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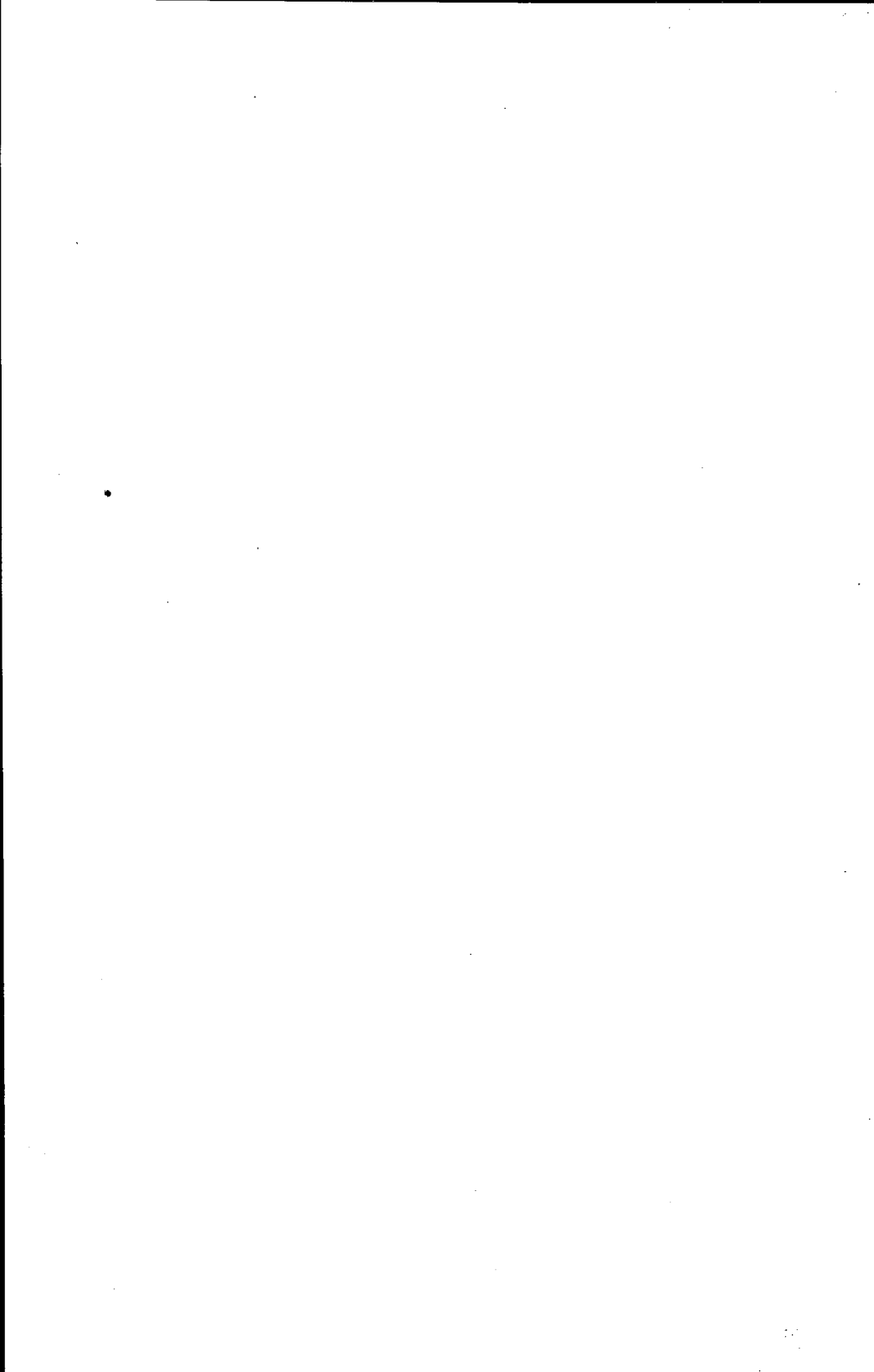
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HISTORY AND POST MODERN CHALLENGES

Irfan Waheed Usmani
National University of Singapore
Singapore

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to analyze the transforming and nihilistic tendencies of post modernism for the discipline of History. Though this topic is not new and has been recurrent theme of ongoing polemics of historical debates, however, the abundance of material as well as their theory laden nature laced with heavily jargonized post modern vocabulary and lingual construction has created many problems of communication and understanding for general readers, students and the traditional historians, not sufficiently initiated in post modern debates. This article attempts to club together the major challenges posed by post modernism to the discipline of History, through their clinical dissection and assesses their cumulative implications for the discipline of History in a simple manner in order to enhance the comprehension of post modernist debates.

Key Words: Post modernism, History, Historiography, Chronology, Time and Space theory.

The post modernist onslaught has ensued new debates in history concerning its viability and survival in the wake of its denigrating and nihilist

tendencies. Like the other social sciences and branches of humanities, the post modernism has created new ripples in History. It has affected history both positively as well as negatively. For instance, on the positive side it has led to enormous expansion of the universe of historians in terms of widening the range of subject matter of history, development of new genres of history and introduction of new approaches into historical method. Moreover, it has made historians more conscious of the limitations of traditional historiography hence they are becoming more creative, inter disciplinary and self reflexive, being fully cognizant of the postmodernist impulse. On the other hand, it has by and large created a crisis of self confidence among historians by challenging the very foundations upon which, the whole edifice of historiography was erected that is historical facts, sources and archives. These very foundations provided legitimacy for history to be an authentic, objective, truthful and universal account of past constructed through techniques, methods and extensive research processes. The implications of post modernist onslaught on history are enormous, ranging from fragmentation of the apparent unity of history to the erosion of the sanctity of past which in turn has opened the flood gates of abuse of history in the name of re-defining and re-creation of past by various marginalized groups, nationalists and extremists with ultra right agendas.

This article highlights the post modernist challenges to history and their implications for traditional historians. It is divided into three parts. The first part seeks to define post modernism. The second part constructs the conception of history as emerging from the postulates of traditional historians. Beside this, it also highlights the post modern contestation to the main premises of traditional historiography. The third part brings to the fore the implications of post modern challenges for history.

(I)

This section deals with the meanings of post modernism. It seeks to conceptualize post modernism at four levels: (a) Its broadest meaning in term of its usage; (b) The explanation provided by its exponents; (c) The perceptions of its critics; (d) The overall understanding one gathers by analyzing its characteristics. This problematization is needed so as to negotiate with the elusiveness of definition this term involves. Johan Hassard¹ while employing the perspectives of Michael Power and Michael Featherstone² provides a broadest connotation of post modernism. He is of the view that "in its most stark sense "it stands for death of reason. It offers a frontal assault on methodological unity".³ He employs the illustration of Featherstone to convey its etymological meaning that 'post' signifies that which comes after.⁴ While further engaging Featherstone's argument he concurs that "he suggests that the situation is also more complex than this, for the term post modern is also used to denote not so much rapture with, as a negation of modern."⁵ While further explicating this term he goes on to suggest four different usages of the term post modernism. For instance, in the sense of what comes after it signifies a "break with modern". In another sense it refers to "abandonment of the modern with the emphasis being placed on a relational move away". He further distinguishes it as "the signifier of a historical periodization or a theoretical perspective". He also explains it in context of "sensibility" as well as an "epistemology" which reflects developments in post- structuralist philosophy. In the later sense it denotes that the "world is constituted by our shared language" and which can only be known through the particular forms of discourse our language creates.⁶

Jeffery C. Alexander in his article "Modern, Anti, Post and Neo" further lays bare the deeper undercurrents of this term. He defines it as "explanatory social theory...(which)has made an original contribution to the understanding of reality... by intertwining the levels of structure and process, micro and macro, with strong assertions about the past, present and future of contemporary life".⁷ He takes it as a 'broad and inclusive theory of

society'.⁸ He also highlights its evolutionary character that is from an ideology of intellectual disappointment;⁹ emerging out of defeat of utopia which "threatened a mythically incoherent possibility, namely that of historical regression" which also "threatened to undermine the meaning structure of intellectual life"¹⁰ to "an attempt to redress the problem of meaning created by the experienced failure of the sixties"¹¹

While following the argument of Marxist intellectual Fredric Jameson,¹² Alexander tries to derive a definite meaning of post modernism as he avers that "what threatened meaningless now becomes the very basis of the meaning, what has been constructed is a new present and a new past".¹³ He considers it as a triumph of mature post modernism.¹⁴ Fredric Jameson describes post modernism as a periodizing concept which "express the inner truth of the newly emergent social order of late capitalism".¹⁵ One may sum up this whole debate of definition by highlighting it in its most simplest as well as broadest sense i.e. "more a sensibility, a coherent theoretical stance".¹⁶

Some exponents of Post Modernism such as James Vernon, Neville Kirk and David Harvey, take the position that there is no such ?as post modernism. Critics, such as Richard Evans, view it as an attempt to prevent the "criticism of their positions".¹⁷ One needs to move beyond this vague stance to more clear cut visions to highlight the postmodernist definitions. For instance, Lyotard describes it "the state of our culture following the transformations which since the end of the nineteenth century have altered the rules for science, literature and the arts".¹⁸ He takes it as an "epistemology" that is fully in tune of these new conditions of knowledge.¹⁹ Lyotard further defines post modern as "incredulity towards meta narratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences... The narrative function is losing its functors... It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements".²⁰ Jean Baudrillard equates it with departure of reality, vanishing of history. It brings us to such a situation that "we have flown free of the

referential sphere of the real and of history".²¹ This leads him to depict post modernism as "the illusion of the end".²² Post modernism according to F.R. Ankersmit, another among the most vigorous exponents of this movement defines it as a "new aesthetic formation". While referring to the brilliant genealogy of postmodernism by Megill, Ankersmit contends that "Megill has...shown to what extent post modernists from Nietzsche up to and including Derrida want to extend aestheticism over the entire domain of the representation of reality".²³ He finds "this aestheticism...in harmony with recently acquired insight into the nature of historiography that is the recognition of the stylistic dimension of historical writing".²⁴ Some critics of post modernism in a rather dismissing fashion seem no longer prepared to consider it as an organized movement. While alluding towards this aspect Richard Evans maintains that "post modernism is a convenient label. It is not an organized movement nor does it amount to a coherent ideology".²⁵ Perez Zagorin labels it as an "essentially historicist conception".²⁶

It would be quite useful to conceptualize post modernism through another approach such as by focusing on its characteristics. For instance, Lyotard isolates two distinguishing characteristics of post modernism namely "death of centers" and "incredulity towards meta narrative".²⁷ The former denotes the de-legitimation of all those organizing frame works of historical explanation and their reduction to a status of "temporary fictions".²⁸ The latter signify the falling into disuse of those "over-arching philosophies" which provided "meaning to western-development" through their "structuring stories". Now they are dismissed as a priori impositions devoid of objective facts.²⁹ Fredric Jameson refers to "a new depthlessness and superficiality"³⁰ as conspicuous characteristics of post modernism. According to Zagorin, it conveys the impression "of being at the end rather than the commencement of an era".³¹

Though there is nothing common in the definitions, explanations and characteristics highlighted by various post modernist and normal historians,

however, the overall inference which one may draw from this debate, in order to arrive at a more fluid conceptualization of this phenomenon, is that it simultaneously represents many things i.e. academic movement, a new aesthetic formation, an epistemology emerging from the post structuralism which by challenging the already established status of knowledge has created incredulity towards the already established notions of past, present and future through parodic representation as well as parodic detachment of past. As all these aspects constitute the main domain of history therefore, post modernism is viewed by historians as a rival which threatens the whole fabric of historical construction.

(II)

This sections brings to the fore the diametrically opposed perspectives/stand points of Normal historians and Post modernists by engaging their respective positions on the following themes, facts, sources, documents, evidence, archives, historical research, time, chronology, historians' conceptualization of past, causation as well as overall dynamics of historical interpretations and narratives. To make this debate more meaningful, it would be prudent to club these themes together in certain categories so as to further explicate the whole process of historical construction and make a comparative assessment of their respective positions. The following table shows the process of historical construction.

1- Basic building blocs of History	Facts, Sources, Documents
2- Elements ensuring the authenticity in History	Evidence, Archives, Historical Research

3- Essentials for precision, order and accuracy in historical construction	Time, chronology
4- Determinants of Historical Interpretations	Historian's conceptualization of past, causation, imagination
5- Constituents of Historical Narratives	Language, content, style, text

The first difference between historians and post modernists emerges out of their divergent views on that we labeled as basic building blocks of history viz facts, sources and documents. Evans defines historical fact as "something that happened in the past, which had left traces in documents; which could be used by historians to reconstruct in the present".³² E.H. Carr brings to the fore a two way relationship between the historian and the facts. He argues that "the relationship between the historian and his facts is one of equality, of give and take".³³ He also considers historians and facts of history indispensable to each other. "The historian without his facts is rootless and futile, the facts without their historian are dead and meaningless."³⁴ Gibbon's perception of historical fact is somewhat different. Besides acknowledging the role of historical facts he also stresses the usefulness of "literary devices in giving form to the facts."³⁵

The post modernists, on the other hand, take an altogether different position as far as the facts are concerned. Their position appears quite relativistic. They lay stress on the frame of description while explaining facts.³⁶ They further argue that "only theory can constitute what counts as a fact."³⁷ While referring to their irrelevance Baudrillard avers that "Every political, historical and cultural fact processes a Kinetic energy which wrenches it

from its own space and propels it into a hyperspace. where, since it will never return, it loses all meaning."³⁸ Moreover, post modernism has further undermined the sanctity of facts through lingual turn which by exposing the instability of language has challenged the very foundations of empiricism, the very basis of historical facts. While explicating it further he draws the analogy of atom and compares facts with atom by arguing that facts after being divided into atom like parts dissolve into the void.³⁹

The entire edifice of traditional history is erected upon sources. The sources constitute the wellspring of facts. The value and authenticity of all forms of historical construction depends upon sources. That is why historians have developed elaborate techniques of source criticism. Gibbon advises the historians that they should "avoid taking sources at face value" rather he stresses the need of "cross-questioning them."⁴⁰ While stressing indispensability of sources, Evans opines that "The past does speak through sources and it is recoverable through them".⁴¹ The historians also use the technique of footnotes to ensure that whether the arguments, propositions and statements of author are substantially corroborated by sources or not.⁴² Like facts, the post modernists' position on sources appears diametrically opposed if compared to normal historians. The post modernists do not believe in distinction between primary and secondary sources as according to their perception the former also involve selection and prioritization on the part of historian.

Keith Jenkin's argument fully epitomizes this contention as he maintains that "the primary/secondary distinction, fetishizes documents and distorts whole working process of making history".⁴³ The post modernists label footnotes as "rhetorical devices" used for "producing reality effect."⁴⁴

The documents are also related to facts and sources. It would not be wrong to maintain that the latter two spring from the former. In history the connotation of documents is quite broad. The advent of Rankean history

further enhanced, the significance of archival documents and produced a cult among normal historians of their acceptance as the foundations of authentic history at the cost of other sources. Thus making them believe (if one uses Evan's Jargon) as "transparent windows through which larger truth about past becomes visible".⁴⁵ All the normal historians are fully cognizant of the value of documents in history, though their points of view differ regarding their nature. For instance, Carr sees "no difference between what the historian thinks and what the document tells."⁴⁶ On the other hand, Evans appreciates their significance in a much broader context. Besides highlighting their value as a source of meaning in history, he underscores their utility in terms of moving beyond historian's thought if historian tries to elicit meaning through comparison of documents.⁴⁷ The post modernists, on the other hand, in their frontal assault on documents highlight their constructed nature, lay bare the underlying ulterior motives as well as the audience whom they seek to address. They also consider documents as carriers of biases which later creep into historical writings through them.⁴⁸ The post modernists also accuse historians of documentary fetishism in order to impose their point of view. The issue of authenticity of history constitutes another area of disagreement between the normal historians and the post modernists. The divergence of opinion of this issue stems from the fact that post modernists challenge all the claims of authenticity of discipline of history. This view undercuts all those premises upon which all the claims of authenticity are posited such as Evidence, Archives and Historical research.

The common sense view of history is that it proceeds through evidence. In fact, facts, sources and documents all are forms of evidence. The evidence provides credibility and unifying dough and substance to historical arguments, assumptions and conjectures. Moreover, it constitutes the medium of transportation of meaning. While alluding towards this aspect, Elton suggests that the good historians do not go for pre selecting "the evidence according to their thinking."⁴⁹ On the other hand, the post modernists tend to dismiss evidence in one stroke. For instance, Ankersmit

opines that "evidence does not send us back to the past, but gives rise to the question what a historian here and now can or cannot do without it".⁵⁰ While further explicating the post modernist view about evidence, he cites Georges Duby, when an interviewer questioned Duby about evidence "what constitutes for him the most interesting evidence"? He replied "this can be found in what is not said, in what a period has not said about itself."⁵¹ One may generalize from this debate about the post modernist approach towards evidence that they are not interested in what historians have cited rather they seem to be more interested in what historians have left unsaid or ignored.

The importance of archives for modern historical research is too obvious to be further explained particularly since the Rankean emphasis on archival sources, these became the hallmark of authentic research. Even the popularity of other approaches could not altogether diminish the significance of archival research for normal historians. The post modernists' position towards archives can be best illustrated through the Foucaultian approach. Geoff Eley shows how Foucault's work brought a radical shift in historian's understanding of archives. He is of the view that Foucault made historians "re -think" about the meaning of archives.⁵² According to Eley, instead of remaining confined merely to the critique of archives, he showed them how to engage archives as a "material event."⁵³ In Eley's opinion, Foucault "exposed its principles of construction. In doing so he revealed the space of communication between the thought and the time of culture, or between knowledge and the weight of history."⁵⁴ He found the "root ground" where the "empirical might came to representation."⁵⁵ While assessing the overall impact of Foucaultian approach on normal historians' notions of archives, he avers that "by restating archives as a question, Foucault challenged historians to think about the very ground from which history could be written."⁵⁶

Normal historians, besides relying on evidence and archives for ensuring authenticity, have also developed elaborate techniques of historical research

and former may be described as two constituents of historical research. These may be cumulatively described as part of historical method. Carr terms the "process of writing and research" one of "continuous interaction between hypothesis and evidence."⁵⁷

The role of whole process of historical research in construction of history is succinctly highlighted by Gertrude Himmelfarb, as he contends that "critical history puts a premium on archival research and primary sources, the authenticity of documents and reliability of witnesses, the need for substantiating and countervailing evidence and at a more mundane level, on the accuracy of quotations and citation, prescribed forms of documentation, in footnotes and bibliography."⁵⁸ Himmel Farb is of the view that all these elements as well as all the rest of "methodology" go into the "cannon of evidence."⁵⁹ He further highlights two fold function of historical methodology; (a) it brings "infrastructure as it were of the historical work". This facilitates reader's accessibility of the historical work as well as it exposes the work to criticism; (b) it encourages historian to become objective "inspite of all the temptations to the contrary."⁶⁰

The post modernists are quite skeptical of the whole process of historical research and dismiss it rather despairingly as "the antiquated remnants of nineteenth century positivism".⁶¹ Normal historians give much premium to the notion of precision order and accuracy in historical construction. Gibbon terms "Diligence and accuracy" as the "only merits which an historical writer may ascribe to itself."⁶² But the question arises which elements ensure accuracy, precision and order in history? One can isolate two elements such as time and chronology which provide history semblance of order. For instance, the associated notions of temporality, spatiality and periodization are inextricably intertwined with question of time and chronology. For normal historians this problematic of time and space is also crucial for contextualization of their narratives in a specific framework so as to maintain orderliness. The primacy of time is even acknowledged by the

analyst like Marc Bloch⁶³ who defines history as "The science of men in time." He makes it abundantly clear that to define history as "the science of men" is vague. Therefore, "it is necessary to add" of men in time".⁶⁴ While drawing on this theme he further argues that "the historian does not think of human in abstract. His thoughts breathe freely in the air of the climate of time."⁶⁵ For post colonial intellectual such as Ashcroft the concept of time is inseparable from normal history as he defines history as "time narrative."⁶⁶ Evans terms it a "far too powerful to be dispensed with."⁶⁷

The post modernists reject these notions of time and chronology in one sweep. They consider the very notions of temporality as constructed. For instance, Ashcroft is of the view that "temporality itself is a construction of language and culture."⁶⁸ He considers the representation of human time and space... the most powerful and hegemonic purveyors of Ethno centrism in modern times."⁶⁹ He further lays bare the ulterior motives of construction of temporality in history as "the means by which European concept of time 'were' naturalized for post colonial societies."⁷⁰

Post modernists are also highly skeptical of notions of order encapsulated by sequential time. Post modernists such as Frank Ankersmit and Rosenau particularly point towards the elements of artificiality, oppressiveness control and the legitimizing hegemonic discourse associated with historical time.⁷¹ Ankersmit goes on to suggest that construction of history based on the concept of time is "building on quick sand."⁷² Post modernists' aversion towards chronology is too obvious. For instance, Dominick Lacapra has attempted to deconstruct this notion through the analogy of birth of Christ. What one infers from this analogy is that the very application of this concept changes the interpretation.⁷³

The realm of historical interpretation may also be described as another area of contesting perspectives between normal historians and post modernists. These differences emanate from the very basic constituents of historical

interpretation such as normal historians' concept of past, notions of causation, the role of imagination in normal history and run deep into the rubrics of the very perception of historical interpretation. It would not be out of place to extract opinions of normal historians on this issue and then bring forward post modernists' contestations.

The concept of past is intertwined with normal history which is generally considered as the record of past. It also denotes a process of transition from past to present. It is also understood as a discipline which is capable of apprehending past through facts, evidence, sources and remnants. Normal historians also consider history capable of transporting meaning from past to present. Similarly all the didactic functions ascribed to history further attest towards historians' belief in history's ability to teach some lessons in present and to guide in future. This perspective may further be concretized by incorporating voices of various historians. For instance, Gibbon views "past as a field on which historian could exercise rational choice and judgement".⁷⁴ Gibbon also acknowledges how past gripped present while alluding towards this aspect Porter writes that "he knew as well as that scholarship was not just a dream world, a present and even a future lived in the past".⁷⁵ Carr defines history in terms of "a process of interaction, a dialogue between the historian in present and the facts of the past".⁷⁶ He reposes trust in historian's ability to "master" and "understand" the past as the "key to the understanding of the present".⁷⁷ Arthur Marvick also concedes over-arching influence of the past on present. He argues that "we cannot... escape from the past... The human past had determined much of the built environment".⁷⁸

Like past, the question of causation also assumes centrality in normal historians' scheme of things. E.H. Carr accords much primacy to problematic of causation in History. While highlighting the pivotal role played by causation in history, he maintains that "historian is known by the causes he invokes".⁷⁹ He further opines that historian should proceed

through "simplification" as well as "multiplication" of causes.⁸⁰ He also underscores a reciprocal relationship between causes and historical interpretation. While further explicating this point, he maintains that "The causes determine his interpretation... and his interpretation determines the causes".⁸¹ He goes on to suggest that hierarchy of causes determines the essence of his interpretation⁸². Zagorin also considers causation indispensable for historiography. He argues that "it is an illusion... to assume that historiography can dispense with the concept of causality".⁸³

The normal historians also attach much significance to the role of imagination in historical construction. They are of the view that the imagination introduces the elements of construction, creativity as well as provides space for the role of historians' consciousness and vision to come into play. However, their conviction towards imagination does not make them unmindful of the role of evidence, empiricism, and historicity. They are also aware of the pitfalls of value judgment and the conventions of historical research so as to keep this imagination in certain limits and not to allow to go awry. This approach makes history different from fiction.

Collingwood's definition of history further refers to the role of imagination as he argues that all history is the history of thought and history is the re-enactment in historian's mind of thought whose history he is studying".⁸⁴ Pakistani historian and intellectual Mubarak Ali identifies two elements in construction of history: the legacy of the past and the power of imagination which historian borrows from the present.⁸⁵ Gibbon accords much primacy to the role of imagination in history; he also gives premium to the supportive play of fancy and learning".⁸⁶ Infact, he believes that imagination always plays its active (role)...to enlarge the narrow circle in which nature has confined us.⁸⁷ As regards the normal historians' notions of interpretation are concerned, one thing that appears quite conspicuous is that in their view the phase of interpretation comes after the collection of facts about past. Thus interpretation always emerges out of combination of these facts into coherent

narrative, opines Robert Berkhofer.⁸⁸ He considers this more important in actual historiography as from sources...the historian creates generalizations assembled into a synthesis that is once again in present called (a) "history".⁸⁹ Normal historians also believe that historical interpretations are based on evidence, therefore by re-examining the evidence these may be tested, confirmed or falsified.⁹⁰ Evans goes on to suggest that even it is possible to prove that "one side is right and the other is wrong".⁹¹

The post modernist's view on all these constituents of interpretation as well as on historical interpretation appears quite dismissive. For instance, their position vis-à-vis normal historians' notions of past may be summed up by three arguments: (a) Their denial of extra textual reality of past; (b) Their disagreement regarding the definition of past; (c) Their aversion toward normal historians' use of past.

