SAGAR

a south asia research journal

volume xxvi • 2018

EDITORS' NOTE

It has been a few years since *Sagar* made a shift to becoming a peer-reviewed journal. Marking further growth are the various submissions *Sagar* gets from scholars located globally. Contributors include graduate students as well as established researchers. We celebrate this diversity of voices and scholarship. This year, we decided to broaden our scope and approach, eschewing a theme, in favor of encouraging our writers to explore issues of their choice. The result was a collection of eclectic submissions from all over the globe, encompassing a variety of disciplines and countries in South Asia. This issue contains five pieces, produced by faculty and graduate scholars and translators, each selected after rigorous peer review. The final piece is an interview conducted by one of our collective members with Chanda Gowda, professor in sociology at Azim Premji University in Bengaluru.

Due to the open nature of our call for papers this year, the submissions address different questions that at first glance appear to have little overlap or connection. The opening and closing pieces of this issue show us the range of authors such as the Urdu short story writer, Saadat Hasan Manto, and the ways in which they use prose to address a number of concerns of the time such as the psychological violence and effects of British colonialism on the subcontinent (Reeck), to the problems Manto had with the direction the progressive movement amongst the Urdu intelligentsia during colonialism (Bruce). These pieces also bring to mind Partha Chatteree's work, particularly *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. The diversity of ways in which the British Raj affected the subcontinent and how it continues to manifest itself in this postcolonial era is something that Manto was well aware of. Sagar's theme of 'space' last year is also prevalent in these two pieces as well as Nadia Butt's exploration of the home and its significance as depicted in Pakistani serial dramas. In a similar vein, Holly Walters' piece addresses the reimagining of bodies, desires, and space in Vaishnava ritual practice. Examining the corporeal and non-

corporeal bodies through the presence of images and practice of rituals, she depicts how images populate religious spaces creating a link between the practitioner and non-corporeal presence of the deity. In conversation with this article is the piece by Sree Padma which explores the veneration of deities in Sri Lanka in Buddhist religious practices. Padma investigates how non-Vedic and non-Buddhist groups situate themselves into the fold of Vedic and Buddhist practicing communities.

Our sincerest thanks go to the South Asia institute, particularly, former Director Kamran Asdar Ali, Asssisant Director Rachel S. Meyer, and accountant Soheila Omrani for their never-ending support of Sagar. We also thank former Chief Editors Saif Shahin, Jeff Wilson, Andrea Gutierrez, for their assistance, designer Dana Johnson for his work over the years on print and digital volumes, the student members of our Editorial Collective, and the faculty members of our Editorial Board.

Sincerely,
Sundas Amer, Charlotte Giles, and Paromita Pain
Chief Editors, *Sagar: A South Asia Research Journal*

THE SILENT (SILENCED) GAP:
Reading the Urdu Gothic
through Foucault

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ABSTRACT

Michel Foucault's Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique *suggests that the definition of deviant psychological profiles is as much about the operation of state power and the tyranny of Enlightenment rationality as about the norms of psychological reality. Foucault's discursive and institutional history illuminates how two stories from the Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto's 1948 volume* Chughad, *"Miss Tin Wālā" ("Miss Tinman") and "Parhiye Kalimā" ("God Save Us from Our Sins"), can be read as allegories of colonial oppression. Ashis Nandy's history of the psychology of British Indian colonial subjects also speaks to how Manto's stories are more than pulp fiction. Rather, their violence and terror dredges up the psychological damage incurred from discursive and institutional oppression during colonialism. These unhinged moments of the* Unheimlich *articulate gothic excess and expose gaps in the discursive and institutional authority of British colonialism.*

A t the heart of every excess is silence. Or, as Michel Foucault writes in *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, "madness is at work, at the very heart of reason and of truth."[1] *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* can be read as a theoretical companion and paratext to gothic literature. Not only are its themes those of the gothic—norm and excess, reason and madness, text and subtext, violence and passion—but also its historical and textual evidence comes from testimonies at the bounds of psychosomatic experience. In the case of the gothic, a silence intervenes in its characteristic moments that defy reason. A bevy of scholarship explains how these moments

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1. Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), 25. Translations will generally follow Richard Howard's translation *Madness and Civilization* (New York: Norton, 1966). Page numbers, however, refer to the French version listed above.

of unreason transfer affect from text to reader.[2] Its physical and emotional architecture overwhelm the reader with estrangement and violence. But it is also possible that these moments of the *Unheimlich* express the compression of a type of logic being routed through its narrowest passage. This tension of the *Unheimlich*, the apparent defeat of reason by the forces of hysteria, brutality, and violence, might be read as the silent gap that when allowed to speak would supply the logic to unite the seemingly irreconcilable.

The gothic is not, however, strictly a European narrative mode. Marshall Brown criticizes the overly parochial thrust of scholarship of the gothic that confines the "international compass" of the Romantic gothic to "national schools."[3] Patrick McGrath likewise argues for the expansiveness of the literature, a "mad dream to be dreamt in a thousand forms."[4] In fact, the presence of the gothic in South Asian literature and film has not been treated in scholarship aside from one

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2. The Gothic is a healthy scholarly literature. A cross-section in recent years includes the following: Marshall Brown, *The Gothic Text* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2005); Andrew Cusack and Barry Murnane, editors, *Popular Revenants: The German Gothic and Its International Reception, 1800-2000* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012); Monika Elbert and Bridget M. Marshall, editors, *Transnational Gothic: Literary and Social Exchange in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2013); Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, editors, *Le Gothic: Influences and Appropriations in Europe and America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); J. Gerald Kennedy and Jerome McGann, editors, *Poe and the Remapping of Antebellum Print Culture* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2012); Robert K Martin and Eric Savoy, editors, *American Gothic: New Interventions in a National Narrative* (Iowa City, IA: U of IA Press, 1998); and Denis Mellier, *L'Ecriture de l'excès: fiction fantastique et poétique de la terreur* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1999). This work focuses on the philosophic precursors and legacy of the Gothic; the German Gothic as the first Gothic; the internationalization of the Gothic aesthetic; an argument for the prevalence and importance of Gothic in our the self-image of America; the Gothic in American print; and Gothic literature as welling up from excess.

3. Brown, *The Gothic Text*, 1-2.

4. Patrick McGrath, "Afterword," in *Conjunctions: 14* (1989): 244.

article.[5] This essay, then, responds to Brown and McGrath's sense of the insufficiency of the breadth in gothic scholarship and to the ways in which the history of sanity that Foucault maps in Europe might also be pertinent for pointing out structural similarities in British colonial India. In particular, two stories from the Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto's 1948 volume *Chughad*, "Miss Tin Wālā" ("Miss Tinman") and "Paṛhiye Kalimā" ("God Save Us from Our Sins"), show how the discursive and institutional structures in Foucault's investigation help us decode these Urdu stories as gothic allegories of colonial oppression.[6] Both "Miss Tin Wālā" and "Paṛhiye Kalimā" involve moments of the uncanny gothic terror of the familiar, that of the *Unheimlich,* which, as Freud notes, is "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar."[7]

The uncanny is the estrangement of the familiar, and in this estrangement a heavy silence descends: the unknown of the known, the absent of the present. In these stories, estrangement leads to moments of oblique yet revealing perspective on the ravages of British colonial rule. The gothic contradiction on display in Manto's stories opens up a gap of silence that can be explained through allegory. Judith Butler claims that allegory is "'a way of giving a narrative form

5. To my knowledge, the only other treatment of the gothic in South Asian cultural production is Rachel Dwyer, "Bombay Gothic: 60 Years of Mahal/The Mansion, dir. Kamal Amrohi, 1949," in *Beyond the Boundaries of Bollywood: The Many Forms of Hindi Cinema*, edited by Rachel Dwyer and Jerry Pinto (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2011), pp. 130-55.

6. Sa'adat Hasan Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā" and "Miss Tin Wālā," in *Chughad* (Bombay: Qutb Publishers, 1948), collected in *Mantonama* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2003), 259-67 and 268-75. The first was translated as "God Save Us From Our Sins" by Matt and Aftab Ahmad, *Metamorphoses* 23.2 (Fall 2015), 167-173.

7. Freud, "The Uncanny," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*, translated by James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1955), 220.

to something which cannot be directly narrativized."[8] "Something" is still too new or uncertain for the author to speak directly about it: in the case of these stories, excessive passion, the abjection of colonial psychology, the liberation of the subject from abjection, and the new anxiety of Pakistan. Through their *Unheimlich* moments, Manto's stories expose contradictions, prejudices, and injustices embedded in the discursive and institutional constructs upon which British colonialism based its rule.

The histories of the reformed French asylum and British colonialism in India are linked through a series of questions. To what extent does the reformed asylum of France suggest in British India a parallel role for educational institutions where the rules of British colonial society could be inculcated in a receptive population of native children? Against the backdrop of the phlegmatic British administrative state's grasp on power, how were everyday passions, including sexual ones, codified in moral terms? And, as in Foucault's argument about the construction of reason in Enlightenment France, did the British justify their authority through denigrating the passion of Indians so as to prove to themselves that Indians were unable to govern themselves and thus were unfit for self-rule? These are questions that Manto's stories address in telling ways.

"MISS TIN WĀLĀ": THE LIBERTINE THREAT TO COLONIAL EDUCATION

"Miss Tin Wālā" tells the story of a fictional Manto and Zaidi, a childhood friend from Amritsar now living in Bombay. Zaidi has become obsessed with a cat that comes to his apartment. Zaidi feels as though he knows the cat somehow. The cat has "a big fat head and a white body covered in grime," and its physical appearance is "really

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8. Quoted in Gary Johnson, *The Vitality of Allegory: Figural Narrative in Modern and Contemporary Fiction* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2012), 11.

scary."[9] But it is really the fact that it will not leave Zaidi alone that fills him with dread. He repeatedly beats the cat, but its reaction is always one of indifference: "I beat the cat three times—why wasn't it scared? It didn't even meow. Why was it so indifferent?"[10] Despite the physical abuse to which Zaidi treats the cat, it keeps on coming back. It seems to take some perverse pleasure in the abuse. This makes Zaidi ill. He cannot sleep. He stays up all night because "[a]t the slightest noise, I think it's the cat."[11] It is clear to Manto that the cat represents something to Zaidi "that was tormenting him."[12] Zaidi admits to have thought the same. Zaidi turns to Manto as to a psychologist, asking him to figure out why the cat haunts him. Eventually Zaidi comes to the conclusion that the cat reminds him of Miss Tinman.

This character was a man who hung around the front gates of the two boys' school. He was a woebegone character "whose head was usually bruised." This was because their "principal had had others beat him so that he wouldn't stand outside the school." That had no impact, and so "[o]ne boy's dad had beaten him with a hockey stick so badly that people thought he'd die in the hospital. But the very next day he was outside the school's gate." This by itself would be a menacing story, though perhaps yet unclear as to who is menacing whom. Manto then writes, "Miss Tinman had been obsessed with Zaidi, who had been a beautiful boy."[13] The reader knows too little about Miss Tinman to speculate upon his sexuality, but this statement suggests the gothic's mark of "transgressive sexuality."[14] When Miss Tinman finds Zaidi reading a book in an empty park, he doesn't molest him. Rather he asks Zaidi to read a letter: "Suddenly Miss Tinman was there. He

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9. Manto, "Miss Tin Wālā," 271.

10. Ibid., 270.

11. Ibid., 272.

12. Ibid., 273.

13. Ibid., 284-5.

14. McGrath, "Afterword," 242.

had a letter in his hand: 'Babuji, please read this letter!' he said. I was so scared. There was no one around. Miss Tinman spread the letter out on my thigh. I got up and ran away."[15] The scene is suggestive of pedophilia, yet literally concerned with illiteracy.

This is where the backstory to Zaidi's obsession with the cat and Miss Tinman's obsession with Zaidi exposes the colonial school as occupying an ambiguous position in shaping British Indian mores. Gothic allegory links the horror of the two situations. Gary Johnson writes that an allegory "metamorphoses a real (possibly historical) phenomenon into a narrative structure."[16] Step by step, Johnson goes through how the transformation of material reality takes place:

> In the first level, the phenomenon exists as the allegory's main object of "imitation." [...] At the second level, [the writer] constructs a literal narrative [...] that illustrates the phenomenon and provides a bridge to the third level. In the third level, the reader infers the figural intent behind the literal narrative. [...] That inference, in turn, allows us to move to the fourth level, the recognition of [the writer's] rhetorical purpose [...][17]

In Johnson's model, the success of an allegory is determined by the effectiveness of the bridge that allows the reader to recognize the writer's rhetorical purpose. Yet the reader's ability to bridge from the literal to the figural in Johnson's third step can never be guaranteed. In this gap, the allegory articulates its silent excess, an excess tied to the way in which material reality frustrates language and the intellect.

In *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, Foucault focuses upon how institutions of progress serve to suppress alterity, and this form of discourse analysis finds an example in the British colonial context in

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15. Manto, "Miss Tin Wālā," 285.

16. Ibid., 10.

17. Ibid., 11.

the central position of the colonial school and its obsessive policing of the native Indian population. Ashis Nandy writes about the stakes in education for the colonial state. He notes how the surveillance of alterity "to carefully monitor and manage dissent" was a chief strategy of colonialism. For Nandy, colonial education stands at the center of the management and suppression of dissent: "The colonial culture redesigns the entire educational system and the process of socialization to ensure the spread of definitions of sanity, rationality, adulthood and health that automatically stigmatize all unruly dissent as childish, irrational and retrogressive."[18] Now the full extent of Miss Tinman's threat begins to be clear. He signals multiple forms of alterity. He becomes a regressive, "unBritish" boogeyman—childish, irrational, illiterate, and perhaps homosexual.

These are the very traits read onto the bodies of the natives that the British cited as justification for commandeering political power. The British justified their imperial policy through the imperative of instilling moral order. The annexation of Awadh stands as one such clear example. Michael Fisher writes that even after the first British Resident began living in Lucknow in 1773, and even after the partial annexation of Awadh in 1801, "[t]he [British East Indian] Company continued to view Awadh as a threat to the political and moral order it wanted to establish in India."[19] From 1849 to 1856, the years of William Sleeman's Residency in Lucknow, Sleeman and other British officials painted a picture of Awadh that practically demanded the outright annexation of the princely state. Sleeman's judgment against the moral disorder of the nawabs and the Lucknawi urban elite is severe: "[The good of the ruling family] cannot be considered to embrace the privilege of rendering wretched in perpetuity 5 million whose welfare and happiness the British Government is pledged to promote, and

18. Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2010), 118.

19. Michael Fisher, *The Politics of the British Annexation of India, 1757-1857* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 1993), 177.

whose lives and properties it is bound by solemn treaty to protect."[20] General Outram, the previous Resident, concurs: "[Oudh is] an effete and incapable dynasty."[21] This perceived moral degeneracy irked Sleeman into frequent expostulations. One tradition to win his umbrage is that of frequent public celebrations: "In this overgrown city, there is a perpetual turmoil of processions, illuminations, and festivities. The sovereign spends all that he can get in them, and has not the slightest wish to perpetuate his name by the construction of any useful or ornamental work beyond its suburbs."[22] Moral degeneracy in Lucknow was the primary excuse for British expansion in Awadh.

British colonialism was based upon the rhetoric of betterment, whose underlying principle was analogous to that of the French asylum. In Paris, the establishment of l'Hôpital général in 1656 was purported to be an advancement for medicine, but Foucault emphasizes its consolidation of power within the public sphere for the monarchy and for the bourgeoisie: "In its functioning, or in its purpose, the Hôpital général had nothing to do with any medical concept. It was an instance of order, of the monarchical and bourgeois order being organized in French in this period."[23] Writing skeptically about the "reformed" mental institutions of France during the years 1780 to 1793, Foucault states that these institutions were only a new form of incarceration with "regressive measures" moonlighting under the guise of progress.[24] Mental institutions were said to operate for the betterment both of the individuals they housed and for society as well, but this public rationale obfuscated how they legitimized reason's triumph

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20. William Sleeman, "Colonel Sleeman's Letter Dated December 10, 1851," *Parliamentary Papers: Papers Relating to Oude* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1856), 18.

21. James Outram, *Parliamentary Papers: Papers Relating to Oude* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1856), 46.

22. William Sleeman, *Sleeman in Oudh, An Abridgement of W.H. Sleeman's A Journey through the Kingdom of Oude in 1849-50*, edited by P.D. Reeves (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1971), 157-8.

23. *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 61.

24. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 445.

by composing its opposite—a degraded mass of humanity viewed as dangerous, unreasonable, and mad. In Foucault's reading, the monarchy and the bourgeoisie joined in tacit confederacy to implement this rhetoric for their own ends, while in India the example of the British colonial school serves to exemplify how the British as colonial rulers joined with the civil servant class to consolidate power over the subaltern groups.[25]

Furthermore, Nandy emphasizes how colonialism created new perspectives on sexual mores and gender stereotyping. He identifies "[t]he denial of psychological bisexuality in men" as helping to justify "dominance, exploitation and cruelty as natural and valid."[26] British colonialism feminized Indian men and retroactively created a hyper-masculine image for British imperial agents to uphold. Nandy writes that imperialism brought into prominence those parts of British political culture which were least tender and humane, de-emphasizing "speculation, intellection and *caritas* as feminine [and thus] irrelevant to the public sphere."[27] Effete, ineffectual, homeless, jobless, but also immoral and uneducated—these are the worst British stereotypes about the native Indian man. The fact that Miss Tinman lurks in front of the school links these characteristics directly to British colonial education.

The discursive and institutional connection between masculinity, morality, education, and employment was central to British colonialism, which groomed its new administrative class through its schools. Thomas Macauley's "Minutes" announced this pursuit in unequivocal terms: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be

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25. The composition of the British colonial class was itself uneven historically. Nandy uses the date 1830 to signal the point at which the British ruling class shifted from being feudal in background to bourgeois. See Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 4. See also Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997).

26. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 4, 63.

27. Ibid., 32.

interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."[28] Yet Miss Tinman stands in front of the school as a constant reminder that the colonial system cannot and does not afford opportunities to all. Miss Tinman represents the subaltern excess of the process through which British colonial education selectively created loyal Indian subjects. He represents a nuisance and a covert menace to the British colonial education system where education, morality, and employment operated in concert within the rhetoric of betterment, and yet reality remained somewhat different. His presence is also a reminder that while capitalism uses a teleological discourse of progress (like Foucault's rationality), it brings about the exclusion and the systematic ghettoization of entire sectors of the population. In the capitalist world-economy, all labor is exploited, and yet some "laborers 'lose' a larger proportion of their created surplus-value than other."[29] This is vital for the accumulation of capital within the system.[30] Not only does this mean that the periphery suffers, but also within the periphery, exploited labor is located within particular "ethnic" communities.[31]

This nexus of education, morality, and labor appears prominently in Foucault's analysis of the reformed insane asylums of the second half of the nineteenth century. Inspired in large part by Daniel Tuke's

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28. Thomas Macauley, "Minute by the Hon'ble T.B. Macauley, dated the 2nd Feb. 1835," www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html.

29. Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity." *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, edited by Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991), 83.

30. Wallerstein calls these laborers those of the "household of part-lifetime wage workers" or "non-waged labor." They "may receive less in hourly wages than what is [...] the cost of the reproduction of labor." Ibid.

31. Ibid. Wallerstein defines these communities as being particular ethnic groups, hence, the "'ethnicization' of the work force." The concept of 'ethnic group' is related to the creation of household structures that permit the maintenance of large components of non-waged labor in the accumulation of capital." Ibid., 78-9.

Quaker faith, the new asylum placed work at the conceptual center of moral re-education:

> Work comes first in "moral treatment" as practiced at the Re-treat. In itself, work possesses a constraining power superior to all forms of physical coercion, in that the regularity of the hours, the requirements of attention, the obligation to produce a result detach the sufferer from a liberty of mind [...][32]

Moral re-education relied upon the benchmarks of the regularity of schedule, the demands of paying attention, and the obligation to produce a product. These combined to heighten the sense of responsibility in subjects known for their excessively "free" spirit—persons not unlike Miss Tinman.

