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Bridging the Gap between East and South East Asian Nations”

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## THE WORD WARRIORS AND THEIR IMPACT

*Regional press is holding ground despite onslaught of television*

**T**he Hindi newspapers in the national Capital and the surrounding areas have lost much on the joy of experimenting with the language. This loss of initiative has been fallout of the market leader's policy to encourage use of English words in the texts and even in the headlines. They have even gone to the extent of using English words in Roman scripts thus totally losing out on creativity in the original language.

Some years back I remember several Hindi walas including Pankaj Pachauri, the current media adviser to prime minister and Hindi Akademi vice-chairman Ashok Chakradhar at a get-together seconding then HRD Minister Kapil Sibal's 'thoughts' on Hindi needing to build itself to meet the challenges of modernization. It belied my understanding then how challenges of modernization and market could be met by hitch-hopping on another language.

Though I am opposed to the Hindi language taking a 'puritanical' tinge especially while being promoted as 'Raj Bhasa' (language of the state), my travel through Bihar last month to cover the poll campaign in the state which is politically extra-ordinarily surcharged, convinced me that the designs of the market leader and desires of the Sahibs like Sibal and his courtiers cannot take away from the practioners of the language their creativity and originality. I was particularly happy to notice that most of the Hindi language publications from the state have resisted the lure of English and worked on making Hindi language market friendly on its own strength then hitching a ride as some others would desire.

The potential of creativity in giving the headlines and coining new words increases manifolds during the polls given the sharp exchange between the political rivals. While there were sharp exchanges during the earlier polls too but during those days there would not be saturation television coverage of the campaign. Now with the camera hovering in every possible nook and cranny, the uttering of leaders even not meant for public consumption are also finding its way to the public domain.

Despite such saturation television coverage, the newspapers have still retained their position of early morning news messenger thanks to the scribes in the regional Hindi press devising means of serious reportage and witty use of language. During your reporter's tour of Bihar, BJP's candidate from Nawada Lok Sabha seat Giriraj Singh came out with his famous 'heart beating for Pakistan' comment for those opposing projection of Narendra Modi as party's prime ministerial candidate.

While the general coverage of what he said, how the Election Commission reacted, how an FIR was registered against him and how he managed an anticipatory bail was done, what caught my attention was a headline on how the EC issued fresh set of guidelines. The witty headline said, *'Aayog ne kaha Bayanveero par lagelagaam* (The poll panel said word warriors should be reined in).'

Now I could not think of a more appropriate term than 'word warriors' for the genre of politicians that the likes of Giriraj Singh and Azam Khan represent. In fact the advent of television and its inability to exercise discretion in broadcasting footages received has given rise to this class of politicians. Without being word warriors likes of Digvijaya Singh, Amar Singh, Baba Ramdev and several others would have never made to the 'iconic' positions but for the self-inflicted disease of verbal diarrhea.

Discussion on word warriors, however, should not make us digress from the discussion on the ability of the regional Hindi press to be creative and be full of potential. In fact some of the words they coin very aptly summarize a political or social trend. Some elections ago I recall, the

Hindi press in Bihar coining the term, 'Vote Katwa' (Who cuts into a vote).

With the rise of regional parties and coalition politics coming to stay, the role of these 'Vote Katwas' cannot be over-emphasized. In these elections too, the role of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi and Janata Dal (United) in Bihar would be closely followed as 'Vote Katwa'. It would be interesting to watch to which of the two protagonists - BJP-led NDA or the Congress-led UPA - they cause more damage.

It is difficult to find an equivalent phrase for the 'Vote Katwa' and 'Bayanveer' in the English language because these words symbolise trends which is exclusive to the Indian context. Somebody did suggest that an existing equivalent for 'Bayanveer' could be paper tiger.

The phrase paper tiger was first prominently used by Chinese leader Mao Zedong to describe American imperialism. 'In appearance it is very powerful but in reality it is nothing to be afraid of; it is a paper tiger.

Outwardly a tiger, it is made of paper, unable to withstand the wind and the rain. I believe that is nothing but a paper tiger,' Mao had said.

In later years Communists came to address their opponents indulging in pamphleteering and issuing statements to the newspapers to counter the Left-propaganda as paper tigers. However, the phrase was coined and used in times when television was not in vogue. The word warriors, on the other hand, are a creation of the television era. A paper warrior could burn midnight oil to draft a statement whereas a 'Bayanveer' is quick witted and delivers in the split of a second.

If I was to for a takeaway from visit to Bihar, I would say an exposure to a very witty, intelligent and exciting regional press effectively holding ground despite the onslaught of the television. I am sure same must be true for all the other language press across the nation.



Sidharth Mishra

18 MAY 2014

# secretary's desk

The past quarter has brought many a success for the Centre for Reforms, Development and Justice (CRDJ). While the last issue of journal received immense appreciation, we also continued with our endeavours to organize seminars and workshops bringing academicians of varied hues together.

Our president continued with his lecture travels into hinterland and abroad, contacting academicians and researchers in our endeavour to bring their research work to the fore. It's our endeavour that The Discussant should look beyond Delhi in scouting for research papers and articles.

In the intervening period our president travelled to Sumerfit School of Business, UCD, Dublin (Ireland) to present a paper at a conference on Responsible Leadership. The conference among others was addressed by Prof Ed Freeman from University of Virginia.

On his return he travelled to remote Sheopur in Madhya Pradesh to deliver a lecture at the UGC-sponsored seminar on Quality Higher education. A few days later he spoke on the same issue at UGC Academic Staff College, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

On 21 March 2014, our Centre in collaboration with Forum for International Management Networks organised a day-long workshop on 'Emerging Paradigms of Engagement between Japan and India: Bridging the Gap between East and South East Asian Nations' at India International Centre, New Delhi. A well-attended conclave of academicians and representatives from the corporate sector, the workshop through its various sessions examined the potential of trade between India and East and South East Asian Nations. The selected deliberations of the workshop are being published in this issue of The Discussant.

18 May 2014

Dr Sanjeev Kumar Tiwari

# CONFUCIUS, THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR

PROF. KASHI RAM SHARMA\*

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) the Latinized name of Kung fu is the tallest thinker China ever produced. A great mind like Confucius either belongs to the tradition of Rishi or Raja. It is an irony of history that the Rishi also entertains the ambition of becoming a Raja. These two worlds - the world of Rishi and the world of Raja - are not mutually exclusive. Confucius went from prince to prince seeking a ministerial position to implement his vision. He failed in this mission. At last, he started his own academy and became China's first private sage teacher. For about 20 years or so, he mentored several hundred pupils. Of these 72 became very famous, who, after his death, dominated China's political and philosophical discourse. After his death, some of his pupils recorded and edited his teachings. In Chinese they are called the 'teachings and saying of Confucius.' When the European Jesuits (members of the Jesus Society) reached China and translated Chinese classics into English language, they nick-named his teachings as Analects. These teachings were originally inscribed on the oracle bones and bronze vessels and it was only in 8th century AD, when Chinese invented printing press and paper that these philosophical thoughts of Confucius could be printed in the book form. These books became most sacred classics of China.

It was during the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD) that Confucius and his philosophy was adopted as the official creed of China. In the last two millions, he ruled over the minds and hearts of Chinese people. The Master argued that all the key questions of life -- both private and public - are essentially moral and ethical questions. Central pillars of his philosophy were compassion, righteousness, truth and propriety. The attendant virtues were filiality, integrity and sincerity. He taught that 'Man is the Measure of Everything.' He advised his countrymen to avoid going to this extreme or that extreme. A balanced man, he preached, should follow the 'golden mean'.

It is noteworthy that he did not have either a God or a religion. Morality was not linked to the divine. He did not establish any church nor created any Pope. Even the Confucian temples in China were constructed several centuries after his death. In a word, he was secular and yet sacred.

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\* Formerly head of the Department of East Asian Studies & Dean of Social Science, University of Delhi

To regulate society and polity he scripted his ethical code of five cardinal relationships; between the Raja and Praja; between father and son; husband and wife; between the elder and the younger and lastly between the two friends. Confucian thought - alone could survive in the competition between the so called, one hundred schools of thought in China. Some of them were called Taoists, Legalist and Mohist. The thoughts and sayings of Confucius, in the last 2,000 years have become Confucianism. Scholars wrote commentaries, they reinvented it and those scholars re-legitimised it. You visit any Chinese family, urban or rural, literate and lay, rich or poor; you would find sacred classics of China in his house. In a word, Confucius has remained the conscience-keeper of China.

In his two thousand years plus career, Confucianism has faced many challenges. Two of them became life-threatening. First serious challenge was when Buddhism travelling on the silk route reached China in the 1st century AD. It reached through Central Asia. By the times of T'ang dynasty (618 - 907 AD), it accepted a huge acceptance in China. Hundreds of Buddhist scholars from India went to China to preach and teach Buddhism. They settled in China, learned Chinese language and translated most of the Buddhist Sutras in Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan language. The Indian Buddhist monk and scholar Kumarjiva (340-413 AD) was forced to migrate from Sinkiang to Chinese. He translated above 100 Buddhist Sutras into Chinese. The story of two former Buddhist travellers to India is well known. Pha-E-Yan (4th-5th Century AD), stayed in India for 15 years and carried with him several thousand Buddhist Sutras and Commentaries. Another notable Chinese traveller was Huang Sang (602-667 AD) who travelled to India in search of Buddhist knowledge.

It was the Mahayan (Greater Vehicle) School of Buddhism which impressed the Chinese. China's literature, philosophical discourse, arts and architecture all were deeply influenced by Buddhism. For the first time, China realised that some other country -- other than China -- is also civilised and cultured. In this case, India was the teacher and China was the learner. It appeared that Buddhism would eclipse and replace Confucianism. This did not happen. A Chinese Adi Shankar was born. His name was Chuxi (130-1200 AD). He was basically a Confucianist, but highly influenced by Buddhism. He synthesised and harmonised the two. China accepted it and it was called neo-Confucianism. It was this neo-Confucianism - a mixture of Confucius and Buddha - which travelled to Japan, Korea, Indo-China and several countries of Asia. The Buddhist Dhyana became Zen at the hands of Japanese innovator, hence the word Zen Buddhism coined.

Confucianism faced a tougher challenge in the second half of 20th Century. This time, the challenger was Mao and his Marxism. Mao abused, ridiculed and banned Confucius teachings. He was called a feudal Thinker. China's ills and inadequacies were attributed to him. During Mao's so called Cultural Revolution, millions of Red Guards were let loose who destroyed thousands of Confucian temples and Buddhist pieces of art. This time, Sinologists were convinced that Maoism - Marxism shall expel Confucius for good. Many knowledgeable people - Chinese and foreign - concluded that Mao shall replace Confucius.

Again, this did not happen: Mao is dead and Confucius is reborn. China has authentically rejected both Mao and Maoism. Confucius has become the national need of China: China has realised that no nation can become a great power without possessing any soft power. China has accumulated a huge hard power. What is China's hard power? Her economic muscle, her dollar reserves, her defence forces, her atomic weapons, her aggressive and aggrandising foreign policy are some of the examples of her hard power. She possesses negligible soft power. How an authoritarian and repressive state can have any soft power ...? A reborn Confucius can give her lots of soft power.

Chinese government has started about 2,000 Confucius centre worldwide. Within China, Confucian and Buddhist temples are being reopened and repaired. Chinese people in millions are visiting these temples. In the year 2012, many million more people visited Confucius grave in his village than people visiting Mao's revolutionary Mausoleum. This restoration and rebirth of Confucius has been named as New-Neo Confucianism.

Chinese people are expecting two things from this revival. First, as taught by Confucius, the Middle Kingdom should follow the middle path and avoid the extreme policy option. Secondly and more importantly, this time, China people hope that Confucius do not come alone. He should bring MR Democracy with him. This is the only way China can claim that Chinese democracy is 'Made in China'. A Chinese Professor friend of mine asked me a tough question. How can India be of some help in this regard?

# **MATTERS OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND DEFENCE: AGENDA FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT**

**BRIGADIER C S THAPA\***

## **INTRODUCTION:**

**W**ith the general elections being conducted here in India domestic issues do take centerstage, while certain important events which pose an international challenge before the new government assumes office get brushed under the carpet. Some important events such as the impact of Crimea on the Indian sub-continent and the Afghan elections do have a bearing thus demand greater scrutiny which this paper aims to cover. The forceful manner in which the Russians occupied Crimea and the lessons it may have for India do need serious consideration. China has long been assertive on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), how will India reacts and does it give birth to more questions than answers? American President Barack Obama while speaking to students in Brussels said that changing national boundaries by force is long lost, yet the Americans only gave moral support and not too harsh sanctions. The polls in Afghanistan have a direct impact on events here in India. What sort of government will emerge and how will the drawdown of the Americans affect the Indian nation.

Traditionally India has relegated matters of defence thus there is a need to mention a few more events in passing before discussing these two events. The lack of a naval chief is not considered an emergency yet the speed with which his resignation was accepted it seemed a national calamity had fallen on India. Does the loss of flight MH-370 is a security threat to the country? India abstained from the United Nations vote on Sri Lanka, a much needed policy correction. The general elections of 2014 are going to be a landmark election in the country. The reasons are many. Some of them are -- a new assertive leadership may emerge, caste is no longer at centerstage, secular credentials are going to be redefined, the much awaited change of the old guard. In spite of all these, the national security can never take a back seat.

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\* The writer is a former Indian Army officer and analyst on defence and strategic affairs

## **LOSS OF FLIGHT MH-370**

The loss of flight MH-370 over the Indian Ocean has grave security ramifications for India. The United States was attacked on 9/11, with aircraft flying from various destinations and hitting certain pre-designated specified targets at will. The 26/11 terror attacks took place in Mumbai after breaching sea. It's a combination of an aircraft flying over sea. Flight MH-370 could fly in at 50 feet above sea level and hit any one of the cities, be it Kolkata, Madras, or Vizak. It was last tracked over the Strait of Malacca from where effectively it comes under India's area of influence yet all reports coming out are of French or Chinese satellite, the flight could have gone anywhere up to Diego Garcia Island in the West which the Americans hold up to the Spratly Islands in the East which the Chinese claim, while currently the Southern extremity in the Indian Ocean is where all search is taking place. There has been no discussion on the security ramifications of the loss of this flight in India and there are many allegations flying thick and fast on the internet that there is more to it than what meets the eye about this flight with cloak and dagger stories doing the rounds<sup>1</sup>. The fact of the matter is that Indian cities both on the Western and Eastern sea board are very vulnerable to such civilian flights and India as a nation has enough security threats, yet 'we have eyes that see not and ears that hear not'?

## **FOREIGN POLICY CORRECTION**

India's abstention on the United Nations intrusive human rights violation against Sri Lanka has been welcomed by all political affairs' commentators. In an article published in leading English daily, G Parthasarathy, a retired diplomat and again a former army officer, states that the nation was being held hostage to domestic policy, and India's good effort was going unrecognised. India has poured Rs 8,000 crore worth of effort, yet domestic Tamil vote bank policies kept it away from exercising full potential on geostrategic issues in its immediate vicinity. With this act the UPA-II has at last corrected its earlier negative policy, however, the various pacts with Bangladesh are still held hostage to another regional parties. It is hoped that with no Tamil backlash this overrated regional centric policies will take their correct place when seen with respect to national interests.

## **ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA: ROLL OF EVENTS WITH BACKGROUND**

Crimea in military history is best remembered for 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', immortalised in a poem by Lord Tennyson, showcasing how the British charged the Russian forces during the Battle of Balaclava on 25 October 1854 during the Crimean War, while the current response is no mad rush against the Russians but economic sanctions. There is a long history, but with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine became an Independent state, formalised with a referendum on 1 December. With the 2004 enlargement of the European Union, Ukraine now became an area of overlapping spheres of influence of the European Union and the Russian Federation. When the Soviets were weak, the Europeans tried to build their influence and Crimea was a Red Line to the Russians. This manifested in a political split between the 'pro-Russian' Eastern Ukraine, and the 'pro-European' Western Ukraine, leading to an ongoing period of political turmoil, beginning with the 'Orange Revolution' of 2004, and culminating in 2014 with the 'Euromaidan' uprising and the Crimean Crisis, in which the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol voted to detach itself from the Ukraine and seek accession to the Russian Federation. Succinctly put it's about area of influence while the world watches.