They deny the conception of past as a lived (actual) reality".⁹² They argue that past has "no narrative structure".⁹³ It is completely hidden and available only in what had been traditionally called secondary sources (stories of past)".⁹⁴ Ankersmit puts it more plainly by maintaining that one can only locate historical past through "narrative logic",⁹⁵ which implies that past cannot be located or found "in relation to time but in narration, the narrative text as a whole",⁹⁶ Ankersmit defines narratio as a "lingual identity".⁹⁷ What one can infer from Ankersmit's argument that he equates past to the historical discourse or narratio which holds its existence "only because of other discourses, not because of past which is always absent by definition".⁹⁸ Therefore, post modernists are not willing to accord any status to past reality beyond of text (which reduces past merely to discourse). The negation of extra textual reality of past can be further explicated by engaging the point of view Patrick Joyce who arrives at some conclusion by arguing that "The events, structures and process of past are indistinguishable from the forms of documentary representation, the conceptual and political appropriation and the historical discourses that construct them".⁹⁹

Post modernists even do not subscribe to normal historians' definition of what constitutes past while alluding to this aspect Ankersmit argues that "the essence of the past is not, or does not lie in the essence of past".¹⁰⁰ It implies that the traditional history fails to encapsulate the true essence of the past, which in his estimation lies in "the slips of the tongue, the *Fehlleistungen* of the past, the rare moments when the past "let itself go " where we discover what is really important for us".¹⁰¹ The post modernists are also quite critical of normal historian's use of past in term of imposition of past reality through the fetishism of facts and documents. They categorically dismiss normal historians' notions of causality and role of imagination in History. Post modernists aversion to causation may amply be gauged from the opinion, Theodore Zedlin holds about this phenomenon. He terms causation "as merciless a tyrant " in history "as the chronology".¹⁰² He suggests that historian should abandon causation approach and substitute it with a model of *pointilliste*, which denotes a painting picture using unconnected dots and leave up to the reader to decide "what lines he thinks fit for himself".¹⁰³ By suggesting this approach Zedlin wants to liberate historian as well as reader, "from the tyrannies of discipline "and later " from the tyranny of the historian ".¹⁰⁴ John Vincent considers search for causes an exercise in futility, he prioritizes explanation over causes. While referring to "constricting falls out of causation " on history he purposes to "let it be unbound ".¹⁰⁵ The post modernists term the normal historians' concept of imagination as an attempt by historians "to create a past in the image of the present " in accordance with their judgement.¹⁰⁶ This approach is diametrically opposed to the normal historians view in which imagination is required "to transcend the present and immerse oneself in the past".¹⁰⁷

The post modernists' demolition of what we labeled as the constituents of historical interpretation does not end here rather they sweep aside the whole concept of historical interpretation. The post modernists' nihilism launches three frontal assault against notions of historical interpretation: For instance, (a) Evans while engaging the views of post modernists like Ellen Somekawa

and Elizabeth Smith constructs their point of view about historical interpretations. They consider historical interpretation as absolute truth. Post modernists thought on historical interpretation is conditioned by relativistic tendencies of post modernism which deny according any primacy to one set of interpretations over the others. Therefore, they tend to consider all historical interpretations equally valid.¹⁰⁸ (b) Ankersmit highlights their paradoxical nature by laying bare the process which makes them recognizable. He argues that "they first acquire their identity, through the contrast with other interpretation; they are what they are only on the basis of what they are not". He further explicates this argument through citing the example of cold war as he contends that "anyone who knows only one interpretation... does not know any interpretation at all of that phenomenon".¹⁰⁹ Then he goes on to conclude that "every historical insight, therefore, intrinsically has a paradoxical nature".¹¹⁰ (c) Hayden White though acknowledges the crucial role of historical interpretations in terms of giving form to history. However, these also appear to him as unstable and subjective.¹¹¹

He also highlights how these are suppressed through their "sublimation" to a "moral or political authority" as a result of which the later "dissolve in to the interpretation".¹¹² While further elucidating the ulterior motives of suppression of interpretation he connects these to the quest of historians to confer the title of "scientific discipline" to history in accordance with the "nineteenth-century mould".¹¹³

Another major point of divergence between the normal historians and post modernists is the realm of historical narrativity. It is not only just the conception, nature and functions of narratives where these differences are exhibited rather each and every constituents of historical narrativity presents itself as an area of disagreement. In order to arrive at a more fluid understanding of nature of historical narrative one may divide these into four components, i.e., language, content, style and text. The normal historians

attach pivotal importance of all these elements in their writings. For these historians, language constitutes an agency of transportation of meaning. Its mediating function is very succinctly highlighted by Gabrielle Spiegel who conceives the function of the language as a one which "mediates human awareness of the world we inhabit".¹¹⁴ While stressing its importance he argues that "which ever definition of mediation chooses, the mediating function will be constituted by language".¹¹⁵ What role does language play in normal history is aptly summarize by Nancy Partner as she argues that until recently this concept of language "unhesitatingly" asserted "the external reality of the world, its intelligibility in form of ideas, concepts, phenomenon or other mental things and verbal signs".¹¹⁶ From these insights one may infer that normal historians consider language such a stable medium which is not only capable of transportation of meaning but also functions as transmitter of reality. One may further highlight its role in normal history at least in three important respects that is as a discursive medium in utilitarian and didactic approaches, insertion of literary and creative traits in history and its conditioning influences on historian's style. In all these realms of normal history language plays a defining role.

As regards content is concerned, normal historians fully appreciate its value in history. There is in fact a reciprocal relationship between the historian and his content. On one hand his empiricism; range, choice and selection of sources and nature of his research all determine the nature of content. On the other hand content also shapes his imagination, perceptions and assumption. It also determines the historicity of text. Even one cannot set aside its permeating influence on style. For instance, the content being the end product of historical research even makes style the way in which it is expressed irrelevant. While, alluding to this aspect, a modernist C.P. Bertels opines that "fine writing, the display of literary style, does not add iota of truth to historical research nor to any scientific research".¹¹⁷

Style constitutes another conspicuous element of historical narrative. All normal historians accord primacy to style though in varying degrees as it signifies expression thus it serves a vehicle of meaning. It enables the historians to move beyond imagination. If normal historians believe that it is historian who makes history than it is his style which enables him to do so. Given so much diversities of style in normal history it is not easy to isolate common traits of style in a rigid manner. However, it would not be out of place to arrive at more profound understanding of nitty gritty of style in normal history by focusing the stylistic contents of one of the major doyens of style in traditional history. Gibbon emerges as most ideal candidate. One may sketch the details about Gibbon's style through insights provided by Roy Porter, according to him the examination of Gibbon's style reveals "the confluence of medium and message, language and idea, form and content".¹¹⁸ It is also laced with irony as he uses it as a "vehicle of an ironic vision"¹¹⁹, through which he succeeds in communicating one thing while meaning the other.¹²⁰ This enables him to establish multiple layers of meaning and Gibbon instead of asserting or imposing one meaning leaves up to the reader to choose one option.¹²¹ While explicating the element of irony Porter further avers that he makes frequent use of ironic turn "not to establish the unsaid, but to unsettle the reader and hold him in suspense".¹²² He uses his style to provoke doubt among his readers so as to force them to reflex back on their responses.¹²³ Though Gibbon appears highly critical of eloquence as he equates it with "none sense" yet he believes in "expression" not merely as "literary adornment but rather the index of thought".¹²⁴ He interweaves "his own interpretation into the very texture of his word, tone and narrative".¹²⁵ All these inferences drawn by Porter regarding Gibbon's style provide cues about the broader connotations, the style entails in normal history.

The historical narrative finds its final manifestation in texts. Moreover, texts are themselves production of curious interplay of language, content and style. Normal history is characterized by sanctity of texts. It stems from

historians believe in their capacity to transparently reflect reality which, further in turn implies materiality of verbal sign, meaning there by that historian is capable of apprehending extra lingual reality through text.¹²⁶ And text themselves are not product of wishful thinking, subjective vision and wild flights of imagination of historians rather these are end product of a long process of historical research, i.e. empiricism, cross examination of sources, their authentication and substantiation through meticulous, referencing and rationalization through critical thinking.

In our discussion about the role of narratives in normal history we sought to conceptualize them by focusing on their constituents in order to elaborate the role of basic elements. At another level it would not be out of place to highlight their role in normal historian's scheme of things. The first question which strikes one's mind is that what is the rationale behind normal historians' focus on narrative? Himmelfarb's explanation provides one plausible answer, as he maintains that narratives provide history the "form of a logical orderly structure of discourse" which enable the historians to get access to the truth about past.¹²⁷ Tony Bennelt a Marxist historian cites a post modernist Jonathan Culler to explicate the function of narrative in normal history. According to Culler "the history invoked as ultimate reality and source of truth manifests itself in narrative constructs, stories designed to yield meaning through narrative ordering".¹²⁸ Fredrick Jameson in his book *The Political Unconscious*, highlights a two way relationship between history and narratives as he concurs that history in one sense is a narrative construct but in other "determines the narrative ordering to which (it) subjects itself".¹²⁹

Unlike postmodernists' reductionist view of historical narrative normal historians' conception of narratives entails quite broader connotations. For instance, Evans sees them as product of "a mixture revealed, rework, constructed and de-constructed narrative from the historical past and from historian's own mind".¹³⁰ As regards their origin is concerned these do not

emanate from a single source. At times historians find them in sources "Lived and thought by people" as is the case with German or Italian unification or the creation of USA. In other instance they are not there.¹³¹ Normal historians are fully aware of their pitfalls in view of the fact that "people in the past were consciously living a story they believed in and sought to shape".¹³² Being conscious of such hazards of subjectivity "they can never rest content" with their reproduction rather they tend to juxtapose these with other so as to lay bare the hidden meaning.¹³³ In normal history they are always subjected to the process of de-construction and re-interpretation as Evans puts it succinctly "Historians not only de-construct the narrative of other historians, they also de-construct the narratives of past as well".¹³⁴

Post modernists quite plainly reject normal historians' perspectives on language, content, style text and narrativity. Post modernists do not subscribe to normal historians' view of language, contrary to that they deny the status of language as an instrument of mediation between human consciousness and the external world, rather they highlight a self-reflexive role of language as "constitutive of the world in which language is seen to describe and explicate as well as to invent reality".¹³⁵ It implies that "past is captured only in mediated form preserved... in language".¹³⁶ This mediation of past through language becomes further more de-legitimized in context of lingual turn which exposes the instability of language. Post modernists formations de-sanctify the phenomenon of content in history by denying its very basis i.e. empiricism, historical research, sources etc. "content" in view of Ankersmit "is a derivative of style".¹³⁷ While explicating the reasons of prioritizing style over content he argues to one cannot satisfactorily define the nature of historical differences of opinion on account of "incommensurability of historical views".¹³⁸ He further substantiates his view by engaging Peter Gay's argument to justify precedence of style over content. For instance, Gay conceiving style in sense of manner avers that "style implies at the same time a decision with regard

to "matter" to content".¹³⁹ Drawing upon this argument he comes to conclusion that "if we are to guarantee the meaningful progress, style not content is the issue in such debates".¹⁴⁰ Post modernist formulation deprives the text of their sanctity. Post modernists simply treat these as constructs which are incapable of "transparently reflect reality but other texts" which reduce the status of historical study to literary study.¹⁴¹ Such a view assumes arbitrariness of texts in terms of their significance as survivals from the past.¹⁴²

Post modernists such as Ricoeur, Ankersmit and Hayden White in varying degrees consider "narrativity as a world view of which story telling is a genre".¹⁴³ They hold narrativity as "primary culprit...(as) it takes the form of a logical orderly structure of discourse that is presumed to correspond at least in some measure to the reality of past" this very idea is the anathema for post modernist, opines Himmelfarb.¹⁴⁴ Narrativity according to Ashcroft is not merely all about story telling rather it introduces the elements of continuity which in turns results into conflation of temporality and narrative sequence. Thus the resultant continuity of events and stories finds reflection in "the continuity of something transcendent called human history".¹⁴⁵ Keeping in view this function of narrativity in history he labels it as "its most salient and powerful discursive feature".¹⁴⁶ According to Hayden White narrativity makes historians believe that "they are constructing their narrative as simulacra of the structure and processes of real events not in the past".¹⁴⁷ He merely sees it as the product of "their own aesthetic sensibilities".¹⁴⁸ Ankersmit also appears to hold the same opinion about narrativity as he considers it incapable of translating reality.¹⁴⁹

(III)

This last section assesses the implications of postmodern challenges for normal history. It seeks to analyze these implications at three levels viz:

- I. Implication of post modernist challenges for the basic building blocks of history that is epistemology, facts, sources, documents, evidence, causation, text, narratives and interpretation.
- II. Implications for normal historians claim of reality, truth and objectivity.
- III. Over all implications for history as well as implications for normal historians' conceptualization of functions of history and history.

The post modernist lingual turn has created very doubts about the very basis of historical epistemology which served the foundation head of empiricism. Foucauldian paradigm has struck at the very basis of empirical representation interrogating the very conditions of its possibility.¹⁵⁰ Post modernist negation of facts implies the conception of historicized facts.¹⁵¹ The post modernists' view of sources virtually blurs the distinction secondary and primary sources which in turn implies that "secondary rather primary becomes paramount".¹⁵² This view also demystifies documents while assessing its implication for documents. Evans avers that "it reduces documents to merely texts through which past may be apprehended. It further implies that "there is no reality beyond them except each other".¹⁵³ It also results into the loss of meaning of documents as "in principle historical documents are not different from the writings of historians themselves".¹⁵⁴ The post modernists' view of evidence implies deciding role of historian's perspective on evidence rather than other way round.¹⁵⁵ The post modernist's notions of causes means replacement of historical causation with cultural determinism, Given the relativistic nature of culture, causation based on such criteria, loses its explanatory power.¹⁵⁶

Post modernists' notions on texts have great implications for history while referring to its disastrous fallout Lawrence Stone concurs that "if there is nothing outside the text ...then history as we have known it collapses

altogether and fact are fiction became indistinguishable from one another ‘‘.¹⁵⁷ For Gabrielle Spiegel it means dissolution of history into literature.¹⁵⁸ While assessing the disastrous impact of the notion of pan-textualism on normal history Robert Berkhofer contends that the denial of factual authority enshrined in pan-textualist notion leads to ‘‘demythification of a historical enterprise, which also delegitimizes it ‘‘.¹⁵⁹ For French theorist Paul Ricoeur post modernist demystification of historical texts means the irrelevance of author to the content of the text. He further argues that ‘‘the reader is absent from the act of writing, the writer is absent from the act of reading... the text thus produces a double eclipse of reader and writer’’.¹⁶⁰ ‘‘Like any literary text the historical text’’ is transformed into ‘‘intermediate and contradictory and ironic’’¹⁶¹ opines Himmelfarb, which leaves it open to various sort of abuses thus ‘‘it can be ‘textualized’, ‘contextualized’, ‘re-contextualized’ and ‘inter textualized’ at will’’.¹⁶² Thus it is reduced to ‘‘little more than a ‘pretext’ for the creative historian’’.¹⁶³ For Evans it means text loses all priority over interpretations of it, since all are forms of discourse and it is wrong to ‘‘privilege one discourse, over another’’.¹⁶⁴

Post modernists denouncement of narratives leaves them no more than ‘‘a fictional, rhetorical, literary, aesthetic creation of historian ‘‘.¹⁶⁵ Post modernist onslaught renders all process of historical explanation obsolete as post modernist theory denies any possibility of separation of text from context.¹⁶⁶ According to Zagorin ‘‘Ankersmit’s attempt to absorb historiography into the post modern concept of interpretation has eliminated text and the past’’.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, post modernists’ view of interpretation virtually implies their ‘‘de-centering’’. While further explicating its consequence Breisach argues it deprives interpretation of the anchors of stability as notions of ‘‘diversity, multiplicity, heterogeneity’’, are made to prevail over homogeneity.¹⁶⁸

The post modernist denigration of the basic building blocks of history entails disastrous consequences for normal history’s claims of reality, truth and

objectivity. As highlighted in the previous pages how post modernists contestations, besides affecting changes in the basic conception of history ranging from the facts and causation to narratives and explanation, also have caused skepticism towards normal historian's fundamental claims of representation of reality. The post modernists' negate the whole process upon the "fusion of structures of interpretation and factuality" and upon which consequent historical claims of reality are based. For Hans Bretnans, whom Ankersmit refers to as modernist, it implies reduction of reality to lingual constructions, as he argues that "thing in reality acquire a language like nature".¹⁶⁹ Ricoeur argues that "past reality should be seen as a text formulated in a foreign language with the same lexical, grammatical, structural and semantic dimensions as any other text",¹⁷⁰ while alluding to the implications of postmodernism for historical reality Berkhofer identifies two conspicuous fall outs. In his opinion historical reality stands challenged on two grounds; (a) Post modernist denial of factuality;¹⁷¹ (b) exposure of constructed nature of reality which brings to the fore the concept of realism as chosen cultural and not a natural category of representation.¹⁷² Such belief about realism reduces it merely to the "arbitrary coding of past in the present".¹⁷³ This creates a situation where reality vanishes into a "reality effect" as "whole scholarly apparatus ... intended to ensure accuracy in the relationship between historical accounts and past reality produces "not on image of that reality at all but only a "reality effect".¹⁷⁴ Post modernists' conception of truth as "freely created construct".¹⁷⁵ Further casts doubt about historian's ability to determine it, as truth is essentially construed as creation of the historian.¹⁷⁶ This situation leads to what Jenkins calls de-realization of an event as "factual statements and their truth vary with their frames of description".¹⁷⁷ Hence forth, historical truth becomes casualty as it "no longer be declared to be absolute" in such a world of flux.¹⁷⁸ Thus post modernists' negation of truth and reality subsequently strikes at the basis of normal historians' claims of objectivity. For instance post modernists consider objectivity "merely a concept designed to repress alternative point

of views".¹⁷⁹ Evans while analyzing the implications of such a nihilist attitude towards objectivity argues that "if historians are not engaged in the pursuit of truth... then scholarly criteria becomes irrelevant in assessing the merits of a particular historical argument".¹⁸⁰ For the post modernists the objective history is not more than an unformulated signified as Barthes concurs that in "objective history" the "real is never more than an unformulated signified, sheltering behind the apparently all powerful referent".¹⁸¹ The cumulative impact of post modernism on historical objectivity may be described as its replacement by stringent self reflexivity.¹⁸²

If ones assess its overall implications for history the most obvious implication that comes to mind may be described as the loss of meaning. For instance, as an outcome post-structural influences language becomes the controlling metaphor of historical process but language itself is construed as an infinite play of significations this instability of language further implies the absence of any transcendental signified to determine the meaning.¹⁸³ It has deep implications for position of author as well, for instance, the notion of loss of historical meaning also suggests author's loss of control over meaning. Thus, in this wake of dethronement of author the meaning is supplied by reader.¹⁸⁴ This loss of meaning may further be explained at another level that is in terms of relativistic impulse of post modernism, for instance, it renders the concept of meaning further meaningless on account of its equal prioritization of meaning which implies acceptance of different point of views with same validity.¹⁸⁵ All this situation entails disastrous repercussions of historical past. For instance, it is also conceived as incapable of possessing any meaning, which further renders the Rankean notion of history obsolete i.e. what the past really looks like. It further denies historian of any non-historicized assess to past.¹⁸⁶ It further means a complete shift of historians focus towards past which gravitates towards self-reflexivity.¹⁸⁷ This situation results to the demystification of past. It brings historian to the controlling position which tries to "liberate the ways of

coding the past as history as well as how it is represented".¹⁸⁸ Thus it is the historian not past which does the dictating in history opines Barthes.¹⁸⁹

This loss of meaning and demystification of past and have further implications for normal history. For instance, it challenges, what Spiegel calls "the mediatory capacity of historical discourse"¹⁹⁰ which constitutes a veritable link between a social world and its literary and discursive consciousness.¹⁹¹ It has deep implications for notions of continuity in history as well, while referring towards this aspect Breisach concurs that it casts doubts about all the notions of efficacy and continuity for instance, thinking in term of "natural" "essential" or "inherent".¹⁹² This demystification of history further leads towards what is referred to as extreme relativism, which further leaves history opens to various misuses or abuses. While further explicating this theme literary theorists, Christopher Norris avers that it allows far right historians to "create a massively falsified consensus, brought about by the misreading or manipulative use of evidence".¹⁹³ Thus it opens flood gates of not only the suppression of crucial facts but also creation of what he calls "a certain selective amnesia in those whose memory might otherwise go far back".¹⁹⁴

This situation has altogether changed the overall conceptions and notions about history and historians. It no longer aspires for "integration, synthesis and totality".¹⁹⁵ For Jenkins it appears as "self-referential, problematical expression of interests (and) an ideological interpretative discourse".¹⁹⁶ For Ankersmit "History is no longer the reconstruction of what has happened to us in the various phases of our lives, but a continuous playing with the memory of this".¹⁹⁷ For literary theorist Ann Words Worth, it brings history to a position where there is "no real object of history or a philosophy of history...the historian's work reduces it to its ideological positions".¹⁹⁸ This situation not only leads to the transformation of normal concept of history but the very conception of historian as well. This phenomenon is very succinctly sketched by Barthes in these words that historian no longer

remains a collector of facts but has now become what he calls as a "collector and relator of signifiers"¹⁹⁹ while further elucidating this theme he argues that "he organizes them with purpose of establishing positive meaning and filling the vacuum of pure, meaning less series".²⁰⁰

The historians are deeply concerned about the intensity of Post modern challenges and their prospective fall outs. For instance, Historian Peter Novick, lamenting the disappearance of complete synthesis of historical knowledge contends that "a broad community of discourse, as a community of scholars united by aims, common standards and common purposes, the discipline of history has ceased to exist".²⁰¹ Zagorin also appears to be quite conscious of this fragmentation of history as he apprehends that the aestheticizing of historiography which has been a major post modernist impulse may result into what he calls "trivialization of history".²⁰² According to Lawrence Stone the post modernist challenge has brought "historical profession into a crises of self confidence about what it is doing and how it is doing".²⁰³ He divides these into three categories i.e. (a) structuralist and post structuralist ; (b) "linguistic "and cultural anthropological ; (c) New historicists".²⁰⁴ While assessing their cumulative impact, he further argues that these cast doubts about all the contents of history ranging from its subject matter, data to its approach towards historical problems, to "the explanation of change over time".²⁰⁵ Fredric Jameson assess its fall outs in terms of "disappearance of the autonomous individual and the death of subject ...loss of historicity and the past... (and) disintegration of time sense into a series of pure and unrelated present".²⁰⁶ Beverly Southgate perceives these as major "theoretical challenge" to the "validity" of history.²⁰⁷

END-NOTES

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- ² M. Featherstone (ed.), "Theory, Culture and Society", Special Issue, 5,2 (3/1988) cited in *POSTMODERNISM and Organization* (London: Sage Publications, 1993), p.2.
- ³ John Hassard, "Postmodernism and Organizational Analysis: An Overview", p.1. in *Ibid.*
- ⁴ Featherstone cited in *ibid.*, p.2.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.
- ⁷ Jeffery C. Alexander, "Modern, Anti, Post and Neo", *New Left Review*, 210,2, March/April 1995, p.85.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p.81.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
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- ¹² The renowned Marxist intellectual who besides being critical for its destructive implications for normal history also enthusiastically appreciates the progressive impulse of the post-modernist movement.
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- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Fredric Jameson, "Post modernism and Consumer Society", in *Post Modernism and Its Discontents*, E.A Kaplan (ed.) (London:Verso, 1981), p.15.
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- ²³ F.R. Ankersmit, "Historiography a Post-modernism", in *The Post modern Reader*. Jenkins (ed.), p.285.
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- ²⁵ Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.255.
- ²⁶ Perez Zagorin, "Historiography and Post modernism: Re-Considerations", in *The Post modern Reader*, Jenkins (ed.), p.299.
- ²⁷ J.F. Lyotard, cited in Keith Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991), p.60.
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- ³⁰ Zagorin, "Historiography and Post modernism", pp.299-300; For details see Fredrick Jameson, "Post Modernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism", *New Left Review*, 146.3, (July/Aug 1984), pp.53-92.
- ³¹ Zagorin, "Historiography and Post modernism", p.299.
- ³² Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.75.
- ³³ E.H. Carr, *What is History* (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.24.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Roy Porter, *Gibbon: Making History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), p.162.
- ³⁶ Jenkins, "Introduction" in *Post modern Reader*, pp.17-18.
- ³⁷ Ibid., p.17.
- ³⁸ Baudrillard, "The illusion", p.40.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Porter, *Gibbon*, p.78.
- ⁴¹ Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.126.
- ⁴² Ibid., p.127.
- ⁴³ Jenking, *Re-Thinking*, pp.47-48.
- ⁴⁴ Evans, *In Defence of History*. p.127.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p.91.