Miss Tinman represents an alternative form of adulthood—childlike, irrational, and naive. He is the childlike native that early racist anthropological models broadcast as the proof of the primitiveness of colonized peoples. Thus, through this paternalistic, racist logic, as Stephen Jay Gould writes, "The *adults* of *inferior* groups must be like the *children* of *superior* groups, for the child represents a primitive adult ancestor."[33] Children were children because of their receptivity to moral instruction. Racist anthropology had already castigated all Indians to an inferior rung, never to become equal to the civilized European, and so the education that native children received was not meant to set them on par with the British but rather to make them benign abettors to colonial power. Nandy writes of how British colonial discourse reformed the notion of childhood so that childhood "increasingly looked like a blank state on which adults must write their moral codes—an inferior version of maturity, less productive and ethical, and badly contaminated by the playful, irresponsible and spon-

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32. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 505.
33. See Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1981), 115.

taneous aspects of human nature."[34] Miss Tinman is an unreformed adult, unformed in many of the same ways as children. He is threatening because his presence points to how the link between moral instruction and social mobility proposed by the British colonial school is tenuous at best.

The form of sexual alterity that Miss Tinman embodies counters as well the imperatives of masculine British colonial culture and its authority. Foucault's libertine provides a historical analogy. Foucault's libertine is an ambiguous figure whose defining trait is his inability to constrain his passions:

> What [libertinage] means, then, is neither exactly free thinking nor a lack of cultural inhibitions; but, rather, a state of servitude in which reason is made the slave of desires and the servant of the heart. Nothing is further from this new libertinage than the free choice of a critical reason; rather, everything speaks to the subjugation of reason: to the flesh, to money, to passions; and when Sade, the first of the eighteenth century, would attempt a coherent theory of this libertinage whose existence up till him had rested a half-secret, it would be this enslavement that would be exalted.[35]

To explain Miss Tinman's return to the site where he has been violently beaten—in fact, almost to death—is difficult to fathom. But to read him as a libertine under the sway of passions makes him a figure of more complete and incisive alterity: he is the native libertine, a figure who crystallizes all those traits that the British imposed upon Indians as the moral justification for colonialism.

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34. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 15.
35. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 115. This excerpt is absent from Howard's translation.

Miss Tinman had "special eyes"[36] for the young Zaidi. But in Manto's view he is not a sexual predator. One last detail remains to clarify exactly what threat Miss Tinman does represent. The story includes an educational history of Manto and his friend. After going to school together as boys, they went to college together. While Manto flunked out after two years, Zaidi earned a BA and an MA—considerable accomplishments for an Indian in colonial times. While Manto moved to Bombay and started writing for the film industry and for film magazines, Zaidi's education did not mete him immediate employment. Zaidi was unemployed for "four or five years," and, at the time of the story, had just got a job in a Bombay shipping company. Thus, the threat that Miss Tinman represents to the school is wrapped in situational irony: he is not a sexual predator, but a libertine, excessively given to his passions; as such, he is resistant to the grooming and molding that the colonial school was meant to effect.

That Zaidi links the cat to the man suggests that his failures to accomplish social mobility haunt him—his failure and that of many others subtends the system in which social mobility was promised. Zaidi recounts the aftermath of his childhood encounter with Miss Tinman: "By the time I got home, I had a high fever. For two days I was raving. My mother thought there must have been evil spirits in the tree I sat beneath."[37] Miss Tinman does nothing illegal, nefarious, or contemptible, and yet Zaidi seems infected with a magical poison. Miss Tinman's crime, if you will, is being a visible sign of difference to the moral and social order that the school represents. His presence is an imaginative goad, and if terror and the failure of reason are the narrative topoi of the gothic, the psychological effects of imagining them are just as central to its aesthetics. The gothic not only "plays with *terror* and the limits of reason, but [...] *imagines* them." [38] Miss

36. The text reads "zaidi par [...] miss tinwāle ki khas nazar thi." See, "Miss Tin Wālā," 284.

37. Manto, "Miss Tin Wālā," 285.

38. Brown, *The Gothic Text*, 14.

Tinman goads the school's principal, parents, and children—all proxies of British colonial order—to imagine an alternative outcome to the narrative of progress and social mobility promised as the reward of acculturation. He represents a counterexample to the British moral order that linked education, work, sanity, and normalcy.

"PAṚHIYE KALIMĀ"—ABJECTION, CONFESSION, AND PAKISTAN

"Paṛhiye Kalimā"[39] tells the salacious story of Abdul Raheem's love affair. From his aiding in his lover's disposal of a murder victim, to his near death at his lover's hands, his murder of his lover, his murder of a possible witness, and his protracted and unhinged confession to the police, this is a gothic tale of misplaced passion, senseless and extreme violence, and paranoid psychology. Yet at an allegorical level, the story gains meaning through the narrator's garrulous confession and the curious psychology that it presents: like the narrator in Poe's "The Black Cat," Abdul Raheem admits what the police do not know; his confession to his lover's murder is the only evidence against him. Reread as a comment upon colonial psychology, his confession reveals the tendency of colonized psychology to over-identify with the oppressor. For within the context of the lawlessness that broke out across South Asia during the chaos of Partition the police no longer stood as arbiters of law and order, and yet Abdul Raheem reinscribes that defunct order and so pointlessly subjects himself again to the authority of the colonial power structure.

Abdul Raheem is apprehended in the public restroom where he stabbed Tukaram, a possible witness to his murder of Rukma Bai, his lover—a murder that he committed in self-defense. Yet the murders to which Abdul Raheem confesses far exceed the murder of Tukaram, the

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39. The kalima is the Muslim profession of faith, "There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet."

only crime for which the police has any evidence. Whereas Poe's narrator writes, "to-morrow I die, and to-day I would unburden my soul,"[40] Abdul Raheem sees this death before him and hopes for a reprieve—"If they don't hang me," "if I escape hanging," he keeps burbling, hoping against hope to avoid death.[41] A confession is a unique psychological form since it is an acknowledgement of guilt before symbols of authority. It is opening oneself up to punishment. But confessions can be manipulated, and those accused of crimes tortured into admitting falsehoods. False confessions also exist. Not only do torture and manipulation increase the psychological pressure that leads to false confessions, but people can also confess falsely for reasons of their own.

The vulnerability of the subject during confession creates an abject subject. To Jean Baudrillard, abjection is one integral element to the governing ethos of the West, which also includes "humiliation, shame, [and] self-denial."[42] Nandy sees the abjection of the colonial subject as integral to the mechanisms of rule within colonial psychology, focusing upon how "cultural co-optation" creates "identification with the aggressor" and binds "the rulers and the ruled in an unbreakable dyadic relationship."[43] Within the context of British Indian subaltern psychology, Abdul Raheem's confession is a token of obeisance, of rendering himself abject before one remaining symbol of colonial rule, the police.[44]

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40. Poe, "The Black Cat," poestories.com/read/blackcat.

41. Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā," 259, 266.

42. Jean Baudrillard, *The Agony of Power*, translated by Ames Hodges (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 113-4.

43. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 7.

44. Richard Delacey writes, "[T]here is something particularly interesting to me about the fact that Manto seeks, often in a very modernist manner in which there is no moral to the tale, to put on display for the consumption of the middle class its own abjection. And there is nothing more abject that taking a perverse pleasure in reading about one's own abject state." See the unpublished paper, "Manto and the Perverse Pleasure of Middle Class Abjection" presented at "On Sa'adat Hasan Manto" Conference, NYU, 11 May 2012.

The story begins with Abdul Raheem speaking to a Muslim police officer, prevailing upon the faith that the two share as a reason why the officer must believe that his killing of Tukaram had nothing to do with Hindu-Muslim animosity: "You're Muslim so believe me. Everything I'm about to tell you is true. [...] Yes, I killed Tukaram, and, like you say, I gutted him with a sharp knife. But it wasn't because he was Hindu."[45] He claims his actions aren't "about Pakistan," though he is "ready to give my life for Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah." He knows that the police officer is likely to jump to conclusions because, as Abdul Raheem says, "I know you're busy these days with [communal] riots." He goes on to admit that he killed three Hindus in communal riots, but he says that shouldn't prejudice the police's interpretation of his story of Tukaram's murder. This framing is at once natural, familiar, and strange. During Partition, Hindus and Muslims killed one another, and indeed the murders to which Abdul Raheem confesses are those of Hindus. Yet, at the same time, the reasons for the crimes would not matter to the police, were they truly impartial arbiters of the state's justice. Abdul Raheem addresses the police officer as a religious judge.

Abdul Raheem frames the story of his crimes as that of straightforward sexual misadventure and lust-borne madness. He cannot believe that what happened to him actually happened to him. Poe's narrator in "The Black Cat" says, "I neither expect nor solicit belief."[46] Abdul Raheem, too, emphasizes how rational thought cannot help explain his actions: "Who knew that I was going to get caught up in this mess?"[47] The madness of love took hold of him: "I don't know what overcame me [...] I was head over heels in love."[48] Through confessing, Abdul Raheem renounces any possible form of self-defense, and thus he renounces his agency; he renders himself abject before the law. But

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45. Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā," 259.

46. Poe, "The Black Cat," poestories.com/read/blackcat

47. Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā," 259.

48. Ibid.

his confession is also a performance of speaking—an act of enunciation—that saves him from madness. Speaking reassures oneself that one is not mad, and as Jacques Derrida writes, the belief in this truism is "inherent in the essence and very project of all language in general; and even in the language of those who are apparently the maddest [....]"[49] The confession also recalls Foucault's history of the asylum, where sexual profligacy—something from which Abdul Raheem could be said to suffer—was treated as a malady of the soul requiring confession, and "profligates" (patients with STDs) in the Hôpital général were treated through a six-week course of bloodletting, purges, baths, applications of mercury, and "a good and thorough confession."[50] Confessions were necessary to unburden the guilty soul.

To read this story as an allegory, the economic conditions of Abdul Raheem's life must be considered as well as how these conditions impact his subaltern psychology. Abdul Raheem is a servant at a Bombay housing tenement, a "chāl" ("chawl" in Bombay English). He sleeps underneath the stairs[51] and earns 35 rupees a month—a sum so low that he admits that his poverty should not allow him to engage in love affairs.[52] Textile mills constructed chawls to house their employees. These buildings represent a chief architectural and industrial feature of the imperial economy: the crowding of these tenements, their lack of running water, and their common lavatories mark the degrading conditions of cheap, manual laborers necessary for the production

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49. Jacques Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," in *Writing and Difference,* translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978; New York: Routledge, 2002), 67.

50. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* 99.

51. Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā," 262.

52. Ibid., 260.

of cheap finished goods sold in Britain.[53] Even within this population of mill workers—the non-fixed wage income earners that Wallerstein mentions as being essential for capitalist exploitation—Abdul Raheem is a subaltern figure. As a laborer, he is among the poorest of the poor. He represents the debauchery, moral disorder, and pitiful living conditions of the modern city from whose "delights and opulence" rise "the tremors of misery [and] the cries of despair and fury."[54] Here, Bombay is the "overgrown" city of excessive misery and joy.

The narrative of exhilarating and yet debilitating moral chaos is as follows. Rukma Bai is married, but her husband is frequently away selling his goods at the market. One day when her husband is gone, Abdul Raheem goes to her room. She invites him inside. There, he gets horny ("mera k̲hun garam ho gayā"); he gets even more horny ("main aur zyādah garam ho gayā"); and then he passionately ("josh se") declares himself willing to kill her husband for her.[55] He repeatedly states that he had never met a woman like her; he refers to her as a "monster" ("z̤ālim"), or someone who has the power to oppressively control him.[56] He explains that he did not go to the police at once because she had "made him her slave in one night."[57] Ten days later, Rukma Bai kills her husband, and when she demands that Abdul Raheem help her dismember and dispose of the corpse, he does so, finally stuffing it piece by piece beneath a mosque's gate.[58]

In the course of their brief relationship, Rukma Bai quickly turns

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53. See Neera Adarkar and Meena Menon, *One Hundred Years, One Hundred Voices: The Millworkers of Girangaon: An Oral History*, introduced by Rajnarayan Chandavarkar (Kolkatta: Seagull, 2004); and Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India: Business strategies and the working classes in Bombay, 1900-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

54. Ibid., 394. Originally, André Matthey, *Nouvelles recherches sur les maladies de l'esprit* (Paris and Geneva, Paschoud, 1816), 66.

55. Manto, "Paṛhiye Kalimā," 261.

56. Ibid., 262.

57. Ibid., 263.

58. Ibid.

on him. She enlists the neighborhood mango seller, Tukaram, to aid her in killing Abdul Raheem. Thinking that they have successfully strangled him to death, Rukma Bai and Tukaram are making love when he miraculously revives on the floor. Again, Abdul Raheem must be killed. When he realizes what lays in store for him, he feels "a superhuman strength" arise in him.[59] Tukaram flees, and when Rukma Bai turns back to murder Abdul Raheem, instead he throws her from her apartment's third-story window. In the morning, her body has been mysteriously cleared from the back alleyway, and all physical evidence has been effaced. Yet Abdul Raheem becomes obsessed with the notion that Tukaram will say something. He decides to kill him. He follows him into a public restroom and murders him, a crime for which he would have gotten away if he had not stopped to take the dying man's pulse. This act delays his escape, and he realizes his error in hindsight: "I should have left immediately and called out, '911!' But I was so stupid: instead I went over to check his pulse. I knew there was such a thing as a pulse, but I didn't know how to take it."[60]

It is a story of mad love, of desperate love, of "*desperate passion*" and "[l]ove disappointed in its excess," a love "especially deceived by the fatality of death" that results in "madness."[61] It is a gothic tale of romance. But it is also a story set within the historical, religious, and socioeconomic frames mentioned above. That is, it is also a very public story, and a story about how the private lives of individuals are impacted by the public controls to which they are also subject. Abdul Raheem is so poor that he lacks private space—he sleeps beneath a set of stairs. Being constantly in the public sphere, he is—like the homeless Miss Tinman—especially vulnerable to colonial discursive regimes that create the abject colonial subaltern. Without any private sanctuary to bolster any sense of resistance, he over-identifies with

59. Ibid., 265. The text reads, "maqāble ke bepanah ṭāqat" or "a strength from which there is no shelter."

60. Ibid., 267.

61. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 49.

the agents of that discourse and confesses too freely. He bears a psychic burden as a colonial subject.

In the context of Indian and Pakistani independence, liberation brought a newly intense phase of discursive and institutional oppression, just as with the advent of the reformed European asylum, repressive mechanisms did not abate but rather doubled and trebled.[62] Britain was no longer the oppressor, but forms of self-loathing developed. The shared cultural inheritance of Muslims and Hindus (and others) in South Asia became severed: for the Indian state, Pakistan became the new boogeyman, just as for Pakistan, India became the same. Reading "Paṛhiye Kalimā" as a gothic allegory connects the lust-borne madness of "hot blood" to the more public story of Abdul Raheem's psychological subjugation and economic enslavement. Subjected to the psychological and economic regimes of British colonialism, the abject Abdul Raheem is hardly able to understand the forces that converge upon him and produce his self-destructive and murderous actions. His dim understanding of the historical conundrum within which he lives can only be expressed obliquely in his unsolicited yet pathologically voluble confession.

CONCLUSION—SILENT NO MORE?

Foucault's *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* is based upon a desire to read silence, the silence imposed upon madness, the silence at the heart of Enlightenment rationality's excessive grip on power within Western metaphysics. Excavating silence—textual silence—is also necessary in reading where the reconstruction involves articulating the bridge that unites the real and possibly historical phenomenon to the surface narrative. Interestingly, tracing textual silence was also the stated goal of subaltern studies. In Ranajit Guha's classic text

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62. Ibid., 571-2.

"The Prose of Counter-Insurgency,"[63] the semiotic principles of index and function are the tools used for unearthing the subaltern's voice within British historiography of South Asia. There, Guha acknowledges the methodological connection between semiotics and subaltern studies, stating his debt to Barthes, and suggesting the pertinence of French epistemological models for South Asia.[64]

While the global similarities among the methods of Foucauldian discourse analysis, allegorical excavation, structuralism, and subaltern studies remains to be sussed out in its intricacies across the European-South Asian divide, the basic question of how one goes about reading silence was quickly challenged in both spheres. Derrida criticized Foucault's project from its inception, taking exception to his reading of Descartes' *Meditations*. He argues that "madness, folly, dementia, insanity" are only seemingly "dismissed, excluded, and ostracized from the circle of philosophical dignity,"[65] and that Foucault misses their presence due to his avoiding the "historical structure" of the sign and how "[w]hen one attempts, in a general way, to pass from an obvious to a latent language, one must first be rigorously sure of the obvious meaning."[66] Derrida questions Foucault's reading of the "obvious" meaning present in the "literal" surface narrative—an explanation that recalls Johnson's idea of "figural intent." Derrida reads Foucault's history of rationality and madness so that surface contradictions are rehistoricized to understand the "zero point at which determined meaning and non-meaning come together in their common origin."[67] Needless to say, reading allegory also involves such a process of the unification of meaning. Then, in the case of Guha, Gayatri Spivak points to a similar problematic. The focus of her question is

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63. Ranajit Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

64. Ibid., 54.

65. Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," 37.

66. Ibid., 38, 57.

67. Ibid., 68, 46.

no less than that which dogs the interpretation of allegory, namely, the question of whether it is possible for a text to speak out of silence. As famously stated, the question that she lances at subaltern studies is whether the "epistemic violence of imperialist law and education" results in a textual oppression that is so complete that the premise of subaltern agency is rendered moot: the question of "*can the subaltern speak*?"[68] is answered with a general "no."

These critiques are useful; at the very least, they point both to the general interest in reading through or beyond social and textual silences, and the difficulty of doing so. Here, I argue that Foucault's history of the silencing of madness in Europe provides a point of reference and a method for excavating silences in the context of South Asia. Derrida's objection to Foucault's work is important, too, in that it points back to Manto's stories, insisting that we locate them first within a strictly contained "historical structure." From there, an allegorical reading allows us to reapproach the stories' plots, connecting them to the underlying gothic logic of madness, alterity, and silence in British South Asia. In the case of Spivak's critique of Guha, one thing must be said: a literary text differs from a historical one in its ability to invoke, or speak, out of silence. Literature's open-endedness allows types of indirect, slant, associative, or allegorical thinking from which it is possible to imaginatively recover voices from silence in a way that is impossible within the epistemological frame of history conceived as an objective, universal record.

Manto provides us with two subaltern characters, Miss Tinman and Abdul Raheem, whose voices of colonial critique can be heard—or read—by applying the structural principles of allegory in which an author narrates "something which cannot be directly narrativized." In this case, it is the trauma of colonialism and the aberrant, abject psychology that it can produce in colonial subjects. Foucault's history of

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68. Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Reflections on the History of an Idea: Can the Subaltern Speak?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 252.

reason and madness serves as a guide for reading how the discourses and institutions of power created silence in British South Asia. The colonial critique latent in Manto's stories can be accessed through applying the insights of European and Indian historiography; moreover, the unique literary mode of the gothic allegory allows these critical voices to speak as though from out of silence.

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THE CHRONOTOPE OF HOUSE:
Negotiating Domestic Realms of Memory in the Pakistani Television Dramas of Haseena Moin

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1. INTRODUCTION: 'OUR HOUSE, OUR STORIES'

I will start off with a personal story. Not only do I feel that a study of literature cannot be separated from personal lives but, it seems to me that a study of memory literature is a way of re-writing and "re-mediating" (see Erll, 2012) one's own memories. The drama serials from the Pakistan of the 1980s that I have chosen to examine in this paper reflects not only the role of house as a site of memory in the South Asian context, but also my own story. I grew up in a house built by my parents over a period of two years, where I lived with my five siblings. When I was a child, I remember eavesdropping on my parents worrying about saving money and getting a mortgage for a house for their children, at all costs. Only during my teenage years did I finally see my parents building the house, exactly according to their choice and as quickly as possible. For my parents believed that it is only when a house is ready—your own house—that it is possible for a family to start documenting family histories with a sense of pride. For the most significant events such as wedding ceremonies, religious festivals, or birth or death rituals are carried out in the domestic space, within the four walls of the house. Hence, individual, collective, and generational memory in contemporary Pakistani culture as well as in a considerable amount of literature from different countries is often inextricably intertwined with family histories.