The Crimean crisis is an ongoing international crisis principally involving Russia and Ukraine. Most developments apply to the Crimean Peninsula, a multi-ethnic region which until February 2014 was administered by Ukraine as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the administratively separate municipality of Sevastopol; both are populated by an ethnic Russian majority and a minority of both ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. Currently, the Crimean Peninsula is administered by the Russian Federation as the Crimean Federal District. There was political turmoil with

both the West and Russians accusing each other of forming an illegal government, but the Russians used force and beginning on 26 February, pro-Russian forces, many of which were widely believed to be Russian military without insignia began to gradually take control of the Crimean peninsula, currently the Russians hold Crimea by sheer force and the response of the West has been sanctions which are not very severe as most countries are dependent on Russian oil.

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

One of the biggest lessons from Crimea is lessons in force asymmetry; can a big power do what it wants with force in its area of influence? Writing in 'The Washington Post'<sup>2</sup>, 'Lessons from Crimea', David Ignatius presents a world view. Is there an Indian context to this act? The West is only talking of sanctions but not tough enough sanctions because they need the Russian oil and harsh sanctions will become counter-productive. The biggest lesson which is emerging that in the current international environment with America waning might is still right in the 21st century. How mighty is India on the LAC with China? There have been more than 500 violations till reported about six months ago by the Chinese and India has only diplomatically protested? Will it work? Last year the Chinese pitched tents in an inhospitable area in Ladakh, will Crimea give them any such ideas, and they understand and know that force asymmetry equitations are different in the China-India context. The Chinese are achieving against India what they want without firing a shot, how will India respond post elections? The West and NATO which egged on Ukraine against the Russians are missing in action except diplomatically, they say use of force will be counterproductive. America is withdrawing from Afghanistan. They will not support India against Pakistan because they have to withdraw heavy equipment through Pakistan, and as far as China is concerned the American trade is heavily dependent on China. All this implies it will be a harsh hot swelter summer in Ladakh followed by Arunachal this summer for our soldiers. Internationally today most countries are preoccupied with good governance and providing economic reforms, all leaders are looking at domestic issues, its only Putin who is trying to gain a handle through muscular foreign policy. India needs to have adequate forces and defence spending is only US\$ 37.15 billion, in comparison to Chinese defence spending at US \$131.57 billion. India is far short of the Chinese, a situation as bad as in 1962, no wonder the Henderson Brooks report is still kept in the wraps. Writing in 'The Tribune' Harsh V Pant<sup>3</sup> brings out the great disparity in the defence budget of the two countries. The rise of China is forcing the Americans to have a pivot in the pacific India needs to handle this issue deftly.

China is a growing super power and sees military modernisation as a way of making its presence felt. The PLA is asserting itself and has recently reorganised itself on India's borders. Earlier there were the Lanzhou Military Area Command which was responsible for Xinjiang and Chengdu Military Area Command which was responsible for Eastern Front, it is now rumoured that a single, 'Tibet' Military Area Command (MAC) is coordinating all forces against India. The Chinese have always been assertive whenever they have been strong thus with India in deep transition the nation needs to doubly careful and in case India does not have a clear cut majority government. The sub-continent is currently undergoing pre and post-election paralysis, emerging leadership is still to find its correct bearing, it may be a good time to fish in troubled waters, as internationally that is the best time to make hay, but India too has a tradition of standing united whenever the chips are down.

The Pakistan-China nexus presents a joint threat to India and Ladakh specifically. Pravin Sawhney<sup>4</sup> is of the opinion that the impact of Afghanistan on Kashmir as the Americans wind up will give two broad options. The first is that as expected there will be status quo. What has changed now is that as argued by the author China has come out openly in favour of Pakistan, by declaring that it does not have a border with India. With the Russians acting tough in Crimea and force asymmetry between India and China there is a precedent of force in the 21st century and a lot depends upon

how the Chinese feel the Indian will react. Whichever government comes to power at the Centre it is going to have to set India's defence policy and arms policy urgently at high priority.

## **ELECTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN: IMPACT ON DEMOCRACY**

The Afghan elections are one of the biggest success stories unfolding and a lot will depend upon how the election commission handles the associated problems of complaints and rigging in post elections scenario. People's faith in this institution will only be reinforced once the complete process through which it may involve a run off for one of the candidates to secure a clear majority of 51 per cent. The initial results will be promulgated in the first week of May and if the second stage takes place the final result by June and a new President in by July. As of now the people of Afghanistan have spoken. A record number of 7 million voters have casted their votes against the 4 million that voted during the last elections. This is a clear 60 per cent voter turnout which is very energetic for a country where the Taliban had issued orders not to cast vote, and inclement weather only added to people's woes, yet women too came out in large numbers. If the entire process is successful than both Pakistan and Afghanistan will for the first time have a democratic transition. This is going to be historic considering that General Pervez Musharraf too is standing trial before the judiciary in Pakistan. Most of us were of the opinion that this region would implode post the American withdrawal but there are signs of hope.

The Americans may be withdrawing from Afghanistan but they are also pivoting in the East, thus changing their focus to check China. The withdrawal of the Americans will cause a strategic imbalance in this region. India will remember the Americans because they gave stability to this strife torn region. As a regional super power which India aspires to be the first thing that needed to have done was anticipated this power vacuum and prepare itself to fill in this void as and when this takes place? Instead India has been like the grasshopper which played and danced during summer and when the winter came was found lagging. These years of peace have not been optimised by India's strategic community; the power vacuum not anticipated and today India dreads the American draw down and the much anticipated result is that the jihads will start to flow in J&K. It presupposes that China and Pakistan will openly join hands and the India as nation in ten years' time has inflicted a two front threat upon itself and created a half front jihadi threat all this in a nuclear environment. The American draw down and the rise of China have to be seen as one event in India and not two separate events, it may be two separate events worldwide, but the ramifications and the time frame in which it is happening on India's border it is a single event.

India needs to strengthen its bonds with Afghanistan as pointed out by Larry Hanawer and Peter Chalk<sup>5</sup>. The authors point out that for years India has played a low profile role it's time to contribute more. India has to play a more robust role in Afghanistan to further its own interests, thus forcing Pakistan to look westwards, and should improve its military footprints including lethal military equipment, if anything needs a debate it should be 'whether India needs to station certain troops in Afghanistan for purely training purposes, once lethal weapons are supplied. This will force the Pakistan establishment to look westwards, but to guard the nexus building up between China and Pakistan, status quo will not work. India pays a stellar role in training the Afghan Army. India currently trains around 200 cadets per year to become officers in the Afghan Army and a host of others are being trained in various other fields, thus the core manpower is being built up before the withdrawal of the US and NATO-led troops by this year end. There is a phased transition as brought out by Vishal Chandra<sup>6</sup> and the process is irreversible yet the Afghan security forces gave a befitting account of themselves in the recent conducted elections. It is stated that they defused around 120 plus incidents which the Taliban were trying to disrupt the polls in Afghanistan. What sort of staying power will the Army have and what sort of residual forces are left behind will depends upon who signs The Bilateral Security Agreement which lays down how America will remain committed post 2014.

## **ELECTION RESULTS AND ITS FALLOUT ON INDIA**

One of the biggest fallouts of the election results is that the process of democracy is stronger in Afghanistan than gauged, which is a positive sign for India. The people of Afghanistan have spoken, it is now up to India to ensure that hope of democratic transition carries out in Afghanistan. The Chinese too want to curtail terrorism as they are directly affected, so also, is the two timing nation of Pakistan, the positives coming out need to be encashed. It can thus be seen that these events in our neighbourhood do demand immediate attention something that recent preoccupation with elections has made the Indian nation miss. To India, it really does not matter much which personality wins the election, what needs to be understood is that India will continue to do business with whosoever comes to power, for its own national interests. The Taliban have to be prevented from controlling Afghanistan and then looking eastwards towards India. These elements need to be curtailed and sidelined in that area lest they poison the atmosphere in India.

## **THE EFFECT OF THESE EVENTS ON INDIA**

The impact of these events are definitely there on our foreign policy and whichever party comes to take charge will have to quickly deal with these events. In its parting shot the UPA-II has set right India's policy with Sri Lanka and left the next government some leverage. As far as the ill-fated flight is concerned, India needs to ensure safety of its citizens by all means and what is required is a proper security audit against a wide range of threats from a lone terrorist, misguided aircraft, to nuclear armed neighbours. There needs to be a policy correction with Bangladesh regarding all pending treaties. India needs to correct the noises made by the RSS regarding Hindu kingdom of Nepal as it interferes with the internal affairs of a nation, especially one which is in deep turmoil. The Indian subcontinent is today in a flux regarding boundary disputes and lack of a visionary leadership that can lift this entire region out of poverty and economic backwardness. Most of these issues are doable. What is not stated is that the area has just had a fresh set of elections, there are new governments in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the entire subcontinent or rather the international community is looking towards the biggest democratic show here in India and the result thereof. The fact of the matter is that the long election process and India's preoccupation with the same will ensure that the next government has to board a running train and let's hope the government does not slip in the process as the defence expenditure is a mere 1.72 per cent of GDP which is dismal. If there is a silver lining it is the response of the people of Afghanistan to the elections. It is presumed that the Taliban will only divert to India once they are certain of events in Afghanistan but the way the people of Afghanistan have responded it seems the Taliban have a long way to go. The status quo in no way factors the lessons that other nations may have learnt from Crimea, thus India needs to act swiftly before it is too late. As far as Crimea is concerned force is not might and India needs to be warned regarding the China-Pakistan nexus on her borders. There is an urgent need to have more forces deployed on the borders and give greater autonomy to field commanders to meet unforeseen contingencies. In an inhospitable terrain and under national media scrutiny, the only friend that a field commander has is adequate reserves in the form of troops and good infrastructure to boldly move them around.

## **CONCLUSION**

One of the issues that come out after a perusal of all election manifestos is that except for the BJP which has given some signs of a muscular foreign policy, all parties have no new ideas of foreign policy. India needs to set its policy right in its immediate neighbourhood a foreign policy that economically links these countries and brings down the level of distrust. There is an old saying 'Time and tide wait for no man', thus the Asian century in which India will acquire centerstage is upon us. The legacy of the past needs to be corrected. India needs to move on into the 21st century, lift its people out of poverty, and take the entire sub-continent forward. This cannot be done from a position of weakness,

**MATTERS OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND DEFENCE:  
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nor a domineering big brother attitude which India is accused of. The best situation is peace, but that only comes at a muscular price, when people know that India means business, and has the political will suitably backed up and ensured by its ability to use force, which it maintains through domestic indigenous industry. Foreign Policy has usually meant the big countries, but India first needs to come to terms with its immediate neighbours'. Foreign policy documents being the last priority CRaja Mohan<sup>7</sup> correctly states that the foreign policy sections of the various parties manifestos seem after thought but he correctly concludes on a positive note saying 'BJP manifesto's vagueness on foreign policy could be his big opportunity'.

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2. The article was reproduced in The Hindu "Lessons from Crimea", by David Ignatius. Most literature coming is from the west and most are talking of the impact on international affairs. The Russians had well planned and got results out of proportion. The March 24 decision by seven industrial countries to suspend Russia is not surprising.
3. Harsh V Pant states India defence modernization is faltering and China's military transformation should be taken seriously.
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# ZOLA WITH AND WITHIN NATURALISM

**ROSHNI SUBBA\***  
**RUPALI JAIN\*\***

**R**ealism and naturalism are enmeshed together; the distinction between these two movements is unclear. In the second half of the 19th century, the emergence of naturalism does not mark a radical break with realism; rather the new style is an extension of the old. When realism seeks only to describe subjects as they really are, naturalism attempts to determine 'scientifically' the underlying forces (i.e. the environment and heredity) influencing the actions of its subjects. The advent of naturalism also marked the positivist age. It was an age of faith in all knowledge which would derive from science and scientific objective methods which could solve all human problems. The artificiality of both the Classicism and Romanticism in the academic art unanimously got rejected and necessity to introduce contemporary art found strong support.

Naturalism as an outgrowth of realism started in the 1840's and almost lasted for less than a century. The evolution theory of Charles Darwin influenced the naturalist writers to a great extent. They believed that one's heredity and social environment determine one's character. As already pointed out naturalistic works were opposed to Romanticism, in which subjects received highly symbolic, idealistic or even supernatural treatment. The naturalistic school came from the French novelist Emile Zola, the writer who formulated in a grandiose but inspiring manner, its principles and objectives. Hence, naturalism is the embodiment of realism and science mixed together. Naturalism was, in fact, an attempt to relate the discoveries of 19th century European scientific thought- a system of ideas which has almost remade the modern world- to the literature of the time. European naturalism attempted to dispel the superstitions and prejudices of its own period; to see human character in a pragmatic light, and social environment as it actually existed.

Zola developed his theory in what he called *Le Roman Experimental*, he along with later naturalist American writers such as Frank Norris, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, and James Farrell, tried to present their subjects with an objective scientific

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attitude and with elaborate documentation, often including an almost medical frankness about activities and bodily functions usually unmentioned in earlier literature. Naturalistic works often include uncouth or sordid subject matter. For example - Emile Zola's works had frankness about sexuality along with a pervasive pessimism. Naturalistic works exposed the dark harshness of life, including poverty, racism, sex, prejudice, disease, prostitution and filth. As a result, naturalistic writers were frequently criticised for being too blunt. They tend to choose characters who exhibit strong animal drives, such as greed and brutal sexual desire, and who are victims both of their glandular secretions within and of sociological pressures without.

From the very young age of 19, Zola had dreamt of becoming a great magus, a great prophet. 'In my opinion,' he wrote Baille on 25 July 1860, "the poet's role is to be a regenerator that of a man devoted to human progress. What he advances are admittedly dreams, but dreams that ought to be turned into reality. If God will only grant me the inspiration that I need, I stand ready." (Walker 78). He had come over the years to accept many of the supreme values of his time. Nature, life, love, fecundity, work, truth, progress, force, in the nineteenth century was the things that held sacred. But in themselves they did not constitute a religion or even a vision of reality. They could at most provide a nucleus, a hypotheses, many exceedingly tentative, some barely conscious, that were associated with them in his mind formed no system. As before, his ideas were in a state of turmoil, like angry windswept clouds. To create a world out of chaos was his major pre-occupation. After reading Montaigne most of what remained of his Christian faith had evaporated, included even his belief in individual souls. Occasionally, he still lost himself in romantic reveries of a vaguely religious character, but in his serious thinking romantic idealism was giving way to the increasingly widespread cult of science.

For Zola, subjects appropriate to naturalism could be those based on scientific findings, in which the playwright establishes real character and allows them to interact according to 'inevitable laws of heredity and environment,' and those which faithfully record events observed in real life. Zola feels that instead of imagining an adventure, complicating it, preparing stage surprises, one should simply take from life the history of a being, or of a group of beings, whose acts can be faithfully recorded.

When he was about to start with his L'Oeuvre, he discussed the image of his hero Claude Lantier:

I want to portray the artiste's struggle with nature, the creative effort that goes into a work of art, an effort of blood and tears to give one's flesh, create life: always battling with truth, and always defeated, the struggle with the angel. In short, I will recount my own personal life of production, this perpetual, painful act of giving birth. (Walker 174)

Zola went on giving vent to his passion for truth, science, reality, his hatred of aesthetic absolutes, his rejection of any one arbitrary ideal of beauty, his passion for the present, he confessed more eloquently than ever before his love and veneration for Paris, the city of progress:

Its immense drama is what attaches me to the great unfolding drama of our times, the lives of its bourgeois and working class people, its whole restless, floating population whose grief and joy I burn to record. It is my brother, my big brother, whose emotions touch me and who cannot cry without bringing tears to my eyes. I feel it rocked by the immense labour of the century; I see it about to give birth to a new world, and my proudest wish would be to cast it, all warm and full of its titanic task, into some gigantic work of art. (Walker 82).