- ⁴⁶ Carr, *What is History*, p.16.
- ⁴⁷ Evans, *In Defence of History*, pp.91-92.
- ⁴⁸ For details see, Lacapra, *History and Criticism* P.11.
- ⁴⁹ Geffery Elton, *The Practice of History* (London: 1976), cited by Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.230.
- ⁵⁰ Anker Smit, "Historiography and Post modernism", p.287.
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- ⁵⁷ Carr, *What is History*, p.xxv.
- ⁵⁸ Gertrude Himmelfarb, "Telling it as you like it: Post-modernist History and the flight from fact " in *The Post modern Reader*, Jenkins (ed.), p.160.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Gibbon cited by Porter, *Gibbon*, p.72
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- ⁶⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶⁶ Bill Ashcroft, *Post-Colonial Transformation* (London : Routledge, 2001), p.82.
- ⁶⁷ Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.142.
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⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Carr, *What is History*, p.20.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Arthur Marvick, *The Nature of History* (Houndmills: Macmillans, 1989), p.15.

⁷⁹ Carr, *What is History*, p.84.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.85.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.97.

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⁸³ Zagorin, "Historiography and Post modernism", p.306.

⁸⁴ Collingwood cited in Carr, *What is History*, p.16.

⁸⁵ Mubarak Ali, *Tareekh aur Falsa fia-e-Tareekh* (Lahore: Fiction House, 1996), p.6.

⁸⁶ Gibbon quoted by Porter, *Gibbon*, p.162.

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⁸⁸ Robert Berkhofer, "The Challenges of Poetics to (normal) historical practice" in *The Post Modern Reader*, Jenkins (ed.), p.139.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.128.

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⁹⁶ Ashcroft, *Post Colonial Transformation*, p.88.

⁹⁷ Ankersmit, *Narrative Logic*, p.19.

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¹⁰⁸Evans, *In Defence of History*, p.219.

¹⁰⁹Ankersmit, "History and Post Modernism", pp.284-85.

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¹¹⁴Gabrielle Spiegel, "History and Post modernism", in *Post modern History Reader*, Jenkins (ed.), p.264.

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¹¹⁶N. Partner, "Making up Lost Time: Writing on the Writing of History", *Speculum*, Ixi (1986),p.95, cited in Spiegel, "History and Post modernism", p.280.

¹¹⁷C.P. Bertels cited in Ankersmit, "History and Post modernism", p.285.

¹¹⁸Porter, *Gibbon*, p.87.

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¹²⁰Ibid.

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¹²³Ibid., p.91.

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¹²⁷Himmelfarb, "Telling it as you like it", p.261.

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**DEATH AND BURIAL RITUALS IN KALASH COMMUNITY,
DISTRICT CHITRAL: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE**

**Irum Sheikh & Hafeez ur Rehman
Quaid-i-Azam University,
Islamabad**

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the funeral and burial customs in Kalash valley. The valley is situated in the district Chitral in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhawa. The emphasis is given to the unique and fascinating tradition of funeral ritual followed by inverting bed "charpai" on the grave of the dead as a symbolic representation for the life after death. This custom serves as a significant identity marker which makes it easier for the viewer to distinguish Kalash from the Muslim in the region.

Key words: Death, Funeral, Mortuary rites, Identity, Feast, soul, Mourning.

In most of the societies, the funerary sites and rituals often tell us of the symbolic construction of a community, and often reveal the fundamental basis, contextual realities and prejudices of a society from which it is drawn from. It can be observed among non Muslims in Kalash valley of Northern Pakistan who has a unique way to depart their dead. The *kafirs* (as commonly referred) of Hindukush are divided into many tribes and the *siah posh* Kalash (wearer of black) is one of them residing in the three valleys, Birrir, Bomboret and Rumbour. Within these valleys live people who follow

the rites and celebrations of an ancient religious culture. The funeral rituals vary with the sex, age, social status, bravery, achievements of the deceased and place. In Kalash, the conception of universe suggests its working at three levels; with the world of the divine at the top, the human world in the middle, and the underworld at the bottom,¹ hence closely intertwining it with the ideas about death, soul and life hereafter which are also enigmatic in their own right.

THE BACKGROUND

The concept of death is mysterious in many cultures which of course influences most of the humans in them. One of the reflections of such influences is the expression of various emotions like disenchantment, helplessness and vulnerability in folklore, poetry and philosophy. Similarly, the performance of last rituals in many cultures is also reflective of such sensibility and can be considered as a unique occasion for specialized ritual and symbolic representation of death which a society has developed over a period of time. The most common underlying theme is that order, represented by life, becomes with death, disorder. The funeral rituals attempt to restore the order psychologically and practically which is being threatened by the death of an individual.

Closely interlinked with such attempts of restoring order is a concept that the dead are not only really "gone" but their spirits keep interaction with the living beings. Occasionally, these spirit are viewed as benevolent, but more often they are feared as dangerous or evil.² Death itself is regarded as a rite of passage in which the dying person becomes an ancestor who will continue to have a social personality. In some cultures dead are completely removed from the social sphere of a living culture. If a body decomposes into smallest components and is perishable, the soul, on the other hand is not. This very same idea gives rise to a notion of life hereafter. Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher, describes this as "being and not being are equally real; one is as true as the other both are true, for both are identical. Becoming is the identity of being and not being. For becoming have two forms, namely, the rising of things and their passing away, their beginning and their end, their origination and their decease"³

The basic function of funeral in their society is to comfort the bereaved, to reintegrate friends and relatives into an active social life, and to protect against the malevolence of the spirit of the dead. Funerals are the last

rites of passage⁴ which are very important and tend to establish the sociological and emotional superiority of the living with the dead. A lavish and elaborated funeral also serves as a statement that symbolizes the strong character or social position of the dead in his / her society. Harmer argues that it is being observed in most of the cases that "the death is received by the family or individuals as a shock, surprise and definitely a new experience".⁵ In fact, they are powerless to comprehend the phenomenon of death logically, here theology and mythology function to make this experience comprehensible without any contestation. Family members and friends of the deceased follow a symbolic ritual which not only marks their ethnic identity but also provide a commemorative sign to the dead one.

THE CONCEPT OF SOUL IN KALASH

The concept of soul is relatively new to the Kalash. Loude states that in former times no one knew where a soul went. They believed that the soul escaped from the body through the mouth and eyes after death because they were open when humans died.⁶ Barth suggests the ancient inhabitants of Swat and Kohistan did not believe in life hereafter, or hell or paradise.⁷ Elders in Kalash valley contest it and term heaven and hell as central to their theology. According to their tradition, when a man dies his soul or breath (*shon*) transforms into a shadow and becomes *partir* and wander as the shades in *yurdesh* (heaven) and sinners will burn in *zozuk* (hell). They owe this to Naga Dehar the religious shaman, who proclaims that the soul went to the other world of peaks, mid way between the divine and human." They regard it "as a promotion, since it is at that altitudes that the fairies live".⁸ According to Peter Parkes, "the degree of pureness is calculated by the verticality, the bipolarities of purity and impurity encompass not only the specific altitudes, but also the flora, fauna and supernatural beings, inhabiting the respective zones and each pure creature, plant, or animal residing in the high mountain zones have their impure counterparts living in the lower zones, below in the villages of the valley bottoms".⁹

People of Kalash reject the act of suicide because they term life as a gift of god which they have no right to finish.¹⁰ Life and death is a continuous cycle and one should celebrate the departure of those who had lived life to their fullest. Death is a transition from one form of life to another and the traditional funeral services are also intended to guide the deceased towards the realms of survival.¹¹ People from all the three valleys come to attend the funeral and stay there for three to four days at the house

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of the deceased. The family is supposed to supply food for the guests. They generously spend on sacrifice and funeral services.

THE TRADITIONAL FUNERAL CUSTOM OF KALASH

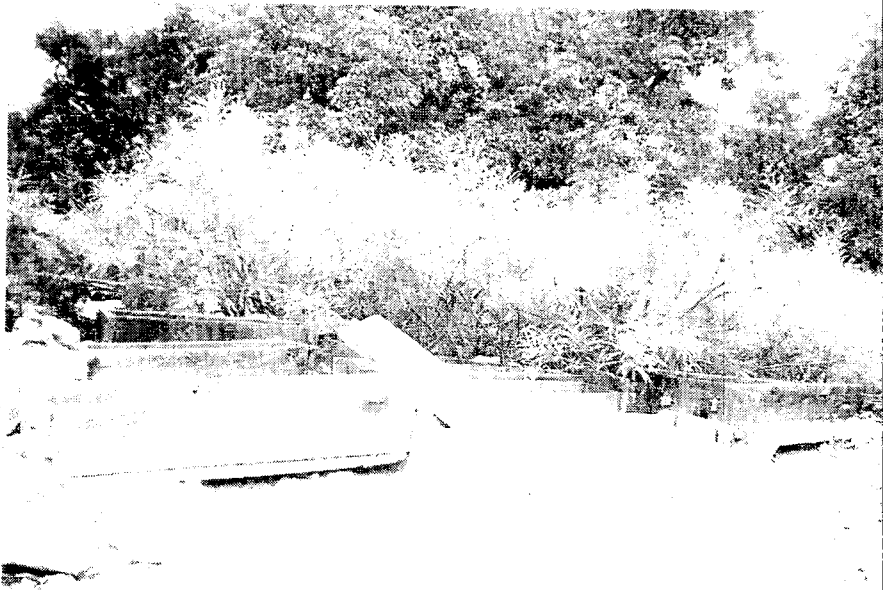
Historical accounts suggest that in Kalash funerals ceremonies offer a chance for display of wealth to eulogize the deceased and his/er family. Death is mostly celebrated as a joyous occasion where it is believed that it is a union of soul with the creator and is now seeking favors and blessing for their living relatives. The tribe is assumed to be regarded as the remnants of Alexander¹². The religious observance of mortuary rites in rural Greece is very orthodox but is very different from the rituals and methods practiced by the people in Kalash. Cohen explains the burial and exhumation in Potamia, a village in northern Thessaly with a population of six hundred prosperous farmers. The village has its own very small grave yard, which is not unusual for rural Greece the graves are the temporary resting places for the remains of dead before they are moved finally to the ossuary. "Beyond a small floor space, a ladder led down to a dark, musty- smelling area is filled with the bones of many generations of villagers. Near the top of the huge pile the remains of each person are bound up separately in a white cloth. Towards the bottom of the pile the bones- skulls, pelvises ribs, the long bones of countless arms and legs - lay tangled disarrays, having lost all trace of belonging to distinct individuals with the disintegration of the cloth wrappings. Stacked in one corner of the building were metal boxes and small suitcases with names, dates and photographs identifying the people whose bones lay securely within".¹³ He quoted from the study of Danforth, 1982, that "the mourning obligations and rituals are observe for a period of five years and the mourning females are considered responsible for the cleanliness of the graveyard as an extension to their domestic chores".¹⁴ Where as in Kalash the graveyard is considered as an impure area and due to the concept of *Bhut*, people are discouraged to go there alone. In the past, the Kalashis, used to leave the corpses in *Mandoajoa* (graveyard) in open lid coffins for the vultures, and wild species following a Parsi tradition¹⁵ rather than burying them in the *Mandoajoa*. They believed that by doing so they were being grateful to nature for the blessings that the deceased received in his life. The *Mandoajoa*, cemetery is most often located along with the *bashalini* (Menstruation homes) the most impure' of places for the Kalasha in a low position.

The wooden coffins were left unburied on the ground. A knife was put in one of the hands of the corpse and some food into the other hand. The cemetery was destroyed about forty years ago, sometimes after the total conversion of the valley. In pre Islamic Bashagal (present day Nuristan)... during the funeral celebration a man would dance holding the heavy effigy on his back: a custom not shared by northern Kalasha, who substitute for the wooden effigy in dance the much lighter *kumbreauki*, a cross shaped pole with a man's head garbed in red clothes.¹⁶

The Kalash people are sharing their geographical space with both the Sunni and the Ismaili Muslims who assume a strong hold in the region either due to economical or religious superiority, and cast their strong influence on the non Muslim population of Kalash.¹⁷ This influence is evident in the form of constant conversion to Islam along with the drastic changes in their traditions and customs especially the burials and the funerals. Traditions of indigenous funeral customs and beliefs in a proper way to proceed the afterlife in Bomboret valley Kalash depicts strong traditions that represents a phenomenon showing the importance of local and family traditions for keeping their ethno-cultural identity alive. There is a big difference between the rituals and burial methods practiced by others in the region. The funeral is special testimony of their pagan religious identity held by the previous generations about which unfortunately the evidences are lost in the imperial period. The tradition later has undergone various transitional changes due to the diffusion with the Muslim burial practice.

Conventionally the Muslim believes in burying their dead ones by wrapping them in plain white unstitched neat sheets after *ghusal*. Christian on the other hand clean and dressed the dead in his best clothes in a wooden coffin with a lid and bury them in the church yard in the presence of a priest, family and friends. Hindus used crematorium grounds where they burn the bodies and later put the ashes in Ganges River. The underlying idea of consigning the ashes to the waters of a sacred river seems that, after getting mixed in the water, the ashes reach the ocean which, with its motion and violent rise and fall, is a visible sign of life.¹⁸ A local resident and our key informant, Rehmat philosophies death in his own words: "Man cannot do anything against the will of god. As leaf falls from the tree, man also has to leave his family, and friends and takes gods hand in the paradise. The dead one goes to a better

place then where we are, he is welcomed by those who are already there". He added that "we should happily say goodbye to the dead. It is a sin to be unhappy on God's decision".



The old graveyard of Karakal village Bomboret Valley Kalash

The basic reason behind their poverty and economic disparity is that they spend their entire savings, live stock for the feast and offerings just to cast an impression of their bounteousness and to seek god's favor and blessings for the deceased. The funeral ceremony is mysterious, curious and fascinating and is a blend of shrieks and thumping of drums. It is customary that the bereaved family announces the total expenditure of the feast to the villagers in order to establish their generosity and their unconditional love and respect for the dead. " A first estimate indicated the participation in the feast of 130 Rukmula, 150 birila, and distribution of 190 kg of butter, 240 kg of strong cheese, over a ton of wheat and 41 slaughtered goats. The feast had to be worthy of the great man".¹⁹

Ancestors are worshipped by their descendents after they have satisfactorily made the passage from the realm of the life to the death. They are moved in to a mythological world, and, as part of a prior realm, they exercise influence on the material world.²⁰

The funeral of a child in Kalash is considered as a very sad and unfortunate event. The body is quietly put in the coffin in presence of a few close relatives without any formalities and is simply taken to the cemetery. No special prayer or rituals are followed. The family is advised to remain composed and calm. The feasts are only reserved for the close family members.

The funeral ritual for women is slightly different from the men. Women in Kalash is regarded as impure (*paragata*) and her status is secondary and dependent on the man they belong to. Funeral of an old woman wife of village elder *Torag Meri*²¹ an important figure in the village was a significant event. It was attended by all the important and close family members. The body was covered with clean clothes and decorated the juniper leaves, cedar leaves. The mourners were dressed in their usual traditional clothes. They danced and chanted around the deceased for quite sometime. The sadness of the death is generally manifested by the weeping, always "orchestrated and organized where women of the community has the task to exhibit sorrow".²² The same pattern is followed nowadays and the proceedings normally last for three days.

If a common woman dies, the burial customs are slightly different. Her burial is not accompanied by pomp and show; the dead body is kept for two days. The first day is reserved for the villagers of the concerned valley. The quietly visit the family of deceased. The dead woman is washed and cleaned, clad in new traditional clothes with accessories is presented before the villagers and the guest. Before the time of the burial, the ornaments are taken off by the maternal uncles and are handed over to relatives and close friends. Immediate family including both daughters and daughter in law is forbidden from keeping the jewelry. The females are buried with a freshly made traditional thread spinning instrument and a small animal bag full of food for their lonely voyage to the other unseen world.

Observance of each ritual sheds light on different aspect of their culture which in turn strengthens their a unique identity. To mourn (*Shok*) is one such example. After the feast, the family is left alone to *Shok* till the

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arrival of any festival or religious feast. As mourning is an impure act in local tradition, therefore, when a man's wife dies he mourns in isolation which is known as *s`unguna nisik*. He is dressed in sacks and hides his face from the people. He eats and stays alone to purify him, seven goats are also sacrificed to purify (*onjesta*). It makes him able to move freely in his community. Finally before the arrival of any religious festival he is presented with juniper leaves, yellow flowers and a traditional garb (*chapan*) to signal the end of mourning.



The man dressed in colourful robe *Chapan* symbolizes that he has lost some loved one recently

Rituals during the burial of men are reflective of male dominant society. After funeral they overturn the "charpai" on the grave which is used in carrying the deceased to the graveyard symbolizing the place as *akhari aramgah* (last resting place) for the dead. During our visit to the place, a young man died after falling from a tree. The villagers sent their condolence messages to the family. The first day of the funeral was specified for the host valley. All the people belonging to Bomboret valley attended the feast and mourning. The deceased was washed and cleaned by the male family members. The dead body was buried with new or at least clean clothes and

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then adorned with beautiful traditional robe *Chapan*, then put traditional shoes *Kaus* on the feet. Finally the *daster* (Tarban) is placed on the head. The dead body's face was turned towards west. In case of man, "the left hand of the dead man is placed on his warrior's bow, and the right hand is dipped in the flour to sustain him during the voyage and in his new existence".²³

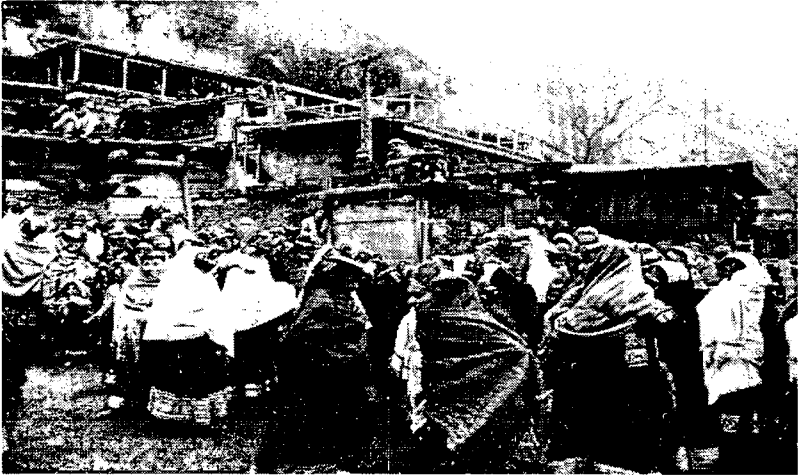


The image of Kalash grave which is considered impure "*paragata*"

In summer and pleasant climate they use open air verandah for the ceremony but in case of winters (*jestik han*) the Holy place is utilized. Women of the family undo their hair and occupy the place around the bed post of the deceased. This is done so that they can be identified as the close relative. The widow particularly removes all her jewelry and ornaments, undo her hair braids puts on an old dress without belt and covers her head with a gray rag. This is regarded as a mourning dress; she remains seated, weeping, besides her husband's dead body until he is taken away. The rest of the females in the village are in their traditional appearance. As for men folk in the past the immediate family members remove their cap but today men do not wear *chitralli* cap necessarily. It has been observed that only the orthodoxy compulsorily follow the tradition. The rest of the villagers dance and sing on the thumping of the drums. One of the famous songs of death funeral is called *Kanaa Bhum*, according to the myth the song is about the

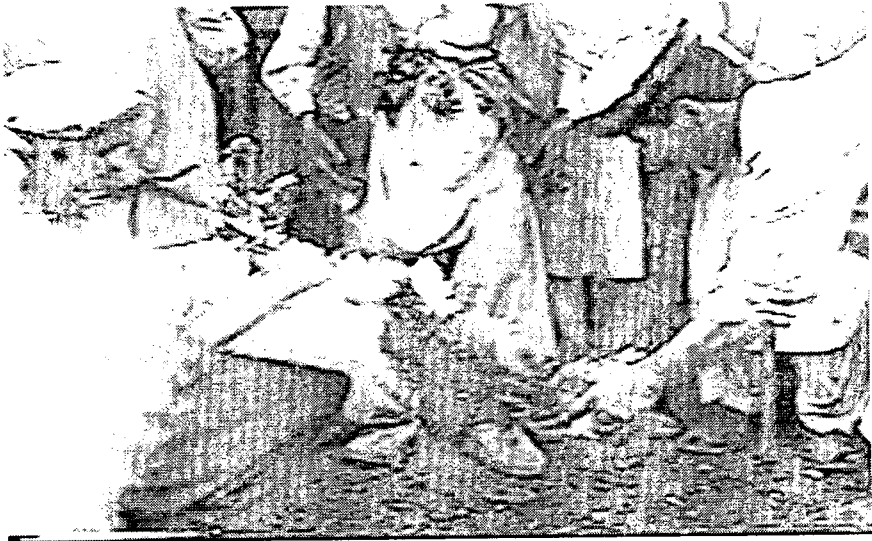
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way death first came on man through a man called Kanna. The dead man and his ancestral greatness and bravery are remembered through this song.²⁴



Funeral Procession in Brun village Bomboret. Courtesy Luke Rehmat

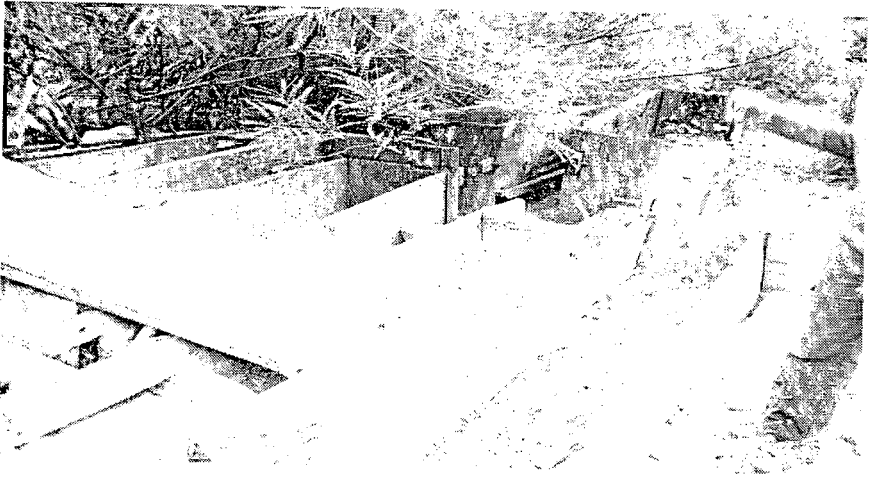
A lavish feast is arranged and served by the effected family to the villagers. Now they have changed this tradition and the feast is arranged through the collaboration of all the relatives. The rest of the village contributes in cooking and distribution of the food. The flour required is distributed amongst the villagers and every household prepared at least 10-12 chapattis. The meat is cooked by the men folk. The second day of funeral is marked for the guests and visitors, the whole village acts as a host.



Slaughtering of goat for the feast at the funeral

People from Birrir and Rumbour valley come to pay their respect to the dead. Again a generous feast is prepared and served to the guests. The activities of the close family members remain the same. The people gather, dance and thump on the beat of the drum and sing traditional songs the whole day. Meanwhile, carpenter prepares a coffin, selection of wood depends on the economic status of the family. It was customary in the past that they left the coffin on the pastures by placing heavy stones on the top of the lid.

