

**Constructing Childhoods: Children and Nation in Odia
Children's Magazines, 1960-1990.**

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

By

Pragyan Padmaja Behera



CENTRE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

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India

June, 2016

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A thesis submitted during 2016 to the University of Hyderabad
in partial fulfillment for the award of

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis titled **“Constructing Childhoods: Children and Nation in Odia Children’s Magazines, 1960 - 1990”** submitted by Miss. Pragyan Padmaja Behera, bearing Reg. No. 11HCPH08, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature is a *bonafide* work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance which is a plagiarism free thesis.

This dissertation has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any other degree or diploma.

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CENTRE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**DECLARATION**

I, Pragyan PadmajaBehera (Reg. No. 11HCPH08), hereby declare that this thesis titled **“Constructing Childhoods: Children and Nation in Odia Children’s Magazines, 1960 - 1990”** and submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Dr. SowmyaDechamma C. C. is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in Shodhganga / INFLIBNET.

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INTRODUCTION

Is there anyone who can recover the experience of his childhood, not merely with a memory of what he did and what happened to him ... but with an intimate penetration, a revived consciousness of what he felt then – when it was so long from one Midsummer to another?

George Eliot¹

Eliot, definitely, is talking about the experience of childhood. But all ways of talking about childhood are adult oriented ways. Even when a person recalls his/her own childhood, s/he does it as an adult and the experiences thus get tainted with adult perspectives. Priscilla Alderson is of the view that “*ontology*- being of real children and young people can greatly differ from the *epistemology* and beliefs that overload the word child” (5).

This thesis researches the way in which ideas and ideologies of nation and nationalism define not only the idea of childhood but also the experiences of childhood. Childhood is shaped both by the realities and imaginations of nations. The idea of childhood emerged much at the same as that of the modern nations. The idea of futurity, which informed childhood, linked it with ideas of nation. The thesis also traces the shifting borders of childhood and nation. It also discusses how the nation is represented to children so that they can form their conception of the nation and understand their role in its making. Hendrick claims that “children represent ‘investments in future parenthood, economic competitiveness, and a stable

¹ From George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, Dover, 2003 (1862): 50.

democratic order” (qtd. in Zsuzsa 137). Zsuzsa also views “childhood as a form of political existence” (138).

Postindependent India underwent multiple social, cultural and political shifts. It was during this period that the child was “reconfigured as a social actor” who holds “economic utility” for the future of the nation (Zsuzsa 138). The primary focus on childhood has an economic angle to it. The idea of nation is attached to a geographical space which only appears to be “natural and neutral” (Zsuzsa 138). Therefore, efforts are made to make it appear ‘real’. Efforts are also made to make childhood appear natural. This idea is visible in the romantic tradition which equated childhood with nature. But apart from this, childhood is made natural by associating it with certain characteristics – innocence, lack of experience, immaturity, etc. When children go beyond these defining limits, they are hardly looked upon as children and described variously as pre-matured. They are neither children in the strict sense of the term nor are capable, according to Archard, of entering the arena of “official adulthood” (qtd. in Zsuzsa 139). Children’s literature in various ways increases children’s “socio-spatial consciousness” (Zsuzsa 138). Children’s literature’s coalition with nationalism is not new though. The Panchatantra, presumably, composed around the 3rd century BC, consisted of stories told by Vishnu Sharma to young princes as part of their education. This education aimed at making them effective and able administrators of their kingdom. Many stories from the Panchatantra talked about territorial space, sense of belonging and communal identity. The Amar Chitra

Katha² serves as another example which forged relation between childhood and national identity. Milton in, *Paradise Regained*, has remarked, “The childhood shows the man as morning shows the day” (qtd. Mills 22). Ideas like this connected childhood with nation. Childhood became a motif for hope and promise. Millei and Imre contend that “Citizenship and ‘nation’ are politically powerful ideas and their use in relation to childhood and children produces powerful governing effects” (qtd. in Zsuzsa 139).

Ernest Gellner has also claimed that the “culture in which one has been *taught*³ to communicate becomes the core of one’s identity” (qtd. in Koh 1). Thus, childhood becomes one of the most important periods for the inculcation of the national character and values. This fact also highlights the other side of the argument that no one is born with national consciousness. It is a learnt feeling. Literature is one of the important media which facilitates the “transition from egocentric conception of the self to a more socio-centric notion of being members of a larger social and political entity” (Koh 16). Sarah Corse opines that “national literatures are ‘consciously constructed pieces of the national culture’” (qtd. in Koh 9).

Before embarking upon the task of unsettling the notions of childhood, it would be interesting to look upon few assumptions about childhood held by various philosophers. Jean Jacques Rousseau, in his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, describes children as noble savages “whose inherent sense of morality could be

² Deepa Sreenivas has extensively discussed the role of Amar Chitra Katha in shaping childhood, in her book *Sculpting A Middle Class: History, Masculinity And The Amar Chitra Katha In India*, (2010).

³ Italics in original.

either enhanced or corrupted” (Pufall and Unsworth 2). Similar ideas have been reiterated in *Emile* where he makes the powerful statement that “God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil” (qtd. in Koh 27). Aristotle pictures children “as a class of humans that has the potential to become, but is never yet fully, human. Being fully human, in the Aristotelian view, assumes some standard of maturity, a standard presumably realized by the already mature and used by them as a measure of the child. This notion of maturity refers to an ephemeral quality of spiritual, intellectual, and moral “finish” that most aspire to but only some achieve” (Pufall and Unsworth 3). According to the protestant view, as specified by Postman, “the child is an unformed person who, through literacy, education, reason, self-control and shame, may be made into a civilized adult” (qtd. in Mills 11). Rousseau’s theorizations assume that children are born with inherent morals and it largely depends on the environment how the child is shaped. In many stereotypical ways, childhood has been viewed as either “idyllic or deprived” (Mills 1). What is ironical about childhood is that children are never given the scope to talk about it. Mills further claims that childhood is a social construction influenced by the “variables” of class, caste, gender, culture and time (9). Childhood as a stage characterized by innocence has gripped the imaginations of many for a long time. The concept of protection is inevitably linked to the concept of childhood. Protection is a colonizing strategy. It disempowers children by denying them the freedom and agency to act on their own, all in the name of care. It is also a strategy to keep them in the state of ignorance and “unknowingness” which differentiates them from adults (Mills 12). This theory of protection actually indicates, according to Mills, a “psychology of repression” in which by protecting the child from unpleasant

truths the adults actually protect themselves (13). Phillipe Aries, in his path-breaking book, *Centuries of Childhood*, claims that childhood did not exist in the medieval world. Based on his research on paintings he concludes that “Medieval art until about the twelfth century did not know childhood or did not attempt to portray it. It is hard to believe that this neglect was due to incompetence or incapacity; it seems more probable that there was no place for childhood in the medieval world” (qtd. in Mills 2)

Postman is of the opinion that childhood is a role that every individual plays at the initial phase of his/her life. Schools, families and through various other institutions the child is made to fit into a mold (Mills 11). Children are instructed to behave and act in certain ways which befit individuals of their age. Priscilla Alderson maintains that “Childhood is partly a biological state, but also a conferred and varying social status, which has varied greatly through history in how children have been perceived, what they were allowed to do, and how this determined beliefs about their capacities or incapacities” (5). The UN defines the child as “every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier” (Milne 2). This definition is based on age. However this definition precludes autistic and differently abled, special people who have grown out of the age category but are not ‘matured’ enough according to the rational standards and constantly depend on others for guidance. Childhood is a relative term and understood in relation to adulthood. Milne adds that “Adulthood has been primarily determined by the start of puberty (the *menarche* for women, ability to ejaculate for men and the appearance of pubic hair for both sexes). Thus, in the modern medical world *biological childhood* is the period from birth to puberty” (2). Childhood in the

contemporary society is primarily understood as a biological phase. But this definition also has its flaws. There are individual variations in the age of attainment of puberty. Different children attain puberty at different ages depending upon the environment and climate of their location. Priscilla Alderson also claims that “Young children with long-term illness, for example, may be far more informed, responsible and courageous about managing their daily healthcare routines than many adults are” (5). Goldson notes that “there is a range of childhoods: working-class, middle-class, black, white, male, female, homosexual, heterosexual, ‘able bodied’ and ‘disabled’, together with the complex permutations between and within these broader structural categories” (20). Moreover, childhood itself is not a single phase. For the twice-born castes in India, childhood is broken into different phases marked by different rituals beginning from birth - Namakarana (naming a child), Annaprasana (giving the child solid food), Mundan (shaving the head), Upanayana (sacred thread ceremony), etc. All these rituals are ways of making the child a member of the adult society and imposing social discipline on them.⁴

The idea of childhood gained momentum precisely around the time of industrial revolution. There was, on one hand, the bourgeois conception of the protected and domestic childhood and, on the other, the working-class conception of the child labourer exposed to danger in the factories. Industrialization and urbanization accentuated poverty and created intimidating living conditions for the working-classes. It also raised the demand for cheap labour. In these circumstances, the child emerged as a financial support for their families and source of inexpensive

⁴ These rituals are specific to upper-caste Hindus. People of other communities, castes and religions have other rituals/practices yet to be made known.

manpower for the factories. One more conception of childhood also surfaced during these times. The 1833 Factories Act⁵ limited the conditions under which children could be employed and this rendered many children unemployable. As the working class families did not have enough to cater to their needs they abandoned the dependent children. The “factory child” was replaced by the “delinquent child” (Goldson 6). Recent research in the case of street children reveals that these children become adult like from a very young age. Being on their own, they are left to fend for themselves. Hill describes the delinquent as:

a little stunted man already—he knows much and a great deal too much of what is called life—he can take care of his own immediate interests. He is self-reliant, he has so long directed or mis-directed his own actions and has so little trust in those about him, that he submits to no control and asks for no protection. He has consequently much to unlearn—he has to be turned again into a child. (qtd. in Goldson 6)

It is a matter of debate whether something learnt can be unlearnt and an adult can be turned into a child. The child welfare policies and various kinds of child care institutions manifest the ideology of reconstructing childhood. If constructing childhood implied the gradual development of the child into a rational, matured and civilized adult, reconstructing childhood constituted the reversion of the uncivilized

⁵ This Act was passed in UK and specified rules regarding the employment of children in factories.

adult-child into the image of the innocent child. Thus many contradictory and complementing trends prevail around the concept of childhood.

CHILDHOOD AND NATION

While the concept of childhood became heterogeneous and radiated in different directions, the notion of a universal concept of “*national childhood*”⁶ (Goldson 6) became widely accepted. National childhood appears to be a homogeneous category or at least makes an attempt at homogenizing childhood. National childhood conjures up the image of the child who is more of a citizen, an active participating and useful member of the national community and instrumental in bringing about national development. Contribution and participation become the criteria of defining national childhood. This national childhood is shaped by the state and its “disciplinary networks” (Goldson 13). These networks subject children to various forms of control. Instead of being active participating members, children are reduced to passive recipients of state ideologies. Wintersberger notes that “as their contributions to the (national and domestic) economy vanished, children seem to have disappeared as subjects and actors” (qtd. in Goldson 5).

Another field of intersection between nation and childhood is the way children’s ‘needs’ are formulated. Like childhood, children’s needs are also culturally concocted phenomenon. One of the pioneers in the field of children’s needs is M. Woodhead. He argued that children’s needs are rhetorical constructions which

⁶ Italics in original.

manifest the “power relationships between experts and families, service providers and consumers, in ways that have little to do with the children themselves (Thomas 14). Martin Woodhead, also discusses same ideas in relation to children’s needs, which he feels are “in practice a complex of latent assumptions and judgments about children. Once revealed, these tell us as much about the cultural location and personal values of the user as about the nature of childhood” (62). Nigel Thomas, discussing Woodhead’s delineation of children’s “needs” attempts to distinguish the typologies of needs (13). First, “need” can be viewed “as a description of children’s psychological nature’, evidenced by drives such as those for sustenance or closeness to people” (Thomas 14). But a close scrutiny might reveal that this is a need basic to all human beings. Thus this need is not specifically confined to children. Moreover, this is need is directly related to various other ideological positions. Nations want their citizens to be unified and this unification can be made obtainable by making children, from a very young age, emotionally dependent on their families and peer group. This need also has its ramifications in as much as it creates conformity through the fear of ostracization. In the second chapter of this dissertation, there is an article titled “Niti- Kalpalata” (March 1961), which discusses upon the expansion and extension of one’s self through forging connections with fellow nationals and this in turn leads to the expansion of the society as a whole. I do not argue that this need is a construction and is not essential in children. But the fact that this particular need gets highlighted even more than certain basic needs, essential for survival, definitely hints at its political aspect. Secondly, Woodhead specifies “need” as an inference from what is known about the “pathological consequences of particular childhood experiences” (Thomas 14). For example, if one study reveals the negative

effects of death on young children, then the need for protection from the unpleasant facts of life is formulated as children's need. But a particular observation cannot be considered as a universal experience. Many children are able to deal with undesirable circumstances in a healthier manner. In a story titled "Mudi" (Ring) (October 1982), the child protagonist loses his entire family in a devastating flood yet manages to overcome the loss. Needs like these change during the times of a national crisis. Children are exposed to various atrocious facts so that they develop a better understanding of their nation's requirements. Third, Woodhead finds "need" as a prescription about which "childhood experiences are most highly valued in society" (Thomas 14). The needs of children change according to the needs of the nation. There are various articles in the magazines I have analyzed in this dissertation which talk about education as an essential need of children. The importance of education in nation building cannot be ignored. Yet during the Indo-China war of 1962, many articles appeared which talked about the justification of violence and the responsibility of children to contribute to their society by participating in social upliftment projects. Children's needs are, thus, constructed from adult's point of view within a network of various ideological and political forces. Moreover, children's needs are intricately intertwined with the idea of development which itself is a politically charged ideology driving modern nations.

The approach to national history and historical analysis also connects the nation and childhood through a conceptual division of time. Usually, national histories depict an idealized past and an incomplete and depraved present. This idea can be connected with the idea of childhood. The child and nation (especially post-

colonial nations), both, are considered undeveloped and incomplete. Through various social, cultural and economic processes the child has to be transformed into a complete and perfect adult who will bring about the same perfection to the nation at some point in the future. The nation and the child thus grow together. In this aspect both nation and the child exhibit the “*progress model*” (Goldson 14).

ORIYA CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

The tradition of Oriya children’s literature is quite old. It took its modern shape from the school text books published for children. Laxmi Kanta Khuntia traces the origin of modern Oriya children’s literature to Madhusudan Das’ *Barnabodha*⁷ (2). Before 19th century there was no distinct field called children’s literature in Orissa. Most of the publications for children consisted of text books. But it would be inappropriate to say that text books do not form part of children’s literature. However, these text books published then were mostly translations from English and Bengali. It was only after 1930 that efforts were directed towards the publication of independent Oriya books for children. Another important angle to be noticed is that there were no books which focused on children’s experiences. These books were not children centered, even though their target audience were children. Whatever was written by adults was passed in the name of children’s literature. While this is largely true even today, this fact, somehow, indicates that childhood and children were not recognized as distinct categories in the then Oriya society. Further views on childhood in Oriya society can be accumulated by analyzing the definition

⁷ One of the first books for children aiming at the learning of Oriya alphabets.

of children's literature which many other writers have put forward. Dr. Bhagabat Prasad Lenka states that "Sishu Sahitya jariyare sishu ku gadhibu. Bhabishyataku gadhibu. Sishuku bhabishyata pain upajogi karibu." (Through children's literature we will shape children. We will also shape the future with it. We will make children useful for the future)⁸ (1). This opinion highlights various perspectives – children are passive consumers of adult ideologies, they are malleable and innocent, adults solely have the responsibility to make children and children themselves have no say in their lives, no voice, no agency and last but not the least childhood and children are subject to nationalist ideologies; they, in fact, are nation building projects in themselves. He also assumes that childhood is the site where national hopes and aspirations have the potential of being transformed into reality. These opinions also ignore actual childhood experiences and place children within a nexus of hopes, aspirations and potential. At some point in his book, Lenka also presents the idea of children as active and developing beings rather than just passive consumers. But even this conception of childhood does not permit any freedom or agency to children. Lenka maintains that their active nature and progress has to be channeled in proper direction and this would be decided by the adults. Therefore, considering all his perspectives, his definition of children's literature as the expression of children's hopes, emotions and dreams, is questionable. These are actually the hopes of the 'adult' writers of children's literature who attempt to make their ideas appear natural to children. One of the major debates which Lenka proposes in his book is whether or not literature written by children be considered as children's literature? He specifically replies in the negative and also forwards various reasons for them.

⁸ Henceforth, all translations are mine unless otherwise specified.

First, he suggests that a child might not be fully conscious while writing a piece. The argument assumes that there exists a conscious writing process. This would amount to say that children are not conscious beings – a theory that can be refuted from various grounds. Second, Lenka argues that a child is not capable of comprehending his/her own feelings and emotions. Dr. Manindra Mohanty, another pioneer of children's literature in Orissa is also echoes the idea that literature written only by adults for children can be considered as children's literature (6). But how are adults able to judge the mental state of a child is also a matter of debate. One of the reasons why adult opinions on childhood are considered valid is that the adults have been children once and therefore it is possible for them to understand what a child must feel in a certain circumstance. But this argument is questionable because experiences cannot be universalized. What an adult experienced as a child in a given circumstance might be completely different from what another child experiences in the same circumstance. Adults are also considered more mature and therefore their opinion about children is considered more valid. But to say that children don't understand themselves and their emotions, would be a serious undermining of their potential as perceptive human beings. Third, Lenka claims that the literature written by children might not conform to the theories of child psychology. He elaborates this point by bringing in the theories of the stages of development of children and proposes that children are not aware of their emotional make-up of at different stages of their growth and therefore would not know what to write for which age-group category. There are severe flaws in Lenka's argument – (a) literary imagination cannot be guided by scientific and rational theories. Art has its own place independent of what science says. (b) even scientific theories are not always accurate. A certain emotion

might not be typical to only a particular age group. The same emotion can be discerned in various age groups at different levels. (c) findings of scientific experiments are based on the investigations of few similar cases and the conclusions cannot be universalized. Keeping in mind the above arguments, it can be concluded that literature written by children should also be granted the status of children's literature. But how authentic will that literature be and how they reflect the perceptions of children will always be a matter of debate. As argued earlier, writing is always polyphonic and literature by children might also reflect the opinions of adults. Many other ideas of childhood emerge as Lenka defines various characteristics of children's literature. Animals are important characters in children's stories. Lenka even goes to the extent of arguing that animals are like children's kin. They identify with them. The notion of childhood reflected from this argument is not new and has been dealt within the Romantic tradition. The child as close to nature and instinctual like the animals is an idea that had taken shape long back. It also highlights the need for control and discipline. Lenka adds that poetry and pictures are integral to children's literature. The fact that children are sensual beings and most of their learning takes place through their sense organs is highlighted through this definition. It is sense organs that build intellect. Poetry, through its rhyme scheme and musical quality is pleasing to the auditory faculty and pictures appeal to the visual sense. Humour and laughter form a significant dimension of literature for children. Lenka either assumes that children are innocent creatures who should be protected from serious subjects or they are not matured enough to handle serious subjects.

Many Oriya educationists attempted to write Oriya books for children. At the primary level books were written for the purpose of learning language. It would not be wrong to say that Oriya language and Oriya children's literature developed more or less at the same time. A few among them were Pyareemohan Sen's *Sishu Patha* (1869), Kapileswar Bidyabhusan's *Bodhankura* (1871), Gobinda Charan Sharma's *HitaPatha* (1874) etc. These books were mostly educational and focused on language learning. Gradually, books were written for enjoyment and these consisted of stories and poems. The Christian missionaries also contributed towards the growth of children's literature in Orissa. Oriya children's literature in the 19th century, as a result of the propagation of western system of education in India, was heavily influenced by European literature and thinking. It is only in the early part of the 20th century that efforts were made to create a specific form, structure and content of children's literature (Khuntia 8). Laxmi Kanta Khuntia traces the growth of Oriya children's literature through various phases. They are:

1. Period of Oral Literature – This phase existed before 1876. In this period those parts of oral literature ⁹which were considered useful for children were considered as children's literature. They consisted mostly of *Nanbaya gita* (Nursery Rhymes), *Sishu Khela gita* (children's play songs), *Prabachana* (sermons), *Parbaparbani gita* (festival songs) etc. As evident from the categories these pieces for children focused more on the social and cultural life of the Oriya community.

⁹ Orality exists even today and constitutes much of how children learn, especially, in rural areas. Even though script was emphasized in 1876, the oral did not vanish altogether.

2. Period of Origin (1876-1900) – This was the period when written children’s literature took shape. One important events during this period influenced the creation of new approaches to literature. This was the language revolution in Orissa. Writers like Radhanath Rai, Madhusudan Rao and Fakir Mohan Senapati contributed profusely to the repertoire of Oriya literature. Madhusudan Das wrote the Barnabodha in 1895 and it still considered a landmark in Oriya children’s literature.

3. Period of Establishment (1901-1920) – This was the period in which children’s literature emerged as a distinct field. Writers wrote simple prose and poetry pieces specifically for children. One of the major writers of this period was Nandakishore Bala who wrote not only about children’s activities but also made an attempt to appeal to their emotions. His writings were grounded in child psychology. Literature became didactic and themes were taken from the everyday ordinary activities of children which made them more relatable. Another important event in this period was the establishment of the Utkal Sammilani, a cultural organization which aimed at achieving the unification of Orissa.

4. Period of Growth (1921-1947) – This period was characterized by two events-- the national freedom struggle and the creation of the separate state of Orissa. Oriya children’s literature in this period was informed by national sentiments. There was also a growth of educational institutions and printing press. Spread of education boosted the publication of books and magazines. All these factors influenced literature for children. This period also witnessed the growing influence of the Satyavadi group and their traditions. This group consisted of eminent Oriya

nationalists like Gopabandhu Das, Anant Mishra, Kripasindhu Mishra, Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Mishra etc. The primary focus of the Satyavadi group was national consciousness. They believed that the nation has to be made stronger then its future inheritors have to be shaped in that manner. Children's literature which emerged in this period was mostly patriotic.

5. The Developed Period (1947-1970) – Post -independence Oriya Children's Literature was dominated by the theme of national integration and aimed to shape children as citizens of a free nation. Children were taught to create a sense of belonging to their surrounding and develop sympathy for their fellow nationals. The form and content of children's literature also underwent a drastic change during this period. The aesthetic element evolved and literature was made more entertaining and informative rather than didactic. Information regarding various nation building projects was provided to children through literature. There were many other factors which influenced children's literature during this phase. They were -- growth in the publication of children's magazines (like *Prabhat*, *Panchamruta*, *Mo Desha* etc., establishment of various child care institutions, growth of the audio visual media, of public libraries, focus on scientific education, organization of book fairs, etc.
6. Modern Period (1970 - present) – This period witnessed a growth not only in children's literature but also in various children related activities and organizations. 1979 was declared as the International Year of the Child by the UNESCO which shifted the emphasis on the problems faced by children. This influenced Oriya children's literature and made it more realistic. Research Institute of Odia Children's

Literature (RIOCL) was also established in the year 1979. This institute promoted active research in the field of children's literature by organizing various seminars and conferences which brought together writers from different places.

ORIYA CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

After independence, Oriya children's literature was informed by the desire to instill national consciousness in children and shape them as free citizens of a free nation (Lenka 65). But the idea of freedom in relation to children is quite a contentious issue. There was also an attempt to free literature from European influence and develop an "authentic" national literature. To this end, emphasis was shifted to historical and cultural traditions. Multiple trends can be discerned. Various themes, genres and ideologies competed for domination and at the same time overlapped in post-independence Oriya children's literature. Analysis of a few poems¹⁰ would be useful here. Literature became quite instructional and a passive conformity was promoted which is evident in the following lines from a poem titled "Kana Kariba" (What Should We Do) (1961) by Janakiballav Mohanty: "Khatiba aame mana lagayi/dehu buhai jhala...Kariba nahi ka saathe kali/Kahiba nahi micha/Gurujananka aadesha mani/Chaliba hoi swacha" (We will work hard sincerely/And let the sweat flow from our body...We will not fight with anyone/We will not tell lies/We will abide by the orders of our elders/And live a pure life). The

¹⁰ The poems analyzed in this section have been taken from Lenka's book *Swadhinata Paravarti Oriya Sishu-Sahitya*, Cuttack: Takshyasila, (2000).

poem very clearly defines what a good child ought to be. It is both an instruction and advice. Hard work is glorified. Fighting is discouraged and conformity is encouraged by advising the children to listen to their elders. An authentic identity can be created only by following our ancient tradition symbolized by the elders in the poem.

Post-independence children's literature was concerned with maintaining harmony and peace in the society (evident in the above poem also) and promote national integration. But in a multicultural nation like India, ways to achieving unity and peace was envisioned in the maintenance of the status quo. This is evident in the poem "Tikira Chithi" (Tiki's Letter) by Udayanath Sarangi. The protagonist is Tiki, a young school going boy who speaks on behalf of his friend Kuna. Kuna, as hinted in the poem, is economically disadvantaged child who does not have access to the basic amenities of life. Tiki is an upper class boy who decides to give his school supplies to Kuna. What is noticeable about the poem is that it is about the problems faced by Kuna but he himself does not speak. It is Tiki who represents him. The status quo is maintained by denying the lower class any voice and agency and making the upper class speak for everyone. The second last line indicates the politics behind the apparent harmony. Tiki says that he has given his umbrella to Kuna because he knew this was what Kuna wanted – "Chata ti mora deichi taku ta mana katha jani". It is the upper class which decides who 'needs' what. The lower class does not fight for its own rights.

Attempts have also been made to chart out a distinct Oriya identity by referring to the rich cultural and economic history of Orissa. Writers refer to the

tradition of *Boita-Bandana* (Worshipping of boats). Earlier, Orissa had business relations with many foreign countries. People took the sea route and travelled on boats for the purpose of business. They were known as *Sadhaba*. A poem by Banshidhara Samantaray titled “*Sadhaba Gita*” recalls the old tradition and makes the child proud of it. It also encourages the child to be fearless and open to possibilities like the *Sadhaba* who travelled fearless on the seas without being worried of accidents. Sometimes Oriya identity is merged with national identity. In a poem titled ‘*Mu Kemiti Pila Hebi*’ (What kind of child I will be), the child narrator says that one day he aims to drive an airplane. Because he belongs to the race of the *Sadhabas*, he has the courage and therefore he qualifies to become the capable citizen of new India.

In certain contexts, rebellion and nonconformity have also been propagated. Instead of a single voice, a collective voice emerges. One assumes rebellion can be encouraged only when the majority advocates it. At the individual level people were still not allowed to be rebellious. In a poem by Radhamohan Gadanayaka, the narrators say that it is high time things should change. A new world order has to be created and therefore traditional authorities should be done away with.

National belonging is forged by creating a sense of belonging to the immediate habitat of the people. It is difficult to explain abstract concepts like nation and national space to children. In such circumstances, writers try to create a strong sense of belonging by making reference to the local territories and villages. In a poem titled “*Chota Mora Gaanti*” (My Small Village) by Sachidananda Routray, the

narrator appreciates his/her village – “Chota mora gaan ti/Bhugola pothi pata re pache na thau tara naanti” (This is my small village/ Even if its name is not mentioned on the map). This poem suggests maps can only show the measurable territorial place but the idea of one’s nation can be fostered by referring to the landscape of the place. Even if the village does not appear on the map, the description of it can create a reality for children. There is no specific name given to the village. It could be any village which makes the reader think of his/her own home while reading the poem. The writer refers to everything that one can find inside a village and to which every child can relate – the village school, the bushes, domestic animals, etc.

The issue of religious differences has very rarely been addressed in post-independence Oriya children’s literature. In many cases, the minority religious communities are not even acknowledged as part of the Indian nation. For example in a poem by Durgacharan Mohanty titled “Aamere Rahim Ram” (We are Rahim Ram), the poet only talks about the unity between the Hindu and the Muslim community (Lenka 69). Besides this, Oriya children’s literature also occasionally addressed other social issues like inequality, intolerance, class differences. By addressing all these problems the picture of India as a democratic socialist nation was being created.

These are few of the major themes Oriya children’s literature catered to. These themes do not appear in any chronological order. At a given period, certain themes dominate but this does not mean that other themes vanish or cease to exist. A theme develops not in isolation but in the context of many other factors.

CHILDREN AND SPACE

If childhood is understood as a socially constructed phenomenon, then the social space assumes significance as the site where childhood is performed. Children understand their nation primarily through space and physical surroundings which provide materiality to the abstract concept. Childhood is constructed differently at different times and different places. Space does not refer just to a territorial or cultural place but the different spaces inhabited by children like family, playground, etc. with each place/space constructing a different narrative of childhood. For example, children are dependent and subordinate beings within their homes but active agents and decision makers in the playground. But this is not a conclusive argument. The same space can sometimes construct contradictory ideas of childhood. As in the above given example, home is the site of dependency and subordination. But when parents are incapacitated or sick, children might take the responsibility of providing for their parents. In such a circumstance they are not dependents rather dependable. Sarah Holloway and Gill Valentine specify the concept of “everyday spaces” which are “the home, the school and the city” (10). These spaces are grounded in the territorial space of the nation. These are the places where every day, children’s identities are negotiated, made and remade. These sites are “dedicated to the control and regulation of the child’s body and mind through regimes of discipline, learning, development, maturation and skill’ ” (Holloway and Valentine 10). Holloway also clarifies that the spaces of play are not always the one’s which adults ascribe to children like the park or the “designated and provided playgrounds” (10). Children create their own play spaces where they want be it a

waste ground or cave inside the bushes. Keeping in mind this concept of children's space it can be argued that children make sense of a national space through the emotional connection they create with their self-created spaces. A nation, for children, becomes their own because it contains within its boundaries the spaces which children are attached with. Children's national consciousness is mediated through these small localized spaces which they inhabit. Children's association with place/space "are more intimate, fluid and intense" (Owain 31). Moreover, children seem much less clearly aware of the presence and/or significance of sharply defined boundaries of ownership, and private and public space. Consequently "they may wander (or race) from road to garden, garden to garden, house to garden to house, garden to farmyard, garden to field, garden to lane to church yard, moving through the striated geographies of adult symbolic and material boundaries" (Owain 31).

Perhaps this is the reason why travel writing becomes a befitting medium to convey the ideas of national boundaries. Children like movement but don't comprehend the ideas of borders. Travel writing gives them enough scope for imaginary travel and through that ideas of transgression and boundaries are reinforced.

Ideas of childhood are depicted in relation to appropriate spaces. For example, the innocent and pure childhood is always related to the rural space which is usually idyllic. Many stories in the magazines present rural characters as simple, non-materialistic and selfless whose primary function in the narratives is to give moral and spiritual guidance to the city folks. In the story titled "Tume Aamara

Aankhi Kholidela” (You Have Opened Our Eyes) (July 1984) the student from a village advises the students from the city to use their time in a productive manner. In the play called *Mu Bada Hebi* (I Will Grow) (1978), Madan, the protagonist, is from a village. Being a simpleton he falls into a trap created by the city boys who are shown as deceptive and cunning. Serene Koh assumes that “children possess a complex conceptual map about nationhood that involves delicately balancing a set of personal, cultural, and national obligations” (18). This seems to hold true for children’s literature in Oriya, especially, during the post-independence period.

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION IN CHILDREN

Anthony Smith has well remarked that “Today national identity is the main form of collective identification. Whatever the feelings of individuals, it provides the dominant criterion of culture and identity, the sole principle of government and the chief focus of social and economic activity” (qtd. in Koh 29). Similar views are presented by Liah Greenfield who believes that:

In the modern world, national identity represents what may be called the 'fundamental identity', the one that is believed to define the very essence of the individual, which the other identities may modify but slightly, and to which they are consequently considered secondary.
(qtd. in Koh 29)

The so called “imagined community”¹¹ is subject to various internal differences and questions. Every individual in the nation might not share the same imagination. The imagination is the product of a particular hegemonic group. Loyalty and belonging from everyone is expected and forced from every group inhabiting the nation through various cultural processes and political strategies and this constitute the project of nationalism. Rogers Smith claims, “No structural feature can by itself form a conception or story of political peoplehood that can sustain a shared sense of ‘imagined community’, in Benedict Anderson’s famous phrase. People have to compose such stories, partly inspired and constrained by their structural (and cultural) contexts” (qtd. in Koh 24). Blood and race have long ceased to be the basis of nationalism. They are being replaced by a set of acquired features and learned practices. Anderson’s idea of the nation as an “imagined community” undoubtedly refers to the constructedness of nation but it does not acknowledge the individual and contextual variations. Every individual can construct his/her own version of the nation depending upon various contexts s/he is exposed to.

Nation as well as childhood is a product of industrialization and modernity. Modernity did not bring out a new concept of childhood. It demarcated the boundaries of childhood and adulthood. The factories required certain special skills and maturity in handling of the machinery and children did not fit into the conception of the factory worker. This was one case. Another case was that factories also required cheap labour for which children were appropriate candidates. Other

¹¹Benedict Anderson famously interpreted nation as an imagined community.

welfare schemes and child related projects hinted that children did not belong to the public sphere. Alan Prout defines modernity as constituting:

a multitude of different materials, ideas and practices. Some of these were material – the inventions implicated in the Industrial Revolution, or buildings such as the hospital, the school, the prison and the barrack. Some of these were representational – they were ways of looking at and categorizing the world. They were discursive, linguistic and symbolic. (39)

This desire to categorize is reflected in the distinction between childhood and adulthood. The nature-culture divide was one of the offsprings of modern thought. The basis of the argument was the claim that what was lacking in nature can be completed through science. Charles Darwin's study of childhood¹² has been very influential in shaping modern perceptions of childhood. Emphasising the importance of Darwin's work, Hendrick observes thus:

In effect, Child Study helped to spread the techniques of natural history to the study of children, showing them to be 'natural creatures'; through its lectures, literature and the practice of its influential members, it popularised the view that the child's conception differed from that of adults, that there were marked stages in normal mental development; and that there were similarities

¹² Charles Darwin focused on the study of mental development in children by observing the process of language acquisition.

between the mental worlds of children and primitives. (qtd. in Prout 46)

Prout also considers Darwin's study very important and concludes that:

the Child Study movement can also be seen as part of another key development of the nineteenth century – the construction of children as a concern of the nation. The advent of compulsory schooling in the industrializing societies of Europe and North America gave children as a social group an unprecedented visibility. Much 'biopolitical' concern, to use Foucault's term, was generated through research and discussion about the physical and mental state of what came to be seen as a national resource for international military and economic competition. Children became a target for investment and were seen as the 'children of the nation. (46)

Nationalism or national consciousness is not expressed only in the times of some major event related to the nation like war, natural disaster etc. Rather it is expressed through the day to day activities that people are involved in. Nation is performed through the activities of daily life which many times go unnoticed and stay invisible. They operate so subtly that they almost appear part of our natural lives. Billig terms this "banal nationalism":

In so many little ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations. However, this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding. The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building. (qtd. in Koh 32)

Billig also argues that these “forgotten reminders” of national consciousness might seem very familiar and routine to adults but for children they form the very basis of their identity formation. (Koh 32). As mentioned earlier children learn abstract concepts like space and identity through everyday ordinary activities.

