–important realization that humankind prefers to categorize the social world on the basis of natural classification'. While *Totemism* is a very specific phenomenon, I am tempted to believe that the urge to naturalize differences, or to state social differences in a natural idiom, is probably a very general and spontaneous tendency" (Gupta, 1996b: 99). As he notes, "*Well I am using Levis Staruss' thing in saying that when you look at differences our differences are always put forward in natural terms*" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013). But would that not mean that he is essentializing human nature? "*Well, you might say so...it is the anthropological unity of human kind. It is not culturological*

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not as rapidly as earlier. Till the mid 1950's we had sorted out almost everything right to vote, civil rights, minority affairs all those things you know but in some cases you might say these are yet to be fully explicated in everyday life for example there are situations in France today which we thought was modern but there is a problem between the migrants and the French you know? Parisians are those who live in the periphery so these problems are there... so we see these issues coming up so we see a tradition of modernity, modernity in trouble, modernity being taken on by traditionalist forces loosing contemporary weapons you know? So these are the you may say these you might say are the tradition of modernity ...in fact if time allows me I might write a book on that on the tradition of modernity. I think that should be written...modernity is like all traditions modernity is not uni-linear there is a certain logic which is expressing itself and there are breaks, stops, hiatuses challenges ...there are reversals you know? And, so on and so forth" (Personal Interview, April 9, 2013).

but anthropological unity of human kind. It is like saying people eat, people drink, people sleep you, know?" (Personal Interview, February 14, 2013).

The discipline of Anthropology and sociology are committed to unearthing these common characteristics in mankind and not harp on differences or produce exotic accounts of societies. If exoticizing differences is what these disciplines indulge in they defeat the purpose of their existence. Working within such a conception of the discipline Gupta discards the arguments that seek to exoticize India and answer questions about it's progress in the light of the cultural uniqueness of the country (This discussion appears clearly in his book '*The Caged Phoneix: Can India Fly*?' (2009). One of the finest instances of this de-exoticizing thesis is Gupta's writing on caste. Gupta normalizes the phenomenon of caste by establishing that, contrary to what Louis Dumont had proposed that the hierarchy enjoys sanction from those at the bottom as well and what actually was true of the caste system was that there were as many tales of origin as there were *jatis*. Thus seen in such a light caste did not appear as exotic and unique as was made out of it. Like in any other system of stratification those at the bottom never willingly sanctioned their position, there were always tales to tell, tales of deceit, which led them to their current position that they hoped to undo someday.

As he rejects all such culturological, exotic explanations about India what he really hopes to achieve is a way out to help Indian democracy work in the best interest of its citizens. It is here that he notes that India needs to learn a thing or two from the West about democracy and citizenship. While each nation-state has it's own set of sentiments as far as becoming a successful liberal democratic state is concerned the *lexical* elements can be reproduced to achieve a successful state.

> *"There are different ways of getting there but you cannot say there are different democracies. Every democracy must guarantee this. You can't say my in democracy women can't vote or in my democracy migrants are out or minorities are out you can't say that. Democracy is a certain template that has to be followed. How you get there, what laws you put in place for example the laws that we have here*

regarding Scheduled castes could be meaningless somewhere else could be meaningful here because it helps democracy because the end is there right...now which route you take is different because there are different conditions out there as I mention in my book ('Culture, Space Nation–State', 2000) itself that when France had the revolution about seventeen or eighteen per cent people spoke French you know. When Italy became Italy only two per cent spoke Italian right so now they were able to make one language. You can't do it in India because in the meantime you have learned to respect languages, cultures which has happened with democracy's advance" (Personal Interview, March 20, 2013).

He notes,

"*I am a situational universalist. I believe in universalistic categories but I look to put them in situations. That is I may think of Structuralism, Marxism, Heidegger I use all these people but I like to contextualise them in different contexts...western contexts, Indian contexts you know? Rich-poor etc., and my method is a macro-empirical method which is I use macro data for background and empirical, field level data again for contextualising... so I use macro-statistics, census etc. so that I may get a feel and then I use my own understanding of the ground and then I try and see which one holds better. Suppose I tell a story...a story that I keep telling you that so and so said that I am a farmer and then you go and see what they actually do and then you get a better understanding of what it means to be a farmer.... so you have a macro understanding of famer and you have a micro understanding of farmer the two together make sense. You can get more out of macro and micro by putting them together...*" (Personal Interview, April 9, 2013).