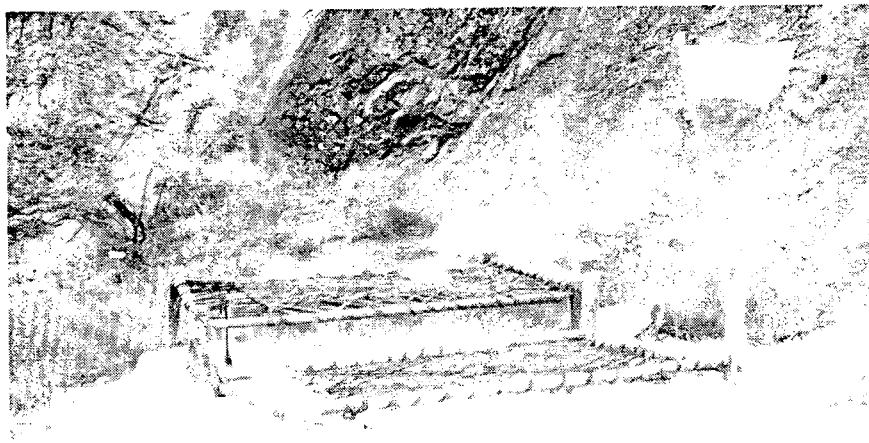
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The view of a burial site in karakal village Bomboret valley, Kalash

A few accused local Muslims of stealing the wood for fire purposes. Now they bury their dead fellows and the grave is prepared on voluntary basis even Muslims take part in burial proceeding depending on their personal association. They bury the dead body before noon in graveyard. Young men of the family usually carry the dead body on their shoulders to the burial site. In the grave yard they assemble for a grand prayer (*duya azeem*). Then the maternal uncle places the dead body in the grave and all the villagers cover the grave. In the end they invert the *charpai* (bed) of the deceased on the grave. The bed is left for the dead man's use in the other world. The bed is the personal property of the deceased during his lifetime. If a man has no bed then the *charapi* is brought back to the house and after purification can be utilized mainly in such instances it is the decision of the close family. It is believed that life is a never ending phenomenon and death is a passage to another unseen wonderful world of heaven. The *charpai* symbolizes the worldly comfort and association to the living. The upturn *charpai* signifies that the dead is now part of another world and his physical contact with his home and with this material world has ended. Although he is gone from this life, by upturning his cart they find solace in the belief that death is not the end but a beginning of another new life. It is also an expression that people are not willing to accept the finality of death and they seek succor in the knowledge of perpetuation of life. By upturning the

charpai they imply the auspicious passing of a loved one so they rejoice for him by singing, dancing and giving elaborate feasts. This ritual helps the viewers to distinguish the graveyard of Muslims and the Kalash coexisting beside them.



A KALASH GRAVEYARD AT BURN VILLAGE BOMBORET

The females are forbidden to attend or participate with the males in the burial proceedings. The men take the bed away from the weeping women, who then climb up on the roof top to watch the funeral procession moves to the cemetery. At the removal of the body from the house, a sacrifice is observed inside the house of the widow. A tradition gives a reason for this and perhaps lays down the first rules of widowhood, "Once upon a time, a man and a woman loved each other deeply. But one day husband fell seriously ill. His wife asked him: 'what can I do for you?' the dying man answered: 'after my death, you must shut yourself inside the house for seven days, without seeing anyone.' After the man died, his wife complied and in fact stayed in the house stricken with grief, without leaving the house. By the end of that time, the smoke, darkness and tears had made her blind. Then she remained another seven days by the tomb of her husband. After that, Sherdast, the shaman revealed in the course of trance: 'she has become blind because her husband's soul remains welded to hers. A lamb or a kid must be sacrificed inside the house at the moment when the

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body is taken away; in order to cut the cord between the souls and free the widow".²⁵

In the end they throw pieces of bread and cheese on both the fresh and ancestral graves, a kind of *sadqa* (charity for the dead) and is believed that the crows carry off the crumbs to the dead man souls: "Myth has it than in former times, a man went hunting in the mountains, but in his pursuits he fell in to a pit and was unable to climb out. After several days, it was assumed in the village that he is dead, and the members of his lineage decided to celebrate his funeral. During the ceremonies, they saw crows taking away bits of bread. The crows were in fact stealing the galettes, but it was in order to drop them in to the pit, where the man was still alive. Thanks to that food the prisoner was able to regain his strength and free himself. When he returned to the villagers, everyone was overjoyed. He then told them about the providential help he had received from the crows; the community instituted the practice of throwing pieces of bread for the crows on the dead man's tomb".²⁶ There are a few other stories which recount the familiar belief where crows facilitate by supplying the bread crumb to the people who were assumed dead and that confirmed the custom of putting bits of bread for the crows on a dead man's grave.

A society's myth have two origins one, the transformation of other myths, endogenous or exogenous, the other, the transformation in to myth of data of another kind, both are attested and are accepted by the masses. The ritual and symbolism of the funeral ceremonies have long attracted the attention of the anthropologists, not because of any "inherently morbid tendencies"²⁷ in the discipline but because the social definition of death casts an instructive light on a society's attitudes to the relationship between the individual and the society as a whole. These funerary rites are generally an important "sociological index" of the deceased and the mourners. The fundamental basis of Kalash religious ideology is on the basis of mythical stories and oral praises transmitted to them by their ancestors. There is no written document or testimonial present to claim the legitimation of their lords, customs and their past glory. Levi Strauss says that "the universe of primitives or those claimed to be such consists principally of message".²⁸ The people in Kalash are practicing on the basis of this message with complete faith and sincerity.

END-NOTES

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- ¹³ P Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London and NY: Ellis Horwood Limited Publishers, 1985), p. 82.
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- ¹⁵ The Parsi custom of the disposal of the dead is somewhat similar to the traditional burial of kalash in letter and spirit. A short time after death, the body of the deceased is washed with water, and a white clean suit of cotton clothes is put over him. This suit is not washed by the launderer, but is, washed before hand at home by some members of the family, when it is seen that death is imminent, the dress is later discarded and never used again for any other purpose. The "Kusti" or sacred thread is then girded round the body by some relative reciting the "Ahura Mazda Khodai" prayer. The deceased is then placed on a white clean sheet of cotton cloth spread over the ground. Then two persons keeping themselves in touch with him sit by his side and somebody recites an Ashem Vohu (holy words) very close to his

ear. The relations of the deceased now meet him for the last time. After this time, nobody is allowed to touch or come into contact with the body, which, it is supposed, now begins to fall under the influence of the "Druj-i Nasu," i.e., the evil influence of decomposition similar to Kalash since they regard the dead impure "paragata" Only those who put on the clothes over the body and the corpse-bearers are allowed to come into contact with the body. The only portion kept uncovered of the dead body is the face. The body is then lifted from its place by these two persons and put on slabs of stone placed in a corner of the room. The hands are arranged upon the chest crosswise. The body is never placed with its head towards the North. Priest sits before the fire and recites the Avesta till the time of the removal of the body to the Tower of Silence. The body is removed to the Tower of Silence any time during the day. As it is essential that the body should be exposed to the sun; it is strictly forbidden to carry it at night. If death takes place early at night the body is removed the next morning, but if it takes place late at night or early in the morning it is removed in the evening. When the pier reaches the Tower, it is put on the ground and the Nasâsâlârs uncover the face of the body. Those who have accompanied the funeral procession pay their last respects and have a last look from a distance of at least three paces. Then the sagdid (seeing of the dog) is once more performed. In the meantime, the gate of the Tower, which is closed with an iron lock, is opened. The two Nasâsâlârs, who had at first brought out the pier from the house, now lift up the pier and carry it into the Tower. They remove the body from the pier and place it on one of the "pavis". They then remove the clothes from the body of the deceased and leave the body there. The body must be exposed and left without clothes as to draw towards it the eye of the flesh-devouring birds and may fall an easy prey to them, so that, the sooner it is devoured the lesser the chance of further decomposition and the greater the sanitary good and safety. The clothes thus removed are never used for any purpose whatever, but are thrown in a pit outside the Tower where they are destroyed by continued action of heat, air and rain. <http://www.zeelearn.com/course/funeralmgmt/html/module4d.htm>. Accessed on 15 May 2010.

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¹⁹ Loude and Lievre, *Kalash Solstice*, p.159.

²⁰ Rehman, *Saints and Shrines in Pakistan*, p. 227.

²¹ Robertson, *The Kafirs of Hindukush*.

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²³ Loude & Lievre, *Kalash Solstice*.

²⁴ This information is taken from the text book being taught to the student of Greek administered volunteer school located at Brun Village Bomboret valley.

²⁵ Loude and Lievre, *Kalash Solstice*, p. 157.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 161.

²⁷ Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, p.82.

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Concept Paper

NGOs, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND DEMOCRACY IN ASEAN 4

**FAHD REHMAN
NEW SOUTH WALES UNIVERSITY
CANBERRA**

ABSTRACT

The paper identifies the common inhibiting factors confronting the NGOs of Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines (sometimes termed as ASEAN 4), which make them ineffective and in turn lead to fragile democratic institutionalization in these countries. The common factors are the existing power relations of elite, lack of social cohesion and associational life and ill-effects of conservative elements. The strength and effectiveness of NGOs play a pivotal role in smooth democratic transition and consolidation. Mere proliferation of NGOs can neither sustain democracies nor measure the maturity of civil society. I argue that NGOs have become ineffective to bring political development in these countries as economic development of ASEAN 4 have taken place at the cost of political under-development. Moreover, the authoritarian regimes impede the political activism and socialization through exploitation of the masses. The ruling elites capture the resources for pursuing their own interests and create division in the societies to avoid social cohesion and association. Finally, the forces of status quo give rise to conservative elements that stalls the transition towards democracies.

Key words: Non Government Organizations (NGOs), Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines (ASEAN 4), Crony Capitalism

Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines (ASEAN 4) remain under authoritarian regimes for a considerable period of time. The prolong period

of authoritarianism shape the structure of society and hence NGOs. It is generally believed that NGOs unite and mobilize people across political boundaries and pose challenges to the state to weaken its authority, but NGOs in (ASEAN 4) countries remain ineffective to maintain and sustain democracies as economic development took place at the cost of political under-development. The authoritarian ruler such as Mahatir justified the benevolent dictatorship by saying "It is good governance by good people that we need. And feudal kings, even dictators have provided and can provide good governance".¹ Although these Asian tiger countries gain economic strides, yet the socio-political instability continues leading to weak democracies in these countries. Such developments in turn reflect in a weak and marginalized role of NGOs in these countries. To highlight this aspect of the NGOs in ASEAN 4, I will divide the article into four sections: the first section underscores the overall role of NGOs towards democratization and political socialization of the society; the second part provides a synoptic view about the proliferation of NGOs in ASEAN 4; the third part encompasses the various dimension of NGOs activism in ASEAN 4; while the fourth section deals with the factors which have inhibited the role of NGOs in promoting democratic awareness and their limitations on account of some structural constraints of ASEAN 4 countries to make concerted efforts for democratization. From this perspective, the role of NGOs looks conspicuously ineffective.

1. NGOs, CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

NGOs play a vibrant role in creating, sustaining and strengthening civil society. We know that civil society mediates between the state and the individual creating awareness, interest and civic feelings among the individuals. Moreover, civil society inculcates a sense of citizenship among the individuals. This sense of citizenship makes them responsible. Such citizens get the capacity to influence the state and its functionaries a great deal which in turn leads to transparency and accountability. In simple words, this is empowerment of the people. This empowerment results from political development which is defined by a renowned political scientist Julie Fisher "as an interactive, public decision making and learning process, within and between government and civil society, based on power creation and dispersion. This process leads to increasing individual and group autonomy from below and more responsiveness from above".²

The common agenda of different NGOs shows that there is a strong relationship between civil society and democracy as Hadiwinata - a renowned social scientist and activist explains, "since a strong civil society can uphold a fledgling democracy in several ways. First, it can provide a reservoir of resources (political, economic, cultural and moral) to check and balance the power of the state. Second, when a wide range of interests are organized, it will provide an important basis for democratic competition where groups in society are able to press their interests. Third, associational life supplements the role of political parties in stimulating political participation and in promoting an appreciation of obligations and rights of democratic citizenship. Fourth, a strong civil society can train or educate citizens of how to organize their neighbors or co-workers effectively, how to mediate their conflicts and produce consensus Diamond 1992".³

NGOs are also regarded as an important constituent of political socialization process in capacity of being a socializing agent. Therefore, their role in creating awareness or consciousness against the authoritarian tendencies of ruling elites cannot be underestimated. Thus this role of NGOs is instrumental in forming strong public opinion against the undemocratic, extra constitutional and authoritarian designs of non-political forces.

Yet the authoritarian rulers of ASEAN 4 countries criticize NGOs by blaming them for promoting western agenda under the guise of ideals of humanitarianism, democracy and universal liberal values. While the authoritarian rulers are the proponents of Asian values as Anthony Mahathir said, "hard work, discipline, a strong commitment to the community, thrift and moderation are Asian values which have in fact contributed to the emergence of the Asian Tigers and Dragons".⁴ The authoritarian rulers of ASEAN 4 cite Asian values as a justification for their autocratic practices and see the agenda of NGOs incompatible with such ideals. But this discussion is beyond the scope of our present study.

2. PROLIFERATION OF NGOS IN ASEAN 4- A SYNOPTIC VIEW

This section highlights the proliferation of NGOs in ASEAN 4 countries. All countries experienced a high economic growth rate of 8-12 % during the 1980s and 1990s. At the same time, the states largely overlooked the fundamental problems of social inequality and lack of democratic

Christians, Chinese and Buddhist population. This diversity of population creates ethnic divisions providing a space to NGOs to address the issue of ethnic polarization. They also work to protect the civil and political rights as happened in case of East Timor, Islands of Southern Philippines and Malay Muslim province of Thailand. Similarly, there are NGOs working for active public role of women in industrial jobs and women's liberation specifically in Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia.⁷

The other dimension of NGOs activism is to address the issue of persistent poverty through urban and rural development. Some NGOs are usually state sponsored and promote the developmental agenda of government. Others are the offshoots of International NGOs. They step up efforts in calamities and emergencies such as Tsunami, earth quakes and floods such as International Red Cross and Young Men's Christian Association.

The economic growth of ASEAN 4 is related to rapid industrialization. This industrial development took place at the cost of ecological devastation and environmental degradation.⁸ NGOs protest for environmental protection in all these countries. Basically, these NGOs challenge the authority of states but the governments avoid confrontation due to fear of economic slowdown.⁹ Moreover, movement oriented NGOs have the agenda of challenging the distorted social and political structures and work for promotion of democratic attitudes and values. They act as political pressure groups and lobbying for legislative changes and protest against corruption. In addition, they are based in capitals, well connected politically and electronically to make their political pressure felt in downtowns.¹⁰

Some NGOs in ASEAN 4 have common activities and the others have issue based activities. Different NGOs have different priorities based on their target groups, ideologies, management style, leadership and funding. As far as environment protection is concerned, NGOs not only cooperate and protest against the government, but also argue to follow the United Nations environment program. The NGOs in ASEAN 4 countries have increased at a rapid pace along with their diversified character. For instance, Project for Ecological Recovery in Thailand, Sahabat Alam in Malaysia, Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (Indonesian Environmental Forum or WALHI) and Sekretariat Keliyama Pelestarian Hutan Indonesia (Indonesian Anti-

institutionalization. But the East Asian Financial Crises of 1997 affected Thailand and Indonesia to a large extent along with Malaysia and Philippines exposing the weaknesses of "crony capitalism" in these countries. These crises also led to the mushrooming of NGOs. Generally, it is believed that proliferation of NGOs during 1980s and 1990s is considered as maturity of civil society and healthy growth of democracy in the countries of ASEAN 4. But interestingly all these countries remained under either authoritarian regimes or military dictators. Mahathir and Marcos ruled Malaysia and Philippines respectively for more than two decades. Suharto remained president of Indonesia for more than three decades. There have been frequent interventions of military in Thailand throughout the history.

The NGOs has grown at a rapid pace in Southeast Asia in the last two decades as Hadiwinata reports: "In Southeast Asia, as in much of the rest of the developing world, NGOs have proliferated since the early 1980s. In Thailand, in the early 1990s it was estimated that there were 10,000 NGOs, including a 250 % increase from around 4000 in the early 1980s. In Malaysia, 14,000 similar organizations were registered under the 1966 Societies Act in the early 1990s. In the Philippines, between 1985 and 1995, the number of NGOs increased by 260 % from an estimated 27100 to 70,200. In Indonesia, while there is no accurate data on the exact number of NGOs, it is believed that the number of NGOs has grown significantly from 10,000 in 1996 to around 70,000 in 2000".⁵

NGOs of Philippine are considered as the third largest community in the world due to their sizes. In addition, the number of NGOs increased in Indonesia rapidly from 1995 to 2000. Similarly, Julie Fisher states that the strength of civil society is roughly related to the sheer number of NGOs between the citizen and the state.⁶ It needs to be stressed that the sizes and number of NGOs do not necessarily determine the strength, efficiency and efficacy of NGOs. What does matter is the way these NGOs organize various sections in the respective communities to articulate the interests of these community members.

3. VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF NGOS ACTIVISM

This section sketches the various dimensions of NGOs activism in ASEAN 4 countries. All countries are multi cultural with Malays, Hindus, Muslims,

Deforestation NGOs Network or SKEPHI) in Indonesia and Green Forum in the Philippines are notable action oriented NGOs.¹¹

Although all NGOs have different target groups and agenda, yet they converge at common point as Shuto mentions, "though these activities are seemingly different from one another in their issue based dimensions, the targets of legal assistance groups, development NGOs and environmental NGOs often converge, and they sometimes call for joint action when they faced with problems related to the abuse or inefficiency of administrative power over the local people".¹²

4. NGOs, ASEAN 4 AND INHIBITING FACTORS OF DEMOCRACY

This section seeks to explore the factors behind the dilemma faced by ASEAN 4 countries in terms of their failure to develop democratic institutions. It focuses on various factors which played a pivotal role in marginalizing the role of NGOs in ASEAN 4. These include the dominance of elites in the political structure, lack of social cohesion, absence of strong associational life and prevalence of conservative elements fostered by strong spells of authoritarian rule.

The existing power relationship among the elites is a fundamental problem which largely made NGOs ineffective in ASEAN 4. We know that powerful elites are the part of the state, exploiting it for pursuing their narrow goals. They do not loosen the grip on the resources. Their strong grip can be loosened with the effective work of NGOs which is not happening in ASEAN 4. Ramasamy- a deputy chief minister of Penang opines that in Malaysia the tension between the state and the civil society is largely in favour of the former and restricts civil society for capitalistic development.¹³ Similarly, Banpasirichote- a famous Thai political scientist mentions about Thailand that NGOs are manipulated by the state and cosmetic changes in the constitution do not bring a meaningful change in the existing power relations.¹⁴

Silliman and Noble renowned political scientists state that social inequality is due to monopoly of elite families in Philippines. They further believe that "predatory elites" deprive the masses from their rights.¹⁵ Joe Studwell, a contributing writer to the Economist analyses the Philippines' elite as "the old political elite, restored by godfather progeny Corazon

Aquino after Marcos' departure in 1986, appears as entrenched as ever. The former president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo — herself the daughter of a former president — spends much of her time fending off congressional attempts to impeach her because of the possibly unconstitutional manner in which she ousted her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, 2001, and allegations of vote-rigging in her own election victory in 2004. The Philippines, in short, has never moved on from the colonial era and the patterns of amoral elite dominance that it created".¹⁶ Similarly, the existing complex power structure in Indonesia is a fundamental problem behind the ineffectiveness of NGOs in the country.

The second common issue is that ASEAN 4 lacks social cohesion which is inevitable for the consolidation and development of democratic institutions. Despite their efforts, NGOs are ineffective to bridge the divisions in the society in general and in the middle class in particular. In Malaysia, ethnic Chinese, the Hindus, Malays controlled the businesses, the media and government respectively and create divisions in the society. Similarly, ethnic Chinese, Muslims and Christian's divisions have divided the Indonesian society. While the Thai culture of patron-client relationship also hinders horizontal linkages and thus cohesion as the social and communal structure comprises monarchy, the military, bureaucracy and Chinese entrepreneurs. In case of Philippines, civil society is in-effective to bridge the differences in society created either by patron-client bonding among tenant farmers and their landlords or by religious divisions among the Christians and the Muslims. Those divisions do not organize the interests of the groups to pressurize the states. In addition, such divisions do not provide the level playing field to settle the disputes and promote consensus. We know that dispute settlement can only occur through accepting the dissenting views. There is a lack of tolerance to accept the dissenting views. Schak and Hudson, renowned political scientists, argue that divide and rule tactics used by the state in Malaysia and Indonesia limits the cooperation among different ethnic groups.¹⁷ In addition, Serrano a eminent NGO activist, states that NGOs in Philippines are unable to advance social cohesion despite wider freedom of operation.¹⁸ Moreover, Vadakan a political scientist, argues that NGOs are modeled on Thai institutions, culture and patron client relationships.¹⁹

The third common issue of ASEAN 4 countries is that they do not have strong associational life which plays an important role in the

consolidation of democracy. The lack of associational life is promoted by authoritarian states in order to maintain their strong hold. NGOs become ineffective to bring the people on a common platform due to state controlled initiatives. In Thailand, NGOs are unable to generate social activism due to existing patron-client relationship cutting across the rural and national strata. Generally, NGOs have to muster support from the public to pressurize the states which is not occurring. Moreover, they are unable to promote social activism and persuasion in the public regarding on going reforms due to weak horizontal linkages as stated by Banpasirichote.²⁰ Similarly in Indonesia, Hadiwinata argues that authoritarian government and state led development in Indonesia make the associational culture fragile and weakens the ability of NGOs to influence the state due to complicated ethnic, religious and gender relations.²¹

In Malaysia, state has controlled associational life through government affiliated organizations, linking people directly to state and leaving little space for NGOs to organize and mobilize them politically.²² Similarly, factionalism, fragmentation is typical in the Pilipino political and organizational life. It is due to a weak associational culture of the society. In the same way, Carol a renowned NGO activist makes a case that there is a wall of separation running right through the Philippine society separating the well to do and the poor, making democracy a fraud in the country.²³

As ASEAN 4 remained under authoritarian rule, the countries enjoy political order and stability for a long period of time gave rise to conservative elements and forces of status quo in the societies. Those forces try to sustain the same kind of authoritarian rule and order in turbulent democratic regimes. Although NGOs have to campaign to stop the ill-effects of those conservative elements, yet in ASEAN 4 they remain ineffective to resist those elements except in Indonesia to some extent. The reforms in constitution, parliament, electoral system and decentralization of decision making have made a slight change in democratic dispensation of Indonesia. However, transition to democracy in ASEAN 4 countries is not smooth. Frequent political violence in Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines is perceived as trouble and instability by the respective conservative elements which makes the process of consolidation of democracy a difficult one.

CONCLUSION

It can be inferred from that the sizes, dimensions and geographical scope of NGOs are not enough to measure the maturity of civil society. The strength and effectiveness of NGOs measure the maturity of civil society, promoting democratic transition and consolidation. However, ASEAN 4 example show that NGOs remain ineffective to change the existing power relations of the elites, unable to promote social cohesion and associational life and powerless to stop the ill-effects of conservative elements from spreading among the countries. In order to be effective, NGOs have to redefine the values and reposition to the emerging situations with innovative strategies to overcome these inhibiting factors.

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Concept Paper

**DEFENDING THE EMPIRE: ANALYZING MILITARY RECRUITMENT
IN COLONIAL MIANWALI DISTRICT**

**Saadia Sumbal
Forman Christian College,
Lahore**

ABSTRACT

This paper brings into focus the military traditions in Mianwali District in Colonial era. Due to its proximity to Salt Range areas of Jhelum, Chakwal, and Shahpur districts, the recruits in this region were considered ideally suited for the harsh military conditions, primarily owing to their physique. An increasingly large number of recruits served in the colonial army in order to supplement their agricultural income derived from haphazard cultivation. Mianwali is a region inhabited by various tribes, kinship or biradaries as it is put in local parlance. The district had overwhelmingly Pathan population along with other communities including Jats, Baluch, Rajputs and Khattaks. Tribes and castes not only symbolized strength and power but also served as the identity marker. Ethnic prejudices and sense of superiority of one clan over another were the defining features among Pathan clans. Economic interests and ethnic prejudices had fostered inter-tribal rivalries and

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stunted mutual harmony and social cohesion. Tribes lie at the heart of rural identity. Tribal identity itself served as a wedge, precluding unity among the tribes. The British recognized the social and political importance of this tribal structure to strengthen colonial rule in this region. Colonial interests were served by the policy of cooption of rural elite, who served as intermediaries in the colonial hierarchy of power. A class of landowners was created in the district to serve as a nexus between state and people by means of lucrative grants. Hence a tribally based local administration was conjured up. The rural leaders legitimized their authority through their lands, an insignia of power and prestige and their connection with the British officials. The local leaders emerged from the Khawanin of Isa Khel, Nawabs of Kalabagh, landed aristocrats of Piplan, Wan Bhachran, Bhakkar. Where as other tribes faced economic marginalization. This gap subsequently exacerbated the inter-tribal misgivings. The colonial state and rural elite developed a nexus to relegate the district to economic marginalization, as a result enlistment in army was left as the only alternative for subsistence.

Key words: Colonial military, Mianwali, martial race theory, Pathan, Rajput, Khattak.