For Gellner, education is the primary mediator of national sentiments. He writes:

The nation is now supremely important, thanks both to the erosion of subgroupings and the vastly increased importance of a shared, literacy dependent culture... The educational system becomes a very crucial part of it, and the maintenance of the cultural/linguistic medium now becomes the central role of education. The citizens can only breathe conceptually and operate within that medium, which is co-extensive with the territory of the state and its educational and cultural apparatus, and which needs to be protected, sustained and cherished. (qtd. in Koh 34)

Gellner emphasizes not only the crucial role of the state as an important medium of propagating national consciousness but also puts actual culture and tradition in the sole control of the state. This opens up the possibility of the manipulation of the culture by the state to achieve its ends. Anthony Smith, on the other hand, postulates that creation of the national sentiment is not dependent on the state but on the real social and the cultural world. For Smith national identity is rooted in the “names, memories, territories, cultures, identities” which preserve the “national traditions and experiences that often draw on long histories of ethnic memories, myths, symbols and values.” (qtd. in Koh 35).

All theorists of nation and nationalism do not recount the processes through which individuals come to understand and acquire their national identity. These conceptions of the nation assume a certain kind of homogeneity in that they conclude that all inhabitants of a nation believe in the same concept of the nation propagated either by the state or cultural history and build similar kinds of relationship with it. They don't acknowledge individual variations in the comprehension and acquisition of national identity. Serene Koh suggests that national identities should be looked at as being discursively constructed. Helen Haste is also of the same opinion. She states:

We must pay attention to the individual actively in dialogue, rather than the individual at the end of a conduit of “influence”. Rather than being regarded as passively “socialized,” the individual actively constructs- and co-constructs with others- explanations and stories

that make sense of experience, to develop an identity that locates her or him in a social, cultural and historical context. (qtd. in Koh 37)

Haste here prioritizes the individual experiences and the processes of identity formation rather than the concept itself.

One of the major focus of the thesis is the dismantling of fixed and essential categories like nation, identity, childhood etc. It posits the argument that these categories are porous and fluid and exist only within the nexus of various other factors. Therefore the thesis does not make conclusive statements about the nature of national identity and idea of childhood that is projected through the analysis of magazine but tries to interrogate, interpret and apprehend the processes through which these categories are produced, sustained and naturalized.

A study commissioned by UNESCO in 1967 concluded that “young children-- with the exception of the Japanese-- do not instinctively identify themselves with their nationality. Instead, gender and personal characteristics take precedence in the early years” (Koh 41). We see in the magazines analysed, the focus is more on the identity formation through a reference to these categories. I would like to use the perspectives suggested by Koh in conceptualizing the relationship between children and nation. The first framework is rooted in Freudian psychology which conceives the nation as the mother figure. This assumption implies that “the mother image underlies and informs feelings for the country insofar as the nation is conceived of as the piece of the earth that “gave birth” to the individual, and that

which comfortably supports and nourishes the individual's needs" (Koh 43). Hungarian anthropologist, Géza Róheim also shares the same opinion when she comments that "belonging to a nation means the successful mastery of Oedipus complex. According to this analytical framework, the path to a healthy relationship with one's country necessitates the son overcoming- symbolically- the rivalry with one's father, accepting a share in possession, and identifying with him—and other males-- in the work of support and defense of the motherland" (Koh 43). But this model does not encompass the whole range of experiences of children. It does not deliberate much on how women build relation with the nation-‘mother’. But these assumptions also throw light on the conceptions of gender within a nation and their relationship with it. Women, accordingly, are viewed as nurturers and care-givers and their role is confined to domestic space.

The second model is grounded on Jean Piaget's theory of developmental psychology and focuses on "children's geographical knowledge about nations and their attitudes towards foreign nationals" (Koh 45). It argues that children at various stages of their development make sense of the world around them in different ways. However this theory has been criticized on the grounds that the development model cannot be considered as universal and development in children can vary depending upon various others factors.

The third model is based on the process of socialization of children. Though it does not specifically relate to the formation of concepts of nation and identity, it does inform how children understand their role in the community. Political

scientists, after observation, have concluded that children learn mostly through imitation. Serene Koh, acknowledging the importance of this idea, concludes that:

Also known as the social learning approach, political socialization posits that children learn how to behave from powerful models around them such as parents and teachers. From these processes, children conform to adult expectations and ease into what has been conceived of as their appropriate role in society. (Koh 50)

SANSARA: THE CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE IN ITS CONTEXT

This thesis primarily attends to the conception of childhood within the network of postcolonial nation building in India. The primary material for analysis is the Oriya children's magazine *Sansara*. *Sansara* was published by Sri Ramakrushna Nanda, a famous Oriya litterateur and poet. In one of his interviews he mentions the necessity of reference books and children's magazine in Odia for the children of Odisha. He then decided to publish such a magazine which would contain articles of literature, science and various other references. Dr. Maheshwar Mohanty opined that the focus of *Sansar* was to provide education and information. The focus on entertainment came much later with the magazines *Meena Bazar* and *Sishu Lekha*. The publication of *Sansar* began in as early as 1951. If we put it in the context of those times then the ideology behind the publication of this magazine can offer a particular view of childhood. Childhood then was not exactly a period of innocence and ignorance. Children were being made aware of the world around them. Conscious

attempts were being made to inculcate certain values in them to prepare them for the new emerging India. The word *Sansara* means the universe. The name sounds appropriate as this magazine aimed at the wholesome development of the child. The period covered, in this work, is from 1960 to 1990. 1960 was a crucial year as far as the 'child' is concerned. It was during this plan that the child was recognized as a human being with special needs and special efforts were outlined for their care and protection. The children's act was passed in 1960¹³. On the international platform, the Declaration of the rights of the child came into effect in 1959. The declaration does recognize the rights of children but it does not take into account the heterogeneous conditions that children's lives are informed with. It sets down standards for a happy childhood but fails to come to terms with the fact that childhoods which do not conform to the standards created by it are different, not unhappy childhoods. Thus the UN declaration though aiming at the well-being of the child was not free from ideologies. The view of children as right bearing social actors fit and competent for participation was first foregrounded by the social and political transmutations kicked off by the Second World War and Civil Rights Movements during the 1960s. Thus the 60s form a refreshing and pertinent starting point for the study of childhood. 1960s were also a very sensitive period in Indian history. The nation witnessed immense development through modernization but at the same time experienced setbacks on various fronts. One of the objectives of the third five year plan was the increase and optimum utilization of the country's manpower and within such a backdrop the insistence on child development programs cannot be a coincidence. The agrarian economy and the traditional societal

¹³ Children's Act of 1960 was passed in India to provide support and care to neglected children.

structure of India, on the one hand, demanded the inculcation of conventional values and the accelerating modernization, on the other, counterclaimed a scientific and rational outlook. The valorizing of community required a social being devoted to the society whereas expanding capitalism necessitated the cult of the individual. This thesis purports to investigate the attempts in the literary imaginations to compose a balance amidst the pull from opposite directions. It aims to examine the engagements between the ideologies of childhood and nationalism at different levels.

What follows is a brief outline of the dissertation. The introduction saw a brief exposition of the ideas of nation and childhood and an elaborate discussion of how childhood became integrated with the ideas of national development. With the onset of modernization and industrialization both women and children became subjects of a whole new discourse. Industrialization required a certain kind of workforce. Children and women, especially from the middle classes did not fit into the idea of the worker and were therefore increasingly made part of the private realm. This was, of course, a caste and class based phenomenon. Modern nations saw their progress tied to the future and children became the carriers of their own and their country's development. The child became a political being and childhood a site of contestation for various developmental ideologies. The print technology which gave birth to the idea of the nation also gave birth to childhood (for example, the publication of fairy tales and other children specific books). The child becomes both a disciple and a role model. Children were (and are) understood as impressionable and malleable and this facilitated the inculcation of various ideologies

which I explore in the magazine under study. The second area of focus is on the strategies through which children create a sense of place/space. Children create a sense of place through their everyday ordinary activities. The playground, the school, their homes have different connotations for them and I aim to examine how children build their relationship with a certain place through the emotion / feelings which the place invokes. How larger ideas of national space are conveyed through localized spaces is also of interest to my work. For example in many of the stories in the magazines, ideas of leadership and ideal citizenship are conveyed through the child protagonist's activities in the school. The school becomes a political site inculcating in the child the value of loyalty, shouldering one's responsibility and defending one's identity -- through participation in simple school related activities, like organization of functions or leading the sports team,. The introduction also traced a brief history of Oriya children's literature.

The first chapter is titled 'Travel, Texts and Identity' and it analyses various travel pieces published in the magazine *Sansara*. The chapter begins with a discussion of the definition and scope of the travel genre and its importance for children. Travel writing is at once cartographic, pictorial and textual which keeps a child engaged in decoding the geographical, cultural and social nature of the territory written about. Abstract concepts like nation, nationalism, territory are made 'child-friendly' by the travel writer who paints the picture of a landscape with words, charts a map and provides textual analysis which intends to help the child imagine and get a sense of national space. Travel writing is a flexible genre which aims to instruct and educate at

the same time. They create a visual cartograph by describing the locations of various places and their distance from Orissa. Writers, very subtly have tried to draw an 'authentic' Oriya identity by comparing themselves and other Oriyas to the places they visit and the people they meet there. The travel texts published in the magazines (1960-1990) under review differ in their technical and thematic aspects. Their form and nature change according to the changing times and prevalent ideologies. In the early part of the 1960s travel writing took the form of something similar to report writing. But in the latter, the observations are not of the physical geography but of their developed technological infrastructure. In the later part of the 1960s, sentimentalism permeated these travel texts and the writers expressed their subjective experiences. Observation and narration of the internal landscape became as important as the external landscape. In short, an inward journey became an indispensable part of the outward journey. The 1980s were characterized by a fusion of both observation and personal response. Neocolonialist tendencies are visible in the travel texts published in the 1980s. The child's subjectivity was shaped through the figure of the traveler and *his* experiences. The 'pilgrim', the student explorer, the trainee and the poet philosopher all interchanged places in these narratives to describe some aspect of the national life. The figure of the traveler has always changed according to the ideology of travelling presented, the period in which it is written, and the destination of the travel. The places visited indicate the kind of education that the writers intended to impart and promote the ideology which was the need of the nation building enterprise of that time. The pieces which appear in the mid-1960s focus a lot on the subjective experiences of the traveler and his emotional response. This inward turn may reflect something on the idea of the

nation and the process of nation building. Earlier, science was considered to be the major medium for the success of the national project. Moreover the project of nation building was considered the task of larger state controlled institutions. This inward turn places the focus on the individual and his or her opinion on the process of nation building. This movement from the status of the subject to the citizen is reflective of another stage of development of the nation. Not only do the boundaries have to be drawn but also differentiated. The perception during this period was also quite romantic. Travel writings also filled in the 'gaps of geographical knowledge' so that the nation could be perceived as a whole. It perhaps helped break many stereotypical images created by the nationalist and romantic poets who describe the beauty of the national landscape with certain rhetoric. The chapter also draws attention to the gendered nature of travel and writing. All the travelers are male, besides being upper caste and upper class. The figure of the Man (traveler) conquering, defining and controlling the body of the Woman (land) is a dominant theme which emerges from the pieces published. It is the man of the post independent India who is the owner of the land / controller of environment, representing it to the future of the nation. The idea of 'othering' goes hand in hand with travel narratives and colonialism. On the international level, the 'others' are primarily people belonging to nations with whom India did not share a friendly relationship after independence. On the national level, othering happens on the basis of caste, class, gender, region and religion. The chapter ends with a discussion of how the landscape emerges as a result of the negotiation between the traveler, the journey and the act of writing.

The second chapter is titled “Free Subjects of the Democracy: Biography, Education and Citizenship” and it primarily focuses on the formation of subjectivity of children through various stories and didactic articles published in these magazines. It begins with a biographical description of figures portrayed as role models for children. The chapter then proceeds to describe various forms of connections that were intended to be forged between the individual and the society. Like many other societies, Indian society has always considered community more important than the individual. But the changes in the economic and the political spheres demanded the creation of strong individuals who are able to handle the responsibility of the new nation. Given these circumstances, efforts were made to balance the individual and the social. Various concepts like agency, autonomy and power in relation to children and how these concepts emerged as a result of other ideologies are discussed in this chapter. The gradual change in the concept of childhood in the context of various national ideologies has also been elaborated in this chapter. The chapter also looks into the ways in which women have been represented as symbols of nation and nationalism. This chapter ends with a discussion of the differences between the ideas of childhood based on gender, class and caste.

The third chapter is titled ‘History, Memory and Identity’ and deals with the roles that national history and collective memory play in the creation of a national identity. The chapter begins by problematizing the notion of memory and analyses the relationship between history and memory. The relation between memory and history, though very obvious, has always been a very complicated one. Some scholars

claim that history and memory are incommensurable whereas many others maintain that they are synonymous. History is an active process of animating the past and it is history, not the past, which creates memories. Memory is thus directly linked to history. The past is related to memory via history. The chapter then discusses the various sites of memory as represented in the issues of the magazine analysed. Museums and monuments refresh memories of certain events by invoking their spatial connections. The collections in the museum are not just objects but are texts whose narratives shape the visiting public. Commemorations form an important part of collective memory. Commemorations not only highlight the social aspect of memory but in a way also define what the social constitutes. Festivals and rituals are commemorative events which create and define the society through recollection. Commemorative recollection is an active process not just because of its physicality but also because it is a constant recreation, reconstruction and reinterpretation of collective memories. The chapter also talks about the rewriting of history as a postcolonial strategy for creating an authentic identity. The task of historiography has always been guided by the requirements of nationalist ideologies. In case of postcolonial countries, historiography is not just an act of writing the past but is also a site of reclamation and reconstruction of national identity. The stories published in the magazines counter and question various narratives and opinions created by the colonizers and thus create different memories. The chapter also gives a brief idea about the conceptions of society and nationhood that existed in the past. Besides, it is interesting to note that the stories present the king as an ideal figure to be emulated so as to shape the consciousness of the child. Certain qualities are presented as important for becoming a leader. Hierarchies form a part of every

society. The chapter focuses on the hierarchies present as revealed through the stories. The idea of community which emerges from these stories is one in which everyone, including the flora and the fauna, formed an integral part. Though equality is stressed upon, hierarchies are not completely done away with. Many stories argue for maintaining the status quo -- some argue that hierarchies are divinely ordained whereas many claim that hierarchies have been chosen by the creatures themselves. The chapter also deals with the discrepancies between the memories created in these stories and the ones available in historical records. Creation myths can also be treated as important historical documents which tell us about the society in which they originated. Therefore the discussion of creation myths and the memories they generate also form an integral part of this chapter. The chapter ends with an analysis of the roles that remembering and forgetting play in creating a nation.

The conclusion includes the observations which emerge from the analysis of these magazines. The observations foreground that there is no single idea of childhood. Even the change in the conceptions of childhood is not linear. Ideas change, become obsolete and appear again depending upon various other social, cultural and political factors. Sometimes contradictory ideas of childhood may be found at the same time. The conclusion briefly touches upon the concept of post-childhood. Though this is not directly related to the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the primary material, the concept assumes significance when we consider the heterogeneity of the concepts of childhood. The only safe assumption is that there is no one single criteria to define childhood and that the dividing line between childhood and adulthood is getting hazy.

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CHAPTER 1

TRAVEL, TEXTS AND IDENTITY

Travel writing, due to its protean nature, forms an interesting genre for children despite its descriptive and factual content. It is at once cartographic, pictorial and textual which keeps a child engaged in decoding the geographical, cultural and social nature of the territory written about. Abstract concepts like nation, nationalism, territory are difficult for children to comprehend. The travel writer paints the picture of a landscape with words, charts a map and provides textual analysis at the same time which helps the child imagine and get a sense of national space. Travel writing is a flexible genre which instructs and educates at the same time. Though travel writing became a proper genre with the advent of western imperialism, Swapan Majumdar focuses our attention “on the notion of travel that existed in the earlier Vedic times, tracing the journey motif in the great epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*” (Majumdar 19). In relation to women’s travel writings, Mills states that that in many cases “such literary excursions by women prove to be effective power trips implicitly communicating feelings of racial superiority and imposing blanket labels on representations” (qtd. in S. Ravi 1). The same can be said about travel writing meant for children. The fact that children are protected and have very limited opportunity of travel, makes these travel pieces even more interesting for them. They fulfil their desire for exploration and movement by becoming a virtual companion of the travel writer. The travel pieces, according to Portor, offer “a promise to fantasise the satisfaction of drives that are one way or another denied to us at home” (qtd. in S. Ravi 2). Moreover at a time when human mobility was limited and exposure to the world was possible only through the written medium, travelogues acted as an

important instrument to know and see one's nation. Benedict Anderson's argument about the role of the novel in shaping a sense of the nation could be applied to the travelogue as well. A parallel can be drawn between the novel form and travel writing. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs have commented that both the genre of travel writing and the "novel, especially in its first-person form, have often shared a focus on the centrality of the self, a concern with empirical detail, and a movement through time and place which is simply sequential" (6). Though the 'sequential' aspect of the argument is highly debatable, the similarities between a novel and a travel narrative cannot be ignored. Travel writing is usually believed to present a real journey whereas the novel often depicts fictional one. However there is a fictional aspect to the travelogue as well and novels are at times based on facts and experiences. Further, travel writing also adds to Anderson's idea of the nation as 'imagined community'. Travel induces a figurative expansion of the nation as an imagined territory (not as a political territory).

Travel and writing have always gone hand in hand. In fact it can be argued that travel itself is writing. Both suggest movement, transgression of boundaries, and liberation. But in spite of these apparent similarities, the equation between the two is anything but uncomplicated. Travel is not just a movement between "geographical locations and cultural experiences" (Ravi 1) but also between emotional and psychological states and ideological viewpoints. They are narratives of displacement which invoke multiple connotations of "self, home, nation, travel and encounter" (Ravi 1). The movement in travel is both progressive and regressive. Giving expression to the multi-layered engagements between all above quoted concepts in a

medium (language) which itself is restrictive in many ways, would definitely be a puzzling affair. Travel writing encompasses a wide variety of forms – fiction, adventure story, legends, folktales, political commentary, philosophical speculation etc. It also borrows freely from other disciplines like history, anthropology, social science and geography. Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan claim that travel writing is a “hybrid genre that straddles categories and disciplines” (qtd. in C. Thompson 12). Therefore before plunging into the thematic aspects of the genre, a detailed exposition of the taxonomical debates surrounding it is necessary. Thompson in his book *Travel Writing* problematizes the concept of travel and the definitions of travel writing. If travel is considered to be a movement in space then what about trips made to the local bookshop or a neighbor’s house? Can only the trips to exotic locations be categorized as travel? Why can’t temporal movements be considered as a form of travel? This is further complicated by the definitions of travel writing. Sometimes the route might be same but the traveler might be different. Can all these accounts by different travelers be considered as travel writing? How does the account of an explorer differ from that of a refugee? In addition to this, travel might not always be circular characterized by an origin point from which the journey starts, the places travelled and a return to the point of origin. In many cases the traveler finds it difficult to reintegrate into his/her society after coming back from a journey. In these cases the traveler has actually moved ahead instead of coming back. Edward Said has advanced a theory of travel that “depends on constant displacement, uprooting and re-rooting” (qtd. in Mandal 2) and this might occur at the geographical, psychological, cultural and ideological levels. Moreover it is not just the individual who travels. James Clifford has “expanded the

idea into that of ‘travelling cultures’ in order to undermine any essentialist, static view of cultural rootedness and to underline the importance of dynamic ‘routes’ for the formation of individual and cultural identity” (qtd. in Mandal 2). All these opinions problematize the idea of travel. The nomenclature also poses a problem. Travel books, travel literature, travel narratives, travelogues - all share some amount of similarities as well as differences. In defining the travel book Thompson cites the concept of ‘Travel writing’ by critic Paul Fussell who says that:

the term ‘travel writing’ implicitly equates with the literary form he prefers to call the ‘travel book’, although he acknowledges that other terms such as ‘travelogue’ are also sometimes used. Whatever name one uses, however, Fussell insists that the proper travel book needs to be sharply distinguished from other forms of travel-related text, such as the exploration account and especially, the guidebook.....Essentially what he means by this term is the material classified in many bookshops as ‘travel literature’. These publications are almost invariably extended prose narratives, often broken up into chapters, and in this way they generally resemble novels, visually and formally, far more than they resemble guidebooks (or at least, modern guidebooks). In the latter, there may be sections of prose narrative, but these are usually kept short, and interspersed with maps, tables, lists, symbols and other non-narrative modes of presenting information. Travel books, meanwhile, may include illustrative material, such as maps or pictures, but usually these elements are secondary to the main prose narrative, and a much

smaller proportion of the text is given over to them. Further to this, the narrative offered by a travel book will almost invariably be a retrospective, first-person account of the author's own experience of a journey, or of an unfamiliar place or people. What is more, the personal or subjective aspect of that narrative is often very pronounced, as we are made keenly aware not just of the places being visited, but also of the author's response to that place, and his or her impressions, thoughts and feelings. (qtd. in Thompson 13)

But in today's postmodern world where boundaries and authority are being questioned the above quoted definition might not be applicable. Prosaic description cannot be a valid or reliable basis for classification because sometimes these descriptions might be structurally in prose but they might be poetic in nature. When the writers express nostalgia, melancholy or other subjective emotions, the descriptions tend to become quite poetic. Moreover, the elaborate descriptions of landscape are also very romantic in nature. In differentiating the travel books from the guide book, Thompson cites the use of maps, lists, tables, etc. But again maps could be created through words as well and can be read and interpreted like any other prosaic descriptions. In short, maps can also function as narratives. Thompson makes a further reference to another critic Von Martels who classifies maps as a form of travel writing. He comments that "One might protest that maps cannot be classed as a form of writing, since they principally employ visual modes of representation. But they can of course be construed as 'texts', insofar as they are artfully constructed representations of the world that are often ideologically charged

and laden with larger cultural meanings” (qtd. in Thompson 25). Finally the expression of the author’s response, feelings and impressions are there in every travel account, even where the author is not directly expressing it. The subjective feelings and impressions of the traveler are sometimes inherent in the description itself, the way in which s/he represents the external environment and the place of visit. As W.B. Yeats in his poem ‘Among School Children’¹⁴ states ‘How can we know the dancer from the dance?’, similarly, perspective cannot be differentiated from representation. What is more pronounced and what is not, depends on who reads it and how it is read. Thus any attempt of defining the genre is thwarted by these blurred distinctions. I would like to argue that the term ‘travel text’ would solve the problem to some extent. It would be a more accommodating category capable of capturing the nuances of a genre which refuses to be subsumed under any single taxonomical grid. It would also increase the potential of the genre by including other forms of representation - maps, lists, tables, etc. - which are as informative and descriptive as written accounts. Not just the writings about travel but travel itself can be considered as a text as it involves an active mode of meaning production.

The inclusion of travel writings in children’s magazines, besides promoting an idea of the nation, also indicate a prevalent opinion about the notion of childhood itself -- John Locke’s concept of ‘tabula rasa’¹⁵ and his argument that knowledge is acquired from the interaction between the senses and the external environment. Travel literature proves to be a rich repertoire of knowledge as the traveler engages

¹⁴ The poem emphasizes that meaning cannot be derived in isolation. Everything becomes meaningful only when put in the context of other ideas.

¹⁵ Tabula Rasa refers to the philosophical idea that all knowledge is acquired through experience. No human being is born with pre-formed knowledge base.

in a wide variety of activities. James Buzard specify that “If knowledge is rooted in experience and nowhere else, travel instantly gains in importance and desirability” (37). Travel writings abound in Oriya children’s magazine *Sansara*. They create a visual cartograph by describing the locations of various places and their distance from Orissa. Writers, very subtly, have tried to draw an authentic Oriya identity by comparing themselves and other Oriyas to the places they visit and the people they meet there. The travel texts published in the magazines (1960-1990) under review differ in their technical and thematic aspects. Their form and nature change according to the changing times and the prevalent ideologies. In the early part of the 1960s, travel writing took the form similar to report writing. The piece which appears in April 1960 is about an excursion from Cuttack to Hukitola and is more like a report consisting mainly of a chronological narrative of events with geographic and ethnographic observations. Another one titled, “Germany Re Barse” (A Year in Germany) (June 1964) presents similar observations of the traveler during his visit to Germany. But in the latter the observations are not of the physical geography but of their developed technological infrastructure. In the later part of the 1960s, sentimentalism permeated these travel texts and the writers expressed their subjective experiences. Observation and narration of the internal landscape became as important as the external landscape. In short, an inward journey became an indispensable part of the outward journey. The 1980s were characterized by a fusion of both observation and personal response. Neocolonialist tendencies are discernable in the travel text published in the 1980s.

The Traveller's Nation

The figure of the traveler also changed overtime according to the requirements of the ideology that was being conveyed. The 'pilgrim', the student explorer, the trainee and the poet philosopher all interchanged places in these narratives to describe some aspect of the national life. The figure of the traveler has always changed according to the ideology of travelling presented, the period in which it is written, and the destination of the travel. The student explorer is unbiased and rational, with great observation skills. He is what Thompson call the "'Cartesian' self or subject, and as an 'I' who seems simply a disembodied 'eye' surveying the surrounding scene; and the term 'Cartesian' ¹⁶here alludes to the influential theory of the self-developed by the seventeenth-century philosopher René Descartes, which postulated an absolute division between mind and matter, observing subject and observed object" (76). He does not get emotionally involved with his surroundings. The philosopher is sentimental and his present observation is accompanied by long flights of fantasy, and his imagination straddles the past, the present and the future. He is more sensitive to the present circumstances and responds with sympathy and empathy. The explorer is more controlled of his situation. For the explorer, the external landscape is something to be owned and controlled whereas for the philosopher, the external landscape is more a part of his internal landscape and his observations of the external nature are coloured by visions of his internal landscape. The difference between the explorer and the philosopher can be understood in terms

¹⁶ Descartes believed that the mind and the body function distinctly.

of the difference between the enlightenment traveler and the romantic traveler. Thompson describes the difference between the two:

Enlightenment travelers prioritize fact-finding and empirical enquiry into the wider world, and that they accordingly fashion themselves on the page principally as observers, and as 'Cartesian' selves or subjectivities, detached from the scenes they survey. Romantic travelers, meanwhile, do not simply observe, they also react to the scenes around them, and record those reactions, and their reflections on them, in their accounts. In many cases, indeed, they seek out situations which arouse strong feelings and sensations of sublimity or spiritual intensity. And by allowing the scenes they observe to impinge upon them in this way, Romantic travelers are seemingly more open than Enlightenment travelers to being changed by their travel experiences and by the others that they encounter. Thus whilst the Enlightenment travelogue will typically present a Cartesian self that does not alter in the course of its travels, the Romantic travelogue ideally records not only a literal journey but also a metaphorical 'inner' journey of self-discovery and maturation. (117)

Stephen Wearing, Deborah Stevenson and Tamara Young consider the *flâneur* as preceding the tourist/traveler (2). The *flâneur* is a figure from 19th century French literary tradition who signifies an idle man with a lot of leisure and for whom exploring the city is the chief interest. What is more important about the above

figure is his disassociated gaze and lack of involvement. Wearing, Stevenson and Young capitalize on the figure of the *flâneur* to build the figure of the *choraster* who is more engaged and involved with his surroundings (2). The traveler selves of the late 60s are more like these *chorasters*. The nature of the traveler influences the relationship between the traveler and the reader. The accounts of the objective and detached traveler are considered more trustworthy and authentic. But can such a traveler completely convince the readers and influence them to develop a viewpoint similar to his own? Divya Joshi in her discussion of Swami Vivekananda's *Memoirs of European Travel* states that the reader and the traveler develop an "uni-directional relationship" and both the "reader and the writer travel in the same direction" (Joshi 81). But put in the larger context of travel writing is such a relationship ever possible between the reader and the traveler? In sentimental travel writing the traveler is free to present his subjective experiences and even his imaginations. The readers, likewise, also get a larger scope to imagine things themselves. In the travel pieces which are in the form of a report, the readers see what the traveler shows them yet this never constricts or restricts their imaginations in any way and they are liable to conjure other images, associations, and experiences invoked by various factors. But in either of the case the reader never travels along with the traveler in the same direction. They might start their journey together (when the reader starts reading a travel narrative) but their direction of movement might change, overlap, merge or part depending upon the associations invoked by the travelling/reading experience.

The other category of traveler that emerges from the travel writings of

Sansara is the one who visit the west for the purpose of work. They are more judgmental and constantly compare other cultures with their own. Their primary aim is preservation of their national identity in midst of an alien culture. This differentiation and comparison helps them distance themselves from the alien culture rather than making them indulgent. They are more cautious regarding details like what they eat, whom they befriend and how they function as a member of an alien social circle. The traveler is charged with the responsibility of protecting his culture. However, these distinctions are not stringent and the categories overlap. Some similar themes might be noticed in all these pieces. Western travel narratives had naturalized an “ideal” traveler – “male, privileged, and autonomous agents, possessing leisure and means to satisfy their wanderlust” (Codell 174). The Indian traveler was similar and different in many ways. The traveler was undoubtedly male. They are privileged financially but unprivileged in terms of certain personal attributes which required handling of unexpected circumstances. They are hardly autonomous agents of their own travel. In many of the travel narratives we see the traveler forging a relationship with the fellow travelers. Though they start the journey alone they slowly end up travelling in groups. Decisions are taken through consultation with all the members of the group which is travelling. Most of the travelers travel on purpose-- training tours, educational expeditions, etc. We hardly find tourists who travel because they have leisure. Moreover, in the 60s, the ethics of hardwork and optimum utilization of time was so dominant that depiction of leisurely travel almost sounds guilty.

The places visited indicate the kind of education that the writers intended to

impart and promote the ideology which was the need of the nation building enterprise of that time. The initial piece which appears in April 1960 **is** more like a report. This is in keeping with the scientific temperament of the time. The travel here is not only for gaining new experiences but also for “conquest and ... discovery” (Bhattacharji 201). It was a time when science was strengthening its hold over different aspects of national life. An attitude of objectivity, keen observational skills and ability to provide for the rational explanation of events and objects were being encouraged. The traveler in the text is a student of science which further validates the argument. He is the explorer giving an objective description of the external world that comes under his surveillance without resorting to his personal opinions. This piece appears in April 1960, which is considered to be one of the formative years of Indian tourism. During the second five year plan (1956-61), tourism became an important constituent of planning. The third five year plan was a major landmark in the history of tourism in India. The Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) was established in 1960 which gave a boost to travel in India. However, the articles which appear in the early 1960s are more exploratory in nature. More in the form of an investigative report, they hardly place any importance on the national ideologies. These kinds of travel literature aim at making the unfamiliar and unknown places of the region familiar to the reading public, giving them an idea of the physical geography, environmental and climatic variations and the flora and the fauna of their region. Stephen Greenblatt differentiates between two types of interaction with the environment --‘imagination at play’ and ‘imagination at work’ (qtd. in C. Thompson 85). What we find in these texts is imagination actively engaged in the work of decoding nature.

In the present piece under review, titled “Cuttack Ru Hukitola” (From Cuttack To Hukitola) (April 1960), the journey is from Cuttack (once the capital of Orissa and still one of the major ‘centres’ of scientific and cultural development) to Hukitola (a small island on the western part of Orissa). A classic example of a journey from the centre to the margin, this piece presents the findings of an undergraduate student of zoology. Being a student of science, our traveler becomes a reliable voice who could be trusted of bringing authentic information about the places he visits. However, the journey is not undertaken for the purpose of collecting information. It is rather inspired by the writer’s desire to take a break from the “noisy day to day life of the city” to the “sweetness” of the village and establish an “intimate” relation with nature (1). The journey also throws light on the attitude of his fellow students towards their own state. They hesitate to go with the writer and he sarcastically comments - “...what is the benefit of spending ten rupees and seven days holiday on a visit to a village. If it would have been Madras, Bangalore, Mysore then the students would have gone to the extent of borrowing money” (1). This was the then prevalent attitude of the “educated” people and this piece seeks to challenge and change it. The 60s were a period of emerging national consciousness. The idea of boundary is intimately connected with national identity. Travel facilitated the breaking of boundaries within the nation and a simultaneous creation of boundaries outside it.

During the journey, the writer mostly gives a description of the different kinds of fishes and other sea creatures he sees. The narration is filled with elaborate

passages describing the physical features of each of the fishes the narrator sees. He also makes references to the budding fish trade there. The narrator does not express any personal opinion. He does not judge or analyze anything he sees, except for the occasional outburst of wonder at the natural beauty of the place. The last part of the piece gives a short description of the society of the fisherman who inhabit the island. A sense of the Oriya community is evident in the social bonding of the people living there. If a fisherman dies, then his family is not neglected. The family gets an equal share from the catch of the other fishermen. The last lines of the piece are very touching. The narrator feels the negligence on the part of the Oriya people towards their own land. A sense of historical documentation emerges here. By the 60s development had made its inroads in the centres of Orissa but the peripheries were untouched by it. These were the places, which had still preserved the 'authentic' Oriya values. Thus it is also a critique of the developmental ideology. This piece definitely aims at fostering respect for one's own land. It also highlights the economic value of the place in the process of national development. In a very subtle way, the article hints at the potential in the place and that it could be further explored. The traveler is sure that this place could be taken from the nature and made a part of developmental economy. This form of travel writing aims at generating information for administrative purposes also. The language in this piece is transparent so as to give the readers a clear picture of their national space/place without drawing any ambivalent conclusions. The nation is projected and interpreted through the traveler's gaze. The traveler in this case is a learned traveler and thus his visit is a combination of tourism and academic exploration. Therefore, it cannot be ignored that his perception would be coloured by the ideas of western science and

this fact makes him a close counterpart of the western colonizer. One important point to be mentioned about this kind of travel is that they are planned journeys. The student explorer studies the maps and routes carefully, makes arrangements of food and shelter at different resting points and contacts the people he would meet at the destination. Planned journeys are always linear in nature both geographically and metaphorically (Bhattacharji 203). This is in sharp contrast with the sentimental journeys (which would be discussed later in the chapter) which are characterized by constant going back in time. These sentimental travelers become victims of various accidents due to the unplanned nature of their journey yet they are able to overcome all obstacles successfully. This movement from planned to unplanned travels throws light on the changing character of the Indian citizen. This piece, where the student plans his journey ahead, shows a person who, though does not lack confidence, still desires to keep his journey safe and organized so that movement is under his control (a typical colonial attribute). The travelers who appear later are more open towards what the journey offers to them. They go unplanned, face accidents yet never lose the hope and desire to continue their travel. They are more flexible in their approach. This is indicative of a more confident and stronger self which is adaptive to changes.