"*I don't believe in indigenisation because I am a Universalist but I believe in specifics how to make it specific and answer the question of the day. If the question of the day and the situation are not answered by the universalist framework even after moderately mutating it or so then I reject the universalist framework and the framework that I will opt for*

will not be a framework that answers only this question but must answer other questions as well for example you may have heard of Thomas Kuhn Structure of Scientific Revolution a time comes when the questions that are asked can no longer be brushed aside and put under the carpet you know? Time comes at which point a new paradigm hopefully enters... the new paradigm answers all the questions of the earlier paradigm and new ones so I am ready for that" (Personal Interview, April 9, 2013).

Talking about intellectual influences that have shaped his ideas and writings Gupta notes, "*I have been inspired by different people. I have been inspired by Marx, by Levis Strauss by Durkhiem, Hegel... I take bits and pieces from everybody I don't have any problems in there...*" (Personal Interview, March 20, 2013).

Conclusion

(I)

The study began with the discussion on whether there are paradigms in sociology in general and in sociology in India, in particular. Reviewing the discussions on the use and appropriation of Kuhnian paradigms in social sciences, two distinct usages come to the fore; one, paradigms as a disciplinary matrix or as a shared set of beliefs, practices and commitments; and two, paradigms as an *exemplar* or a puzzle solving activity, within which all research can be reduced and grasped. In engaging with the literature on paradigms in the social sciences, Kuhn's response and the use of paradigms in sociology, it became clear that the Kuhnian suggestion that the crystallisation of paradigms depends on the maturity of the discipline may not be sustainable in the social sciences. The pre-paradigmatic or the multi-paradigmatic nature of the discipline of sociology does not suggest that social sciences are not characterised by researches that have a sharedness of values, domain assumptions and commitments among a set of scholars. It was found in the study that sociologists have for most part used paradigms heuristically, at a meta-sociological level, to map and analyse the broad trajectory of the discipline, as loosely understood in its former sense as a disciplinary matrix. But not all sociologists have been comfortable with such appropriation of paradigms and have argued that the latter meaning of paradigm as an *exemplar* is an equally important aspect of Kuhnian formulation that must not be overlooked. However, paradigms understood as exemplars are difficult to identify in social sciences particularly because there is no clear consensus about meanings of sociological concepts among the sociologists in the manner in which it is among scientists. For instance, the connotations associated with the concept of tradition are many and so the puzzle solving exemplar is difficult to identify in the manner it is present among the natural sciences. Nevertheless, while sociological studies using paradigms in its strict meanings as articulated by Kuhn, are few and far between, the merit of identifying and isolating paradigms whilst arguing that sociology is a multi-paradigmatic

discipline are discernible in sociology at large, as well as in sociology in India. Kuhn's discussion stating that those who are interested in development of contemporary social sciences would find elements in their discipline, similar to those which he collectively labels as paradigms and his admission of the fact that he drew the very inspiration for paradigms from the periodization as it exists in English literature, certainly allows for an exercise in identifying paradigms within the discipline, even if understood differently from how Kuhn used it for natural sciences, which too was inconsistent at times.

There is evidence to show that there has been crystallisation of positions, shared ethics, methodological orientations and epistemological claims among groups of sociologists. In this sense sociology is seen as having several schools of thought, and although there are reservations among the disciplinary practitioners about using the term paradigm, they have nevertheless, used it interchangeably with theoretic orientations and schools of thought to talk about such a crystallisation of intellectual positions. It was also found that one of the central reasons as to why paradigmatic positions were difficult to discern in the discipline was because of the lack of academic freedom within organised departments of sociology in India and the patronising culture prevalent therein and polarisation based on extraneous and non-intellectual factors were responsible for the lack of culture of engaged debates among those writing on similar themes. The study thus proceeded to use paradigms in the manner of loosely defined shared matrices among sociologists in India writing on the theme of identity, self and the other vis-à-vis the nation-state in the period between 1970-2000. It is imperative to mention here that Kuhn in his later works addressed the question of inter-paradigm dialogues, thereby putting to rest the debates on incommensurability between radically different paradigms. This study has also found the task of understanding dialogues and exchanges between the discerned paradigms to be fruitful in the process of addressing its stated objectives. It must also be noted that the debates have for most part, been tacit without overt referencing or polemics thereby, partially validating the claim of invisibility or lack of paradigmatic research in the discipline of sociology in India.