Building a house in Pakistani society is indicative of the ability and the resources to make your mark in life. For a house is not only a status symbol, but represents the basic desire to create a nest for family. The house was the centre of our lives—it had an almost tangible presence in our everyday existence, as it provides a perfect space for making sense of the outside world. In the following pages I intend to highlight this phenomenon through my reading of the TV drama. I argue that the house as a memory trope is uniquely central to South Asian print and electronic media. My thesis in this paper points to

the house as a site of memory which sheds light not only on different kinds of memory networks of its inhabitants, but also on broader issues such as family histories as "connective histories" (See Hirsch 2012, 247), exemplifying the continuity of generational relations as well as issues of class and gender. This thesis is applied to my reading of two Pakistani television drama serials in Urdu language, namely *Tanhaiyaan* (1985, Urdu: تنہائیاں) translated as *The Loneliness* and *Dhoop Kinare* (1987, Urdu: دھوپ کنارے) translated as *Seeking Shelter in the Scorching Sun*, both of which are written by the most renowned Pakistani playwright Haseena Moin.[1] The playwright Moin, who has always been able to write highly romantic plays throughout her career, deliberately chose never to get married or to co-habit, which is naturally a taboo in an ultra-conservative Pakistani society. She seems to realise, instead, the waiting and a yearning for fulfilment of a deeply romantic bonding between parents, siblings and lovers within the frames of her dramas. This has been the popular belief among her avid audience across the whole subcontinent. Interestingly, it is the celebration, in her plays, of the single parent family, the nuclear family and parenthood, especially fatherhood, which is predominant. This occurs to such an extent that her male and female protagonists seem to have troubles investing completely in sexual love, as if sexual love were subordinate to the higher, deeper and perhaps truer parental love.

Opponents may argue that the TV drama serials I have chosen is a work of pure fantasy; therefore, it cannot be taken as seriously a case study as a real, historical house, say Jinnah house in Mumbai (Dutta 2017), the house of the founder of Pakistan or Rudyard Kipling's house in Lahore,[2] the residence of the famous British writer. Since I aim to read the idea of house beyond its political, imperial or nationalistic implications, I deliberately choose the *literary representation*

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1. The former was directed and produced by veteran Pakistani TV artist and director Saira Kazmi, whereas the latter was directed and produced by another highly acclaimed artist Shehzad Khalil.

2. http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/rudyard-kiplings-house-lahore-1880s/.

of a house to examine how a fantasy on TV screen actually stages, visualises, captures, translates and even interprets the fantasies of its viewers. I even assert that fantasy, like a work of art, in a TV drama takes its inspirations from contemporary cultural and social trajectories, inviting us to concentrate on dreams and memories of a common man within the frames of a play. However, the plays I have chosen use fantasy to get across a more serious message (Chatterjee 2017, Web).[3] This is the reason that realism dominates the development of the plot. Indeed, the intertwining of fantasy and realism as well as the interplay of comedy and tragedy in the storyline greatly appeal to the audience. Lastly, it is the use of high and sophisticated Urdu which enhances the status of these plays as great pieces of contemporary Urdu literature.

2. HOUSE-SCAPES AS MEMORY-SCAPES AND THE DYNAMICS OF MNEMONIC SPACES

From Henrik Ibsen's celebrated play *The Doll's House* (1879) to Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), or from Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1938) to Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* (1901), the house seems to play a vital role in several famous works of European literature. The house has been given several symbolic dimensions in many different literary works, particularly in Indian literatures in English:

The colonial house, handed over to the parents of the narrator/

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3. Chatterjee highlights that "social messages have always been at the heart of these (Pakistani) dramas." Citing Aamna Haider Isani, editor of Instep at *The News*, he states that "Pakistani dramas have often portrayed the complete warps and wefts of society" as they have taken it upon themselves to become "social commentators and through that, a medium to educate the masses." He feels that many recent drams also have taken this responsible position, but the audience still "miss the carefree tone and treatment of classic Hasina Moin (who has written some of the iconic dramas such as *Tanhaiyaan, Ankahi, Dhoop Kinare* among others) plays from the '80s and '90s."

protagonist Saleem Sinai in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* (1981), is a permanent reminder of the legacy of colonial rule in India, as is the History House in Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things* (1997), where an English man is believed to have committed suicide once the parents of his lover took the boy from him. The house called "Ashiana" is central to the plot in Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), where the reader encounters separate quarters for men and women within the huge villa. Anita Desai's *Clear Light of Day* (1980) places the house in the old city of Delhi as the site of tragic memories when it begins to dilapidate as the aging head of the house Bim or Bimla, also starts to degenerate. A crumbling, isolated house at the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the Himalayas is noticeable in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), where an embittered retired judge lives. It is the grandmother's country house which is the major focus of Ram Rau's *Remember the House* (1956) whereas the house is a symbol of independence in V.S. Naipual's *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961). The authors, in these narratives, clearly make the house not only embody and epitomise the predicament and plight of its inhabitants, but also carry the marks and scars of their changing lives as they move back and forth in time. Hence, the house stages the dynamics of tradition and modernity as the change in the characters who inhabit the house is further echoed in its interior as well as its exterior. This is particularly conspicuous in Hosain's *Sunlight on the Broken Column* in which with the death of Baba jaan, the patriarchal head of the family, the strict separation between the male and female parts of the house is suddenly dissolved. Women come out of the veiled quarter (mentioned as *purdah* quarters) as they are now required to claim power in order to take care of the ailing man, with whom the old order is dying out. As traditions give way to modernity in the wake of the partition of India in the novel, which crumbled the old order of the Urdu-speaking, Muslim aristocracy of the city of Lucknow, the house begins to crumble down completely, leaving the reader with the image of sunlight on its broken column—an image

which remains vivid in the memory of the grown-up narrator. It remains a perennial symbol of loss and mourning, but at the same time as a beckoning of a new political, cultural, familial and personal era. The question arises as to why the house has, apparently, influenced the literary imagination of contemporary writers from India and Pakistan as strongly as that of their literary predecessors all around the world. One possible answer could be the dominant role of family in both Indian and Pakistani culture whose different aspects remain rooted within the four walls of the house.

Thinking along Michel de Certeau's idea of 'the practice of everyday life,' the house can be seen as a "spatial trajectory" (1988, 115) where place as a personal archive can reveal how house is perceived and presented in Pakistani media. Extending the focus of previous geographical research on public spaces of remembering, especially on "Third Space" by Edward Soja[4] (1996, 11) and on the spatial or topographical turn, particularly elaborated by Doris Bachmann-Medick (2016, 211-243), I seek to demonstrate the ways in which memory-work also takes place in private domestic spaces. Nathan Wachtel has already claimed that the "preservation of recollections rests on their anchorage in space" (1986, 216). Since sites of memory encompass geographical places, I choose to look at the house as a unique model of remembering. However, unlike museums, monuments and memo-

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4. Soja developed a theory of Thirdspace in which "everything comes together... subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" (1996, 11). As he explains, "I define Thirdspace as an-Other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the rebalanced trialectices of spatiality–historicality–sociality" (1996, 11). Soja constructs Thirdspace from the spatial trialectics established by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* (1991) and Michael Foucault's concept of heterotopia in his book *The Order of Things* (1970). He synthesizes these theories with the work of postcolonial thinkers from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to bell hooks, Edward Said to Homi K. Bhabha.

rials as places of public memory, the house is the abode of the investigation of personal memories, offering a view of the various ways in which memory is spatially constituted. In fact, I draw upon 'the house' as a specific realm of memory, showing how it serves as a zone where valued items are displayed and material artefacts are curated as part of the construction and reproduction of personal memories and familial identities. Looking at the house as memory- work, a constant longing, among its inhabitants, for a return to an idealised past can be noticeable; thus, the house not only bridges past and present for them, but treats the past as never dead—something constantly flowing into the present. In short, the past is the present and the future, too. This aspect of time—a desire to hold on to the past as a place of perfect bliss—is vividly mediated in the selected drama serials.

Before I indicate why I choose Moin's dramas from the 1980s and present the theoretical frames of sites and spaces of memory in more detail, I would like to point out that in my close reading of the plays, I define the idea of the house as a realm of memory in three ways[5]: **first**, the house as a conduit to an idealised past, a meeting place of past and present as the present is feared to be fast regressing from that ideal past; **second**, the practice of curating the past in the house as a living museum with its objects as vital to family history and identity; **third**, the house and materialising memory, with house as a landscape of different kinds of memory. In this context, the house is especially treated as a means of 'existential memory work', the idea of which has been expounded by David Sutton who explains 'existential memory' in terms of "the ways people's orientation toward the past is felt to be an intrinsic part of their selves and subjectivities (2008, 86)."

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5. These three ways have been employed by Angela Meah and Peter Jackson in their essay "Re-imagining the Kitchen as a Site of Memory" (2016). Whereas Meah and Jackson use these ways to discuss kitchen as a site of memory, I draw upon them to discuss house as a site of memory.

3. WHY HASEENA MOIN'S DRAMAS OF THE 1980s AS DOMESTIC REALMS OF MEMORY?

Although the 1980s were the most politically volatile era as Pakistan was firmly under the control of military dictatorship with television completely in the grip of the military dictator Zia-ul-Haq whose Islamization process and censorship policies was feared to have adversely affected the quality of Pakistani dramas as all kinds of connection between the opposite sexes on screen were rendered either obscene or simply un-Islamic, the era of 1980s is still considered the age of top notch Urdu dramas with Moin's plays fascinating the imagination of millions of people across the nation. Despite the fact that contemporary Pakistani TV plays, especially on famous channels such as Hum, ARY Digital, ATV, or Geo demonstrate far more glamorous artists and settings as a result of dramatic improvement in technology, the 1980s remain the golden age of PTV dramas due to the high quality of the drama script. In fact, the 1980s are still associated not only with the most glowing age of PTV serial drama, but also with the two best plays of Moin, which are chosen for discussion in this paper. Interestingly, the thematic focus of these two plays is as much current as it was when the plays were broadcast for the first time. The most prevalent aspect in these plays is, indeed, the house image which is representative of not only individual memories, but evocative of the essence of the protagonists' existence, who tend to imagine house as the living epitome of family and generational history.

There is no denying the fact that the renowned Pakistani playwrights such as Amjad Islam Amjad, Noor ul Huda Shah, Bano Qudsia, Ashfaq Ahmed, Asghar Nadeem Syed, to name but a few, have written exemplary dramas which address social and cultural weaknesses, evils and vices deeply rooted in Pakistani society, no playwright could surpass Moin in staging house not merely as the background of the main plot, but house as a highly romantic notion.

Some may claim that the much appreciated recent Urdu drama broadcast on ATV channel *Yeh Mera Deewanapan Hai* (2015-2016),

translated as *I'm smitten by you*, a 48-episode long serial,[6] is the most powerful example of house as a work of individual and family memories, especially as the serial follows the flash-back technique starting with 1989 Karachi when the narrator/protagonist, Jahangir, is 13 years old, and moving forward to 1998 in the very first episode when he is an adolescent and is head over heels in love with Mehtab, the elderly divorced nurse of his father. However, the house is not treated as a romantic place despite presenting a romance between Jahangir and Mehtab budding in that house, but a sinister and macabre place where only death, misery, nightmares and injustice reign supreme, mainly as an outcome of a cruel father constantly mistreating his unattractive wife who eventually sets herself on fire and jumps out of the window of her room. As it is a play which strengthens rigid gender hierarchies in present-day Pakistani society with men as oppressors and women as either victims or victimisers, the house becomes an ugly space of power conflicts and gender wars. The opening of the drama immediately depicts the standalone, tall house with huge closed windows, mysteriously cut off from the outside world as filtered through the traumatic memories of Jahangir—the image of which repeats itself throughout the play; in short, the house is always depicted as an isolated building surrounded by darkness, cryptically illustrating the darkness of its inhabitants. Further, the title song, sung by Ali Sethi, underlines 'house as a ruin where loneliness surrounds you', namely Jahangir's ancestral house, Mehtab's abandoned house, and even Jahangir's new house, which Meena, Jehangir's second wife, declares as an empty shell.

The middle-aged narrator/protagonist takes the audience to his childhood and declares at the very beginning of the play: "Let me introduce you to the reality of my father—and take you to our house where you never hear laughter, but the bitter and harsh remarks of my

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6. Written by Zanjabeel Asim Shah, directed by Shahzad Rafique and produced by Sadia Jabbar.

paternal aunts, which make my mother sob silently and utter regrets, pouring into my ears like poison. (*Jahangir runs upstairs*). This is my father's room—empty and sad like his life. (*He runs in another direction*). This is the place where I have seen my father romancing…(with other women)."[7] A house is actually presented an antithesis of a romantic place, as it is recollected by Jahangir as a dreadful spot, almost like a graveyard where dreams and desires of the vulnerable mates are ruthlessly crushed and buried on a daily basis, making the house a living hell for all its inhabitants. Hence, no other play than Moin's so far, in the history of Pakistani soap opera, has proved to be representative of house as a memory landscape as no playwright seems to be ready to stage and thematise house as an ideal place.

To me, there are four major reasons of the undying popularity of Moin's two plays under discussion. **First**, unlike the case in several Indian movies and dramas (see Chattopadhyay, 2018), nationalism or patriotism is not celebrated in any form, which makes all kinds of audience connect with the characters who are no super heroes, fighting for 'national pride' however imagined (See Anderson, 1983), but actually fighting emotional conflicts. **Second**, romantic love is presented as the most cherished goal of life, but it is subtly connected to the institution of family as Moin is aware of the importance of family in Pakistani culture: the playwright does not make her heroes or heroines elope with each other out of sheer feeling of love, but struggle hard to locate love within the bounds of family duties and ideals. **Third**, Moin is able to stir the feelings of her audience by urging them to take part in the predicament of her suffering protagonists who are ready to make every kind of sacrifice to keep their romantic view of love and family intact.

Indeed, Moin's plays treat television drama not as a sacrosanct space of political ideals, but a private space of an individual who has

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7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB_AylUqhrc. Episode One on ATV. (My translations).

to come to terms with his dreams and memoires, the strands of which shape his past, present and future. The genre of soap opera, in Moin's art, clearly seeks to discover the realm of private memories. In Pakistani culture, nation tends to come before the individual as Pakistan was created on the basis of 'the Two Nation Theory' with the aim of giving Indian Muslims their distinct national identity (Cohen 2004, 36). Consequently, 'national' memories are regarded more significant a field of study than individual memories located in domestic, private spaces. However, Moin's plays invite the audience to forget the national frames and participate in the passions of her characters, the intensity of which is integral to the storyline. These plays are, therefore, an important media of the study of memory,[8] which has become a significant field of research in the last years in the Western academia.[9]

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8. The field of memory studies (see also Erll 2011 a) was established by two German professors Jan and Aleida Assmann in Germany in the 1990s who introduced the term cultural memory, based on French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs' notion of the social frames of memory. There is no denying the fact that the discourse of memory has been highly Eurocentric. A number of renowned scholars of memory such Assmann (2011) and Michael Rothberg (2009) discuss and develop the discourse of collective cultural memory in relation to European history. By taking inspiration from their definition of memory, I decide to examine Pakistani television drama as works of memory in the postcolonial period. So, in the present context, I define 'memory travels' or "travelling memory" (Erll 2011b, 9) in two ways: first, memory travels as carriers of memory cross spatial and temporal borders in their memory work; second, travelling concepts of memory allow us to move beyond its Euro-centric interpretations and thus broaden the scope of memory studies.

9. According to Erll, "Memories do not hold still—on the contrary, they seem to be constituted first of all through movement. What we are dealing with, therefore, is not so much (and perhaps not even metaphorically) 'sites' of memory, *lieux de me´moire*, but rather the 'travels' of memory, *les voyages or les mouvements de me´moire*" (2011b, 8). Erll elaborates, "'Travel' is [...] an expression of the principal logic of memory: its genesis and existence through movement " (2011b, 9).

4. MAPPING SITES OF MEMORY, PLACES OF MEMORY

Memory has often been perceived in terms of building or architecture in memory studies discourse (See Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen 2012) which brings to mind the close connection between site and memory. [10] In fact, thinking memory in terms of site and of place underlines our constant desire to speculate on memory not merely in relation to temporality, but also in terms of its spatial and geographical dimensions. Perhaps this is the reason that memory has been rendered a 'landscape' (Schama 1996), a 'realm' (Nora 1989), a 'location,' or a 'theatre' (Samuel 1995) by a significant number of memory scholars besides site, space and place. By interpreting memory in terms of sites and places, it is possible to observe closely the emotional impact of a 'geographical location' on memory making. While Jay Winter (1995) looks at sites of memory as sites of mourning, Toni Morrison examines them as a domain of very personal memories. She claims:

> How I gain access to that interior life is what drives me and [...] which both distinguishes my fiction from autobiographical strategies and which also embraces certain autobiographical strategies. It's a kind of literary archaeology: On the basis of some information and a little bit of guesswork you journey to a site to see what remains were left behind and to reconstruct the world that these remains imply. What makes it fiction is the nature of the imaginative act: my reliance on the image - on the remains - in addition to recollection, to yield up a kind of a truth. By "image," of course, I don't mean "symbol"; I simply mean "picture" and the feelings that accompany the picture. (1995, 92)

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10. Steven Hoelscher and Derek H. Alderman remind us, "Once the sole preserve of psychology, the study of memory now extends to anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, literary studies, communication, history and, increasingly, to geography (2004, 348)."

It is Morrison's idea of journeying to the site to see 'what remains behind and to reconstruct the world that these remains imply' which is crucial to the representation of site and of memory in my reading of TV dramas. For the practice of reconstructing and rewriting the world out of the rosy past is what the selected plays particularly appear to dramatize.

While examining drama as a form of escapism from the most volatile period of post-independence Pakistan, it is difficult not to acknowledge the political aspect of the sites of memory before moving on to the domestic aspect—the deeply personal one with which Morrison is engaged. In Pakistan, on 14th August, which is the Independence Day, soldiers march on memorial places. The ceremonies mark the anniversary of their country's freedom from the British Raj in 1947 and the division of the subcontinent into the two separate nation-states of India and Pakistan on the basis of the 'Two Nation-Theory.' These places represent what Nora (1989) has referred to as *lieux de mémoire* – places of memory—which, in the modern period, are "specific places where memory, both formal and popular, is produced and negotiated; where it crystallises and secretes itself, enabling individuals to block the work of forgetting" (1989, 7). Memory, suggests Nora, is attached both to physical sites, such as burial places, battlefields and prisons, which embody tangible remains of the past, as well as to celebrations, spectacles and rituals that retain an aura of the past or forge a connection with previous events.

In contrast with public sites of memory, where national identities are not uncommonly reinforced, much less has been written concerning how memory erupts (see Atkinson, 2007) in ordinary, private, domestic spaces where, it can be argued, class and gender as well as individual and family, may be more salient realities than national identities. In fact, private memories are often dismissed as nostalgic, betraying a partial, romanticised and erroneous view of the past, an idea which geographers such as Alison Blunt (2003) and Stephen Legg (2004) have attempted to refute. I argue that it is important to

explore memories which are mobilised in the private space of the house. Consequently, I treat the house as a symbol of the temporal topography of domestic life, revealing how it can be understood as an embodiment, evocative of "memory and nostalgia for the past, every-day life in the present, and future dreams and fears" (Blunt and Varley, 2004, 3). As Linda Hutcheon in her essay "Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern" (1998) indicates, nostalgia is inextricably bound up with notions of 'home', with its etymological roots in medicalised notions of home sickness, "a rendering of German *heimweh*."[11] The term now connotes a yearning for lost times and places, with as much concern for the temporal as for the spatial (see also Blunt, 2003). In this way, the house, as an extension of our emotional geography, is a means of being rooted in a world of so-called darkness and loneliness. These are the metaphors which the playwright Moin toys with in her dramas steeped in fantasy, as her characters repeatedly indulge in memory and nostalgia, making the audience imagine house to be a 'contact zone' where one connects with oneself and with the world outside. In Moin's dramaturgy, house is always staged as a hub of 'light' against the 'darkness of loneliness' and of 'shelter' against the 'sweltering heat of lost love.'