SIL also known as style indirect libre was the method of writing which Zola explored. In L'Assommoir, Dubois has shown the detailed study of Zola's use of SIL. Zola's method is very different from Flaubert. Zola managed to avoid irony for the most part, while maintaining the characteristic language of Parisian faubourgs. By allowing his characters to speak in their own words, Zola relinquishes authorial control, giving them the freedom to express their own characteristic attitudes, thoughts, and feelings. Thus, Zola not only eliminates the interventionist role of the narrator, by his distinctive use of SIL he also refuses the creationist operation of the author generally betrayed by stylistic features like phrasing, composition, choice of terms, or irony. Zola's desire to tell the language in the language of the people requires the author to renounce his own personality completely, that is, to retreat from the hitherto sacrosanct domain of narration proper.

Zola seems to have dropped his considerations of naturalism as applied to painting while they were still in embryonic stage,

perhaps because even he could see that they differed too little from already accepted principles of realist painting. None of his criticisms published in French either before or after his association with Vestnik Evropy use the term naturalism in connection with painting. The naturalist school declares that art is the expression of life in every way and degree, and to reproduce nature to the fullest, it is truth balancing with sciences. But again, no painting can be fully natural; the artist is bound to make tiny distortions to create his idea of a perfect picture if he is bearing the clear aim of replicating nature.

Zola mostly wrote novels, but sought to reform the play as well. He felt the theatre was fifty years behind the novel and was a victim of worn-out conventions, in his words, 'the last citadel of falsehood.' The real enemy of naturalism was not Romanticism, but the well-made play. Zola loathed the distortion of psychology, which was 'necessary' to create sympathy for a character in the well-made arrangement of exposition, intrigue, complications and satisfying resolution. In its place, Zola advocated plays which would avoid the complications and startling reversals typical of the 19th century and substitute the depiction of human beings caught in the coils of fate. Inspired by Balzac's *La Comedie Humaine*, Zola too starts his *Les Rougon Macquart* which follows the life of a fictional family of the Second French Empire. His monumental naturalist project proposed to study the effects of environment and heredity on a fictional family; it is not coincidence that Zola applied himself to chronicling the moral degeneracy of his fictional family during the Second Empire. The avant-garde preference for the subject of modern city and its inhabitants was not simply an aesthetic choice but part of the rejection of the aristocratic cultural apparatus. The failure passed down from Tante Dide, a character in Doctor Pascalt to her descendants allows for a variety of degenerative behaviours, from alcoholism and sexual depravity to unbridled greed. The characters of *Les Rougon Macquartare* tied down by the invincible fate.

The prefaces to his plays are essays on Naturalism especially Therese Raquin and there is also a collection of his essays per se published as *Naturalism in the Theatre* (1881). He was a staunch supporter of naturalism despite receiving frequent criticisms. He felt that the theatre should either die or become modern and naturalistic. Tragedy must disappear and the theatre should raise the question of morality. For Zola, the century belonged to the naturalists, to the direct sons of Diderot.

In the preface of Therese Raquin Zola wrote 'There should no longer be any school, no more formulas, no standards of any sort; there is only life itself, an immense field where each may study and create as he likes...'. Hence, a dramatist should be aloof and never allow his own prejudices to intrude, but only observe record and experiment with the sole aim of demonstrating the truth. Therefore, a playwright should be allowed to treat any subject who would allow arriving at the truth. Of course, Therese Raquin seems to modern eyes anything but naturalistic. It appears to us to be quite a melodramatic story about love and murder and betrayal, and suicide brought on by conscience. Wanting, as he said, to experiment with constructing a play without the 'usual intrigue,' he took up the challenge. Zola in preface to the second edition of Therese Raquin says, "I chose to portray individuals existing under the sovereign dominion of their nerves and their blood, devoid of free will and drawn into every act of their lives by the inescapable promptings of their flesh." (Zola 1)

Using 'time' as the real antagonist, Zola has a pair of lovers commit murder in order to be together. The catalytic event is, of course the murder of Camille. The focus is ostensibly on the nature of the consciences of Laurent and Therese. Then we see the mounting remorse of the two conspirators and it is their conscience and exposure, which drive them to their suicides. The play ran only nine performances. Still revived from time to time, its appeal to modern audiences -- if there is any--is probably based more on the play's intrigue rather than what Zola believed to be its inexorability. This particular novel of Zola was criticised by contemporary critics for its immorality calling the novel 'garbage,' and challenged him to put it on the stage. In the preface to the second edition of Therese Raquin, Zola aptly replies:

Accusations of immorality, in the field of science, prove absolutely nothing. I do not know whether my novel is immoral; I admit that I never worried about making it more or less chaste. What I do know is that I never for one minute set out to put in the filth that moral people are now discovering in it; that I wrote every scene, even the most torrid ones, with the sole curiosity of a scientist;... (Zola 3)

Zola was greatly influenced by Claude Bernard's *Introduction to Experimental Medicine*(1865), a study of the effects of environment on bodily organs and changes in body chemistry on behaviour. In Zola's *The Experimental Novel*, he tried to apply Bernard's methods to literature. He compared the writer to the doctor, who seeks the causes of disease so that he can cure it-not hiding infection, but bringing it into the open where it can be examined. In like manner, the dramatist should seek out social ills and reveal them so they can be corrected.

The frankness and political engagement of Zola contrasted sharply with the rarefied prose and alienated spirit of the younger generation of the symbolist writers. From the appearance of his first successful novel *L'Assommoir* in 1816 through his journalistic campaign in defence of Alfred Dreyfus, Zola's distinctive face and corpulent truly had become the continual brunt of the caricaturist's crayon. A sizable portion of these images specifically associated Zola with sex, dirt and excrement. In practice, naturalism usually spotlighted some of the more degraded aspects of lower class life. The swine imagery, cochinnerie as it was called, was common in both visual and verbal arguments against Zola's writing. The somewhat archaic word, found in Zola's writings as well, alludes to filth when used with regard to children and animals and to sexual behaviour when referring to adults. The latter, highly pejorative sense is employed only in crude parlance. By associating the author with a term that is age, species and class- specific, the remark here insinuates Zola's immaturity, crassness, and lack of refinement. At least, as visually repugnant is Zola's caricature in the series of posters entitled *Musde des horreurs*. This shows a caricatural yet naturalistic rendering of Zola's face, his body transforming to that of a pig.

A number of other playwrights, who had veneration for naturalism, were Henry Ibsen, Ludwig Anzengruber, August Strindberg, Henry Becque, and Gerhart Hauptmann. August Strindberg with his zealous effort became prominent while propagating naturalism. Strindberg was very much a part of the Paris cultural scene in the 1880's and '90's, where he encountered Zola's essays around 1883. At the same time, he came out with his experimental theatre and his early naturalistic tragedies like *The Father*(1887); *Miss Julie*(1888); and *The Creditors*(1888). He moved on to other forms as well declaring that the task of bridging the gap between naturalism and supra-naturalism falls on him, he has to proclaim that the latter is only a development of the former.

Nothing could escape from the clutches of naturalism. Starting from literature, to theatre to paintings, the influence of naturalism is omni present. Expressionism a cultural movement in the first half of the 20th century in Germany replaced naturalism. Contrary to naturalism, expressionism presents the world as a subjective perspective, distorting it for emotional being and expressing the meaning of being alive. Zola brought a wider and a keener observation than any of his contemporaries, but his books are great not because of their photographic accuracy, but because of the poetic idealism, with which he infuses naturalism, that without which this would be as dreary as the subjects of which it treats.

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# **REFORMS AGENDA IN INDIA: POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTOURS**

**DR VIBHU KUMAR\***

Indian Political system has failed to translate the dreams of the fathers of the constitution into reality for a majority of our people. Quality of governance has also deteriorated. This necessitates closer scrutiny of the functioning of parliamentary democracy in India in the new millennium. The present paper makes an attempt to establish that various governments and political parties have not shown enthusiasm in bringing forth genuine political and administrative reforms. Second, without introducing far reaching reforms, our democratic institutions will continue to be subverted and people's welfare and interests will continue to be neglected.

The present state of the health of our polity can hardly be judged as satisfactory by any yardstick. Parliament and Legislatures in the States seem to have at times declared lock-out abdicating their primary responsibility of debating issues of vital concern to the people. Over the decades, the time spent on law-making has gone down, apart from pitiful decline in the quality of legislative debates. Ministries demand for supply of funds amounting to billions are voted every year without any discussion. Instead of debating the budget, the policies and programmes, a lot of valuable time is lost in disrupting the proceedings on trivial and frivolous matters. Poor attendance in the plenary as well as in the committees indicate the measure of concern among parliamentarians for public issues like droughts, floods, cyclones, rise in price of essential commodities, population explosion, miserable conditions of the poor, non-availability of safe drinking water, wide spread corruption and a growing sense of fear and insecurity in the minds of the common people because of serious decline in the law and order situation. Certainly the unresponsiveness and indifference in administration to the people's problems is much due to the weakening influence of the Parliament and other Legislative bodies. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer rightly comments :

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“The noblest national institution is our democratic Parliament. If it functionally frustrates itself the casualty is the People’s Republic.” (Iyer, 2011:103)

According to a Lok Sabha study, ‘the nation lost a colossal 393 hours and 22 minutes in terms of Parliament hours during the 10th, 11th, and the 12th Lok Sabha (1991-1999)’ (The Times of India, April 27, 2002:7). Further, the 15th Lok Sabha has proved to be the least productive of the houses constituted over the past six decades (Hindustan Times, Feb. 15, 2014:6). Speaker of the 14th Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee has cited many instances when the Prime Minister was not allowed to speak, when budget was passed without discussions and when Government Bills were passed without discussion due to continued interruptions in the Fourteenth Lok Sabha (Chatterjee, 2010 : 362-365). Unfortunately over the successive parliaments, the orderly progression of Question Hour has been besieged by scenes of power struggle, of one upmanship, pandemonium and unruly conduct (Singh, 2012 : Vol. 46:20). While remembering certain painful decisions Somnath Chatterjee observed :

“Ten members had to be expelled from the membership of the House for their involvement in the cash-for-query scam.... I had also the painful duty to constitute several committees to inquire into alleged misconduct of members as in the alleged human trafficking case and the alleged bribery scam prompted by the unsightly display of wads of currency notes in the well of the House during the debate on the trust vote in July 2008” (Chatterjee, 2010:332).

It may be mentioned that two members of the 15th Lok Sabha, Lalu Prasad, RJD President, and Jogdish Sharma (Janata Dal-United), have been disqualified from the House as a result of their conviction and sentence in the fodder scam case RC20(A)/96.

Really it is a matter of deep anguish that the Indian Parliament is being repeatedly undermined by the activities of its members. Pepper spray, smashing microphones and fisticuffs plunged parliamentary conduct to a new low on February 13, 2014, as tensions rose in the Lok Sabha over the Telangana bill (Hindustan Times, February 14, 2014 :1). Besides, Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies have also witnessed uproar on many occasions. Chaos was observed in the Rajya-Sabha March 8, 2010, Delhi Assembly - February 13, 2014, Bihar Assembly - July 2010, Andhra Pradesh Assembly - February 2009, West Bengal Assembly - November 2006, Odisha Assembly - November 2004, Gujarat Assembly-March 2001, Uttar Pradesh Assembly - October 1997, and so forth (Parbhatkhabar.com accessed on February 14, 2014). Thus, the citadels of democracy are facing disruption day after day over issues which themselves call for thorough debate and discussion. By not ensuring proper functioning of legislative bodies, our representatives are not only wasting tax payers’ money but also causing steady erosion of the citizens faith in the parliamentary system of governance. In this grim scenario one may agree with the viewpoint of A.G. Noorani when he writes :

“The cure lies in the renewal of India’s political life and in the revival of the political culture which once produced men of stature and worth in our public life” (Noorani, 2000 : 13).

Much delayed electoral reforms in this country got a boost from the 2 May, 2002 and 13 March, 2003 orders of the Supreme Court of India stipulating that for electors to make the right choice, past of the candidates should not be kept in the dark. Following the apex court directive, the Election Commission issued guidelines on 31 March, 2003 to make it mandatory for candidates fighting elections to furnish information on affidavit regarding their educational qualifications, assets, liabilities, and criminal antecedents, if any. It must be submitted at this stage that it was a welcome step.

One may argue that legislation is a function of Parliament and any judicial initiative in this regard may disturb the delicate balance between the executive, judiciary and parliament. But as a matter of fact, the Supreme Court has just sought to fill the void created due to unwillingness of members of Parliament to bring about electoral reforms. The voters cannot be kept deprived for long of a basic right-the right to know who they are electing. As aptly pointed out by the Supreme Court, the right to information is a natural right flowing from the right to free expression.

Under the present parliamentary system of government, political leadership holds the highest authority and is also

ultimately responsible for providing clean and efficient administration. What the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption said in 1964 is valid even today : “The problem is difficult and delicate. There is a large consensus of opinion that a new tradition of integrity can be established only if the example is set by those who have the ultimate responsibility for governance in India, namely, the Ministers of the Central and State Governments” (cit.in.Maheshwari, 1998 : 17).

In this background, voters of this country should also understand that without choosing good representatives they can expect neither good governance nor solution to their real problems. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, in his concluding speech rightly observed :

“After all, a Constitution like a machine is a lifeless thing. It acquires life because of men who control it and operate it, and India needs today nothing more than a set of honest men who will have the interest of the country before them.... We can only hope that the country will throw up such men in abundance” (cit.in.Kashyap, 1994 : 38).

N. Vittal, former Central Vigilance Commissioner, identifies corruption as being a common root cause of all our failures. He comments :

“Corruption, like the AIDS virus weakens all the institutions and in the ultimate analysis, systematically removes the defence mechanism of the society and the country itself” (Vittal, 2000 : Vol. 34:49). Actually the aforementioned maladies afflicting our political and administrative system call for urgent attention.

## **REFORMS AGENDA**

We may proceed to underline certain reforms needed for the betterment of parliamentary governance in India :

1. Under the present system of ‘first-past-the-post’, a party can win or a candidate can get elected on the basis of a minority of votes cast in his or her favour. It should be made mandatory for a candidate to get a minimum of more than 50 percent of the votes cast to get elected. If nobody gets over 50 percent, then there should be a run off contest between the top two candidates. This change in the election rules may enthuse the political parties and candidates to reject narrow poll tactics and adopt people centric issues.
2. Parliamentary and State elections should be held simultaneously and no one should be allowed to contest from more than one constituency to save time, money and manpower.
3. Indicating the alarming trend of criminalisation of politics, Navin B. Chawla, former Chief Election Commissioner, states that almost 30 percent members are with criminal antecedents in the 15th Lok Sabha (Hindustan Times, February 10, 2014 :8).In a landmark development, the July 10, 2013 Supreme Court Judgment declared as null and void section 8(4) of the Representation of the people Act that excluded from disqualification sitting lawmakers even after being convicted of crimes. Thus, the present legal framework which ordains the immediate disqualification of convicted lawmakers must be maintained. Parliament, the supreme law-making body, should never act to protect the tainted politicians who are a blot on our democratic set-up. Further, there should be stringent provision in law so that persons chargesheeted in heinous crimes could be debarred from contesting elections.
4. According to Article 75(1) (A), the total number of ministers, including the Prime Minister, should not be more than the 15 percent of the total number of members of the Lok Sabha. Likewise, according to Article 164(1) (A) state council of ministers should not include ministers more than the 15 percent of the total number of members of the Vidhan Sabha. But it is highly recommended that the total number of ministers both at the central and the states level should not exceed the 10 percent of the total number of members of the respective popular houses. We must galvanise the society to free the country from the high profile beacon light culture reminiscent of colonial and feudal days. A good beginning was made by the Aam Aadmi Party’s Delhi Government in this regard. Actually, security guards are meant for the safety and security of the nation and its people, never to be used as status symbol by the politicians, bureaucrats and the judges.