The discourses on identity in the period between 1970s to 2000s in sociology in India were largely framed within the broader discussions of politics of identity, in the context of the Indian nation-state. Such discussions reflected the wider international context within which fragmented identity had emerged as a central issue in social sciences in the face of breakdown of social structures and emergence of uncertainties as characteristics of modern life and in the study of modernity, post modernity and post traditional society in the West. While the earlier formulations about identity assumed an unchanging self, maintaining a continuity of narrative from the past as seen in the writings of Freud and Erickson, who used terms self and identity as manifesting a sameness and an unchanging fundamental sense of who individuals are, the more recent formulations discussed identity as being contextually determined; privileging one aspect over the other and as contingent on the situational specificity. In such articulations the discussion moves away from selves towards self-identification or identity. As has been pointed out by scholars writing on identity in India, the discussions on self and subjectivities have always been rich in the subcontinent, although, there is a conspicuous absence of the usage of the term identity *per se* even as several classifications existed in a complex, stratified Indian society (Jayaram, 2102; Jayaram, 2004). The discussion on identity has been accentuated globally in its articulation vis-à-vis political institutions of nation-state and the processes of democracy and more recently that of globalisation and this has brought centrally the category of culture into the discussion.

The discussion on politics of identity in the Indian context can also be seen as being organised around these two broad formulations of self and identity; where one set of scholars are seen as drawing upon the continuity significance of community and culture in shaping selfhood and identity, while the others are seen as positioned in a manner that privileges the contextual specificity of identity in relation to a necessary and bigger entity as the nation-state. In the course of this study however, it becomes clear that what prima-facie appears as a sharp contrast between these two positions is not an absolute division of cultures or traditions vis-à-vis nation-state where one is ignored for the other. The point lies in which is more fundamental and robust context for shaping the

self- culture, community or the nation-state and it's modern institutions. All the thinkers deal with or, have a position on the same set of concepts and thus we see different paradigmatic perspectives on the same objects of analysis. It is seen that often they are referring to similar historical and social events and entities. The writings of the chosen thinkers draw upon theories of self, of instrumentality of political identities, of contexts and social coordinates, of civilisation and cultures, of states, nation-states and civil society; nuancing each of these, as they theorise about politics of identity in the Indian context during the stated period. This is why each of their writings provide a unique assimilation of concepts and theories which are worthwhile to engage with carefully, from within a framework of sociology of knowledge allowing for an examination of a tacit dialogue in which they appear to be engaged.

The study opens with a discussion on what we refer to as the 'culturist position' whose foremost representative is Ashis Nandy. He is labelled as a culturist in this study as in contrast to a "traditionalist" or a "nativist" as he has been classified by those writings on communities and identities in the context of culture and politics in India (Jodhka, 2001). In Nandy's writings, one can see a dominance of notions of civilisation and culture, as crucial categories in understanding selves and the manner in which the Indian context in particular and the South Asian context in general provide for a distinct formulation of politics of identity.

Beginning with a discussion on colonisation in India and the changes it induced in selfhood among the Indians, Nandy discusses the process of hegemonisation by a singular civilisational universal, that of the West. This he argues has altered the traditional world-view of Indian civilisation that gave primacy to self-realisation and believed that it led to a better understanding of the 'not-self'. It has also reduced the importance of subjectivities in understanding and negotiating with the world at large. Nandy's position re-envisions plural worldviews which challenge the hegemony of the West. In doing so, he brings in centrally the notion of culture, which he articulates as lived realities. It is in cultures and lived traditions that the plural conceptions are traceable. Culture in such an understanding becomes a resource for common people to articulate their selfhood. Positing his arguments at the

intersection of cultures, societies and personalities, Nandy brings back into the discussions on identity the rich theorisation on selves and subjectivities in the Indian subcontinent.