The 1960s saw the publication of a series of articles which were not travelogues in the strict sense of the term but gave a description of various places like any other travel narrative. The selection of these places was done on the basis of certain political ideologies. The first in the series titled “Ladakh O Ladakhi” (Ladakh and The People of Ladakh) (July 1960) presents the social, cultural and economic life of the place and the people. The inclusion of the article was triggered by the violent

border disputes between China and India. The main purpose of the article is to make the child aware of the boundaries of the nation. It highlights the fact that the borders are as important as the mainland nation. Knowing and protecting one's borders is very important for formation of nation and national identity. Though the places at the margins are quite different from the mainstream nation, these places have to be known and integrated. The differences are established with respect to various aspects -- language, religion, social institutions. The dominant religion in Ladakh is Buddhism. Polyandry is practiced among the people and the families are matrilineal. A strand of Buddhism known as Lamaism is also prevalent here. The child has to be made aware of the differences and made capable of acknowledging and respecting them. The ideology that India is not a 'Hindu' nation consisting of monogamous family units everywhere, is highlighted.

There are articles on Tirupati and Varanasi. The writer gives detailed descriptions about their geographical locations, their surroundings and the facilities available to the tourists. There is no mention of their religious significance or any other subjective opinion of the writer. This is indicative of the assumed natural Hindu character of the nation. Significance of Hinduism does not require to be marked out separately as Buddhism was in the above article. They are more in the form of an informational piece in a guidebook. Similarly the piece on Lhasa titled "Nisidha Nagari-Lhasa" (Invisible Town of Lhasa) (April 1961), gives valuable information about the social, economic and political life of the place and the Chinese invasion of it. Chinese invasion of Tibet might be one of the major reasons for the inclusion of this piece in the magazine. The conflict between India and China was at

its height during this time and this piece might be an alert message to the Indian to be beware of China.

The travel texts which appear in the mid 1960s focus a lot on the subjective experiences of the traveler and his emotional response. This inward turn may be reflective of a slow change in the idea of the nation and the process of nation building. Earlier, science was considered to be the major medium for the success of the national project. Moreover, the project of nation building was considered to the task of the larger institutions. This inward turns shifts the emphasis on the individual and *his* (rarely *her*) opinion on the process of nation building. This movement from the status of the subject to the citizen is reflective of another stage of development of the nation. Not only do the boundaries have to be drawn but also differentiated. The perception during this period was also quite romantic. Focus on the art and architecture of the temples encouraged the child to develop a taste for the aesthetic connected to the religious. Again, this could have been an attempt at neutralizing the effect of too much emphasis on science and rationality and growth of individuality in the society. Western travel writing is focused more on the creation of a distinct identity by creating and maintaining a distance from the people and surroundings. These sentimental travel writings, on the other hand, had more of a self-effacing quality about them. The narrators try to relate more to their surroundings, attempting to create an organic solidarity and forge an emotional connection between all the elements of the universe. The places visited were mainly sacred sites. Resurrecting faith in the cultural and religious values was considered to be of utmost importance. The religious places were also places of spiritual enlightenment. It was

also a time when the Christian missionaries had accelerated their pace and number of religious conversions. In the tribal regions of Orissa the effect was very strongly felt. Their major argument that Hinduism is based on the grounds of inequality had to be refuted and the spirit of Hinduism had to be animated in the hearts of the future generations. The piece on the Jagannath culture in Orissa, titled “Jagannath Sanskruti” (Jagannath Culture) (August 1986), does this wonderfully. The Jagannath Temple in Puri is not just a symbol of our glorious past, rich culture and architecture but is also an attempt to make the past relevant in the present and to show how the religious represents the social. The temple is not just a monument made of stone but a pious thought of a sage, a culture’s creative origin, the concrete manifestation of human desires, the moral base of one’s imagination and the pride of the Oriyas. The Jagannath culture thus touches and influences every aspect of Oriya life. The three gods inside the temple look different. Lord Jagannath is dark, Lord Balavadra is fair and Goddess Suvadra is yellow. These differences represent the diversity of our nation and the lives of the people who live here. Despite differences all the three gods are on the same pedestal. Unity in diversity is reflected through these images. The writer points out that all other religions preach violence. They forcibly convert people to their own faith. But Hinduism is foregrounded as a peace loving religion which preaches tolerance and equality. The idols of the Gods are not adorned with any artificial jewelry. Simplicity is the very basis of Hindu identity. Moreover, Lord Jagannath is dark, not fair and yet He is beautiful. Our concept of beauty is different from the western conception of beauty. This beauty makes everyone equal in spite of surficial differences. The essence of His personality has inspired and influenced people from time immemorial. The writer presents a very positive and untainted

picture of Hinduism. The caste differences, brahmanical superiority, ill treatment of the lower castes, and untouchability have not been talked about. Violence has also been a part of Hinduism. A very biased representation of Hinduism would make the child believe that Hinduism is the only good faith. Other Hindu religious places described are Devkund, Sakhigopal and Konark. It is interesting to note that all the religious places described are Hindu. This shows how the idea of sanctity and purity were and still are attached to Hinduism. In tracing the religious history of Orissa, the writers also highlight it as a divine and sacred place which makes it distinct from the rest of India. Since the 1960s depicted an inward spiritual journey the pilgrimage became the best way of showcasing it. Sara Dickinson in her study of sentimental travel writing in Russia says that “In sentimentalism as well, the repeated visits of emotional pilgrims to sites of legendary despair and their careful remembrance of previous affect also function to “transform profane space into transcendent space” (138). In sentimentalist travel writing there is also an attempt to distance reality by viewing the present places through the lens of the past glory. The journey also symbolized the search for peace and hope in times of social and political turmoil, the reclaiming of a history which would provide some kind of stability, and search for origin and a glorious past which would glorify an inglorious present. The visit was itself a way of paying homage to the land and a way of connecting with the past. Religious travel was a way of overcoming selfhood (Mandal 66). It was a means of realizing that the individual is nothing and all humans merge with the superpower and thus are equal. These travel pieces thus performed the contradictory function of destroying the self and at the same time fashioning a self which would realize that the self is nothing. Sentimentalism also served another function – that of persuasion.

In “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi Is Not Far Anymore) (September 1967), the writer breaks down at the sight of Rajghat¹⁷. He remembers Gandhi and feels his absence as a great loss for the nation. Though he does not say anything directly, he subtly persuades the present generation to follow the footsteps of the national leader.

Travel writings also filled in the gaps created by inadequate geographical knowledge so that the nation could be perceived as a whole. In the same text, “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi Is Not Far Anymore), the writer begins with the statement – “Dilli bahut dura” (Delhi is very far) (9). We realize the significance of the sentence only after we have read all the experiences of the writer. The writer goes to Delhi from Almora where he was sent for a training program. Though his travel piece is about his visit to Delhi, he begins with the description of the landscape of Almora as he passes by it. Not only in this article but in other articles also, the writers describe not only the place of destination but also other places they pass by, thus providing a sense of continuity. It aims at helping children to understand the fact that the nation is not a mosaic of separate states but one whole entity. Fragments are joined together to create a national boundary. This way of describing the experiences also highlights the fact that it is the journey, the travel which is more important than the destination.

Visit to places where technological infrastructure have been built aims at explaining the changing attitudes of the society towards urbanization. Nehru in 1954 commented – “Probably nowhere else in the world is there a dam as high as this...As I walked round the site I thought that these days the biggest temple and

¹⁷ Rajghat is a memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi.

mosque and gurdwara is the place where man works for the good of mankind. Which place can be greater than this, this Bhakra-Nangal?” (Khilnani 145). Besides the descriptions of temples and other sacred places, the 1960s saw the publication of a series of articles on the structures of technological development – The Hirakud Dam, The Rourkela Steel Plant, The Paradip Port etc. This disseminated the idea that though Indian and Oriya society are traditional societies, they do not completely disapprove of the technological developments as long as they help in the progress of the nation. The pieces on visit to the U.S and Germany aim at making the child capable of an international citizenship. In an era of globalization, where international travels have been made possible and easy, the child should be made capable of interacting with the larger world.

The centers of national identity during this period move from the urban to the rural and the religious. The urbanization and the effects of economic capitalism are frowned upon and disapproved. If at all scientific developments are approved of they are ones which are built for rural upliftment. Rural upliftment is not to be confused with urbanization. Development of the economic infrastructure while keeping the social and cultural values intact is the aim of nation building in these travel narratives. Return to the rural is a dominant theme in these narratives.

Travel writing helps break many stereotypical images created by the nationalist and romantic poets who describe the beauty of the national landscape with rhetoric. Travel writings help us come face to face with reality and see what our land is actually like. This piece titled “Aame Tini Tirthayatri” (We Three Pilgrims) describes

the writer's visit to the Godavari. The narrator is a child who is eager to see Chilika, a place which has been described by many writers as possessing exotic beauty and exceptional charm. But when he sees the real place, he is shocked to see the dirt surrounding it. Sometimes stereotypes related to a particular culture are also broken. In "Patalapurira Halchal" (Condition of The City of Hell), the Indian narrators had a misconception that the people of America are materialistic. In the church they witness different people from various backgrounds and come to the conclusion that their views were wrong. They realize that the Americans, no matter how developed, never missed their Sunday church meetings. In many cases the traveler breaks stereotypes which he had formed about himself. In the same travel piece quoted above the narrators carry the baggage of being the colonized subject. The journey is also about their overcoming this mentality. Outside the church they meet people who show them great respect and invite them to their houses. The narrator is surprised and states – "Gote Bideshi rashtrara eka ajana sthanare amaku ete nijara bhali sneha sahanabhuti miliba boli kalpana kari na thili". (I had never even imagined that in a foreign nation we will receive so much love and respect) (August 1988). But at times travel writing also reinforces certain stereotypes. In "Kalijai Pathe" (On The Way To Kalijai) (August 1962), the traveler is mesmerized by the beauty of the place and comments that this is 'Godavarisha's kalijai' (The Kalijai of Godavarisha). Godavarisha Mishra was a poet who had written a poem on the same place exalting and glorifying it. By making such a comment the writer reinforces the image of the place created by the earlier poet.

Travel, gendered.

Needless to say, the whole project of travel writing is gendered. All the travelers are male, besides being upper caste and upper class. The figure of the Man (traveler) conquering, defining and controlling the body of the Woman (land) is a dominant theme which emerges from the texts published. It is the man of post independent India who is the owner of the land and has the responsibility of representing it to the future of the nation. The upper caste and upper class who had access to religious sites besides having the financial strength of making a tour, are projected as the only one 'capable' of representation. The predominance of male travelers also indicated that the public space was available only to men. In relation to the gender differences in travel it has been observed that "The *flâneur* was unquestionably male, and *flânerie* was a way of experiencing and occupying space that was available (if not only, then surely predominantly) to men" (Wearing, Stevenson and Youngs 7). Wolffe also specifies that – "There is no question of inventing the *flâneuse*: the essential point is that such a character was rendered impossible by the sexual divisions of the nineteenth century'... Alone, women could occupy public space in the guises of prostitutes, widows, lesbians or murder victims, but the 'respectable' woman 'could not stroll alone in the city'" (qtd. in Wearing, Stevenson and Young 7). Women in the travel pieces appear mostly as objects of gaze. The narrator in "Aame Tini Tirthayatri" (We Three Pilgrims), discussed earlier, sees the south Indian women and comments on their dark skin colour and sturdy physical features. He makes constant comparisons with Oriya women whom he describes as being more petite. He is bewildered at the fact that women in the south are actively

engaged in the economic life of the state¹⁸. This bewilderment is indicative of the male perception of the public sphere which does not include women as active agents and decision makers. The nation had not achieved equality yet. In the initial years, group excursions are mentioned which change gradually. It is reflective of a society which was growing individualistic under the gnawing influence of capitalism. As the traveller was a male, certain values were considered important to be inculcated. Travel literature in the later years focused on the experiences of a single individual who travels not for fun or spirituality but with a purpose. The travel literature of the earlier years train the child regarding the values of communal life, travelling in groups with parents and other people, taking care of and protecting the parents, knowing and developing respect for other cultures. This fact also reflects the role that the male was to play in the building of the new nation. The child also comes in contact with various strata of the society, people belonging to different castes, class, etc. Development of fellow feeling and national consciousness receive a boost through these travel narratives. All these added to the idea of masculinity. Being able to handle unexpected situations and conducting oneself outside the one's own comfort zone was stressed upon. Developing familiarity with the nation was the major ideology underpinning all such attempts. Earlier writings also showed the ability to make contacts in a different place. People who visited other places made contacts there and stayed at the homes of their new found friends, who treated them with great respect and affection. Later narratives focus on individuals who travel for higher studies to foreign countries. A long narrative appears in the magazines in 1986. It is about the visit of an Oriya student to the U.S for higher studies. The

¹⁸ Women's work, in any case, especially domestic work is not considered as part of the economy.

relations between India and U.S were improving after the rifts created by the Cold War. The U.S was transporting considerable technological support for strengthening the defence infrastructure in India. Besides, it was also investing in the private sector. Thus the travel narrative explores the experiences of the Indian traveller during his stay there. It depicts the Americans in various ways as good albeit a little critique of their culture appears in the narrative at interesting points. Surprisingly, the article “Patalpurira Halchal” (Condition of The City of Hell) published in 1985 is about a visit made twenty years ago, sometimes during the 1960s. India had shared considerably good relations with the U.S during the 1960s. The then President John F. Kennedy’s support to India during the Indo-Chinese conflict gave a boost to Indo-U.S relations. However, the 70s saw the deterioration of the relationship after Kennedy’s death. The relations revived during the 80s, and in this article an attempt is being made to maintain it by focusing on the history of Indo-U.S relation which were quite good in the 60s. This narrative is about a spatial as well as a temporal journey, the traveler being an educated Indian youth.

However, the idea of the feminine as being an integral part of travel writing has not been neglected. The idea has been dealt in an abstract manner, through a kind of inward journey. Travel can help a person go back to one’s past and recall a bygone time. It can also help one achieve peace by providing solutions to many conflicts. The phrase ‘arriving at a solution’ itself suggests a kind of journey. An inward journey leads to a kind of transformation which can be understood as a feminine concept. Paulo Coelho in *Brida* states – “Up until now, you have dealt only with your masculine side: knowledge...but you haven’t yet touched on the great

feminine force, one of the great transformational powers. And knowledge without transformation is not wisdom” (111). In fact, ideas of regeneration, rebirth and transformation, considered to be feminine abound in travel literature. Not only does the traveller but also the relationship between the traveller and the external world undergoes a transformative process where the individual comes to have a better understanding of the outside world. In the travel piece “Cuttack Ru Hukitola” (From Cuttack To Hukitola), the traveler is mesmerized by the natural beauty and diversity of the places he visits. He admits, with some guilt, his lack of effort at not having discovered the rich heritage of his own state. He wonders why the people of Orissa go to other states for seeking peace and pleasure if there is so much to explore in our own state. This trip establishes a kind of intimacy between the traveller and the external landscape and fosters respect for one’s own region. In “Dilli Au Dura Nuhe” (Delhi Is Not far Anymore) (September 1967), the writer becomes nostalgic after seeing the effects of urbanization both on the physical and cultural landscape of the place. But at Rajghat he comes to an understanding with the hope that Gandhi’s principles will one day redeem the nation. His inner conflicts are resolved to some extent. Thus, travel puts the traveler in touch with his feminine side – the ability of giving birth to a new self. The process of travel establishes a connection between the masculine and feminine – knowledge and transformation. Not only this inward journey but this form of travel writing has been considered as feminine by some critics. In relation to gender Carl Thompson remarks that “The picturesque tourism pioneered by William Gilpin in the late eighteenth century, for example, was often lampooned by contemporary critics as a distinctly feminised form of travel and travel writing, since it encouraged travellers to consider the landscapes through which they

moved principally in an aesthetic rather than a practical or scientific light” (175).

Douglas Ivison is of the opinion that “The genre of travel writing . . . was the cultural by-product of imperialism, often written by those actively involved in the expansion or maintenance of empire (explorers, soldiers, administrators, missionaries, journalists), and dependent upon the support of the institutions of imperialism in order to facilitate the writers’ travels” (qtd. in Edwards and Graulund 1). In postcolonial nations, travel writing assumed importance due to varied and significant reasons. Breaking of the stereotypical notions about the colonized nations that colonialism constructed became one of the major agendas post- independence. Through the eyes of the traveler the people of the nation could see their own land, free from the colouring of the colonial ideologies. However, for the postcolonial nations travel writing became a significant medium for the creation of a national identity, emerging out of the effeminate colonized figure. Like the travel writing of the earlier era, which was meant to aid in the imperial expansion projects, travel writing of the postcolonial era was also meant for the purpose of expansion but in a different way. Travel narratives in the post-colonial period aimed at the expansion of the imagination of the nation i.e. nation as an imaginative entity. Besides, travelling also symbolized reclamation, repossession and control of one’s own land. But then “Postcolonial travel writing has critiqued, and continues to critique, the notion of ‘real’ and ‘authentic’ travel by posing the question: ‘Authentic to whom?’” (Edwards and Graulund 9).

Travel and the 'Other'

If these narratives aimed at breaking the stereotypical ideas generated by colonialism, they also created colonialism of a different kind. Besides, the newly emerging neocolonialism is also visible in many narratives.

The idea of 'othering' goes hand in hand with travel narratives and colonialism. Thompson clarifies that:

Either way, to begin any journey or, indeed, simply to set foot beyond one's own front door, is quickly to encounter difference and otherness. All journeys are in this way a confrontation with, or more optimistically a negotiation of, what is sometimes termed alterity. Or, more precisely, since there are no foreign peoples with whom we do not share a common humanity, and probably no environment on the planet for which we do not have some sort of prior reference point, all travel requires us to negotiate a complex and sometimes unsettling interplay between alterity and identity, difference and similarity. (9)

Srilata Ravi also surmises that the "traveller in the position of heightened authority of ethnographer/consumer finds himself inevitably engaged in a process of judgment and comparison" (2). However, it can be argued that the traveler judges not only the others but also judges oneself in relation to others. The traveler is, in fact, in a very ambivalent position which has crucial implications for subjectivity and identity formation. Potter says that:

Nowhere perhaps as much as in the field of travel writing, in fact is the fundamental ambiguity of "representation" more apparent. To represent the world is political as well as an aesthetic-cognitive activity. It is an effort both to put something alien into the words of a shared language for someone else at home and to put oneself in the Other's place abroad in order to speak on its behalf. One is at the same time *representator* and *representative*, reporter and legislator. And in all that one writes one also inevitably (re)presents, however imperfectly, oneself. (Ravi 2)

The travel pieces published in these magazines also create many 'others'. On the international level, the 'others' are primarily people belonging to nations with whom India did not share a friendly relationship after independence. For example, in the piece titled "Germany Re Barse" (A Year in Germany) (June 1964), the Indian traveller meets two people on the flight. He describes them as 'rustic' from their looks because the clothes they wore looked as if they had borrowed it from someone else. They also did not know how to sit on a chair. The traveller looks down upon them for not being able to speak in English. Later he realizes that both of them were from Pakistan. This whole process of differentiation and recognition is ideologically motivated and highlights the character of the Indian and the 'other'. The traveler conveniently forms his opinion before knowing the fact that the people are from Pakistan. This proves that his judgement is not biased or prejudiced. He, in fact, helps them in completing some formalities at the airport. This indicates that the present day Indian is a cultured and broadminded person who can help the enemy at

the time of need. The other is thus inferiorised. Inferiorising is done on different levels. If people from Pakistan are shown as educationally inferior, the Chinese are shown to be morally inferior. Post the Chinese attack on India, the magazines published numerous articles which portray China as having 'evil intentions', 'greedy' and always desiring things which belong to someone else. These are considered to be signs of moral weakness. In the piece titled "Ganesh Aasile" (Ganesh Came) (September 1967), the Chinese is caricatured and is treated with a lot of sarcasm. The piece is about the celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi. Lord Ganesh is described as coming from the Himalayas and his vehicle-- the mouse -- is not Indian but Chinese with 'sunken cheeks', 'small nose' and yellowish skin colour. Portraying the Chinese as mouse in front of Lord Ganesha might be a strategy of characterizing it as insignificant in its power. The Indian God has control over it as it is just a vehicle. Moreover, the mouse is also shown to be a coward. It gets frightened at the appearance of cats. The Indian cats look like tigers. The mouse is also shown to be gluttonous. This greed for food is symbolic of China's greed for power. All these representations highlight the moral weakness of the Chinese. Cultural inferiority is depicted through the travel piece "Ireland Ra Chithi" (Letter From Ireland) (April 1964) which is epistolary in form. The traveler writes a letter from Ireland describing the social and cultural life there. The article comments on how couples live together for some time before getting married and after marriage live separately from their parents. Their parents are left alone in old age. The people there are also very money minded. These facts disappoint the traveler and he makes a comparison to India where marriage is a sacred bond which, in his words, "cannot be explained". Parents are accorded the highest position in the Indian family and this is the reason why the

Indian culture, according to the writer is superior. A similar idea is presented in another travel narrative titled “Patalapurira Halchal” (Condition Of The City Of Hell). In this piece the traveler is a student residing in the United States. When the narrator reaches his hostel, he immediately recalls his home. Home constitutes both Orissa and India. This is evident in his recitation of two poems-- first by an Oriya poet and second by Rabindranath Tagore, the national poet. Seeing him emotional, another Indian student consoles him by saying that – “Aama Bharatiya sanskruti o paribarika jibana pruthibira adhikansha desha tharu sampurna bhinna. Paribarika nibidata o sneha souhardhya aama pakhe ete besi je, anyamankatharu durare rahi aame sukhi hoi paruna”. (Our Indian culture and family life is completely different from any other country on this earth. We have such strong familial bonds and affection that we can never be happy if we stay away from our family members.) What gets emphasized here is the family life and strong bonds. This gets contrasted with the nuclear family structure of the Americans. The narrator for the first time hears about old age homes in America. One important difference that the narrator notices between himself and an American is their feelings towards their nations. One American student he meets does not show much interest in some of the national issues. On being asked why, he replies that many of his family members are settled in different places outside America and he spends much of his time living with them. Again, he was not sure of where he would find a job. There is no emotional connection with their nation like that of the Indians. This piece particularly shows how national identity also has become a fluid concept. As an Asian the narrator feels more closely related to the Asian community present there and speaks about them from their perspective and not from the perspective of the Americans. He says that

the Asians ‘proudly’ call themselves oriental. They participate actively in the public life but still maintain their racial purity. They don’t like to marry Americans. Rejection of the locals and their custom is a way of asserting one’s identity. Something similar is evident in “Germany Re Barse” (A Year in Germany) (June 1964). In this article the narrator is enamored by the hospitality of his boss. Hospitality is way of colonizing. Derrida views “the guest identity as informed by hospitality’s collusion with power” (qtd. in Codell 187). Hospitality, for him, is a “general name for all our relations to the Other,. . . re- invented at every second,... transforms the private home into a public space:” (187). Julie Codell in relation to some other Indian travel narratives states that the acknowledgement of the hospitality is a way of recognizing one’s powerlessness. This is evident in the “Germany Re Barse” (A Year in Germany) (June 1964) where the narrator refuses to drink in spite of constant insistence from his boss. The rejection is an assertion of a cultural identity. It also brings the Indian on an equal platform as that of the German. It is not just the rejection but the fact the Indian also has the right to say no and make his decision get accepted is what makes this narrative post-colonial. The narrator accepts the hospitality but on his own terms.

On the national level, othering is done on the basis of caste, class and region and religion. In “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi Is Not Far Anymore) (September 1967), the writer begins by saying that Delhi is very far. We understand the significance of this statement when we reach the end. The writer is quite disapproving of the life in the city. There is no community life as the people are very busy. They are also very rude and impolite. The article describes an incident of

pickpocketing which enrages him. This is where the first sentence becomes significant. He talks not only about the geographical distance but also about the cultural distance which has helped the people of Orissa to retain their innocence and simplicity. Another article, titled “Agra Au Asibini” (I Will Never Come to Agra Again) (December 1967), also explores the issue of identity. The writer boards the train for Agra and his immediate reaction is annoyance because the people of U.P. are noisy and ill mannered. He being a peace loving person finds it quite difficult to put up with all the rude behavior. However, the writer’s experiences in Agra make him shun the place forever. His wallet is stolen and he is sold fake gold jewelry by a shopkeeper. He describes it, therefore, as a place of cheats. “Mathura Mahayatra” (The Grand Journey to Mathura) (January 1968) is another piece which talks about differences. The writer, like in the previous articles, is annoyed with the rude behavior of the fellow travelers who are from Mathura. The rickshaw pullers argue and misbehave with the writer. Thus, he creates a certain image of the lower working class people across India. People in Mathura are very materialistic. This is the impression created by owner of a hotel where the writer and his friends eat. In “Aame Tini Tirthayatri” (We Three Pilgrims), class difference is made visible through the interaction between these people. During the journey they are helped by another person. He is an educated man and, therefore, has a very condescending attitude towards the narrator and his family because they were simple folks from the village. Education had brought about a lot of progress, no doubt, but it had also created differences and adversely affected social relationships. The figure of the urban educated elite is treated as the other because he is a product of westernization. After some time a brahmin enters the compartment along with his family. He is very

rude and ill mannered. The influence of caste is explored through this small interaction. Higher caste people don't treat the lower castes with respect. In Godavari, the family meets a young Telugu man who had come for an interview but was not selected. Still there was no sign of discontentment in him. He was carefree. This attitude is what differentiates them from the Oriyas, who are very responsible. The figure of the Muslim has always been considered as the other. In the above mentioned articles, both the travelers see temples destroyed by the Muslims in Delhi and Agra. Comments such as – “Muslims have ‘always’ done this”, create a stereotypical image of the Muslims as a violent race, of their religious fundamentalism and disrespect towards other religions. Othering is an important process of creating one's identity. Thompson, in this context, comments that “Consequently, all travel writing has a two-fold aspect. It is most obviously, of course, a report on the wider world, an account of an unfamiliar people or place. Yet it is also revelatory to a greater or lesser degree of the traveller who produced that report, and of his or her values, pre- occupations and assumptions. And, by extension, it also reveals something of the culture from which that writer emerged, and/or the culture for which their text is intended” (10). In “Patalapurira Halchal” (Condition of the City Of Hell), even though the narrator is in America, he still attempts to find differences between himself and other Indians present there. In this case the difference is created on the basis of customs. The narrator meditates on the difference between the Oriya and the Gujarati and their perspectives on travel by sea after marriage. The Gujarati community is okay with it and is not scared of sea accidents. But the Oriya remembers the legend of Kalijai¹⁹ and the superstitions

¹⁹ The Legend of Kalijai narrates the story of a girl named Jaai who was going to her husband's

associated with travel by sea after marriage.

Domestic travel writing or travel within one's own nation is a complex phenomenon, including a plethora of contradicting ideologies. It places the travel writer in a paradoxical position of being both an insider and an outsider. In keeping with the main aim of travel writing i.e., creation of a distinct and unique identity, the travel writer has to identify and acknowledge the differences between his region and others. But at the same time he also has to be aware of the fact that he belongs to a larger political territory and this identity could be formed only by identifying himself with his fellow Indians. Thus ideologies of similarities and differences are juxtaposed and balanced so as not to create friction between the two. The 'Oriya' and the 'Indian' have to be similar and different at the same time. This feat is achieved through the employment of various techniques. Regional differences of the present are levelled by a recalling of a colonial national history. Creating a religious Hindu identity also acts as a unifying factor. In this case the 'Muslim' becomes the other. In almost all the travelogues published in the magazines a strong Hindu identity is created. Sometimes irony and humour are used to project national identity through the flora and fauna of the country. In the piece "Ganesh Aasile" (Ganesh Came) (September 1967), Lord Ganesha's vehicle which is presumed to be Chinese is afraid of the 'Indian' cats. Reference to certain secular cultural traditions also highlight the national identity. In the above mentioned piece, though the puja celebrations are described in Orissa, the idea of the guests being gods is Indian. So, in spite, of the fact that the cat is Chinese it is welcomed and treated well. In the text about a visit to

house after her marriage. The husband's house was on the other side of the Chilika Lake which is why they used a ferry. But, unfortunately, there is a cyclone and Jaai drowns in the lake. After this incident she is considered as a goddess and worshipped.

Vrindaban, titled “Chala Mana Brundaban” (Let’s Go to Vrindaban) (November 1967), the traveler is surprised to note that the priests are same everywhere in India - greedy and rude. In another piece about a visit to Agra, the traveller is irritated at the attitude of the rickshaw pullers and concludes that they are also same everywhere. This idea of the present day Indians as victims of blind beliefs in religious rituals (which makes the priest the center of all religious activities) and capitalism (which has created class differences such that the working classes can do anything for earning) also serves to create a unified national identity.

Postcolonial travel writing, is thus, contradictory in nature as it tries to create otherness and deconstruct it at the same time. Travel is taken up to deconstruct ideas which were generated by colonialism through the process of othering and interestingly this is achieved through the process of othering itself. Thus, the identities to be countered are transferred to the new other and the traveler becomes a new kind of colonizer.

Postcolonialism operates on the idea of creating a new history which is different from the colonial version. Understanding history in the framework of geographical locations gives it a sense of concreteness which, in turn, helps the child to grasp the complete significance of a historical event, besides promoting a sense of respect for the site, the land where that event took place. In “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi is Not Far Anymore) (September 1967), the traveler is overwhelmed by the magnanimity of the place and its hypnotizing landscape. He recalls history and tries to rationalize colonial invasion as being propelled by the beauty of the place. This subverts the usual colonial argument that colonized lands were underdeveloped and

poor and the invasion was meant to ‘modernize’ them. On the contrary, the colonizer is now pictured as the greedy and envious ‘other’ who could not control his desire to possess something beautiful which is not his. The weakness thus lies in the colonizer. The project of nation building is based on the resurrection of a mythic past. This highlights the sacredness of the land and exalts it to a transcendental position. In describing the holy place of Devkund, the writer recalls the story of Shakti, her self-immolation to protest the humiliation of her husband and the tandava dance of Lord Shiva which showered the body parts of Shakti on different places of the earth, one of them being Devkund. The place is a glorification of the feminine power and sacrifice, of rebellion and courage. However, it keeps the gender hierarchies intact -- woman sacrificing herself for protecting the dignity of her husband. Similarly, Sakhigopal is the place where Lord Krishna himself came to bear witness to prove the innocence of a devotee. The mythological stories associated with certain places not only glorify the past and highlight the sacred nature of the place but also give a sense of reality to the myths. In “Mathura Mahayatra” (The Grand Journey to Mathura) (January 1968), the traveler describes Mathura as the childhood abode of Lord Krishna who had spread the message of love and joy. These invocations establish Orissa and India as a sacred land, once inhabited by the Gods, a land where virtues like justice, sacrifice and universal love have always been respected. In many other travel pieces also, the narrators recall stories associated with the places they visit. This knowledge of the past shapes the perception of the present in many ways. The traveler is not supposed to just see things superficially but envision things. This idea has been explored in detail in the third chapter in the discussion on museums. The historical knowledge aids the traveler in seeing beyond

what is visible. This quality also distinguishes the traveler from the tourist. A historical knowledge creates a sense of involvement. In many stories the writers recollect poems by other poets. They are the major poets. Such citations create a dialogue within the travelogue between the past ideas and modern representations. The piece on the Andaman and Nicobar islands, titled “Andaman Dwipapunja” (Andaman Islands) (October 1961), is worth considering because it performs some major functions in the process of nation building. The article tries to create a different history and do away with stereotypical images. The writer begins with a reference to the history of the place which still inspires fear among children. This island was used during the British rule as a place for punishing the rebels by shifting them to the cellular jail. In his attempt to contest this past the writer converts this place of punishment into a place of sacrifice and heroism. The narrator interprets this place in the context of the Indian struggle for freedom and proudly concludes that this place has been inhabited by various heroic figures from different parts of India. But still the idea of social ostracisation and loneliness due to impossibility of communication remain integral to this place. Hence the writer considers it important to have a different take on the place. Making the unknown familiar is very essential in creating a unified nation. Detailed descriptions about the people who have settled there, their day to day life, the economy of the region and the environment form the greater part of the article. However, the writer does not fail to bring into notice the lack of infrastructural development in the area due to which many people are unwilling to settle there. He concludes with suggestions for making it a tourist attraction which can yield huge benefits for the national economy.

With postcolonialism, the form of the travel genre also changed. Travel narratives do not show a linear narrative of progress in the western sense but show the deteriorated present which is symbolic of the glorious past, colonial atrocity and a narrative of regression as opposed to progression and thereby subverting the colonial travel writing genre. Colonial travel projects were also concerned with demarcation of strict boundaries and contours. Postcolonial travel writings show the narratives as an ongoing process, ceaseless without any beginning or end. The absence of the idea of any point of origin and is a dominant theme in postcolonial travel literature. For example, in many pieces the travel does not begin at a specific point, though the destination is specific and the description continues even after the travel has ended. The voice of the narrator is not the only voice. Other voices also speak through him. The idea of authority is challenged. These texts are Polyphonic. For example in “Germany Re Barse” (A Year in Germany) (June 1964) and “Patalapurira Halchal” (Condition of the City of Hell) the narrators are accompanied by companions who have an equal say in narrative. This hints at the assumption that construction of the nation is a collective enterprise.