Keeping in view a rematerialisation of social and cultural geography[12] and objects and spaces having their own agency,[13] I particularly focus on the materiality of house-scapes—actual and remembered—and the significance that household objects hold for their inhabitants.[14] As a result, it is no exaggeration to say that the house is like a

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11. http://www.etymonline.com/word/nostalgia. Online Etymology Dictionary.

12. See Jackson, 2000; Philo, 2000; Appadurai, 1986; see Hoskins, 2007; see Hockey, Penhale, and Sibley, 2005.

13. Cited in "Re-imagining the Kitchen as a Site of Memory" (Meah and Jackson 2016, 513)

14. Hoskin shows us how the object is not only a metaphor for the self but a means thinking and introspection, a tool for autobiographic elaboration, a way of knowing oneself through things.

private museum, where the inhabitants become the curators of their memories, possessing a space in which objects of personal, artistic or cultural interest are stored and displayed to document and narrate stories of lives being lived by the old as well as the new generations. I may even add that these inhabitants act almost like 'the architects of their memories'—memories which function like an imaginative archaeology, as the design of the house becomes increasingly funda-mental to memory making. My aim is to focus on the materiality of the house in order to highlight the significance of mundane items and objects for its inhabitants and their role in making individual remem-brances. Consequently, items and objects in the house such as a ta-ble, a sofa, family photos, mirrors, walking stick, gramophone, books along with places such as bedrooms, living rooms, verandas, garden, swimming pool, or staircase can be seen both as repository for and a carrier of memory—physical, symbolic and embodied. In fact, house is 'embodied memory' which illustrates the pattern of change and continuity among family and generation. This embodied memory is vividly captured in the media of TV drama through light, music and a simultaneous presentation of past and present through flashback techniques.

As memory is, arguably, embedded and encountered within both the fabric of the house and in everyday encounters in its domestic space, it is a form of memory which yearns for an idealised past. Therefore, the house needs to be addressed as an intensely personal space in which encounters with different objects play their role in mobilising the sensory, haptic and kinetic dimensions of memory, through a combination of taste-, sound- and smell-scapes and mun-dane activities which are embedded in the rhythms of everyday life. My reading of the play will illustrate this interaction between object and memory. Also, my reading will highlight that as house provides the space for different networks of individual memory, it is treated as one of the most important places in the plays of Moin, in both a literal and a metaphorical sense.

5. MEDIA AND MEMORY: REPRESENTATION OF THE HOUSE AS A SITE OF MEMORY IN THE SELECTED TV DRAMA SERIALS

Both plays under discussion, each consisting of thirteen 60-minute episodes, are considered to be "cult classics" (Ahmad 2015 Web). Almost no one growing up in Pakistan during the 1980s can forget the impact of these plays on people's imagination,[15] staging a fine form of modern romance between unconventional, unglamorous heroines and iconoclastic, cryptic heroes (see Shabbir 2017 Web). It is especially notable that the plays present a reversal of gender hierarchies, at a time when the country was increasingly sinking under the yoke of military dictatorship as mentioned above. In order to spread fear, suppress democratic institutions and widening the gender divide, particularly promulgating laws violating women rights, General Zia had started using Islamization as a means of strengthening his pernicious hold on the country and of curbing modernisation. With the exception of only one scene of a terror attack on children in the drama *Seeking Shelter in the Scorching Sun*, at a time when Karachi was reeking of ethnic conflicts, neither drama alludes to political transformations even as a vague reference. They concentrate solely on domestic space—unpolluted by political and social conflicts. Great TV drama, focussing on stories within a domestic space was what the eager Pakistani audiences wished to see on the television screen during those turbulent times.

The play *The loneliness* (1985) is based on two sisters Zara and Sanya who happen to lose their parents in a car accident in the city of Lahore. In order to clear the debts of their father, the house has to be sold and the sisters have to move to their single maternal aunt Aani in the city of Karachi. There, Zain, their childhood friend, falls in love

15. Sadaf Haider points out, "Classic dramas such as *Tanhaiyan* are part of a collective memory shared by a community, not only in Pakistan, but across the globe. Everything from the drama to the mellowness of those days just seems to flash in front of one's eyes" (2012 Web).

with Zara even though he is engaged to his cousin Vadi. But Zara becomes obsessed with the idea to re-buy their house –a place of perfect bliss—of memories of warmth and affection. So, the parental house is an 'existential memory work' for her. Losing that house means losing not only a connection to an idealised past, but her entire sense of life, her being in the world. With her business partner Saad Salman, Zara establishes a garment factory which proves to be extremely lucrative. This enable her to buy the house in Lahore. But once she is there, without her family, she notices only the empty walls. In desperation, she runs out of the house, meets with an accident and becomes bedridden. Saad, who has actually proposed Zara with a precious ring, leaves her in the lurch because of her physical condition, but Zain expresses his love to fill the void of 'loneliness' (*Tanhaiyaan*) first embodied in the house and then in Zara's entire being.

The drama is based on the paradox of loneliness associated with the house as a space of sharing as well as parting. The female protagonist sinks into deep loneliness following her sudden initial expulsion from her house, but this very condition of loneliness, which she has aimed to combat, is aggravated by the re-purchase of the house. The playwright, thus, treats the house as a romantic, nostalgic place in which resides an ideal family, but as soon as that family meets a tragedy, the house seems to become only a personification of lost times. Hence, there is no possible retreat to the idealised past since the house, resonating with a dark family tragedy, offers no solace to Zara. At the same time, following the sad demise of her parents, there is no return to the past reality of that family house, for the house has changed for ever, as even upon rebuying, it will not offer a space of comfort. In fact, the house is as lonely as Zara as it has bidden farewell to a nuclear family whose roots cannot be retraced in reality, but only in dream or memory. The house can never offer the same pattern of life as that lived formerly with parents, so the house is only a remnant of a lost past which Zara is unable to tolerate.

There is another twist to the house and family saga. Through-

out the play, Zara is stubbornly clinging on to the house as a place of memory where she can retrieve domestic comfort without realising that, in the absence of her parents, the house is only an empty space where everyday homely practices cannot be experienced. The whole endeavour of getting back the house is a lost effort as time has slowly faded the idea of the 'house' as a conduit to an ideal past. It becomes a place of loss—a site of mourning as the empty walls of the house remind her of the painful absence of both her parents and of the haunting shadows of their untimely death. In it, the older rhythm of life is impossible to be re-possessed or re-lived.

During the climatic scene, as Zara finally enters the repurchased house she has bought through the huge wooden main door, she is alone, without anyone willing to accompany her. She faces nothing but loss in several forms.[16] Sadly, she only sees dark shadows despite turning on the light; the artefacts of memory such as furniture and family photographs can no longer be experienced as objects of comfort. Upon the repurchase of the house, they are encountered draped in white sheets, like forgotten corpses in a graveyard, making Zara realise the tangible loss of a seemingly blissful past whose idealistic quality can only be revisited in memory. Entering the empty space of her ancestral home cannot redress the loss. In short, Zara realises that people make the house and not bare concrete. In order to retrieve the happy days which are homed in the 'house of her imagination', she needs to invest in love and not in a lost parental house, which now becomes a strong metaphor of 'the end of innocence.' She is eventually forced to forgo parental love and embrace romantic love. Having bought the house, she also finds out that she can never regain the warmth of her parental home. This has died with them. So, she is ready to leave the former nest and build her own.

While walking in the empty house, Zara is overwhelmed by the contrast between past and present—the past is associated with sounds

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16. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCA4FOV9Hhw. Episode 8

and bright light while the present is one of silence and dark shadows—making the audience take part in her predicament. She obsessively holds the chairs of the dining table as the echoes of the past begin to overwhelm her imagination, intensifying the reality of loss and loneliness. These emotions are always staged in Moin's plays through light effects, namely the dramatization of light and dark shadows chasing her idealistic, larger-than-life protagonists whom no one seems to understand except the audience. Touching family photographs, smoothing draped furniture with her fingers and moving around the dining table remembering dinner time, uniquely reveal the work of haptic and kinetic dimensions of memory, both of which characterize the role of remembering small-scale motions in the domestic space. Their impact intensifies our association with the house as a place of memory and nostalgia. It is also during the climatic scene that the sensory dimension of memory becomes conspicuous as Zara begins to hear the sounds of beautiful times at home while walking helplessly in the empty house. The very sound of memory does not soothe her, but makes her reconcile with loss as embodied in the empty space of the house. Preoccupied with memoires of lost time, increasingly bordering on trauma, she loses her sense of the present completely and meets with a tragic car accident.

Zara's bitter realisation of her loneliness is one of the most moving scenes in the drama. As she is admitted to the hospital after the accident, she finally tells her aunt Aani: "You were right when you said that a house is only concrete, so it's not the house that is important but the people around us." "No" replies Aani, "I was wrong. Sometimes a place—whether made of stone or sand—is highly significant because it is testimony of our memories. So, your thinking was not flawed." Zara declares, "In the last years, I had been obsessed with the idea of getting this house back. But when I got it, there was no one there. In fact, there was nothing there. There were only memories, shadows. Fear. And dreams, but no one was even there to wake me up

from those distant dreams."[17] Thus, the playwright tends to complicate the notion of memory by entangling it with dream and imagination. As Zara recovers from the physical injury of the accident, she begins to heal from the inside as well. The realisation that the 'house repossessed' is not the same house, that she needs to channel the loss of parental love into another direction—perhaps by starting a family with Zain, actually exorcises the demons of loneliness in her being. Thus, the play deals with the house as a protagonist as well as an antagonist, the idea of which is again developed in the next play.

In the next play under discussion, the house is a site of memory in yet another way: in fact, it remains a place of retrieving memory despite the loss of a person who has built the house as a domain of perfect existence. However, the house is also a symbol of shared dimensions of memory in the play as scattered family histories come together toward the end of the story. In the previous play, a huge wooden door being closed on a grand house with a heavy thud is a strong trope of bidding farewell to a nuclear family and to happy times, whereas in this play, the house is surrounded by a garden which seems to signal a possibility to repossess the house as a hub of temporal, spatial and generational connections.

It is in this play that Moin also draws our attention to the difference between the etymology of 'home and house' in her native tongue Urdu. Home in Urdu language is *Ghar* whereas house is understood as *Makan* similar to its usage in English or German; *Ghar* is associated with family and the internal space of its inhabitants while *Makan* is linked to the outer structure of the house; hence, *Makan* is considered to be devoid of the warmth of a *Ghar*, the idea of which dominates the thinking of the main protagonist once he has to leave his ancestral home and move to a new mansion or, as he puts it, a *Makan*. In the picture below, the protagonist Ahmer finds himself utterly lost and be-

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17. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wwoz7x5YTHM. Part 44. My translation from Urdu into English.

wildered in a brand new *Makan* and ruminates on his lost *Ghar* where he claims to "have found everything and lost everything."[18] In other words, Ahmer finds himself terribly alone after having moved into a *Makan*, the wider spaces of which appears to isolate him increasingly from his rosy past.[19]

The play *Seeking Shelter in the Scorching Sun* does not focus on a female protagonist obsessed with the house which is considered to be typical of women in Pakistan, but a male character as it tells the story of an eccentric, mysterious, slightly ego-centric elderly protagonist physician Dr Ahmer Ansari who falls in love with a young budding medic Dr Zoya Ali Khan. Although Ahmer's colleague Dr Sheena Karamat, the main antagonist, tries her level best to stop Ahmer from falling for Zoya, she does not succeed in creating ill will between them. However, soon a house becomes the bone of contention and tears apart the relationship. Ahmer's late adoptive father is in reality the grandfather of Zoya with whom Ahmer's father has broken contact even before her birth as his daughter has married someone against his will. In fact, he has told Ahmer that he has always been childless. After his death, he leaves the house in Zoya's name, against Ahmer's expectations—a house he has promised to him as a token of their loyalty and mutually lived lives. Ahmer does not know that Zoya is the woman whom he claims to hate deeply without even meeting her is the granddaughter of his adopted father. He is under the misconception that Zoya has deprived him of his house which is the only conduit to the past and a means of forgetting the darkness of the orphanage, his first home. Once he finds out that Zoya is the owner of the house, Ahmer abandons her at once. In this way, it is clear that the house relates to Ahmer's existential memory work where his entire sense of being is rooted and that the house is more important to him than romantic love.

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18. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoF0zyCaJ5w. My translation from Urdu into English.
19. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ3yVkKsnYs. Episode 2.

Soon after their breakup, Zoya's father gets a heart attack as he loses a considerable amount of money in his business. As Zoya is desperate to sell the house to pay her father's debts, Ahmer buys the house to support her, but refuses to keep any kind of contact with her. Zoya cannot bear his rejection anymore. So, she resigns and breaks off all contacts with Ahmer. In utter desperation, Ahmer decides to leave the country at the request of his best friend Adel and gives the house back to Zoya. As Zoya visits the house to mourn her lost love in the last episode of the drama, Ahmer suddenly shows up and expresses his love for her at the swimming pool; their muddled life histories converge and coalesce in the space of the house which has finally belonged to both of them. It becomes a testimony of entangled family histories as Ahmer and Zoya declare their love in the comfort zone of a house mutually experienced as their own. Hence, the house separates them but unites them, too. In some ways the house, as in the drama *The Loneliness*, becomes both a protagonist as well as an antagonist, a typical dramatic strategy the playwright Moin tends to employ in her plays about familial and generational conflicts.

Like the previous play *The Loneliness*, the house is a site of mourning at the beginning of the play in two ways: first, it reminds Ahmer of the sad demise of his beloved father; second, it also divests him of his sense of being which is grounded in that very house. However, unlike the previous play, the house is not left behind as a rosy memory, but is restored as a space of bringing together generations as well as "new and old relations."[20] It is in the house of her maternal grandfather, who is Ahmer's adoptive father, that Zoya starts a new life. Thus, the house creates an opportunity to share 'common threads of memories' for both Zoya and Ahmer, which is not the case in Zara's home saga. She enters the ancestral house alone and leaves it alone, too.

There is an interesting reversal of gender hierarchies as it is Ah-

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20. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Wow24vv_E. Episode 67. My translation from Urdu into English.

mer and not Zoya who is interested in homemaking and keeping the legacy of an old family member intact. Since the house not only connects Ahmer to the love of his adopted father, but also to the memories of warmth and homeliness, he is determined to retrieve the same house to relive the memories that actually give him the impetus to live—the memory of a home—of a father—and a new life away from the dark memoires of the orphanage. [21] In contrast, Zoya as an anti-heroine is alien to homemaking let alone imagining solid concrete as a means of preserving family histories. This is underlined by Zoya's father in an important conversation with Ahmer after Ahmer's break-up with Zoya.[22] It is perhaps because she has never lived in a nuclear family, but has been raised only by her father. She is, therefore, not ready to show understanding to Ahmer for his excessive idealisation of a house as the centre of his life—a house which haunts Ahmer's entire life and being, his past and present. Whereas for Ahmer, the house is a reason for existence, for Zoya it is a mere fantasy—a dream from which Ahmer does not seem to wake up to the reality. In fact, Ahmer cannot help seeing the house as the extension of his self and identity which Zoya declares as an utterly selfish act.

Moin gives another twist to the house-cum-love-cum-family-cum-generation saga. In the middle of 'the relationship vis-à-vis house chaos', the play, interestingly, seems to celebrate and idealise fatherhood by using the house as a trope. It is Ahmer's adoptive father who has built the house whose legacy Ahmer has to keep and it is Zoya's father who is the maker of the home in which Zoya grows up. In this way, the scattered strands of love for people and places as well as family and generations increasingly dominate the plot. Throughout the drama,

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21. The memory of an orphanage is a direct contrast to the memory of living in a grand house, intensifying the work of kinetic memory in the play as Ahmer increasingly recollects walking in and outside the house with his adopted father in his saddest moments as a means of comfort against his dark beginning as a child and an empty life as an adult.

22. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Wow24vv_E. Episode 67.

Ahmer only allows the façade of a stern and grim man to fall when he indulges in remembering the times with his adoptive father, especially mundane activities like looking for the matching socks for his senile father, whiling away the time in the evening in the living room, listening to music, or looking at each other in the mirror to joke about each other's physical appearance.[23] Some of these moments Ahmer tends to remember when he notices Zoya engaged in such activities like looking for matching socks for her father. Indeed, Ahmer even offers to clean the foggy glasses of Zoya's father on his visit to the hospital, claiming that that has been his favourite activity for a very long time.[24] Indeed, Zoya's love for her father somehow connects Ahmer with her as he begins to relive lost fatherhood through her associations with the father figure.

Since Ahmer's major goal of life is apparently not to fall in love and start a family, but to regain the house first, it is no wonder that upon his expulsion from the house of his memory and imagination, he seeks comfort only in remembering small-scale events in the lost house. It is not surprising that material, sensory, haptic and kinetic memories seem to become the only source of solace: Ahmer almost feverishly recollects giving his late father medicine to persuade him that he can combat his illness or helping him dress up properly or his father sitting across him in the garden to encourage him to be happy. To combat his mixed feelings towards these memories which overlap dream and imagination, Ahmer is seen sitting in the armchair of his late father with his walking stick in his hand, as if the father was still living in him. Thus, the house takes the form of a cognitive map whose routes only domestic spaces (real, imagined, and remembered)

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23. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGwd9gVD94Y. Episode 1.

24. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amz-o_eb_SM. Episode 49.
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0g_pAXtGWI. Episode 50.
 When Ahmer begins to fall in love with Zoya, he cannot help hugging the photo of his late father in the evening at home as if he were trying to share his newly kindled feelings of love with him—as if he were to merge the warmth of parental love with his new found romantic love.

can demonstrate. Finally, by examining the house as a cartography of longing and a means of resurrecting beloved people and places lost to time, it is possible to follow not only several routes of memory, but also its material and immaterial dimensions as staged in the play.

6. MEDIATION OF THE HOUSE AS A TROPE OF INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILIAL MEMORY AND HISTORY

These plays seem to sum up the image of 'the house as a place of memory' in the imagination of a Pakistani audience, but more importantly how the house, as an emblem of internal and external conflicts, is able to 'house' family scars and tragedies as well as losses and reconciliations. They also draw our attention to the ease with which a space can be transformed into a place to create a sense of belonging and attachment—a place where the life narrative can be composed, where the inhabitants can be the preserver of their personal histories. These plays naturally concentrate mostly on the problems of upper-class Pakistani society where house and money, social status and position are interconnected. More importantly, these plays show how upper-class men and women remember the past. Therefore, memory notion is twined with the notion of gender and class issues: gender as the drama emphasises a different approach to house and home-making between male and female characters, as well as their ways of remembering, and class since possessing a house and the practice of preserving family history is a tradition in upper-classes families.

Both these plays underline that memory work takes place in private domestic spaces as well, as opposed to the more public settings that have been the focus of most previous geographical work on the spaces of memory. The house as a site of memory gives us the chance to examine not only the social life of memory but also 'how societies remember' (See Connerton's idea of social memory and group mem-

ory 1989)[25], and how the house explicates both generational change and the role of the past in shaping the present. By examining the house as a significant place of memory, we are able to delve deeper into private histories, especially the different *ars memoriae* or 'arts of memory' in South Asian cultures and media. Also, how house as a specific *lieu de mémoire* is a space that provides a context for the material, sensory, haptic and kinetic dimensions of memory as the intensely emotional scenes in the drama take place in the house.[26] In brief, how the house is actually a microcosm of memory dynamics active in Pakistani culture. The house invites the audience to take into account the significance of domestic mnemonic objects as much as those objects found in a 'national' museum that portray larger and more objective records of history.

Unlike the kind of public monuments that Nora describes as *lieux de mémoire*, spaces and places in house are small-scale domestic sites (see Hurdley 2013), but no less powerful as carriers of memory. A careful study of the lives of inhabitants deeply attached to their house also demonstrates Nora's argument that memory is "multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual [...] taking root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects" (1989, 9). These plays uniquely showcase the intersection of past, present and future (Boym, 2001, 38) in the domestic place and space, shaping the life-worlds of its inhabitants in a distinct manner. Such an approach furnishes a more complex and nuanced understanding of the role of the house in 'memory making'. Moreover, it is an understanding via

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25. "...when recollection has been treated as a cultural rather than an individual activity , it has tended to be seen as the recollection of a cultural tradition" (see Connerton 1989, 2).