5. Presiding Officers of the legislative bodies should act independently, rising above party considerations, to ensure proper functioning of their respective Houses so that constitutional obligations get fulfilled. They should not hesitate to act effectively to discipline the erring legislators. The 15th Lok Sabha has been dubbed as the most disrupted House in the history of Indian Parliament. This is extremely alarming and shameful. Citizens must choose their representatives wisely in the national interest.
6. The trend of legislators becoming the chairmen of public sector units should be stopped. Every measure should be adopted at the governmental level to eliminate mismanagement and extravagance. Foreign tours by the ministers, legislators and bureaucrats, at the Union and states level, should be discouraged and must be judged on its pure utility basis. All such top functionaries must understand that their basic job is to serve the people and the country. They must learn to curtail and minimize their facilities. The gap between the government and the Aam Aadmi should not be very wide. Otherwise the ordinary people start feeling alienated and disconnected from the system.
7. The present system of nomination of twelve members by the President to the Rajya Sabha and indirect election for the rest should be done away with. Rajya Sabha, in the bicameral structure of Parliament, is constitutionally meant to provide representation to the states in the federal set-up. However, this House is being used to fulfil party purposes and to repay personal or political debts often leading to unsavoury controversies. Each and every member of the Rajya Sabha should be elected directly by the people of the respective states. For this constitution should be amended suitably.
8. The provision of Legislative councils in the states should be abolished altogether by constitutional amendment.
9. After much efforts and continued public campaign, Right to Information Act, 2005 was passed by the Parliament and came into force on 12 October, 2005. In its preamble the new Act recognized that democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital not only to its functioning but also to contain corruption and to hold governments and their instrumentalities accountable to the governed.  
Now a vigorous campaign is required to make the RTI Act more inclusive. It must encompass all the pillars of our democratic system. In the present stage, judiciary and political parties are opposed to following the RTI Act. The Press do not have RTI provision. Such things are creating imbalance. A full bench of the Central Information Commission (CIC) in June 2013 had brought six national political parties under the RTI law. But the major political parties joined hands to block transparency. We must remember that exempting political parties or other public institutions from the RTI law would be in violation of its spirit.
10. Lokpal, Lokayuktas Bill, 2011 has been passed by the parliament in December 2013. Significantly, Prime Minister has been brought under the purview of the Lokpal. With the passing of the Odisha Lokayukta Bill, 2014 by the Odisha Assembly on February 14, 2014, Odisha became the first state to enact the law after the central act was passed in Parliament. Chief Minister, ex-Chief Ministers, Ministers and public servants have been kept under the purview of anti-corruption panel of Odisha. However, in this age of liberalisation and privatisation, public-private partnerships should also come under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas. We should also remember that independent and transparent functioning of these institutions will be in the interest of corruption free India. For this only persons with exemplary and non-partisan credentials should be appointed on such highly dignified and empowered panels.
11. There should be statutory Civil Service Boards, both at the Union and States level, to regulate civil service postings, transfers and promotions. Honest and upright personnel should not be harassed through frequent transfers on political or extraneous considerations.
12. It is also imperative to make administrative machinery more humane and responsive and to improve the level of transparency in the services. Needs and problems of the people must get priority of attention. In a welcome move, all categories of public servants have been brought under the purview of Lokpal, Lokayuktas Act. A truly people oriented administrative culture is the need of the hour.

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13. Last but not the least, political expediency should not guide the creation of new states. A states reorganisation commission, comprising statesmen of high stature, should be constituted to look into economic and administrative viability of new statehood demands. Actually, more and more new states are an avoidable burden on the exchequer. Greater devolution of administrative powers from state governments to grassroots bodies can also work wonders in redressing local grievances.

## **CONCLUSION**

By working seriously, tirelessly and incessantly on the aforementioned reforms agenda we, the largest democracy of the world, can herald a new dawn for our country. We have to make our parliamentary democracy healthier, more transparent, more meaningful and more effective. Political and administrative functionaries must rise to the occasion by responding positively to the pains and complaints of the ordinary citizens.

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# QUESTIONING UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CULTURAL RELATIVISM CONTESTATIONS

JEETENDRA KUMAR\*

## INTRODUCTION

**H**uman rights are rights to which people are entitled by virtue of being human. There are international moral and legal norms that aspire to protect all people everywhere from severe political, legal and social abuses. For instance, right to freedom of religion, right to fair trial when charged with crime, right not to be tortured and right to engage in political activity. They are addressed primarily to government requiring compliance and enforcement.<sup>1</sup>

They are regarded to constitute 'universal' rights in the sense that they belong to all human being rather than to members of any particular nation, race, religion, gender, social class or whatever. Human rights are also 'fundamental' rights in the sense that they are inalienable; they cannot be traded away or revoked. Human rights are regarded as the most influential form of moral rights.<sup>2</sup>

Human rights are political norms dealing with how people should be treated by their government and institutions. They are not ordinary moral norms applying mainly to interpersonal conduct (such as prohibition of lying and violence). As Thomas Pegg (2,000) puts it 'to engage human rights, conduct must be in some sense official.' But this not only confined to the governmental dimension rather it also impose duties upon government to prohibit and discourage both private as well as public forms of discrimination.<sup>3</sup>

Human rights marks departure from civil rights. Civil liberties pertain to those rights which are not legitimised according to some universal feature of humanity rather they are rights only to the extent allowed by the state and they are 'granted from above'. Citizenship are often explained in terms of reciprocal relationship between individual (the citizen) and the machinery of political administration (the state), as well as terms and conditions of their relationship — rights and

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duties-are enshrined in the positive law.They differ across time and space. Human rights, by contrast come from 'below' from a universal set of ethical principle which seek to ensure the equal worth of each individual's life, and which are applicable to all people at all times and in all places. Thus, in principle, if not in practice, they are not subject to the whims of any political machinery.<sup>4</sup>

The prime source of the idea of human rights is argued to have sprang from the conceptualisation of the 'natural rights' theories of the early modern period. The prime purpose behind these theories was an urge to limit how individuals are treated by others, especially by those who enjoy political power. The pertinent question then comes forth if rights are to act as a check upon political authority, they must in a sense be 'pre-legal', because law being merely the creation of political authority. The origin of the human rights conceptualisation got reflections in the scribbling of the natural rights theorists.The natural theorist of the 17th century, John Locke, espoused natural rights that emphatically stressed on right to 'life, liberty and property'. Propagating the similar sense a century later, Thomas Jefferson defined them as the right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'. Such rights were described as 'natural' in that they were thought to be God-given and therefore to be part of the very core of human nature. Natural rights did not exist simply as moral claims, but were, rather, considered to reflect the most fundamental inner human drives; they were the basic conditions for leading a truly human existence. The furtherance of human rights got mirrored in the words of the American Declaration of Independence (1776), written by Jefferson, which proclaimed, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights'. Thereafter, there were several other sources and pulpits that disseminated the cause for human right for instance, the United Nations or the civil society at large that have come up to be proponents of Human rights. The main source of the contemporary conception of human rights is the UDHR and the many human rights document and treaties that have followed in its wake.

Scholars have time and again got into contestations regarding the nature, scope and applications of human rights. Several debates continue to hover over the issues of human rights. Several scholars have suggested that human rights are 'absolute' rights in that they must be upheld at all times and in all circumstances. Such a view is untenable as it is difficult to sustain, as in practice rights are often balanced against one another. For instance, does the assertion of a right to life rule out capital punishment and all forms of warfare, whatever the provocation? The right to life cannot be absolute if a right to self-defence is also acknowledged. There are other unsettled issues pertaining human Rights. The conceptual understanding of the human rights throws a number of questions, about both who can be regarded as 'human' and the rights to which human beings are entitled. For instance, there is fierce controversy about the point at which 'human' life begins and so the point at which individuals acquires entitlements or rights. The query remains whether human life starts at the moment of conception or does it begin at birth? There are two sides of the understanding, those who opines the former view assert what they see as the rights of the unborn and reject absolutely practices like abortion and embryo research. On the contrary, the champions of the other view assert if human life is thought to start at birth, abortion is quite acceptable since it reflects a woman's right to control her own body. Such contrasting positions do not only reflect different conceptions of life but also allocate rights to human beings on very different grounds. There are those who consider embryos as 'human' in the same sense as adults, draw upon the belief that life is sacred. According to this view, all living things are entitled to rights, regardless of the form or quality of life with which they may be blessed. Drawing corollary from it, if life itself is regarded as the basis for rights then why it should be enjoyed by humans and not entitled to animals and other forms of life.<sup>5</sup>

Under the background of several contentions that encompass human rights; one dimension of debate that lurks at the international level is about whether human rights are universal or not.Let us problematise the universality of human rights.

## **CONTESTATIONS: ARE HUMAN RIGHTS UNIVERSAL?**

One of the several debates that surround the issue of human rights is whether human rights are universal in nature or not? Are they really universal as distinct from culturally, politically and morally specific? For instance, the notion of human rights as found in the UDHR or the UN could be traced to the historical experience of the western civilisation and when UDHR was adopted, most of the 'third world' countries were under the colonial rule. Does this historical fact make human rights essentially western, in that sense that they originate in the western culture and tradition, does this questions universality of human rights.<sup>6</sup>

There are several arguments that sought to assert the universal nature of human rights and equally applicable in all societies irrespective of their diverse and different culture and traditions. Any right that all human being possess by virtue of status of being human is in that sense universal. It is non-negotiable tenet of the human rights that they apply to human beings universally, irrespective of their race, their colour, their religion or their nationality. Human rights are universal, that is, they belong to each of us regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, political conviction, or type of the government.

The inclusive universality of non-discrimination on specified grounds does not mean that human rights do not differentiate between entitlements of different categories of people. For instance, there is enough difference between the human rights of children, adults and old-aged people. In some other case the universality of the human rights refers to human beings having same set of rights at each stage of their development and decline. For instance, there are special human rights for sick and children. Many human rights apply to a particular individual in particular plight for example an accused of criminal offence or need of medical care. So the universality of the human rights means that all human beings in certain situation have, or ought to have certain rights. These situations may be defined in such a way as to effectively exclude or favour some human beings, such as property owners, over others. Some human rights spring from differences and not because of similarities between human beings. For instance, gender rights are based on the distinctive characteristics of women and indigenous rights primarily confines to certain sections of indigenous groups.

The spirit of the universalism has been championed by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the main source of the contemporary conception of human rights, was signed by member states of the United Nations in 1948. For many, that document was the single most important of the 20th century that lays down certain claims regarding the rights of the peoples around the world and also formalises them within the framework of international law with its recommendatory nature rather in a legally binding manner. The member states of the UN have come to acknowledge that the Declaration, although not in the form of a binding legal instrument, does contain actual human rights obligations. In 1968, the Teheran International Conference (the first World Conference on Human Rights) 'solemnly' proclaimed that 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states a common understanding of the peoples of the world concerning the inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family and constitutes an obligation for the members of the international community.' By proclaiming the Universal Declaration in 1948, and continually reaffirming the obligations that stem from it, the UN General Assembly has given an international meaning to the expression 'human rights'.<sup>3</sup> It is consisted of 30 Articles. This can be broadly categorised into six or more groups. That include<sup>4</sup>:

- Security rights that protect people from against several crimes such as murder, assassination, torture, rape etc.
- Liberty rights that protect freedom in the areas such belief, expression, speech, association, assembly and movement.
- Political rights that protect the liberty to participate in politics through actions such as communicating, assembling, protesting, voting and serving in public office.
- Due process rights that protect against abuses of the legal system such as imprisonment without trial, secret trials and excessive punishments.
- Equality rights that guarantee equal citizenship, equality before law, and non discrimination.

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■ Welfare rights (Economic and social rights) that require the provisions of education to all children and protections against severe poverty and starvation.

The UDHR is criticised on the premises that it does not include the group rights like protection of the ethnic groups against genocide and the ownership by countries of their national territories and resources but it was subsequently became part of the other treaties.

Thus, the issue of universality assumes that if human rights exists they necessarily belongs to each and every one of us. Universality is probably the single most important and contested issue in the discourse on human rights, and is essential for their application as much as for their theorisation.

The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the universality of the human rights have been engrained in the writings of several contemporary writers. They include what rightly has been christened as scholars of neo-Kantian traditions. They have emerged to re-establish the universal foundations of human rights. The eminent proponents are John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. The important difference between these writers and the abstract, essentialist universalists such as Kant is that they accept the need to ground these universals in everyday action. They have adopted an approach akin to pragmatism.

Illuminating further, Rawls has been influenced by the Kantian version of the 'state of nature' arguments which formed the foundations of earlier contractual thinking. Kant's idea of contract gives space for treating individual, who are part of the contract are as 'ends' in themselves and not merely be treated as 'means.' Rawls' defence of the idea of a just society based on universally agreed moral principles lies essentially in the idea that in any pre-social arrangement, people, if given the choice, would be most beneficial to them all. We are, says Rawls, to imagine ourselves in a contract situation in which we must agree with all those people who will live with us in a society based on the principle of justice that will govern its. These principles are grounded in equality and justice.

Another writer, Habermas located these universal principles in the practice of everyday communication. He stresses that in this act, which is the most basic and universal of all human practices, we are actually presupposing the existence of a consensus, and the point is to find it. As consensus is possible so, necessarily, is truth, and for Habermas, using a Rawlsian argument, this truth will always, necessarily, lead to a defence of justice against injustice, equality against inequality, and freedom against oppression. This consensus is the attainment of the 'ideal speech situation', but it is dependent upon his act of communication satisfactorily achieving four validity claims which are presupposed in the relationship between the speaker and the listener. To reach consensus (and achieve truth), Habermas says, an utterance must be comprehensible (the listener must be able to understand it); it must be rightful (the speaker must be in an appropriate position to make it); it must be truthful (the speaker must be speaking with honesty); and it must be right (the utterance must be factually correct). Each claim is made against a different set of rules. Comprehensibility is judged in accordance with the rules of language itself. Rightfulness is judged in accordance with the normative or inter subjective world occupied by the speaker and listener. Truthfulness is judged in accordance with the subjective world of the speaker. Truth is judged in accordance with the objective world of external reality.<sup>3</sup>

In the more contemporary debates, scholars have attempted to foreground principles around which a universal framework of human rights can be sustained. Nussbaum has argued based on the Aristotelian approach of 'general characteristics of human beings' that it is possible to identify characteristics that are fundamentally human and 'not as a member of a particular or Local Community.'<sup>3</sup> Her understanding is that needs like food, drink, shelter, sex, mobility, relatedness, humour among other are common across societies. Sen has arguments marking in tandem with Nussbaum that there is requisite need for advancing a common standard in accessing development such as nutrition and education, as they form the 'capabilities' necessary to function in various ways and are essential to universal 'freedom to achieve.'<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the perusal of universality of human rights has been championed both by the writings of the theorists as well as statesman of the world. But, there is other side of the fence that needs to be ploughed.

## **CHALLENGES TO UNIVERSALISM**

The quest for universality of the human rights got objected by the philosophical claim that essentially nothing can be universal; that all rights and values are defined and limited by cultural perceptions. If there is no universal culture, there can be no universal human rights. Countering the proposition of the universality of the human rights, two prime criticisms are levelled at the theory of universality. These include:

- First, the philosophical criticism of the idea of natural law;
- Second, the charge that universalism is necessarily insensitive towards cultural difference.

## **THE PROBLEM OF NATURAL LAW**

The idea of human rights is the idea that all people are part of a community that transcends their immediate political community; that they subscribe to a law that is superior to the laws of their states. Of course, neither this 'community' nor this 'law' has any formalised status. Both ideas form part of an abstract, moral commitment that can be traced back to the philosophy of the classics. The 'community' is the community of all people; humankind. The 'law' is natural law. Natural law is grounded in a pre-social, universal, state of morality, as opposed to positive law, which is grounded in official, binding, constitutional acts and precedents.

Initially, natural law was a methodological tool used by political philosophers to justify how citizens (or subjects) should act on the basis of a philosophical reading of how they would have acted before the advent of society. It had less to do with the rights of all peoples per se than with the relationship between a citizen and a state (or subject and sovereign). This, at least, is how Locke understood natural law. Both Locke and Hobbes were attempting to explain human essence that humans are before they enter into social relationships. They were, therefore, less concerned with providing guidelines for moral action than with establishing the philosophical basis for a political constitution. Kant, on the other hand applied the paradigm of natural law specifically to questions of morality and ethics. He wanted to show not only that morality is universal but that it is articulated through the behaviour of people towards one another. In this respect, Kantian moral philosophy can be read as a framework for building the 'good society'. There is a huge difference between advocating a position which sees moral behaviour among individuals as a pre-social condition, and advocating one that claims certain basic rights exist in some invisible, abstract realm beyond and prior to the social.