Mianwali was not accorded substantial significance in the colonial system as it had a peripheral location in the Punjab and was essentially located as a

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recruiting region. The main tribes who were recruited in the army were Bhangi Khels and Khattaks from Isa Khel although small in number, supplied excellent warriors to several regiments of the Frontier Force. Awan tribe living on the fringe of Talagang Tehsil and the Zangeza Balochs in the Dab region joined 15th Lancers in large proportion¹. The Bhidwals, another Jat clan, inhabiting the south-east of the Bhakkar Thal had a natural inclination towards military service. The Baloch constituting considerably large part of the population of the Bhakkar Tehsil, joined Cavalry Regiment specially to the 35th Scinde Horse.²

Niazi Pathans of Pai Khel, Bori Khel, Musa Khel, Tari Khel and Moch had long been associated with the military service. Baluch who constituted large part of cavalry were known as camel riders. They held pride in their sword and warrior tendencies so they preferred army as their choicest inclination. They had a distinct tribal and political organization and were largely migrated to cis-indus tract in east of Thal under their chiefs and leaders. The eastern Thal region was not agriculturally rich which drove them towards army as only alternative. Bhangi Khels and Khattaks were settled in IsaKhel, were a fine manly race. They had warlike nature and had been involved in feuds for centuries. They were industrious and good cultivators but they possessed stony and unfertile tract with very meager economic resources. This economically marginalized tribe secured economic shelter in army. The Rajput's presence in colonial army could also be seen in the context of their feudal instinct. They preferred pastoral to agricultural pursuits as they despised agriculture and all manual labour was looked upon as derogatory. Military exposed all these warrior tribes to an opportunity to satisfy their martial self-image apart from economic security. In a socially conservative society of Mianwali, the tradition of military service came to be perceived as a mark of social status and not as a career. In the district which was overwhelmingly constituted by Pathan population, the desire to maintain a warrior tradition among certain tribes e.g Rajputs, Baluch and Khattaks was there, however, there were equally important economic factors that motivated enlistment in the army, which can be considered as fundamental push factors. Military service promised a regular pay, pension and land grant too. Many families were dependent on military earnings. According to Tan Tai Yong, "Military service offered an escape route from the ecological impasse."³

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The Salt Range tract including Mianwali was agriculturally disadvantaged and the people found an easy outlet to seek future in the army. The study also reveals how substantial was the role of rural elite as recruiting agents in war efforts to raise the level of recruitment in the district. The rural elite had developed a nexus with military command to help in enlisting men in the army and also provided economic assistance to the colonial government. The Niazi pathan tribes figured significantly in the district but they had a meager presence in the army which does not corroborate the widely believed British assumption of pathan as a martial race. The reluctance on the part of pathans to join army was seen as resistance against state's authority.

MIANWALI DISTRICT

Mianwali district is located in the north-west of the Punjab and had been most south-westerly district of the Rawalpindi Division of the Punjab.⁴ The district comprises of three sub-divisions namely Mianwali, Isakhel, Piplan. Mianwali is a bordering district of the Punjab, having common borders with district Kohat, Laki Marwat and D.I.Khan⁵. Mianwali was sliced away from North West Frontier Province, incorporated into the Punjab and was accorded the status of a district in 1901⁶.

After the annexation of the Punjab, the district was brought under a centralized and elaborate administrative system. It was a time when major districts in the Punjab ushered in an age of modernity, however Mianwali remained distinctively backward. Due to its peripheral location in the West Punjab, it remained quite low in the priority list of the British regarding their imperialist scheme of things. Colonial indifference was reflected quite explicitly on over all state of the district as Mianwali had supposedly no tangible bearing on the politics and economy of the Punjab. Its separation from mainland of the Punjab had made the natives politically inert and virtually ignorant. There was hardly any investment in the education, socio-cultural development, infrastructure and agriculture, although the district had an overwhelmingly agrarian economy. The colonial policy was hinged on the perception that investment must yield economic benefits. The prospects in Mianwali were not in consonance with the colonial ideology. Hence the district was essentially identified as a recruiting region, the social

and economic backwardness of the district substantiated the colonial policy enshrined in "Martial Race Theory."

MARTIAL RACE THEORY IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Military remained one of the most distinctive features of the Punjab's colonial history. The Punjab as one of the last annexed region came into colonial fold as a "non-regulation" Province. With the turn of second half of 19th century, following the events of 1857 the Punjab became the "sword arm of the Raj". The revolt of the Bengal army in the wake of war of independence(1857) brought a reversal in its policy of demilitarization. The Punjab was once again ready to be rearmed. In the Punjab a strong military tradition existed which subsequently made it " sword arm of the Raj". The post 1857 India witnessed a major shift in the imperial Ideology which was engrossed in two central themes.⁷ One was the redefinition of the relationship between colonizer and colonized and second was the redirectio n of strategy.⁸ Post 1857 colonial State looked for new allies with unequivocal loyalty to them. The Traditional elite was restored to its Punjabi position and the recruitment was shifted to newly annexed region of the Punjab.⁹ The Punjab although politically backward,¹⁰ proved its loyalty during the crucial hours of 1857 war. That is why the Punjab graduated to a position of priority in the colonial hierarchy, as Mustafa Kamal Pasha states

"Punjab's rise signaled an ideological retreat for the British from a position of self assured dominance to one marked by mistrust and self doubt."¹¹ The army was now reconstituted on different pattern in which Sikhs, Punjabi Muslims, Gorkhas, Dogras, Pathans and Jats formed the essential components.¹² The opening of the Punjab for recruitment was also enshrined in the "Great Game" against Russia and in the "Martial Race Ideology".¹³ The popular belief of the 19th century in the British soldiers was that, "Certain clans and classes can bear arms, the others have not the physical courage and skill necessary for the warriors."¹⁴

So the full blown theory of 'martial race emerged as a result of 'Russophobia'¹⁵ By the early 1880, a long series of Frontier skirmishes cultivated the Russian fear among the British that they might have foment the trouble in Indian north. In the face of the pressing threat from the north-west, it was imperative to enlist in areas closer to northern border.¹⁶ Lord

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Roberts the commander in chief of the Bengal army (1885-1893) was the main spokesman of Martial Race theory.¹⁷

RECRUITMENT IN THE DISTRICT

Pathans of the Mianwali district were considered ideally fit for armed services, as the pathan was supposedly inclined to display the cult of masculinity and willingness to bear arms. Even though there existed the military traditions in the district nevertheless we don't see a sizeable increase in recruitment during the world war 1, which could not be associated with any one particular factor. One of a reason that the district had an ample agricultural land which needed manpower and every recruit to the Army meant a serious loss in agricultural power, carried currency.

At the outbreak of the War, 1,159 men were recruited in the army from the district. On the 1st January 1916 their strength was raised to 1,527 combatants.¹⁸

Recruitment process invigorated when depots were setup in the district under the supervision of recruiting officers who were civil officers and rural elite.

2,598 combatants and 299 non-combatants were raised in the district since recruiting was undertaken by civil officers in Jan 1917.¹⁹ The table shows the respective standing of various tribes of the district in the army.

IN THE ARMY MALE	NO.	PROPORTION OF TOTAL OF MILITARY AGE
Pathans	652	1 in 5.3
Biloches	344	1 in 6.3
Jats	969	1 in 19.5
Awans	445	1 in 6.5
Syeds	125	1 in 11.3
Kamins	434	1 in 15.3

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Hindus (Arora)	62	1 in 55.7
Total	4,029	1 in 13.5²⁰

Among the Pathans, the Bhangi Khels entered the British Army in large number. Out of 1,300 males of military age, 727 joined army that was one in 1.7.²¹

DISTRICT RECRUITMENT FIGURES OF PUNJAB (1914-1918).

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF ENLISTEES DURING THE WAR
Rawalpindi	31,291
Jhelum	27,743
Amritsar	21,988
Ferozpur	18,809
Ludhiana	18,067
Attock	14,815
Shahpur	14,040
Sialkot	13,376
Gujranwala	12,618
Lahore	10,054
Lyallpur	6,507
Multan	4,636

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Mianwali	4,242
Montgomery	2,813
Dera Ghazi Khan	1,012
Jhang	946

Source: M.S. Leigh, Punjab and the war, pp. 59-60

THE ROLE OF RURAL ELITE AS RECRUITING AGENTS AND THE LAND GRANTS TO INTERMEDIARIES.

The period between 1916 and 1919 witnessed the civil and military institutions coalesced in to single machinery to generate recruits. The civil-military nexus and the support of the civil bureaucracy towards the military establishment mobilized the entire province for manpower in war. It also resulted in the emergence of a potent rural military lobby which had its impact on the post war politics of the Punjab as well.²² A tremendous amount of donations and investments were extended by landed elite in the districts of the Punjab who served as rural intermediaries between the state and populace.²³ The British government found it the most effective and convenient way to subjugate the indigenous people through local collaborating groups most importantly, the rural elite. They extended their influence to generate man power as "military contractors". Those who served in the army were given the highest regard.²⁴ The imperial authorities further strengthened their social and economic positions by land grants and inclusion of rural magnates in administrative setup of the Punjab.²⁵

The 130th Baluchistan infantry established a forwarding depot in Bhakkar. The 124th Baluchistan infantry set up a depot in Mianwali and enlisted 500 young men from the district in 2-21st Punjabis.²⁶ The Local elite were made part of depot who extended their help in recruitment. Generally natives remained reluctant in joining army. 'Major Sparkes'

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of the 54th Sikhs (F.F) wrote that "the effort required to get one recruit in the Mianwali District would have procured three anywhere else."²⁷

During the War days, the district was managed by Deputy Commissioner, Major A.J.O Brien, C.I.E , raised 316 Sarwans and muleteers. The divisional officers, Tehsildars, Magistrates and Zaildars wielded authority among rural population and demonstrated their indispensability to the State in recruitment. Prominent among them were, Malik Zaman Mehdi Khan, Sub-Divisional officer and his brother Malik Sultan Mehmud Khan as Tehsildar.²⁸ The Assistant recruiting officer of the district was 'Khan Saifullah Khan'. Among non-officials the most successful recruiters were Khan sahib Malik Laddhu Khan, Khan sahib Malik Ameer with his son Risaldar Malik Muzaffar Khan, Malik Muhammad Qasim of Chakrala and Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim Khan of Isakhel, had tremendous influence in rural society and had been an invaluable support to the administration.²⁹ Syed Ata Muhammad Shah of Dher Umeed Ali, belonged to a Syed family and had religious influence among his people. He got 35 near relations enlisted in army. The pir-murid network marshalled people for enlistment in army. He received a jagir of Rs.500 a year in recognition of his services.³⁰

Kin- based solidarity and Biradari identity, the important elements in rural social organization were used by local elite to influence people. British constructed a system in which through grants of land the rural patrons were bound to the colonial state. The district was awarded six rectangles for assistance in recruitment. The British ensured the loyalty through rewards which transformed a military district into a military labour market.³¹ For the services rendered in war, Two rectangles were given to Malik Muhammad Qasim of Chakrala who raised 100 recruits for the British Army.³² Two rectangles were given to Malik Ghulam Haider Khan, Zaildar of Darya Khan, who in addition to producing 76 recruits, rendered great assistance in the matter of transport for the troops operating against the Mahsuds and assisted the camel corps encamped near Darya Khan.³³ The title of Nawab was conferred on Malik Atta Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh in recognition of his generous contributions to War funds. The title of Khan Sahib was given to Malik Ameer Khan, Zaildar of Wan Bhachran, and Malik Laddhu Zaildar of Kotla Jam, for their recruiting services.³⁴ Khan Rab Nawaz Khan of Musa Khel succeeded his father in Durbar in lieu of his recruiting

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services.³⁵ These rural magnates also contributed to British Army in money and materials.

Rewards distributed in the PUNJAB DURING FIRST WORLD WAR

DISTRICT	TITLES	SWORD HONOUR	OF	JAGIRS	LAND GRANTS
Hissar	13	-		1500	52
Kangra	2	4		500	85
Jullundar	19	2		750	92
Lahore	39	3		1000	101
Amritsar	17	-		750	176
Gurdaspur	5	2		-	147
Sialkot	4	-		250	83
Gujranwala	6	1		1000	115
Gujrat	5	3		250	72
Shahpur	16	11		200	191
Jhelum	17	6		500	157
Rawalpindi	18	6		1,750	118
Attock	7	7		1500	171

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Mianwali	4	1	500	97
Montgomery	1	-	-	30
Lyallpur	10	2	750	15
Jhang	3	-	-	17
Multan	9	2	500	78
Muzaffargarh	3	-	500	101
Dera Ghazi Khan	10	1	-	207

Source: M.S. Leigh, *Punjab and the War*, pp.140-74.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY RURAL LAND HOLDERS IN THE DISTRICT

First war loan of 1917, was of a staggering sum of Rs 2,91,469-8-0 including one lakh contributed by Nawab Atta Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh and Rs.3,000 by Khan Bahadur Muhammad Abdul Karim Khan of Isa Khel.³⁶ Malik Atta Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh also paid for 30 British Cavalry Remounts.³⁷

Second war Loan of 1918 had received a subscriptions of Rs 3,11,4438-4-0 up to 31st March 1919, including Rs 50,000 from the Nawab Atta Muhammad Khan and Rs 1,000 each from Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim Khan and Khan Sahib Malik Ameer Khan.³⁸ This is interesting to note that a handsome amount of second war loan was given mainly by the traders and the money lenders.

The district offered a large contribution to the aeroplane fund. An amount of 1,46,295 was subscribed which included Rs 75,000 from Nawab of

Kalabagh and Rs 10,000 from Khan Bahadur Muhammad Abdul Karim Khan.³⁹ Rs. 35,000 were specially contributed by the Nawab for the purchase of remounts. An amount of Rs. 10,446 was added into the Imperial Indian fund.⁴⁰ An amount of Rs 46,928 had been subscribed in Red Cross and St. John Ambulance association funds.⁴¹

RESISTANCE BY NATIVE PATHAN TRIBES

In view of all these facts, it had been observed that generally enlistment of Pathan tribes in the army had been fairly marginal in this district. The reason may be located in the inherent nature of Pathan, who had ethnically an overbearing disposition, declined to accept a subordinate character. Although the Pathans of Mianwali had been much complaisant by the agricultural life of the plains, nevertheless the free life in the rugged mountains accorded them a masculine independence which showed its resilience quite often. Moreover, the Niazi Pathans were mostly settled in the Cis-Indus area of the district, possessing fine agricultural lands which provided them a reliable source of income. Hence enlistment in army was not a desirable option. However, the traditional perception of the British about Pathans as martial race, who possessed military dexterity, martial prowess seemed to be dispelled in case of Mianwali District. Pathans in the district were visibly reluctant to enlist in the British Army. The reluctance is seen as an invisible resistance against the army, a weapon of relatively powerless groups, who avoid any direct confrontation with authority. There was no dramatic confrontation with state in the district as open insubordination might provoke a rapid and serious response by the government than an insubordination which was pervasive and never ventured to contest the hierarchy and power. The method of passive resistance was nearly unbeatable because state had nothing to call into question, provided it was not expressed as open defiance. In a colonized territory the natives lived as exploited groups, accepted the colonial political and social order especially in a situation where exploitation was taking place in the context in which the elite or the state used the coercive force to virtually suppress the open expression of discontent. In such a society covert and pervasive resistance is the only possibility.

However, there were a few attempts of agitation against the government. Some rioters attempted to enter district from Jhang district in 1915, aimed to provoke the natives for an anti-government agitation. The situation was

controlled with the assistance of Lambardar of Dhingana in Bhakkar Tehsil.⁴² There were also signs of unrest in the village of "Chidroo" at the beginning of world war I. It was reported that arms were being secretly collected for uprising against state. Mian Maluk Ali, a religious figure of the district assisted government by using his influence among his disciples and a rigorous process of disarming was undertaken⁴³. These facts had vividly demonstrated the discontentment of natives, infused with anti-government sentiments, failed to manifest itself in a patent expression of defiance under a centralized hierarchy of power. The British controlled such acts of defiance against state with the help of religious and political influence of rural leaders. With a secure religious base in the countryside, the religious leaders exploited the pir-murid nexus in the favour of imperial government. Another reason for passivity was that the various Pathan clans when settled in Mianwali kept their tribal customs and traditions intact however their cultural traits coalesced with other cultural and social strands. Hence in the changed social context, the traditions and customs also underwent change, giving rise to a new set of social practices. Such cultural affinity among various tribes and clans, however failed to forge unity among tribes. Their ethno-centric behaviour hinged on the notions of tribal superiority, triggered internecine misgivings. Consequently the pathan tribes could not strengthen themselves into a cohesive whole thus the tribal affinity got diluted and in the absence of inter-tribal unity and social organization, the possibility for joint resistance against state apparatus evaporated. The local elite who were close to the power structure, controlled the ideological sector of society and created a symbolic climate which prevented the marginalized groups from thinking their way free. Hence they developed a conformist mind set vis-à-vis colonial state instead of call in question the suzerainty of the British. However, the covert and passive resistance tried to contend with the State's authority whenever feasible. The district's virtual seclusion from the mainstream of Punjab's politics had accorded its people backward, ignorant and generally indifferent disposition. Society was divided into three groups, one was of rural elite who worked as intermediaries of the imperial government and sustained their colonial rule. They were contemptuously called by natives as toadies. Second group who was in majority did not care who ruled as long as they were allowed to live peacefully. The third, very small group showed interest in self-rule and freedom. In 1919, when Rowlatt Act was passed and a virulent anti-government agitation started throughout the province, an act of agitation was also demonstrated by a few railway

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employees at Kundian railway station⁴⁴. They disrupted the tele-communication system, the situation was soon controlled by deployment of troops at Kalabagh, Mianwali, Daud Khel, Kundian and Bhakkar to guard railway communication⁴⁵. This indicated that a slight attempt of commotion provoked such a serious response by the government. The disturbance also revealed a fact that the people involved in the act were based in other districts and had an adequate awareness about the political turmoil in the Punjab, where as the natives were politically inert and had no political acumen. There were very few occasional processions carried out by volunteers, chanting anti-war slogans in the streets of the district, who were mostly Hindus⁴⁶. Muslims had a very marginal presence in such political activities, owing to their illiteracy and less affluent status in the town. However, this freedom oriented spirit was never admired by the native employees of the government and tried to dissipate their assemblage, as they did not want to risk their jobs by coming to adverse notice of authorities. It was generally assumed in the district that the "Angrez" ruler though mostly not visible, was watching you.⁴⁷ Poverty was an overriding factor in the passivity of local populace which arrested their ability to resist and caused insurgence. They developed a mind-set to survival rather than to pose challenge to the state's suzerainty. Where as British perception about Pathan was contextualized, the defiance of Pathan against colonial government was declared as being lethargic, whose fighting capacity had become quiescent.

CONCLUSION

The configuration of various communities living in Mianwali had given society a tribal pattern. The district faced a subaltern status vis-à-vis other districts of the Punjab owing to its geographically peripheral location. The British assumed that investment in the district did not yield a tangible return on its outlay and so it became a recruiting ground for colonial army. As a result district retained its distinctively backward and essentially tribal status. The study revealed that the economic marginalization of tribes was exploited by British to their advantage and turned them into cannon fodder for colonial army. The process of enlistment was accentuated by developing a nexus between military command and rural landholders, who shared the colonial power structure and thrived themselves at the expense of other tribes, augmented mental division in society. Reluctance of pathan tribes in joining

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military service should actually be seen in the context of marginalized tribes having no political clout in the district resented their status, which was traditionally dominated by land holders.

END NOTES

¹ D. J. Boyd, *Record of the War Services of the Mianwali District, (1914-19)* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1922)p.1.

² Ibid.

³ Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849 – 1947* (Lahore: Vanguard Publishers, 2005), p. 83.

⁴ *Gazetteer Mianwali District 1915* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 1990), pp.1-2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 42.

⁷ Ibid., pp.11-12.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., p.12.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., p.13.

¹² Ibid., pp.68-69.

¹³ Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp.68-69.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp.59-60.

¹⁵ Ayesha Siddiq, *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*, (Karachi; Oxford University Press, 2007) pp, 59-60. British India's uneasy relationship with its western neighbor Afghanistan was now complicated by suspicions of Russian intentions to extend their imperialist designs in to India. The British military authorities in India became obsessed with the "Great Game" with Russia, and were no longer content to maintain the army in India merely as an internal policing force and to stop Russian drive towards warm waters of Indian Ocean.

¹⁶ Mustafa Kamal Pasha, *Colonial Political Economy* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.36.

¹⁷ David Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860-1940* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), p.25.

¹⁸ Boyd, *Record of the War Services of Mianwali District*, pp 2-3.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.3.

²⁰ Ibid., p.3.

²¹ Ibid, p.4.

²² Yong, *The Garrison State*, p.139.

²³ Ibid, p.125.

²⁴ Ibid, p.31.

²⁵ Ibid., pp.130-131.

²⁶ Boyd, *Record of the War Services of Mianwali District*, p.4.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p.5.

²⁹ Ibid., p.6.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Yong, *The Garrison State*, p.96.

³² Boyd, *Record of the War Services of Mianwali District*, p.7.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., pp.7-8.

³⁷ M.S.Leigh, *The Punjab and the War* (Lahore: Government Printing Press, 1922), p.122.

³⁸ Ibid., p.8.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.8.

⁴² Boyd, *Record of the War Services of Mianwali District*, p.10.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ See for details, *District and Miscellaneous Reports on the Punjab Disturbances, April 1919* (Lahore: Government Printing Press, 1920)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Harish Chander Nakra, *Wichra Watan* (New Delhi, 2002), p.44.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.45.

Kokab, A Pleasant Augury

Concept Paper

A PLEASANT AUGURY: ANALYSIS OF LAWYERS' MOVEMENT
IN PAKISTAN (2007-2009)

Rizwan Ullah Kokab
University of the Punjab,
Lahore

ABSTRACT

This paper offers an analysis of the structure, organization, leadership and other elements of Lawyers' Movement in Pakistan (2007-2009). The Movement will be examined with the help of characteristics and features essential for a social movement namely collective effort or behaviour, a common outlook of activists in the society, a change as goal, a loose organization and membership, conflict and discontent in the society. It will be explored how the Lawyers' Movement became a mass movement, wherefrom a common discontent joined diverse sections into a Movement, what goals and methods to achieve them were set by the Movement and how the state responded to them.

Key words: Lawyers' Movement, Martial Law, Yousaf Raza Gillani, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, Aitazaz Ahsen.

In this paper, I will discuss the transformation of the Lawyers' Movement into a mass movement with the aid of political parties. I will also address the issues of discontent on part of various groups and how did the measures taken by the state prove counter-productive in controlling this movement. In the end, I will explain the causes of its success. The Lawyers' Movement started on the day when Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was

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sacked on March 9, 2007. The Movement ended successfully after two years when Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani announced for reinstatement of deposed judges. It is one of the movements launched in Pakistan – like the movement against President Ayub Khan in 1969, Separatist Movement in East Pakistan 1947-1971, the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* Movement of 1977 – which were considered successful in achieving their stated goals.¹ It was a mass movement that *Dawn* called a pleasant augury for Pakistan, ‘a success of the entire nation and a step in the right direction.’² On the contrary most movements in past – the above mentioned three movements as well as the *Khatm-i-Nabuwwat* Movement in Punjab during 1952, the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) and the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) – were either ineffective or partially succeeded. The end of the Lawyers’ Movement, however, stabilized the democratic institutions, assured the confidence of public, and strengthened the institutions of the state.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOVEMENT

On March 9, 2007 President General Musharraf asked Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry to resign over allegation of misconduct during the period in office. On his refusal he was put under detention. Very next day the lawyers, igniting the first phase of Lawyers’ Movement, held nationwide protests; the first in a series of demonstrations that gathered pace over the following three months. The movement became popular and attracted tremendous support of public. On reinstatement the Chief Justice did not follow the lines of the government and filled with the force of the Lawyers’ Movement he took tough stance against army regime of Pervez Musharraf. Many anti-government cases like *suo moto* case of the missing persons and the petition challenging to National Reconciliation Order were put up. In one case the Chief Justice remarked, “Do not compel us to summon higher authorities of sensitive agencies in uniform, a step which we are trying our utmost to avoid.”³ Most important of all the Court gave verdict in petitions challenging the candidature of General Musharraf in presidential elections 2007 that the official results of the elections be declared after the decision of the apex Court.