Nandy draws upon Erickson's discussion on development of the self, and even as he is largely understood as a psychoanalyst, by his own admission, uses Freud in an intuitive and a metaphorical manner (Lal, 2000; Personal Interview, 2013; Deftereos, 2013). He opines that for a number of years, his model was quite close to that of Frankfurt School- of Marxism or psychoanalysis, which he found to be very useful, in particular the writings of Adorno and Marcuse and some of Erich Fromm (Lal, 2000: 28-29). He found Marx's theory of alienation very interesting as it allowed for subjectivities in an otherwise "mechanistic" model that Marx proposed. In his debates with Freud and Marx and his selective borrowings from Erickson and the Frankfurt school, Nandy went on to articulate a theory of identity that can be best classified as that of cultural selves. He writes, culture and traditions in a society provide an on-going continued language in a civilisation and any discussion that wishes to address politics of identity must start from here. The self is a microcosm that contains within itself socio-cultural-politico dynamics of a society; and identity is merely a matter of *atmaparichay* (self-identification) in a given context. The self is a much deeper, layered concept within which individuals find the resource to navigate in their everyday lives. This is crucial, as it provides a framework for understanding confrontation, negotiation and reconciliation that occur upon the selves' interaction with the larger systemic forces. Such a discussion on identity politics recognises the superficial instrumental- rationality of identity conflicts as devised by those who wish to leverage political benefits in a modern context, which is a consequence of clear breaks from the civilisational pasts of a society and reflects the rootlessness and alienation that need to be compensated for, by the modern urban individuals. This is also critical because as opposed to the bifurcation between selves-others, instrumental rationality-emotions and means-ends, that the western modernity has unleashed, the non-modern cultural selves provide a language of continuity, hosting others well within the selves in intimate friendships and animosity, allowing a manner of thinking

and being which is not classifiable as rational alone, and keeping the possibility of an unification of means and ends open.

In such a discussion on politics of identity the processes of modernity are seen as vectors within the self and discussions on alternative conceptions of politics, state, time, memory, histories and tolerance are invoked to re-envision the hegemonising modern utopias of progress, nation-states, nationalism and secularism. This theorisation allows to look at selves of societies and communities as containing within them cultures and traditions as living forces that are constantly negotiating and trying to stay resilient in the face of global forces of massification.

Close to the culturist position is the non-dualist paradigm as discussed in this study, and as represented most clearly in the writings of JPS Uberoi. The non-dualist paradigm expounds on breaking the dualism between self and the other by bringing into the discussion the language of oneself. Examining the specificity of the dualist European modernity, Uberoi examines the lesser visible but omnipresent non-dualist worldviews within Europe which look at self as united with the cosmos in its consciousness, reflection, lexis and praxis. Uberoi writes, the corrective to the dualist western modernity and its polarised politics is a search for structures that support cultural and political pluralism and which can combine differences with equality. As opposed to the idea of one land, one language, one faith and one state he proposes that human beings are pluralist by nature. Uberoi expounds the non-dualism contained in Sikhism's martyrdom and Gandhi's *Satyagraha* which conceive state and religion in a non-dualist framework or as he puts it, in a framework of unity in variety, which had been altered by India's encounters with British colonialism. Both Sikhism and Gandhism challenge the inherited dualism of collective and individual, state versus power and disclose the true centre of self-rule, self-sacrifice and self-reform (*Swaraj*) in order to re-establish unity in variety in relation to self, the world and the other through the method and practice of non-violent actions. Uberoi sees religion and civil society as sites of self-realisation.

Using Lacan's discussion on original moment of birth, rebirth or creation of the development of opposition of self and the other and the separation and differentiation of *you* and *I* which is simultaneously accompanied by the development of a solidarity of the plural 'we'; Uberoi formulates a conception of the self which represents unity in duality. In such a formulation 'you' and 'I' have the ability to exchange places with one another and even to exchange their respective selves, one for the other, through the conception of oneself, as seen in the use of the impersonal pronoun 'one' as employed in English language. The writings of Uberoi bring to the discussion on identity, the formulation that self- identity is never self-explanatory but a gift of the other and the unity of the self does not exist in itself but instead, it is reducible to the other of its other(s). Translated into the political domain, such an understanding of the self and the other means that the non-dualist paradigm rejects the simple duality of self and other and nuances it, by providing a political possibility for a pluralistic arrangement. The non-dualist paradigm furthering the culturist thesis of rejection of simple duality of self and other, nuances it further by providing a political possibility for pluralistic arrangement where civil society emerges as a site of pluralistic customs and traditions. Uberoi's work does not seek to explain modernity as disjunction between state, religion and society but as an on-going dialectical process between the three, as mediated not alone by religion nor state, but by civil society where individuals come together both for their self interest as well as for the reproduction of society. Civil society has practices which affirm the project of the state as well as those which challenge it. It is through self-management that civil society manages questions and problems common to human beings. Customs and traditions are understood as the mainstay of collective conscience or sensibilities of civil society. Both the culturist and the non-dualist paradigms offer a discussion on self and the other as rooted in every day categories.