However neocolonialist trends are visible in the piece “Patalapurira Halchal” (Condition of The City of Hell), which describes a visit by a student to the U.S for higher studies. The attitude of the traveler in “Patalapurira Halchal” (Condition of The City of Hell) is reminiscent of the attitude of those who travelled to England in the nineteenth century. These people, just like the present traveler considered the foreign land as the epitome of civilization and modernization. However the narrator is also critical of various aspects of American culture. The process of othering is

quite complicated in this piece. It is not the west which is critiquing the east rather it is a person from the east who is critical of his own culture in a foreign land. The student is highly satisfied with the technological development of the place, the educational and research facilities provided by the universities, and the social and economic arrangements. For example, when he plans to buy a second hand car he is taken to a junkyard where old cars are for sale. He is surprised to see the absence of any kind of surveillance there and even more surprised to know the fact that nothing is ever stolen from there. He ironically comments that if it had been India all the cars would have been stolen. This tendency to consider the west as superior in all matters has led to a kind of neocolonialism. Moreover this travel is not in the tradition of exploratory journeys made earlier. The narrator gathers extensive information about America before travelling. The focus of his journey is not so much on discovery as it is on attempts to fit into that society using the information which he had gathered. For example, during a new- year party when all his friends decide to stay awake all night, the Indian narrator is uncomfortable with the arrangement as he is not used to it. Yet he decides to stay up late because he had heard about these parties earlier. He also specifically mentions that one should behave according to the customs of a place in which one is. Western travel writers visited the unexplored places of the east to create and substantiate their ideas of the other as “exotic, inferior, quaint, erotic, and picturesque” (Codell 174). The Indian traveler “played with these conventions by applying them to the over-explored, over- discovered Western metropole, reversing the hierarchy of periphery and center,” (174). The narrator in this piece visits his University (the academic and intellectual space where ideas actually generate), the club (the communal and cultural space) and sites of historical

significance (the social and historical space). There is a subversion of hierarchy as the other of the west becomes one of their own by participating in their socio-cultural milieu. Yet the location of our narrator is still ambivalent. He is critical of the east yet he does not belong to the west. He occupies, what Bhabha call the “interrogatory, interstitial space” (qtd. in Marjorie Perloff). It is in these interstices, which are places of “overlap and displacement of domains of difference”, that identities and cultural values are negotiated (Perloff). The narrator, as a citizen belongs to the east but he is able to relate more to the ideas of the west. His sense of belonging is bifurcated. He is critical of various aspects of both the cultures. This locates him on the cultural border which is shared by a newly developing nation on one hand and a developed hegemonic nation on the other. His identity is shaped by this heterogeneity as that of the readers of this travelogue. Emily Hicks defines border writing as “a strategy of translation rather than representation” that seeks to “undermine distinctions between cultures” by deterritorializing the subject and cultural codes. Indians’ narratives fit this description of border writing; their travels deterritorialized them as Indian or British, or Anglophile Indian or Indian Briton, or Bengali-Indian-Briton, or other hybrid possibilities” (qtd. in Codell 175). Thus keeping in consideration the social and cultural instabilities of the 80s, this narrative constructs the idea of identity as something fluid and malleable. The genre of travel writing thus becomes an appropriate medium of expressing and translating the process of identity formation. With/like travel, identities and subjectivities also denote a sense of flux and reinvention.

Travelling is intrinsically related to space. As such, various space related concepts are associated with travel. One such concept is that of “contact zones”. Mary louise Pratt coins the term “contact zones” which are “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (Mandal 16). These contact zones are not restricted to places of historical importance which tourists from various background visit. It is also places like the bus, train, waiting halls etc. also constitute spaces of cultural interaction. Technological inventions become the site of cultural encounters. These are spaces where people from various social, cultural and educational backgrounds meet and compete for domination. For example in “Aame Tini Tirthayatri” (We Three Pilgrims), the brahmin in the train sits on somebody else’s seat yet considers his claim justified because he is a brahmin. The educated person on the other hand maintains his superiority by maintaining a distance from other passengers which is an assertion of the fact that he is not a part of the crowd. The brahman claims that he is *above* others and the educated youth hints that he is *different* from others. Temples similarly, in many of the articles, act as contact zones which bring people from diverse classes and linguistic background together. However, their role as places of segregation cannot be ignored. Lower caste people were not allowed into many temples and thus they reinforced differences. In “Aame Tini Tirthayatri” (We Three Pilgrims), the evening prayers are held in a different language yet the narrator is moved by the music and is able to relate to the entire crowd, feel one with them through the harmonious effects of the music. The writer also emphasizes the role which temples played in bringing people together by being centers of social and cultural life in India. In “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi is Not

Far Anymore) (September 1967), the park which the narrator visits is one such contact zone. It is a place where people from diverse backgrounds meet. The past and the present, tradition and modernity all encounter each other here. There are statues of many mythological figures – Lord Krishna, Yudhistir etc. Though India has developed it has still not forgotten its religious and cultural roots. Science will always pay its homage to religion first. There are also the carved out figures of various animals. Civilization has driven these animals into the interiors. These things indicate human being's attempt at recreating and planning nature.

Another integral part of travel writing which draws our attention is the landscape. The word 'landscape'²⁰ was introduced into English as a technical term related to painting. It does not refer only to a natural scene but also to the ways in which the observer interacts with the scene. Thus while highlighting the pictorial nature of the process of describing the external world, it also indicates that the concept of landscape is a construct. The term does not refer to the natural world only. It may refer to man-made structures also. Landscape, thus, cannot be perceived to be fixed and static. It evolves continuously with the changing circumstances.

In a postcolonial nation the description of the landscape became a way of understanding and controlling the land and environment. Travelling itself can be way of dominating and controlling the world. The ideas of landscape again changed according to the changing forms of the travel texts and the figure of the narrator. Landscape is not what we see but the way we see. Therefore the ideas of the

²⁰ cf. *Oxford English Dictionary*

landscape that emerged were dependent upon who was seeing it. For the student explorer in “Cuttack Ru Hukitola” (From Cuttack to Hukitola) (April 1960), the landscape is not sublime or picturesque. Rather it is rich and varied. He talks extensively about little known varieties of trees and animals thus foregrounding the need for further exploration and research. Landscape for him is material on which he can work. He has a more colonizing attitude towards his external environment. He describes an incident where he and his friends stand on the top of a lighthouse and witness the high tides which appeared quite threatening. But he was not scared. Taming and controlling nature was one of the major aims of nation building at that point of time. In the later part of 1960 when sentimentalism became a dominant mode in travel texts the ideas relating to landscape also changed. For the poet philosopher the landscape was sublime, transcendental and picturesque. It provided a space for philosophical meditations and introspection. In “Agra Au Asibini” (I Will Never Come To Agra Again) (December 1967), the traveler visits the Taj Mahal. He is awe stricken at the sight of the Yamuna near the Taj Mahal. His views create a nature/civilization dichotomy. He observes that the Taj Mahal is static and is withering under the influence of time. But the Yamuna is still dynamic, full of life and vitality. In the texts of this period even when environmental degradation is referred to the explanation for them is mythical. For example in “Aame Tini Tirthayatri” (We Three Pilgrims) the traveler is overjoyed on reaching Yamuna. He describes it as pure, sacred and beautiful. This is also the river at whose banks Lord Krishna had played and grown up. Yamuna has become polluted now. Her beauty long destroyed. But the writer provides another cause for the paleness of the Yamuna. When Krishna left the place to revenge Kans, she had also run after him.

Her beauty and charm is lost in her sorrow. In “Dilli Au Dura Nuhe” (Delhi is Not Far Anymore) (September 1967) and “Alakapuri Almora Re Mase” (A Month in The Heavenly City of Almora) (April 1968) the travelers describe the natural landscape in a romantic manner. They are mesmerized by the beauty of the landscape – green fields, huge trees and calm weather. This is indicative of the prosperity of the nation and establishes its image as a comfortable place to live in.

Landscape may not be natural but can also be man-made. The man made landscape is as important as the natural one. In “Dilli Aau Dura Nuhe” (Delhi is Not Far Anymore) (September 1967), the narrator describes Delhi as a place of historical importance, a place where many events took place which gave a shape and identity to our nation. The Lal Quila is a witness of our past. This is where the cases of the soldiers of the Azad Hind Fauz were judged, this is where Nehru himself had practiced as a lawyer. It is symbolic of justice, truth and strength (much like India). The writer is impressed with the technological development in Delhi – Huge buildings, clean roads, all amenities of modern civilization. He thus relates the concrete with the abstract. For an Oriya from a rural background the din and bustle of the cityscape is annoying. Though he approves the technological developments, he does not feel comfortable there. Wearing, Stevenson and Young state – “Two significant but very different landscapes are central to the contemporary travel experience and thus to the construction of the traveler self: the natural environment and the city. The city is first and foremost a spectacle; it is vast and impersonal, and yet through the experience of tourism it can to some extent at least become knowable and tamed. If nature-based travel is underpinned by the (romantic)

possibility of harmony and fulfilment, then travel in the context of the city is frequently discussed in terms of anomie, superficiality and alienation as well as display, stimulation and exhilaration” (75).

Landscape also presents the idea of the feminine, especially the natural landscape. Nature has always been perceived as feminine and maternal due to ideas of nurturing associated with it. But there is an inherent contradiction in the way this landscape has been perceived. It is the m/other. Besides being the eternal mother landscape is also the feminine other subjected to the male traveler’s gaze. It is something to be conquered and controlled.

Travel writing is not just an account of the encounters of a traveler. It is a form which emerges from a complex negotiation between the traveler, the landscape, the people they and the process of writing itself. Many critics have described travel as translation. It is not only a translation of one culture into another but also of the writer’s imagination into language. In doing so, the writers create a kind of reality which initiates the child into a sense of identity.

Tzvetan Todorov poses a rhetorical question – “What is *not* a journey?”²¹ Every movement of ours constitutes a journey of some sort. Even childhood is considered as a journey into adulthood. Travel as a metaphor also is very integral to the idea of growth. In most of the travel pieces, the travelers experience an expansion of their selves through their encounters. They grow as human beings. Childhood is also considered a journey towards growth and maturity.

²¹ Tzevan Todorov, *Morals of History*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.

Travel writing dismantles the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Earlier considered as “minor forms” of literary expression, the burgeoning repertoire of travel writings has given way “to a new understanding that treats alike all forms of expression as worthy human creativity” (Balachandran and Bala 1).

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CHAPTER 2

FREE SUBJECTS OF A DEMOCRACY: BIOGRAPHY, EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The title sounds quite oxymoronic as contradictory terms are juxtaposed- 'free' and 'subjects' and 'democracy'. The transition from subjecthood to citizenship is usually marked by certain socio-political changes that define the nature of the nation and its inhabitants. In the context of India, like elsewhere, decline in the feudal structure and growing capitalism gave birth to an ascending sense of individualism which influenced the socio-cultural scenario. Tensions between various identities and ideologies necessitated the creation of 'citizens', a homogeneous category which would not only curb the accelerating sense of individualism by enforcing a certain degree of conformity but would also foster loyalty and belonging to the nation-state. In his analysis of the European society, Javeed Alam concludes that capitalism facilitated the “emergence of individuated persons with the accompanying changes in their sense of being a person. Such an emerging sense of person also gave rise to new imaginings about life and society” (350). This is applicable to India as well. Under such circumstances, education as an ideological tool gains new connotations. Whether to educate the child to become a good individual or a good citizen is still an unresolved matter of debate because both involve different processes. Bertrand Russell, in *Education and the Social Order*, opines that “in practical daily life the education which results from regarding a child as an individual is very different from that which results from regarding him as a future citizen” (1). Though citizenship is empowering and is characterised by some degree of freedom, it is still governed and

limited by various social, cultural, religious and political discourses governing the nation at a particular period. When it comes to children, notions of agency, freedom and rights are different and therefore their citizenship is conceived in different terms. For a healthy public sphere and a smooth functioning democracy, good individuals are as important as good citizens. In the magazines published between 1960 and 1990 the tension between these two categories is clearly visible. Though the 'child' is treated as the free future citizen of a free nation yet s/he is subject to various ideological positions. Citizenship constitutes both rights and duties. It is the latter aspect which explored more in the magazines. This exploration of the last aspect emphasizes the duties and qualities of the inhabitant of the nation state which also create a sense of belonging.

Biographies and Citizenship

One way in which the lessons of citizenship are mediated is through the genre of biography. Biographies work on the conception that examples are better than precepts. Hermion Lee employs two contrasting metaphors to describe the idea of a biography – Autopsy and Portrait. The first metaphor conjures up the idea of biography as a form of 'posthumous scrutiny' of a helpless subject who is no more alive. It is more like a “technical forensic process” which analyses the dead facts of a lifeless entity. As a form of “clinical investigation”, this process in its extreme can also suggest “a violation, both of the body and history of the subject” (21). The portrait, on the other hand is a way of 'bringing to life' that which is no more. It involves the resurrection of the warmth, energy and colour which life has. It is not a

dry analysis to be read but a lively picture to be viewed. It is this second form of biography that nationalist historians prefer when it comes to handing over the nation's culture, history and character to its posterity. It is in the second sense that the biographies published in the magazine '*Sansara*' have been used. A picture is easier to emulate and imitate than an autopsy. Thus biographies could be used as a lens for understanding nationalism. But this second form also has its limitations – 'flattery, idealization, flatness, inaccuracy, distortion'. Thus biographies are lives of 'famous' people as constructed by the biographer (Lee 22).

In the biographies which were published in these magazines, it is the childhood of the subjects that gets highlighted. There could be a multitude of objectives behind this. Childhood as a crucial phase for shaping adult life is foregrounded. The subject's struggle with both external and internal negative forces and ultimate victory form the crux of these narratives. Since these magazines were published for children, they would identify more with child characters than adults. Sharron L. McElmeel argues that:

Primary-age children are characteristically egocentric, and if they are able to relate at all, they relate best to characters and experiences closely connected to their own world that is, to children their same age or to events in the present. They do not easily put themselves into the lives, time periods, or situations that ask them to identify with adult concerns and perceptions. At about the age of eight, readers begin to look beyond themselves and can begin to understand

and identify with subjects of biographies if the subjects are people who interest them and if the biographies are interestingly written and have a direct connection to their own lives. Students in the intermediate grades begin to explore other perspectives and situations in terms of time periods, cultures, history, and beliefs. (102)

This is one of the reasons for highlighting the childhood of the figures presented in the biographies. Biographies are one of the best ways to represent the self. Going by this argument, they are one of the best ways of fashioning a self. They are, thus, integrally connected with identity and subjectivity formation. Besides being a medium of fashioning the self, biographies also contain that “exemplary strain” which have been their typical characteristics since their inception as a genre (Lee 71). Explaining his claim, Lee adds that “A good life or martyrdom provided a model for good behaviour or spiritual aspiration; a bad ruler or a fall from greatness provided an awful warning” (Lee 71).

Biographies construct the future through a reconstruction of the past. The biographies published in the early 1960s delineate figures who are highly individualistic in nature. The attribute of self-reliance is valorised over other qualities. They are similar to the self-reliant individual of the transcendental philosophy²². These figures emerge as a response to the dissatisfying social ideologies and are, in fact, grounded upon the three major postulates of Emerson’s philosophy of self-reliance – each person is inherently genius in a unique manner, one’s individuality

²² Transcendentalism was a philosophical movement which emerged in 19th century America. It was, in many ways, similar to Romanticism.

should be prioritised over social and material influences and self-worth has to be valued. The biographies of Pattabhi Sitaramayya (February 1960), N Sanjiva Reddy (March 1960), Sir Sahib Singh Sokhe (May 1960), all present individuals who manage to keep their individuality intact in the face of sweeping social, cultural and political changes. Pattabhi Sitaramayya is representative of a self which defines the national character of the times. The fact that a person can rise over his limitations, be it social or personal, through hard work and perseverance is emphasized in his biography. The death of his father is symbolic of the absence of authority and he finds his path through self-discipline and self-reliance. The widowed mother figure is highlighted as the symbol of austerity, non-material outlook, asexual and pure. These are the qualities which Sitaramayya also inherits. More than institutional authority, it is the cultural authority, symbolised by the mother, which shapes the self. Education helps him to rise in the social ladder. In spite of being successful, he is very detached. The Gandhian ideology of simple living and high thinking is very prominent in his life. He resists colonial authority and advocates autonomy and freedom. The biography of N Sanjiva Reddy (March 1960) has resonances with that of Sitaramayya. He, like the above figure is also born in a poor family. Through education he also rises above his social limitations. He stands for the communist self and social service. The biography of Sir Sahib Singh Sokhe (May 1960) also presents the same ideals as the above two. All the above figures are extraordinary in their achievements. They are above others in their ability to rise over mundane ambitions. Their lives hint at the existence of an innate self which is pure, sacred, genius and remains untainted by the worldly affairs and this makes them extraordinary. This innate self remains unchanged in spite of the ups and downs of life. Their inner life and social life run

parallel but never merge. Their social selves are, in fact, shaped by the guidance of their inner selves. They sacrifice their lives for the society and yet remain distinct from it. These figures represent what Robert M. Strozier terms “Subject”, the subject with a capital S. Contrary to the Foucauldian subject, Strozier explains that the Subject is not constituted by the prevailing ideologies. According to him the Subject is “self-founded as individual” and has “selves as a given” (11). However, it can be argued that the subject can never be judged in isolation from the social and cultural context that produces it. Hence, any fact related to the subject is a revelation of the socio-cultural atmosphere of that period. Though the biographical subjects do not relate to the then prevalent social norms, they still conform to the “supposedly” Indian/Hindu ideals. It has to be noted that all the figures are against materialism. Pattabhi Sitarammaya resigns from a government job and starts private practice as a doctor with very little income. The indoctrination of the virtue of independence was a serious requirement at that point of time. A newly independent nation had to struggle to retain its sovereignty in the face of slowly rising neo-colonialism. These figures become a medium for the assertion of the Hindu ideals of detachment and selfless devotion towards the nation. Though they are actively involved in the public sphere, they maintain a personal distance. Thus, two different narratives of the subject's fragmented self can be recognized from any biographical account – that of the private self and the public persona. Both the public and the private space become the sites where citizenship is enacted. This bifurcation is representative of the classic nature vs. nurture debate²³. It is this dilemma that shapes the self. As

²³ Even though this debate has various aspects to it, in terms of child psychology, it centers around the question of what influences identity and self-formation. Nativists argue that heredity is more influential. Environmentalists consider external environment as more important.

Hermione Lee puts it - “Any biographer must give some thought, even if not explicitly, to the relation of nature and nurture in the formation of a self, and to the negotiation between interior existence and the self’s public performance” (15).

Ideas start changing towards the mid 60s with the publication of the biography of Charles Darwin (October 1960). The earlier figures are neither conformists nor rebels. They hold to their opinions without opposing the dominant ideologies. In Charles Darwin, we are introduced to a subject who rebels to prove himself right. The biography of Charles Darwin forms a significant departure from the previous line of thought. Firstly, the most noticeable fact is that he is not an Indian. The reason could be that certain qualities which needed to be highlighted were against the Indian philosophies and therefore they had to be mediated through personas which were not Indian. He was one of the greatest scientists of his age but as a student he was not very bright. He learns through his own curiosity and interest. During his childhood he mixes one chemical with another without following the rules of chemistry. This simple incident highlights the fact that non-conformity to rules and creativity are equally important for development. He was also an acute observer of the world around him. His theories of the survival of the fittest and the origin of species also had a profound impact on the way the world thought. However, his biography does indicate the trajectory in which the Indian thought was moving at that point of time. The material aspect of life was gaining importance. Living in a real world, one has to think practically about surviving. His theory also went well with the capitalistic tendencies sweeping across the country. His origin of species shook the belief of the entire world by proving that the human is not a

descendent of the divine but has evolved from the animal. The idea of evolution is also connected with the idea of growth of the self through conditioning and attainment of knowledge through practice and experience. This theory contradicts the above theory of the self as a pre-given attribute, as exemplified in case of the above figures. Through the biography of Darwin, the concepts of self-formation, self-creation and self-invention make their way into the conceptions of childhood. Like the identity category of the 'brahman', the theory of evolution also gave the 'fittest' the opportunity to rise past his/her limitations based on caste, class and gender. His theory is proved through his life itself. He himself was not a good student but rose to become a prominent scientist. One can always become the 'fittest'. What constitutes the 'fittest' is explored in the biography of Lal Bahadur Shastri in "Aama Pradhanmantri Shri Shastri" (Our Prime Minister Shri Shastri) (December 1964) through a deliberation on the ideas of strength and power. Like the earlier figures, his father also dies when he is very young and he grows up in poverty and pain. The writer argues that even though Shastri was humble and sober, his sobriety should never be misunderstood as weakness. It is a way of establishing good relationships with people. After the railway incident, in which he is falsely accused as the culprit, Lal Bahadur Shastri clarifies that even if he is short in stature, sober in nature and of weak health, his soul is strong. These ideas throw light on the idea of masculinity prevalent during that period and counter the British conception of the effeminate Indians. In this context Sita Ranchod-Nilsson's observations are quite pertinent. She, in *Women, States, and Nationalism: At home in the Nation*, states:

Colonialism, a relationship based on power, is akin to a male-female relationship where the colonizer, the "male," feminizes the colonized

in order to subjugate, control, and “protect.” Gandhi’s genius was to question and reject the British version of the meaning of courage and develop instead a strategy that placed “femininity” on its head. He “masculinized” the colonized by redefining “feminine” traits as “manly” or courageous. In doing so, he made the British critique of the Indian irrelevant. To give his claims legitimacy and authenticity, Gandhi drew upon a particular Hindu culture and experience to reconstruct the notion of “courage.” He made it clear that, according to Hinduism, violence, or inflicting pain on the “other,” is the weapon of the weak, while self-control that enables one to *bear* pain is a sign of courage. (85)

The above idea of power and strength is contradicted again in the biographies of Hitler and Churchill. The Indo-Pak war of 1965 would provide a favorable context for comprehending the ideas of nationalism, childhood and citizenship which emerged then. “Adbhutakarma Hitler” (Unique Achiever Hitler) (February 1965) shows Hitler as a charismatic leader who had the strength to conquer the world, mobilize people, political cunningness. He was born in poor family but is able to overcome all obstacles and become a national leader. Earlier, the leaders sacrificed themselves for the nation but maintained a sense of detachment from the achievements. Duty was their primary focus. But with Hitler, the definition of a national leader changes. He is focused more on the results or the fruits of his duty and this, in turn, inspires him to plan his strategies. His involvement not only with the present of his nation but also with the past proves his immense love for his

nation. “Rashtranitigyan Churchill” (Statesman Churchill) (March 1965) is the biography of Winston Churchill. He is depicted as a political scientist who creates his nation. He was great orator, capable of influencing and motivating people. He was interested in the art of warfare from his very childhood. This fact indicates the changing definitions of childhood across times and cultures. He was very calm and cool minded even in the time of crisis and this was the reason of his success. Both these biographies emphasize the involvement of these leaders with their nation and their people on a very personal level. Hitler’s ability to mobilize and Churchill’s oratorical powers made them popular and successful leaders. An ideal citizen, thus, is one who can interact with his/her fellow nationals and guide them. Similar ideas are reiterated in the biography of Dr. Rajendra Prasad titled “Dhupakathi” (Incense Stick) (September 1982). In this case, the virtue of humility is given a civic character and used a strategy to maintain social harmony. A small anecdote reveals this. Rajendra Prasad is angered by the breaking of his favourite pen by the peon. He uses his powers to transfer him to some other department. But then he realises his mistake and asks for forgiveness. Thus, through the humility of the upper class/caste all the sections of the society are imagined in harmony. In the second incident he goes to meet the editor of the magazine - *Leader*. He waits outside in the rain in spite of being the chairperson of the Congress Party. It is a Gandhian way of passive resistance to make the other person realize his or her mistake by appealing to the good in him/her and by arousing guilt. Thus, he is able to interact with people who are his subordinates as well as with the ones who are at a higher position than him. In the biography of Gyani Zail Singh titled “Sedinara Puranapanda Aaji Rashtrapati” (Yester Years’ Priest Is Today’s President) (September 1982), we find a return to the

ideal of conformity. Even though he was rebellious against the established order in fighting against the kings, he was still a conformist when it came to maintaining the political tradition of the nation. He says -- "E bhumira sarbocha aasanara adhikari hoyithiba purba surimanankara pratithistitha parampara mani chalibi" (I will conform to the established traditions of my predecessors) (6). Reemphasis on tradition becomes a hallmark during this period and is evident in many other writings. The 80s were a turbulent period in Indian history both culturally and politically. Communal riots had accelerated and the only way to establish order was perceived to be the return to the Vedic ideals of Hinduism. This is evident in the biography of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, titled "Jane Mahan Sanskaraka" (One great Traditionalist) (May 1983), published around the same time. In earlier period, the biographies were mostly of people who were intelligent but depended on institutional education to rise high up in the social ladder. In the later publications, the people are not well educated but gain popularity because of their practical work. Swami Dayananda Saraswati did not believe in idol worship and had a questioning mind from his very childhood. He found the answers or rather justifications of his Hindu brahmin father very 'light'. The writer says "Katha, pathara ra murthi pain se upabas kariba nahi. Satya anusandhana re siye bhahariba." (He will not fast for an idol made of wood and stone. He will go in the quest for truth.) (27). Thus, instead of reinforcing or accepting tradition, he creates a new tradition based on empiricism and rationality. He renounces the material world and finds a guru in Birajananda, who suggests that truth lies in the Vedic ancient past -- "tume jadi satya anusandhan karibaku chahan, tebe vedadhyana kara ebang mahabharata purbara sahitya patha kara.mahabharata parabarti sahitya padha nahin. segudika sankirnamana andhabiswasinka dwara

rachita. veda re bharata mukti ra tatwa nihita achi." (If you want to search for truth then read the Vedas and read the ones written before the Mahabharata. Don't read the ones written after the Mahabharata. They were written by confused and superstitious people. The road for India's freedom is inherent in the Vedas) (28). It would be interesting to note how truth is equated with the Vedas/Hinduism. Dayananda protests against the ills of Hinduism and publishes his philosophy in *Satyartha Prakash*²⁴. Just like Dayananda Saraswati fought during a time when Hinduism was losing its hold over people and huge masses were converting into other religions, the writer hints that it is time again to reassert Hinduism and strengthen its grip.

The 80s also saw the publication of a few biographies of people from the peripheries. An attempt to make citizenship more inclusive can be discerned. But this effort was also not without prejudices. "Kartavya Palana" (Fulfillment of Duty) (March 1983) is about a kandh tribal chief, Tama Dora, who fights against the British. Being a tribal, he was well practiced in the art of war fare. Thus, he is invested with Kshatriya qualities which the king also possesses. In spite of being from a minority community, he is identified as the national hero. His local identity is superseded by certain qualities which are national and thus he is qualified for being a national icon. "Jatire Nicha, Chintare Ucha" (Low in caste, high in thinking) (August 1985) is the biography of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. The writer argues that even though Ambedkar was born in a poor family and a lower caste, he had great interest in learning (qualities which are considered belonging to the upper castes). This

²⁴ A book written by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, expounding his thoughts on the Vedas.

opinion of the writer indicates the stereotypical idea that people born into the lower caste cannot be intellectually superior. This is, very subtly, hinted by the title of the article. He was very proficient in Sanskrit. He was against casteism and inequality created by the Hindu religion and questioned it in a rational manner. His revolt was not physical rather intellectual. The writer states that his questions and ideologies were not opposite to that of the nationalist ideologies of the Congress rather they were in keeping with the arguments presented by Mahatma Gandhi. Thus Ambedkar is brought on the same platform as that of Gandhi. He is accepted into the upper strata only after he has proven his worth as a citizen of this country. His knowledge of Sanskrit and ability to exhibit intellectual skills gave him an entry into the upper class. These two figures belonged to minority communities and their inclusion into the pantheon of national heroes is not on the basis of qualities assumed as typical to their communities. Rather they are presented as possessing some pan Indian attributes which make them recognized as Indian, a quality which upper-castes “naturally” possessed.

The “Subject” of the biographies published in the early 60s may be termed as impersonal, showing no emotions or personality. The subject was guided by a stoic morality which implied that he was “capable of raising himself above his own peculiar point of view” (Strozier 11). The ideologies of the Subject were different and, at times, contradictory to the prevailing ideologies of the society but were never at clash with each other. They perfectly fit into Kant’s conception of a “transcendental subject” which consists of the “principles of reason” and “categories of thought given to all humans prior to experience and which make any ordered

experience of the world possible” (Burkitt 9). But slowly subjects become more humane, in the magazines studies.

The postcolonial society in India was escalating into an increasingly complex and expanding society. The idea of expandable selves gains much weightage in relation to a society of this kind. Gregory M. Walton, David Paunesku, and Carol S. Dweck are of the opinion that the self is “expandable and contractable” (142). Different contexts activate and engage with different selves of a subject. Depending upon the variety and number of situations a subject is exposed to, the self expands or contracts. According to Durkheim, “changes in the structure of society precipitated a "crisis" in the normative or moral system that linked individuals and society” (Harms 395). This crisis requires an adaptation and appropriation on the part of the Individual to get accustomed to the newly emerged society. Adaption and accommodation are the primary responses to changes that get foregrounded. The self is to be flexible and pliant. The social structures of any nation are the fundamental bases for the formation of collective consciousness. Therefore the child has to be molded along the lines of the societal changes so that the collective consciousness remains intact. The idea of expandable selves also becomes important in the context of a society which required to retain its traditional communal solidarity to counter the growing cult of individualism. In the poem “Sishu” (Child) (1960), there is an attempt at creating an identity of the child by expanding it to accommodate other identities. Drawing on religious, historical and political figures the ideal child is an amalgamation of all these identities. It is a child which is representative of the Indian culture which, itself, is a portmanteau of different

cultures and ideologies – Jesus (divinity, forgiveness, and redemption), Rama (duty, commitment, and leadership), Buddha (Ahimsa, truth, renunciation) and Gandhi. The last figure is human and is presented as the culmination of all the above figures. He is more immediate and can be easily identified with by children. Ironically, neither Islam nor any other minority culture is presented. The culmination of the above qualities is in an upper class, upper caste, Hindu male. “Niti- Kalpalata” (Principle Of The Creepers) (March 1961) also talks about the relationship between the subject and the society in terms of expansion and extension. The writer argues that selfless social service and sacrifice are more beneficial to the person who does it than the people who are helped. It is an expansion and extension of the personality and the self of the helping subject -- “manushya jetebele para pain tyaga swikar kare, para pain parishram kare, setebele nijaku bistar kare”. (When a human being decides to make sacrifices for others, work hard for others, then s/he expands himself/herself) (15). What is presented here is an organic view of the self and the society. The writer argues that helping is a way of connecting with the community at large. It is also a way of connecting with God. Tolerance is presented as a strategy for survival. It is a way of curbing the cut- throat competition sweeping across the country. All human beings are assumed to be the limbs of the society. There is also an attempt to create equality by talking of human beings as mirror images of one another. A kind of homogeneity is also propagated - “..nija bhitare smastanku dekhe, samastanka bhitare nijaku dekhe” (see others in yourself and yourself in others) (15). But this homogenization constituted the acquisition of a Vedic Hindu identity. The imposition of homogeneity institutes a form of invisible violence which MacCannell terms as “cultural cannibalism” (qtd. in Wearing, Stevenson and Youngs 54). Ernest

Gellner draws attention to the politics of homogenization – “Homogenisation inscribed social continuity and cohesion over a territory, and its often violent processes enabled one ‘ethnic’ cultural group to be charged with creating, protecting and propagating its ‘traditions’ as the national culture (qtd. in Koh 138). Homogenization is also propagated through the article “Prani Jagatare Anukarana Prakriya” (The process of Imitation in the world of living organisms) (June 1961). Though the writer gives the examples of organisms who imitate other organisms to protect themselves from danger, the article is primarily about the idea of imitation in general and its requirement in the present world. The writer concludes that imitation is a way of survival through which the weaker nations withstand threat by imitating the powerful nations. It is also a way of learning and development. However, to view imitation as a simplistic process of copying something to survive would be to limit its potential. Bankimchandra Chatterji argues that one way to cultivate the national values is “to imitate those who have demonstrated their capacities as powerful and freedom-loving nations”. (qtd in Chatterjee 65). Bankim further adds that “One cannot learn except by imitation. Just as children learn to speak by imitating the Speech of adults, to act by imitating the action of adults, so do uncivilized and uneducated people learn by imitating the ways of the civilized and the educated. (Chatterjee 65). Bankim, nevertheless, is aware that only imitation is not enough for achieving perfection and therefore clarified that it “is always the first step in learning” (Chatterjee 65). Partha Chatterjee raises a fundamental question that if imitation is accepted as the norm then is the creation of an authentic national self possible at all? (65) He also answers this question with his eponymous distinction between the outer and the inner world (66). The idea of imitation dates back to

Aristotle²⁵ who has mentioned that imitation is a way of perfecting nature. In this case we are talking about human nature. When children are given models to be imitated, they incorporate their qualities into their own selves. This leads to an expansion of the self which connects them to the society as a whole. The idea of incorporation of higher qualities is evident in the story 'Parivartana' (Change) (March 1974) is about change in the casteist attitude in Indian society. Sabari, a lower caste man works in the house of a brahmin. When Sabari's child cries, the brahmin gets angry. This can be symbolic of the lower caste voice which when expressed becomes disagreeable to the upper caste. Sabari is ill treated by the brahmin. It is only when he saves the life of the brahmin's only son, things take a different turn. The brahmin changes his heart and acknowledges Sabari as his equal. There is an expansion of the self through an expansion of perception. The upper caste person becomes more accommodative and adaptive. However, even though change is brought about in the end, the politics behind it is clearly visible. The lower caste untouchable does not get the right to citizenship naturally by the virtue of being born in the same land as that of the brahmin. He, on the other hand, has to prove his eligibility as a participating member of the society to get integrated. In the poem 'Alasua Hoyi...' (Being lazy...) (1977) the idea of expansion of the self is combined with the ideology of work. The child is given the example of the natural world and how all organisms of nature work for the betterment of the universe. Social contribution and participation is presented as the Law of Nature – “Alasua na hoi sabiyen karuchanti kama/ ehaku kahanti sarbe 'Sansara-niyama” (Not being lazy everyone is busy working/this is called the universal rule) (2). The child is made a part of this vast universe without being given

²⁵ Aristotle's idea of Mimesis also advocated imitation to make nature perfect through art.

any special care or protection. Working becomes a way of integrating oneself into society. Work is something which unifies people and connects them. Gregory M. Walton, David Paunesku, and Carol S. Dweck have introduced the concept of “working selves” (141). In the context of a capitalist society, a working self is one which is more open to expansion and growth. Various working circumstances expose the self to various skills and people. This leads to learning and growth. In this and various other poems, integration into the society and the fear of ostracism are two dominant values which are described. Appreciation and praise are made desirable. Laziness as a negative quality is harmful, not only for the individual but also for the nation. 'Tucha Garaba' (Useless Pride) (July 1982) is a poem in the form of a conversation between a cloud and the sea. The cloud is proud of the fact that it gives the entire humanity relief from heat and gives fresh water whereas the water of the sea is salty and therefore cannot be consumed. The sea replies that the cloud is formed when evaporation of the sea water takes place. It reflects the interdependence of various elements of the universe. No person can survive on his own without taking help from others. The cloud comments "dina kaita re padibu jhuri tu/ barasa hoi/ kete jaga buli aasi mo dehare/ misibu jai." (In a few days you will fall down in showers/ after wandering the whole world you will be/ immersed in me) (9). The poem advances the idea that the entire world is one family. 'Mu' (I) (December 1963) is a poem in which the child identifies with nature and derives his identity from the various forces of nature. This is in keeping with Tagore's philosophy of education that the child should be sensitive to the nature around and it should be a part of the child's learning process. The child compares himself to the star (shining, providing light in the darkness), river (dynamic, movement, force) and

various other things. The child integrates his identity with that of nature. Only by obliterating his identity he would be able to do good for the larger society. The 'I' here refers to the individual identity. Childhood as a phase is considered that of becoming rather than of being. It is not just becoming but also becoming like someone. The pragmatists opined that the self is the product of the dialogue between the Individual and the society (Burkit 32). They valued social activity because from it emerged knowledge, self and consciousness. Therefore the idea of expansion is combined with the ideology of work. In the article on Darwin, the emphasis is on his work which reveals that the human self has evolved over time through the human animal's constant efforts at adapting with the environment. His biography also reveals the same idea. He constantly keeps experimenting and thereby reinventing himself. A self that can be expanded is conceptualized not only by what it is but also by what it can become, its potentialities. Biographies and other stories having a heroic figure who propagate certain values and help in the expansion of the self. Self is also constituted by assimilation and imitation. Modern theories describe the self as dynamic and multifaceted. Burkitt defines the self as a "confederation of actual-, ideal-, ought-, and even counter-selves". So whenever there is an attempt at creating a good citizen efforts are made to shape all the possible selves rather than a single self (39).