The concept of natural law is a hugely contested one. To make the claim that certain rights exist before the formation of human societies, that they are right and true in abstraction from people, that they are grounded in some higher spiritual or moral authority, is to invite criticism and controversy. One interesting question to emerge from this debate is: Would I have rights if I lived alone? That is to say, under such circumstances would I need them? Are rights created not for our benefit but for the benefit of others? We sometimes call this hypothetical situation the 'desert island scenario'. I am alone on a desert island; I am sovereign and have neither rights nor duties. Only when someone else is shipwrecked on my island is it necessary for us to enter into some kind of contract in order for us to live in security and relative prosperity.

In recent years the Kantian position come under attack from two distinct sources, the first challenge has been from the communitarian challenge and the second being the postmodernist challenge (discussed later in the article).

The communitarian critiques the explicit individualism of the Kantian understanding or the notion of rights on the ground that they take the 'individual' as the unit for the distribution of resources. Thus, they assert that the 'community' or 'group' identity of an individual should be taken into account, rather than the 'individual.' They argue that the 'individual' is not an abstract category but is deeply embedded in his/her culture. For many of the communitarians, the problem with

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the liberalism does not pertain to its emphasis on justice, nor its universalism but its individualism. However, it has also contributed towards a critique of universalism and natural law. For the communitarians, morality exists not in terms of liberal universal principles but in virtues; the ideal of universal morality is replaced by that of the good life, or, more specifically, the 'good society'. While Kant believed that there is a right way and a wrong way of doing things, communitarians, drawing more on Aristotle, adopt a more pragmatic stance and pay more attention to context. The most significant advocate of this moral contextualism is Alisdair McIntyre.

The communitarians adopt a relativist position on rights and argue that they only emerge in particular settings. We cannot devise universal rules which we expect to apply in all cases. Instead, we must treat every community, every society, in its own context communitarians do not necessarily oppose the idea of rights; merely their presumed universality.

### **THE PROBLEM OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE**

Another contestation to the universality of human rights is from the proponents of Cultural difference. In contemporary world society, supporters of universality of human rights claim that this universality implies, by its very nature, the inclusion of cultural diversity and regional particularism. Critics, however, suggest that, far from being universal, these rights reflect a Western bias. In some respects this is a fair charge, as it is only in Western political thought that the world is seen as an aggregation of individuals. Against this charge of Western bias, though, we should note that to various degrees rights are presupposed in many of the world's major religions, not just Western ones. In fact, the alleged universality of rights is less to do with their intent than with their implementation. We should certainly take care that the 'universality' of human rights is not turned into a weapon for Western cultural hegemony, for 'attempting to replicate the United States in other parts of the world'. In truth, the origins of our way of thinking about rights may lie in Western philosophy, but the idea of universal human rights is, necessarily, universal and global. For most commentators, the origins of this universality lie not in the abstract of Locke's world of natural law but in a modified Kantianism which encourages respect for all people based on the fundamental dignity which is inherent in human beings without distinction or exception. Such a view of universality does not, then, appear to challenge or undermine cultural diversity.

The tradition known as communitarianism have focused their relativist critique of Kantianism primarily on the problem of universal natural law. Postmodernism presents relativist a perspective, and is equally damning of Kantian liberalism, but it is also scathing of the idea of the community, or of the 'good society'. The postmodernists regard values such as 'goodness' and 'truth' necessarily abstract and have no concrete meaning. For them claiming one thing is 'better' than another is to adopt a dictatorial approach. Truth, justice, goodness and so on are merely grand narratives that have been used in construction of history. That very construction comes from a particular point of view (one which is Western, male, middle-class, white, etc.). Therefore they emphasises for interpretation of the history, but each interpretation will favour something different, because it carries with its own power interests as well as abandon the search for grand narratives and concentrate instead on the world as a constant struggle between plural, competing discourses. Postmodernism is thus opposed to the Kantian discourse on human rights because it considers being essentialist, i.e. that it presupposes an essential core. Postmodernism is opposed to all forms of essentialism. Such instances seek to emancipate us from the constraints of grand narratives, but if the world is made up of competing narratives, and no one should be favoured over another, then morality becomes a free market. Torture may not be preferable in our society, but it might be acceptable in others, and their opinions on the subjects should be respected and considered equally as valid as ours. We should not criticise the practice of female genital mutilation because it is an accepted cultural practice. Feminists and anti-racists have thus embraced post-modernism because it allows for new voices to be heard, new stories to be told. But their 'anything goes' viewpoint has serious ethical implications. It demands serious attention because it challenges the very foundations of rights as we have understood them.

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Neo-Kantians have taken issue with this charge of Western bias in their attempts to rethink the problem of universalism. Hebermas, in particular, has taken serious issue with the postmodernists, accusing them of being apolitical at best, and conservative at worst.

Richard Rorty has gone some way to bridging this divide from within a tradition which stands closer to the relativist than the Universalist side. Rorty's position is as follows. First, we need to move beyond epistemological perspectives which claim that we came somehow through critique or reason, know the social world (i.e rationalism), as such perspectives are flawed. Second, in keeping with the postmodernist viewpoint, grand narratives are merely stories which are reflections of particular times and spaces. The grand narrative that is human rights has been told, successfully, by liberal democratic societies. Thus, only these societies are equipped to develop arguments for human rights, but this does not mean that any attempt to do so would be an imposition upon the cultural differences of other societies. On the contrary, Rorty claims that contemporary liberals have a responsibility to continue to 'tell the story', and just because only they can know the story of human rights does not make that story any less real. Here, Rorty is not drifting into essentialism. Rather, he is upholding a pragmatism that recognises that in the contemporary world, with the horrors of the 20th century recent memories, the culture of human rights has become a reality. This is a reality which has been constructed not through recognition of innate human dignity or reason, but through a shared (but mainly Western) sentimentality which has emerged from hearing these stories and has proven to be the new basis for human solidarity. Rorty does not enter so much into a debate on the existence of universal human rights (ontology) but on how we obtain knowledge about such rights (epistemology).

Rorty, then, has offered a sympathetic critique of postmodern relativism by calling for activists and intellectuals to abandon their pointless quest for universals, and accept that the discourse on human rights is a Western liberal one, but at the same time to recognise that this does not make it any less of a reality, or any less of a good thing. Whichever position one takes, or attempts to take, there are innumerable pitfalls, not least the most curious criticism of all that Ken Booth has made against the postmodern relativists - that by defending localised cultures against the supposed tyranny of universalism, the relativists are themselves falling back upon an essentialist understanding of those cultures, divorced from time and space, unique and exclusive in their own respects. While the charge is more appropriately made against traditional anthropologists, it can equally be made of extreme postmodern relativists, and in this respect perhaps Rorty, in his honest defence of Western liberalism, should be applauded. However, it seems curious that a Universalist such as Donnelly is more sensitive to cultural difference than many relativists. Indeed, in suggesting that human dignity - a respect which is found in most world cultures at most points in history and in no way betrays a Western bias - Donnelly has gone some way to upholding a commitment to universalism beyond natural law.

### **CULTURAL RELATIVISM DEFENDED**

Cultural relativism refers to the view that right and wrong differs from culture to culture and that different cultural values are non-comparable. This does not only include content of set of rights but also grounding of the moral values in rights based system of thought.

Cultural relativity is an undeniable fact; moral rules and social institutions evidence an astonishing cultural and historical variability. Cultural relativism is a doctrine that holds that (at least some) such variations are exempt from legitimate criticism by outsiders, a doctrine that is strongly supported by notions of communal autonomy and self-determination .

### **CULTURAL RELATIVISM CAN BE STATED AS**

Values have to be understood as part of the complex whole; that complex whole 'culture' when discussing the universal applicability of 'human rights' we must take into account the impact that they will have on particular cultures. For some,

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cultures are those rights express central values, for others they may, with some revision, be compatible with that culture, but for others they may be wholly inappropriate and damaging.<sup>4</sup> The cultural argument makes rights or any other standard of treatment, contingent on a person's culture.

The philosophical objection to universality springs from the very fact that nothing can be universal i.e. all rights and values are the product and defined according to filters of the cultural perception. Logically if there exist no universal culture so therefore there exist no universal human rights. Some writers argue that the human rights conception is based on the self seeking and self interested conception of human being and he being an autonomous being free from the interference from the state in arena like right to private property, the right to freedom of contract, and the right to be left alone. Such understanding marks departure from the societies stressing on communitarian element and society with different ideology that considers society as more than sum of the individuals. In such understanding the universality comprehension of human rights gets contested and problematical.

The cultural relativism takes different forms sometimes it takes religious based notion like human rights are Christian values and therefore not valid in the Islamic states. At another occasion the debate pertains to Asian Values versus European nations. In the recent years there has emerged the conceptualisation called Asian values or the East Asian challenge to human rights.

Historical and cultural affinity and influence have an impact on human rights. Adamantia Pollis and Peter Schwab opine that all societies, culturally and historically manifest conceptions of human rights. Yogindra Khushalani takes this claim forward and argues that the concept of human rights can be traced back to the origin of human race itself. On the other hand, another set of arguments have contested the cultural relativist arguments. Unlike him Writer like Donnelly holds that non western cultural and political traditions, like pre-modern west, lacked the practice as well as the concept of human rights. According to this argument human rights first emerged in the west in response to social changes produced by modern market and state. This argument urges it roots in the western society<sup>4</sup> that is being contested and there has emerged several alternate conceptions of human rights such as Islamic, Africanist and 'Asian Values.'

The Hindu philosophy marks 'dharma' having closest connotation to the human rights. It takes comprehensive meaning that include law, norms of conduct, truth, right, ritual, justice, morality, destiny, religion, and more. The philosophy of 'vashudhaivkutumbkam' underlies this understanding that sought to envisage rights not only confined to human being but rights being privilege of animals and plants. Similar understanding has been conceived in the Jain philosophy too. Thus, the underlying thrust of the Hindu philosophy looks society and universe as a whole. This in quite contrast runs contrary to the individual centric understanding of Human rights by the western view. Even the Buddhist understanding don not base life on self or ego rather the focus is on holistic nature of a thing.<sup>4</sup>

The reflections of cultural relativism can be gauged from the African and Latin American understanding of human rights. Such understanding has been marked with an emphasis on the group rights rather than Individual rights. In terms of the individual rights and community rights with regard to right to property marks difference in different societies. The UDHR includes the right to property as part of the Individual rights that is being problematised by the societies in which the property rights are part of the community rights. They emphatically argue that western world is making endeavours to impose free enterprises and capitalism on the world by calling property rights as part of the fundamental rights.

The contestations over the universal nature of the human rights led to the disagreement to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and in recent years marked with famous coinage of the terms like 'Asian Values debates' or the 'East Asian Challenge. There are group of the writers that argue that the developing countries cannot afford human rights because in many of the developing countries are in nascent stage of its development and issues like nation- building, economic development and the consolidation of the state structure is still state of transition and still unfinished. It is therefore that in these states authoritarian government provides viable premises for economic growth and development.

## **QUESTIONING UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CULTURAL RELATIVISM CONTESTATIONS**

This is basis for the Asian values stress the economic growth of Southeast Asia to the Confucian virtues of obedience, order, and respect for authority.<sup>4</sup> Several countries for instances, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, North Korea, Iran and Singapore have been the forerunners of this understanding. 'Asian Values' as respect for old age, wise leadership and social solidarity<sup>4</sup>. In the 1990s Asian political leaders like Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore being critical to the western understanding of human rights argued that these human rights are culturally biased in prompting individual freedom over general well-being. In contrast, Asian cultures emphasise community values like social order, respect for authority, general welfare, and loyalty to family, state and nation. This emerging Asian consciousness distances itself from the perceived selfishness and responsibility of western capitalism .

The universality of human rights is contested in the Confucian or Vedic traditions. It is also stated that in several non-western societies individuals are not accorded rights in the same fashion as it in the western culture. The critics to the universal idea of human rights states that in the non- western societies like Confucian or Vedic traditions, conception of the duties find prominence compared to rights. In the African society it is community that protects and nurtures the individual. Quite appropriately, as One African writer summed up the African philosophy of existence as: 'I am because we are, and because we are therefore I am.' Some Africans have argued that they have a complex structure of communal entitlements and obligations grouped around what one might call four 'r's': not 'rights,' but respect, restraint, responsibility, and reciprocity. They argue that in most African societies group rights have always taken precedence over individual rights, and political decisions have been made through group consensus, not through individual assertions of rights.<sup>6</sup>

The prime critics argue that universality of human rights claimed through the UDHR are based on a very modern Western way of life and thinking. They further argue that other cultures, like ancient tribal cultures or Oriental cultures, have customs that may clash with the ideas and the Articles given in the Declaration. For instance, Article 5 of UDHR asserts 'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.' Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights goes a step further since it includes the following clause: 'In the particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.'

### **CULTURAL RELATIVISM CRITICISED**

The Cultural relativist arguments and premises are debated at several planks that have negative implications. For instance, 'torture' is any planned cruel, inhuman, degrading physical or mental treatment but certain cultures the punishment for a person found guilty of stealing is the removal of her or his right hand. This kind of action is reflection of in human tendencies in the society.

Cultural relativists are being accused of crushing their own culture domestically. The overemphasis on the 'traditional culture' could be one pretext to advance and justify the nonobservance of human rights. The notion of culture is one of constantly evolving in any living society, responding to both internal and external stimuli, and there is much in every culture that societies quite naturally outgrow and reject. For instance, the practice of sati, of obliging widows to immolate themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres. Slavery was acceptable across the world for at least 2,000 years does not make it acceptable to us now; the deep historical roots of anti-Semitism in European culture cannot justify discrimination against Jews today. Thus, in the garb of culture anything and everything is not justifiable.

Other instances are also reflective of the misuse of the arguments and philosophy of cultural relativism, if we are talking of Asian values, who were upholding these values when the Chinese government shot down hundreds of students demonstrating for democratic rights in Beijing. The People in the helm of affairs use the cultural-relativism argument to justify political repression and restriction of rights but there are exceptions also like in Japan the people choose to exercise their political right according to their culture, and opt for a one-party system without any force by the government or by law.

## **QUESTIONING UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CULTURAL RELATIVISM CONTESTATIONS**

It is also argued that under the veil of cultural relativism all the members of the being subsumed under the same cultural framework even though it may be inimical to them. It is one thing to advocate the cultural argument with an escape clause—that is, one that does not seek to coerce the dissenters but permits individuals to opt out and to assert their individual rights. Those who freely choose to live by and to be treated according to their traditional cultures are welcome to do so, provided others who wish to be free are not oppressed in the name of a culture they prefer to disavow.<sup>6</sup>

In another controversial but pertinent example of an approach that seeks to strengthen both cultural integrity and individual freedom is India's Muslim Women (Protection of Rights upon Divorce) Act. This piece of legislation was enacted following the famous Shah Banu case, in which the Supreme Court upheld the right of a divorced Muslim woman to alimony, prompting howls of outrage from Muslim traditionalists who claimed this violated their religious beliefs that divorced women were only entitled to the return of the bride price paid upon marriage. The Indian parliament then passed a law to override the court's judgment, under which Muslim women married under Muslim law would be obliged to accept the return of the bride price as the only payment of alimony, but that the official Muslim charity, the Waqf Board, would assist them. Many Muslim women and feminists were outraged by this. But the interesting point is that if a Muslim woman does not want to be subject to the provisions of the act, she can marry under the civil code; if she marries under Muslim personal law, she will be subject to its provisions. That may be the kind of balance that can be struck between the rights of Muslims as a group to protect their traditional practices and the right of a particular Muslim woman, who may not choose to be subject to that particular law, to exempt herself from it.

It needs to be emphasised that the objections that are voiced to specific (allegedly Western) rights very frequently involve the rights of women, and are usually vociferously argued by men. Even conceding, for argument's sake, that child marriage, widow inheritance, female circumcision, and the like are not found reprehensible by many societies, how do the victims of these practices feel about them? How many teenage girls who have had their genitalia mutilated would have agreed to undergo circumcision if they had the human right to refuse to permit it? It appears that where coercion exists, rights are violated, and these violations must be condemned whatever the traditional justification. So it is not culture that is the test, it is coercion. Thus, cultural relativists dispute the universality of human rights but at the same time they are often questioned for their conservatism.

### **CONCLUSION**

Several arguments have evolved validating the universality of the human rights as well contesting these claims. It is vital to mention that the universality does not necessarily mean uniformity as the human society is a composite and heterogeneous population with diverse culture and communities. It also does not suggest that the connotations of the human rights transcend all cultural, philosophical as well as religious differences. The attempt of the universality needs to be taken into considerations the aspirations and ideals of the common humanity and does not exclude any individual.