The third emerging paradigm that of the statists, as represented in the writings of André Béteille and Dipankar Gupta discusses the instrumentality of identity politics and the quintessential malleability of culture which is used variedly to construct an "other". In contrast to the culturist and non-dualist paradigms as

discussed above, the statists argue that selfhood in India needs to be understood within the parameters of secular citizenship. Culture in their view is not a fixed entity and is appropriated in multiple ways, depending on the context. Discussing instrumental politics and the appropriation of culture in constructing the other, the statists discuss nation-state as a cultural space. They argue that nation-states have their metaphors within which other meanings play out. A nation-state is not a mere territorial entity, it is a sentiment and once it comes into being, it cannot tolerate any diversion from the root metaphors that underlie it. People have to be socialised self consciously into accepting the identity of citizenship. Culture is understood as not a meaningful whole but as a subscription to very specific root metaphors, which are learned and which play out only within a specific space. Conceiving cultures as metaphors allow an understanding of how there are inconsistencies in the manner in which culture is understood and plays out. Culture as metaphors are significant to understand not only the different manner in which they are appropriated but also, how for instance, Sikhism's martyrdom and militant version can co-exist depending on regnant meanings attached to it at different times. The statists discuss the nation-state and its structures as an on-going process and the question of identity, the dyad of self and the other as mediated by the Indian nation-state and it's institutions.

Drawing upon Levi Strauss, Gupta who is discussed in this study under the statist paradigm notes that, Levi Strauss provides us with all–important realization that humankind prefers to categorize the social world on the basis of natural classification. While *totemism* is a very specific phenomenon, he argues, that in general the urge to naturalize differences, or to state social differences in a natural idiom, is probably a very general and spontaneous tendency among human beings. Gupta then refers to the anthropological unity of human kind; not culturological, but anthropological unity of human kind which argues that people everywhere do the same things. The discipline of anthropology and sociology are committed to unearthing these common characteristics in mankind and not harp on differences or produce exotic accounts of societies. If exoticising differences is what these disciplines indulge in, then they defeat the purpose of their existence. Therefore, cultural

specificities, customs and traditions are not of value until they can say something universal and general about human societies. Béteille's articulation of sociological reasoning which must be universal rather than specific, argues for the same. Working within such a conception of the discipline, Gupta discards the arguments that seek to exoticise India or Indian civilisation and its selves. The earlier paradigm's focus on culture, customs and traditions which appear as resources to counter modernist categories of nation-state, nationalism, secularism then appear differently in this framework. Gupta draws upon Lacan's formulation that the imagery of the self does not develop independently but in a space that is socially mapped. The specular image is based on a *meconnaissance* or misrecognition which allows it to appear rounded and unruffled; but for the image to appear smooth and without breaks, the image needs coordinate points outside, in the social field. Following from Lacan then, the self-image comes into being in a healthy fashion only when there is a triadic setting for it. The "name of the father" provides the triadic node without which there is only the *imago* which is restlessly in *jouissance* with it's constructed other. This name of the father or big 'Other' is the provided by the framework of the nation-state within which all constructions of politics of identity must be discussed and resolved.

When cultural diversities free themselves from past and present themselves as spaceless artefacts, or as alternative lifestyles, they might become compatible with nation-states. Nation-states alter the scope of prior cultural affiliations and memberships. The manner in which community sentiments are expressed in modern nation-state therefore, cannot be understood without factoring the specifics of the nation-state in question. Nation-states believe that they speak in the name of all and are therefore embarrassed when faced with recalcitrant communities with their different cultural practices. Cultural identities in contemporary times cannot be understood without nation-state. Statists proceed to argue that seen in this way the protection of threatened minority communities is provided by their status of being equal citizens in a nation-state and not by assurances of protecting their cultures. Nation-states take account of cultural diversity by relying on its root metaphors. As long as the root metaphors of earlier cultural spaces can make room for supra local community