The idea of citizenship is never free from its cultural location, national and regional politics, and historicity. Agency can be understood as consciousness/ability to respond to authoritarian structures which are not just political but also social and cultural. Conceptual categories like nation and identity are fluid and porous and

therefore the related concept of citizenship is also very ambiguous. The task of citizen-making takes place not just in the political sphere but also in the academic, religious and cultural sphere. The Jacobin view of citizenship “equates citizenship with virtue, public spirit, and the hegemony of the political over all and other spheres of life where political participation is both a right and a duty for citizens, as distinguished from slaves, subjects, aliens, and residents who are not free” (Mitra 9). This view is evident in the lives of prominent figures presented in the biographies where politics is the major medium of expression of their personalities. The writer argues that citizenship in the liberal sense, where the “individual sets her priorities – such as family, religion, the pursuit of wealth, knowledge, the arts, or leisure”, is a matter of “legal status rather than a fact of everyday life” (9). But it is very dubious to reduce citizenship to only a matter of legal status. Citizenship is constituted by an individual’s responses, choices and performances in his/her daily lives.

The emphasis on reason and rationality during the 60s and 70s was quite notable. Reason plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between individual and society. Durkheim’s conception of the “dualism of the human nature” suggests that the human nature consists of two separate elements. He says:

Our intelligence, like our activity, presents two very different forms: on the one hand, are sensations and sensory tendencies; on the other, conceptual thought and moral activity. Each of these two parts of ourselves represents a separate pole of our being, and these two poles are not only distinct from one another but are opposed to one another. Our sensory appetites are necessarily egoistic: they have our

individuality and it alone as their object. When we satisfy our hunger, our thirst, and so on, without bringing any other tendency in top lay, it is ourselves and ourselves alone that we satisfy. Conceptual thought and moral activity are, on the contrary, distinguished by the fact that the rules of conduct to which they conform can be universalized. Therefore, by definition, they pursue impersonal ends. Morality begins with disinterest, with attachment to something other than ourselves ... We possess both a faculty for thinking as individuals and a faculty for thinking in universal and impersonal terms. The first is called sensitivity, and the second reason . . . they exist in a single and identical being. (Harms 401) ²⁶

Therefore, we find that in the stories there is always an attempt at controlling the body. Selfishness and individual centred approach originate in the desire to satisfy bodily needs. Throughout the 60s, the subject is portrayed as one who has controlled his emotions and has succeeded on the basis of his intellect. While this idea of society is true, the nation can be brought into existence only by an appeal to the emotions of the human being. The allegiance to the state is based on reason. The nation is an emotional conglomeration of people. Rousseau, following the same lines also speaks of an inner self and outer self which are present in all human beings. He argues that the inner self is the more authentic and pure. It guides and controls the outer/public self (McArdle 251). Durkheim's distinction of the two natures and Rousseau's conception of the two selves echo Partha Chatterjee's ideas on the inner

²⁶ This whole idea of "dual" is contested and because of its gendered nature, reason is considered as male and sensory as female.

and the outer world. The inner self is the pure authentic self - the nation. The outer self is the state, the citizen. In “Dwiti Dipa: Dwiti Rupa” (Two lamps: Two forms) (November 1983), the existence of both the selves is evident. This story narrates an incidence from the life of Chanakya. Once Meghasthanese visits the house of Chanakya, the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. He is surprised by the simple and humble lifestyle of Chanakya. His inner self is manifested through his simple outer self. The prime minister uses the oil provided by the government to do official work and uses his own oil to do his personal work. It an example of an instance of how two contradictory selves can exist harmoniously in one person. The idea of a single identity is not reinforced. A person assumes different roles and these produces different identities. The subject and the citizen co-exist.

One ideal which is highlighted in many of the stories is the idea of self-control. This ideal forms an important ideological component which defines the relationship between the individual and the society. Gandhi conceived of “the nation as essentially consisting of individuals who feel that they belong to it” (Rothurmund 314). He also advocated a spiritual solidarity which is stronger than the abstract national solidarity. According to him, “This spiritual unity and self-control is attained by right action, restraint and discipline. Self-control can be attained only if there is complete freedom from all passions such as anger, hatred and selfishness which may arouse violent action that leads the self into bondage” (314). Gandhi is, basically, crushing rebellion by valorizing these qualities. Violence and selfishness give rise to the principle of matsyana where the big fish devours the small fish. In the present capitalist society, self-regulation becomes very important. Self-regulation invests the

individual with agency and gives him/her the power to make choices. But what should be controlled is something decided by the society and culture which the self inhabits. This is evident in the article “Red Cross” (March 1961) which describes the story behind the establishment of this organization. Henry Dunant, the founder, had a lavish and unrestrained lifestyle which changed after the war. Henry Dunant was greatly moved by the suffering of the soldiers. He creates Red Cross after a realization that luxury is a sin. – “Sambhogara prachurya re nijaku hajai deba maha aparadh boli janiba pare mu ‘redcross anusthan’ gadhi basili.” (After realizing that loosing oneself in the abundance of luxury is a great sin, I created the Red Cross) (1). This article appears in the March 1961 when the nation’s development was lagging behind. Control of resources had become a necessity to provide a backup to the Indian economy. The appearance of this article specifies that what was to be controlled was in some way decided by the social and political scene of the times. Self-control also becomes important in the present context because it helps to “improve the fit between the self and the environment” (Baumeister and Vohs182). In the past change was impossible in the dogmatic societies. Since the society was unchangeable the concept of the malleable self was promoted so that the individual adapts to the society without disrupting it. In the modern societies change is possible and ironically this becomes the reason for self -regulation. Since the society is in a continuous state of flux, the individual needs to maintain its essential identity. In the modern, dynamic societies self- control and regulation have become the major means of creating identity. Identities are decided not just by what a person is but also by what s/he is not. In a capitalist economy, where a selected few own everything, self- control becomes one of the means to curb competition and promote an equal

distribution of resources. Therefore renunciation as a virtue has been talked about in many articles. Renunciation and asceticism are not just means of an other-worldly orientation but also a method of protesting against the social order (Thapar *Ancient Indian Social History*, 56). The aim of protesting against the society through renunciation was to maintain peace and avoid disruption of other kind. The purpose was to create a “parallel or alternate system” without breaking the existing one (Thapar *Ancient Indian Social History* 56). This arrangement of a parallel system in the ancient Indian society tells us a lot about the kind of civil society that existed earlier. Society, though dogmatic and unchangeable in many ways, made space for its critique but in a healthy manner. But just understanding renunciation as a form of protest would be an understatement of its ideology. There are many negotiations at varied levels between the renouncer and the mainstream society. Romila Thapar states that “One of the paradoxes of the Indian tradition is that the renouncer, in spite of migrating out of the society, remains a symbol of authority within society” (*Cultural Pasts* 215). Thus, renunciation does not mean isolation from the society. This is evident in the story “Eka Bindu” (One Drop) (November 1960) which is about a dissatisfied ascetic who is unable to find bliss even after austere meditation. He is consoled by a small bird, which suggests that cutting oneself from the social is not the way to achieve divine bliss. One has to merge in the world, become a part of it in order to be really happy. Renunciation in the Indian culture, according to Thapar, has never been perceived as a life negating principle (*Cultural Pasts* 215). This idea is reiterated by the bird – “Mrutyuku jibanare hin dekhibaku chesta karantu, kintu manaku mari nuhe. Manaku jibana Kendra re sthira rakhantu.” (Try to see death in life itself but not by killing your soul but by focusing on life) (25).

Another article which advocates integration in the world is “Rabindra Pratibha” (Talent Of Rabindra) (Jun 60) which is an exposition of the ideas of Rabindranath Tagore on society and life. For him satisfaction and completeness in life is very important but to achieve this one need cut himself from the world. Experiencing the world by becoming a part of it is the way to become one with the creator who created it. The writer says “Jibanara purnata pain sabubele se byakula thile. Kintu se purnata, se mukti pain samsara tyaga Kariba tanka dharma nathila...jibanaku purna bhabare upabhoga kari, srushti ku purna bhabare anubhava karihin mukti lava Kariba tanka darshana.” (He was always eager to find perfection in life. But in order to find that perfection, that freedom, he did not plan to renunciate the world. His philosophy is to find freedom by living life to the fullest and experiencing the creation as a whole) (19).

Gandhi's ideal society/nation is the Ramrajya, a patriarchal form of government devoid of any inequality and injustice and which provides equal opportunity even to the weakest member of the nation to grow and develop. The Ram he talked about is not the “upanishadic hero rather the ram inside every individual. “This at once brings home the Upanishadic thought of the identity of God and the individual soul as described in the words" Tat tvama si" (that thou art),which emphasize the basic identity of everything that is individuated (Rothermund 315). In 'Khanda Pate Diyaare Mote (Give me a sword) (February 1963), hardworking children of India are summoned to protect their motherland. War and violence are justified in the name of nationalism and justice. China is

referred to as Ravana. War is put in the context of religion. This idea symbolises the abduction of the land/female by the enemy. Like China, Ravana was also the evil 'other'. The child has to assume the role of Rama to bring back the honour of the motherland. This idea is also evident in the play "Neta" (Leader) (1976). This play, through the character of its protagonist, Gyananjana, explores the idea of a *male* national leader and the society/ramrajya that such a leadership would lead to. Gyananjana is an educated, upper class, upper caste young man who prefers maintaining a low profile. His sense of independence is shown in his choice of doing his own work. This is evident in the beginning of the play when he is thirsty and wants a glass of water. Instead of asking the servant he gets it himself. It is this ability to sympathise and empathise with someone that highlights his character. He likes reading but not just for the sake of exams but for intellectual and spiritual growth. He reads biographies, moulding himself in the shape of great leaders. In sharp contrast to his character, is the character of his sister who is interested in reading stories about witches, princesses and fairy tales. Gyananjana is practical and not interested in the fairy-tale world. He has a realistic approach to everything. He stands for truth. His lecture to the thug who was trying to cheat him, describes his concept of masculinity. Someone who gives up fighting the hardships of life is not a man. Begging is not the solution to unemployment. Gyananjana is simple and kind hearted but also clever enough to differentiate between who really needs help and who is cheating. He does not take the money back which he gives to the thug before recognizing him. He does not take charity back. The idea of an authentic Indian is explored through the character of Gyananjana. He is against the bourgeois capitalist class. The 'sophisticated aristocrats' have completely take up the western culture (15).

They are imitators and hence are not Indians. But he is also a kind of extremist who has a stereotypical opinion about particular castes. His father acts as the source of rational understanding. He advises Gyananjana not to form opinions on the basis of generalizations. He is against untouchability. It is evident in his treatment of the woodcutter. He brings him into the house and when the woodcutter asks him not to touch him Gyananjana is irritated. When the issue of caste is brought up, the difference in the understanding of the “illiterate” woodcutter and the “educated” Gyananjana is evident. Whereas for the woodcutter, it is a religious matter, Gyananjana tries to provide a rational explanation of the issue. He says that caste is not a disease which can be transmitted through touch. It is only the biological condition of the body which can prohibit touching. Thus he gives untouchability a scientific basis. Gyananjana is a student leader who with a group of other friends is involved in social work. He is very patient. He is also someone who goes by authority. When his friend Satish teases him saying that he lectures like an old man, Gyananjana takes it as a complement. According to Satish, young people are supposed to be full of energy, ready to do anything. Qualities like patient, calmness belong to old age. Gyananjana defends by saying that whatever old people say may not be meaningless. On the contrary, their suggestions are full of the knowledge of their years of experience. The intellectual and the philosophical legacy is for the new generation to inherit and follow. Satish further says that if we go by rules then any kind of change and creative formulation is not possible. Youth of the country must speed up their pace for development. But the experience of the old act as a brake and without brakes there will be accidents, this is what Gyananjana replies. Therefore it is important to balance the old and the new, youth and old age. This is where the

ideology of Bankim comes into play. Even though Gyananajana had a western education, he does not imitate them blindly. He has inherited the west's intellectual legacy but has not forgotten his moral tradition. It is this balance which creates an authentic national self, in spite of imitation. The creation of an authentic self is also explored in the play *Mu bada hebi* (I will grow 1978). *Bada* may signify many things. It can refer to the physical growth in size which connotes adulthood and thereby inculcation various qualities which are part of adult hood i.e coming out of immaturity and childishness. It can also signify superiority that is developed through certain qualities which are beyond the ordinary mundane inferior human qualities. Madan, the protagonist, has a sportive spirit who can bear victory and defeat with the same attitude in all spheres of life. When Gobind, one of his classmates, says that if they lose the match it will be a great humiliation, Madan replies there is no such thing as humiliation or appreciation in sports. One plays to keep the mind and body fit. This sportive spirit is promoted to keep the spirit of competition, fired by the capitalist ethics, in check. We are introduced to another character called Mohan who acts as a foil for Madan. Mohan is the typical modern middle class child who goes to school and does nothing but study. He basically stands for rote learning. Madan is very good at socializing and his communication becomes his key to popularity and success. Emphasis here has shifted from winning oneself to winning others. But this winning of others is possible only when one has won oneself. Madan actively participates in social work, for example he helps in cleaning of the road. Bankim's theory of *Anusilan* or practice, would be an appropriate intervention at this point to comprehend the kind of national self that was being tried to be formed. *Anusilan* was based on the "concept of *bhakti* which, in turn, implied the unity of

knowledge and duty” (Chatterjee 66). Both Gyananjana and Madan do not limit themselves to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge but applied their knowledge in the upliftment of their society. This is where the role of imitation also ceases to exist. As Bankim had specified, imitation is the initial step towards learning. But putting that learning into use is what requires ingenuity and creativity. Socio-economic structures, traditional and cultural formations are unique to every society. Western knowledge has to be adapted to the Indian situation. Thus they not only put their knowledge into practice but in a way which would suit their societal environment. We see Gyananjana attempting to formulate a new path for development by combining his modern learning with tradition. Madan’s thoughts are made explicit in his opinion regarding the national language. When asked if Hindi be made the national language of India, he says that English is a mark of colonisation that we are still carrying in our minds. Hindi on the other hand is our language. Mohan on the other hand maintains that someone who does not learn English is a fool. He is the blind follower of modernism without questioning it or adapting it to our cultural demands. Mohan in fact fumbles while speaking and is not able to present himself clearly. He just has bookish and theoretical knowledge. Madan belongs to the lower class rural background. Through him the rural values are highlighted and middle class values are shown as incomplete and incompetent in creating the character of the citizen. Madan is sympathetic towards the blind beggar and talks sweetly to him. A leader is one who can not only control the nation but also the minds of the people. Kanduri is a Dalit and Biraja suggests that Kanduri should be given concession because of his caste. He can participate in the Puja celebration for free. But Madan interrupts saying that this concession is a sarcastic

treatment of the Dalit. He has equal right to pay. Just getting something without contributing, is sympathy. Sympathy is for the weak and the disabled (like the old blind beggar). But the marginalised sections have a right to respect, not sympathy. This is the kind of civil society which would benefit all the members by making them efficient enough to contribute. This piece also talks about who should be the voice of new India-- one who works for the nation, sympathises with its people, and gets involved in the day to day activities rather than one who just studies theories.

The main responsibility in discourses meant for children was to sustain the basic “good nature” of men and thereby influencing the environment to become a good place. The creation of identity categories was one of the strategies to sustain the “essential goodness” of human beings. It also predicated an equality based on intellectual and spiritual rules which are not governed by the dictates of caste, gender or class. The ‘Brahman’, as Deepa Srineevas has specified, was defined as an “intellectual category” and emerged “as a norm that is culturally central and authoritative, and is essential for laying claim to the status of the citizen of the nation” (72). This category is constituted through a disciplining of the mind as well as the body. As we have seen in case of the figures presented in the biographies intellectual achievements are highly prioritised and education becomes a way of overcoming caste and class. This (Ram) is another identity category alongside the Brahman, as mentioned in the opinions of Gandhi. Another identity category of Buddha is created in the article “Jataka Galpa O Bodhisattva” (Jataka Stories and Bodhistava) (May 1985) which specifies that like the Brahman, Buddha is also not the name of any particular caste or person. To prove this the story argues much before

Buddha there was a Brahman boy named Sumedh. He visits a guru named Dipankar and urges him to show the path of salvation and achieves it by following certain ideals. Thus the Buddha is someone who acquires the knowledge of salvation and shows the path of salvation to others. These categories of the Brahman and the Buddha are not inherited by someone by birth like other identities based on caste and gender. Anyone can achieve these statuses through hard work and perseverance. Everyone has the Brahman and the Buddha in the potential form. Whereas the Brahman is about the development of one's self and soul, Buddha is about the development of the entire society. Brahman is for intellectual upliftment and the Buddha is for spiritual upliftment (not only one's own but of the entire society). Towards the 80s yet another identity category is created – that of the revolutionary leader. In the story “Kartavya Palana” (Fulfillment Of Duty) (March 1983), the tribal chief Tama Dora fights bravely against the British. When captured, he proudly declares that even after his death many more Tama Doras will be born. This identity category is more localized and humane. If the Brahman was intellectual, the Buddha was spiritual, Ram was moral and the last one was physical yet guided by all the above three virtues. The physical power displayed in the protection of the nation has to have a moral and spiritual dimension. It cannot be brutal or authoritarian. Even though the identity categories have been presented as secular, they have resonances of Vedic Hinduism.

Another way of preserving the essential goodness was discipline and self-purification. Gandhi says: “Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well –being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of

which he is a member...if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him, and if one man fails, the whole world fails to that extent” (qtd. in Rothermund 315). Gandhi felt that the individual has to follow his dharma to maintain his essential identity. Gandhi’s ideas on identity are conflicting at times. On the one hand he talks about equality in his concept of ramrajya and, on the other hand, he talks about dharma which is nothing but the maintenance of the status quo. For Durkheim “modern individuals are selves characterized by their place in the division of labour: by their skills, interests, specialisms, talents, functions, knowledge, jobs, professional and social status. It is these things that create a sense of self-identity, and it is the reason why we look to change jobs or social functions when we want to change ourselves and our lives” (qtd. in Burkitt 19). This idea is somewhat similar to the idea of dharma.

Gandhi attached a lot of importance to self-reformation. His idea of freedom is characterized by restraint. He talks about freedom from a religious angle and emphasizes the spiritual and ethical aspects more. He says: “A man who chooses the path of freedom from restraint, i.e, of self-indulgence, will be a bonds slave of passions, whilst the man who binds himself to rules and restraints releases himself” (qtd. In Rothermund 317). In an article titled “Sadhu Jibana O Kashta” (Life of sainthood and pain) (May 1960), the life of Shankaracharya is presented. The life of an ascetic is highlighted as the supreme form of existence. Shankaracharya was a sage but the other three figures mentioned above also exhibited a similar form of existence characterised by austerity, denial and non-materialistic outlook and this is what made them distinct. The *kashta* (pain) or the austerity which is mentioned is a

source of strength rather than being a form of weakness. Shankaracharya was a brahmin, well read in the Vedas, Upanishads and other Hindu religious texts. The power of the inner self is so strong that he is able to summon the river to change its direction and came to his house. “Ghasaphula” (Grass Flower) (March 1961) is a biography of small and ordinary flower. It is small and insignificant yet it faces every season (symbolic of the different phases of life). The idea of power is explored through its life. The second paragraph talks about the sense of detachment which the flower has. S/he is above victory and defeat, pride, glory, profit and loss and excitement. It has received no sympathy from its fellowbeings and yet has never complained about it. The poem drives home the point that the individual is insignificant. No importance is given to the individual but it is a voluntary choice. The flower has no desire to reach high in life. Staying in one's place is a way of maintaining the social order. “Wue O Semankara Samajika Jibana” (White Ants and their Social life) (May 1961) is about the social life of the white ants. The social divisions are specified. The purpose of specifying this is maintaining social cohesion. Their society is presented as a model society where each and every member does his or her work (work is divided on the basis of gender also). Every member is a contributing member and this leads to the strengthening of the social order. “Golapa O Kali” (Rose and the Bud) (June 1961) is a dialogue between the flower and the bud, symbolic of the adult and the child respectively. Seeing the bud smiling, the flower asks her the reason. The bud replies that her focus is on her duty and fulfilling it gives her immense satisfaction. One has to fulfil one's purpose in life. Dying for the sake of the betterment of the society is the right way to live one's life. “Balita” (Lamp) (July 1961) is the biography of a lamp which fosters the idea that it is very

important to fulfil one's purpose in life. The lamp has to burn itself and provide light to the nearby surroundings. Similarly, every member has to fulfil his or her duty, no matter what he or she has to face. It is the hardships and the struggles of life that give definition and add meaning to it. Therefore one should not hesitate when it comes to face the problems of life. "Mu- Ta Kichi Nuhe" (The I is nothing) (August 1965) is an article which clearly curbs the growth of individuality. The crux of the piece is that a happy man is one who remains content with his own destiny. "Jeun Bhikhyakaku Dekhi Goramane Tharuthile" (The Monk who made the British tremble) (December 1965) idealises the Indian concept of courage and strength. It is not the external possessions that make a man strong rather the moral/spiritual strength which resides inside a pure mind. The monk of the piece is Mahatma Gandhi. "Karmajogi" (December 1985) presents a contrast between the life of a sage who has renunciated the world and relationships and a woman who does her duties efficiently in this world. Being in this world one has to be sensitive to the needs of this world, to the needs of one's family. The sage becomes aware of the needs of his mother in the end. The same idea can be found in "Adbhuta Shahid" (Strange Martyr) (June 1987). It is about a sage who decides to sacrifice his life for the sake of his motherland. He is known as Kashi baba. Even though a sage, his aims are material and this worldly. This story is also in keeping with the story above. Renunciating this world is of no use when actually one's efforts are required for the society. He fights against the British and tries to win freedom for India.

The didactic articles are an effort to transform what C. B. Macpherson calls "possessive individualism" into a more social phenomenon (Burkitt 2). Possessive

individualism arised in western capitalist societies based on the ideology that the individual is his/her own creator. The society has no role in the formation of individual identity. Sometimes, the stories depict individuals gaining insight from others in the society, sometimes from social experiences and sometimes their capacities are used for the upliftment of the society.

The idea that the self has to be continuously recreated, reinvented and reformed, is stressed in many of the articles in the magazines. This is in sharp contrast to the Indian philosophy of the essential nature of man. Self-formation is as much a political process as it is social or cultural. Even the social and cultural are sometimes political. People don't just fight for their rights with the government but the struggles are also sometimes against the dominant social and cultural ideologies. According to anthropologists Marcel Mauss, identities are like masks which different people assume to shoulder different responsibilities (qtd. in Burkitt 5). Descartes also "believed that people's higher sense of individuality is not linked to their bodies or to carnal desires and appetites; rather, for Descartes, we humans identify our existence through mental reflection on our own selves, and this what makes us unique"(17). Rousseau's conception of the human self is characterized by the "struggle between the good and the evil" (8). All these observations point to the fact that the self is always actively engaged in the process of evolution. One of these ways of self-evolution, which the Romantics also believed in, is creative expression. Whereas in many cases the idea of self-expression presumes the existence of the self, prior to expression, the romantic idea of the self perceives that the self comes during or after expression. The society assumes a secondary position in the Romantic philosophy. "Kahi Janile Katha Sundara" (Speech Is Adorable If One Knows How

To Speak Well) (July 1960), since speech is a manifestation of one's mind. Though it is about public speaking, it touches upon various aspects of citizenship and education. It aims at creating charismatic orators who can influence people through their speech. The art of oratory can be of great service to national integration. Confidence is one of the most important quality that has to be cultivated if people are to be approached. It not just the strength express oneself strongly but also overcoming one's own fears and weaknesses. Shyness is a universal characteristics as exemplified by the lives of Gandhi and George Bernard Shaw. Recognizing and overcoming shyness is important if one wants to grow. Knowing oneself is very important. This article is one which does not assume the existence of an innate strong self but focuses more on growth and development. In the earlier articles the self/identity is stable and unchanging. It also assumes the existence of the inherent goodness in human being. But in the article under consideration, the self/identity is dynamic, subject to changes. Maintaining a diary to keep a record of the oratorical events will help the subject in the quest for perfection. It will also show all the experiences and the subject will learn from it. Thus, in the earlier figures if the self was already formed (as indicated by the fact that these figures exhibit the typical qualities of their character from their childhood and don't show any change in their adult lives), in this article the subject is presented in more humane terms with certain flaws and limitations which creates the possibility of growth. This fluid self, which would be adaptive to its environment, could be the requirement of the changing times which necessitated change and adaptiveness. Control is one of the dominant themes of the subject. Whereas in the earlier articles self- control was given more importance, in the present article control of the inner self is as important as the

control of the outer environment. The outer environment can be controlled by controlling one's own mind. Through practice and preparation one can train oneself. Conditioning as a method of learning gains importance in this article. Agency was a pre-given attribute of the self in the earlier article. In the present article the self is presented as being capable of gaining agency. Earlier, agency was a privilege of a chosen few, here agency can be gained by anyone who is ready to put the necessary effort. The subjects earlier worked with a sense of detachment. They become a part of the larger social picture yet maintain their individuality. Here the subject becomes involved in the social. Articles which advise the children to be organized, hardworking and maintaining a routine are symptomatic of a society in which we live; a society which demands that time should be utilized to extract the maximum benefit. The division of labor in the public sphere/space can be seen as reflected in the division of time for doing different types of works (playing different roles) in the private sphere. The rational organization does not leave time for emotional self-introspection. The society is not the antithesis of the individual but the background structural network in which the individual functions and grows. The stories which show the family as the guiding principle insist on the larger relation between the individual and the society. The family is the microcosm of the society and the society, an extension of the family.

In the western society, since the enlightenment, the concept of the person has come to mean an individual who is reasonable and responsible, capable of judging and deciding their own action and who are also responsible for the resultant outcome. They have a responsibility towards the society and be accountable for their actions. The dialogic relationship between the society and the individual, as explained

by John Shotter, is that - “In dialogue, we are called to account by others, yet we respond in ‘spontaneous’ ways that are not determined in advance. That is, we act *into* everyday situations through a ‘feel’ of what is required of us, rather than from a pre-formed mental plan constructed ‘in the head’ prior to the events at hand” (qtd. in Burkitt 61). But this dialogue does not exist only at the societal level. The self is also dialogic and is in continuous interaction with the other of/in the self.

Shotter “also talks of a ‘micro-social power politics of growing up’, meaning that when young children are addressed as ‘you’ they are not just being given information on how to act, ‘they are being “in-structed” in how to be’. That is, in mutually authoring one another, two (or more persons) in dialogue actually ‘in-form’ the self of the other(s), gently moulding it or aggressively pummeling it into shape with their words.” (qtd. in Burkitt 62). The word inform has varied meanings. It just does not mean giving knowledge to someone but also means giving them a certain character, form and animate them.

One of the ways in which the rebel is brought under control is by producing guilt in him/her. This guilt produces remorse. This idea of punishment creates a certain idea of the individual – that there is an inherent goodness in the self which can be activated through guilt and remorse. It also produces a certain idea of the society – that ostracization is not the solution to any rebellion. The discipline imposed by the prisons and the discipline of ascetism were different in the sense that, in the former, the discipline is imposed as means of reforming the rebel whereas in the latter discipline is a means of achieving self- control. The ‘good boy’

discourse dominates Oriya literary imagination when it comes to childhood. In India, 1975 was a very crucial period as the Emergency was declared. It was a period infested with various forms of rebellions against authority, ex: the Gujarat Nav Nirman Andolan and the student's unrest in Bihar asking for reformulation of political, economic and social structures. In this context, this piece assumes greater significance. Tuna is a child who has no respect for authority and spends his days playing, without doing anything productive and substantial. He has become immuned to all kinds of punishments. He has become a wayward child who has to be made to fit in. But this cannot be done in a violent manner. To make him conform, reward is made desirable. But contrary to the previous discourses of moral achievements and non-attachment to material objects, here in this piece we find a desire for material goods and economic upliftment. The definition of education has changed from spiritual and moral evolution to achievement of material success. It was also a time which demanded that everyone should cooperate in making India an economically developed nation. The realisation that children have unlimited potential, made the channelization of this energy in a positive direction necessary. It also propagates the idea that childhood is not a period of idle and carefree play. It is a phase when even more work is required so that the child does not grow into a rebellious youth. Conformity is achieved through coercion. "Chala Aame Bhala Heba" (Let Us Be Good) (August 1982) is a poem which is against bookish knowledge. It is not enough to learn good things. It cannot bring about change in our present state. Change is the keyword which defines the period after 1975. Practising good habits is the key to become good. This assumes that there is nothing inherent in human beings. Even if a human being is bad, s/he can become good through conditioning and practice. In

order to control the undesired, the good has to become a habit. In order to develop good qualities one has to listen to the orders of the elders and read the biographies of great personalities. Authority is thus reinforced. Goodness is considered as Godliness. A human value is equated with the spiritual. Ultimately it is the spiritual unification with the absolute which is the aim of life.

Previously, the authentic self was to be discovered inside the individual through self-introspection. With modernity the process changed. The discovery of the self is replaced by the invention of the self. The various discourses surrounding the individual aid the process of invention. William James has pointed out that the self is composed of the 'I' and the 'me', the observer and the observed (Carver 50). The dictum – know thyself and Vivekananda's educational philosophies were based on this division.

The biographical subjects show an essential identity whereas the later the focus becomes more on acquired identities. In the story "Mudi" (Ring) (October 1982), the child loses everything in a flood. This is symptomatic of the loss of all kinds of identities one is born with or born into – the local/regional, the caste/family, the social and cultural. He works hard, does menial jobs yet does not lose his integrity. His playing the role of Yudhistira²⁷ is the acquisition of an identity-the acquired identity. He is defined by his actions something which he creates and executes. Like Yudhistira, who loses everything in the game of dice and exits to the forest as punishment, the boy also loses everything and lives as an exile in the city.

²⁷ Yudhistira is a character from the Indian epic *Mahabharata*.

The city here becomes equal to the forest characterized by lack of rules and competition, survival of the fittest. It also becomes a place where his mettle is tested. Merit becomes the criteria of identity.

Since identities supposedly become fluid in the modern culture and are decided and attained through one's work there has been a priming of a "culture of competition and achievement orientation" (Ryan and Deci 225). But what is to be achieved depends upon the society. Certain things are made desirable and worth achieving. Acquired identities fulfill the individual's desire for autonomy.

Identities change when the enemy changes. The other is sometimes external and sometimes within us. The other in us, instead of being given an appropriate outlet, is suppressed or destroyed. When the enemy is within us the focus is on self-control and self-discipline. When the enemy is outside the focus is on violence and exercising of power.

Civic virtue refers to the sincere deliverance of responsibilities that are entailed with certain roles that an individual is supposed to play in a given society. However the virtue is context oriented and varies from time to time depending upon various other ideologies. These virtues may range from conformity to rebellion – "To be virtuous, then, is to perform well a socially necessary or important role. This does not mean that the virtuous person must always go along with the prevailing views or attitudes. On the contrary, Socrates and John Stuart Mill have persuaded many people to believe that questioning and challenging the prevailing views are

among the highest form of virtues.” (Dagger 14). “Fear of corruption” is one of the important elements of civic virtues (14) “Satyashrayi Socrates” (Truthful Socrates) (April 1961), as the title itself suggests, emphasised the search for truth. For him wisdom, truth and good character are one. Like knowledge, good character/behaviour can be learnt. Ignorance was a sin according to him. This again reflects on the potential of the human beings to learn. The innate self is no more emphasised. He promoted dialogue and argument. Questioning and discovering the truth was more important than accepting something blindly. Enlightening the mind was possible through the senses (knowing the world through the various sense organs) but enlightening the soul was also important and it was not possible through the senses. Thus two strands of education are highlighted in these magazines – intellectual as well as spiritual. Like the fear of corruption, fear of dependence is also considered as a civic virtue (Dagger 14). A small incident from the life of Napoleon Bonaparte (April 1965) is recalled to show that a strong man is an independent man. Independence not only from people but also from debts is necessary if one was to live with dignity. As a child, Napoleon takes fruits from an old lady but with a promise that one day he will repay the debt. He does not forget the old woman and appreciates her help when he becomes an able administrator. “Biswasi Balaka” (Trustworthy Boy) (April 1965) is also about a boy who repays the debt by working hard. Both these stories are about people who don’t want to be under anybody’s obligation. It is also a form of dependency. The idea of the self-made man is reiterated here. This reflects the state of the nation just recovering from the aftershocks of a war which has left its economy crippled. Rising on its own without taking help from anybody else was important to prove its strength and show that it is

capable of deciding its own destiny and own future course of action. This is also in sharp contrast to the idea of emulation and imitation that was advocated earlier. It depicts a nation which has earlier taken debt both in terms of ideas and money from the other nations, like the student in this story takes help from the teacher. The teacher in the story functions as a symbol of an established and recognized source of knowledge, the adult, matured and experienced; the student is the infant nation, a nation which has to grow in the image of the teacher, but after a certain incident he decides to take his life into his own hands. He not only rejects institutional education but also the help and assistance of the teacher. He works hard to repay the debt. The death of the mother symbolizes the death of the values that were created after independence with the intention to emulate the west. Now the burden of that culture is gone and the citizen becomes free to create a life for his own on the basis of his actions. His agency is emphasized in the end when even after constant appealing the student does not take the money from the teacher. “Biplabi Guru Karl Marx” (The Guru Of Revolution: Karl Marx) (June 65) is an article emphasizing the necessity of revolution and rebellion to change the social hierarchy and structure. Revolution is important for reorganizing the society if any development has to be achieved. “Jack And The Beanstalk”, a translation of an English fairy tale, is also about a child who takes his own decisions and makes himself able to do his work on his own without seeking help from anyone. He has a mother but she is completely dependent on him. So he decides what to do. His invasion of a foreign land to colonize the resources for the development of his own territory indicate the emergence of the new child. He defeats the giant with his intelligence and wit. Physical warfare is no more expected

and the emphasis on the body is also not required (symbolised in the defeat of the giant by the little boy).