26. While Sutton's arguments concerning the relationship between memory and the senses are—most obviously—implicated in taste and smell, he (2006) suggests that memory is also embodied, haptic and kinetic, since it comes together with the senses and skilled practices—habit memories, or a 'remembrance of the hands' (Connerton, as cited in Sutton, 2006, 89) needs to be seen as important a memory practice as any other memory form.

which the past can be seen as permeating the present through the everyday practices of individuals busy in hanging family photos on the wall, strolling in the garden, celebrating an engagement party or a seasonal get-together in the living room. Hence, by looking at house as a place of memory, we are able to make sense of inner lives lived privately which are as valuable a source of memory work as the public, and so-called collective, national landscapes of memory.

7. CONCLUSION

My three approaches to reading house as a site of memory, as addressed in Pakistan television drama serials, are, in fact, a step to imagining domestic space as important a domain as public memorials. These memorials celebrate and glorify national histories while the house as a repository of individual stories and archives eulogize only personal memoires, which interestingly the genre of soap opera sets out to highlight. In Pakistani culture, national memoires are expected to be the focus of collective memory with individual memory having a subordinate or virtually no status at all. However, Moin's TV drama serials, staging the art of remembering house as a fantasy, present the opposite as they serve as a prime means of gaining insight into the memory realm of Pakistani middle class and upper-middle class families, especially the role of personal memory in everyday life which no other medium has presented so effectively. One way of keeping the legacy of her plays alive is the creation of sequels such as *Tanhaiyaan: Naye Silsilay* (2012-2013),[27] a 13-episode sequence of *Tanhaiyaan,* which seeks to continue the tradition of remembering the house as a work of memory in our modern, digital age (Haider 2012, Web).

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27. Written by Haseena Moin and Mohammed Ahmed and directed by Marina Khan.

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"*I AM NOT THIS BODY*": Persons, Boundaries, and Bodies in Vaishnava Ritual Practice

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ABSTRACT

The semiotic separation of persons from their bodily needs and desires in Vaishnava ritual practice re-imagines individuals and communities as represented by but distinct from their physical forms. In language, persons and bodies that are *present have equal standing to persons and bodies as if they are present. In ritual practice, bodies as if they are present are then materially represented by sacred images and incorporated into daily life through rituals. Vaishnava practice then links ritual language and ritual objects with the ways in which personhood in India is conceptualized both within and between physical bodies. This paper focuses on the parallel ways in which both linguistic participant frameworks and the material construction of ritual spaces extend personhood across objects, space, and time, in order to demonstrate how the relationship between sacred spaces and language construct families and communities as simultaneously living, dead, and about to be reborn.*

"I am not this body." Menaka devi patted my knee with a smile but remained otherwise indifferent to my concern as she struggled to sit comfortably on the marble floor. As we traded pleasantries over mangoes and sweet rice, she carefully arranged the cut-leaf plate on her lap so that the folds of her sari were spared the worst of the extremely ripe fruit. The cool marble of the Prabhupad Samadhi, a large central memorial building just inside the main gates of the village of Mayapur, was a welcome respite from the mid-July heat and the small hallway within which many devotees were now seated occasionally erupted with impromptu song as the gathered group was served a generous meal in honor of a fellow devotee's upcoming birthday. An older Bengali woman bent her head in agreement as she tucked her white sari out of the way of her bowl of vegetable curry and joined the rest of the Vaishnavi women on our designated side of the hallway. My friend carefully set aside the remains of her plate for the small girl next to her eagerly awaiting the rest of her grandmother's dessert with a sly grin. "I am not this body" she said again in Bangla reassur-

ingly, "It is changing, it's getting old, but it is not me."[1]

It was not uncommon for me to be gently reassured with this phrase, as a reminder of my presence among more spiritually-minded pilgrims, but I was later surprised at how often I had apparently recorded it in my field notes. As a customary statement of belief or as a precursor to the performance of bodily austerities or ritual proclamations, I noted how various devotees employed it in times of stress or illness, in response to the difficulties of agricultural labor, or even more so, as a way of talking to God. When devotees used this expression, however, they were not specifically distinguishing between binary categories of animating soul and mortal flesh: they were hinting at particular ideas of persons separate and distinct from their physical forms. When I encountered Menaka devi again in the temple later that day, she acknowledged me with a slight nod before turning her attention back to the deities of Radha-Krishna and addressing them with arms outstretched: "My Lord" she said "I am not this body. This body is not me."[2]

"I am not this body" is metonymic for the semiotic separation of bodies and persons among Krishna devotees and their deities. More practically, this separateness is achieved through the parallel ways in which both linguistic frameworks and their material representations in ritual spaces extend personhood across interlocutors, objects, and time. This interplay was particularly noticeable during three daily ritual events that took place at both temple and home shrines: *darshan*,[3]

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1. In the vast majority of my recorded conversations, "I am not this body" was spoken either in English or in Bangla (Āmi ē'i dēha na'i or Āmi āmāra śarīra na'i). In some cases, Hindi was also used, especially among pilgrims coming from the western or southern regions (Main yah shareer nahin hun). As is not uncommon in India generally, most pilgrims and devotees to Sri Mayapur spoke a combination of languages, in this case Bangla, Hindi, and English. Throughout my fieldwork, most conversations were carried out using two or more languages with continual switching based on context and topic. I have translated them into English here for clarity.

2. Bangla. Translated from field notes.

3. Also: *darśan* (दर्शन)

the ritual unveiling and viewing of the deities for worship and inter-action; *puja,* offerings of food, clothing, and care activities (such as bathing or lamp lighting); and every day ascetic living practices with-in the *dham*, a term meaning "abode or seat" that refers to the sacred landscape of a place of pilgrimage. At first, conversational participant frameworks and the material construction of ritual spaces did not seem to form a recognizable pattern, at least not one that would help to explain the complexities of personhood and embodied practice that I saw. Then, after several weeks of participant-observation, a kind of pattern began to emerge; an order, or more generally, a relationship of ideas that I will lay out here as I attempt to reflect on my own ex-periences at a particular moment within one of West Bengal's largest Krishna pilgrimage temples, Sridham Mayapur.

Vaishnava ritual spaces are characterized by a complicated form of perpetual divine play wherein the god Krishna typically interacts with his devotees as a kind of friend, lover, and play-mate. Within these spaces of recreational games and disciplined erotic desire, devotees also continuously participate in a material construction of familial and cultural immortality. This construction begins with a shared understanding of God, Krishna, as a singular and particular person; a person with whom devotees engage in conversation with, speak about, and speak for. In these moments, Krishna might then appear to take on a variety of potential linguistic positions within the course of a conversation. But because these positions are constantly shifting around understandings of his viewpoint, his role is better en-capsulated as that of a socially negotiated interlocutor; a point I will return to in more depth shortly. But Krishna as a linguistic participant within every-day and ritual speech events is not limited solely to the boundaries of language or participant roles. In the material activities of ritual, such as creating, feeding, bathing, and dressing deity icons, his roles are given substance, represented in material media, and made concrete. By thus giving Krishna material and ritual bound-aries that parallel the linguistic boundaries of his participant roles,

devotees create spaces for interaction that make the deity available to sense experience and material exchange.

Within the *darshan*, images have agency, and as the subject (devotee) and object (deity) are collapsed during the devotional exchange of ritualized sight it often becomes ontologically unclear who can be said to be acting on whom (Eck 1998). Through the daily care and maintenance of deities during *puja*, the material bodies of the deities achieve the same status as living bodies and through everyday ritual enactments of mythic events within the *dham*, supernatural and historical time merges with the present day. Therefore, what at first seems to be clear distinctions between mortal bodies, material objects, and linear time becomes precarious and fluid, blurring the lines between persons and events in the present with persons and events in the past and in the future. In the end, where actual persons and their bodies become semiotically separated, devotees open up the possibility for divine persons to achieve bodies, laying the foundation for the expansion of personhood across boundaries of space and time.

Before going further, I feel it is important to briefly outline the structural trajectory of this paper so as to ground the proposed ideas in a discernible order. First, I will continue with a brief introduction to Vaishnavism in general so that I can be clear as to what evidence and what potential gaps exist in this analysis. I have also included a few pertinent details regarding the recent history of Mayapur and of the specific nature of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition that is practiced there so that the complexities of this ethnographic moment acknowledge the delicate balance of participation and observation that are key in understanding how the Vaishnavas of Mayapur are ultimately represented here. I will then primarily focus on the linguistic role of Krishna as an interlocutor and the ways in which the construction of his role during conversational participant frameworks is vital to the formation of the religious self as well as the initial locus wherein persons and bodies become both symbolically separate and communally shared. By drawing connections between 'what is said', 'what is done',

and 'what it is done with,' I hope to demonstrate that the notions of bodies and persons hinted at in the polysemous use of "I am not this body" indicate engagement with a greater cultural system of agents and entities within and between physical bodies. Finally, because I acknowledge that this work is limited by length and scope and must, by necessity, be restricted to a certain body of previously published research, treat the material aspects and specific practices of Vaishnava ritual only briefly, and relate directly to my own fieldwork, I will also propose avenues of further inquiry that include possibilities for additional research that may or may not support my current examination.

GAUDIYA VAISHNAVISM AND THE KRISHNA OF MAYAPUR

Vaishnavism is a distinctive yet diverse religious tradition that comprises one of the major branches of Hinduism along with Shaivism, Smartism, and Shaktism. Vaishnavism, however, is organized around the veneration of Vishnu and his ten incarnations, or *avatars*, as a single supreme God. Gaudiya Vaishnavism (which has also been called Chaitanya Vaishnavism or Hare Krishna) is a Vaishnava religious movement founded by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (AD 1486–AD 1534) in India during the early decades of the 16th century and is primarily structured on the devotional worship (*bhakti*) of Krishna,[4] who would otherwise be considered the eighth avatar of Vishnu, as the supreme deity.[5] "Gaudiya" refers to the Gauḍa region or what is present day West Bengal/Bangladesh where devotees define "Vaishnavism" as worship centered on a monotheistic deity who is addressed as either Krishna,

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4. In these contexts, Krishna is also commonly referred to as *Svayam Bhagavan* (meaning The Supreme Lord or God Himself) or the "Original Supreme Personality of Godhead".

5. The principal belief of Vishnu-centered sects is the identification of Vishnu or Narayana as the one supreme God. This belief contrasts with the Krishna-centered traditions, such as Vallabha, Nimbaraka, Vallbha, and Gaudiya, in which Krishna is considered as the Supreme Lord Vishnu.

Narayana, or Vishnu. The Gaudiya Vaishnava movement is also some-times referred to as the Brahma-Madhva-Gaudiya *sampradaya* (tradi-tion), which is a reference to its conceptual origins in a succession of spiritual masters, or *gurus*, believed to originate from Brahma. It is typically classified as a polymorphic monotheistic tradition, see-ing the many forms of the cosmic and impersonal Vishnu as expan-sions or incarnations of one Supreme God, a personal and intimate deity named Krishna (literally "black/dark blue"[6] or "all-attractive"[7]) or Govinda, the divine herdsman (Schweig 2004: 14-17). In other words, in the polymorphism of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, the ambigu-ity of "manyness" in the polytheistic traditions from which it arose is not completely displaced by a monotheistic "oneness," rather, the two are simultaneous and become inextricably symbolically linked. Its philosophical and theological basis in text is primarily founded in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Bhagavata Purana*, as well as other Puranic scrip-tures and Upanishads.[8] Among the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, devotion to Krishna also includes the worship of Krishna in conjunction with his "spiritual internal potency" (called *hladhini shakti*) which manifests as his divine consort, the goddess of devotion Sri Radha (Sherbow 2004, Brahma Samhita 5.1, and Bhagavat Purana 1:3:28 - 6:4:33). But even outside of his veneration in Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Krishna is also one of the most beloved deities of Hindu India.

The distinctly recognizable image of the "blue god" appears every-where from the mischievous lover (Radha Krishna) of North India to the patron of art, music, and poetry (Vitobha Krishna) in Maharashtra in central India, to his association with the mysteries of the nighttime sky and monastic traditions (Udupi Krishna) in Karnataka and Guru-vayor in Kerala in the South. Krishna's appearance in multiple liter-ary epics throughout Indian history includes the *Mahabharata* which

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6. Monier Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary (2008 revision)

7. Rosen, Steven (2006). *Essential Hinduism*. Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 224

8. The *Isha Upanishad*, *Gopala Tapani Upanishad*, and *Kali Santarana Upanishad* appear more often in devotional contexts than other secondary texts

also contains both the *Bhagavad Gita*, the best-known and most often translated Hindu text, and the *Harivamsha*, a lengthy appendix which is exclusively dedicated to Krishna's life. Krishna also appears in the *Puranas*, the stories of Vishnu's ten earthly incarnations, most notably in the *Bhagavata Purana* (also known as *Srimad Bhagavatam*), the *Vishnu Purana*, the *Padma Purana*, and the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*. In other devotional literary traditions, he plays a role in the *Cankam* poetic corpus of early Tamil texts and in the theatrical dramas of both past, namely the *Balacharita* of the Gupta period (AD 320 to AD 550), and present, such as the *ras lilas* (devotional theatrical plays) of present day Vrindavan (Bryant 2007). But with a such a diverse and complicated history and mythology to draw from, pin-pointing the exact details of precisely who Krishna is and how devotees across the world understand him is a project that would ultimately take lifetimes to pursue. For the more specific questions of personhood, language, and practice in this case, we will have to begin with Krishna as he is realized in Mayapur.

As a figure in language and in text, the Krishna of Mayapur is both transgressive of typical social norms and indicative of them. In many of the local stories of his childhood and adolescence, Krishna engages in childish pranks on the people of his village, spends much of his time sporting with his mortal peers, is considered fun-loving and easy-going, and teaches various "lessons" through his mischievous antics and choices of games. His devotees then also see their devotions and interactions with Krishna in return as a similar kind of play. The conceptualization of this interaction between God and his devotees, that of an eternal divine game, is a large part of what characterizes the personality of Krishna as a figure in conversation and in material representation. His indeterminately playful nature allows for a kind of disavowal of the potential destructiveness of this divine play, a destructiveness that becomes increasingly socially-transgressive over time. When speaking about God, however, devotees do not typically perceive Krishna as malicious or aggressive regardless of whether or not his actions would

otherwise seem so. This disavowal then not only indexes the ambiguous boundaries of ritual spaces, where the actions and interactions of gods routinely test and transgress human cultural rules and norms, it also situates Mayapur devotees as interpreters of these acts, though not necessarily with a mandate to imitate them as direct examples. As the Bengali proverb states: *Devatar velay lila khela, Dosh likhechhe manusher velay* (It is divine sports as far as gods are concerned, only for humans it is considered a moral lapse). This division of divine sport and moral lapse also suggests that the disavowal of malice or animosity on the part of the devotees protects and supports individual devotees' abilities to present conflicting viewpoints and religious interpretations through ritual spaces.

The ritual spaces of Krishna, as a playful god, are also themselves spaces of human play where the normal rules of time, space, and social participation are temporarily suspended, explored, and recreated. This complicated intersection of unrestricted potential, human and non-human doubling, the suspension of social normality and rules of moral conduct are reflected in how devotees speak about and speak to Krishna. They are also equally present in material ritual practice. In constituting religious life, there remains a tension between the performative nature of religion and the importance of subjective viewpoint particularly when it comes to how devotees manage their spiritual interactions through various ritual objects. What God wants, what God likes, and how God feels are all as much a part of the economic and political life of the community as they are its religious life. Historically, as Indological scholars have pointed out, this merging of spiritual and social realities through the locus of ritual is not unusual in Vedic practices but we must be careful here in attempting to draw boundaries too sharply between what we might call "imagination" and what we call "empirical experience" (Patton 2005: 1). In Mayapur, this is because persons don't just extend through aspects language and perspective; they also constitute, and are constituted by, objects and bodies in the physical world.

The poetry, narratives, and performances of Krishna contain a pervasive kind of physicality where the structures of the surrounding world must be made to match the nature of the story or play in order for Krishna himself to be considered manifest and personally present. This is not unusual in the day to day ritual life of Hindus in general, whose spiritual practices are not typically predicated on abstract interior truths but are, instead, principally based on particular concrete appearances of the divine in the substances of the material world (Eck 1998: 11). This essential aspect of physicality is notably important here because it not only places divine persons in physical bodies, it also mediates devotees' perceptions and actions regarding the treatment of those bodies. This binding and bridging of physical matter to spiritual reality takes a number of intriguing forms, from the creation of sacred sculptures for the practices of *darshan* and *puja* offering; where god is made directly manifest is his *archa-vigraha* or material form, to the set-up of stages and dance circles for the *ras lilas*, to the proper methods of tending pilgrimage villages and towns (Nash 2012).

This stress on the importance of the physical constitution of devotional spaces pervades almost every kind of Krishna worship and includes wide-spread notions of bodily physicality that are often expressed in terms of sensuous or erotic themes. For example, sacred bridges (*tirthas*) between the physical world and the spiritual world in Vaishnavism are maintained through theatrical costuming practices – so that the actors playing the divine lovers, Krishna and Radha, are believed to be physically overtaken by the deities during performances – through the special standards and restrictions of creating sacred sculptures or *murti* – so that the object itself becomes the actual, physically incarnate, form of God in the mortal world during the revelations of *darshan* – and through the verbal performance of *bhakti* (devotional) poetry and stylized gestures in traditional, Bharatanatyam, dance – so that the words of God can be lived through sense experience.

The focus on physical embodiment here emphasizes a person's experiences within their body rather than the body as a construction or image. This particular formulation of the body as vehicle of subjective experience originates in the works of Merleau-Ponty (1981: 82). but embodiment, as I use it here, is what Csordas described as "an existential condition in which the body is the subjective source or intersubjective ground of experience" (1999: 143). This is important because I am essentially concerned with the relationships between certain cultural practices and religious experiences that are positioned both from within and outside of the body. In the same way that Bourdieu's notions of *habitus* are critical for understanding how structures influence our outward decisions and responses, similarly, the subjectivity of bodily experience is vital for understanding how 'bodies', and concomitantly 'persons,' are produced and perceived as well as how they are distanced and transformed from subject into object. In terms of the extensions of personhood, the production and separation of persons and bodies is crucial to the larger cultural system of familial roles and community relationships.

The theological foundations for the physical importance of Krishna worship is based in a traditional form of Indian theism scholars typically refer to as "theistic intimacy" where God is presented through his innermost intimate relationships of love and affection (Schweig 2004: 14). In these traditions, love between God and the soul is constructed through relationships that closely resemble those in everyday life, such as parents and children and husbands and wives. However, it is the passionate affections between lovers that becomes the penultimate expression of devotion and the Vaishnava tradition; much like certain forms of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic mysticism, which are equally fascinated with the erotic vision of divinity. Framing the existence of persons at least partially though the make-up of their relationships and through their desires is a significant aspect of Indian culture and constitutes an important link between language and materiality. By expanding individual personhood outward into

various social networks of relationships, exchanges, and obligations with other persons (including divine and deceased persons), devotees thus begin the construction of a community that can persist regardless of the realities of death, displacement, and abandonment. This is also where the role of sense experience becomes ambiguous, both locating ecstatic religious experience within the realm of bodily participation but also necessitating the control and partial removal of the body from the field of action. As a result, bodily taboos are also quite common in Vaishnava practice, including rules of hair-cutting, dietary restrictions (vegetarianism/no animal products other than dairy), separate spaces for different kinds of washing, restrictions on the public interactions of men and women, specific daily schedules for rest and activity, and customs for allowed and disallowed types of clothing. Such is certainly the case of Sridham Mayapur.