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# EXPLORING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE LESS PRIVILEGED

**DR NAVIN KUMAR\***

- Individual is genotype of social life and social field which acts upon him/her is phenotype.
- Social conduct is a product of inter individual uniformities or dissimilarity which is algebra of individuals cognition and motivation.
- Man as Rule-learning animal (Harre and Peters) that leads to appropriateness of conduct to all social situations.
- Equity theory of deprivation is concerned with individual's relations with other individuals (Berkowitz & Walter 1976).
- Rokeach (1966) theory of prejudice is based on inter-individual perceptions of belief similarity.
- Bruner & Rodrigues (1953) described the notion of "Relative increase in over estimation" guided by interest.
- Perception of accentuation in a perceived relationship is also an effect of inter-serial relationship.
- Categorisation is an important dimension of discrimination which is result of an interaction between information obtained from outside and its active internationalisation by the person.
- Attribution of differences is a fundamental feature of this internationalisation.
- Bruner (1957) described that most perceptual activities are perceived in terms of categories.
- Why categorisation? It helps us to perceive in simplicity and group differences of nationality, race, skin, color, height is transmuted to one.
- The idea of notions about certain groups and autonomy of cognitive functioning in attitudes towards other groups is governed by learning of evaluations. (Preferences)
- Man appears as exploring and rational animal from evolutionary point of view.
- Discrimination or co-operative relations arise by the logic of the situations.
- All part in his book prejudice describes five cognitive functions of stereotypes which is also a basis for discrimination.
- It forms large classes and clusters for guiding our daily adjustments.

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## CATEGORISATION ASSIMILATES

- Category enables us quickly to identify a defect or class of defects. The category saturates all that it contains with same ideational and emotional flavour. Categories may be or may not be rational.
- Discrimination is also a result of certain generalisations reached by individuals. Generalisations are both cognitive and social.
- Cognitive is applied in process of categorisation and social as it is shared by large scale social group or entities.
- An interaction between contextual structuring and their role in the adaptation of individuals to social environments result in stereotypes and discrimination.
- Discrimination is governed in terms of selecting, accentuating and interpreting the information in a biased or exaggerated manner.
- Value differences play an important role in social categorisation. Extreme events or extreme individuals are more accessible to memory retrieval than are more average instances.
- The concept of 'illusory correlations' introduced by Chapman (1967) is the process of report by observers of a correlation between two classes of events which in reality are:-
  - A) Not correlated
  - B) Correlated to a lesser extent than reported

Discrimination is not 'out there' rather it is constructed by individuals by the social contexts in which they live. It has cognitive (knowledge) evaluative (membership in a group may have positive or negative value connotations) and an emotional content (love/hatred, like/dislike).

The consensus about 'who is who' is shared by many in a group socially categorised. In the process of discrimination in-group and out-group social behaviour is adopted. Inter-personal is determined by personal relationships between the individuals on basis of individual characteristics and in case of inter-group behavior of two or more persons is determined by their membership of different social groups.

Discrimination may lead to social mobility for social movements which is aimed at promoting or resisting change in society at large.

**Relative Deprivation:** Gurr, 1970 in his book 'Why Men Rebel' defined relative deprivation as actor's perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and value capabilities. Value expectations are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of getting and keeping.

Deprivation is driven by social comparison and theory of reference groups. Classic paper on aspiration level written by Chapman and Volkman (1939) 'whatever change in aspiration level is induced by a change in the frame of reference may have enormous social consequences.

The new judgement may serve as catalyst for major social changes in which groups revise their ambitions and perhaps their status. The failure of expectancies can have two possible dimensions personal and interpersonal. The people may be deprived but not frustrated as it also depends on their realisation of obtaining those hopes.

## DONZIGER

The awareness of common group fate determined by race focused the school boy's aspirations from individual goals of comparative success and towards the development of political ideologies expressed in terms of their group aspirations.

South Africa represents an extreme example of groups whose members are not able to move individually.

How discriminated groups construe their social outcomes:-

Ego defensive perspective (Jost & Banaji, 1994)- Member of discriminated groups construes their social outcomes in

ways that will enable them to buffer their personal or social self-esteem from threat.

## SYSTEM JUSTIFICATION PERSPECTIVE

Discriminated people have tendency to perceive that status quo as just or legitimate and they start perceiving their social outcome in ways that justify and legitimise their disadvantaged position. Social ideologies, attitudes, beliefs and values that are consensually held within society often help to sustain the perception of social system as just and fair.

Because of their impact on construal processes legitimacy appraisals are thought to influence affective reactions to disadvantage such as resentment, discontent and anger.

Discriminated group members may reflect a spectrum of behaviour:-

## INACTION

Individual normative actions socially accepted behaviour directed at improving personal status.

Individual non-normative action-such as criminal behaviour.

Collective non-normative actions.

Behavioural framework may involve feelings of injustice, resignation, frustration, anger.

Gramsci's (1947/71) central concept is hegemony: It's a mix of coercive repression and control of ideological leadership and persuasion. Hence, consent the balance between them varying historically. Consent is not automatic rather it is produced through a machinery of ideological domination.

The relationship between base and super structure (i.e. states civil society) is subtle and complex.

The state apparatus (of government courts, police) and civil society (schools, media, church) together constitutes the mechanism of engineering consent through producing and transmitting ideas.

Like Machiavelli Marx & Gramsci, Habermas assumes that a façade of legitimacy is a functional prerequisite of a state social order. The contradiction between liberal ideology and monopoly capitalism causes a deficit in legitimacy.

Beliefs once externalised, because they are reality, and therefore in the nature of things are capable of justifying action in accord with belief (Spears et al).

Effects of reality considerations on the acceptance of stereotypes: Stigma individuals can have their social identity, their humanity and their membership in the group questioned by others. They can be devalued, have their social identity spoiled on be treated as if they were flawed (Jones Etal 1984).

Crockers Etal suggest 'Stigma is a devaluing social identity (p-505) linked to the groups to which person belongs'.

The author goes on to agree that people of higher status may stigmatise those of lower status to justify their advantage (p-509). Political sociologists and psychologists have long-argued that social ideologists attitudes, beliefs and values that held consensually within society often help to sustain the perception of social system as just and fair and justify the hierarchical and unequal relationships among groups in society.

The legitimising ideologies tendency lead to members of disadvantaged groups to construe their social outcome in ways that justify and legitimise their disadvantaged portion; system legitimising ideologies [such as the belief that status system is permeable] substantiate the inferiority of low status groups and superiority of high status groups.

System justification theories indicate the potential vulnerability of the self-esteem of members of socially deprived groups of social devaluations.

In a research Crocker etal (1993) found that overweight women who were rejected as dating attributed the rejection to their weight, but not the biases of male evaluations. The term 'Queen Bee syndrome' was coined to describe the phenomenon that women who have been successful in male-dominated environments are at times particularly likely to oppose women's movement.

## TOKENISM, AMBIGUITY AND THE TOLERANCE OF INJUSTICE:

Tokenism is an intergroup context in which boundaries between the advantaged and disadvantaged are not entirely closed, but where there are severe restrictions on access to advantaged positions on the basis of group membership.

The social identity theory [Tajfel & Turner] presents boundary permeability - the perceived possibility of individual upward mobility as primary determinant of disadvantaged group behavior.

Lesser privileged group member's discriminatory social structure is primarily dependent on perception, emotional reactions and their actions. This lesser privileged discriminatory social structure may lead to inaction, individual normative actions, individual non-normative actions such as criminal behavior, collective normative and non-normative actions such as protests and strikes. The dynamics of everyday life activities result into long-term indicators of self-efficacy, happiness or complexity.

The distinction between lesser privileged and the privileged social groups needs to be understood in the micro-sociology of our living of everyday life as process reality rather than product reality. In education field technology and exposure play a vital role and the lesser privileged are left behind in the modern life clock due to lack of these factors. Categorisation is an important feature of group process which is result of an interaction between the information obtained from outside and its active internal organisation by human beings. Categorisation helps us to perceive in terms of simplicity and group differences are transmuted to one and even new differences are created which does not exist at all.

Allport described stereotypes in terms of selecting, accentuating and interpreting the information obtained from environment which increases the gap between lesser privileged and the privileged. It is an exaggerated belief associated with a category.

Impressions of group of people are also affected by the way in which data are organised in memory.

Illusory correlations are made about people on the basis of class affiliation which in reality are not correlated or are correlated to a lesser extent.

The consensus about who is who is shared by many by the group socially categorised. Social reality is not out there rather it is constructed by individuals through their inter-individual behavior which in turn becomes intergroup behaviour.

Purely interpersonal behaviours are also affected by membership of social groups or categories.

Social mobility initiated through education and awareness consists of a subjective structuring of a social system in which permeability and flexibility assumptions and free movement of one group to another takes place.

Gurr in his book 'Why Men Rebel' defined relative deprivation as the actor's perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and value capabilities. Education can intensify the hopes change in the aspiration level and frame of reference in which lesser privileged can revise their ambitions and perhaps their status for equitable life.

Qualitative research methods of ethno methodology in which contribution of interaction and context both are important, discursive psychology- everyday conversations, interpretive repertoires descriptions, images and metaphors can become building blocks for creating positive social actions.

Knowledge of equitable social order can vastly improve the way we organise our experiential world. Jerome Bruner proposed folk-psychology every account of why people act as they do.

Folk-beliefs are carried within the mind as narratives that we understand others by thinking in narratives. Indeed the very shape of our lives the rough and perpetually changing draft of our autobiography that we carry in our minds is understandable to ourselves and to others only by virtue of (our) cultural system of interpretation. Thomas Kuhn (1962) historian of science rightly emphasised the difference what researchers are supposed to do and what they actually do our academics should allow more space for subjective interpretations.

## STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS FOR STATUS BELIEFS

Since Max Weber's social theorists have observed that development of structural inequality between social groups is a precondition for the development of status beliefs about the groups. A structural inequality is an inequality in the distribution of a valued resource such as wealth, information technology that brings social power.

Status construction theory begins by assuming that a structural inequality has developed between the distribution of a valued resource and a cognitively recognised distinction among the population about which there is not yet any consensual evaluation.

Paternalistic prejudice reflects a desire to domesticate and exploit a low status group. The most extreme expressions of paternalistic prejudice is slavery. This kind of prejudice is couched as benevolent by the dominant group and can be accompanied by affection and emotional closeness with low status group members (Jackman, 1994). Paternalistic affection nevertheless co exists with a lack of respect for the subordinate group, which is stereotyped as incompetent and discrimination (often disguised as benevolent concern) aimed at keeping the lower status group safely 'in its place'. For example many affluent and higher caste children are raised by lower caste aayas whom they develop lose emotional and physical relation but strict role segregation maintains status differences. In the case of 'benevolent sexism' - a set of beliefs that are subjectively benevolent because they idealise women's warmth, but sexist in that they cast women as subordinates in need of paternalistic protection is a cross cultural phenomena. Legitimising the system in an ambivalent manner is crucial for maintenance of status discriminations.

This ambivalent attitude of hostile and benevolent sexism helps to maintain gender discrimination.

In an individual base social hierarchy individuals enjoy power, prestige and wealth by virtue of their own valued characteristics whereas in group based hierarchies individuals enjoy power prestige and privilege by virtues of their membership in ascribed social groups such as sex, age, race, caste, class and soon orientation.

Social dominance orientation (SDO) is an attempt at identifying the specific processes responsible for the creation, maintenance and recreation of group level social hierarchies and the manner in which these processes affect on another (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

Social dominance theory suggests that legitimising ideologies rationalise group level social inequality (hierarchy enhancing legitimising myths) and also serving to justify greater group based social equality (i.e. hierarchy attenuating legitimising myths).

Finally, SDO indicates the group based social hierarchies are produced and maintained by various forms of behavioural asymmetry (i.e. by systematic behavioural differences between dominants and subordinates).

Recent studies also support the hypotheses that stereotypes of group warmth and competence are predictable from social structural relations between groups, with status determining ascriptions of warmth to groups. These trait attributions are particularly effective in legitimising myths of difference between lesser privileged and the privileged.

It becomes difficult for the lesser privileged to refute the taxonomy of prejudice existing in a given socio cultural context.

Social systems impose themselves through the medium of norms that requires justification (Habermas).

The potential psychological conflict and challenges a professionally successful women have to face, which has been aptly described by Valian (1988p20).

A man's success and masculinity reinforce each other. If a woman is professionally, successful, she must see herself as having masculine traits- and thereby run the risk of seeming unfeminine to her and others or as having compensated in some way through luck or extraordinary effort for a lack of masculine characteristics. Unlike a successful man, a woman has to loose something from success- her gender identity or belief in her of the capabilities. Conversely, failure and femininity reinforce each other. For men then, there is a complete congruence between professional goals and the need to

feel like a good example of their gender; for women there is a potential conflict. The same applies to other disadvantaged groups.

Studies also demonstrate that low status group's members may opt to misidentify with at least certain attributes that they agree are the characteristic of their own group and to perceive themselves as more similar to the out group.

Under the umbrella of research of social identity, social dominance and system justification perspective people acquire strong motives to legitimise the self. Legitimise the group and social system.

Naive realism and the search for social change and perceived legitimacy:-

The social cognitive approach to group conflict has assumed that both sides in social conflicts are equally prone to social misperception.

Asch (1952) and Ichheiser (1970) proposed that opposing partisans follow a straight inferential path to reach conclusions about their opponent's attitudes and preferences, this process is referred to as 'naive realism'(Robinson, Keltner, Ward, Ross 1995) Theories of naive realism have three tenets. First, people assume that they see the world objectively, thereby underestimating the subjective forces that shape their own perception and judgment (Asch, 1952). Secondly, people assume that others leave their judgments on this same 'objective' reality a projective tendency known as the 'false consensus effect' (Ross, Green and House 1977). Thirdly, partisans attribute the origins of judgements that deviate from their own, such as those of opposing groups, to ideological bias.

It is also a complexity of the social phenomena of the lesser privileged groups that so many deprived individuals do not protest their status. Behavioural manifestations of resentment are lacking at certain social arrangements which are highly unequal in terms of distribution of resources.

Perceptions of deservingness are central to the feeling of resentment. Self-blame or believing that one is responsible for causing one's plight reduces feelings of entitlement and thereby reduces resentment about deprivation.

[Bernstein and Crosby, (1980) Bulman and Wartman, (1977)]

It is also the imagination, vision and the thinking of deprived individuals thinking of the ways that better outcome could have occurred, they are likely to feel resentful. It is also important to highlight the term motivation to believe that the world is a just and fair place, tendency for lesser privileged to have relatively little personal experience with discrimination and social undesirability of being resentful add to the tolerance of injustice.

Lerner (1970, 1977) proposed that people want to believe that the world is fair. In his just world theory, Lerner suggested that we are all motivated to believe that the world is just, because believing otherwise would imply that we might be treated unfairly ourselves. Lerner's theory is best known for its application to few perceivers respond to the suffering of other people. Studies indicate that when compensation to victims character's either blaming them for their suffering or concluding that they are bad people who deserve to suffer.

(Lerner 1980, Lerner and Miller 1978).

This belief in a just world also predicts the tolerance and it becomes an important determinant of low rates of protest and acceptance of low status quo.

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# LEADERSHIP PROPPED BY SURVIVAL NEEDS

7 FEBRUARY 2014  
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## Leadership at grassroots by youth in a poor tribal area

- Key achievements of the model:
  - (a) Creating job opportunities for young persons just out of college.
  - (b) Bringing tribal population into the national mainstream to enjoy fruits of development.
  - (c) Help build brand value of a corporate entity.

## Leadership at grassroots by youth in a poor tribal area

- Key takeaways of the story we are going to hear are:
  - (a) Necessity is the mother of all inventions.
  - (b) Leadership is about doing a few small things right and creating small wins
  - (c) Humility and Malleability are strongest pillars of a leader's personality.

# THE JHABUA STORY



- Jhabua district is on the western periphery of the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.
- Area -- 3782 sq kms (About 1460 sq miles).
- Population -- 10.2 million (85 % tribal)
- Population density -- 270 persons per sqm



- Sex ratio is 989
- Literacy rate 44 per cent.
- Drought prone
- Traditional occupations - shifting agriculture and hunting.