The various didactic articles in the magazines intend to shape the citizens in a way which would stimulate the expansion of a vigorous and active civil society and public sphere. But in the process they also draw attention to the then prevalent state of affairs and thereby provide a strong critique of it. The peasant culture was glorified in comparison to the industrial culture because it was what Durkheim call a “mechanical” culture (Harms 397). The agrarian culture was characterized by “little social complexity and differentiation” and a strong collective consciousness (397). Their members operated with “little variation” and “likeness” was the basis of social identity (397). It was the industrial civilization which created difference with its concepts of division of labour and class stratification. This resistance to change, this permanence and ability to hold strong in the face of sweeping changes is a sign of strength and continuity. The idea of progress is thus not linear but rather staying authentic i.e holding the past in the present and perpetuating it in the future. This is why education gains importance in new industrialized societies.

Different political and philosophical ideologies at various points of time have given rise to various concepts of citizenship. In classical liberalism the emphasis is on individual rights and freedom. The state takes a backseat. The ideal citizen is the “autonomous individual”. This is evident in the biographies. Social liberalism which was quite dominant in India in the times of Nehru emphasized social equality and

therefore the ideal citizen was the “citizen-worker”. Civic Republicanism emphasized community and bridging of differences. This emphasized the need for citizens who would actively participate in the public sphere and work for common good. The initial subjects presented in the magazines are a combination of the citizenship present both in classical liberalism and civic republicanism. Modern republicanism has its roots in the ideas of enlightenment and French revolution which emphasized equality, brotherhood (sisters are neither mentioned nor acknowledged). The ideal citizen in the modern republicanism is the soldier. Since the concept emphasizes community and places it above the individual, the martyr is the best model to represent it. Therefore during the time of the war, the poem “Khandapate Diyare Mote” (Give Me A Sword) (February 1963) appeals the children to become like soldiers, just to create a common experience. An important aspect of citizenship is the learning of the civic virtues which can be done through participation in social activities and practices.

Gendered Citizenship

Active citizenship and a healthy interactions between institutions is the base of democratic citizenship. According to Berta Siim active citizenship involves active participation in neighborhoods, political and social organisations, workplace, etc. (8). Berta Siim also talks about the male bread winner model which makes citizenship a gendered concept. Both men and women are in charge of their families but shoulder the responsibility in different ways. Whereas the male is actively involved in the

public sphere, the women is in charge of the household chores and thus, forms part of the private sphere. Even the public/private spheres are not monolithic homogeneous wholes. Even though the argument has been that the private belonged to the women, it had its own hierarchies. Siim observes that “the private sphere is often contradictory for women because it is both a site of caring and mothering and a site of oppression and dependency” (Siim 19).

Women's contribution to the public sphere has been in the way of creating good citizens as mothers and wives. Their active participation in person has been insignificantly recognised. The concept of citizenship is not just a political phenomenon but also a philosophical and cultural one. This is evident in the gender differences in citizenship theories which are always based on the cultural and philosophical conceptions of gender. Even after so many years women have been excluded from active citizenship and are included in the roles of nurturers and care givers. Old patriarchies have broken but new democracies have laid down new definitions of gender roles. The division of the public and the private has given rise to the new “public man” and “private woman” (Siim 3). The new economic arrangement produced various social and cultural relations which effected the gender relations. Carole Pateman was one of the first political scientists who had raised the question of women's citizenship in modern nation states and had criticized their inclusion only as mothers (Siim 1). This is very evident in the magazines where the role of the mothers has been presented as very crucial and influential in shaping the child. In the biography of Pattabhi Sitaramayya (February 1960) the mother is the one who raises the children after the father passes away. The widowed mother figure is highlighted as the symbol of austerity, non material outlook, asexual and pure.

These are the qualities which Sitaramayya also inherits. More than institutional authority it is the cultural authority (symbolised by the mother) which shapes the self. Sitaramaya's widowed mother is the carrier of Indian Values and culture. She not only gives biological life to Sitaramaya but also spiritual and cultural rebirth – “Matra tanka balyavasta re pitanka bicheda pare matanka kathina shrama o Sarala jibana japana tanka jibanaku adhika prabhabhita karithiala” (After the death of his father, it was the simplicity and hard work of his mother which had influenced his life) (2).

The difference between the public and the private sphere is reflected in the story “Hrud Vijaya” (Victory Over Heart) (February 1960). It is a conversation between Gandhi and his wife Kasturba. Gandhi gets a precious stone necklace from a woman to give it as a gift to Kasturba. But he opines that she should contribute it to the fund required for freedom struggle. Gandhi is shown to be the active citizen. In fact the play begins with a description of the activities he has undertaken to fight against racism in South Africa and his political contribution towards the Indian freedom struggle. Though the conversation implies that one has to earn citizenship and one's place in society (also hints at the fact that it is not enough to be born in a certain country but work towards some contribution), the definitions of the public and the private are well established.

Kasturibai – (Surprised) If it is not mine then whose? This gift has been given to me.

Gandhiji – This is a very strange argument! How does the gift become yours? What have you done to earn this precious necklace? You are just sitting at home. How do you become eligible to get it?

To this kasturibai replies:

Kasturibai – Who has taken care of you when you were sick? Who has supported you when you felt discouraged? Who has fed you such delicacies? Whose care has made you capable of doing your work?

The story talks about sacrifice and selfless service as primary duties of women only. One of the reasons that Gandhiji gives for not keeping the necklace is that it will encourage thieves and thereby violence. “dhana lova re hinsa marga acharana Kariba taha pakshya re bichitra katha nuhe. Tenu paraku hinsa margaru rakshya Kariba pain swa kamana ku samule binasha Kariba uchit.” (it is not impossible for a thief to resort to violence for achieving material ends. It is your responsibility to stop the thief from committing a crime and for that you have to give up your desires first) (12)

“Mu” (I) (December 1963), written by a woman, is a poem in which the writer is in search of her identity. Though the male subject was definite and stable, the identity of the female subject is undefinable. It is an idea of the subject that will arrive with the poststructuralist movement. The existence of a definite, comprehensible, unified subject has been questioned by the poststructuralists. Put in a feminine context this idea assumes new connotations. She is a woman in search of her identity. She does not know her aim, purpose or direction of her life. She rejects her pre- given identities as wife, lover or daughter and just accepts her mortality as the marker of her human identity. It would be interesting to note the difference between the idea of the male and the female subject. In the biographies which appeared in the early 1960s, the male figures are represented as supra human. They

are powerful enough to keep themselves unaffected by the mundane ideologies of the world. In sharp contrast is this piece which appears around the same time. Whereas the selves of the male figures is pre-given the woman is still trying to find her self.

'Asha O Astha' (Hope And Trust) (September 1961) is an excerpt from the life of Helen Keller in which she equates the divine, the humane and the soul. Conformity is something which defined femininity in the 1960s. This piece is written by a man and presents the stereotypical male point of view. Helen Keller strongly feels that nobody has the right to criticize the creation of God because He has created this world with his own intelligence and parameters. Each one of us should work for the development and permanence of peace, fellow-feeling, cooperation, and harmonious coexistence. It is not a change of the social order but the perpetuation of it which should be the primary concern of its citizens (especially woman, since the speaker is a woman). Social harmony can be maintained only by accepting the pre-established order and protecting it. One needs to have confidence in oneself but that courage and strength has to be used in a way that has been already decided. It is interesting to note that women are presented as protectors of the patriarchal order which is equated with the divine. What gets highlighted in this piece is her desire to conform and accept rather than her heroism in dealing with her life in spite of all her disability. She somehow justifies her condition. Similar to this is the biography of Madhabi Devi "Pancha Dasha Satabdi Ra Jane Odiya Nari" (One Oriya Lady Of The Fifteenth Century) (February 1960), a poet and astrologer of the 15th century. She devoted her life for the devotion of Lord Jagannath. The motive behind

presenting life stories of woman from the past is to counter the British idea that women were illtreated in India. Even though the woman are presented as educated they are not a threat to the established order. In fact they help in the perpetuation of it. In “Mora Samsara Eithi” (My World Is Here) (April 1960) the writer talks about the tribal women and presents them as active members of their community. Though the writer says that women take active part in each and every aspect of the social and economic life of the community, he exaggerates the argument by mentioning that the woman actually finds satisfaction in doing such hard work. The writer questions the upper class ideas about femininity – “Aneka anchala re strimane ghare basirahiba eka paramparagata hoi jaichi. Sate jepari maryada, satitva, badima, lajja ityadi narisulava bahara padakshyapa dwara talitalanta hoijiba” (In many regions it has become a custom for women to stay inside the house. As if feminine qualities will get destroyed if the women step out of their houses.) (9). She is the backbone of her family and community. The tribal women even though are more actively involved in the public sphere. In feminist scholarship woman’s agency “refers to their ability to determine their own daily life as well as their collective ability to make a difference on the public arena” (Siim 4). The woman in the magazines are shown to be independently and voluntarily making decisions which reinforce the status quo. Even when they are shown to be independent they are not presented as a threat to the establishment. Similar idea are reiterated in “ChampaKumari” (April 1962), which is about a princess named Bishakha. She is beautiful as well as intelligent. But she does not do anything for herself. Her sole aim is to protect her husband and help him in solving his problems. Interestingly the problems which Bishakha solves relate to the kingdom. But she solves them within the confines of her house not in the king’s

court. Her solutions are not given to the king by her but by her husband. This indicates that even though women are capable, they don't participate directly in the public sphere.

“Rani Dwitiya Elizabeth” (Queen Elizabeth II) (April 1961) forges the typical connection between children, woman and nature. She loves animals when she was a child. She contributed quite well to the political life of the country yet she is presented as feminine. She supervised her house and arranged things on her own. She used to go out only when she has completed her household duties. A woman's priority is always her house. The biography of “Mary Rogers” (September 1962) highlights the typical nature of the feminine self. She sacrifices her life to protect the passengers like a mother does for her child.

“Turta Budha Ra Kahani” (Story of the Cunning Old Man) (January 1965) is about an old man who very cleverly defeats the animals who were creating problems for him and his wife. This article establishes the supremacy of the human race, in particular that of the human male over other animals who are considered as cunning. It establishes the reign of the human male over the natural (feminine). The animals are like the 'other' who continuously keep invading the human territory both geographical, personal and moral. The human does not interfere first nor does it harm them first. The wife is like the typical female, dependent, easily fooled even by the animals and does whatever the husband asks her to do. Put in a larger framework, the old man (who symbolizes experience, wisdom and authority) protects his land and his woman from the animals with his wit and intelligence. He

does not harm them until and unless the circumstances demand (like war becomes justified in the time of national crisis).

In the play *Neta* (Leader) (1976) the women of the 1970s is depicted. Ranjita, the female protagonist of the play, is also a well-educated woman. She is presented as the typical modern Indian woman, who wears western clothes but whose values and respect for tradition are intact. She also has formed a group of her own aiming to help women. She is more educated than Gyananjana but still seeks help and guidance from him. The modern Indian woman is not intellectually independent to work on her own from her own direction and ideology. The final decision has to come from a man. Gyananjana is sympathetic to their cause as well. Though Ranjitha and her friends have a group which wants to do social work, yet they do not go alone. When Gyananjana asks how they will manage alone, she replies that they will go under the protection and protegee of her parents. She also says that the universities provide only theoretical knowledge and hence she needs the help of Gyananjana who has worked actively in the field. The difference between educational ideologies is clearly visible here. Practical knowledge is superior and therefore the man possesses it. Ranjita though is educated and wants to work yet she is a synthesis of the western educated woman and the traditional loving and caring Indian women. When Gyananjana's sister asks her brother to tell her fairy stories, Ranjita replies that he does not have time (for fairy tales which are childish). She takes up that role.

“Koumudi Katha” (The Story Of Koumudi) (September 1961) is a short story which delineates the ways in which a woman can become an eligible citizen of

the nation. Koumudi, a would-be bride gives all her jewellery to support the financial requirements of the freedom struggle. Like a man, a woman does not have to be educated, courageous or fearless. The ways in which a woman can participate in the making of the nation is by making sacrifices - the passive form of contribution. Whereas male contribution is mostly active -- contribution of labour and intelligence. A woman's contribution is mostly passive -- a denial of things that she could have kept otherwise. The idea that beauty is only skin deep and it is the nature and the character of the person that matters most is again a veil to supply for the economic needs of nation making

“Shefali” (February 1982) is the biography of a flower. A flower named shefali narrates her life story. It presents the typical idea associated with women – *binakapali* (pathetic)- the life of a woman is bound to be painful.. Her life is always in the service of others. She blooms in the night which refer to the fact that the sacrifices of a woman are always invisible but she never complains about it. They never get acknowledged but they consider it as their destiny. She has no attachment with her life as she does her duty with sincerity and a sense of detachment – “badi sakalaru jhadipade sina/jibana mamata chutai” (I die as soon as the night is over and dawn appears) (15).

“Chai O Batoi” (Shadow And The Traveller) (August 1964) presents the self as the traveller who has not just to explore the unknown territories but also has to keep moving on in search of life for the nation. The temptation of rest is not strong enough to tie down the traveller. Whole life is a journey and the traveller is constantly

in quest of new routes to bring in development and progress. The traveller is a male and the leaf which asks him to rest is a female. The gender roles are clearly defined - the traveller is strong, dynamic, curious, ready to take risks; the leaf is static, desires to rest.

Gandhi believed that the “rejection of Hindu ideals of womanhood such as chastity, self-control, and sacrifice has led to woman’s enslavement and the enslavement of the Indian nation”. (Nilsson 83). Such ideals are evident in “Dushta Kipari Shishta Hela” (How The Naughty One Changed Into a Sober One) (February 1965) where a proud and spoilt princess is trapped with an old woman who is a strict disciplinarian. This eventually leads to her realization of her mistake and subsequent reformation.

According to Feinberg, “national identity in multicultural societies involves the understandings that (1) citizenship in the national community is shared by members of different cultural groups; (2) members of this national community are expected to be morally partial to it and, under certain conditions, to their co-members regardless of cultural affiliation; and (3) culturally different citizens are to be partial to one another (in certain kinds of situations) even if this involves distancing themselves from culturally similar citizens of a different nation-state” (Koh 24). In a multicultural country like India creating the concept of citizenship is the only way of forging equality which cannot brought through any other means. But that citizenship has to be defined and constructed in certain ways. Going by the above criteria, some ideals and attributes had to be highlighted as necessary to make a claim to membership in the national community. Many of these attributes were

based on religious, gendered and caste-based ideals and follow the demands of a dynamic and changing society. The concept of citizenship consists of rights as well as duties. The stories in these magazines focus more on the duty aspect of citizenship. This brings into focus the role and importance of children in an emerging society like India. Citizenship is an attempt to balance the individual as a subject of an authority and as an active political agent. It is this rhetoric of balance which dominates the stories in the magazines.

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CHAPTER 3

HISTORY, MEMORY AND IDENTITY

“He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past.”

George Orwell

These highly potent lines from Orwell’s political fantasy *1984* do accentuate the synergetic alliance between history and memory in framing reality. Ironically, in the novel, the department which supervises the revising of historical records is labeled the “Ministry of Truth”. The relation between memory and history, though very obvious, has always been a very complicated one. According to Barbara Misztall there have been contradictory claims that history and memory are incommensurable and also synonymous. Some even blur the distinction between the two and talk about “remembered history” and “historical memory” (Misztall 99). But even making such unequivocal statements is very convenient as they don’t accommodate the knotty and perplexing association that the two share. Enumerating the difference between history and memory, Barbara Misztal in *Theories of Social Remembering*, says:

“A memory orientation towards the past involves the invocation of the past through ritualized actions designed to create an atemporal sense of the past in the present... A historical orientation *implies* ‘a reflective exploration of past events considered along an axis of irreversibility’ and is directed toward developing our understanding of these events’ causes and consequences. The main difference between the two approaches is supposedly connected with the fact that memory tends to mythologize the past, to look for similarities and to

appeal to emotions and is thus considered arbitrary, selective, lacking the legitimacy of history and ultimately subjective, while history calls for critical distance and documented explanation, and opposes memory's non-linear temporality and its indivisibility from imagination" (Misztall 99)

This exposition reflects only a peripheral discrepancy between the two. The crucial points which she expresses here are that – (a) history is a chronological record of events whereas memory has nothing to do with time (b) history is logical investigation of events grounded on cause and effect but memory is about emotions related to that event (c) history deals with universality whereas memory is about particular events. In the above frame of reference David Lowenthal²⁸ has appropriately remarked that these are two different approaches to the past. How different are they exactly? Both might differ on the notion of time but ultimately the two are concerned with formulating a sense of the past. Memory provides a scaffolding to the writing of history and history guides the construction of memories. Nineteenth-century historians saw memory as completely insensitive to the differences between periods. According to Weissberg these historians believed that “historical narratives were a form of science and that history, as public and written, was verifiable and able to guide private memory” (qtd. in Misztall 101). Memory might be selective but so is history. History is always an official archive of certain events which are considered appropriate to be preserved by certain institutions. Blurring the difference between memory and history Barbara Misztal examines the mechanism of history writing. She argues that history is both objective (“the things

²⁸ *The Past is a Foreign country, 1985*

that happened”) and subjective (“the narration of the things that happened”) (Misztall 100). In this aspect of being subjective history becomes analogous to memory because they create space for alteration and manipulation. In addition to this they both grapple with the same question of power – who has the right to remember and write history and why? History and collective memory presumably work on same lines. Another angle can be implemented to the dialectic by scrutinizing the past, history and memory as different but related categories where the degree of engagement between the three varies at unequal levels. Edward Hallet Carr in *What is History* attempts to search for an answer to the question - “What is History” comes to the conclusion that “...our answer, consciously or unconsciously, reflects our own position in time, and forms part of our answer to the broader question what view we take of the society in which we live” (Carr N. pag.). The past exists as a bunch of information of certain events. To use Collingwood’s term in a different context, it is a “dead past” (qtd. in Carr N. pag.). It is the interpretation of the past by the historian (who himself or herself belongs to a certain time and ideological climate) which is history. History is an active process of animating the past and it is history, not the past, which creates memories. Memory is thus directly linked to history. The past is related to memory via history. This would be nearer to Collingwood’s concept of history which hypothesizes that history is concerned neither with the “past by itself” nor with the “historian’s thought about it by itself” but with the “two things in their mutual relations” (qtd. in Carr N. pag.). This mutual relation creates memory. Thus one of the essential functions of memory is the continuation and preservation of the past. But this is only a generic statement and cannot be said about any particular event. The content of both past and memory

changes as new histories emerge and old histories are reinterpreted. Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka in this context mention that no memory can “preserve the past” and what remains is “that which each society in each era can reconstruct within its contemporary frame of reference” (130). Edward S. Casey in her article ‘Public Memory in Place and Time’ differentiates between social memory and collective memory (18). Social memory is more localized form of memory held by people belonging to a particular neighborhood, region or associated by kinship ties like the family. Collective memory is a broader and more accommodating category “in which different persons, not necessarily known to each other at all, nevertheless recall the same event— again, each in her own way. This is a case of remembering neither individually in isolation from others nor in the company of others with whom one is acquainted but severally” (Casey 23). People are “brought together only in and by a conjoint remembrance of a certain event, no matter where those who remember are located or how otherwise unrelated they are to each other” (23). This concept of collective memory resonates Anderson’s discussion of the novel as an instrument for forging national consciousness. Like the Novel, memory and commemoration also function as texts which forge national identification.

Earlier history was viewed as a recounting of glorious deeds of great man. This hierarchical and gendered version of history is reflected in the magazines under review. Women, children and other marginalized sections of the society, like the tribal community, hardly find representation in these historical narratives. In relation to this Barbara Misztall points out that:

The criticism of history, as developed by Whyte (1978) and Foucault (1977), pointed to the hidden ideological biases built into any model of representation. It presented historical narratives as irrevocably tainted with the language of power and control, and demonstrated that history privileged the experiences of those in a position to leave behind documentary evidence and silenced those without access to the printed word. With neither memories nor histories seen as objective, 'Remembering the past and writing about it no longer seem to be the innocent activities they were once taken to be' (Burke 1989: 98). Seeing collective memory as the creative imaging of the past in the service of the present and an imagined future, studying the fluidity of images, the commodification of memory and the acceptance of the debatability of the past have introduced a new dynamic to the interaction between memory and historiography in the representation of the past. (102)

Monuments and Commemoration

The magazines under review contain various articles which give insight into India's history. There are various articles on historical events and monuments, origin myths, national symbols, etc. They, thus, create specific locations for memories. For Pierre Nora "memory attaches itself to sites" (22). Although language and written forms are influential in creating collective memory, studies have shown that

“pictorial and spatial domains” are more effective in the “memory industry” (Meusburger, Heffernan, and Wunder 4). They convey a wide range of information than written texts which impart information “linearly or sequentially” (4). It is in this context that national symbols and museums assume significance. They appeal to the visual faculties and inspire interpretations which are both individual and collective. Written texts always have an implicit agenda and therefore make little room for individual opinions. Visual material, on the other hand, offers larger scope for personal view points. “Bharatara Jatiya Pakshi Mayura” (India’s National Bird Peacock) published in November 1963 is about the national bird of India, the peacock. The writer traces the origin and importance of peacocks from time immemorial. Not only is the bird famous in every continent but has also been acknowledged as something extraordinarily beautiful and mesmerizing. Its varied colours depict the rich diversity of the Indian subcontinent. The bird as a symbol is able to transcend all kinds of linguistic, cultural and regional barriers. Meusburger, Heffernan, and Wunder further opine that “visual images can, under certain circumstances, efface and elide language and cultural barriers to allow meanings and messages to be understood across communities otherwise divided by their abilities to comprehend written texts” (5). Not only has the bird been mentioned in the writings of Kalidasa but has also been popular among all the dynasties of India – for example, the Peacock throne of Shahjahan. The image of the peacock, thus, appeals to various religious communities fostering national unity. Kalidasa says that the extraordinary peacock is a symbol of the glory of the almighty- “Bichitra mayura iswaranka gouraba ra pratika” (The unique peacock is symbolic of God’s glory) (5). The bird also has religious significance. It is the vehicle of goddess Saraswati, Karthikeya and

Subramaniam. Klein points out that “an early meaning of memory lies “in the union of material objects and divine presence” (qtd. in Meusburger, Heffernan, and Wunder 5). Kokosalakis also supports this opinion by stating that “Through symbols the material becomes spiritual and the spiritual becomes empirical and is communicated in visible form” (qtd. in Meusburger, Heffernan, and Wunder 5). Another important characteristic of the peacock is its sharp vision and ability to comprehend the speed of the tiger. It alerts other animals about the approach of danger thereby saving their lives. This is in keeping with the “Indian” character. Similarly, another symbol of national glory, which has been passionately written about, is the Kohinoor. An article titled “Kohinoor”, published in December 1960, brings out the historical importance of this precious stone. Though not officially recognized as a national symbol, the Kohinoor has always epitomized the lost glory and grandeur of India.

Maurice Halbwachs argues that “all acts of memory are inherently social—literally that to remember is to act as part of the collective” (qtd. in K. R. Phillips 1). This fact is endorsed by commemorations. Commemorations not only highlight the social aspect of memory, but, in a way also define what the social constitutes. Festivals and rituals are commemorative events which create and define the society through recollection. Commemorative recollection is an active process not just because it involves physical activity but also because it is a constant recreation, reconstruction and reinterpretation of collective memories. No two commemorative events or rituals are identical even though they might be related to one event or

memory. Retrieval of memory is not an uncomplicated matter of escorting the past into the present. Barry Schwartz opines that commemorations are “affected by the organization and needs of social groups” (374). In a country like India, where heterogeneity and diversity form the foundations of society, commemorations are an indispensable requirement for forging a uniform identity and national unity. Various poems referring to the celebration of festivals like Holi, Diwali, etc. become a platform for social bonding across caste, class, gender and age. Everyone has to participate. In the poem “Hori Hori Hori re” (Its Holi) (1971), the poet says that “ghara bhitare luchichi jiye/ aana ja, taku dhari re’ (one who is hiding inside the house/ go and bring them out) (17). In the article “Saraswati Puja” (February 1961) and “Ganesh Asile” (Ganesh Came) (September 1967), we are shown school children organizing the celebrations. But what gets foregrounded is the coming together of all the children belonging to multiple categories for a common purpose. The gender roles are also clearly defined. The boys take care of the decoration and organization whereas the girls are in charge of cooking. Thus commemorations, while forging fellow feeling, also sustain certain divisions. They also reproduce caste divisions. The puja is performed by a brahmin, specifically appointed for the task. Commemorations are activities which Barbara Misztal refers to as “habit” memory (10). Habit memory helps us to reproduce events through performances. This kind of memory “like all habits, is sedimented in bodily postures, activities, techniques and gestures” (Misztall 10). The celebration of festivals, like Holi and Diwali, mentioned in the collection “Gaan Maati Mora Hase Re” (My Village Smiles) (1971), refreshes certain memories through bodily performances. In the poem “Maati Dipali” (Earthen Lamp) (1971), the speaker, while lighting the earthen lamp recalls, a

history of Orissa when the people used to travel far to other countries for business. They brought wealth and prosperity. Even though that period no more exists, the earthen lamp becomes a reminder of that period and the legacy left by the ancestors which the present generation has to carry forward. Besides other rituals, the act of bowing down before elders to take their blessings is reiteration of the memory of bowing before tradition and authority. Barbara M further states that habit memory turns the past into present. She says: “Habit-memory differs from other types of memory because it brings the past into the present by acting, while other kinds of memory retrieve the past to the present by summoning the past *as past* – that is, by remembering it.” (10)

Commemorations center on icons. Iconography, according to Barry Schwartz is one of the means by which society commemorates. The icon is usually a “pictorial representation of a sacred figure to whom veneration is offered” (Schwartz 376). However, the icon is not limited just to a picture. It symbolizes various qualities. Any commemoration is actually a celebration of these qualities. “Asadha Purnima” (Name of a festival) (July 1960) is related to Lord Buddha and celebrates the ideals of austerity, equality, quest for truth and rejuvenation. “Dolaleela” (Name of a festival) (March 1961) is celebrated for commemorating the ideals of Lord Krishna and his attempts to establish love and friendship among the people-- ideas which are important to maintain the peace and stability of the country. However, an attempt has been made to differentiate between the “dola khela” of Orissa and Holi which is celebrated in northern India. In Orissa, this festival is mostly about

strengthening spiritual and friendly connection with other people. The celebration primarily focuses on the worship and prayers, while playing with colours occupies a secondary position. “Chitalagi Amabasya” (August 1983) is one of the prominent festivals of Orissa related to lord Jagannath. Started by the Ganga dynasty, this festival has been celebrated since 11th century. The writer, through a recollection of this festival, creates a golden history of Orissa. During the Ganga rule Orissa was a flourishing kingdom. The kings, even though powerful and successful, always sought the blessings of God before any venture. They were god- loving and religious people. This festival was celebrated as a show of gratefulness to the supreme power. Sometimes commemorations can center upon abstract concepts used as icons. “Akshaya Tritiya” (May 1961) is a celebration of creation, birth and rejuvenation, just like the above article. According to a story in the Bhagavata, this was the first day of creation. This is the day when the farmer sows the first seeds in his land to produce food. “Bipasha” (May 1962) is about a river which, in the present, is known as Beas. The writer, by associating the life of a Hindu sage with the river tries to reclaim it. The water of Beas, according to an agreement between India and Pakistan in 1960s, was to be shared by both the countries. By presenting a mythical anecdote associated with the river, the writer tries to present it as Indian and Hindu. He also highlights certain values associated with the Hindu philosophy. According to the myth, this was the river into which sage Vasisth jumped into to commit suicide, after he learns that all his sons have been killed. But ironically, all the strings he had tied himself with to make him unable to swim are detached and he becomes a free man. This suggests not only rebirth and rejuvenation but also freedom from the strings of attachment. “Bharatiya Sanskruti O Gurupuja” (Indian Culture and Reverence of Teachers)

(September 1983) is a commemoration of not only a great scholar and academician Dr. Sarvappali Radhakrishnan but also the relationship between a teacher and a student. The teacher has been accorded a high pedestal in the Indian culture. Teachers' day is not just a commemoration of the past but also a way of incorporating it into the present to make it better – “Ehi dinati aamaku kebala prachin parampara ra guru shishya samparka mane pakei diye nahi, barang atita ra samparka mane pakai vartabana ra samparka ku adhika madhumaya o sukhakara karibaku prerana diye”. (This day not only remind us of the traditional form of relationship that existed between a teacher and a student but also reminds to improve the teacher student relation in the present) (18).

Commemorations have a contradictory character. They retrieve certain memories with the aim of dismissing certain other memories. Uniformity and unity are achieved by making people forget previous conflicts. Remembering and forgetting work simultaneously in commemorative activities. Commemorations are not so much about celebration of the past as they are about the perpetuation of an ideal considered worth preserving. They lift “from an ordinary historical sequence those extraordinary events which embody our deepest and most fundamental values.” (Schwartz 378). “Rakhi Purnima” (Rakhi Festival) (August 82) is not just another festival celebrating the relationship of brother and sister rather it has deep historical significance. This ritual dates back to the times of war when the sisters tied a thread on the wrists of their brothers, as a token of their well wishes. Thus, this is not a religious festival limited to a particular section. It is more secular. Even the

queen of Chittor, Karmavati, sent a rakhi to Humayun to seek his help in defending Chittor against an enemy kingdom. This festival also lays down certain rules for the women, besides reiterating the typical gender roles of protection and care. This festival perpetuates the patriarchy which has been an integral part of the Indian society. “Savitri Brata” (November 1984) is a festival in which the women fast and pray for the wellbeing of their husbands. But this piece presents a different view of the story. The story is about the protection of truth and it clearly defines the kind of strength required to protect that truth. That strength requires a combination of courage, determination, focus and alertness. The story argues that this is the kind of strength that women should try to create in themselves. Through the story of Savitri and her struggle with the god of death for the life of her husband, a woman’s dedication to her marriage and her determination to save it enforces certain stereotypical ideas about women and their purpose in life. Though women are encouraged to be strong the article argues that it should be for the betterment of their family. “Asadha Purnima” (July 1960) is the day celebrated as the birth of Buddha. However the focus is not so much on his birth and life as it is on his rebirth i.e., his attainment of enlightenment. This Purnima is the time when Buddha was conceived, born and reborn. The idea of rebirth gains significance in the 60s because of the social, cultural and political turmoil that the country was going through. The excitement of freedom and the dream of a golden future were languidly perishing. Regeneration and rejuvenation were essential if the country was to develop further. These, according to the article, can be acquired by following the path of peace propagated by Buddha. Maurice Halbwachs has pointed out that “the past is a social construction mainly, if not wholly, shaped by the concerns of the present” (qtd. in

Coser 25). The validity of his argument can be discerned from the article, published in the 80s, on another commemorative festival related to Buddha. This is where the constructed nature of memory gains significance. “Baisakha Mahatmya” (June 1984) is a commemoration of Lord Buddha. Baisakha Purnima commemorates the ideals of sacrifice, perseverance and brotherhood. The article argues that these ideals originated in India and then were circulated throughout the entire world. This is slightly different from the one published in 1960, which emphasized rebirth and salvation; the spiritual world over the material and the human. The present article emphasizes humanity. Being a good human is important than anything else. The earlier article advocated renunciation. But this one encourages people to live as good human beings, as social animals by following certain ideals.-- “...Shri Buddha sethi pain dekhai jaichanti tyaga dwara, tapasya dwara suniti patha re gati hi manusya ku pragati parayana karai neba” (Lord Buddha, therefore, has shown that only through sacrifice, meditation and observance of the right path can bring progress to mankind)

(2). Earlier Buddhism was projected as a religion, but, in this it projected more as a way of life.- – “buddhanka dharma biswamanabatara dharma, e dharma kebala grantha ra; byakti ra biswasra dharma nuhe. Eha anubhuti ra dharma; sadhanra dharma, siddhi ra dharma. Jaunthare manusya achi, manusyara mana achi, setare buddhankara abedana. Buddha manusyaku awahan karichanti manusya hebaku. Ehanhi manushya dharma.” (Buddha’s religion is the religion of the entire humankind, this is not just religion of the sacred texts, not a religion of individual faith. This is the religion of experience, of perseverance, of perfection. Wherever human beings reside, wherever their minds reside, there Buddha is welcome. Buddha has asked human beings to be human. This is the religion of humanity.) (3). In this

article there is an attempt to make religion more connected to everyday life rather than presenting it as a transcendental ideology, corresponding to a different level of existence. In the context of war and proliferating capitalist tendencies, this article becomes significant. The earlier article gave importance to individual salvation and happiness. It underlined the gravity of renouncing the material for attaining salvation. But the latter, prioritizes renouncing the material for the good of fellow citizens. To curb the gnawing effects of capitalist individualism, the focus of the Buddhist philosophy is changed to promote a stronger society.

Maurice Halbwachs acknowledged only the social frameworks of memory but Assmann shifts the focus to the cultural frames also – “human memory is also embedded in cultural frames, such as the landscape or townscape in which people grew up, the texts they learned, the feasts they celebrated, the churches or synagogues they frequented, the music they listened to, and especially the stories they were told and by and in which they live” (Assmann 131). Therefore, monuments become an essential part of collective as well as individual memory. “Gaan Chatashali” (The Village School) is a poem in the collection *Gaan Mati Mora Hane Re*, published in 1971. It is a recollection of the village school by the writer. This poem belongs to the romantic tradition, where the memories are recollected with a sense of nostalgia. Ironically, it is not a glorious past which the writer tries to remember. Rather, the writer is well settled now and is reminiscing a past which was more familiar and to which he could relate. It is a memory about the village school, which was a broken mud house – “nahi aaji sei ‘gaan chatashali’/ jhati mati chala ghara/”.

(The village school, a unclean mud hut, does not exist anymore) (3). It is not a golden past which is lost now rather it is a past which held certain values, which are in decline today. Hence the need to recollect. The school was not just a place of academic learning but also a place which brought people closer to their soil and nature, as signified by the garden in which various flowers were planted by the students. It was also a place where the collective life thrived, as indicated by the games which the children played. Today the world has been polarized. The writer is not in touch with his friends now. The monument is symbolic of the rural values which are in decline today.