SPEAKING TO GOD: THE INTERLOCUTOR DEITY

In the course of daily living within the holy spaces of the *dham*, devotees reconstitute their mundane lived spaces as sacred through a continuous transformation of linguistic, ritual, and material boundaries. For this reason, "I am not this body" serves not only as a way to symbolically divide the self from the body it currently resides in but also as a bridge to conceptualizing the presence of God as simultaneously omnipresent and incarnate in a material form. While "I am not this body" first appears to be a kind of colloquial shorthand for the semiotic distancing of internal selves with physical characteristics, such as hair or skin color, current states of health, or other physical circumstances, it also acts as a denial of mortality. The "I" is perceived as static, unchanging, and eternal whereas the body grows old, gains weight, loses its memory, and ultimately dies and decays. Similarly, this conception of an unchanging core of personality momentarily embodied by a malleable physical form lies at the heart of Vaishnava

ritual practice.

Just as "I" both exists within the body and is distinct from the body so too does Krishna exist within the bodies of his deities and yet is distinct from his physical manifestations; giving even more weight to the inclusion of "this" in terms of which body out of any number of possible bodies might be within consideration. This poses some interesting problems for the analysis of participant roles in Vaishnava verbal events, specifically ones that include some conversational exchange between devotees and God himself. In particular, what kinds of co-participation are possible in such events given the marked differences between what each devotee might understand is taking place? What is the best way of determining the differing contributions of devotees and deities so that the importance of the linguistic boundaries of personhood are made clearer? Finally, what does this say about the way persons are negotiated through verbal exchange? At the level of practice, it is probably best to address these questions through a notion of participant status within the broader context of linguistic participant frameworks. This way, personhood might be better demonstrated through interactions between persons that are present and persons as if they are present.

When Goffman (1981) first constructed his participant frameworks he set out to categorize the interplay of various participant roles as a method for understanding larger social affairs through the microcosm of the speech event. Through a variety of role combinations, speech act participants negotiate wider social relations, recreate and perform aspects of the self, and mediate conflicting perceptions all through their *place* within the conversation. In recent years, numerous scholars have taken up Goffman's initial elements of participation and challenged the various possible realizations of the classical categories of "speaker" and "hearer" into further, almost limitless, categories (Irvine 1996, Goffman 1974 and 1981, Hymes 1972: 58-60, Clark and Carlson 1982, and Levinson 1983 and 1988). As William F. Hanks notes, "participant formations in talk are complex and dy-

namic structures that shift with the flick of an eyebrow and inevitably involve much more than the familiar labels "speaker" and "addressee" would lead us to suspect" (1996: 162). This work is not meant, however, to reduce the following conversations to even more fragmented labels drawn out of "speakers," "hearers" or "addressees" but rather to bring an analytical focus specifically to the precise role of what I am calling here the Interlocutor Deity and how the role of the deity in speech indexes specific understandings of personhood more broadly.

While there is no formal definition of Interlocutor Deity, for the purposes of this analysis I take the Interlocutor Deity to be a socially-acknowledged conversational participant or persona who is not otherwise physically animate at the time and place of the speech act. This is not to imply that Interlocutor Deities are not actual persons or are not "real" in an ontological sense, but that the role of the Interlocutor Deity is inhabited by an agent that must be continuously culturally and socially negotiated by the other participants throughout the speech event. In this way, the Interlocutor Deity can represent anything from a fictional character, to a deceased friend or family member, to divine entities. In the case of Mayapur's Gaudiya Vaishnavas, the Interlocutor Deity I focus on here is that of Krishna himself. In so doing, my intent is to reveal something particular about the relationship between the believer and the position of god as an Interlocutor Deity, a relationship that occupies such a privileged status in religious contexts. This is also because the nature of the complex interplay between Interlocutor Deity and believer is vital to the creation of religious personhood.

For the devotees of Mayapur, these roles are the very locus where selves and bodies begin to semiotically separate and recombine. Performative linguistic spaces then form the foundation for the material representations of the deities, where the Interlocutor Deity is embedded in substances and made available to sense experience. By making the presence of the deity concrete in this manner, devotees blend parallel spaces of viewpoint, accessing multiple intersubjective per-

spectives that extend the community beyond present time and place. By making such activities as speaking and chanting "as much a condition of possibility for the experience of the divine as a response to it" (Keane 1997: 48) devotees reveal how personhood is constructed through the relationships between performance, text, and context. An Interlocutor Deity that includes aspects of both individual subjective experience and community practices creates a viewpoint that appears to be beyond ordinary experience, existing simultaneously in the past, the present, in all possible futures, at a spatial distance, and across ontological divides (Keane 1997: 48).

The creation of the Interlocutor Deity is ultimately about the creation of a contrasting and conflicting space between viewpoints. This space then allows devotees to propose a particular viewpoint, incorporate or align themselves with a viewpoint, negotiate or discard a viewpoint, to engage with viewpoints that arose with other participants during other situations, or to construe a kind of "bird's eye view" from which multiple viewpoints can be evaluated. For example, it was not uncommon for devotees to refer to a number of actions or objects as something "Krishna liked" or something "Krishna desired;" typically stated in the third person and as though Krishna himself were present to receive the action or item in question. This is how, through multiple conversations, Krishna is situated as a desiring subject. His wants are occasionally interactional, such as a desire for conversation or play, but more often tend towards the material as he often desires food, clothing of a certain design or color, a bath, or a certain accoutrement such as jewelry, incense, or flowers. It then becomes the goal of the conversation to negotiate the specifics of how the assembled devotees would provide the desired items. This opened up numerous possibilities for leveraging the deity's perspective in order to address communal needs: hungry people could be fed, artisans and laborers could be given work, water supplies could be replenished from the river, or travel for buying and trading could be arranged. Krishna's desires were also a way to attend to social issues. By describing how

and why Krishna would want something or by discussing what his intentions might be, men and women were often able to negotiate issues such as proper dress, familial obligations, and domestic living arrangements. As two of my informants once debated during a discussion on how I, as a female, non-devotee and Westerner, should be dressed during *darshan*, it was Krishna's perspective that determined the final decision.

> Gita Priti: We should help her with her sari. It's not right. She must cover her head in the temple.

> Ragini Priya: Oh no, it's ok if she doesn't want to cover her head. Krishna understands. He's very forgiving about that. (turning to me) He just wants you to come and see him.

> Gita Priti: Yes, that's true. He really just wants us to come and see him. (turning to me) He would be lonely if we didn't come.[9]

Another example of this kind of viewpoint negotiation happened while Menaka devi and I were preparing lunch one afternoon and were discussing what food needed to be purchased from the produce seller for the next day.

> Menaka devi: What should we get tomorrow?

> Me: What do we need? Is there something specific I should look for?

> Menaka devi: Oh! We should get a whole pineapple. He (the produce seller) has them now. Krishna loves pineapple and I can make him some ice cream. Everyone is saying that it is so

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9. Bangla. Translated from fieldnotes recorded shortly after the conversation.

very hot out now, so I think he would like that very much.

Me: Will it take a long time to make?

Menaka devi: It doesn't matter. He knows I am thinking of it, so now he will be so excited for it. (turning to the deity on the home shrine) Aren't you my Lord? It is so hot out.[10]

Numerous similar examples appeared often in my interactions with the Krishna devotees of Mayapur and occurred anywhere from formal ritual events to every day conversations. By extending the self beyond the body into an all-knowing, all-seeing observer who acts as a repository for other subjectivities, other interpretations or understandings, devotees functionally re-imagine personhood both within and between physical bodies. Secondly, by sharing the same Interlocutor Deity, devotees continuously build communal and ritual intersubjectivity through their interactions with each other and with Krishna. Additionally, because material space parallels socially imagined space, each acting as a form of communication with the other, physical viewpoints can also represent narrative viewpoints (Dancygier 2012). Material practice then becomes a kind of viewpoint embedded in substance and made concrete to the senses. What is then "blended" in the parallel of these spaces is the ability for devotees to access multiple perspectives and thus use those perspectives to stretch family and community bonds through time and place. This became even more apparent during a discussion I had with three women regarding the care of their deity home shrines:

Manjari Mahima: I'm bathing the deities tomorrow but I should do it out by the window. Krishna wants to see the goshala (cow shelter/pasture).

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10. Combination of English, Bangla, and Hindi. Translated from fieldnotes recorded shortly after the conversation.

Me: So he can watch the cows?

Manjari Mahima: I have him here always (indicating the shrine in the main room) so he can watch over the household but during *abhishek* (deity bathing ceremony) he is playing with the cows.
Kunti Mata: He can see them from there, that is very good.

Me: Do you mean that Krishna remembers playing with the cows while he takes his bath or that he plans on going out to play with them afterwards?

Manjari Mahima: (laughing) Oh yes, he does both of those things. Very naughty. Maybe I shouldn't let him watch the cows. It might make him naughty.

Jhulan Mata: (admonishing the deity directly) Yes, that would be naughty, right after your bath.

Kunti Mata: I make sure to have milk sweets on the counter where he can see them. He'll stay for some sweets if you have them. I should come and make some. He always wants sweets after his bath.[11]

As apparent during this particular conversation, the physical viewpoint of the deity was the method by which the women were able to narrate a future communal event, the bathing ritual. It also demonstrates how Krishna as the Interlocutor Deity is both a subject participant in the conversation in the present, when he is addressed directly by one of the women, and an object of the discussion through which actions in the future are negotiated, such as where to perform the ritual, who will be in attendance, and whether or not to have milk sweets.

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11. Conversation mostly in English, with some Bangla. Recorded conversation.

It is here that I must further clarify, at least in brief, a few of the ways in which I am defining the role of the Interlocutor Deity. While these characteristics are by no means comprehensive, they serve to help describe this particular participant role in the context of Maya-pur Gaudiya Vaishnavism (and Hare Krishna). As shown in the pre-vious examples, the Interlocutor Deity is always a potential role in Vaishnava conversation but one whose particular position is generat-ed at the time of the speech event. The Interlocutor Deity is therefore comprised of a mental image or concept of a persona who takes part in a conversation or dialogue through social consensus but who is not otherwise physically animate (though often materially present). But more specifically, the Interlocutor Deity is also generated out of the self or selves of at least one of the participants and whose presence is then shared among some, if not all, of the remaining participants within the context of the speech event. Because the viewpoints as-signed to this ontologically distant agent, who can then be mediated through multiple speakers, effectively belong to no one they are free to "be taken up and read" or even reinterpreted and reimagined with-out the full weight of intentionality or responsibility falling on any one participant in particular. As Keane, drawing on the work of Hanks, describes it, "distribution of roles may serve to displace responsibility away from particular individuals or diffuse it among many. Elabora-tions of participant roles may help invoke sources of authority that are not limited to the perceptible here and now, so that, for instance, the speech event makes plausible the presence of invisible and inau-dible spirits" (1997: 58). The Interlocutor Deity thus provides some-thing of a repository for these fragmented roles, where diffuse respon-sibility and elaborations on, for example, Author, Animator, Principal, Addressee, Target, and Over-hearer combine to presuppose the very same presence as they depict.

Thus, the viewpoint(s) of the Interlocutor Deity is vital in under-standing devotees' perceptual construal of events in their daily lives. As Eve Sweetser points out, language is the medium through which a

single mind can access multiple different points of view and without such cognitive flexibility "humans could not cooperate and communicate at the high level apparently unique to our species" (2012: 1). The Interlocutor Deity's position in multiple spatio-temporal contexts: past, present, and future as well as "here with us" and "everywhere" also provides people with the impression of something that is eternal, impermeable, and impervious to the inconsistencies and failings of mortal life. It allows for a spectrum of belief where the zero-sum idea of absolute belief vs. no belief no longer applies. Ambivalent or contradictory beliefs have an outlet in the Interlocutor Deity and can be employed either in service of social change or for the negotiation of cultural continuity, particularly again in a tradition that puts less emphasis on internal states of belief than it does on communal practice. As a final example, I was particularly struck by how these contentious viewpoints played out among a group of women following a class led by a male *swami* (teacher). On this particular morning, the *swami* had answered another woman's question of proper temple participation by explaining that women with husbands and sons had no need to attend to temple life. The resulting conversation took place after the class back in the main temple room:

> Suddha Bhakti: Was he saying that women should not come to worship at the temple?

> Me: He said that a woman with a husband or a son should not come to the temple because her devotion was accomplished through them.

> Suddha Bhakti: That's what I thought, but I think this is a foolish thing to say.

> Me: Why is that?

Suddha Bhakti: Krishna loves the matajis (ladies) who come to him and he would never send them away. You cannot say that, Krishna does not want that. (addressing the temple deity) Oh, don't you Lord?

Rangadevi: Does Scripture say that? Krishna did not say that. Keeping *matajis* (women) away from Krishna is bad. They need more than husbands and sons to know Krishna. Husbands and sons are not Krishna.

Suddha Bhakti: He (the *swami*) wants women in the household, but we take care of Krishna. Krishna wants us with him.

Durgatinasini: Yes, he (the *swami*) doesn't get it.[12]

Here again social conflict is negotiated through Krishna's desires and contentious religious interpretation is removed from the realm of daily gender politics and into the negotiation of viewpoint through the presence of the Interlocutor Deity.

In some ways, the religious self, partially located within the Interlocutor Deity, transcends the physical bodies of the participants and in another way, sharing, adopting, and discarding viewpoints among multiple persons through the Interlocutor Deity partially locates the self within the interactions of the community. What the person desires and believes is both internal to the self and external in the viewpoints of others and what the self desires and believes is not only communally negotiable but resultantly inviolate. The intentions and actions of the individual are the intentions and actions of the community which are the intentions and actions of God himself. This is what Keane alluded to in his discussion of DuBois when he said that

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12. Conversation mostly in Hindi, some English. Translated from fieldnotes recorded shortly after the conversation.

"because the collective product is outside the volition of any particular storyteller, the participants take this unity to manifest the presence of a single divine source. This conclusion seems to be predicated on their assumption that any agency that lies beyond the level of the individual is not likely to be human" (1997: 57).

But the extensions of personhood through participant frameworks is only part of the relationship where "I am" is linguistically separated from "this body" and being acknowledged as a social person is not limited to verbal participation and recognition. This relationship is furthered through the material construction of ritual spaces, particularly in the creation of and interaction with individual *murti* or deity statues. The material representation of the deity that is also presented as the Interlocutor Deity maintains the continuity of this role across the specific time and space of the speech event, lending it a kind of corporeal entextualization, where the role itself and not just the discourse becomes extractable from its interactional setting and remains constant across contexts. Thus, the parallels of linguistic and material practice further facilitate the idea that personhood can extend across time and space because this is not just limited to God himself. In other cases, the role of the Interlocutor Deity is filled by the dead, often either a deceased family member, a deceased spiritual master, or a relevant historical figure. In this situation, lost community ties are maintained through the deceased person's continued social "participation" in the same way as precarious community ties could be repaired and renegotiated through Krishna's social "participation." It is these kinds of "invisible interactions" that support the perception that the Interlocutor Deity is somehow beyond the present context and imbues the role with a kind of agency and authority that allows it to both help clarify and define the religious self and to play a role in the workings of human society. This is also how devotees bridge the gap between the spaces of subjective experience, where the Interlocutor Deity is principally generated, and the spaces of performativity, where the Interlocutor Deity is shared, leveraged, and employed

towards a social end. When this bridge is then recreated in material practice, the possibilities of interaction and embodiment take on endlessly new dimensions.

CONCLUSION: THE MAKING OF BODY AND MIND

In the course of my research, I found it necessary to locally contextualize a number of terms inherent to the study of religion, belief, and ritual. More often than not, this came down to two specific terms: 'sacred' and 'deity.' In light of many of the ongoing discussions on the larger meanings and usages of these words, I attempted, for the purposes of my own ethnographic work, to situate my understanding of them within the subjective realities of ritual practice among the Vaishnavas of Mayapur. The first of these terms, "sacred," is typically defined in Western contexts as that which is in connection to the divine or that which is designated solely for religious purposes (often, but not always, in opposition to what is considered secular). However, as Ashish Nandy points out, the sacred/secular dichotomy in South Asia is not typically characterized by delineating separate spaces for religion and for public life as it is popularly conceived in the West. Instead, secularism in South Asia tends to revolve around a kind of ongoing religious hybridity, where "while public life may or may not be kept free from religion, it must have space for a continuous dialogue among religious traditions and between the religious and the secular" (1990: 68).

For predominantly Western definitions of religious terms, many of which come from a background where post-Enlightenment Western secularism was the norm, many scholars have previously noted that this poses a problem in that objects, persons, and spaces which are labeled as "sacred" in South Asia often do not maintain such neat boundaries between religious ideologies and secular/daily purposes as the common definition might imply. Essentially, a sacred space in

Vaishnavism may be just as "sacred" as it is "secular" and incorporate aspects of multiple religious identities from Hindu and Jain to Muslim and Buddhist. This is made all the more complicated when local practices are also frequently undergoing processes of redefinition and reappropriation through, what Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi calls "selective erasure and inscription of distinctions, which owe their force to communalist rhetoric and politicking, electoral campaigns, or state administrative practices that privilege binaries such as Hindu-Muslim" (2011: 262). For this reason, I have found it more useful in the contexts of this fieldwork to call these spaces 'ritual spaces' or 'ritual play spaces' and to leverage the term 'sacred' as something both set aside from the logics and confines of daily life and yet wholly subject to them. In other words, that "sacred" tends to serve more as an indicator of the actions and extensions of divine persons in the world than as an ontological descriptor of a space or object. While these terms are not without their own problems, they are, for the moment, the best suited for the needs of this project.

The second term, "deity," also carries a wide variety of connotations. In Christian theology, "deity" refers either to God specifically or to the rank or position of being a god. In anthropological writings, usually drawing from the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Victor Turner, "deity" is typically defined along the lines of 'spiritually animate material forms' (Lévi-Strauss 1955 and Turner 1969). But in the Gaudiya Vaishnavism of Mayapur, "deity" did not necessarily refer to a one-to-one stand-in for God. Rather, the complex linguistic and ritual interplay between material object, participant roles, and space revealed that deities were less vehicles of divine animation and movement, particularly in cases where the deity in question wasn't even a god at all,[13] than they were the material expression of relationships between physical and non-physical persons. This is the greater sym-

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13. Deceased spiritual masters and favored teachers, as well as deceased ancestors and friends, are also often represented in deity icons and treated to the same ritual care and maintenance and deity icons of Krishna himself.

bolic reference that lies at the heart of the Vaishnava maxim, "I am not this body." [14]

The physical body of the person was mirrored in the physical body of the deity and both were thus metonymically subsumed and recreated as the meeting of the immaterial soul of the devotee and the personality of the deity. The physical bodies of each, in this case, acting more as a kind of concrete representation for and mediating object of the social life of the other. This is how ties to Krishna and thus Krishna's material body (the deity) prevent the loss of social ties upon an individual's death or absence from the community, wherein their living social relationships persist through death and then, theoretically, into rebirth; through past, present, and future. Thus, the community constructs its own cultural perpetuity through the material expression of these relationships in the forms of the deities. Combined with life in the *dham*, the traditions and conventions of *darshan*, and the daily practice of feeding and caring for a deity during *puja*, a reworking of ritual play spaces and new insights into the nature of deities may help to make the meaning of these kinds of Vaishnava ritual spaces clearer.

In the *dham*, both real and sacred landscapes become a socially-constructed geography where the living, the dead, and the divine interact with the threads of daily life. The characteristic conversations involving Krishna as the Interlocutor Deity combined with material interactions in ritual space brackets potential resistence by distilling and reducing social anxieties into divine persons and ritual objects. Through complex symbolic processes of conflation, mirroring, and reduction, the body (including the deity's body) then becomes the focus of cultural action and the representation and repository of community relationships. Though, this is not to say that this kind of social

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14. While Vaishnavism is principally non-dualistic and the maxim is generally meant to index the 'truth' of a person within the concept of a spirit-soul, there is also something to be said about the possible presence of an idea of two selves, a soul and a personality, which can only be accessed through the body. In the future, this warrants further research.

bracketing is always favorable. Occasionally, the distillation of social anxieties employed in phrases such as "I am not this body" also have problematic outcomes. For example, in some cases such phrases were used to convince individuals to give up or that they were unworthy of certain physical wants and needs, such as a full night's sleep, a certain meal, sex, or certain kinds of medical care. While this was also typically formulated as a virtue of denial over indulgence, it is important to note the effects of these social actions and spaces are not always the ideal or intended effect and that the lines between spiritual encouragement and control can vary from moment to moment and from person to person.