The most important battle of the judges who had the support of Lawyers’ Movement and the Musharraf regime was the writs which challenged to Musharraf’s re-election as president in dual office. The Supreme Court had decided to continue hearing without interval in order to quickly wrap them

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up after an earlier plan for a ten day adjournment raised fears that emergency rule might be declared or extra-constitutional measures might be taken.⁴ President Musharraf, sick with the anti-government decisions and feared from the direct danger to his position, on 3rd November 2007, imposed state of emergency, replaced Justice Chaudhry, suspended the constitution and put Justice Chaudhry as well as other judges under house arrest.

MOVEMENT ATTRACTED THE MASS SUPPORT

The Lawyers' Movement was led and launched by a specific class of society – the lawyers' community – but due to the public support behind it seemed to be a mass movement on many occasions. Different sections of the Pakistani people were frustrated due to various reasons. Bugti's murder had caused discontent in the Baloch circles who were already dissatisfied from the Central government's exploitation. The religious minded people were disappointed on the Red Mosque incident. The common man's discontent was ignited due to increasing inflation and loadshading.

The presence of common people representing all classes of society in various processions and rallies of the movement proved it a mass movement. It will not be wrong to say that majority of political parties – except Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)⁵ and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (F) – supported the movement on one or other occasion. Pakistan Muslim League (Q) opposed the movement during its ruling period but taking U-turn in line with the public sentiments and aspirations backed it during PPP period⁶ while Pakistan Peoples' Party supported it in the start though opposed in a way in the last phase. Moreover when PPP officially withdrew support from the struggle after forming government, many PPP lawyers continued to actively back the movement⁷ and during that period PPP took the first long March of 2008 friendly and democratically without creating any hurdle for the march due to the fear of public resentment in case of showing opposition to the Movement.

Other political parties like Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, Jamat-i-Islami, Pakistan Muslim League (N), Awami National Party, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, All Parties Democratic Movement, Balochistan National Party (Hayi), Saraiki National Party, Khakhsaar Tehreek, Labour Party Pakistan, National Workers Party and Awami Tehreek etc. registered their whole hearted support to the movement. All civil society organizations without any exception and unanimously supported and worked for the Lawyers'

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Movement. The gatherings of the movement, especially the rally of Chief Justice from Islamabad to Lahore on 5 May 2007 made the movement a mass movement⁸ and long marches attracted a large number of common people belonging to a variety of different classes of society.

THE DISCONTENT

The discontent – an essential element of any movement – was there as a motive of the lawyers movement. The people were dissatisfied from the military and civil dictatorship. In the first phase they were dissatisfied from the military dictator Musharraf and in the second phase they were discontented from the all-powerful civil president. The movement did not start on the name of this discontent and its beginning was not planned on the basis of this disapproval. Rather the movement began abruptly in reaction of the deposition of Chief Justice. The already existing discontent from the military rule of Musharraf and abhorrence with the too powerful presidential seat of Zardari served as catalyst and fuel for the development of the movement. This discontent helped the movement in getting the support of enlightened classes, political forces, civil society organizations, the media as well as the common people.

The discontent with the system, though apparently the love of one single personality, glued the lawyers behind those who took courage to stand in front of those who were responsible for discontent. The lawyers and people in the intensity of their dissatisfaction from the injustice ignored the previous mistakes of Justice Chaudhury when he had justified the PCO 2002. The discontented people saw him as a rebel of the autocratic and unjust rule and forgot his past due to their strong feeling of dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction, and not the charismatic leadership, was the cause of attachment with the movement.

The main target and goal of the Movement remained 'the restoration of the deposed Chief Justice.' This main target was reformed after the imposition of emergency as "to reinstate the judiciary of 3rd November." From start to the end the movement unequivocally focused to this goal and never wavered an inch from it. In the first phase of the movement, however, many side goals were set. They were demand for true democracy, holding of fair and free general elections, accountability of the parties striking deal for personal gains and stopping President Musharraf from contesting presidential polls either in military uniform or without it.⁹

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COUNTER-MOVEMENT MEASURES

The opponents of the movement made many efforts to divert the target of the Movement. The Gillani government offered to restore 44 judges without Iftikhar Chaudhry but lawyers rejected this offer.¹⁰ Even steps to hoodwink the masses – e.g. the restoration of some judges through re-oath by the PPP government, the statements that the Movement had been limited to a struggle for personal gains, and the sayings that the Movement had turned into a political one did not divert the attention of the activists of the Movement. The activists even did not bother to pay attention to such misguiding and did not leave to chase their said goal.

A group of PPP figures close to Mr. Zardari including party treasurer Babar Awan and Law Minister Farooque Naek promoted one plan saying that Justice Iftikhar would be reinstated, but then retire almost immediately through the introduction of new rules about the tenure of chief justices. Such a move would technically fulfill the pledge to bring back all the removed judges but would save Mr. Zardari to bring back the active Chief Justice.¹¹ The lawyers who backed Mr. Iftikhar Choudhry did not accept this plan.

Afterwards Mr. Zardari created ambiguity saying that PPP wanted to restore justice and not just judges for which purpose the judges would be restored through a constitutional package and not by a simple resolution.¹² Thus it was tried that the issue was muffled into the darkness of confusing solutions. But the activists of movement made themselves and the common public stuck with the main target of the movement.

Gillani government created another legal controversy by concerning whether to restore the judges through a resolution of parliament or executive order. Government's view was that the judges could not be reinstated unless parliament by a two-third disapproved of the PCO and the subsequent amendments to the constitution. The other view to which the Lawyers' Movement, with the backing of a large majority of the experts as well as the masses, subscribed was that in fact, parliament's approval (by a two-third majority) was needed if the purpose was not to reinstate the judges. All that was needed for the reinstatement was an executive order.¹³

The government to a large extent adopted suppressive measures in order to tackle the movement. The main leaders were put under arrest like terrorists

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under Anti-Terrorism Act and large number of activists of the movement was detained after the imposition of emergency¹⁴ and during different important events of the movement. At least 650 activists were detained under 3-Maintainance of Public Order for the period of 90 days after imposition of emergency in November 2007. An Anti Terrorism Court ordered to send 351 lawyers, including seven ladies to jail on judicial remand for fourteen days.¹⁵ The demonstrations were baton charged. In Peshawar an armoured personnel carrier hit a group of lawyers including Peshawar High Court Bar Association president Abdul Latif Afridi on 6 October 2007.¹⁶ The harshest of the actions were the killing of 16 lawyers in Karachi on 12 May 2007, burning of Mianwali bar, Karachi Malir Bar and offices of lawyers in other parts of the country.

On certain occasions the danger of rift in the inner circles of the movement was tackled with wise decisions of the leadership. An attempt was made to highlight the conflict among the leadership of the movement by creating difference between justice (retired) Wajehuddin and Aitzaz who refuted this on April 20, 2008. Again the difference of Aitzaz with the PBC on his decision to contest by-poll on PPP ticket, mentioned by the newly elected vice-chairman of the council, can also be recorded in this regard. The scuffle of lawyers on Aitzaz's arrival in Rawalpindi Bar Association on 5 May 2008 marked the dangerous rift in the movement. Aitzaz's decision not to contest these polls demised differences of this kind.¹⁷ Then the rift that appeared after the abrupt end of long march on 18th June 2008 with the decision of Aitzaz Ahsan was tackled wisely by leadership. Despite reported split between two top lawyers' bodies - the PBC and SCBA, the top leadership like Hamid Khan and Kurd denied such reports. The leadership collectively made dividing issue go in back and Kurd's replacement with Aitzaz as president SCBA finally strengthened the Movement by giving impression that Aitzaz's decision could not weaken the Movement as he was not all in all.¹⁸

The government in first phase of the movement could get very few supporters from legal fraternity against the movement. There were very few examples like Khwaja Naveed Ahmad, Vice President Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) who during September 2007 led a delegation of Executive Committee of the SCBA called on the Prime Minister Aziz and, in order to get the pleasure of the government, assured him the support of majority of the SCBA that proved unrealistic. The desire of government to

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hinder the movement through division in the circles of lawyers with the help of some pro-government judges – those who supported government or who took fresh oath under PCO 2007¹⁹ (the PCO judges) could not bear fruit as these judges could not muster the support of more than a few lawyers. The PCO judges, however, would have superiority in numbers over the deposed judges if they were reinstated in April/May 2008.²⁰

The Lawyers' Movement took a clear and unambiguous stand against the PCO judges by rejecting their positions. However during the stage when it looked that the PPP government would reinstate the judges some mild attitude towards PCO judges in order to avoid the clash within the institution was expressed by some leaders of the movement. Aitzaz Ahsan said that the newly appointed judges would be adjusted on merit and if the number of seats of judges was required to increase in any court will be increased. After passage of deadline the Pakistan Bar Council warned that lawyers would not accept any formula under which PCO judges retained their offices.

The demonstrations of the movement turned rarely violent. Except the scuffles with police the lawyers on very few occasions displayed violence against the civilians and public property. The violent incident of manhandling former federal minister Sher Afgan Niazi could defame the Lawyers' Movement. But the incident was controlled without much damage by the office bearers of SCBA, Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA), Lahore Bar and especially Aitzaz Ahsan, the president SCBA. The responsible lawyer leaders called it the sabotaging effort of some official agents.²¹ The skilful and mature handling of the incident by Aitzaz and even his announcement of resignation in protest to the behaviour of lawyers ultimately strengthened the movement through improvement of confidence on him when 73 bar associations warned to resign in case he did not take back his resignation. Aitzaz thus decided to stay as SCBA chief in the best interests of movement.²²

BUILDING PRESSURE AND MOBILIZING SUPPORT

The movement adopted different methods to raise pressure in order to fulfill its goals. The boycott of the courts, sometimes full day boycott and often a token boycott for some hours, was special feature of the movement. At the beginning of the Movement in 2007 and after the imposition of emergency all courts were boycotted for various days. Afterwards in order to continue the Movement as well as to keep the business of lawyers and courts

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Thursday was fixed as weekly boycott day. On that day the courts – superior and local – everywhere in Pakistan were boycotted and processions were held. Moreover judges who took oath under PCO were permanently boycotted.

The hunger strike camps were set up on various occasions in different cities where a number of lawyers remained sitting for hours. In March 2007 soon after deposition of Chief Justice a hunger strike camp was established in Lahore by Lahore High Court Bar Association. Again on 26 November 2007 Lahore Bar decided to go on token hunger strike from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm daily.²³ Imran Khan went on hunger strike in prison during November 2007. In March 2008 two leaders of Awami Jamhoori Ittehad in Islamabad – Iqbal Bali and Jahangir Akhtar – remained in hunger strike near the judges colony Islamabad. Others joined them for a symbolic 24 hours or 48 hours strike. The jailed lawyers detained in the central jail Kasur went on a hunger strike in protest against their illegal detention on November 10, 2007.²⁴

The largely crowded meetings of the bars and the conventions of the lawyers throughout Pakistan became the permanent feature of the movement. When the leadership went to participate in such functions their journey to the destination took the form of public procession which was used as a useful tool of pressure. The deposed judges did not directly talk on the issue of their reinstatement during their speeches in these gatherings. On the other they touched the issue through the expression of their views and provocation for the independence of judiciary and supremacy of law. They avoided speaking in the public meetings minding the norm that judges kept themselves away from political activities. Their only presence would raise the passions of the people and could convey the message to the people that had already been sent to them by the media and lawyer leaders. They, however, talked a bit directly and freely during meeting a large number of delegations of lawyers, political activists and civil society workers, even then hinting in a shrouded way. Other lawyer leaders and retired judges not only spoke in public and political meetings but also performed the duty of criticizing the government, putting the demands, calling the people to support the movement, and using tough language for the opponents of the movements. Ali Ahmad Kurd, Aitzaz Ahsan, Munir A. Malik and other leaders often delivered fiery speeches.

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Long march, sit-in, Iftikhar day and black days became hallmarks of the movement. One black day observed by the opposition parties starting on 13 November 2007 was joined by lawyers and they observed it.²⁵ The lawyers observed a 'black day' on 12 May 2008 to mark the first anniversary of the riots in Karachi on the day a year before when CJ Chaudhry was to address a rally there. The lawyers wearing black arm-bands held protest in cities across the country and stayed away from courts. They also hoisted black flags on rooftops of bar council buildings.²⁶

Two long marches were launched by the Lawyers' Movement; one started on June 10, 2008 from Karachi and Quetta. Deposed CJ and Aitzaz joined it from Multan. On June 13 it reached in front of the parliament in Islamabad where lawyers stage a token sit-in and through a controversial decision Aitzaz said the lawyers to disperse peacefully proving it futile effort apparently. On the surface it seemed that the long march met a failure because it did not yield the expected or tangible results but it was said that the movement got another victory – a moral victory.²⁷ The second long march was launched in the March 2009 that ended in the victory of the movement. The lawyers also staged sit-in on important places. Lawyers across the country observed 'Iftikhar Day' on January 31, 2008 and then on September 23, 2008. The day was observed to commemorate the struggle of deposed Chief Justice.²⁸

The strike from the courts remained common tool of the movement. Joint Action Committee of PBC gave concession to lawyers to appear before PCO judges on the pretext of hardships of people. In fact the movement did not try to disturb the economic conditions of lawyers. In order to continue the movement on long term basis this was a good measure. It was also decided that every day the token strike would be observed for one hour while complete boycott of courts would be observed every Thursday. LHCBA launched a mass contact campaign to win public support and create awareness in the public. The process of publishing booklets was also going on.²⁹

An innovative method of the movement was the celebration of Black Flag week through which the black flags were hoisted on the buildings of Bars and during the demonstrations. Moreover various members of sub-ordinate and higher judiciary tendered their resignation in protest especially in the first phase of the movement. These resignations supported the movement a

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lot. A civil judge working in Bahawalpur, Saeed Khurshid was the first who tendered the resignation on March 13, 2007. Justice Khwaja Jawad S Khwaja of Lahore High Court also resigned. Many office bearers of PML-Q offered the resignations from their posts from the party slots.³⁰ It is said that one of the highest members of judiciary tendered the resignation on 5 May 2007 and president Musharraf had to request him not to resign.³¹

The tool of court arrests was resolved to be used in the wake of second round of the movement in November 2007. The first four lawyers for courting arrests were nominated. They were prominent jurists, Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsam, Hamid Khan, Munir A. Malik and Tariq Mahmood.³² To raise pressure on the government some distinguished figures came forward to protest by returning the award to government. Ahmad Fraz was the first in this regard. In order to raise the feelings through literature the meetings of poetry were arranged by the literary organizations. Literary organization *Alao* arranged such meetings.³³

In order to get support of the masses and get the workers involved as well interested in the activism some functions were arranged on generally accepted issues which did not directly link with those of the target issues of the movement. The most important example of such practice was the Hurmat-i-Rasool rallies to record protest over the issue of blasphemous caricature of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and launching of a movie against the spirit of Holy Quran.³⁴ Some leaders like Ali Ahmad Kurd and Bhagwan Das deliberately attempted in public gatherings to manipulate the deprivation of the Balochistan and lauded Justice Iftikhar as the son of Balochistan soil who had the courage to forsake any kind of threat or greed for the sake of supremacy of law and the SC.³⁵ Some unique methods were adopted to express the solidarity with the movement. An advocate Sikandar Javed from Multan launched a signature campaign, under which some 80,000 lawyers from 320 bar associations marked their signatures on a register in solidarity with the movement.³⁶

The general and presidential elections were also used as the tools of the movement. The lawyers boycotted and suggested the political parties to boycott the general elections of 2008. A campaign was launched to take oath from the candidates of general elections that after victory they will get the demand of the movement passed.³⁷ Two lawyers were the most important candidates in the two presidential elections held during the period of the

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movement. Justice (R) Wajihuddin contested the first presidential election in October 2007 on behalf of the movement and his campaign was launched in the meetings of the lawyers. He got 8 votes only but showed his presence as an opposition to president.³⁸ Justice (r) Saeeduzzaman Siddiqui was the PML-N's nominee in the presidential elections when Zardari won the elections. The nomination of a lawyer by the PML-N was a proof of the popularity of the Lawyers' Movement.

The role of free media proved to be a big advantage for the Movement. It connected the Movement with the Pakistani masses as well as international community.³⁹ Without strong support of media and particularly the journalists it would have been hard for the lawyers to keep the Movement running.⁴⁰ The media popularized the Movement to such an extent that the Musharraf government responded by introducing new laws to curb the radicalization of the media.⁴¹ The broadcast of major TV channels which were propagating the ideas of the Movement like Geo and Aaj were curbed and banned several times.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MOVEMENT

The Lawyers' Movement was well organized especially in contrast to the political and social organizations generally in Pakistan where trade unions are so weak that they look like distinct. The farmers' organizations virtually do not exist. The student unions are banned and the organizations of political parties are too fragile. The lawyer community formed the nucleus and three central circles of the movement and the bar associations and councils of every court formed the basic unit in the hierarchical set up of the movement that provided the activists and workers. The decisions were made by the top leadership that was comprised of the office bearers of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and Pakistan Bar Council (PBC), after the consultation with the office holders of High Court Bar Associations of the four High Courts and bar councils of the four provinces.

When the movement started Pakistan Bar Council was chaired by Dr. Khalid Ranjha who was pro-government senator and supported the reference against Justice Chaudhry. All other 21 members of the Council presided by Senior Vice Chairman Ali Ahmad Kurd decided to stand by the movement.⁴² Government's plan to divide Lawyers' Movement failed when Ali Ahmad Kurd was elected as President SCBA on October 28, 2008. He defeated government's candidate Muhammad Zafar with 1052 out of 1724 votes.⁴³

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The route and venue for long march was decided by the implementation committee formed by lawyers' convention. A National Action Committee headed by PBC vice-Chairman and comprised of all vice chairmen and the chairmen of executive committees of all the provincial bar councils, president and secretary of the SCBA, presidents of the Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and Quetta Bar Associations and the elected representatives of the Rawalpindi and Islamabad Bars chalked out the strategy and plan of one phase of the first round of the movement in September 2007.⁴⁴ To frame the further line of action after the failure of talks between PPP and PML-N on 12 May 2008 the PBC met on May 16 and the following day it held a lawyers representative convention to strike a consensus line of action. This convention decided with 299 to 1 majority to launch a long march on June 10.⁴⁵

In the fourth circle there were political parties, civil society, labour and the student organizations. The masses formed the most outer circle of the movement. The main lawyers' leadership had consultations with the political parties whose support was considered essential to win leverage. It never happened that any representative of any political party took part in the meetings of working council of any bar association and only lawyer of dual status who was member of the bar as well as the political party could represent the feelings of that political party in the meeting. APDM formed a Central Coordinating Committee to coordinate with PML-N, lawyers and civil society on judges' issues in May 2008⁴⁶ but the lawyers always made decisions freely while taking under consideration the stands of different parties. The parties wanted to get the public support for their political ends promised by the issue of judiciary which the Lawyers' Movement desired to use in their own favour while some parties like PPP desired to mould the Movement according to their point of view. Moreover the complete mixing up with political parties might change the legal dimension of the issue into political one.

Civil society in Pakistan comprise nongovernmental organisations, community-based organizations, think tanks, trade unions, cultural groups, informal citizen organization, professional associations, philanthropies, academia, independent and quasi-independent pressure groups in Pakistan. Not only the term 'Civil Society' was more frequently used during the Lawyers' Movement but the civil society organizations also supported the

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Lawyers' Movement to a large scale. ⁴⁷ Human Rights Commission of Pakistan along with various organizations played active role in getting the support of powerful American Bar Association, Nelson Mandela and the Group of Elders, the European Union and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group which opposed the government on imposing the emergency and suppressing the Lawyers' Movement. ⁴⁸ Since the Movement began Amnesty International called for the reinstatement of judiciary and release of activists.

The membership of the movement was of two types. It was voluntary in the outer circles. Any member of civil society or political worker who had ideological affiliation with the movement could participate in the activities of the movement especially on the call of main leadership. In the inner circles, however, the membership was binding to every lawyer. The power to grant license or cancel membership of lawyer vested with the bar councils helped to maintain discipline and to get the members fixed and affiliated with the organization of the movement a lot. The majority decision was binding to all of the members whether office-bearer of the association.

The difference with the organization had potential risk of the fury of whole lawyers' community as well as an economic and career setback for the lawyer who could face a situation in which he could not appear in any court in case of loss of license. A collective wave of difference of the majority from the leadership could not be created due to strict measures taken against the dissident lawyers on different occasions. The physical attacks on the opponent lawyers and the defamation were additional threats other than the danger of loss of membership of Bar kept the escape from the movement very hard for lawyers. The membership of many like Naeem Bukhari, Wasim Sajjad, Wasi Zafar, Federal Law Minister and the honorary membership of Raja Basharat were suspended in various bars. The NWFP Bar Council even banned the entry of Naeem Bukhari in NWFP. ⁴⁹ The SCBA's warning endorsed by HCBA's that strict action would be taken against the bar associations for inviting PCO CJ Dogar to address any bar in the country forced him no Islamabad only and he was not invited by any bar except Sukkur, Larkana and Ghotki in July 2008.

The dual and triple membership of a lawyer in district Bar, High Court Bar and Supreme Court Bar helped in integration and communication between different circles of the lawyers' organization. The elections of the Bars were

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held every year; the tradition existed prior to the start of movement. The leadership did not fear for loss of leadership in case of loss in the election and no effort was made to postpone the election on the level of any tier. On the other hand the elections annually were used as the integrating factor. The change of leaders also did not affect badly. It only supported the movement. For example Aitzaz Ahsan's victory as president SCBA gave a new impetus to the movement⁵⁰ and when he lost some popularity due to a controversial decision of ending the first long march of the movement the other popular leader Ali Ahmad Kurd was elected as president. Thus leadership was substituted without any damage of the tempo of movement or personal wound to the leader. The elections made it possible for leadership or one leader substituted with the other as in a hockey match the fresh and active player is substituted with a tired or weak player who has committed some mistake in the match.

THE LEADERSHIP

The movement was led by the collective leadership of law experts which can be divided into two groups. One group comprised of the in-service judges who were deposed later. Most of these leaders did not participate in public activities and never addressed to the mass rallies but their presence and symbolic leadership inspired the masses and activists. The most prominent personality of this group, indeed the figurehead of the movement, was Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhury. He was respected as the first member of judiciary who stood firmly before the generals and thus literally raised a movement for the rule of law. He became a symbol of struggle since start to the end and bore difficulties as he remained under house-arrest for 5 months after the imposition of emergency and PCO.

Aitzaz Ahsan, former cabinet member of Benazir government (1990-93), PPP opposition leader in Senate (1994-1999) remained close associate and lawyer of deposed Chief Justice. He, with his speeches, poems and ideas filled a revolutionary spirit in the Lawyers' Movement. For one year of the Movement he led it as president of SCBA. Though his role became controversial after the PPP's government yet he preferred to lead Lawyers' Movement at the same time remaining associated with PPP whose leadership expelled him from the Central Council. He played a difficult role simultaneously supporting the Movement as well as keeping allegiance with PPP ideals and its deceased leaders. His stature in Lawyers community as well as in people remained still higher.

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Flamboyant lawyer from Balochistan Ali Ahmad Kurd came to limelight after the eruption of the Movement. His fiery speeches fueled the lawyers' Movement. He became the symbol of protest. Due to his and Justice Iftikhar's relationship with Balochistan the Movement got substantial support from the resistant elements from Balochistan even though with leftist bent and as possessor of revolutionary ideas he was liked by protesters all over Pakistan. He took the baton of leadership of the Movement from Aitzaz Ahsan as President SCBA when the Movement seemed to lose the momentum but his leadership once more gave a new life to the Movement.

Another key leader of the Movement, Munir A. Malik, former president SCBA, who was arrested and during detention remained seriously ill being the model of state suppression. Justice Tariq Mahmood, another former SCBA president, who emerged to prominence first by opting not to take oath under the PCO in the Balochistan High Court and then taking part in the Movement, also complained maltreatment during prison.⁵¹ Elevated from Chief Justice Sindh High Court to the Supreme Court Judge, Justice Wajihuddin gained more respect when he resigned from the Supreme Court instead of taking oath after PCO. He was nominated as a presidential candidate against Musharraf in 2007. PML-N nominated another retired Chief Justice Supreme Court, Justice Saeed-uz-zaman Siddiqui who had defied taking a new oath under PCO in 1999, as the presidential candidate against Zardari in 2008. Thus the lawyers' leadership represented the both major political parties of Pakistan, Aitzaz from PPP and Siddiqui from PML-N

A SUCCESS STORY

Apparently success of the movement is due to the street power of PML-N demonstrated in its last episode. The factor of the political support of PML-N on the last day of movement is so dominant that a large number of people generally may attribute the success of the movement to this last rally. Tariq Rahman rightly maintains that the lawyers alone might not have pulled the movement off. Along with them were members of civil society and students.⁵² No doubt the effective rally of PML-N forced for sudden acceptance of the demand of movement by the government but the success of movement did not wholly depend on the public support of Nawaz Shareef. It was momentum of the movement that was bound to succeed. The political parties, during whole movement of two years, followed the lawyers who

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were launching the movement. The movement had already been succeeded in reinstating the Chief Justice in July 2007 and also by reinstating of deposed judges by PPP. Victory of the movement was quite natural whether with support of Nawaz Sharif or of some one else. It was momentum of the movement and its idea that convinced Sharif Brothers to see their political survival in the support of the movement.