## Coming of GAIL at Jhabua



- Started in 1984, GAIL operates 9500 km of gas pipelines.
- Annual profit of \$ 500 million (INR 3050 CR).



- Under Government of India laws, 2 per cent of the annual profit has to be spent on CSR activities, which should be focused at the growth of these local communities.
- The challenge in Jhabua was to bring social and economic changes to the lives of local Bhil tribe.

# CSR Partner in Jhabua -- CFM



Community Friendly Movement works on village development addressing issues of supply chain inefficiencies. They started work with artisan communities and have graduated to implementation of complete village development programs that ensures the delivery of a sustainable ecosystem that leverages strengths of villages.

Anhad Gram is the village development programme of CFM for developing village cluster as a model of sustainable living through low cost technologies, better and improved farming methods and creating market linkages.

## Getting tribal to trust social workers



Saurav Ghosh,  
Secretary



Manish Kumar,  
Team Leader



Rahul Kumar  
Team Member



Ankur Raj  
Team Member



Prince Kumar  
Team Member



Amit Kumar  
Team Member

GAIL classifies Jhabua as a hard location. CSR projects for several years have failed to take off here for two reasons – A. Lack of trust between the benefactor and beneficiary groups. B. The benefactors found the terrain too inhospitable.

The challenge was to form a cost effective team hardy enough to survive. A group of men in their early 20s, just out of college, with no B school degrees were selected. The job offered was nearly 3000 km away from their home. They knew well that their first assignment could well be the last too. They really did not have any choice.

# Jhabua Challenge: Identifying areas for social change



- Launched in the winter of 2011
- Social and economic maladies identified
- High indebtedness and malnourishment
- Non-remunerative rain fed agriculture
- Lack of irrigation
- Predominance of fluoride in groundwater
- High rate of unemployment
- Migration rampant
- Failure in integrating with developmental activities

## Challenge of Co-option – Forming Self-Help Groups (SHGs)



- Form beneficiary groups.
- Given the high prevalence rate of alcoholism among men, women SHGs were formed for empowerment, inculcation of saving habits and promote self dependence.
- A total of 175 SHG's with about 2,000 women and men are associated today.
- Members of the SHGs are being trained for entrepreneur skills development for better livelihood opportunities.

# Empowering Women and Children



- Women showed potential of leadership and in due course took charge of the growth of their family and community.
- Apart from this these volunteers also undertook work with children of the villages shaping their personality and dreams – Bal Upvans.



# Projects empowering beneficiaries



- Projects which had agricultural content were undertaken.

## Nursery and Kitchen Garden

- Each member of the SHGs is now trained to raise kitchen garden
- Supported with seeds and saplings.
- Each of the beneficiaries now own a kitchen garden of about 1500 sq. ft
- Enterprising farmers are trained for commercial nursery raising



## Projects empowering beneficiaries



A vermipost bed being readied



### Sustainable Agriculture

- Promotion of Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture techniques. About 200 farmers integrated and encouraged to use organic manures instead of chemical fertilizers.
- **Case Study of Shaitan Singh:** Member of the Shiva Baba Jaivik Kisan Samooh; Uses only organic manure and earned an additional income of INR 75,000 (925 Euros) in the last cropping season; Improvement in soil health and quality of grains; As reward one farm pond was gifted to him, which provides water for irrigation and develop fish farming.

## Projects empowering beneficiaries



### ■ Green Domestic Fuel

- Women of the villages spend a large part of the day in collection of firewood and bear drudgery and smoke while cooking.
- Briquette making programme attempts to spare the cow dung for vermin composting as well as provide smokeless fuel for cooking.
- A briquette is a 6 inches diameter domestic fuel and is made from the agricultural bio-waste and fodder waste residue.

# Projects empowering beneficiaries



- Animal Husbandry
- Semi arid zone, farming has to be supported with allied activities.
- Sirohi breed goat and bucks introduced for breed improvement.
- Poultry farms have been constructed for the enterprising members.
- Training on general animal hygiene and medical care

# MEASURING SUCCESS



- Success of CFM's Jhabua story cannot be weighed in the terms of real term cash earning.
- It has brought happiness to the team of unemployed volunteers who came to find livelihood and ended up creating a whole happy community.
- In times when development brings conflict, we have an example of harmony

# What I learnt from Jhabua

- Nature abounds in resources
- To harvest nature's bounties long term, one has to work in harmony with it
- While dealing with Human Development issues, a profit showing balance sheet should be the least governing document
- Good intention, determination to survive and innovative ideas, in that order, are key to success

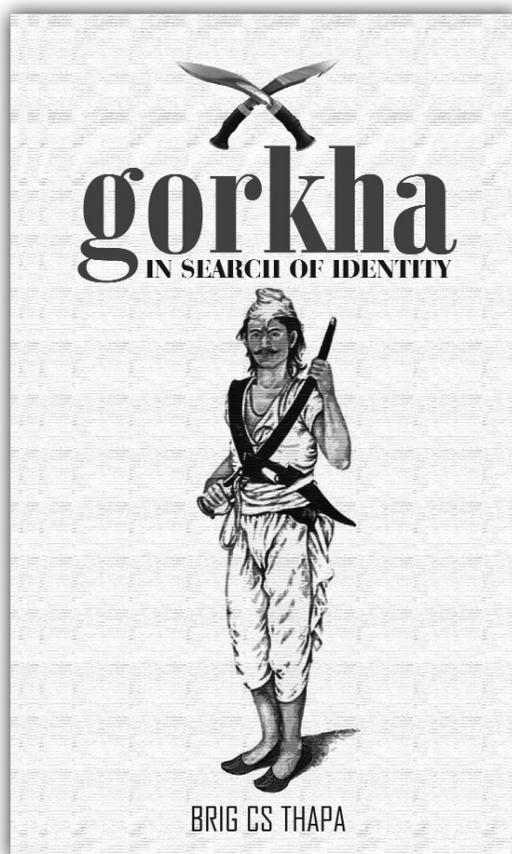
Thank  
You For  
Patience



# BOOK REVIEW — A REBUTTAL

## **GORKHA: IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY**

Author: Brig CS Thapa  
pp. 137 Price. Rs 350/-  
Publisher: Sriav - 2013, New Delhi  
(sriavcreations@hotmail.com)



**A C SINHA**

# **GORKHA – A REBUTTAL**

**A C SINHA\***

Dear Editor

This is with the reference to the book review of **GORKHA: IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY** (Brig. CS THAPA, Sriav, Ghaziabad, 2013) published in the January-March 2014 issue of *The Discussant*. I have also had the opportunity to read the book and being a student of Gorkha affairs, I thought it to be prudent to share with you some of my thoughts.

**T**he book tells a passionate story of a family of Gorkha soldiers, who had been serving Indian armed forces for the last six generations since 1815. The book has been penned by a member of the family with a plea for a better treatment and pathos for the alleged national denial of a just cause. The author, a fifth generation soldier of the yesterday's martial race of Gorkha, reminds readers of the devotion with which his family and others like him had sacrificed for the British and the Indian cause in war and peace. He provides some historical background in which Gorkhas continued with the Indian armed forces even after departure of the British colonial rulers from their Indian Empire. He feels that the community had made so much sacrifice for the Indian Union that it is entitled to its imagined homeland of Gorkhaland as demanded by various fora of the Nepali speaking Indians over time. And here, the soldier in the author turns into a partisan champion of the Gorkhaland movement. Not only that, but he also surrenders

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rationality as to why their claimed state had not been granted and becomes emotional reminding the Indian nation, how much Gorkhas had done for its integrity? He reads history selectively; gives figures differently at different pages; and equates all Nepali speaking people as Gorkhas, which is far from empirical reality. He fails to convince his readers on a number of points and sadly here is an honourable soldier repeating political idioms without providing sound proves in favour of his chosen cause.

None of the proponents of the Gorkhaland movement, including the author, understands that, though granting of statehood in India is a political decision, it has historical, geographical, linguistic and ethnic basis. Secondly, India has created confederating states out of its districts such as Naga Hills district turning into Nagaland, but making of Gorkhaland out of three hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling district will create untold problems for the country. The country will be on fire and every little village will demand a state of its own on some real or imaginary grounds and nobody will know where that madness stops. (And the author knows that adding of Duars as parts of alleged Gorkhaland state is an after thought and it ignores more logic than supporting their cause). Thirdly, Gorkhas are spread in every part of the country and even the author informs that they are in considerable numbers in 16 of the states of Indian Union. How elevation of three hill subdivisions to statehood in Darjeeling hills will solve their problems of homeland conundrum? After all, the Nepalis or Gorkhas have the state of Sikkim, a Nepali speaking majority state in India. If one small state of Sikkim cannot solve the problem of homelessness of Indian Nepali speakers, what is the rationale that another equally small state of Darjeeling hills will solve such a problem? Lastly, these pleas for national partiality, misunderstanding, disrespecting the sacrifices of the brave Gorkhas and treating them as second class citizens are totally misplaced.

India is a democratic and an open society, which is something like a fish market, in which everybody has to negotiate a favourable price. There is no body against anybody; one has to canvass in favour of one's issues convincingly and in ultimate analysis, the Indian nation is a commonwealth of everybody. The supporters of Gorkhland movement may recall the recent decision of the Central government to grant statehood to Telangana. However, in spite of the armed rebellion in 1948, peaceful demands, continuous agitations and violent movements, it took more than six decades for the Indian Parliamentarians to be convinced of its justification only in 2014.

It is soothing to the ego of the reviewer, whose book the author considers as 'a gospel for understanding the Gorkhas in India' (p 136). The cause of the Gorkhas has many complex nuances and before other Indians come to their rescue (and I hasten to add that they must help the community to live a life in the comfort zone as the proud citizen of the country), they have to rise above emotive issues and sort the issues first among themselves on an appropriate nomenclature of the community and then their place in the Indian national life. Unfortunately, it appears that the Gorkha intelligentsia does not believe in seating together for sorting issues out among themselves. There has been continuous debate on the appropriate nomenclature of the community. However, the issue remains inconclusive. They must have a distinct Indian identity of their own without reference to Nepal or Gorkha. Though term 'Nepali' is as well inappropriate in meaning and expression, because of the fact that it mixes the Indians with that of the Nepalese citizen, the term 'Gorkha', which is indicative of a former kingdom in a foreign country, i.e. Nepal and which is also a unit of British, Indian and Nepali armed forces, cannot be an appropriate nomenclature of the community. The author as an honoured and experienced soldier, a senior citizen, who had seen the world and as an intellectual has special responsibility to educate the youth to control emotions and marshal their reasoning capacity.

The reviewer's intention is not to find fault with the book, but enumerate some of glaring unwelcome inaccuracies, so that they may be removed from the second edition so that book's utility may be enhanced. For example, page 22 informs that among others, 'entire Sikkim' was included in the state of Gorkha, which is factually not the case. Second, 'Sikkim Saga' is the book written by B S Das, not by B A Das (p.25). Thirdly, at page 66, it is mentioned that '10 million

odd Indian Gorkha are living in different parts of India; but page 118 records 1.5 crore Gorkhas spread over 16 major geographical areas in India'. Fourthly, at page 69 it is mentioned that All India Gorkha League was formed in 1921, while elsewhere (p.100) it is recorded that AIGL was founded on February 15, 1924. The author has rightly enumerated the contributions of the members of the community to the cause of the Indian freedom struggle in good spirit. Similarly, he has shown instances, when the Gorkha soldiers were used by the British colonialists to suppress the agitating Congress volunteer during the freedom struggles. It is the considered opinion of the reviewer that it will be futile to apportion blame on a community as mercenary and to another one as martyrs of any cause whatsoever, which occurred in the past in different circumstances. At last, one must appreciate the genuine feel of a seasoned soldier for a cause dear to him and his community certainly deserves his dispassionate guidance at this critical hour.

# **SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT**

## **One Day Conference on**

**"Emerging Paradigms of Engagement between Japan and India:  
Bridging the Gap between East and South East Asian Nations"**

## **Organised by**

**Centre for Reforms, Development and Justice (CRDJ)  
& Forum for International Management Networks**

**India International Centre, New Delhi  
21st March, 2014**

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: RANDOM THOUGHTS

**PROF JP SHARMA\***



I have been given the opportunity to share my views on the topic “Corporate Social Responsibility”. CSR has become the core part of the business now days. As per the title of my presentation, CSR has very important role in the corporate world. The Indian Law also recognises it now.

There have been many studies on CSR. These studies have tried to link the performance of the business with their initiatives towards CSR. In the present scenario CSR determines the company’s brand image. It has been proved by the different studies that companies which are practicing in meaningful CSR activities can with stand any kind of pressure even in depression. In USA when scams and corporate failures shacked the world, most of the banks were not effected in India whether Private or PSUs because these corporates were following CSR. In India out of 5 prominent IT companies only Satyam collapsed. That period was the peak of crises. It has been proved by scholars now that CSR is linked with the performance of the companies.

Let’s consider a case study of Malboro, a cigarette company, in the 1990s, it was the most hated brand. In every AGM there were many unwanted queries raised by the shareholders. But once this company

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started spending on philanthropy, charity and towards the welfare of the society, their share prices started rising. The image of the brand changed due to their contributions towards society welfare. Other big names like Bill Gates or Warren Buffet have spent voluntarily billions of US dollars on CSR though not binding. And you can measure the result by looking at their business numbers. It is expanding day by day.

Now, talking about the responsibility of the business, we can look at it in three ways, one Shareholder's approach, two, stakeholder's approach, three, the latest, CSR approach.

As per the shareholder's approach, the business of business is to do business. The interest of the shareholders is being focused. All the decisions are being taken in consideration of the interest of the shareholders which is only maximising profit. The sole purpose of business is to earn maximum profits at minimum cost. This approach has totally become outdated.

In current scenario the most practiced approach is stakeholders approach. According to stakeholders approach, in addition to shareholders, there are many other stakeholders like, employees, suppliers, whose interest has to be taken care of. In the list of stakeholders they placed public at large above the shareholders. In this approach, the decisions of the company are centered on the interest of the stakeholders. The interest of the public at large is given importance and this is moving towards the CSR. CSR is not considered only as an activity but as an investment.

If we go to history of CSR, the first glimpse was in 60's its being criticised by scholars and considered as a waste.

Looking to Late 80's and early 90's there was nil transparency. Many corporates, especially in the developed part of the world, were questioned on their unethical conduct. In 1991, four biggest corporates of the world suddenly failed, like, Maxwell communications, the largest publishing house of the world, BCCI, the 7th largest bank of the world. The reason was zero transparency and total unethical code of conduct on the part of the management and corruption. May be that is why CSR came in the picture.

Now, I would drive your attention to another important issue that does manufacturing causes damage to nature? Yes, manufacturing process does cause damage to the nature. Though manufacturing is very important because it gives products, it gives employment, it gives revenue to the government but it has side effects too as it damage nature like pollution, to name one. Now here the question is that if manufacturing damage the nature or it affects the society by creating pollution, using resources of the society then why should not the polluters pay? So, those who are in support of CSR say that corporate should provide monetary equivalence to the damage done to the nature. Assure that the damage is compensated whether voluntarily or made mandatory.

Talking about India's initiatives or regulatory framework, India is in a privileged condition. In India CSR is in statute whereas in other parts of the world CSR is not in Law. CSR is voluntary and in the forms of guidelines only. In India section 134 and 135 of Companies Act are meant for CSR. Accordingly, all companies are taken into the purview of the statute. It has been made mandatory for listed companies to set aside at least 2% of their PAT towards CSR activities, committee should be formed for CSR and it is first time CSR activities have been defined given in schedule 7 nothing has been left in these activities.

Every listed co is covered under the law. They have to show documentary evidence of CSR spending. No word like philanthropy, contribution is there in law.

I have undergone lots of literature on CSR there is no exact definition of CSR. It is an overlapping concept. It is different from Philanthropy, Corporate Governance and Sustainability. In addition to philanthropy CSR includes environment. CSR includes ethics and Corporate Governance. Though CSR and Corporate Governance are complementary but are different.

The problems of global warming and environment are very important and corporates are nowadays following triple bottom line concept.