Lastly, the material construction of these ritual spaces is also revealing in the way that they locate sensuality, both as an aspect of the senses and as erotic desire, and subjective religious experience in terms of a complex interplay of object-person relationships. Here, objects both represent and mediate social bonds. They act as repositories of meaning and memory that can be controlled, moved, and experienced. Mythic and symbolic links to objects in the *darshan* and in *puja* then connect social constructions of marriage and kinship to timeless supernatural and narrative spaces. Finally, as time fragments, erasing particular moments in favor of infinite generalities, ritual space results in a kind of perpetual memory-experience that is unending and immortal. But this is not to suggest that Gaudiya Vaishnava ritual spaces are settled or that this framework is, in any way, absolute. In reality, despite such analysis of the relationships between persons, space, ritual time, and embodiment, the extent of Vaishnava ritual practice retains a great deal of ambiguity. And it is within these spaces of ambiguity, that the greatest transformations become possible.

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¨I AM NOT THIS BODY¨

ARE SATARA VARAN DEVI
SINHALA BUDDHIST DEITIES?
Vibhisana: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Satara varan devi, *or the four "guardian" or "warrant" deities during the medieval Sinhala Buddhist cultural regime, were specifically designated to guard the four directional quarters of the kingdom. In this paper, to assess the processes that occurred over time giving rise to the tradition of venerating the* satara varan devi *in medieval Sri Lanka, I consider not just the Buddhist cosmology appealed to by devout kings, but also pre-Vedic, Vedic and ancient Sri Lankan ways of venerating deities that ultimately inform understandings of the* satara varan devi. *My objective is to demonstrate the strategies of the promoters of Vedic and Buddhist religiosities in assimilating various non-Vedic and non-Buddhist groups through an examination of the Vibhisana cult inclusion. Vibhisana starts out as a* yaksa/raksasa *in the Hindu Ramayana and later is embraced as a transformed elevated deity by the Sinhala Buddhist world.*

The actual words *satara* [*hatara*] *varan devi* are employed in a 15th c. inscription at Gadaladeniya Rajamahavihara (just west of Kandy in Uda Peradeniya) referring to Visnu, Saman, Vibhishana and Skanda as protectors of Lanka. These four protectors of Lanka are also mentioned in an earlier 14th c. inscription found on a rock cropping within the premises of the Buddhist vihara of Lankatilaka just a few kilometers south of Gadaladeniya. This inscription, written both in Sinhala and Tamil languages, refers to the images of Kihireli-Upulvan (later conflated with Visnu, see fig. 1), Sumana (also known as Saman, see fig. 2), Vibhishana - Ganapathi (probably an attempt to equate Vibhishana with Ganesa, see fig. 3) and Kanda Kumara (later known as Kataragama Deviyo and Skanda, see fig. 4) along with their "spouses." All of these figures have been established iconographically in the *devalaya* shrine that abuts the *viharaya* or *buduge* (Buddha image house).[1] The combination of *devalaya* and *viharaya* spatially rep-

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1. S. Paranavitana, *The Shrine of Upulvan at Devundara. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon*, Volume VI (Colombo: Archaeological Department, 1953), 21, note 2; Kingsley mentions the images of the same set of *satara varan devi* existing in Gadaladeniya. See, K. M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2005), pp. 51, 54 & 92-93

resents two dimensions of Sinhala Buddhist religiosity. Over time, the deities came to be identified as *satara varan devi* in various literary and other inscriptional sources and sometimes surfaced in various combinations of Visnu, Skanda, Saman, Vibhishana, Natha, Pattini, Boksal, Aiyyanar, Pulleyar (Ganesa), and Mangara. By the time of the 18th c., when ritual contexts of the proceedings of the *esala perahara* (the festival of the tooth relic of the Buddha), the pre-eminent public rite of the Kandyan kingdom were fixed by King Kirti Sri Rajasimha, Saman, and Vibhishana were replaced by Pattini and Natha. One can also note that there were apparent conflations among these deities: such as Upulvan with Rama and Visnu, Saman with Mahasena and Lakshmana, Skanda with Kataragama deviyo and probably Vibhishana with Natha. While the constellations of the *satara varan dev*i specific to Sinhala Buddhist religious culture has its origins at least from the 14th century, I argue in this paper that this very concept derives its inspiration from many different preceding traditions. Since there is very little scholarly exploration on the origins and evolution of these guardian deity traditions with the exception of exhaustive studies on Visnu, Natha and Pattini,[2] I take up the task of examining traditions such as *caturmaharajika* (the four great cosmic kings) and *dikpala* deities and their relation with the Buddhist, Sanskrit *puran*ic, epic, south Indian and local deities. While this investigation establishes a literary context for the rise of the *satara varan devi*, I also intend to give special consideration to Vibhishana whose cultic origins and Sinhala incorporation has been absent in the scholarly discussions. My hypothesis in this study is that a study of these deities helps explain how religious leaders of Vedic, Buddhist, and puranic or Sinhala Buddhist rulers negotiated with various groups of people and their religious sentiments in advancing their own agendas.

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2. John Clifford Holt, *Buddha in the Crown* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); John Clifford Holt, *The Buddhist Visnu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004) & Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Cult of Goddess Pattini* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

The concept and significance of *caturmaharajika* and *dikpala* deities probably owes its origins to the tradition of *lokapala* deities. Heinrich Zimmer located the origins of the *lokapala* myth in pre-Aryan cosmology. A creation myth imagines Mount Sumeru rising from the mid-point of the surface of the earth as the vertical axis of the egg-shaped cosmos with four divine kings: Virupaksa in the west, Virudhaka in the south, Dhrtarastra in the east, and Kubera/Vaisravana in the north, guarding each of the four quarters and ruling over *naga*s, gnomes, *gandharva*s, and *yaksa*s.[3] The summit, called Amaravati, is said to have been presided over by Indra.

It is probable that this concept of *lokapala* was filtered very early into the *Rgveda* in an incipient form, in the same way as non-Sanskrit words from Dravidian and Mundarian sources were accommodated.[4] For example, a divinity in the *Rgveda* is described as representing the regions through spreading his arms in the form of Hiranyagarbha. One of the Rgvedic hymns identifies Hiranyagarbha as the ruler of the universe who controls it by enveloping or embodying.[5] Hiranyagarbha's protective aspect is also highlighted in this hymn qualifying him as the guardian deity of the whole world. The concept is elaborated in the *Visnudharmmottara Purana* composed between the 4th and 7th c. CE, to show how Vishnu is the sole guardian of the universe.[6] In this context, Visnu, who is understood as formless, is also announced as possessing a form filling the whole universe with his eight arms,

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3. Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of India Asia*. Vol. 1 Bollingen Series 30. Completed and edited by Joseph Campbell (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), 47.

4. Asko Parpola, *Deciphering the Indus Script* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 133, 137 and 140.

5. *The Hymns of the Rigveda* Tr. Ralf T. H. Griffith 2nd edition, Kotagiri (Nilgiri) 1896, 487 [10-121] Accessed December 11, 2017. www.sanskritweb.net/rigveda/griffith.pdf

6. Stella Kramrisch, *The Vishnudharmottara*. Part III: *A Treatise on Indian Painting and Image-Making*. Second Revised and Enlarged Edition (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1928), 5.

pointing to the "four quarters" and "intermediate directions".[7] In the next chapter in the same *purana*, the concept takes on yet another level of precision wherein the god is described as possessing five faces that represent the five basic elements (the earth, water, heat, wind and sky) and his ten arms represent ten regions of the universe.[8]

The four different subjects of the *lokapala* (the *naga*s, gnomes, *gandharva*s, and *yaksa*s) are also mentioned in various contexts in Vedic, Buddhist, Jain and later Vedic sources qualifying them variously from pure evil to extremely pious forces. A general consensus among scholars is that these were references to some of the non-Vedic tribes who came to interact with Vedic culture and were embraced it.[9] Although decidedly uneven, I reason that the interaction was a two-way process as Vedic culture from the very beginning had been influenced by the mythology of these non-Vedic tribes whose identity often was collapsed into the category of either *yaksa*s or *raksasa*s.[10] Here it is worth noting that Vibhishana is identified in Valmiki's *Ramayana* as a *raksasa*, the word used in many sources as synonymous to *yaksa*. Vibhishana's wife, Sarama, is mentioned as the daughter of a *gandharva* king, Sailusa, thereby reflecting how non-Vedic tribal names were often lumped together as *yaksa*.[11]

Although the notion of guarding various regions of the world con-

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7. Stella Kramrisch, *The Vishnudharmottara*, III, 70, ch. 47.

8. Stella Kramrisch, *The Vishnudharmottara*. III, 71, ch. 48.

9. N. N. Bhattacharya, *Indian Demonology* (Delhi: Manohar, 2000), 122-6; Gail Sutherland, *The Disguises of the Demon* (Albany, NY: State university of New York Press, 1991), 66; L.A. Waddell, "Evolution of the Buddhist Cult, Its Gods, Images and Art", *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly* (January 1912), 126.

10. To show the relation between *raksasa*s and *yaksa*s, it is said that they were born of the same mother possessing red eyes and dark bodies. See, N. N. Bhattacharya, 111. Later Vedic literature identifies *yaksa* "as a species of certain non-human beings, demons, ogres or spirits." See, O. H. de A. Wijesekera, "The Philosophical Import of Vedic Yaksa and Pali Yakkha," *University of Ceylon Review*, April 1945, 73-95.

11. R. T. H. Griffith, trans., *Ramayana* (Benaras: Lazarus, 1915) 7. 11-12; N. N. Bhattacharya, 138

tinued to be part of Vedic and later Vedic understandings with different numbers of quarters (or regions) from 4 to 8 to 10 with different schemes, they continue to be identified with *Rgvedic* deities such as Agni, Yama, Varuna, Soma, etc.[12] What this means is that in spite of the employment of the *lokapala* concept, neither the non-Vedic *lokapala*s nor their subjects (*naga*s, gnomes, *gandharva*s, *yaksa*s) were accepted as part of the *brahmanic* divine world. In fact, early Vedic literature portrayed non-Vedic people and their deities as deleterious forces. Later Vedic literature shows that there had been a gradual process of incorporation in which non-Vedic deities had earned semi-divine status before they were recognized as fully divine.[13] The names and schemes might vary from text to text, but Kubera was the only non-Vedic deity that consistently appeared in these *brahmanic* variations.[14] This is significant, given Kubera's *yaksa* status and his relation to his half-brother, Vibhishana. The epics mention that Ravana expelled his older half-brother, Kubera, from his kingdom and took away his celestial chariot.[15] In the Mahabharata's version, Ravana's younger brother Vibhishana follows Kubera to his new kingdom whereupon Kubera appoints him as the head of the armies of *yaksa*s and *raksasa*s.[16] This account portrays Vibhishana not only as faithful to Kubera, but also how he won over his confidence.

While Kubera was promoted as one of the *dikpala*s on par with the Vedic deities, the Vedic deities identified as *dikpala*s were somewhat demoted in their status. This means guarding or protecting no longer was seen as a highest rank in the *brahmanic* divine order. This shows further how later *brahmanic* literature identified various non-

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12. Gail Sutherland, 65 & 180; J. N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1956), 519 ff.

13. N. N. Bhattacharya, 41; Ram Nath Misra, *Yaksa Cult and Iconography* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1981), 59-70.

14. Gail Sutherland, 65.

15. N. N. Bhattacharya, 112-114.

16. Gail Sutherland, 63-4.

Vedic guardian deities of villages and towns, deities who are ubiquitous throughout the Indian sub-continent, with their roots in the unknown past, as *ksetrapala*s and places them outside of the shrines to guard against unsavory characters. Basically, the function of these *ksetrapala*s is not really to rule their subjects, but to keep the impurity of "evil" beings at bay.[17]

Unlike *brahman*ic adaptations, the early Buddhists, as mentioned in the *Digha Nikaya*, incorporated the non-Vedic mythology of Sumeru (Mount Meru) and Amaravati into their own cosmological system.[18] Buddhists also retained the same non-Vedic *lokapala*s often referring to them as *caturmaharajika deva*s (four divine kings): Virupaksa (Virupakkha), Virudhaka (Virudaka), Dhrtarastra (Dhatarattha) and Vaisravana (Vessavana/Kubera).[19] This generous incorporation occurred only on Buddhist terms, as these were labeled in their scriptures as a lower class of supernatural beings.[20] Their primary function in the Buddhist cosmos changed from guarding the regions of the world to protecting the Buddha. These gods appear in Buddhist art and sculpture as guarding the four cardinal points of the Buddhist *stupa*s and

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17. Gail Sutherland, 80.

18. Prithvi Kumar Agrawala, "The Kumbhnada Figures in Sanchi Sculpture," *East and West* 37 (1987): 179-189; Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia*, 47.

19. E. Senarat ed., *Mahavastu,* III. 217, 309 (Paris: Impremerie Nationale 1882-97); S. Lefmann, ed., *Lalitavistara*, (Halle: Leben und Lehre,1908), ch. XXIV; E. B. Cowell & R. A. Neil eds., *Divyavadana,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), 147.

20. Robert Decaroli explains the ways what he calls the native South Asian cults as "spirit deities" have been inducted into Buddhism. Refer to Robert Decaroli *Haunting the Buddha: Indian Popular Religions and the Formation of Buddhism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

attending on the Buddha during all major events of his life.[21]

The *Mahamayuri* is a great example that shows the way that the Buddhists incorporated hosts of non-Vedic and Vedic deities to fit into their scheme with the Buddha as the warranting figure.[22] The text lists these deities in an hierarchical order, *caturmaharajika*s (four world guardians) attending on the Buddha along with a list of the tutelary deities of 177 cities, 28 *mahayaksa*s (great *yaksa*s) and a multitude of female deities, all belonging to the *yaksa* category. It is possible that the strategy in play here was: by including these many deities worshiped by various different groups, Buddhist cosmology made accessible to one and all. In any case, this exhaustive list contains not just Vibhishana, Lankesvara (lord of Lanka), Ravana, and Vaisravana, but also Indra, Visnu, Gopala (Krishna as a cow boy), all of whom are labeled as tutelary *yaksa*s! This must have been the Buddhist strategy of subsuming all non-Vedic, Vedic and epic deities under one group, referring to them as *yaksa*s to subordinate them even further. It must also have been a ploy in belittling the Vaisnavite tradition and especially the deities of the epics, by bringing deities such as Visnu and Gopala down to the level of Ravana and other *raksasa*s.

What is important for our discussion here is the fact that Vibhishana is listed as guardian deity of a city, in just the same way as Visnu.

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21. J. Ph. Vogel, *The Indian Serpent Lore* (London, 1926, reprint Varanasi 1972), 213; Aurel Stein, A*ncient Khotan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), figs. 30-31, pl .11; Alfred Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art* [Tr.] L. A. Thomas and F.W. Thomas (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1917), 171, pls. XXVI 2; XXVII; G. Yazdani, *Ajanta* Part –I (Delhi: Gyan Books Pvt. Ltd, 1930) Text, pt. II, 6-7; Plate IX; James Burgess, *The Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta in the Krishna District, Madras Presidency*, Volume 6 (London: Trubner & Co., 18870, P. 45, Pl. xvii, fig. 1 & Pl. xviii, fig. 1; James Burgess, "Notes on the Buddhist Rock Temples," 24; Robert Knox, *Amaravati: Buddhist Sculpture from the Great Stupa* (London, British Museum Press, 1992), pl. 61.

22. V. S. Agrawala and Sylvan Levi, "Geographical Contents of Mahamayuri", *Journal of Uttara Pradesh Historical Society (JUPHS)*. Vol. XV, part II, 24-52; Moti Chandra, *Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India* (Ahmedabad, 1949), 15. See also online publication accessed December 12, 2017 http://www.herenow4u. net/index.php?id=268.

What this shows is that Vibhisana, along with Visnu, had established his credentials to be a guardian deity of a city in the mainland before he was to be inducted to be one of the *satara varan devi*. This is strategic on the part of Buddhists: while they are demoting the status of Visnu, who by this time well established in *puran*ic Hinduism as a supreme deity, they are elevating the status of Vibhisana who was formerly only a *yaksa*.

Sinhala Buddhist culture, however, was open to receiving not just the Buddhist *caturmaharjika* tradition, but also various schemes of *brahman*ic *dikpala* traditions. In doing so, the Sinhala Buddhists followed the path of early Buddhists in India, i.e., subsuming all of these supernatural figures into one level of deities. This is what happened to *dikpala* deities. The early evidence for the portrayals of *caturmaharjika* gods find mention in the *Mahavamsa* as four heavenly kings guarding the *stupa* built by Duttagamani (101-77 BCE) in Anuradhapura.[23]

While these guardian deity traditions lent a legacy of authenticity for establishing a later formal tradition of *satara varan devi* to address the needs of Sinhala Buddhist rulers and their subjects, there was already another precedence of Sinhala rulers praying to spirits to protect the borders of their kingdoms. The *Mahavamsa* mentions that Pandukabhaya (437-367 BCE), after establishing his kingdom in Anuradhapura, sets up shrines to various gods at the gates that faced four cardinal directions. Of particular interest is a banyan tree shrine set up at the Western gate for Vessavana, or Kubera, along with a Palmyra-palm for the "Demon of Maladies".[24] Here, again the appearance of Kubera as a *yaksa* shows not only his non-Vedic roots but his prominence throughout the Indian subcontinent and beyond. This is an important detail as his relation with Vibhishana would be well known especially after Sri Lanka's identification with the *Ramayana*'s Lanka. Leaving this detail for later discussion, here I would like to stress how

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23. *Mahavamsa,* XXX, 89.
24. *Mahavamsa*, X, 89-90.

the pre-Buddhist practice of venerating deities to guard borders remained alive and was transported into medieval Sri Lanka in the form of *satara varan devi*.[25] The name, *satara varan devi* and the initial list of local deities also point to their local roots. As we shall see, both the long tradition of the four divine kings that was in practice during ancient times and the set of local deities in play underwent substantial modifications with the influence of *brahman*ic and Buddhist notions.

The intense interaction with south India and the influx of Indian mercenaries, traders and others into the island brought several deities of *puran*ic, epic and south Indian origin. For example, shrines were built to Pattini, a goddess of south Indian epic origin, Siva as Isvara, Ganesa,[26] Kandasamy (later known as Kataragama deviyo and Skanda),[27] Ayyinar, and Sudasun[28] (Visnu) along with local deities such as Mangara,[29] Nathasura and Upulvan.[30] By the 14th c., Sinhala Buddhist shrines not only displayed gods of different schemes, the *caturmaharjika*, *dikpala* and *satara varan devi*, but also new deities such as Ganesa, Suyama and Santusita, etc. In about a century, even the *satara varan devi* would undergo various changes. While the *brahman*ic religion subordinated village gods by making them guardian deities

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25. W. A. de Silva, "Ceremonial Songs of the Sinhalese Guardian Spirits (Deva)" *The Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain &Ireland*, Vol. 28, No. 73, Parts I., II., III. and IV. (1920), 36.

26. Siri Sunandasabha Mahathera, ed., *Paravi Sandesa* (Matara, Mudrana Yantralaya, 1925), v. 140.

27. Mudaliyar C. Rasanayagam, *Ancient Jaffna* (New Delhi: Asia Educational Services, 1984) 331ff.

28. D. B. Jayatilaka, ed., *Tisara Sandesa* (Colombo: Lankabhinava Visruta Press, 1935), v. 83.

29. To learn Mangara's myth and ritual, see, Gananath Obeyesekere, "The Vaddas: Representations of the Wild Man in Sri Lanka", In Jacob K. Olupona (ed) *Beyond Primitivism: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 272-294: David Scott, *Formations of Ritual: Colonial and Anthropological Discourses on the Sinhala Yaktovil* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 103-4.