The movement had wide support of the masses and Nawaz Sharif and his party just expressed political wisdom to win more mass support through focus on the agenda of Lawyers' Movement. Without the help of Nawaz's PML the movement could not fail altogether and might prolong some more months and could end successfully. The cause of the lawyers and public support behind it was so forceful that even PPP under Benazir when they were in opposition had been manipulating the issue through the support to it. Therefore it was force and potential of the movement that won the decisive support of PML-N.

Nawaz Sahrif, since elections, risked a break up of the coalition which he deemed necessary to wrest power from the establishment in case of rendering support to Lawyers' Movement. He could be deprived of the government as it was not hard for PPP to make government without PML-N with the help of MQM and other parties⁵³ but it was impossible for him to go against the ideals of the Lawyers' Movement. Nawaz could lose a strong political and public support in case of turning against his past pledges. The main point of Nawaz's election agenda was the restoration of judiciary. He had made candidates of his party to have oath of the Lawyers' Movement. The Concerned Citizens Pakistan Chairman Hamid Zamand nd members of civisl society had requested Nawaz Sharif to support the cause of and independent judiciary, a request honoured by the chief.⁵⁴ PPP abstained from the presidential elections of Musharraf. Iftikhar chose right ally in Nawaz Sharif as PPP had close ties with Musharraf.

The decision given against him proved the fact that his political as well as personal survival was conditioned with the reinstatement of the deposed judges. He was a party who did not get any benefit from the existing judiciary in contrary to Zardari who had had a series of charges dropped, including a murder case after the post-PCO judiciary approved an amnesty that had been granted by President Musharraf to politicians, which was tailored to help the PPP.⁵⁵ On the other hand he and Lawyers' Movement

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had close contacts. It was blessing of the deposed judges that he could return the country. CJ Iftikhar not only gave verdict for his return ruling out on 23 August that Nawaz had inalienable right to return but also was ready to call prime minister in contempt of court on sending him back to Riyadh.⁵⁶

In the light of above discussion it can be concluded that the Lawyers' Movement possessed almost all the characteristics defined for a movement. The discontent from the autocratic rule facilitated the rise of movement though the basic cause of the start of movement was the sack of CJ Chaudhry. The movement was a mass movement as it attracted the support of common people and it was also well organized movement compared to other movements in Pakistan. The movement chased its target "the reinstatement of the deposed judges' through various innovative and traditional tools and methods in the face of a number of counter measures adopted by the government. The movement succeeded due to its on tempo and momentum which caused the political forces to support the movement and help in its success and the impact of the political forces was not only factor for the success of the movement. The support of Civil Society and some political parties especially PML (N)'s contribution in the final stage should be observed in the light of this principle.

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END-NOTES:

¹ Only Jamat-i-Islami considers it partially successful. Jamat views the objective of the movement 'the restoration of judiciary of 3rd November 2007' was not fulfilled.

² *Dawn*, 17 March 2009.

³ *The Post* (Lahore, 2 November 2007)

⁴ *The Post* (Lahore, 3 November 2007)

⁵ MQM even though did not oppose the basic idea of the movement 'the freedom of justice'.

⁶ *The Post* (Lahore, 23 April 2008)

⁷ Editorial, *The Nation* (Lahore, 17 March 2009)

⁸ Sohail Waraich, *Adlia kay Arooj-o-Zwal ki Kahani* (Lahore: Sagar Publishers, 2007), p.21.

⁹ *The Post* (Lahore, 2 September 2007)

¹⁰ Aitzaz Ahsan's address to Okara Bar Association, *The Post* (Lahore, 8 April 2008)

¹¹ *The Post* (Lahore, 15 April 2008)

¹² Asif Zardari's interview to BBC Urdu Service, 25 April 2008

¹³ Hussain H. Zaidi, "Strategy of Long March," *Dawn* (Lahore, 14 February 2009)

¹⁴ *The Post* (Lahore, 7 November 2007)

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Dawn* (Lahore: 19 October 2007)

¹⁷ *The Post* (Lahore, 6 May 2008)

¹⁸ *Daily Times* (Lahore, 21 July 2008), also see *Daily Times* (Lahore, 3 November 2008)

¹⁹ On November 3, 2007 President Musharraf, as Chief of Army staff, in exercise of powers under the Proclamation of Emergency promulgated Provisional Constitution Order (PCO) under the Constitution was held in abeyance, fundamental rights were suspended, and all judges of Supreme Court and High courts were required to take fresh oaths while they could not call in question the PCO or imposed Emergency. More than sixty judges who refused to take oath or were not liked by the government were dismissed. This emergency and PCO were imposed due to the fear of the Supreme Court decision against the validity of the presidency of Pervez Musharraf. *Dawn* (Lahore, 4 November 2007)

²⁰ *The Post Monitoring*, 2 September 2007, 4 May 2008.

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- ²¹ Press Conferences of Aitzaz Ahsan, *The Post* (Lahore, 2, 9 April 2008). Sher Afghan blamed Nawaz Sharif and Shabaz Sharif for planning that attack.
- ²² *The Post* (Lahore, 20 April 2008)
- ²³ *Daily Times* (Lahore, 27 November 2007)
- ²⁴ *The Post* (Lahore, 11 November 2007)
- ²⁵ *The post* (Lahore, 13 November 2007)
- ²⁶ *The Nation* (Lahore, 13 May 2008)
- ²⁷ Khalil Ahmad, "Long March – a Moral Victory", *The Post* (Lahore, 01 July 2008)
- ²⁸ 'Editorial,' *The Post* (Lahore, 3 February 2008), also see *The Post* (Lahore, 23 September 2008)
- ²⁹ *The Post* (Lahore, 18 January 2008)
- ³⁰ Jameel Sindhu, *Chief Justice ki Ghair Fuali par Wokla ki Jiddojuhd* (Lahore: Lawyers' Park, 2007) pp. 69, 102, 126.
- ³¹ Waraich, *Adlia kay Arooj-o-Zwal ki Kahani*, p.21.
- ³² *The Post* (Lahore, 2 September 2007)
- ³³ Sindhu, *Chief Justice ki Ghair Fuali*, pp.363-365.
- ³⁴ *The Post* (Lahore, 16 April 2008)
- ³⁵ The Address of Bhagwandas to the Balochistan Bar Association on 22 April 2008, *The Post* (Lahore, 23 April 2008)
- ³⁶ *The Post* (Lahore, 29 April 2008)
- ³⁷ *Text of Aitzaz's open letter to lawyers*
- ³⁸ *The Post* (Lahore, 6,7 October 2007)
- ³⁹ Abdul Khalique Junejo, "Some Lessons from the Laywyers' Struggle," *Dawn* (Lahore, 11 April 2009)
- ⁴⁰ Statement issued by the Asian Human Rights Commission, 3 March 2008
- ⁴¹ <http://links.org.au/node/305>, 25 November 2009
- ⁴² Sindhu, *Chief Justice ki Ghair Fuali*, p.29.
- ⁴³ *Dawn* (Lahore, 29 October 2008)
- ⁴⁴ Interview Muhammad Ramzan Chaudhry, *The Post* (Lahore, 2 September 2007)
- ⁴⁵ *The Nation* (Lahore, 13 May 2008)
- ⁴⁶ *The Post* (Lahore, 15 May 2008)
- ⁴⁷ Arshad Chaudhry, "Civil Society Organisations Need Coordination," *Pakistan Observer* (Lahore, 4 November 2009)
- ⁴⁸ <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp>, 25 November 2009
- ⁴⁹ Sindhu, *Chief Justice ki Ghair Fuali*, p.45.

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⁵⁰ Jalilur Rehman, "Lawyers Awaiting SC Decision Keep Fingers Crossed," *The Post* (Lahore, 29 October 2007)

⁵¹ *Dawn* (Lahore, 27 November 2007)

⁵² Tariq Rahman, "Victory for Democracy," *Dawn* (Lahore, 17 March 2009)

⁵³ Nasim Ahmad, "Has Judges' issue been resolved?," *The Post* (Lahore, 5 May 2008)

⁵⁴ *The Post* (Lahore, 3 February 2008)

⁵⁵ *The Post* (Lahore, 15 April 2008)

⁵⁶ Asad Muhammad Khan, "SC Orders to Let Nawaz Return," *The Post* (Lahore, 31 October 2007)

Review Article

**THE (AB)USES OF HISTORY THROUGH INVENTION OF
TRADITION(S)**

Irfan Waheed Usmani
National University of Singapore
Singapore

Roy Porter, Gibbon, *Making History*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1988.

Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Morton Guerre*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1983.

This review article deals with the theme of uses and abuses of history through invention of tradition by engaging the perspectives of Roy Porter, Eric Hobsbawm and Natalie Zemon Davis. Besides, providing detailed instances of invention of tradition, it also tries to identify certain areas of invention of tradition as highlighted by the respective authors. More significantly, it also delves into the more profound themes of historian's vision of history. It also traces certain commonalities among these works by analyzing their themes in between the lines so as to maintain the continuity of argument.

(I)

Roy Porter's book *Gibbon: Making History* though primarily may be described as a biography of Edward Gibbon, yet Porter's scholarly treatment makes it an invaluable addition in historiographical literature. More than a traditional biography it may be more appropriately be described as a

discourse analysis of Life and Works of Gibbon, particularly his *magnum opus*, *The Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*. Simultaneously it also serves as insightful treatise on historian's craft. Furthermore those aspects make it more relevant for our consumption deal with the use of past, imagination and the role of historian in making history. It also highlights some of the earliest instances of invention of tradition in History.

Porter makes one thing abundantly clear is the use of past for the present day purposes. While alluding to this aspect he cites example of Georgian times that how all English history writing could be identified 'first by its dynastic and later by party allegiances'. It further highlights that how history provided idiom for politics (p. 18) The Georgian historians did not try to seal off or detach their findings from the concerns of present. He further avers that despite their claims of objectivity they did not keep themselves aloof from ideological mould rather they tried to become part of it. They also believed that present must learn from the past. Tudor historian's vision of history also emphasized the need of political use of history for rulers or more specifically it was confined to presenting maxims for the guidance of the state (p.17). In Porter's opinion the orthodox use of history also stressed the legitimization of present by the weight of the past (p.21). He also provides insights about the use of history by various Christian sects at that time such as Diests, Catholics, Protestants and Jesuists for vindication of their claims (pp. 18 - 24).

Porter also brings to the fore the crucial role played by imagination in historical construction, by referring to Gibbon's use of imagination as he shows that how imagination comes into play through the 'supportive play of fancy and learning (p.162) Taking further cue from Gibbon's use of imagination, he refers to three pronged role played by imagination in history that besides, being instrumental in construction of history, it also helps to create historian as well as his readership (p.160). This work also underscores some other aspects of historian's relationship with past. For instance, it presents past as a field on which historian can exercise his rational choice or judgement (p.10). The main challenge for historian according to Gibbon's opinion is to recapture the lost past within the fleeting present (p.161).

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The work this besides illuminating us with Gibbon's vision of history further seeks to recapture the visions of his contemporaries as well. Gibbon considered all history as contemporaneous long before Croce and Collingwood. Further elucidating his vision Porter maintains that 'for Gibbon history was worthless unless it constituted a school of virtue...it must be instructive' (pp. 10-11). Gibbon always believed that it must be virtuous. Another peculiar aspect of Gibbon's vision highlighted by Porter is that for Gibbon the underlying purpose of writing book on Roman decline was to instruct British Empire. This work also underscores the visions of history of the distinguished contemporaries of Gibbon such as Bacon, Hume, Lord Boling Brook and Voltaire.

Bacon accorded primacy to the role of imagination and reasoning in historical construction (p.33). While further explicating its details, Porter avers that 'Bacon saw the intellect as a tripartite hierarchy. At its apex reason was the engine for understanding 'he causes... beneath reason, there was meaning while poetry was feigned history''(Ibid). Hume concentrated on political realities of the time. He supported strong centralized dispensation not for the reason that he desired to support despotism rather the circumstances demanded so. He was of the view that only a strong centralized government, aided by constitutional checks and enjoying support of public opinion could have ensured fundamental freedoms of security, property and capital (p.12). Lord Boling Brooke's vision of History was characterized by didactic and utilitarian impulses as he was in favour of use of history to bring a constant improvement in public and private virtue (p.30). Voltaire conception of History was quite pessimistic. 'History was essentially a tale of darkness ignorance, error and terror... The past was a dream from which were trying to awake' (p. 68). He considered history 'Just a pack of tricks we play on the dead' (ibid).

One also finds two instances of earliest forgeries in history through the invention of tradition. First was exposed by Lorenzo Valla – an Italian Humanist, who through his meticulous research proved donation of Constantine was a forged document. This document had conferred ecclesiastical power to Roman Emperor and the state, virtually to a creation of a sort of 'ecclesiastical polity in perpetuity' and created a situation which Porter describes as taking up of church under its protective arm by the state.

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Afterwards, the church started playing a legitimizing role for state (p.19). Porter further highlights how Richard Bentley (a friend of Issac Newton, who also served as Master of Trinity College) proved that the epistles of Phalaris, believed by Temple to be most of ancient of Greek writings were a late antiquity forgery (p.31).

The most conspicuous theme of this work is Porter's insights about historian's craft, which he has extracted from the detailed study of Life and works of Gibbon. First observation pertains to the role of historian in constructing history (p.162). It is in fact historian who provides the façade of objectivity to a work of history. Notwithstanding, the claims of dispassionate neutrality no historian can keep himself out of his work. While further highlighting, Gibbon's notions of objectivity, Porter writes that impartiality arouse not out of a fetishism of facts but from the operations of mind, from analysis, imagination, wit and capacity to hold judgement in suspense' (p. 163).

While analyzing the implications of role of historian as well as limitations of objectivity, impartiality and neutrality, one may further stretch it to inventions of tradition in this sense that pivotal role of historian in construction of history brings him in a position of imposing his own judgement. This role of historian is also recognized by those at the helm of affairs. Thus everything boils down to manipulation of history through historian. The overall impression which, one gathers from this work is that whole discourse of historical construction appears perilously closer to post modernists conception of History which Berkhofer fully epitomizes in these words 'normal history orders past for the sake of authority and therefore power'. Foucault also draws the same conclusion 'we want historian to confirm our belief that the present rests upon profound intentions and immutable necessities'.

(II)

Eric Hobsbawn's edited volume on invention of tradition brings to the fore the most interesting examples of use of imagination in history for some ulterior motives, which amounts to intentional and purposeful distortion of

history. The element of imagination plays a pivotal role in historical construction as historians work upon the sources of past in new ways. They make use of ancient materials to construct invented tradition of a novel type, for quite novel purposes (p.6).

Hobsbawm defines invented traditions as "a set of practices normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rule and of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition" (p.1). The underlying motive behind their invention is to establish continuity with a suitable historical past. Hobsbawm isolates three types of invented tradition. The first category comprises those traditions which are aimed at establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups real or artificial communities. The second category seeks to establish or legitimize 'institutions, status or relations of authority'. The third category consists of traditions which are invented for the purpose of socialization. Such traditions are directed towards 'inclusion of beliefs, value systems and convention of behaviour' (p.9). According to Hobsbawm the traditions belonging to last two categories are devised, whereas, he describes first category as prevalent. In the introduction of this work he also highlights that why these are so interesting or attractive for historians. He provides two plausible explanations: first, as these shed a considerable light on the human relationship to the past, therefore, in this capacity they belong to their own subject and craft. Second, on account of the fact that these use 'history as a legitimator of action and cement group cohesion' (p.12). The most conspicuous theme of this volume is that it provides scores of instances of their invention as well as their diverse usages in history. This not only makes this work quite interesting but also lays bare their different layers of meaning besides, highlighting the underlying motives of their invention. The most explicit example of use of invented tradition can be found in their usage in construction of nationalism either by states or by different social groups and communities. This work quite aptly demonstrates that how German, French, Welsh, Scottish nationalists used invented traditions in their nationalist constructions. Hobsbawm also includes Palestinian and Jewish nationalism as other explicit manifestations of invention of traditions. Hobsbawm, in the last chapter of the work, delves deeply into the whole discourse of development of German nationalism particularly during the period 1870 – 1914, through a systematic, well thought out and organized process of mass

producing traditions. It further shows how the Germans managed to forge union and succeeded in establishing their bonds of continuity to the new Empire through ingenious use of invented traditions ranging from mythology and folklore to the short hand cartoon stereotypes to the definition of nation in terms of its enemies (p.278). These may further be stretched to Nazi symbolism as well as Nuremberg party rallies. Hobsbawm also makes an interesting observation about the dominant strand of German nationalism was its definition in terms of *otherizing* the others as 'like many liberated people Germany was more easily defined by what it was against' (p.278). While alluding to the French nationalism, he concurs that 'whatever the historic or other continuities embedded in the modern concept of 'France' and the French... these very concepts must include a constructed or invented component' (p. 14)

Hugh Trevor Roper's article provides very penetrating insights into the whole discourse of construction of Scottish nationalism based upon invented traditions. It shows how the whole concept of a distinct Highland culture and tradition is a retrospective invention. This article further highlights the role of certain personalities in this whole process such as David Malcolm, James Macpherson, Rev. John Macpherson and Sobieski Stuarts. It provides very interesting details about how James Macpherson picked up Irish ballads in Scotland and wrote an epic based on these in which he transformed the whole scenario from Ireland to Scotland and then dismissed the genuine Irish ballads as mere reflection of these. Later, Rev. John Macpherson wrote a critical Dissertation in which he provided necessary construction (p.17). It further underscores the role of Sobieski brothers though they were 'insolent pretenders' in 'putting the Scottish Highlanders on the map through their tradition of erudition, their fabrication of myth of the costume of the clan' and their book *Vestiarium Scoticum* was shot through with pure fantasy and bare faced forgery. In nut shell this article provides vivid details of whole process of creation of an independent Highland tradition and its imposition in three stages, with its outward symbolism, badges on the whole Scottish nation and proves it as a work of the later 18th and the early 19th centuries.

Prys Morgan's article on Welsh nationalism may be described as the best exposition of the whole process of constructed nationalism. It depicts it as highly self conscious nationalism. It shows how systematic efforts to revive

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past started from music and how these efforts of 'un self conscious survival' developed into a discourse of 'self aware revival'. It would not be out of place to sketch out the main stages of this whole process i.e. (i) publication of books on music by Edward James (ii) attempts to revive oral tradition of Bardistry (iii) Reconstruction of Durids traditions (iv) Re discovery of the celts (v) systematic efforts directed towards revival of language from 1660 to 1730 (vi) invention of new words for new things and actions (vii) invention of songs which culminated in the adoption of the 'Land of my Father, as national anthem (viii) construction of national heroes such as Owain Glyndwr, Thomas Gray, Madoc, Dafydd ap Gwilym and many others (ix) Launching of movement to make the Welsh understand that their landscape must be cherished (x) Attempts of heraldry of culture through construction and dissemination of various insignias of nationhood viz three ostrich plumes of Prince of Wales, re appearance of Red dragon as Royal badge in 1807, the substitution of the daffodils for leek as a national symbol in 1907, use of ideogram or logo of Druid, use of triple harp as a symbol of Wales, adoption of Welsh mountain goat as a Welsh symbol.

The writer opines that the new ceremonials the symbols and insignia all served to help Welshmen visualize their own country and they had an exceptional importance in a national community that was not a political state. This article further provides insights into certain other development like the publication of a Royal Commission on Education Report and Welsh reaction which provided further impetus to Welsh nationalism in terms of closing of gap between Welsh patriots and the dissenters and Methodists (p.94).

This article further informs us about the role of three other important elements in the development of Welsh nationalism through invention of tradition. Firstly, personalities such as William Owen, Lolo, Lewis Morris, Pezron, Edward Lhuyd, Ben Johnson, John Thomas and Evan Evans. Secondly, role of societies such Morris Circle, the circles of Gomer, The Welsh Manuscripts Society, the canbrian Archeological Association, the Public School at Llandovery and the Saint David's University College at Lampeter. It further argues that how these societies fully exploited the potentialities of print capitalism and how they reached the common people. Thirdly, Eisteddfod which denotes revival of tradition of music and poetic

competition dating back to 1176, it virtually developed into a national institution, the highpoint of this tradition was reached in late nineteenth century when elaborate costume regalia and symbolism were associated with it and this institution grew into a veritable channel of communication with masses. Trevor Roper also shows the paradoxical impact of invention of tradition on Welsh people and the consequent contradiction which caused incredulity towards myth making (p.98).

The development of national languages constitutes another important domain for the consumption of invented traditions. Hobsbawm opines that "standard national languages which are learned in schools and written are in fact initially developed by a 'smallish elites'." Their standardization and construction also involved invention of tradition. Hobsbawm while citing a French historian of Flemish language reveals that Flemish taught in Belgium today is not the language which 'the mothers and grandmothers of Flanders spoke to their children' (p. 14).

A substantial portion of this work focuses on the use of invented traditions by monarchies. Interestingly, the use of these traditions varies given the nature and function of monarchies i.e whether they are autocratic, constitutional, imperialistic etc. This issue has been dealt at length by David Cannadine in his case study of invention of tradition by British monarchy. Through this case study the writer seeks to explain the subsequent changes in the context and nature of English royal ceremonial. It shows that how invention of tradition worked wonders in context of transformation of the image of British monarchy before public which had been badly tarnished on account of so many reasons such as public scandals associated with the lives of the monarchs, political ambitions of certain monarchs, pathetic indifference of Queen Victoria towards the affairs of monarchy and irresponsible role of British press.

It vividly demonstrates that how the monarchs like as Queen Victoria (since 1877), Edward Seventh, George VI, and Elizabeth II made frequent use of invented traditions to bolster the image of British monarchy. It describes the period from 1877 to 1914 as heyday of invented traditions in Britain. This assertion is substantiated with these instances (i) The appointment of Queen Victoria as empress of India and associated ceremonies, (ii) Golden Jubilee

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celebrations of Queen Victoria's accession to throne in 1887, in the same year commemorative medals in the manner of Campaign Medals were also issued, (iii) Creation of the Indian orders, the Royal Victorian orders, the Orders of Merit and of Companions of Honour, revival of grand ceremonies for Knights of the Garter and of Bath; (iv) Celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee which presented interesting example of celebration of second Jubilee within a decade; (v) Victoria's Jubilee procession to West Minister Abbey; (vi) Embarking of Prince Edward on imperial tour of Canada and India; (vii) Imperial tours of Duke of York in 1910s; (viii) Victoria's funeral in 1901; (ix) Coronation of Edward VII ; (x) Revival of state opening of parliament as full dress ceremonial occasion with a procession in the state coach through the streets of London; (xi) Edward VII 's funeral also added new dimension to the invention of tradition in terms of innovation of his lying-in-state at West Minister hall; (xii) The coronation and Durbar of George V and the investiture of his son as Prince of Wales at Carnarron Castle.

Two other aspects make this period more distinguishable in terms of invention of tradition. One may be described a growth of interest in musical histories and patriotic hymns. For instance, there were more musical histories and choral settings of the national anthem during 1890 – 1910 than in any period before or since. Second was a systematic effort to enhance the grandeur of imperial buildings and monuments. The construction of the Admiralty Arch, the re-fronting of Buckingham palace and the construction of the Victorian monuments sufficiently corroborates this point. The period between 1914 and 1952 further saw five conspicuous novelties in terms of invention of tradition:

- 1- Invention in the ceremonies of Royal marriages also adds another dimension to this debate. The marriage of Duke of York provides its most explicit example. It was significant in this sense that for the first time a prince had been wed in the Abbey since five hundred year. This was coincided with the projection of new meaning of royal marriage of Royal marriages. Now these no longer called Mary's wedding but construed as 'Abbey wedding' or 'Royal wedding' or 'National wedding' or even 'People's wedding'. (p.151)

- 2- The plantation of trees throughout the empire was an innovation particularly began since the coronations of George VI and Elizabeth II.
- 3- Issuance by Post office of specifically designed commemorative stamps starting from the times of George V's silver jubilee.
- 4- In 1932 there started the Christmas broadcasts and British monarch quite readily grasped that opportunity. It made extensive use of the enormous potentialities of print media to enhance 'the image of the monarch as the father figure of his people speaking to his subject in the comforts and privacy of their homes' (p. 139)
- 5- The monarchy in Queen Elizabeth's period saw further innovation in royal ritual in terms of the enhanced rule of the Queen consort and Queen Dowager. Another conspicuous addition in the realm of invention of tradition may be described as the broadcasting and recoding of such ceremonies. According to the writer, "since 1958... all have been essays in television rituals"(p.159). The last portion of the article deals with the meaning or symbol of all these exercises and what do these intend to convey to people.