Corporate Governance is about Values, ethics and exercise of power. These three pillars apply everywhere in this conference also. Always look for the people's interest. It applies everywhere even in your family, corporates everywhere.

Board must always look for the interest of stakeholders. We can consider Infosys as an example for this they take care of the people's welfare.

Thus, I end by saying that CSR is the core of the business in current scenario. It acts as a brand image builder. Also it is more than philanthropy and contribution.

**Thank you.**

# INDIA-JAPAN COLLABORATION: A CASE STUDY OF DELHI METRO

**ANUJ DAYAL\***



To begin with I would just like to recount some of the connections that we have with Japan. Relations between India and Japan go a long way when Buddhism spread to many parts of Japan from India. According to history, such exchanges started as early as 8th century and we all know that Japan also played a very positive and constructive role in India's freedom movement. Since independence also, the relationship with Japan has continued on a very positive note. In terms of business, Japanese companies have been among the first. Among the reputed MNCs we all know Maruti Suzuki very well and today Japan is the 3rd largest source of FDI to India. Japan has also played a prominent role in major development projects in India through their overseas development assistance. My own project, the Delhi Metro project is one of the recipients of that. This year the Japanese Prime Minister H.E. Shinzo Abe was our guest of honour in our Republic Day celebrations, which displays the bond of friendship between the two countries.

One of the Japanese Prime Minister came to visit the Delhi Metro just before we started at Central Secretariat Metro Station. He was very surprised when he asked me how come his mobile phone is working in the Metro because it doesn't work in Tokyo. Since we came very late

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\* Executive Director, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation

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we could adapt the latest technology enabling this. We could lay our cables but in Tokyo the Metro is very crowded so there is no time for them to stop the subway and put these cables. So once you have done it, you have done it.

Our former Managing Director, Sh E Sreedharan had received one of the highest awards from the Japanese Emperor few months back; "Order of the Rising Sun: Gold and Silver Star Award". This is the second highest award that the government of Japan can give to any outsider. Japanese treat this award as very sacred. The process of deciding to whom to give the award lasted for two years with a lot of meticulous screening of information and data for study. It is not given just on recommendations. There is a lot of R&D and they want concrete figures of achievements to finally bestow these awards.

Now talking about the cultural aspect, if you want to do business with a country, you must understand their culture, the people and their psyche. Also, the level of commitment of the Japanese is something which you have to understand. I have been working with the Japanese companies now for 15-16 years. They are very different from Americans. They are very different from British. You will find them reasonably reserved, quiet but highly sincere, highly dedicated to their jobs. They don't show their emotions but they are highly emotional people. They are very particular about the details to the point. The commitment level to their work is very high. They don't treat work as working for a company; they treat their work as something very personal. Japanese feels so satisfied whenever he achieves his objectives, however minor we may think the objective is. He ensures that they are completed to the hilt. So when you are dealing with the Japanese you have to understand their culture.

I have some slides to show you to talk about my project and the Japanese involvement. Our company is the most visible symbol of cooperation between the East and South Asia. The Delhi Metro project is considered as a symbol of Indo-Japanese cooperation. Our first consultancy contract that we awarded was to a consortium which had four Japanese companies in them. Japan has played a very big role in guiding us on the type of Metro we have in Delhi today. Japan contributed 60% of the project cost in phase I of the Delhi Metro, in phase II they contributed 50% and in phase III again they are contributing 50%. Which means out of about 70,000 crores of money which is being spent in Delhi Metro, almost 35 to 40 thousand crores have been given by the Japanese government as a very soft loan at only 1.3% interest? But for this loan the Delhi Metro keeps on reiterating. We have a Japanese gentleman here, we again reiterate in his presence that we are very grateful for the loan that the Japanese have given us.

This loan that Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has given us for the Delhi Metro is not a tied loan. One of the reasons is that the DMRC is performing very well. So it has become a symbol for them also. So to understand the Japanese psyche, you have to understand that they are very keen. If they are collaborating with you, if they are giving money to you or assistance to you, they would like that to be known in a very subtle fashion. They have withdrawn their loan from China because Japan was not receiving any image boost from the loan that they were giving to China. Traditionally, Japan and China are enemies. In India, the Delhi Metro gave them a big image boost, which is one of the reasons why they continue to fund money. They have given this appreciation in writing.

When the nuclear blast took place in Pokhran that was just before we started our work in 1998. There was a lot of doubt and skepticism where the funding would come through. The Japanese on their part were silent also. It did come through but we took our decision that we will start our work without the Japanese assistance. So we had some money from the government and we started the Shahadara section without their assistance. They were informally telling us that they are just waiting for things to cool down. Plus we had put pressure by already starting the project. So the loan did come through, they stuck to their word but keeping in view the international pressure and scenario, for some time it did hang in balance.

Now, let me talk about the direction of this cooperation with Japan. By the Japanese giving the money, without which this project would not have come, what has happened? More than 1,17,000 less vehicles run in Delhi because

**INDIA-JAPAN COLLABORATION:  
A CASE STUDY OF DELHI METRO**

2.5 million passengers travel on the Metro. Fuel consumption has gone down by 106493 tonnes, pollutants have gone down by 179613 tonnes. Saving in time is 28 minutes per trip. Fatal accidents have reduced. 111 lives have been saved. Almost 600 accidents have been avoided annually. So this is a direct result of assistance that we have received from the government of Japan.

Now we are also collaborating with them for a high speed Metro line in south. So we have consultants from Japan who are helping us in this. Our association with Japan continues. Japan has been one of the backbones of our project. DMRC and some of the other cities like Bangalore and Chennai are very lucky to get this assistance.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

# ROOT CAUSE OF JAPAN'S FINANCIAL SLUMP

**YASUSHI SUZUKI\***



Today's talk addresses the institutional changes in the Japanese financial system and their relationship with the prolonged financial slump since the 1990s, focusing in particular on changes in the modes of monitoring borrowers. I have drawn upon a few of the main lessons that the Japanese experience has for a broader analysis of financial institutions and financial reform processes. This potential fragility in the Japanese system should be addressed by other countries including India. It is worth understanding the challenges that open up as the system approaches the technological frontier and the Japanese case demonstrates the importance of early and appropriate action.

What I suggest is that, there has been a structural failure to respond to the increased "uncertainty" in the economic environment facing Japanese banks since the 1980s. This was associated with the growing internationalisation of Japanese banks, and financial deregulation and technological changes since the 1980s. This in turn led to the Japanese traditional monitoring system becoming less effective.

In the period when the Japanese economy was still catching up in terms of technological capability, an important element in the screening and monitoring process of the Japanese banks was to look at the managerial ability and efforts of the borrowing firm to absorb and

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improve engineering expertise developed abroad. To assess the commercial and engineering values of an emergent technology per se was less important for the banks during the period. The lender's confidence in the borrower depended more on whether the lender believed the borrower was making an effort in learning the use of existing technologies or whether they were shirking. These judgements, while difficult, involved a very different type of uncertainty than the uncertainty involved in betting on new innovations that a borrower may be undertaking. During this period, the participation of the main bank as a quasi-insider in the operation of firms provided information that made shirking by the borrower difficult.

However, once Japan entered into "frontier economy" period, when more Japanese industries were reaching the international technology and marketing frontier, their business and investment was exposed to more significant aspects of fundamental uncertainty. As more and more lending went to investments that involved R&D and the development of frontier technologies, both firms and banks were exposed to the type of fundamental uncertainty discussed by Keynes and the post-Keynesians. Even if the bank was deeply involved as a quasi insider in the operation of the firm, its detailed network of knowledge on management quality did not have a significant mitigating effect for this type of environmental uncertainty. During the catching-up period, shirking and the variability of management quality was the source of most of the uncertainty. In the frontier economy, uncertainty was fundamental and related to innovation and new product development. In this respect, this book suggests that Japan could not resolve this transition challenge by simply maintaining its traditional mode of monitoring, and even less by reverting to it again now.

However, that an ill-planned transition to the Anglo-American and Basel-type approach to monitoring (which he described as "algorithmic monitoring" because it is mainly based on the codification of credit risk and the development of arms length approach to maintain an adequate capital buffer against unexpected credit losses) exacerbated the transition problems faced by the Japanese banking system. The adoption of elements of this 'algorithmic monitoring' model neglected the important question of how Japanese lenders were to manage uncertainty given their greater exposure to industrial lending, and given the particular ways in which Japanese banks were intermediating financial resources in the macro economy.

The Japanese banking system began to adopt Anglo-American and Basel-type modes of monitoring when the exposure to greater frontier uncertainty began to undermine the traditional network based "relationship banking". The pace of this transition accelerated after the bursting of the bubble economy but the transition had begun much earlier. The deregulation of the deposit rate ceiling was completed in 1994 and the financial "Big Bang" deregulation was enacted in 1998. Against this background, the LTCB collapsed in 1998 and major Japanese banks continued to suffer from significant NPL until the mid-2000s. Clearly, the financial deregulation was unable to smoothly revitalize the Japanese financial system.

A critical problem that prevented a significant adoption of important aspects of the Anglo-American system is related to a feature of the Japanese financial structure. The revealed preference in portfolio selection by the Japanese household sector, the largest source of funds for the Japanese banking system, shows that this sector remained risk-averse during the 1990s (the Japanese households owned substantially more "safe" assets, in proportional terms, than the US households), so that finance for industry continued to rely on the intermediation of these savings through the Japanese banking system. Thus, Japanese banks were required to transform the savings of risk-averse Japanese households into long-term loans for industry. However, this long-term intermediation had to continue even as Japanese banks were shifting over to meeting the short-term portfolio quality conditions under the Basel Accord. These conditions were required after deregulation but they only made it far more difficult for the Japanese banks to perform their traditional role of converting risk-averse funds into long term industrial loans, a role that they could not abandon given the structural features of the Japanese financial system. From another perspective, this meant that Japanese bank managers had to somehow attempt to adjust themselves to a securities-based financial system in the absence of the

critical foundation for such a system, namely a sufficient and diversified base of individual investors willing and able to absorb small amounts of uncertainty in diversified individual portfolios. Therefore, while the Japanese financial system had a huge surplus of “safety” investors in currency and deposits, there was a scarcity of “risk” investors in shares, equities and securities that was necessary for incubating new enterprises and industries if banks were to withdraw from this role. The inherent structural contradiction in adopting an Anglo-American model of financial intermediation without the Anglo-American distribution of risk-absorbing small investors was a crucial contributor to Japan’s deepening financial slump and the inability of the banking system to contribute to its resolution.

The 8 percent capital adequacy requirement of Basel was devised to ensure the solvency of banks by ensuring that investments in assets with uncertain returns are limited. However, these requirements do not address the fundamental problem faced by the Japanese financial structure, which is that Japanese banks have to absorb risk and uncertainty for a risk-averse investor base. If financial sector reform in Japan does not address this problem, an adequate intermediation of financial resources from savers to investors cannot be guaranteed.

I draw upon a few of the main lessons that the Japanese experience has for a broader analysis of financial institutions and financial reform processes.

It is not feasible to simply adopt the financial systems of some countries to others. Our detailed examination has focused on the problems of attempting to transfer the Anglo-American model to the Japanese context. But equally, the reverse argument holds if one were to attempt a transfer of the traditional Japanese bank-centred and indirect financial system to other developing countries without recognition of specificities of their financial markets and network relationships.

Potential fragility is implicit in the Japanese model. This fragility was actualised in an economic environment where the system was exposed to a higher level of fundamental uncertainty that could not be absorbed by the existing operating rules. In particular, the conditions of the frontier economy required that as a rule, when investments in innovation were being made, some investors would win while others would lose without any compensation. The traditional system of finance and monitoring based on sharing and absorbing all risks on relatively low margins worked in a context of catching up but had to adapt to a new situation where the number of failures would be larger. The adjustment required both new rules of thumb for spreading investments across sectors and technologies and possibly also higher operating margins to absorb greater average losses. There is no theoretical reason why a system based upon dense networks of monitoring could not have adapted to these challenges but in fact it did not. This potential fragility in the Japanese system should be addressed by other countries including India, creating a bank-based financial system for early stage industrialisation. It is worth understanding the challenges that open up as the system approaches the technological frontier and the Japanese case demonstrates the importance of early and appropriate action.

**Thank You**

# TRADE STRATEGIES OF JAPAN AND CHINA THEIR ECONOMIC POWERDOM: LESSONS FOR INDIA

**MUNIM BARAI\***



Japan suffered huge devastation during World War II. But soon after that in 1968, it became the second largest economy in the world. And this is because of the trade policies followed by Japan i.e. the export led development policies. If we look at what happened to China, 1978 onwards when China initiated its economic liberalisation and since then it has surprised the economy of Japan and has become the 2nd largest economy in the world. Also, it is suspected that in 2014 Japan may be the number 1 economy in the world. It might even surpass the position of USA. We are waiting for the statistics and I think that could be the surprise of 2014.

So how it happened is a big question. The process of industrialisation started in Japan in 1868 and this is the era in which the development started. In 1951 the Japanese condition was far below the other economies but interestingly 1968 it was the 2nd largest economy in the world. Between 1950-1990 Japan became a trade surplus economy from a trade deficit economy and there is a huge change in structure of Japanese imports and exports to signify the emergence of Japan as a major industrialised nation. The financial

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slump started in 1992 and from the last two years Japan has deficit balance again. The main reason for the deficit is the fuel import.

Historically, there have been three main elements in Japanese industrial development- development of a highly competitive manufacturing sector, deliberate restructuring of industry towards higher value added and finally aggressive national and international business strategies. Though this has been taken from Wikipedia but I believe that these are very strong points. Also, use of fixed exchange rate policy helped in Japanese competitiveness. Japanese yen was fixed against US dollar at 360 yen from 1950-1970. Therefore appreciation of yen also added to the competitiveness. After 1985 yen appreciated at a fast speed which put a lot of pressure its exporters and investors as they had to take a lot of cover.

Though Japan has liberalised but Japanese policy makers never encourages much FDI. Also sustainable ratio of investment in Japan is low.

Now talking about China, it has now become the second largest economy. During 1970-2010, China has grown rapidly and its total trade position has moved from 20 billion dollars to 2974 billion dollars. It is a huge jump. And if we look at the world ranking, it has jumped from 32nd position to 2nd position during this period. It has become a huge trade surplus country. Industrial structure of China has changed from primary to manufacturing goods in its international trade. US and Japan are big trade partners of China. China liberalised the labour intensive sector for foreign investors. Investors from Japan, Taiwan and Singapore came in because of this liberalisation. China also encouraged investment from foreign investors to set up plants in China. Talking about the exchange rate policy, there is a lot of disagreement between China and US regarding this. US always blames that China has kept its Yuan value artificially low. And some data also suggests the same. China encouraged a lot of investment in special incentive zones. China also gave a lot of tax incentives to investors. The government of China has always been supportive for investors coming in the country.

Lastly, I would like to discuss some of the lessons for India according to my observations.

A very basic thing is that India needs to be competitive. India's industrial competitiveness is still arising from factor driven manufacturing base. There are three levels- factor driver, innovation driven and efficiency driven. India is still at the first level. India needs to be competitive to reach the 2nd and the 3rd level.

India also has to identify the manufacturing industries from China, Thailand, and Japan etc. Investors from Japan and Thailand who have invested in China are now looking at India for investment opportunities.

Removing various domestic obstacles in doing business in India is another important aspect. If we look at the ease of doing business, out of 178 countries, India is at 134th position.

Another area is disciplining the work force. But the debate is that is it possible or not? The four factors that contribute to the development of an economy at their initial stage are democracy, demography, diversity and discipline. If we compare China and India, we find that there is an interesting observation. India has democracy, India has good demography, and India has diversity but India does not have discipline. I think we all agree that we lack discipline. On the other hand, if we look at China, China has demography, China has diversity, China has discipline, but it does not have democracy even today. So, without democracy China could reach this position and without discipline, India is far behind. We need to do something at home, if we want to see the change.

Giving more focus at the manufacturing level, another suggestion is that labour force in India is not totally oriented for service sector or tertiary sector as is the case of Japan (Japan is a tertiary sector based economy). There is a lop sided development in India. If we look at the distribution from different sectors, we find that service sector has contributed much higher than any other sector. But that does not match with the requirement of the work force, which is big problem.

Lastly, following China, the government of India should take initiatives to increase the attractiveness of India for other countries to generate investment.

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