by making adjustments and the extent to which it can make these adjustments will determine if the diversity can co-exist within the nation-state. Diversity by itself is not a virtue but once it is tamed and opened it may be of value. It is following from this understanding of diversity that Gupta proceeds to argue that understood as such the protection of minority communities from persecution and threat, can be seen as emerging not from their needs to being qualified and recognised as cultures which need to be preserved and protected, but from the sense of confidence that they have as equal citizens of a nation-state. The greater the diversity, the lesser the success of nation-state metaphor in those spaces, the more traditional and backward a society tends to be. Unqualified support of diversity for sake of diversity is anti to the root metaphors inaugurated by the nation-state. The nation-state is a relatively recent form for organising the state. The culturist paradigm notes that, the state is an instrument of a civilization and not the other way round. The culture-oriented approach tries to demystify the traditional reason of the state i.e. national security. The advocates of this approach believe that national security can become unrelated to people's security and may even become a threat to the latter. The advocates of this approach believe it possible for a state to represent a confederation of cultures, including a multiplicity of religions and languages. To each of these cultures, other cultures are an internal opposition rather than an external enemy. This also distinguishes between political participation and participation in state oriented politics i.e. between *lokniti* and *rajniti* and it stresses on the former. Such participation seeks to bring different sections of a society within politics without bringing different aspects of the society within the scope of the state. In the non-dualist paradigm too the discussion revolves around state instead of the nation-state. It begins with the discussion on Indian modernity in the context of Sikhism which, in contrast to Hinduism and Islam did not separate spheres of religion, state and society. It is not the rule of the state but the self-rule of the community that shows the way forward. The separation of state-civil society- religion as established by European modernity is seen as reconciling itself in both Gandhism and Sikhism through self-management. It draws upon Gandhism and notes that the national freedom movement of *swaraj* meant essentially the self-reform and self-rule of civil society and *Ram rajya* was to bring the rule of salvation-in society, viewed as

self-management in politics of the institutions of civil society rather than of the state.

(II)

Each of the paradigmshas a nuanced understanding of culture. The statist paradigm, which is often deemed to have neglected culture, does not exclude it from its worldview but has a clear understanding of the changing meanings of culture. It is in its understanding of culture as a metaphor that it explains the plurality of meanings that culture gains in different contexts. The notion of the root metaphor allows for shared meanings among those belonging to the same culture and the appropriation of the meanings is shared as well as contextual. In doing so the paradigm clarifies the argument that cultures and traditions do not have fixed meanings, instead they gain their meanings through shared frames of reference. This then allows for explanation of plurality of meanings in appropriated cultural idioms at various points. This is the manner in which the paradigm also provides an explanation of identitarian movements and their cultural appropriations. The notions of root metaphors are also used to explain the parameters and meanings of a nation-state. It counters the notion that cultures have relevance and meanings which are fixed since the very beginning and argues instead, that cultures and their assertions change and so need to be analysed contextually. The culturist paradigm enters the discussion on culture as not an artefact or a product extracted and alienated from its people but as a living language for negotiating with the global forces of homogenisation. Culture, it is argued holds the potential for negotiations and protests. The culture of nation-states has colonised the world but that in no way suggests that other forms of non-invasive states do not exist. The culture of those who are oppressed includes a recognition of the world-view of the oppressor but it is not necessarily the other way round. The crusade is to include within the imagination of the oppressor, the language of the oppressed. The paradigm warns against management and selective use of cultures, instead it argues for culture as resilience inbuilt into the ethnomethods of societies. The non-dualist paradigm looks at the question of tradition and culture in the context of

religion. Negating the dualist position of separating state from religion it notes that it is not the rule of the state, but the self-rule of the community under guidance of *guru* as illustrated in Sikhism that slices through the western theologist's dualism of tradition and modern. In the Indian modernity, the state must learn to live and let live under a regime of pluralism, and even to tolerate other sovereignties, free and responsible, besides its own society. It makes a case for unity in variety and is an advocate of plurality. Customs and traditions are understood as the mainstay of collective conscience or sensibilities of a civil society and it is through self-management that civil society manages questions and problems common to human beings.

Closely discussed with the notions of modernity is the idea of tradition. The statists paradigm looks at traditions as cumbersome and counter to the idea of modernity. It critiques the plea to analyse Indian traditions as unique and distinctive. Tradition must not be understood in its antiquity but it's inter-temporal filiations of the beliefs and practices constitutive of it. There is a plurality of traditions in India. The adherents of this paradigm argue that the lack of a democratic tradition in India makes it challenging to transform a society of castes and communities into citizens based on equal consideration of individuals. They opine that while the Indian social tradition is a pluralist one it is not a liberal one as this diversity was organized hierarchically. The paradigm also states that history, tradition and culture cannot be the entry points for a sociological understanding and that one needs to be cautious of traditions and should look at its malleability contextually. The paradigm does look to distance itself from primordial traditions, however, there are slight variations in this for instance, one strand in the paradigm seeks to do away with traditions, so that it does not interfere with building a modern democratic state while the other seeks to explain through the usage of the concept of "root metaphors" the varied meanings that traditions gain in different situations.