Another use of invention of tradition may be described as its usage for imperialistic purposes. In this context one may highlight their three purposes: to deflect the attention of public opinions from issues of domestic politics, as part of ideologies of imperialism these are meant to create 'temporal distancing through the institutionalization of what Partha Chatterjee terms as the rule of colonial difference; to legitimize imperial rule; and to develop power elites among locals through their engagement in patron-client relationship. Bernard Cohen's article broadly deals with these themes.

States and governments also encourage the invention of traditions ostensibly for different reasons. According to Hobsbawm these are used as means of social subordination. This problem appears manageable in those states where social structure remains unchanged or static. But it proves more intractable in those states which undergo the process of modernization (p.266). Cohn's and Cannadine's articles also bring to the fore use of invention of tradition by British governments to compliment foreign policy objectives and expansionist motive during the hey-days of

imperialism and to bolster the staggering image of the state when Britain was caught up in the throes of decline. For instance, from 1870s onwards in Britain the position of the Head of state was ceremoniously enhanced. During the last decades of nineteenth century successive British governments tried to project crown as the emblem of British race in their perusal of imperialistic ambitions. Before 1877 both Gladstone and Disraeli even showed reservations concerning the indifferent attitude of Queen. In 1877 Disraeli conferred the title of Empress of India to Victoria, in 1897 on the occasion of celebration of Diamond Jubilee, the British Prime Minister Joseph Chamberlain invited Colonial Prime Ministers and troops to parade in the diamond jubilee procession.

Another example of the use of invented traditions by the political governments is provided by Hobsbawm how German government negotiated with the problem of overcoming the contradictions between the religious realities of Holy Roman Empire and secular national aspirations of the German people so that state could be fitted into the nineteenth century nationalist mould. This was achieved through invention of traditions (p.271). The case of Third French Republic was even more chequered as it could not rely on History before 1789 and after as well on account of its divisive role, serious nature of differences among the pioneers of French revolution, therefore, unlike other nations the French republicans could not afford to fall back on the cult of founding fathers. Keeping in view these contradictions French resorted to the selective use of past symbols until 1914, therefore, it is not surprising they did not make use of themes of national past on its postage stamps till so late (p.272).

The articles of Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger provide further insights into the even more variety of diversified themes of the uses of tradition. These range from domains of sports to working class. Ranger's article deals with invention of tradition both by colonizers and the colonized. Besides this it also provides useful insights into the various levels of local response when they confronted the challenges of invention of traditions as a part of western imperialistic agenda of order and control. Hobsbawm further refers to the traditions invented by educational institutions, elites and middle class. Bernard Cohen's article provides

insights into the British invention of traditions in colonial India in the domain of Law.

In the conclusion of this review it would not be out of place to problematize this theme by focussing on certain generalization, inferences and other problems highlighted by the writers. Alluding to the question why traditions are invented Hobsbawm argues that they are invented in order to respond to the changing needs of society. Old usages have to be adapted in new condition, by making use of old models with new purposes. While further explicating this point he avers that 'old institutions with established functions, references to the past and rituals and idioms and practices' require some adaptations keeping in view of cataclysmic changes.

He also makes another very important observation that invented traditions become less important for these societies in which the past becomes increasingly less relevant as a model or precedent for most forms of human behaviour. But he makes it explicitly clear that this generalization does not apply in the field of what might be called the public life of the citizen and to certain extent public forms of socialization for instances schools (pp.11-12). He further seeks to assess their impact on history. He is of the view that these affect history in two ways: first, through distortion; second, by becoming part of the memory. Notwithstanding those differences, the element of invention is particularly clear as the history which becomes part of pool of knowledge or part of ideological consciousness of the nation state or movement is qualitatively different. What is preserved through the invention of tradition is actually quite different from what has been preserved in the popular memory as the former comprises the selected, written, pictured popularized and institutionalized by those whose interests it is supposed to serve (p.13).

Terence Ranger makes two important observations about this phenomenon. At times they prove counterproductive once they have served a good deal of practical purposes to invent tradition than to modify these and bring flexibility in these after their invention (p.236). Hobsbawm believes that invented traditions often compete with each

other and in their competition only the more useful ones survive. The overall inference one may draw from this debate is that contrary to the general perception that modernity would erode the tradition, it has tended to solidify it by making available new avenue to the traditionalists, conservatives, orthodox and fundamentals to articulate their agenda much vigorously through their appropriation and adaptations.

(III)

Zemon Davis' book also deals with the themes of abuses of history, role of imagination and problematic of false identity. It also brings to the fore the issue of invention of tradition albeit through a different spectacle, i.e., issue of adoption of a false or invented identity by a pretender Arnaud du Tilh who took on the identity of Martin Guree. Unlike the other historians who have dealt with this issue at macro level, Zemon Davis seeks to deal this issue at micro level. Her treatment of this theme appears similar to the approach of a novelist who opens so many perspectives at the same time. Through her micro historical approach she explores simultaneously so much varied dimensions of invention of tradition pertaining to lives of individuals such as invented tradition, invented identity, invented marriage and invented heritage. Though these take place as an outcome of an individual's act of forgery, however, these have greater implication for society as these amount to stealing of a heritage, different form of deception, adultery etc. If one stretches them further these imply overturning the conventions of community. The involvement of community in the issues of identity leads one towards another debate such as whether the individual possesses the capacity to adopt or shape and identity in accordance to his choice or whims or this identity is formed by society at large. The erid of this story suggests that community shapes individuals.

The acceptance of identity depends upon community. From this, one may conclude that invention of identity or tradition relies upon community. Arnaud du Tilh's story is a case in point. For instance, as long as community provided a tacit recognition or acceptance to him in his role of as Martin Guree he faced no problem. On the other once he was challenged by the community, he landed in trouble. Through the exploration of this theme the author takes us into another debate about the problematic of popular memory and invented traditions. One finds this

difference quite conspicuous as invented tradition is different from what is retained in the popular memory.

END-NOTES

¹ Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (London: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp.14, 31.

² *Ibid.*, p.282.

³ *Ibid.*, p.282.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (London: Anchor, 1955).

⁶ Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, pp. 48 – 49, 89 – 90.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 91 – 92.

⁸ See for instance, Marie-Helene Tesniere and Gifford Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (eds.), *Creating French Culture: Treasures from the Bibliotheque Nationale de France* (London: Routlage, 1995)

⁹ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975)

¹⁰ Ranajit Guha and Gyatari Spivak (eds.), *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New Dehli: OUP, 1988)

Book Reviews

BOOK REVIEW: MONA OZOUF, *FESTIVALS AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION* (LONDON: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1988)

Mona Ozouf's book is a revisionist study of French Revolution, which analyzes the use of festivals in redefining the temporal and spatial setting. She discusses the utilization of allegorical symbols to interpret an event and to avoid the signs of the middle ages and the period of Royal absolutism. Ozouf arranges her argument by presenting the oppositions between popular spontaneity and central planning, and community unanimity and factional transgression. Thus French historians Jules Michelet (1798-1874) and Albert Mathiez (1874-1932) are compared with François Victor Alphonse Aulard (1849-1928) and Edger Quinet (1803-75) in the historiography of traditional fetes, and Durkheim is contrasted with Freud – "the two major philosophers of the festival".¹

By conceptualizing the discursive functions of the revolutionary festivals, Ozouf indicates "the beginning of a new era".² She negates the commonly held belief about the attribution of festivals to the middle class and contends how the festivals functioned in the mass culture. The festivals of 1789 – 1799 provided the grounds for the legitimization of modern French social and political identities, and it was through festivals that "the transfer of sacrality onto political and social values was now accomplished, thus defining a new legitimacy and a hitherto inviolate patrimony, in which the cult of mankind and the religion of the social bond, the bounty of industry and the future of France would co-exist."³ Inspired by Durkheim, Ozouf sees the festivals from the general dimension of inclusion and exclusion of the members of community. Like Durkheim, she contends that festivals should not be taken as something imposed by the revolution, rather these are the means by which new social relationships are constituted. Festivals provide a utopian vision in order to fulfill social and psychic needs for organization and order in a community. Moving beyond the categorization of festivals by their explicit themes like celebrating victories, Ozouf looks for the individual perspectives. Here she rejects the very idea of using political division as her key for interpretation. Her theory lies at the nexus of historiographical approach, taken from Alphonse Aulard, Albert Mathiez, Daniel Guerin, and Albert Soboul, and her own ethnographic observations.

Ozouf traces the history of main revolutionary festivals. She argues that the first half was an "astonishing continuity we have discovered in the festivals of the French Revolution".⁴ She discusses the utopian instances that are

common to all the festivals of the Revolution. She shows how the time, space and identity are reshaped through the celebration of festivals, i.e., the introduction of a new calendar that was integral to the festivals, substitution of life cycles for the historical chronology, and replacement of the real historical personalities with the allegorical figures. With the concept of time, the spatial paradigm was also changed as the festivals shifted from the indoor confinement to the outside public sphere. This notion was further strengthened by the focal point of reference i.e., the civic altar where the oath of allegiance was sworn. Thus the festivals visualize the nation into a single entity by wiping out previous social hierarchies like rich and poor. These festivals mirrored Rousseau's concept of 'transparent general will'. However, the use of Greco-Roman allegorical symbols generally proved ineffective and limited to aspire the general audience, who clung to the fixed traditional beliefs and religious symbols. Whatever the case might be the festivals did succeed in forming a civil religion whose basis were secular and reasonable.

Although the book is a useful addition to the scholarship of French revolution yet the reader may find few problems in it. One of the major problems in Ozouf's theory is the reduction of festivals to the discursive practices, thus leaving the multifaceted realities of the fetes untouched. Moreover, the central focus of the book i.e. festivals is not shown in the larger context of the Revolution with its obvious elements of violence. For instance, Republican marriages (tying nude males and females and putting them in river, throwing child out of window from the upper floors) were the part of revolutionary violence as well as festivals. Ozouf does mention that the masses were attached to their traditional symbols but does not identify the impact of that attachment on the festivals.

The book uses Tocquevillian themes⁵ of the enforcement of a uniform social vision on individualistic community by a centralized government and mentions that egalitarianism can only be achieved through fear; the Utopian character of the festivals and the notion that history intrudes to undermine access to utopian transcendence. With it Ozouf overemphasizes the uniformity of revolutionary cultural policy and its enforcement. It is hard to ignore the difference between planning and its execution on spontaneous celebration of the first festival in 1790. Thus, Ozouf oscillates between Durkheimian idealism and Tocquevillian tragedy.

Ozouf's argument for the social view of festivals suffers by essentialism that tries to move away from contradictory evidence. For example, the assertion that "in the Revolution, every assembly is *ipso facto* a festival berates the

carnavalesque performances which are discarded by mentioning them as cultural[ly] archai[c]", "atypical", and bearing "no resemblance" to the central festivals from which she derives her model of "ceremonial unanimity".⁶ Ozouf notes that "with festivals of this type, we see a movement toward a different model," one in which spontaneous popular action seems clearly to predominate over centralized elite conceptions and planning.⁷ It appears quite strange that Ozouf conceptualizes this model without engaging Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie⁸ and Natalie Davis⁹ to Victor Turner and Mikhail Bakhtin, who are considered authority on carnival tradition. Without substantiating her point of view, Ozouf rejects the tendencies of Freudian transgression which explains various forms of resistance, and extra-moral entertainment in the festivals.

The single mindedness impression of revolutionary cultural festivals may be attributed to the author's heavy dependence on the official government reports. Such documents leave more to be said on the enactment of festivals as these projects on the official perspective. According to Gyatari Spivak, official archives hide more and informs less.¹⁰ Ozouf's sensitivity to her sources is missing, in this narrative. Lynn Hunt's observation seems interesting that the book is "characteristically French,... more an extended essay than a monographic study." Ozouf often uses vague statements, for example, she quotes different writers for the definition of festivals but not a single definition fits on whatever she describes in the book as a festival. Similarly, her use of rhetoric is a further addition to her sweeping statements like "there was no debate on the festivals in which it was not said that the festivals ought to be educative" without evidence. Apart from the above mentioned problems, the book is a useful reading into the discursive practices of festivals in the revolutionary France.

Hussain Ahmad Khan
National University of Singapore
Singapore

BOOK REVIEW: PHILIP DUNN, MANUELA DUNN MASCETTI AND R. A. NICHOLSON. *THE ILLUSTRATED RUMI – A TREASURY OF WISDOM FROM THE POET OF THE SOUL* (NY: PUBLISHED HARPER COLLINS, 2000)

Jalalu'ddin Rumi's literal meaning is Majesty for Religion and *the illustrated Rumi* is no doubt itself a majestic tribute to the work and life of Rumi. Poetry and mysticism are universal languages of the human soul and the 13th century mystical poet, Rumi, has displayed this combination in a magnificent fashion. His poetry celebrates the sacred in everyday existence.

Rumi is the prophet of today - the best selling poet in America – a cult. His work has held the historical taste and gist of his verses as well as revived the essence of Love, thus, with incredible brilliance he takes us all to the age in which he experienced the fundamental nature of love.

It shall interest the readers as it is a fresh interpretation with an artistic touch – Persian miniature, where scenes depict Rumi's various tales. Each tale is provided here in a modern rendering that keeps the flavour of this unique period of history, culture and of inspired, ardent beauty. With a foreword by Huston Smith, the text follows a style which is a mixture of parables and poetry interwoven with 150 illustrations and photos.

Illustrated Rumi covers selected tales from Rumi's renowned work, the Mathnawi, and from other of his works including a section from the Divani Shamsi Tabriz, written for his dearest life- friend, and from the Ruba'iyat of Jalau'ddin Rumi.

The forte and splendour of Mathnawi is the allegorical meaning attached to every parable and it is this skilful symbolism that Rumi limns through his verses. Its persistent themes are the longing the eternal, reunifying with Allah, enlightenment through love, and the merging of one's self with the universal spirit of the world.

MATHNAWI COMMENCES WITH THESE VERSES:

Listen to the reeds as they sway apart;
Hear them speak of lost friends.
At birth, you were cut from you bed,
Crying and grasping in separation.
Everyone listen, knowing your song.
You yearn for others, who know your name,
And the words to your lament.

We are all the same, longing to find our way back;
Back to the one, back to the only one.

From Book one of Mathnawi, tales like *King's Handmaiden*, *Grocer and the Parrot* and *The Lion and the Beasts – Truth Verses Action* enhance our understanding and perspective regarding spiritualism. These parables depict an act of good wearing the aspect of evil and difference between holy men common people, sinners. *The Graduate and the Boatman* explains a very fundamental reality that we face in our daily life. It says:

Selflessness works where knowledge fail,
In surrender you'll float, while in confidence sink.

The man who said I is a parable that has probably the most imperative message attached to it. It explicates the cardinal theme of Sufism, which is the spiritual state of the self-having-passed-away-in-God, or *fana*. Use of art makes the book more attractive.

The book two of Mathnawi has held the beauty of parables like *King and Two Slaves*, *Moses and the Shepherd*, *Tree of Life* and *the Man Who Swallowed the Snake*.

The miniature representing the court scene has been taken from Victoria and Albert museum used for tale, *King and Two slaves*. Rumi very simply questions and proves the depth of human nature which is diverse and the shallower it is, the dirtier the mirror of soul becomes. *Moses and the Shepherd* elucidate the fact that reason is powerless in expression of love. This theme strikes the walls of Al Hallaj's story and signalises the state when only God persists in human psyche and He is the only Origin of every soul.

The breath that's blown within the flute,
Who owns it, flute or vou?

Rumi's skill of telling stories is unique to the extent that he provokes the human mind with simple words veiled with profound meaning. *the Man Who Swallowed the Snake* is a parable that pertains the teaching of Prophet Muhammad; telling the disciple of the true darkness within the being cause only collapse from the horror. Another brilliant idea of finding the source not the form is beautifully conveyed in the tale, *The Tree of Life*.

Parables from book four, five and six of Mathnawi are carefully illustrated and relevantly placed with respective fable, giving a Persian medieval aura. The verses elicit the sense of spiritual basics that include the difference between soul and body; difference of perception, like attract the like and in Why God Said He Loved Moses, Rumi highlights the concept of Omnipotence of Lord Almighty.

A portion is celebrated with selective poems from the Mathnawi, the Divani Shamsi Tabriz and the Rubai'yat of Rumi.

This is not spring but another season,
Behind each passionate eye, another harmony lies.

Though every branch of every tress is dancing now,
They dance from another root.

In my opinion this is comprehensive book covering Rumi's all works portrayed in a new fashion with a tinge of art. This idiosyncratic aspect along with the style of text makes it worth relishing. The verses of the Mathnawi symbolize a highly adept spiritualization of Sufism while remaining entirely true to Islamic orthodoxy.

Nabiha Chaudhary
GC University,
Lahore

BOOK REVIEW: MARTIN W LEWIS AND KAREN E WIGEN, *THE MYTH OF CONTINENTS: A CRITIQUE OF METAGEOGRAPHY* (CALIFORNIA: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 1997)

Post-World War period (after the Second World War) has witnessed two great phenomena, de-colonization and globalization. These developments not only influenced the formulation and re-formulation of, what may be termed as, globe systems, but in many ways also affected the social fibre in various societies. Basic assumptions which had never been questioned before were now challenged in the light of new evidences and theories. 'Sensibilities' of other regions were imported, along with deploying local perspectives to analyse and to deconstruct the 'accepted truths'. Academicians from History, Political Science, Economics, Literature, Philosophy, and Sociology began to transform their respective disciplines according to new emerging realities. They visualized the sense of past-ness as a product of socio-political, and religious milieu.

Such sensibility not only intensified 'nationalism' in the post-colonial states but also provided an opportunity to the so-called western world (western Europe and USA) to re-structure their basic assumptions about the "other" (or parts of the world which were colonized during the past three centuries) and subsequently prompted them to think globally in local terms. One variant of such sensibility is termed as post-modernism.¹ It not only challenged and deconstructed the ungrounded, constructed truths, but also provided jargon to the marginalized, local expression. The book under review written by Martin W. Lewis² and Kären E. Wigen³ may be located within this context.

As the title suggests, the book questions the very understanding of continents, hence, de-constructs the contemporary metageography. The authors assign broad meanings to the metageography, a "set of spatial structures through which people order their knowledge of the world: the often unconscious frameworks that organize studies of history, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, or even natural history".⁴

Extracting strength from Saidian⁵ and Foucaultian paradigms,⁶ they argue that metageographical constructs are strongly imbued in cultural, sociological presumptions and imaginations, not to mention the power structure. Thus, these constructs are not only "clearly flawed", but also "constitute ideological structure".⁷ By focussing on the Eurasian world, the authors identify four myths regarding the metageography, quite prevalent in the English speaking world. These are related to the continents, nation-state, East and West, and geographical concordance (unity behind the variant phenomena).

While discussing the myths of continents, the authors argue that the continents are not only the land mass but also make our basic understanding about the natural world and human communities. Such understanding configures the humans in various categories, structuring their histories according the construct of the continent. The authors trace myth of continents from the classic period with sufficient evidence to substantiate their hypothesis. The constructs like East-West, Orient-Occident have a lot to do with local perception than actual reality.⁸

The book problematizes the configuration of world on the basis of economic development, like First, Second and Third worlds. For instance, Greece and Portugal are place in first category inspite of their low level of economic development. Emerging economic states, like Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea are placed in the Third World, although they have far much better growth rate than the states in the upper two categories.

By playing within somewhat similar paradigm of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*⁹ and Eric Hobsbawm's classic works,¹⁰ the authors describe the phenomenon of nationalism as vague and contradictory. "Does a map of language distribution bear much resemblance to the political map" (with few exceptions like Japan)?¹¹ The construction of a nation state hides many internal dynamics which are quite different from the external representation. For instance, northern part of Sudan has more cultural affinities with Egypt than the Southern Sudan. But maps and nationalism hide such invariant patterns.

While identifying the basic problems in metageography, the authors argue that "global geography can never be derived from a single phenomenon, for the single reason that there are no geographical phenomena per se".¹² They also emphasize the need of "quasi-taxonomic organization" of metageography extracting strength from "context specific" structures and ideas.¹³

The authors conceptualize a scheme, heuristic world regionalisation scheme, for re-thinking metageography. It may liberate the metageography from Eurocentric and environmental determinist discourses along-with assigning the regions a neutral nomenclature, acknowledging the historical and contextual specificity of world regions, and reaching for creative means to visualize and express unorthodox regional forms, the authors maintain. By this scheme, Europe is termed as Western Eurasia, Western Hemisphere as North America, Ibero-America, and African-America.

The book also criticises the teaching of geography in American schools and colleges. Every source of information (whether in the form of atlas, books, naps) available to the students and general public is based on misconceived deas, and ungrounded realities. Few scholars may dispute the heuristic scheme of understanding the world, but the book as a whole provides useful insights to many aspects of metageography. It has certainly enriched the available literature on the world history, and attracted our attention to re-think our geographical concepts within the cultural context by keeping in view the possible intrusion of various centres of power.

Hussain Ahmad Khan
(National University of Singapore, Singapore)

END-NOTES

¹ MC Lemon, *Philosophy of History* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.359.

² Martin W. Lewis is Associate Research Professor of Geography, Duke University, and author of *Wagering the Land: Ritual, Capital, and Environmental Degradation in the Cordillera of Northern Luzon, 1900-1986* (California, 1992) and *Green Delusions: An Environmentalist Critique of Radical Environmentalism* (1994).

³ Kären E. Wigen is Associate Professor of History, Duke University, and author of *The Making of a Japanese Periphery, 1750-1920* (California, 1995).

⁴ Martin W Lewis and Karen E Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (California: University of California Press, 1997), p. ix.

⁵ See Edward Said's classical-cum-controversial work, *Orientalism*.

⁶ Michel Foucault argues that "ideology does not question the domain of representations in general: it determines the necessary sequences that appear there; it defines the links that provide its connections; it expresses the law of compositions and decomposition that may rule it. It situates all knowledge in the space of representations, and by scanning that space it formulates the knowledge of the laws that provide its organization. It is in a sense the knowledge of all knowledge. But this duplication upon which it is based does not cause it to emerge from the field of representation; the aim of that duplication is to superimpose all knowledge upon a representation from whose immediacy one never escapes". Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of Human Sciences* (London: 1970), p. 237.

⁷ Lewis and Karen, *The Myth of Continents*, p. xi.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-103.

⁹ Benedict Anderson's work is considered as most classic one in identity studies. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Lahore: Ferozsons, 1983)

¹⁰ Eric Hobsbawm's many works can be quoted here. But *Nations and Nationalism since 1789* may be an interesting reading in this context. Other works like *Age of Revolution*, *Age of Capital*, *Age of Empire*, and edited volume, *The Inventions of Traditions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), also provides insights to the construction of nation states.

¹¹ Lewis and Karen, *The Myth of Continents*, p. 08.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.13.

Notes for Contributors

1. Research papers, concept papers, review articles, comments, rejoinders and book reviews-in English only should be sent in duplicate together with floppy in MS-Word to:

Tahir Kamran, Editor, *The Historian*, Department of History, GC University, Lahore (e-mail: history_department_gcu@yahoo.com).

2. Papers will only be accepted for consideration on the understanding that they are original contributions to the existing knowledge in the fields of History, International Relations, Current Affairs, Women Studies, Sociology, Journalism, Political Science, Philosophy, Anthropology, etc.

3. Each paper should be typed and should carry a margin of an inch and a half on the left-hand side of the typed page.

4. The first page of the research article should contain the title of the paper, the name(s), abstract and any acknowledgements.

5. Tables for the main text and each of its appendices should be numbered serially and separately. The title of each table should be given in a footnote immediately below the line at the bottom of the table.

6. End-notes should be numbered consecutively.

7. All references used in the text should be listed in alphabetical order of the author's surnames at the end of the text. References in the text should include the name(s) of author(s) with the year of publication in parentheses. Attempt should be made to conform to the style of the Journal. Further information on questions of style may be obtained from the editors.

8. We only publish research 'articles' after peer reviews from referees, while concept papers and review articles are non-refereed. The editors reserve the

right of publishing any article as concept paper on account of its length, lack of empiricism, argument and referees' reports.

9. The research article must be between 5000 to 8000 words, review articles should be between 3000 to 5000 words, while expected length for book reviews is between 1000 to 3000 words.

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