Studies in neuropsychology show that memory for events are tied with memory for places. Museums and other monuments refresh memories of certain events by invoking their spatial connections. For these reasons Smith calls this process “territorialization of memory” (qtd. in Meusburger, Heffernan, and Wunder 8). Like symbols, monuments and museums also function as mnemonic devices of some sort. Jas Assmann says that “The past exists, if it can be said to exist at all, in a double form: as a sedimentation of relics, traces, and personal memories and as a social construction” (15). Museums combine both. Museums also define one of the important aspects of modern memory, which Pierre Nora describes as being archival (Nora 13). According to Nora, modern memory “relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image” (qtd. in Gillis 15). This concept also hints at the transient and permutable nature of memory in the

modern age. The desperate need to preserve a certain memory stems from the awareness that today memories can be recreated and even manipulated.

The museum is a testimony of India's historical legitimacy. It echoes the intentions, ideologies and objectives of its creators. The collections in the museum are not just objects but are texts whose narratives shape the visiting public. It is here that the public is given meaning and identity. Kristina K. Phillips observes that "Evidentiary objects of a broadly glorious heritage and of triumphant pasts constitute the national identities of the viewers, offering them a subjecthood of the Indian identity and citizenship as long as they are prepared to partake in the museum's carefully orchestrated ritual" (22). "Anubhutiru Pade" (A few Lines from Experience) (March 1964) and "Neheru Smaraka Jadughara" (Nehru Memorial Museum) (June 1965) are two articles detailing two museums of paramount significance. Through the vignette, the writer fashions certain memories which would shape the identity of the citizens. "Anubhutiru Pade" (A few Lines from Experience) (March 1964) sketches a picture of the Salar Jung museum. The museum was initially established by Salar Jung the third, to collect various rare and unique objects found throughout the world. It was a symbol of the love for beauty and extraordinariness. This feeling is celebrated after the death of the king by naming the museum after him. The museum, within its monumental radius, encompasses exhibits appertaining to various time periods and multiple cultures. Foucault, in his essay "Of Other Spaces", defines heterotopias as places in which "all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested

and inverted” (qtd. in Bennet 1). According to Foucault the museum is one such heterotopia which encloses in “one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes” (qtd. in Bennet 1). For Foucault, the museum accumulates time but itself is “outside time and inaccessible to its ravages” (qtd. in Bennet 1). Thus, museums articulate time through space. They locate multiple histories within a well-defined geographical place. In “Anubhutiru Pade” (A few Lines from Experience) (March 1964) the writer, after seeing the Chinese exhibits, takes a look at the paintings depicting the daily lives of the Mughal kings. The paintings show a lavish and luxurious lifestyle of the Mughals, which also indicates the glorious period of India as a nation. The paintings show the Mughals eating from golden plates and enjoying music and dance in their courts, thus formulating a rich cultural history of India. The paintings also show the Mughal army getting ready for war, indicating a love for their motherland, their bravery and the strength of the nation. In another room, the writer comes across various books and anthologies, torn and tattered through the effects of time. This fact refutes the colonial view that India had no history, no literacy. Not only books from India but also from other parts of Asia and Europe are preserved and this indicates that there might have been an atmosphere of intellectual cooperation in the past. In another room the writer sees the wealth of the kings-- their clothes studded with gold and silver, utensils, tablecloths, caskets embroidered with gold and silver, etc. This, not only shows an abundance of wealth but also of culture and civilization. Both the museums display objects which give a glimpse into the lives of various prominent figures. The museum is a social space which consists of objects that once belonged to the private space. The result is that the child not only gets to know the past but gets the chance to be a participant in it. The “museum of the

past” is restructured and transformed in to a “living thought” (Bennet 35). History is made alive to be experienced rather than just to be viewed. Being a secular space, the museum grants access to every citizen and makes them participants in their own history. Because of its pedagogical elements, the museum, since its inception has always been considered as an “exemplary space” (Bennet 39). Bennet further says that “the public museum attached to this exemplary didacticism of objects an exemplary didacticism of personages in arranging for a regulated commingling of classes such that the subordinate classes, might learn, by imitation, the appropriate forms of dress and comportment exhibited by their social superiors” (39). According to Bennet, the museum arose in the west based on the ideology of improving man’s inner life (29). According to Thomas Greenwood, “a museum and a free library are necessary for the mental and moral health of the citizens” (qtd. in Bennet 29). Similar ideas are reiterated by Kristina Phillips, who in her thesis, points out that in the 1960s and the 70s the idea of development that dominated the Indian nation were not confined to the economic sphere only (6). Intimately connected with the “notion of development was the social and moral uplift of a nation and the boundless possibilities of the future” (Kristina Phillips 9). The objects of personal use of the kings are interesting to look at because they create a specific memory of how a king is remembered. Jahangir, described as “premika” (lover) and Shahjahan, described as “bilasi” (lover of luxury) are remembered as comfort loving kings represented by their golden betel leaf and vase made of elephant tooth. Shivaji, portrayed as “birashreshta” (bravest) is remembered for his valor and courage through his sword. The writer then enters the children’s section filled with animals of various kinds made from mud and elephant tooth and other metals. The toys in the children’s

section of the Salar Jung museum exhibit what is called the “Rousseauesque conception of the natural” (Bennet 29). The ideas, associated with this, throw new light on the idea of childhood, which existed then. It indicates that, children were given special significance in the Indian culture and efforts were made to make them familiar with their land. The existence of toys show that childhood as phase was recognized in the Indian culture. However in “Neheru Smaraka Jadughara” (Nehru Memorial Museum) (June 1965), the focus shifts to the public life of Nehru. It is his own house that has been converted into a museum. It was the center of the nation’s political and social activity and thus assumes historical significance. The house creates a specific idea of a leader. He was a voracious reader and an eminent scholar as revealed by his library and study room. He was also a great diplomat. A room in his house is dedicated to the gifts he has received in his visits to foreign countries. This also creates a history of our nation as a friendly and peace loving country with good relations with other countries. It proves that India had an eminent position in world history and this was made possible, to a great extent, through the efforts of Nehru. In another room his degrees from the Cambridge and other national and international universities are kept side by side with his spinning wheel and two kurtas made from the thread he made himself. This highlights other aspects of his personality. Even though he was educated abroad, he had not forgotten his roots. The Tinimurthi Bhavan is a truly a conceptual lens through which history can be viewed.

As historical narratives convey history by ‘knowing and telling’, the museum narratives convey by ‘showing and telling’. Handler states that museums demonstrate an ‘objectification’ of culture (qtd. in Macdonald 3). The materiality of the museum

building and the collections present history and identity in concrete forms. Handler also claims that “a thing...presents itself unambiguously to human subjects who can...apprehend the thing as it really is” (qtd. in Macdonald 3). Sharon J. Macdonald also argues that objects are “straightforward and factual” (3). But it can be argued that it is not as transparent as it seems and objects are anything but straightforward and factual. E. Zerubavel, in his book *Social Mindscapes*, talks about sociomental control which operates in the case of museums. He adds that “when you go to a museum, you know that what you see is just a representation of the past. But it takes a certain sociological perspective to realize that what is being represented there is part of a certain narrative, and not just “the past”. It think that when you look at museums it is important to consider not only what is represented, but also what is not represented” (Spicci 117). The collections in the museum create meaning by “organizing an exchange between the field of the visible and the invisible” (Bennet 46). What is seen on display in the museum is “valuable and meaningful because of the access it offers to a realm of significance which cannot itself be seen. The visible is significant not for its own sake but because it affords a glimpse of something beyond itself”. (Bennet 46). Pierre Bourdieu’s critique of the modern art gallery will be a relevant mention here. The “art gallery’s capacity to function as an instrument of social distinction depends on the fact that only those with the appropriate kinds of cultural capital can both *see* the paintings on display and *see through* them to perceive e hidden order of art which subtends their arrangement” (qtd. in Bennet 35). But to understand the relation between the visible and the invisible, the child must be encouraged to develop a sense of historical consciousness. Thus a child looking at the collections in the Nehru Museum does not just see the objects but

tries to comprehend the passion and the inspiration with which Nehru worked, which is required from the people of the present era. S/he strives to fathom the needs of the nation and what is demanded of an ideal citizen. The above theorists have addressed the ideas of representation and showing in museums as modes of mediation. Bennet's rationale is circumscribed to more or less the seen and the unseen, even though he uses the terminology of visible and invisible. What I would expatiate is the concept of visibility. Visibility is a more complex category involving active processes. It can be argued that museums are not limited to mere showing rather they are ideological projects actively involved in generating visibility of the hidden and unknown past. Andrea Mubi Brighenti in his book *Visibility in Social Theory and Social Research* claims that visibility is not a "monodimensional, or dichotomic, on/off phenomenon" (3). Rather it is "inherently ambiguous, highly dependent upon contexts and complex social, technical and political arrangements which could be termed 'regimes' of visibility" (Brighenti 3). One of the crucial aspects of visibility, according to Brighenti, is that it is relational and it creates a negotiation between the one who sees and the one who is being seen (24). The child inside a museum not only perceives the artefacts, but also perceives himself/herself in the in relation/as part of the complex configuration of the museum. Museums place the viewers in a contradictory position of both the observer and the observed. It is within these contexts that subject positions are established. The child locates himself/herself within the nation's history and culture. Another pivotal principle of visibility is that it is not confined to "cognitive or informational dimension" (Brighenti 5). Far from being a purely intellectual phenomenon, visibility is "affective and haptic" (5). Visibility evokes emotions and this is where its deciding role in

memory becomes foregrounded and the higher the emotional quotient of an event (in this case, of an object) the higher the probability of it being imprinted in the collective memory. The collections in the museums thus are not reduced to mere fragments of the past but become integrated in the observer's present conceptions and future dreams. Intrinsically associated with emotion is a sense of property or possession. This, S. J. Macdonald argues is integral to the western concept of identity – “a notion of selves as owners” (3). Thus the child is made to realize that s/he owns his/her nation and thereby the protection of it rests on his/her shoulders.

Kristina Phillips maintains that in the 1960s and 70s museums and museology education were tied with the ideology of development. In a similar vein Tony Bennet talks about Foucault's analysis of the modern prison, school and asylum as institutional designs to control and impart correct training to the individuals. The museum is also one such design where the viewing public is also subjected to “regulation and control in the form of security guards, guide lectures, authoritative guide books and narratives of display that map ‘correct’ ways of viewing, of learning and of historicizing the new nation-state” (Bennet 99).

Authority, Society and Nation

The way in which the history of a nation is recovered, constructed or invented plays an extensive role in defining and expounding not just a shared past but also a common future – the two temporal elementary units of national identity. A shared history conducts the nation on the road to a common destiny. Derek Walcott, in his

much acclaimed essay ‘The Muse of History’, quotes Joyce’s observation on history – “History is the nightmare from which I am trying to awake” (Walcott 36). Veritably for many postcolonial nations, history is a horrific ordeal and recuperation becomes one of the primary agendas of historiography. Nevertheless, instead of awakening, these nations replace the nightmare with another fascinating vision – that of a pre-colonial utopian golden age. However, this is not the only way in which colonial history is countered. Sometimes facts are opposed and where possible, reinterpreted. It is common knowledge that history is a fusion of fact and fantasy. Yet, a close and in-depth study of which aspects of the pasts are chosen to be written or rewritten and for what purpose, can reveal various useful insights.

The study of any subject presumes the existence of its object of study. For example, sociology would assume the existence of a society, political science presumes the existence of politics. But curiously, Indian historiography began with a denial – the absence of history in/of India. Any history is not just an elaboration of how things were but also a potential explanation of how things should be. Indian history, as the accepted theory goes, begins with James Mill’s *History of British India* (1817) and his epic division of the Hindu, Muslim and British periods. This chronological mapping has ever since held ground with just the minor change in the taxonomy with periods being referred to as Ancient, Medieval and Modern. Mills was of the opinion that the Hindus had no sense of history; that the Hindu period was stagnant and characterized by despotism; that the Muslim period was comparatively superior and finally change and progress came with British

colonization. V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* (1911) and the five-volume *Cambridge History of India* (1922-37) "were fresh attempts at justifying British rule in India in the face of mounting opposition from Indian nationalists (Bharata). In the words of R C Majumdar, Vincent Smith 'never concealed his anxiety to prove the beneficence of the British Raj by holding before his readers the picture of anarchy and confusion, which, in his view, has been the normal condition in India with rare intervals.' The inevitable moral was: 'Such is India and such it always has been till the British established a stable order'" (Bharata). Mount Stuart Elphinstone's *History of India* (1841) goes a step ahead in presenting a very denigrating picture of the history of India. E. B. Cowell's introductory notes state that the history of ancient India is "exclusively mythic and legendary" thus denying any actual existence to it "Bharata". Swami Vivekananda was one of the first people to emphasize the need for writing Indian national history from the Indian perspective. In a conversation with Priya Nath Sinha he said, "a nation that has no history of its own has nothing in this world. ... We have our own history exactly as it ought to have been for us. ... But that history has to be rewritten. It should be restated and suited to the understanding and ways of thinking which our men have acquired in the present age through Western education" (Bharata). Wole Soyinka also has similar views. He states – "For a people to develop, they must have constant recourse to their own history. To deny them the existence of this therefore has a purpose, for it makes them neutered objects on whose tabula rasa, that clean slate of the mind, the text of the master race...can be inscribed" (qtd. in Nayar 54).

The task of historiography has always been guided by the requirements of nationalist ideologies. In case of postcolonial countries historiography is not just an act of writing the past but is also a site of reclamation and reconstruction of national identity. According to Pramod Nayyar there are three modes of historical reconstruction – “contestation of established stereotypes and discourses, retrieval of buried histories and stories that perform this contestation” (46). Out of the three, except retrieval of lost histories, the other two modes are quite dominant in the children’s magazines under review. Sometimes the two modes merge. Contestation is primarily done through stories which counter various stereotypes. In the magazines, history is mediated in the form of narratives. Narrative is the translation of the ‘*knowing*’ into ‘*telling*’ (White 5). This implies that a narrative transforms the abstract into concrete and imagination/images into reality/ language. Narrative provides the space where our “desire for the imaginary (*past*), the possible (*future*) must contest with the imperatives of the real, the actual (*present*)” (White, italics mine.). Narratives are also suitable to the idea of time that is so integral to history and memory. Historical time is quite different from individual time. History presents a linear progression of time through a chronology of events. Individual time is a site where the past, present and the future contest for dominance and meaning and at times merge into one another. But even though historical time is linear, the content and ideology of history and historiography are often characterized by progression as well as regression. In this context E. H. Carr’s statement that history is a dialogue between the past and the present holds good. (Thapar *The Past As Present* 2). It is here that the role of narrative in historiography assumes significance. One of the important advantages of presenting history in the form of narratives is that it helps in

placing an event within the framework of a structure. A few decades earlier the study of history was limited to the chronicling of the lives of great men. According to Romila Thapar it is in the 1960s, 70s and the 80s that “the interest in the past came to be re-oriented in a significant way. It was no longer limited to political and dynastic histories. It introduced the interface of these aspects with others such as social and economic history and the flow of what was called culture/civilization that largely addressed religion, language, literature, the arts and philosophy” (*The Past As Present*, 69). History during these decades became a study of the larger picture of social, economic, political and cultural relations. The stories, though revolving around a central figure of authority, focus more on his activities and relations to his surroundings. Sometimes the king is unnamed to completely shift the focus from him. The inclusion of folktales, revealing certain historical facts, is also an indication that historiography was moving away from chronicles of centers to the peripheries.

The ideas, which the western scholars have promulgated about the Indian past, have been questioned and countered in the Children’s magazines under review. One of the prominent charge against the Indian society has been the presence of despotic rulers. Both Mills and Marx buttress this thesis. In fact, according to them, one of the cardinal reasons for stasis in Indian society has been Oriental Despotism which is characterized by “an absence of private property in land, despotic and oppressive rulers and endemic poverty” (Thapar, *The Past As Present* 10). The stories reject this idea. Some of the stories depict the kings as ordinary human beings vulnerable to human weaknesses (thus also countering the theory of divinity of kingship) and many times redeemed by common village folks. The theory of oriental despotism also does not hold good in these cases. The village folks are shown to make sacrifices

for the king voluntarily, out of a sense of obligation not so much towards the king but more towards their region/kingdom. Besides, the stories also present the king as an ideal figure to be emulated so as to shape the consciousness of the child. Certain qualities are presented as important for becoming a leader. In “Bhojarajanka Swapna” (King Bhoja’s Dream) (April 60) we are presented with an introspective King who is not blinded by power. The king is confronted by Truth in his dreams and interrogated about the fulfillment of his duties. He is shocked to discover that whatever he has done is futile. The next day, the king who has always given grand donations to the Brahmins, sends them away and instead caters to the needs of the poor. He is definitely not depicted as a despotic ruler. “Kanakachmapa²⁹” (December, 1960) is a story which questions and counters the divinity of kingship. The king is unable to save the life of his own son and yet considers himself God. An old man attempts to save the life of the prince but first he tries to explain the king to improve himself as a human being. It is interesting to note that the voice of change, conscience and spirituality, in almost all the stories, is always an old man. The king gives up his pride and repents sincerely with his heart and this saves the life of his son. The old man while leaving says “Manusya kebe iswara hoi parena” (Man can never become God) (15). The fact that kings were not only the protectors of their subjects but also provided them with financial assistance is shown through the story “Satyameva Jayate” (Truth Always Triumphs) (August 1967). Besides establishing the strong historical foundations of this dictum, it depicts a king, Dharmashila, who loses all his kingdom and wealth in order to keep a commitment. The fact that the king is tested on his character proves that this dictum is a tested one. The story also

²⁹ The name refers to a flower in the story.

establishes the facts that kingship is earned rather than being bestowed through lineage. The argument thus follows that power and authority are earned through one's personal traits and effort. It is given to the one who deserves it. The king, according to the ancient ideas of kingship, was also supposed to eliminate the law of *matsyanaya*-- the law of fishes in which the larger one swallows the smaller one (Sharma and Singh 385). Understood in today's terms it is the survival of the fittest. The king has to guarantee that even the weakest of the people get justice and equality. This is evident in the economic data provided in the stories. For example in "Satyameva Jayate" (Truth Always Triumphs) (August 1967), the king organizes a weekly sale of the produce of all his subjects and decides to buy everything that is not sold, thus making sure all his people get paid for their hard work and earn. His obligation to this rule is so strong that he even buys an idol which is considered to be inauspicious and which eventually brings him bad luck, resulting in his poverty. It also reflects the non-existence of the market economy where a selected few make the profit. In ancient Indian politics, the state has been presented as an "organic entity" (Sharma and Singh 383). The analogy given is that of the human body with the king as the head followed by the ministers, friends, army etc. at different levels of the hierarchy. Though the organization is hierarchical, all are dependent on each other for creating a smooth functioning, well balanced and harmonious society. This is shown in the story "Sukara Sandhane" (In Search Of Happiness) (September 1967), which presents a spiritual relationship between the king and his subjects. The king falls sick and is prescribed with a strange medication. He has to wear the clothes of the happiest man living on earth. Finally, the ministers meet a farmer, who says that he is content and satisfied with his life and therefore

happy. The ministers take his clothes and give it to the king, who after knowing about the farmer's secret of happiness starts working hard himself. He is cured and also learns a great lesson that hardwork is the key to happiness and luxury breeds disease. This story strikes at the very base of the theory of Oriental despotism which claimed that the king was an oppressor who exploited the subjects. The king, in the above story, is shown to be dependent on his subjects for his own betterment. Many of the stories show that the peasants owned private property. They, in fact, donated their land for the betterment of the king. The stories also show that poverty is purely an economic phenomenon which is not related to the social or communal lives of the people. In the above mentioned story, the farmer is shown to be the happiest person. The agrarian economy is glorified and shown to be the way of achieving a stable and happy kingdom. The success of any nation is not dependent only upon the economic progress that it makes (shown through the characters of the king, the diamond merchant and the businessman who have achieved material wealth) but also upon the amount of happiness and satisfaction that the people have in their lives (shown through the character of the farmer). This also reflects the kind of relationship that the ruler and the ruled shared. Historical documents reveal that the subjects were supposed to give tax to the king. But taxation "presupposes the impersonal authority of the state and some degree of alienation of the cultivator from the authority to whom the surplus is given" (Thapar *The Past As Present* 92) But the stories in these magazines focus on the spiritual link between the authority and the subjects. Economic factors were external factors for the making of a nation.

“Bhojaraja Budhhi Sikhile” (King Bhoja Learns a Lesson) (February 1983) is a story about the obliteration of the pride of a king at the hands of old uneducated women. Once king Bhoja and one of his ministers lose their way. They meet an old woman and seek her help. On being asked who they were, the king replies that they were travelers. The woman contradicts their answer by saying that there are only two travelers – the sun and the moon. The king then says that they were guests. To this the old woman claims that there are only two guests – wealth and youth. The old woman complicates various other answers of the king, who finally accepts his defeat. This story is published in the 80s when women empowerment was a major agenda. This story shows that a woman has the right to question pre-established forms of knowledge as well as authority (here symbolized by the king). “Baigana Kahani” (The Story About Brinjal) (April 1983) shows the power relation between the king and the courtier – Akbar and Birbal. Birbal manipulates the king’s emotions and wins his trust. He agrees to whatever Akbar says, even though it is wrong. This story shows that one should always go by the authority. Both these stories are reminiscent of the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi. The first story is about a woman successfully defeating a man with her intelligence which is indicative of Indira Gandhi’s success in Indian politics, which was considered to be a man’s field till then. The second story is about the imperialistic power which Indira Gandhi wielded. “Kshyatipurana” (Compensation Of Loss) (November 1988) is about the ideal of non-violence. King Ajatshatru decides to organize a yagna to satisfy the gods and achieve salvation. For the ritual, he decides to sacrifice an animal. Lord Buddha gets to know about this and to teach the king about non-violence he gives him a task. He crushes a mustard seed and asks the king to make it a whole seed again. When

the king is unable to do such a small task, he understands the limitations of his power. – “dekha raja, tume nija parakrama balare e sundara pruthivi ra sabu nashta kari dei pariba, kintu gotiye sorisa dana ta tiara kari parila nahi? Dhwansha Kariba ati sahaja, matra gadhiba kashtakara. Kebala ishwara hi taha kari paranti. Tenu jau Shakti balare tume bada boli garba karucha, tara kichi mulya achi ki?” (O King you can destroy everything in this world by your strength, but you couldn’t even create a small mustard seed. Only God can create. Therefore, is there any value of the power you are so proud of) (18). This story has resonance to the one published in the 60s where the king is unable to save his own son. This story also counters oriental despotism, but this time the ideology changes a little and directed towards environment issues. To counter this idea of poverty resulting from oriental despotism, the historians have argued that poverty has resulted instead from the tyranny of the Muslim rulers. The pre-Mughal period in Indian history was a period of contentment and prosperity. In fact the writers present the idea of oriental despotism inherent in Muslim dominated kingdoms. In “Raja Kipari Aarogya Hele” (How the King was Cured) (February 1960) we are shown an atrocious and morally depraved ruler who can go to any extent to cure himself of an unidentifiable disease. He even decides to sacrifice a young boy as a remedy. He is so brutal that even the parents of the boy are unable to oppose him and reluctantly agree to his proposition. But he has a change of heart and is miraculously cured, not by the sacrifice of the poor child but by his realization that he has to overcome his despotic nature. – “Jane niraparadha lokara mrutyu bandh karithibaru tanka manare jeu santosha hela ta phalare....se krame arogya labha kale.” (The satisfaction which he found by stopping the death of an innocent person resulted in his slow recovery) (6). Another story

which reinforces this idea is “Sesha Siksha” (The Last Lesson) (February 1984) which is about the last times of sultan Mamud Ghajni and the his final observations on life. More than the final realizations of a dying man, it is the repentance of a cruel and unjust ruler for attacking India. He is presented as an atrocious ruler, blinded by power and greed. He recalls his attack on India and the desperate efforts of the poor, innocent Indians who had tried to protect their wealth in a temple. This story firmly stresses the idea that it was the Muslim rule in India which was despotic in nature and led to poverty and exploitation.

The concept of oriental despotism is inevitably tied to the idea of authority. The king, even though was the head of the state, was not the highest authority. One more perception of the British historiography of India is the claim that religion superseded all other authority. This view has been constantly countered in the stories. The highest form of authority, as depicted in the stories, is Dharma. Accordingly, to confuse Dharma with Religion would be a grave mistake. Dharma, in the Indian philosophy, has been considered as a social concept and, therefore, a secular one too. Dharma includes certain duties, observance of laws, respect for justice and various other elements to promote a right way of living. The king, who in the stories is presented as the highest authority is himself subservient to dharma. He is required to live his life according to dharma and one of his greatest duties is to protect Dharma at all costs. Keeping the subjects pleased and protecting them from danger, form the main duties/dharma of the king. He derived validation and justification of his powers from the subjects by carrying out certain functions. Unlike

the western tradition the king is not considered God's minister on earth but his functions are very much like god as far as protection and caring is concerned (Sharma and Singh 393). The king, in fact, is seen as the 'Father' taking care of the children subjects. It is mentioned in the Mahabharata Shantiparva (90.5) that the person who protects dharma is eligible to become a king. (Sharma and Singh 385). Thus, the king is accountable to his subjects for his actions. It is not the king but the law (dhrama) which is divine and the king is subordinate to it. The Indian polity lays down certain qualities which a person must have to become a king.

An entire gamut of the duties and obligations of the king, also known as "Rajadhrama" is specified in the Vedic and epic literature (). One of these qualities is self-control. This quality stands out in the magazines because it is not only used as a basis of differentiating 'us' from 'them' but also forms one of the bases of nationhood in India. The Muslims in all the stories are shown as people who are ruled by their baser instincts, ambitions and pleasure. Self-control, in case of the Indian kings, becomes one of the instruments for defeating their enemies and keeping their kingdoms integrated. For example, in the story "Matru Darshana" (Vision of the Mother) (may 1960), Shivaji defeats the Muslim opponents but treats their women with respect and even protects them. The motherland, biological mother, the mother goddess and women are brought on the same plane. The Mahabharata Shantiparva states that "a king must subdue his own senses and only then can he subdue his foes" and "only he who has conquered his senses alone can keep his subject under control" (Sharma and Singh 387). These texts historicize the

idea of self-control which many years later found resonances in Swami Dayananda Saraswati's philosophical meditations and Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj*. Dayananda Saraswati defined Swaraj as 'the administration of the self' or 'democracy'. Gandhi stated that: "It is swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves" (Kolge and Sreekumar 177). The nation, thus, becomes a self-sufficient unit ruled by its own. This idea also contradicts the British view that the Indians are unable to rule themselves. To avoid the contradiction between the idea of self-rule and kingship (which makes an impression of dictatorship), the religious texts lay down that the king should be subservient to Dharma. Thus, even though India had kinship in the past, it cannot be considered synonymous with dictatorship. The ideals of democracy and self-rule were still prevalent then. The king, more than being a ruling authority, symbolized a set of principles, similar to our constitution in the present, which were to be followed by one and all. His power was not arbitrary, rather guided by the rules of dharma.

Besides other qualities like courage, honesty, righteousness etc., the king should have qualities of inviting nature (Abhigamika Gunas), which would attract followers, make him someone who is looked up to (Sharma and Singh 391). Thus, the king in the stories is not just a person but a trope symbolizing various attributes which are to be emulated, adopted and followed by the child. In India, kingship is generally considered to be hereditary i.e. the following of the rule of primogeniture. But since the Indian religious and political texts lay down that a person must be worthy of being a king rather than just inheriting the status through birth attempts have been made to justify this rule of primogeniture. For example in the story "Suna

Deula” (Golden Idol) (February, 1969), the king is manipulated into believing that the younger son is more capable than the elder one and so he should inherit the throne. But the younger son fails in all the tasks and it is the elder one who emerges successful. The story proves that the law of primogeniture is followed because the elder son is more matured, stronger and intelligent because he of his age. The younger one still has to overcome his childishness. More over the older son is helped by the gods in completing his tasks successfully. This indicates that the older children have better understanding of state affairs and therefore, to some extent, it is divinely ordained to make the first born the king.

Hierarchies and The ‘Other’

As mentioned earlier, the state in ancient times was considered an organic entity with different other categories at different levels of hierarchy. Territory was one such category. The idea of the territory is baffling when it comes to decide who or what constitutes it. In relation to this a quote from Jawaharlal Nehru’s *Discovery of India* is worth mentioning. In chapter three, there is a section named ‘Bharat Mata’ where Nehru explores the idea of nation and land:

Sometimes as I reached a gathering, a great roar of welcome would greet me: *Bharat Mata ki Jai*- ‘Victory to Mother India.’ I would ask them...who was this *Bharat Mata*...? At last a vigorous Jat... would say that it was *dharti*, the good earth of India that they meant. What earth? Their particular village patch, or all the patches in the district or province, or in the whole of India? I would...explain that India

was all this that they had thought, but it was much more. The mountains and the rivers of India, and the forests and the broad fields...but what counted ultimately were the people of India. (Nehru 60)

Though in passing, Nehru does touch upon the idea of a national collectivity which includes people and the environment. What he does not include are the fauna of a country. The imagination of the writers of these magazines conceives of a national collectivity where the flora and the fauna form an integral part of the national collective. Thus the stories which depict the animals and trees speaking, portray a stage in the development of the state where there was active interaction between all forms of life and that led to the ideal atmosphere. Though they have elements of fantasy, they present the real desires of the people to preserve their environment and consider it as part of their nation. These stories also project the ideal being destroyed by the human beings influenced by the growing capitalist ethics and values. These forces are always represented as alien. “Gotiye Tiki Chadheira Tiki Katha” (A Small Story Of A Small Bird) (April 1983) is a folktale from Nepal. It depicts a world where the animals behave like human beings. The story also tells about how power can work from bottom up. The bird which loses its food (a small grain) is not helped by any human. It finally approaches the animals who help her find her food. The story also shows how the order of the creatures can be subverted if power structures are turned down. The most powerful can become the most powerless. The human beings are unable to find the grain and the ants find it. “Kuhuka Darpana” (Magic Mirror) (June 1983) is a translation of the English story magic mirror. The prince of turkey is kind and saves many animals from death and in

turn is promised helped when there is an urgent requirement. With the help of these animals, he wins the challenge of the princess and marries her. The challenge was that the prince has to hide in a place where she will not be able to trace him with the magic mirror. Ali, the prince, hides in the sea, then in a cave and finally under the ground. This story hints at the symbiotic relationship that exists between the creatures of the world. No creature, however small, is useless. In “Daradi Kathuriya” (Sensitive Woodcutter) (January 1989), the woodcutter does not cut the trees and is rewarded in return by an old man. He is given a golden stick which would fulfill all his necessities. “Mankada Mantra Dela” (A Monkey Gave The Solution) (November 1982) is about the lesson that Jawaharlal Nehru learns from monkeys. The perception of India has always been that of a nation consisting of innocent people who need the guidance of an able leader. After witnessing the activities of the monkeys, Nehru learns that it is not courage or leadership that is required to win any battle rather it is unity and collective effort that bears the desired result. Real power is in united revolt. “Padiye Katha” (A Small Conversation) (February 1984) is the story of a prince who realizes the value of life. The king is supposed to take care of all his subjects, including the animals and birds. They also form a part of the nation. The prince shoots five birds. One bird before dying asks the prince – “...sarala jibana re bipada aani pahanchaiba ebang bippana jibaku uddhar kariba madhya re keunti shreyaskara?” (Which is better – bringing danger in the lives of simple creatures of saving the life of someone in danger?) (26). “Chandana Banare Gotiye Rati” (One Night in The Forest of Sandalwood Trees) (June 1984) is about king Vikramaditya who considers all his subjects as equal, be it human or animals. As usual the story depicts an ideal kingdom where truth and happiness prevails. The

king is the ultimate protector of all. He fights against the lion to save the cow. “Itihasare Jaha Lekha Nahi” (That Which Is Not Written In History) (June 1985) is a story about the life and times of Pratap Chandra Bhanja, the king of Orissa. During a hunting expedition he kills a few birds. Thinking it to be a show of his skills, he takes pride in the act. But all of a sudden a farmer comes out and defends the birds and condemns the killings. He sees the lives of the birds from a humanitarian aspect. He says that the birds might have families to look after. This changes the perception of the king who begs for forgiveness. The voice of change is always the rural figure – the authentic Indian. These stories indicate that authority, instead of being oppressive, should be democratic and open to all opinions. “Rajabanshara Brukshya” (The Tree of the Royal Family) (July 1985) is the story of a king who decides to build a house on a tree trunk and to achieve this end he decides to cut the age old tree in his own garden. He is a cruel and selfish king and this is indicated by his decision to wipe away an entire village to make space for his palace. The tree here symbolizes tradition and ancient cultural heritage which is being destroyed by the modern palace. The tree appears in the dreams of the king to defend itself. It says that by destroying it the king will destroy all the prosperity and well- being of his kingdom. It has nurtured so many birds and other living organisms and they will be homeless once the tree is cut down. The king realizes his mistake and aborts his idea. “Kshati Purana” (Compensation Of Loss) (November 1988) also talks about animal rights. King Ajatshatru decides to organize a yagna and for ritual he decides to sacrifice an animal. Lord Buddha gets to know about this and opposes the king. He crushes a mustard seed and ask the king to make it a whole seed again. Since the king is unable to do so he is made to realize that other organisms also have the right to live. This

story has resonances to the one published in the 60s where the king is unable to save his own son. These stories also counter the idea of oriental despotism but this time the ideology changes a little and is directed towards the environmental issues which were gaining prominence during that time. These stories which project change in men and their attitude reiterates Gandhian philosophy of history which “concern the changes in man and his nature...and the ascent of man from animalism to spirit” (Gokhale 217). In the last story “Kshati Purana” Buddha advises the king that what is more important than killing animals is killing the animal within oneself.

To counter the anthropomorphic idea of the nation, there are many stories which speak about animal rights. Besides the fauna, the flora has also been presented as an integral part of the nation. The forest, especially, is depicted as the place where Dharma is actually put into test. It is the place where human nature comes into contact with its positive and moral side, thus gaining strength to maintain the balance and integrity of the nation. In the story “Chandanabanare Gotiye Rati”, (June 1984) the king defeats the lion who intended to kill the cow (the famous *goumata* of Indian culture and thus similar to mother/motherland). The king of the civilization comes face to face with the king of the wilderness, the lion. At any cost the king does not let the rule of the jungle – the survival of the fittest – to perpetuate (which is also one of the Dharma of the king). It is the forest which gives the fruit to the king which will keep him healthy. The forest is a source of strength – both physical and moral – and of nourishment. In another story “Daradi Kathuria”, (January 1989) the trees speak about their contribution in maintaining the balance of the nation by

providing food and shelter to the birds, animals and humans and through their role in ecological issues. The idea of the nation or the state as an organic entity is again emphasized here and it is shown that its survival depends upon the proper functioning of all the elements. Though protection of animals is stressed upon, the bias in this thought is clearly visible. Not all animals are to be protected. The wild animal is a threat whereas the domestic animal which contributes towards the well-being of the human community is taken care of.