The culturist paradigm understands cultural traditions as representing the accumulated wisdom of people and argues that, such wisdom does not automatically become obsolete as a consequence of the growth of modern science or technology. Traditions are not to be understood as being museumized but living and thriving. The paradigm does not suggest a return to

past or tradition but looks at past as being in continuity with the present. The traditions need to be read as open texts rather than as a closed book. The Indian civilization has survived not because of one, true interpretation of the texts but because of varied, improper and deviant reinterpretations. The Gandhian understanding of living with traditions rather than defending them and of inculcating some elements of modernity in it is adhered to by the paradigm. In the non-dualist paradigm it is argued that India represents a plurality of traditions. Indian modernity is not understood as a point of disjuncture excepting that it is seen as the break in the dualist understanding of the state versus religion. The paradigm argues against the "traditionalists" who don't acknowledge the need for deconstructing the concept of tradition and who show ambivalence in the manner in which Gandhi understood Hindu tradition alongside non- Hindu ones. The paradigm looks at how Gandhi produces out of traditions and customs a modernity of India's own and brings with it a reformed tradition of pluralism referred to as vernacular democracy. It critiques the traditionalists who do not perceive any need for radical self-reform in the Indian reconstruction of modernity nor of any deconstruction of the concept of tradition.

Modernity is engaged with by all the three paradigms although it is not necessarily the entry point for all the paradigms but it is certainly against the backdrop of modernity that the concerns of identity are articulated. Non-dualist paradigm starts out with a conception of modernity as a temporally and spatially specific cultural product that dates back to the period of Reformation of Church in Europe. The genesis of this version of European modernity is seen as having led to the separation and bifurcation between the relations of the subject vis-à-vis the object (discourse) and that of the whole vis-à-vis that of the parts (structure). The conception of a non-dualist understanding of structures and discourses and of truth and method were brought to an end within this version of the European modernity. And the other forms of non-dualist conceptions of being and of knowing were only traceable to the less popular strands which appeared as an "other Europe" and from within the "others of Europe". The paradigm engages with neglected texts to find unity and struggle of opposites and the forms, rather than their simple opposition in

this context it engages with the writings of Paracelsus where the principle of cooperation and complementarity is articulated. The paradigm discusses Sikhism and Gandhism which it refers to as integral to understanding of Indian modernity since it rejects state established religion and religion established state as enemies of the civil society and proposes combining religion and politics. Dualist bifurcations and its uniqueness as a modern pathology is also articulated by the paradigm. It is in the scheme of sustaining modernity and its institutions that violence is seen as being unleashed. This paradigm associates human degradation as a fall out of the hostility of the self towards one's own culture which has been a characteristic of totalizing ideals of modernity. Modernity has its set of ideas, values and institutions; however, it is in the dependence on these values and institutions that societies have obliterated the alternative understanding of pasts and futures which provide the resources for alternatives.

In the statist paradigm, modernity is discussed extensively and it is argued that it marks a break from the earlier epochs in providing a prospect for iso-ontology. According to it modernity is an on-going project but must not be confused with overt morphological attributes such as technology, urbanization or adult franchise. The direction of modernity is such that it dissolves past diversities and leads to homogeneity which allows for greater degree of inter-subjectivity and creation of a public sphere. No society inhabits a non-hybrid time –span this means that while there is modernity on one hand there would also be other kinds of contemporaneous time scales simultaneously. Gupta refers to these as contemporaneous diachronies. The project of modernity gains different kinds of salience as it moves through a stream of contemporaneous diachronies. The main idea is that the project of modernity can be forwarded through normative interventions once it's goals are set.

The specificity of European modernity and the discussion about alternative Indian modernity are discussed. Together the three paradigms discuss the varied aspects of modernity, its specificity bound to the context of its emergence and its teleos. There are three distinct ways of assessing European modernity's viability in providing insights and in shaping Indian society's experience with the same. Against this background discussion, all the

paradigms have delved deeply into the concept of tradition, not necessarily only as countering the modern.

The discussion on time is addressed by the paradigms under study not only in the context of tradition and modernity but as an integral concept in negotiating with the past, present and the future of India. In a discussion on identity, historical analysis does take a centre stage. Past offers a resource to frame the present concerns and the future directions. The Indian nation-state is a fairly new one and has had to deal with various primordial affiliations from the past. In such an instance, the statist paradigm does look into questions of traditional affiliations and argues that these are not timeless constructions but are open to contextual modifications. The memory of such affiliations from the past often create impediment in the path to building a future which offers equality of opportunity in a democratic nation-state. The proposition to move from a nation of people to a nation of citizens can be achieved only by less dependence on past and more emphasis on selective memory and forgetting. For the culturist paradigm history establishes a neat framework that exhausts ambiguities and seeks to provide a certitude which also, translates to an inevitable and certain future. A distinction is made between principled and unprincipled forgetting. It is noted that principled forgetting is often taken to be against the project of history whereas unprincipled forgetting which suggests that forgetfulness is not random and is shaped by ideology and defence mechanisms is acceptable. The pasts are to be read as marks, scars, memories, experiences and adaptive resources within personalities not as records. Both the paradigms emphasize on forgetting albeit with very different visions of future. While the statist paradigm has in its larger frame, the idea of a desirable society, it does emphasize on the notion that an ideal society is never a finished product it keeps evolving. In this sense then they label themselves as anti-utopian since achieving the ideal would leave no more room for changes. The culturist paradigm looks at futures as open possibilities and is wary of utopias since utopias can be overarching and usually don't have an inbuilt criticism. Future should be understood as a way of coping with hopes, fears and anxieties. Different visions for future are at loggerheads in the public

domain. The desire is not limited to only constructing the past but also the future.

(III)

The discussions on the paradigms articulated by the chosen thinkers reveal insightful and original ways in which fundamental sociological categories such as state, nation-state, civilisation, culture have been conceptualised in Indian sociology with each paradigm placing relatively more emphasis on one aspect while according a place for the other aspect. They draw upon freely from international scholarship, yet it is evident that there is a creative deployment and interpretation of the notions of self, other, identity and so on based on the experience of South Asian societies. It is also noteworthy that the conceptualisation by all the thinkers discussed here are not 'ontologically blind' as several mainstream theories are. Rather they are alert and acutely sensitive to the unprecedented social experiences of the Indian subcontinent. In this respect the paradigms and the thinkers presented, do offer a framework to grapple with the persistent issues relating to the nation-state and it's vexed relationship to culture and community that could be extended to other context anywhere in the world. The discussion on identity, self and the other during the decades under study can be seen as crystallising around key positions. While these positions may not necessarily qualify as paradigms proper, they do provide some of the broader outlines within which these discussions were discussed and written about. It can therefore, be argued that the culturist, non-dualist and statist positions can be understood as representing schools of thought on identity, self and the other in the Indian context.

The delineation of the intellectual divisions on the theme of identity from the vast body of writings in the Indian context took considerable effort. There is no doubt that some more interviews with the scholars would have enriched this study but due to paucity of time it could not be undertaken. A second order analysis only of definitions was also not possible as the thinkers themselves preferred to retain broadly defined concepts. Also, this thesis has not attempted a systematic critique of the thinkers, rather juxtaposed them in a way that they

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will be mutual critiques. Around the later part of the nineties, feminist and Dalit sociological perspectives gained ground. The scholars discussed here, have it in common that they were subject to criticism by feminist and other scholars. But this is beyond the purview of our objectives.

Despite these limitations the study is significant in its contribution to analysis and consolidation of existing paradigmatic positions on the given theme of identity in the stated period but it is limited in its scope and is not an exhaustive account of all writings on the theme during the decades mentioned, as that would merit a study much vast than the one attempted. There are also shortcomings in the study undertaken, particularly with regard to the fact that the study due to its primarily theoretical nature, superimposes a framework on the writings of the scholars. However, as stated earlier it proposes to be an exploratory study and does not aim at finality. Finally, unlike disciplinary histories, the study makes an attempt to map, identify and consolidate theoretical positions on a theme an exercise that has been seldom attempted in sociology in India.

It is our earnest hope that it would be possible in future to carry out such conceptual exegesis on critical themes in Indian sociology and such attempts could facilitate a vibrant debate on fundamental categories underlying paradigmatic positions, even if for a specific period.

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