Though equality is something stressed upon, hierarchies are not completely done away with. Many stories argue for maintaining the status quo. Some argue that hierarchies are divinely ordained whereas many claim that hierarchies have been chosen by the creatures themselves. “Bagha Jebethu Ghasa Khaila” (When the Tiger Started Eating Grass) (July 60) is a story which defends the status quo. It depicts a world in which everyone is closely related to each other. The Gods, the king, the sages and the animals all lead their respective lives. The story proves that stability is possible when the status quo is maintained. The sage is the one who questions the hierarchy. Renunciation has always been looked at as a counter culture in ancient India. People became sage if they were not satisfied with the existing social arrangement (Thapar *Cultural Pasts* 215). This was a way of rebelling and resisting. Put in the modern context, the sage could be seen as a fusion of the intellectual bourgeois (for the superiority of his knowledge) and the marginalized other (for his renunciation of social and material life which constitutes the mainstream), both of which always question the existing social and political arrangements. But it should also be mentioned that Thapar also recognizes varnashram as one of the four

ashramas in the Hindu social system. As the story goes, the sage tries to counter the violence of the animals by making them vegetarians. As a result none of the animals get killed and their population increases to an extent where they become a threat to the human beings. This story also justifies the theory of the survival of the fittest. The present social order and hierarchy, as depicted by the story, have been divinely ordained and any change can lead to severe consequences. Therefore, as indicated by the story, acceptance rather than questioning should be the mode of thinking. This could have been a response to the various rebellious events that were taking shape in the 60s which could be a threat to the peace and order of the society. “Prakruti-parivartan chesta ku se ebe byartha manekale.” (The sage now thought that the attempt to change someone’s nature is worthless). “Ghoda Manishaku Bahila” (Horse Carried The Human) (October 1963) is a kind of origin myth which provides details regarding the origin of hierarchy in society. It presents an ideal society where everyone – human and animals both live peacefully. But this ideal society is possible only in the forest away from the civilization. This story is also about economic struggle over resources and survival of the fittest. This story actually argues that only the one who is deserving gets the right to dominate. “Kebe Hele Hoi Na Thiba...Nischaya Hoithiba...” (It Could Have Never Happened...Must Have Happened) (August 1982) is another creation myth dwelling upon the creation of the organisms. The piece begins with a meditation on the truth factor of historical material. The writer argues that immediate history is easy to investigate but remote history is not. Therefore, it has equal chances for being false as well as true. It was a story told to the writer by another writer. It a memory about human memory. Autobiographical and individual memory is made a part of the collective memory. In

the story, the supreme power, female in this case, makes all the creatures and it is she who decides who will live where. In order to protect themselves the Mother gives each creature a special power. For ex: some rodents are given poison to defend themselves. When it comes to human beings, she runs out of her stock of tools for protection. So, she gives the human kind the gift of mind/brain. With it the human race can create its own tools for protecting themselves. In short, the Mother gives the human race a quality like the Gods which partly endows them with the power to create. The mind is also the storehouse of memory which is important for finding the right direction for guiding the future. “Se mastiska ra ebhali Shakti achi je aakhi kana bhali indriya shajya re tu jete jete katha janibu, sabutaka se jatna re ta bhitare saiti hoijiba...seiya kariba phalare to jibana jaka thik bata re jibata suvidha hoijiba”. (The Brain has so much power that whatever new information you gain through your eyes and years, everything will be stored in it...by doing this your life will proceed in the right direction) (6) This indicates that the power lies in the hands of the human to control one’s memories. They have to be made beautiful. It hints at the constructed nature of the memories. This article is a glorification of the human kind, a trend which is visible in the 70s also (in the article *jamaloka re chahala*). The writer further states that “...tume , mu, au sabu manisha pashu tharu dher upare” (...you, me are above other animals) (7). “Pruthibi Rani” (Queen Earth) (June 1984) is a myth about the creation of the world. Vishnu creates Brahma who in turn creates the sky, sun, moon, clouds, wind and earth. All of them, except earth, become proud of their powers and demand special privileges from the Gods. Earth, represented here as a female, exhibits typical feminine characteristics. She shows respect to the male father symbolizing the patriarchal order. Her fulfillment comes from obeying the

orders of the father/creator. She says – “apanka ichha hi mo thare purna heu.” (May your wish come true through me) (28). She happily accepts the pain of nurturing the human race. She further adds – “apanka anugraha ru sabukichi mu sajya karibi” (Due to your request I will tolerate everything) (28). God makes her the queen. Manishara ayusha (Human Being’s Life Span) (October 1986) is a folktale about the life span of humankind. Initially the human gets a small span but on request God grants him a greater span, which has been deducted from other animals – bull, dog and owl. After his own forty years of life he lives like these animals. There is an attempt at finding an equality with other living creatures. “Bulbul gayi sikhila kipari” (How the Cuckoo Learned to Sing) (September 1988) depicts a world where all the birds look similar. They are of the same colour and share the same characteristics. The only difference is in their size. One day god comes to take a tour of the world and is hugely disappointed to see the uniformity and homogeneity. So he decides to make the world colourful. On the appointed day all the birds gather on a mountain. He not only changes the colour but also the beaks of the birds. This symbolizes not only colour/race and language. The birds choose their colours on their own. Thus, according to the story, the hierarchies are chosen by the creatures themselves. Each creature chooses its features, based on its requirements, to survive in its own environment. The cuckoo is somehow not informed about the distribution and arrives late. Since the colours are over God gives it a beautiful voice. The depiction of hierarchy is quite amusing. It is shown as something which is divinely ordained, voluntarily chosen and accepted by the organisms themselves.

Various communal riots and conflicts, beginning from the late 60s, had proved the rising rebellion of some of the minor sections of the nations which were increasingly becoming a disintegrating threat to national stability. Therefore, many of the stories try to create a more inclusive definition of a community, whose membership is based not on religious or ethnic affiliations but on one's contribution to the society. One idea which dominates the stories on kingship is dharma. The concept of hierarchy can be better analyzed if seen through the lens of dharma. Romila Thapar describes dharma as the "norm of conduct and of duties incumbent on each man in accordance with his caste...To act according to the rules of his *dharma* meant that a man must accept his position and role in society on the basis of the caste into which he was born" (*Ancient Indian Social History* 26). Each member had "had its own role in the larger and more complex network of social structure" and by observing the rules s/he was showing "an awareness of others in society as well" (Thapar *Ancient Indian Social History* 26). Though, as mentioned earlier, dhrama was a secular concept free from religious affiliations it was still a politically charged term. Emphasis on dharma was a way to keep people in their respective positions and thereby avoiding frictions. Thus, the mother earth accepts her role as the all sacrificing female without any defiance; the cuckoo, even though deprived of colour gets to contribute in some other way. Dharma becomes an ideological tool, creating a false consciousness, to make the people realize that what they have is the best they could get.

The 'other' is an important way of constructing identity. Every society creates its 'other' to maintain its own unity and identity. The binary categories of us/them is not a postcolonial invention of modernity. Ancient India had its other in the form of

the barbarian known as *mleccha*. Initially language and culture were the distinguishing features between the native Aryan and the *mleccha*. But slowly this was extended to other identity categories. Among the foreigners the Chinese were considered as the *mleccha* and their land was considered as impure. More than superiority/inferiority, civilized/uncivilized, the idea of the pure/impure governed the distinction between the Aryan and the *mleccha* (Thapar *Cultural Pasts* 238). In “Mac Mohan Line O Chin” (Mac Mohan Line And China) (February 1960) China is not just any country attacking our nation. It is also the barbarian, the impure *mleccha* who has no respect for dharma. Association with the Chinese is not just a matter of defeat but, at a different level, it is the contamination of our land. China is represented as a greedy nation, which aims to possess other nations. The article states that cunningness is something which is inherent in its nature. Even though imperialism no more exists in China, imperialistic tendencies still dominate its very character due to which it aspires to dominate other nations. This interpretation indicates two things – first it is naturally like that and therefore structural changes like changes in the political structure (nation vs state) cannot change its real nature; second historical and natural tendencies are very hard to change. This nature of china is very ancient. “Matru Darshana” (Vision of the Mother) (May 1960) is a play set during the reigns of Shivaji. The depiction of Muslim soldiers is stereotypical. Though the play depicts a war, it does not show Shivaji as violent. Shivaji does not initiate the war rather respond the call of war by Aurangzeb who had become a threat to the Hindu religion and culture. Retaliation through violence to serve a purpose is depicted as bravery. In fact in such a situation non retaliation or passivity would have been cowardice. The story argues that violence came to the Indian culture through Muslims. Indians are

basically peace loving people. Sivaji shows his respect for other religion by ordering his soldiers not to destroy Muslim monuments, their religious books and their women. This is how masculinity is shaped. The duty of a king is not just towards his motherland and his own people but also towards the enemies if they are weak.

“Yudha O Yudhakhori Chin” (War And War-Loving China) (January 1963) is about the war in 1962. India is projected as a nation cheated by China. The title itself establishes China as having a natural propensity for war and destruction. The war by India is justified on the grounds of defence. Not only India, but Nepal and Ladakh also have fallen victims to the cruel intention of China. The writer further claims that China has been a war loving nation since the very beginning of its civilization – “Chin manankara e prakruti nua nuhe. Itihas srushti hebara bahu purbaru madhya semane e prakar niti grahana kari asichanti.” (This violent nature of China is not new but has been there since time immemorial) (1). The writer traces a very brief history of China from 264 BC and tries to show how it has been a nation favouring war and destruction from its very inception.

“Panchashila” (March 1963) is an article on the treaty signed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Chou-N-lai, the Prime Minister of China, in 1954. The word itself has historical origins. It is originally taken from Buddhist Philosophy of the five tenets required for a good life. It specified that all nations should favour peace and respect the freedom and dignity of other nations, besides other clauses which required the maintaining international peace and order. But China violates the treaty and attacks India. It not only breaks the treaty but also the religious tenets of Buddhism. Its mistake is not only political but also religious. India in spite being a peace loving nation had to get into war because of China – “Chin aaji nirepakshya shanti priya bharata ku yudha ra ghanaghata madhyaku badhya kari tani

neichi.” (China has forced India to get involved in war) (2). “Leelamayanka Leela” (God’s Miracle) (February 1984) is about the minister of Akbar named Rahim Khankhana. Even though a Muslim, he was an ardent devotee of Krishna and it is Krishna who saves his life from the evil trap of an enemy. What is interesting is the way this Hindu believing Muslim has been portrayed. He is described as a gentleman ‘unlike’ other Muslims who are brutes –“senapati Rahim thile ati sajjan...tanka manare kahaprati kebe dwesha bhaba ba sankirna bhaba rahu na thila. Mana thila tankara sada nirmala” (Senapati Rahim was a gentleman...he never had any grudge against anyone. His heart was always pure) (16) His heart was clean and and he had never thought bad for anyone. This story establishes various facts, first Hinduism is the superior religion since the believers are always protected. Second it tries to create an equal platform for all the people on condition that they believe in Hinduism. Third Hinduism is just and fair as it favours the good over the bad. This proved by the representation of the Hindu king who plans the death of Rahim. It depicts an idealistic world where gods were in contact with human beings; where truth and justice prevails.

“Kshama Danda” (Punishment By Forgiveness) (May 1984) is another story set during the reign of king Akbar. But in this he is not presented as the cruel emperor causing destruction but someone who has humanity. He not only forgives and frees Raghupati, the minister of Maharana pratap but also acknowledges true courage and honesty. Raghupati was arrested and brought to the court for trial along with the soldier who had allowed Raghupati to enter his own house and meet his son. Akbar not only forgives Raghupati but also the soldier for showing kindness and upholding humanity above rules. He also acknowledges his courage and ability.

The idea of purity still works here. Akbar embraces Raghupati to purify his own body “aasa bira tumaku mun alingana kari mo sharira ku pabitra kare”. (Come to me brave man, let me purify myself by embracing you.) The Muslim himself acknowledges that he is impure. Raghupati in return vows that he would never fight against the king. It shows an ideal society where each person is tolerant of the other and recognizes the good in other. But the politics of Hindutva is still very glaringly visible. “Mo Aankhire Sabu Saman” (Everyone Is Equal In My Eyes) (February 1985) is a story set during the reign of king Ranjit Singh. He was an ideal king who favoured a secular approach. He buys the Koran from the poor Muslim boy and gives him the well -deserved reward. Even though the king is kind the politics is well visible. The Muslim is poor, powerless and meek. He does not fight to get his right. This powerless Muslim figure is integrated and incorporated into the society because he is not a threat. Equality is only apparent. The Muslim is obliged and equality is only in the form of charity. This story also establishes the fact that India had been a tolerant nation respecting all religions since time immemorial on the condition that no other religion poses a threat.

The Hindutva approach to history creates a past based on “dubious evidence and arguments” (Thapar, *The Past As Present*, 62). They argue that the Hindu civilization suffered because of the Muslims. Refuting this argument Romila Thapar says that:

Aurangzeb has now been converted into the icon of the Muslim destroyer of temples. Yet, there are innumerable firmans that record

his substantial donations to temples and to brahmanas....There is no record that states that any brahamana refused to receive a grant of land or money from a ruler who was destroying Hindu temples...This is also related to the question of what we choose to recall from the past and reiterate, and what we choose to forget. The broader question is why were some temples destroyed and others conserved by the same ruler. Destroying a temple was a demonstration of power on the part of invaders, irrespective of whether they were Muslim or Hindu. We choose to forget that there were Hindu kings either willfully as did Harshadeva and other kings of Kashmir in order to acquire the wealth of the temples, or as in the case of the victorious Paramara Raja who destroyed temples built by the defeated Chaulukya, as part of a campaign. (*The Past As Present*, 62)

The narratives project a certain idea of the king/leader, society and relation between the various components of the socio-cultural environment be it human or non-human. Though they are simple stories their leverage in carving a collective consciousness cannot be overlooked.

Creation Myths and History

Every culture has a fascination not only with its past but also with its origins and "...how it got here." (Macintyre 516).The origin is important not only because it highlights the origins but also because it indirectly points culture's efficiency in

continuing despite all odds. The preoccupation with sacredness and purity of one's group is reflected in these creation myths which show that God himself created their nation. "Gonasikaru Srushti Aarambha Hela" (Creation Began On The Gonasika) (August 1983) is a tribal folktale of the people of Kendujhara. It is basically about the creation of the world. Initially there was only water and nothing else. On a mountain a sage and his wife were born. They were not happy because they were alone. This fact indicates that human is gregarious. They need society and nature for their physical and emotional well-being. Ultimately through sacrifice they were able to populate the earth. The mountain where it all happened is known as Gonasika which is still considered by the tribes as the birth place of the human population. This myth indicates that society evolved out of human being's emotional needs contrary to the various theories of origin of society like the social contract which claims that society arose out of a contract between the members who wanted to protect their material assets. The memories of emotional bonding assume significance in the context of capitalism and division of labour which has come to define social relations in the present. "Prithvi O Manishara Srushti" (The Creation of Earth And Human Beings) (May 1985) is a tribal creation myth. Initially there was a man and a woman who lived in heaven. There were no trees no land or air. There was only water. This couple makes a pair of swans and from their eggs came the first human couple – a boy and a girl. The old woman gave some magical herbs to them and they produce innumerable children and thus the population on the earth increased. This myth besides stressing the commonality of the human race by establishing the fact that we emerged from a common ancestor, also highlights that the human race was not a product of sexual activity but of some divine miracle.

“Saragata Uthila” (The Heavens Rose Up) (February 1986) is a tribal folktale. It depicts an ideal world where there was nothing, except a couple kaya and kui. The heaven was very near the earth, so near that one could touch it if they stood on their legs. The couple was provided with all the basic needs and the gods visited their house. Once Kui while trying to makes a lot of noise due to which the heaven moves upward and finally incurs the wrath of the gods. Suzanne Preston Blier in her article ‘African Creation Myths as Political Strategy’ opines that creation myths depict a “better, more connected world” (42). This connection is broken due to human inefficiency. “Katha Rahigala Kala Kala Ku” (The Story Survived) (March 1986) is another tribal folktale which depicts a world where everything talked and walked like the humans. The human beings lived in cooperation with nature. The two most important mountains had magical powers and took care of the needs of the human beings. The humans were prohibited to enter the mountains. But out of greed for more they break the rules and the mountains become static and powerless. The story shows that the peace was destroyed by the greed of the human beings. All these stories stress on one fact that creation is basically a divine and male activity.

Memories have been considered as self-reflexive because they “reflect the self-image of the group through a preoccupation with its own social system” (Assmann 132). Whereas this statement is true to a certain extent considering it to be an absolute truth would be to deny the creative aspect of memories. Sometimes memories are invented to influence and shape the society in a new way. Here memories do not refer to the society in question but some alien ideology which is intended to be incorporated into the society. For example many stories create

memories which refute the memories parented by the British historians of India. In such cases memory becomes a response. Memories of a particular community always do not emerge from its own past. Another important aspect which needs to be highlighted is the embodied nature of memories. Memory is not confined to the mind. It is not just a mental process or activity. Memories are perpetuated through our bodies. Our senses organs are constantly engaged in creating and recollecting memories. The museums create memories through vision, folk songs through our auditory faculty and various other environmental cues might be appealing to some part of our collective memory which we might not be even conscious of.

Memories are a way of bonding and creating a common cultural identity. In a country like India where heterogeneity rules the roost, certain things are to be created which people can share and possess in common. A common history and a common memory are essential to forge a sense of unity and belonging. There is always a conflict between individual and collective memories. People belong to different social groups, political associations and cultural formations and thereby form different and sometimes contradictory memories. Museums, national monuments, commemorations and historical narratives provide a context to the individual to relate their personal memories to the collective memories of the larger group to which they belong – the nation. The act of remembering goes hand in hand with forgetting. Collective remembering cannot be successful without what Benedict Anderson calls “collective amnesia.” (qtd. in Gillis 24). This collective amnesia is also instrumental in creating a unified national identity.

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CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed at dismantling the universal idea of childhood and investigating the various forms of childhoods that emerged at different times. It also intended to look into the factors which were and still are instrumental in creating these childhoods. Most important among these factors was the idea of the nation. The idea of the nation changed from time to time and vis-à-vis the idea of childhood also changed. All the three chapters elaborated on how the relationship between children, childhood and nation is intertwined and expressed through multiple processes. Diverse aspects and ideas regarding nation emerge from the study of these magazines. The nation is represented as diverse with a checkered history. This necessitates the need for a single homogeneous national identity which would then act as a unifying factor and this single national identity in most cases is derived from the Vedic ideals. Likewise, plural ideas of childhood also emerge to create the appropriate representatives of the nation. The biographies, published in the magazines, seek to provide a role-model to the children and persuade them to follow their examples. However, the role-models are mostly Hindu, upper- caste and upper-class males. As the social and political circumstances change, the ideologies of the magazines also change. *Sansara*, whose primary purpose was to provide education through entertainment, succeeds in its task. But, at the same time, it also ends up reinforcing hegemonic ideologies which are not visible always.

The first chapter presents a nation which is divided not only geographically but also culturally. Travel facilitates the creation of an apparently unified nation. It creates an idea of childhood where the child has to know its surroundings, learn to

communicate, try to find out differences between him/her and the cultural other. This requires a child who is psychologically alert as well as physically healthy. The elaborate descriptions of the landscape convey the sense that the flora and the fauna also constitute a significant part of the nation. Formation of national identity however depends on the 'other' one is encountering. A pan-Indian identity is emphasized when the other is outside the borders of the nation. Within the nation, othering happens more on the basis of culture and behavior. The identity of the Oriya child thus depends on achieving a balance between the national vs. international, on one hand and national vs. regional on the other. Childhood here is seen as a period of exploration and adventure.

The second chapter, which focuses on citizenship, looks at the ideas of childhood and nation in a more detailed manner. This chapter elucidates the fact that ideas related to childhood don't change gradually, rather they can overlap, exist adjacent to each other, dominate, evolve and sometimes even gain meaning from each other. Romantic ideas of childhood as a period of innocence were highlighted in the early 60s. This required a detachment from the society which was considered corrupted. The mid 60s necessitated involvement with the nation as the scientific revolution overtook it. Childhood was characterized by a rational outlook, willingness to experiment rather than questioning tradition and risk taking. The 70s looked at childhood more in terms of participation at the social and the national level which made children part of the public sphere. The 80s required a return to the Vedic ideals of Hinduism to counter the threat to the Hindu nation from various directions.

The third chapter of the thesis, with its focus on the history of the nation, emphasized the acquisition of perceptive abilities on part of the children. Collective memories contribute to the construction of national identities in a significant manner. Children, who are considered as the future of the nation, were expected to participate in its past also through commemorations and various other activities.

How the nexus of nation and childhood influences and changes actual children's experiences is an arena that has been insignificantly investigated. Actual children's experiences can be brought into focus by motivating children to write. Children's literature hardly includes pieces written by children. The scope of children's literature should also be expanded to include works of art, other than literary pieces, as they also reveal a child's perception about his/her environment. Children, from the time they become conscious of their surroundings are injected with adult ideologies. In these circumstances even if literature by children is given the status of children's literature, how far will it be free from adult perceptions and their ideologies is a matter of contention. Can there be a kind of children's literature where children are not just consumers but also producers of their own imaginations and realities? Is such a concept of authentic children's literature really possible? There are bound to be contradictions between real and imagined childhoods. Children's literature written by adults attempts to impose imagined childhoods over other possible ones. It should move from the ideology of what children *should be like* to what children actually *are like*.

POSTCHILDHOOD

Given the circumstances what we can have is not a definition of childhood but perspectives on childhood with each perspective having the potential to grow and develop into an open ended theory. Rethinking childhood in different ways is a decolonizing act because it helps unsettling the hegemonic grip of the Metanarrative of Childhood and making way for various narratives of childhoods. In this context I would like to further explore the concept of postchildhood. However, my idea of postchildhood is not similar to the ideas of death or disappearance of childhood. Concepts like erosion or death of childhood have been discussed in relation to children who don't get to live the ideal childhood of innocence and protection. This appears mostly in cases where children work as labourers. Postchildhood is also not related to the transformation of childhood into adulthood. What I would like to contend is that childhood is growing out of the fixed boundaries that were once used to define and limit it. Its horizons have expanded and it has entered into a phase where the conventional explanations fail to expound the practices and institutions of this newly emergent category in fullest possible capacity. A child does not become an adult if s/he works or lives like an adult. A child will still retain certain characteristics typical to children. The differences between childhood and adulthood would still exist. Here it would be worthwhile to recall Bhabha's notion of the third space³⁰ which determines identity. Childhood and adulthood should no more be considered as essentialist categories with rigid and established boundaries. This newly emergent childhood has created a third space for itself somewhere between the

³⁰ Homi K. Bhabha elaborates the idea of third space in his book *The Location Of Culture*.

conventional idea of childhood and adulthood. New paradigms have to be created to understand and interpret its potential and requirements.

Before elaborating on postchildhood I would first like to talk about how the boundaries between adulthood and childhood are contracting and becoming blurry. Access to information is one of the major paradigm of difference between adults and children. The idea of the innocence of childhood is based on this. Children are not aware or rather not made aware of the world around them. Access to information expands their intellectual range, makes them more aware and exposes them to a variety of emotional experiences. Postman says that “Children, as adults, have easy access via television to a treatment of ‘the defence budget, the energy crisis, the women’s movement, crime in the streets ... to incest, promiscuity, homosexuality, sadomasochism, terminal illness, and other secrets of adult life’” (Buckingham 81). New studies in childhood have revealed that children are not just passive consumers of information but also active producers of meaning. When a child, through the media, is gets to know the geography, economy and politics of his/her nation then s/he also actively gets engaged in processes of self and identity formation. This is considered as a work which requires maturity and intellectual strength and which only adults were though capable of doing. Priscilla Alderson cites a few reasons which have been forwarded for the exclusion of children from serious matters:

‘They are pre-citizens, under their parents’ care and control. Adult-centred politics cater adequately for children. If children are to be explicitly considered, then a special case must be made. Yet this can

raise potential divisions between adults and children, which would disrupt families and schools, and therefore would not serve the public interest. Talk of children can trivialise and infantilise policy making. Children cannot understand politics, and so speculating about their supposed viewpoints and interests could risk being false and misleading. (6)

In spite of all these arguments children are fed political ideologies in the interest of the nation. They are many times exposed to violent stories when the need be. Access to information has not only diminished the dividing line between adulthood and childhood but has also created new definitions of childhood.

There is a recent trend of technologisation of childhood. In fact it would not be spurious to deduce that childhood today is primarily shaped and transformed by the media than by anything else. The popularity of “screen- based” media has led to an alteration in the space inhabited by children (Plowman, McPake and Stephen 63). The playground has ceased to be the most preferred space by children. The virtual space is consuming them. These transitions in turn have modified the discourses of healthy childhood. This has definitely raised questions about the development stages of childhood which were earlier considered universal. Palmer claims that “children’s linguistic development is at risk because they spend too much time listening to television (receptive language) and not enough time talking with others (productive language).” (64). This observation makes us wonder if childhood has gone back to the same conception with which the study started with – children as passive

consumers. Children's games in the real world are productive activities. Through role-play during games, children socialize in a healthy manner, communication develops and formation of identity occurs through empathy and sympathy. Due to technology, children are increasingly becoming more isolated which makes them less adept at handling real life situations. Plowman also contends that increasing use of technology in childhood puts children's "intellectual development at risk due to the demands made on cognitive resources" (64). Video games also narrow down children's perceptions and problem solving abilities. Their approach to everything is reduced to the binaries of victory and defeat (the ideology on which most video games are based upon). Children fail to perceive that other healthy and balanced approaches to life can also exist. Technology is also becoming instrumental in shaping children's experiences. Children take their experiences of the virtual world into the real world and many times this leads to emotional conflicts. Lydia Plowman conducts a study on the use of technology by children their effects on them. She concludes that it is not technology in itself which is dangerous but an aggregation of various other factors which decide the influence of technology. Parental guidance, time spent on the electronic media, type of electronic media used etc.-- all play an important part in deciding the effect of technology. This is of course a class based phenomenon. Families where access to technology is limited, Plowman perceived that technology actually helped children develop their cognitive abilities. Children were earlier thought to "occupy the space provided by a 'walled garden' which protects them from 'the harshness of the world outside'. (Coppock 61). Though childhood is still perceived as a closely guarded space, the definitions, connotations and the boundaries of that 'walled garden' have changed from time to time. Earlier

children inhabited the space of home, family and peer group. Today childhood is becoming more and more confined to the virtual world of video games.

Access to so called adult spaces is another factor which distinguishes childhood from adulthood. Jones introduces the concept of “polymorphic” spaces “which are in use within adult structures” (33) but can also accommodate children. She gives the example of the farm access to which is denied to children during the farming and harvesting seasons but after the harvest, the land is used by children for their own purposes. However, it can be argued that polymorphic spaces exhibit a more class based phenomenon. Access to places like the farm, depend on the status of children within a given society. In most agrarian families children generally work on the farm and help their elders. In such circumstances, the definition of polymorphic spaces loses its validity. Spaces can be defined not just on the basis of whether it is available to children or not but on the basis of what roles children assume when they gain access to a certain space. In the above example, children enter the farm as workers during farming and harvesting, but use it as ‘children’ when the farm is not used for the purpose of farming. It is only in the second sense that a space becomes polymorphic. In the first situation children enter the adult space as adults and this problematizes the nature of the space and the concept of childhood associated therewith. Put in the larger context of nation there are many instances where children are actively engaged in nation building activities and contribute to the national economy. In such cases, the idea of childhood as a phase of becoming is questionable. The child does not wait to become a responsible adult to make his/her contribution rather shares the responsibilities of the adults. Alan Prout suggests that

“as part of a complex and contradictory process of social, economic, cultural and technological change, the boundary between adulthood and childhood that was established in the modern period is weakening. The diversity of forms that childhood can take is expanding, or at least becoming more visible.” (Buckingham 82). Access to adult spaces also raises issues of visibility. Children as beings in their own right can become visible only through access to the so called adult spaces. If they continue to inhabit the spaces created for them, they will continue to remain the invisible citizens of the nation. It is quite ironical that children gain visibility only with access to adult space. But in this space they are not looked upon as children rather become symbols of lost or depraved childhood. This opinion is what needs to be changed in postchildhood. Children are capable of inhabiting the public sphere without arousing the sentiments of pity. Generally children who work are looked upon with pity. But Buckingham maintains that “to say that these poor children do not have a childhood is a highly normative statement. It is to naturalize the childhood of the rich as the only form that childhood can take” (13).

The stability of the institutions in which childhood was judged – family, nation, society, community, etc.--are dismantling. It is difficult to expect that childhood will remain as a fixed category in such circumstances. Modern technology is also creating new spaces for expression where children can create their own blogs and vent their own opinions. Through this they also become members of the larger public sphere. The relationship between parent and children has also become very flexible. The structure of families is also undergoing various changes. Families with a single parent are not rare in the contemporary society. A single working parent does

not share the same relationship with children as traditional families did. In these families the nature and degree of adult authority also changes. In families with a single parent children also share certain responsibilities which demand maturity. In families where both the parents work, children are left alone or in the care of the nannies. In such cases as well, the nature of authority varies. Children form different ideas of independence when they with an adult and without.

Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical musings on the human world can provide a pertinent context to understand the concept of postchildhood. According to these two theorists the human world is not anthropomorphic. Other heterogeneous non – human entities are also part of the world. – “Rather than seeing humans as isolated from the world, human capacities and powers derive from their connection with it. Human history is the process of borrowing from the non-human world, creating new combinations and new extensions of the body” and mind. (prout 115). They use the metaphor of the rhizome “to express the idea of the world as a complex set of assemblages that constantly proliferate, iterate, bifurcate, combine, transform and perform”. In the framework of Deleuze and Guattari's theory Lee suggest that:

humans find themselves in an open-ended swirl of extensions and supplementations, changing their powers and characteristics as they pass through different assemblages . . . Looking through Deleuze and Guattari's . . . eyes we do not see a single incomplete natural order waiting to be finished by human beings, we see many incomplete orderings that remain open to change . . . a picture of human life, whether adult or child, as an involvement in multiple becomings . . .

Deleuze and Guattari have given us a framework within which to compare . . . various childhoods . . . Whether children are in or out of place, or whether new places are being made for them, we can ask what assemblages they are involved in and what extensions they are living through. (Prout 115)

The above observation makes it clear that childhood is indeed a sphere of potentialities and possibilities. Fixed lines cannot drawn regarding the process or direction of its movement. Earlier the idea of ‘becoming’ associated with childhood was considered linear and homogenous. The child was the deviant who had to be structured and put into the mold of an adult. The adult was also a homogeneous category. But as the above remark shows, the ‘beings’ and ‘becomings’ are fluid categories. The ‘assemblages’ that is referred to in the above quote refer to the networks of spaces and relations that children are found in. The idea of childhood may assume different dimensions and connotations depending upon the assemblage the child is situated in (Prout 117). For example, the child in the “child-classroom-teacher” assemblage will form itself differently from the child in the “child-television-marketplace” assemblage. Sometimes the same child may be shaped differently at the same time depending upon the assemblage. Thus, it can be assumed that the meta-assemblage of the child-family-society-nation is being dismantled and small assemblages including various other factors are becoming instrumental in shaping and producing childhood.

From the above discussion it is evident that children are coming out of the pre-defined spaces. But just because they are gaining access to the virtual, physical and intellectual spaces of the adult world, they don't become adults. Children are growing more and more conscious of their surroundings. They know how to negotiate with it. German sociologist Ulrich Beck talking about this new child specifies one distinguishing feature – “individualization”. It is process where there is a recognition of the fact that children have a life of their own. This also requires constant renegotiations with authority. (qtd. in Prout 60). Lee also echoes similar opinions - “He notes that the late-twentieth century has seen the emergence of the idea that children are people who have their own perspectives and that, concomitant with this, childhood studies have taken on board the social constitution of childhood and the status of children as social actors” (Prout 63).

Repeating Bhabha's notion of the third space, it can be argued that this new childhood has created children who have a life, feelings and opinions of their own. Childhood has moved on to new territories which offers more freedom and less judgement.

AFTERWORD

This obsession with knowing and understanding childhood is reflective of a desire to control. This stems from the colonial binary of power-knowledge relations. Anything unknown can pose and transform into a threat. A child's imagination and thought processes are beyond the comprehension of the mature adult. A child is made to fit into the discourses governing the social and cultural environment, before

its imagination spirals into something unknown. The so called welfare programs veil the controlling nature of the state. Control is masked through the ideology of care. Modernity created childhood as the “cultural other” of adulthood. (Prout 10). The paintings of children in the romantic period in England show children sitting amidst nature surrounded by tress and birds. These paintings “extract childhood from social life” (Prout 11). They were pushed into spaces where they were subjected to surveillance and control. Expansion in the areas of child psychology and pediatrics also influenced the study of children and childhood. We find in many of the stories analyzed in the dissertation that traditional theories of child psychology play a dominant part in shaping the subjectivity of the child. Pavlov’s classical theory of stimulus response is evident in many stories where positive reinforcement comes in the form of praise and negative reinforcement is presented in the fear of ostracization from the society. This is not to say that children were expected to be absolute conformists. They had the freedom to use their creativity but that had to be within the boundaries set by the society in the interest of the nation. Skinner’s theory of operant conditioning is also evident in many stories. Children commit mistakes and later learn through them to become better persons. This indicates that children are given the scope of self-formation and reformation and exercised agency in the decisions related to their lives.

Theories promote understanding of a subject but they also limit it. Theories create categories and name them for the sake of simplification. But to simplify is to do injustice to any subject because it ignores the possibility of change and growth. This is same in the case of childhood. Labels on identity categories like children,

disabled, old, black, etc., define and limit the potential and characteristics of the people belonging to these groups. Labels are a way of creating universal and homogeneous identity without acknowledging the heterogeneity of individual differences.

Chris Jenks commenting on the possibilities of many childhoods says that “Now it may be that our children are becoming increasingly complex as we enter the twenty-first century or, more likely, we are becoming more complex in the way that we understand and articulate identity and difference” (137). This comment definitely creates a few associations on the nature of childhood and society. Childhood is always a reflection of the society it is a part of. As the society changes, childhood also changes. There is no one single criteria to define childhood and the dividing line between childhood and adulthood is becoming hazy. Definitions of childhood should be replaced by stories of childhood. Jenks claims that the “social constructionist view of childhood regard. “childhood” as constructed through its telling . . . there can only be stories and storytellers of childhood” (56).

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