30. Wilhelm Geiger, Tr. *Culavamsa*, (London: Humphrey Milford, 1929), XCVII. 46, XCIX. 42 & C. 248.

to guard the temples from human thieves and evil spirits,[31] I argue, medieval Sinhala Buddhists did the same to the *brahman*ic deities by relegating their status to guard Buddhist shrines with the same intention as their predecessors

For example, in a 15th c. inscription at Gadaladeniya, which is in the same vicinity as Lankatilaka, Kanda Kumara was identified with the Vedic deity Skanda and was made one of the guardian deities.[32] Note that Boksal is associated with Alutnuwara. The reason Boksal is listed in the same category as the rest of the *satara varan devi* indicates that he is also guarding one of the five regions identified in the inscription as part of Kotte kingdom.[33] Later, Boksal is subsumed with the south Indian deity Aiyyanar to become identified as one of the four guardian deities of Sinhala rulers.[34] In these instances, the choices of rulers and their religious advisors were probably guided either by their own or that of their subjects' preferences.

The function of Sinhala guardian deities is symbolically reinforced in an inscription issued by the Alakesvara rulers, who originally came from Kerala,[35] and whose lineage ruled Kotte from the capital at Jayavardhanapura (1412-1597). The inscription mentions that Alakesvara protected his fort by building shrines by means of deploying

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31. C. J. Fuller, "The Hindu Pantheon and the Legitimation of Hierarchy," *Man*, New Series, 23 (1988), 20.

32. *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (EZ) Vol. IV, 21, 25 & 26.

33. The names of these five regions differed in records issued under Kotte rulers at various times. "In modern times the 'Five Countries' were Denuvara (Udanuvara or Yatinuvara), Tumpane, Harispattuva, Dumbara, and Hevahate." See, *EZ* IV, 20.

34. John Holt, *Buddha in the Crown* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 131 and 133. According to H. Parker's version as guardian deity, Vibhishana gradually replaced Vishnu.
See, H. Parker, *Ancient Ceylon* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1981, p. 668.

35. Amaradasa Liyanagamage, "Keralas in Medieval Sri Lankan History: A Study of Two Contrasting Roles." *Kalyani: Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Kelaniya* 5 and 6 (1986), 73.

the *satara varan devi* i.e., Kihirali (Upulvan), Saman, Vibhishana, and Skanda Kumara at the four corners of their ramparts surrounding the palace.[36] This reference makes it clear that the main purpose of these *satara varan devi* was to protect Sinhala Buddhist rulers. This duty is in contrast to the task of *caturmaharjika*s and *dikpala*s who attend on the Buddha and whose function was clearly more cosmic than locally political.

In any case, the concept of the function of *satara varan devi,* once it was politically instrumentalized, became a mainstay with successive rulers through the end of Lankan monarchy and the colonial period into the present reflecting the religious sentiments of different groups who formed part of the Sinhala Buddhist society, and who just like their Burmese and Thai counterparts, as noted by Hans-Dieter Evers, observed dual aspects (the cosmic and political) in their religious system, a development which was well-integrated into the symbolic articulations of complementary spaces of the "*viharaya* and *devalaya*".[37] While *viharaya* or *buduge* (image house) contains the image of the Buddha, *devalaya* hosts at least one, and in the case of Lankatilaka as many as all of the images of *satara varan devi* thereby affording an opportunity for devotees to pay homage to the Buddha and seeking merit before transferring the merit from their propitiations later to the deity in the *devalaya* to help empower his progression as bodhisattva while simultaneously helping his petitioning devotees in this world to lead safe and secure lives.

At Kelaniya Rajamahaviharaya, close to the capital Colombo, Vibhisana is the deity worshiped in the *devalaya* as one of the *satara varan devi*. In the absence of royalty in the contemporary scene, the function of these *satara varan devi* has been understood in terms of

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36. G. P.V. Somaratne, "Jayawardhanapura: The Capital of the Kingdom of Sri Lanka c. 1400-1565" *Sri Lanka Archives* 2 (1984), 3.

37. Hans-Dieter Evers, "Buddha and the Seven Gods: The Dual Organization of a Temple in Central Ceylon" *The Journal of Asian Studies.* Vol. 27, No. 3 (May, 1968), 541-542.

hierarchical power and constituting a "political geography."

> "Varan (sanctioned authority) is delegated by higher beings to lower beings. The Buddha gave varan over all the Buddhist world to the highest god, Sakra, who in turn delegated varan for Sri Lanka to the Four Guardian Gods (*satara varan devi*). The Four Guardian Gods vary (by informant), but they are always drawn from among the gods just under Sakra: Natha, Vishnu, Skanda (also called Kataragama), Saman, Pattini, and Vibhishana. In addition to being national guardians, these deities are also said to have delegated authority to provincial rulers, who in turn have delegated *varan* for local areas to lower local gods and goddesses."[38]

I have mentioned earlier that Kanda Kumara, a local deity, becomes Skanda. In the same way, Upulvan becomes Rama and Visnu, Saman merges with Vedic deity Yama momentarily and then with Lakshmana. I will explain briefly the chronological process and the circumstances of these assimilations to get an idea of where Vibhishana stands in all of this and how this demonstrates the wide variety of currents joining to constitute the *satara varan devi*.

KANDA KUMARA/SKANDA

He is the only god with a Saivite identity among the four deities and who is not related somehow to *Ramayana* characters. He is first mentioned in the *Mahavamsa* as worshiped by a royal figure of the 7ᵗʰ

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38. Debora Winslow, "A Political Geography of Deities: Space and the Pantheon in Sinhalese Buddhism" *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 43, No. 2 (Feb., 1984), 275.

century.[39] He absorbed the cult of Mahasena, one of the deified early Sinhala kings.[40] By the 15th c., probably because Skanda became a popular Saivite deity, the monks, as in the case of Visnu, brought him into the Buddhist pantheon of deities by making him one of the guardian deities, as can be seen clearly at Lankatilaka (fig. 4). Considering his early Vedic status, this is a demotion for him. These gods, such as his counterpart Vishnu, have been shorn of their soteriological significance. His identity is also conflated with the local deity, Kanda Kumara whose popularity is known through the ceremonial songs handed down from generations.[41] As shown in the Gadaladeniya inscription, his name conflates with Kanda Kumara to constitute one of the *satara varan devi*.

UPULVAN/RAMA/VISNU

The *Mahavamsa* mentions that the god "in color like the lotus" (*uppalavannassa*) identified as Upulvan was one of those to whom was entrusted the guardianship of Lanka by the Buddha on the advice of Sakka.[42] While this shows the continuation of local tradition of venerating guardian deities, it also explains how the Buddhist layer was added on to this to bring the local god, Upulvan and the Vedic Sakka, together into the Buddhist cosmos assigning specific respon-

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39. *The Mahavamsa* mentions Kajaragama five times and once Kataragama, both of which are identified as the place for Skanda. See, XIX. 54, 62; XLV. 45; LVII. 2, 66 and LVIII. 6. For details about the cult of Kataragama, see Sunil Goonasekera, *Walking to Kataragama*, Colombo: *International Center for Ethnic Studies*, 2007.

40. *Mayurasandesa* (*abinava*) refers to a temple in Dewundara as that of Mahasena or Skanda. See, Huge Nevill. "Sinhala Verse (Kavi)", *Ethnology*-vol. iii. edited by P.E.P. Deraniyagala Ceylon: Ceylon National Museums Manuscript Series vol. VI, 1955, 130.

41. W. A. de Silva, "Ceremonial Songs of the Sinhalese Guardian Spirits (Deva)", 16-17.

42. *Mahavamsa*, VII. 2-9; Nevill. VOL. 3, 171-3 & 183; Vol. 2, 118.

sibilities. According to the *Culavamsa*, royalty patronized Upulvan at least from the 7th century with his popularity continuing into the 15th century in a temple dedicated to him at Devundara.[43] Evidence shows that south Indian Brahmins who spoke Tamil served as priests in this temple and, as such, played a key role in the transformation of Upulvan into Rama. The fact that the Brahmin priests appointed in these temples spoke Tamil indicates that there was constant cultural import between south India and Sri Lanka.[44] This lead to the conflation of Upulvan, Dunu deviyo (bow god) and Rama.[45] Rama is often described in Sinhala *kavi* (poetry) as the carrier of the *randunu* (golden bow).[46] This was the time when Rama, along with his brother Lakshmana, were identified as two of the *satara varan devi* basically fusing their identities with Upulvan and Saman respectively.[47]

Rama's merger with Upulvan is preserved in popular culture in the form of rituals performed to ward off impurities or evils.[48] One of

43. *Culavamsa* LXXXII. 49, LXXXV. 85-89 & XC. 100-102; B. Gunasekera, *A Contribution to the History of Ceylon.* Translated from Pujavali (Colombo: Mudaliyar, 1815), 47; H*amsa Sandesa*, edited with paraphrase by R. Dharmakirtti Sri Dharmarama, (Colombo: Pradhana Nayaka Mahimi, 1926), v. 51; *EZ*, III, No. 36, 333ff.

44. Joseph Pearson. Ed. *Memoirs of the Colombo Museum* (Colombo: Colombo Museum, 1914), VI, 70-74; *EZ* III, 331-337.

45. D. E. Hettiaratchi, "Civilization of the Period: Literature and Art", In *History of Ceylon.* Vol. I, Part II, edited by H. C. Ray (Colombo: Ceylon University Press, 1960): 770-778.

46. There are three poems, *Randun Pralaya, Randun Kavi* and *Randun Upata* that recite Rama/Visnu/Nararayana as carrying the golden bow. See, Nevill vol. 3, 171-3.

47. S. Paranavitana, *The God of Adam's Peak* (Ascona, P: Switzerland, Artibus Asiae, 1958), 4-78.

48. C. E. Godakumbura, "The Ramayana: A Version of Rama's Story from Ceylon." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* no.1 (Apr., 1946), 14 -22: Although the Kohomba Kankariya rite claims its origins to the 5th c. BCE when it was supposed to have been performed for King Panduvasadeva, the earliest literary reference to the rite is made only in the 15th c. CE See John Holt, *The Buddhist Visnu: Religious Transformation, Politics and Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 227.
 C. E. Godakumbura, 14-22.

the folk ballads, the *Sataran Waran Mal Yahuna* ("Flower Altar of the Four Guardians") addresses the four guardian deities acknowledging Visnu as one of the four. The ballad describes Visnu as holding Rama's arrow in one hand and his golden bow in the other and being addressed as "bosat" (bodhisatva) revealing how Visnu was understood by his Buddhist devotees as a Buddha-in-the-making.[49] This new identity with a local deity is a second demotion for Visnu. As a supreme Vaishnavite deity he was first understood to create and preserve the world in the *brahman*ic scheme of cosmogony. When this scheme was brought into the Sinhala Buddhist fold, his assignment changed to guard the Buddhasasana, a first demotion. As is seen in places like Lankatilaka (fig. 1), bringing him to be part of the *satara varan devi* was probably a masterstroke on part of the Buddhist monk scholars who kept these gods under control. As a way of fulfilling their rulers' wishes to write devotional poems to Visnu, Rama and a number of other gods, they also made sure to slate them carefully in the hierarchy of Buddhist cosmology.[50]

Because Visnu appeared in both schemes as one of the *dikpalas* and later in the *satara varan devi*, some scholars confused these

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49. Holt, *The Buddhist Visnu*, 145-6.

50. Much of *sandesa* literature was authored by the Buddhist monks. See M. H. F. Jayasooriya, ed. *Kokila Sandesa Warnana* (Sinhala) (Colombo: Mahabodhi Press, 1962); Rapiel Tennakoon, ed., *Sevul Sandesaya*. (Colombo: M. D. Gunasena Co. Ltd., 1968); Kumaratunga Munidasa, ed., *Gira Sandesa Viwaranaya* (Colombo: K. A. Ariyadasa & Co., Ltd, 1963); Kumaratunga Munidasa, ed., *Mayura Sandesaya* (Colombo: M. D. Gunasena Co. Ltd., 1963); A. V. Suraweera, ed., *Tisara Sandesaya* (Colombo: S. Godage Bros. 2006); Rev. Kitalagama Devamitta, *Kirala Sandeshaya ha Mayura sandeshaya*, (Colombo, Sri Lanka: M. D. Gunasena, 1961); Punnada, *Wattaka Sandesaya* (Ambalangoda, Sri Lanka: Vidyaprakasa Press, 1900); D. J. B. Wijesekara, *Wana Sevul* (Colombo: Lankabhinawa Press, 1916).

schemes as one and the same.[51] Studying the paintings in Mahiyangana, William Ward used the word *lokapala*s (the *brahman*ic scheme of *dikpala*s) and *satara varan devi* as synonymous terms.[52] Ward identifies one of the four deities as Visnu. While it is true that Visnu appears in the *brahman*ic scheme of deities and then becomes part of the *satara varan devi*, it was only after his identity was conflated with the indigenous deity Upulvan that this occurred. So, the function of this conflated Visnu (whose incarnation is Rama) is not the same as the Visnu in the *brahman*ic scheme.

The discussion of Rama would not be complete without a note on what happens to the *Ramayana* in Sri Lanka during the colonial period. Colonial rule elicited many reactions from the Sinhala Buddhists, among them the explosion of literature with *Ramayana* themes.[53] This phenomenon was similar to what happened in India, as explained by Sheldon Pollock:

> "[T]he period of some two hundred years starting around the mid-twelfth century witnessed a coding of political reality via Ramayana themes such as did not exist-or at least not to anywhere near the same degree-in the previous era."[54]

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51. For example, in Lankatilaka Vishnu is seen in the *viharaya* within the torana of the Buddha image as part of the devamandala serving the Buddha while also portrayed as one of the *satara varan devi* in his *devalaya*. His appearance in deva mandala has been consistent from this period onwards although Asoka de Zoysa reports that the tradition started a little later. See, Professor Asoka de Zoysa *Madawala Viharaya Revisited*, (Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers (Pvt) Ltd, 2014), 211.

52. William Ward, "Recently Discovered Mahiyangana Paintings" *Artibus Asiae* 15 (1952): 108-113.

53. James Alwis, *Ravana Hella*; K. R. Perera, *Ravana Yuddhaya*; Hugh Nevil, *Janakavi Sangrahaya*. The titles of Palm leaf manuscripts in the British Museum: *Ran Dun Deviya*, *Yatu Kumara Kavi*, *Hakgedi Santhiya*, *Randun Alngiya*, *Randun Mangalya* and *Randunu Parale*.

54. Sheldon Pollock, "Ramayana and Political Imagination in India," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 52: 2 (May 1993), 273.

One of these versions of the *Ramayana*, written in Pali belonging to either the late 18th or early 19th c. was the *Rama Sandesa*. A Buddhist monk composed this *sandesa* during the last years of the last Kandyan king, Sri Vikrama Rajasinha (r. 1798-1815). This text seeks blessings from Rama to protect the ruler and the *Buddhasasana* clearly identifying him with Visnu/Upulvan in the temples located in Kandy and Hanguranketa.[55] Since it is composed in Pali, the author's intention is not so much to make it accessible to public. In Holt's words about the text:

> "It is a fitting summary of how Rama was incorporated into the evolving portrayal of Visnu at the time of the Lankan kingship's disestablishment in the early nineteenth century. That the Upulvan/Rama dimension of the "Buddhist Visnu" would fade in its importance in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and that the protector of the Buddhasasana motif would remain important, is indicative of the historical disappearance of Lankan kingship, on the one hand, and the serious threat posed to the Buddhasasana by the intruding British and Christian presence on the other."[56]

SAMAN/YAMA/LAKSHMANA

A third deity of the *satara varan devi* is Saman or Sumana, the god of Sumanakuta or Sri Pada.[57] Sumanakuta (Adam's Peak) is mentioned in the *Mahavamsa* as one of the sites visited by the Buddha

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55. John Holt, *The Buddhist Visnu*, 142-5.
56. John Holt, *The Buddhist Visnu*, 146.
57. In Sinhala Kavi, "mountain" is referred to as "samanala". See Nevill *Sinhala Verse* vol. 3, 183.

during one of his three sojourns to the island.[58] The mountain known in Sinhala as Samanola.[59] His main shrine is now in Ratnapura. First, Yama, the Vedic deity, who also appeared as one of the *dikpala*s seems to have been identified with Saman. Probably because there was no ritual currency involving Yama, this identity also does not seem to have lasted very long. Saman, like Skanda and Visnu, is portrayed as one of the *satara varan devi* at Lankatilaka (fig. 2). In an early 15th century inscription in Saman's main shrine in Ratnapura, Saman came to be identified as Lakshmana. This identity has endured in a popular form of worship and ritual story telling.[60] In addition in Saman's shrine in Ratnapura, some *yatika*s (prayers) identify Saman with Lakshmana.[61] How Lakshmana gained this status can be deduced from the version of the *Ramayana* preserved in popular tales and rituals in which Lakshmana not only remains loyal to Rama, but also, after the death of Ravana, on Rama's bidding, goes into the city of Lankapuri and oversees the coronation of Vibhishana. As if to commemorate this key event, there are two images of this nature, the details of which I will discuss below.

The first image portraying this scene comes from Kelaniya, the very cultic seat of Vibhishana. At Kelaniya, unlike the rest of the guardian deities shown standing singularly, Vibhishana appears seated on

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58. *Mahavamsa*, I. 33: "Mahasumana of the Sumanakuta mountain" said to have received handful of hairs from the Buddha in a golden urn and heaped them with gems etc., at the place where the Buddha sat and that's where later a stupa was built; *Culavamsa*, XCVII. 30-32, LXXXVI. 19-29: "magnificent image of Sumanadeva" (taken) to the Sumantakuta,... and set up in the courtyard of the cetiya of the sacred footprint" (for veneration).; 1.77: "the Master..left the traces of his footsteps plai to sight on Sumanakuta."; VII. 67; XV. 96-97; XXXII. 49-50.

59. EZ II, p. 217.

60. Hugh Nevill, *Sinhala Verse (Kavi), Ethnology* 3, (1955): 183; "Saman Deviyo is the deified spirit of the brother of Rama who vanquished Ravana.." See, W. A. de Silva, "Ceremonial Songs..", 17.

61. Anuradha Seneviratne, "Rama and Ravana: History, Legend and Belief in Sri Lanka", *Ancient Ceylon: Journal of the Archeological Survey Department of Sri Lanka* 5 (1984), 234.

a throne along with his consort Sarama on his left and with Laksh-mana standing on his right placing a garland around his neck (fig. 5). Both Vibhishana and his consort raise their right hands in *abhaya mu-dra* (fearlessness or protection). The symbolism in this image appar-ently is multivalent. It shows the key moment that is repeatedly told in the poetry and legends that after Ravana was vanquished, Rama entrusts Lakshmana to coronate Vibhishana as the ruler of Lanka. As I discuss below, this is an important factor for Vibhishana's cultic sta-tus. And, this is also critical moment for Lakshmana, as this helps him to acquire an elevated divine status. In the panel, Vibhishana looks handsome by anthropomorphic standards except for the tusks that protrude on either side of his lips, the telltale signs of his *raksasa* past. His gesture of *abhaya* establishes his main function of protection of the people of Sri Lanka as a god-king (*devaraja*).

Although the focus in this image is Vibhishana's coronation, Lak-shamana's crucial role is also clear. Probably for this reason, Sinhala Buddhists have a special place in their cultic hearts for Lakshmana as a guardian deity since his conflation with the indigenous Saman is apparent.

VIBHISHANA

While the induction of Rama and Lakshmana are attributed to the apparent popularity of the *Ramayana*, Vibhisana's gaining of the same status can be attributed to the belief that Sri Lanka is the Lanka of the *Ramayana* as the above scene affirms. His origins as a *yaksa* and his relationship with Kubera, as has been explained earlier, might have also played a role in his veneration. Starting from the 14th cen-tury he is known as one of the *satara varan devi* both from inscrip-tions and *sandesa* literature. The *Uttamala Sandesa,* written in Pali by the Buddhist monk Gathara, not only praises him as a great friend and protector of Lankadipa (Sri Lanka), its ruler Parakramabahu, and

the *Buddhasasana* but also as an enemy to those who deviate from *dhamma* (the Buddha's teaching).[62]

This is an elevated position for Vibhishana whose duty is now not just guarding the kingdom but also the *Buddhasasana* thus qualifying him as one of the bodhisattvas, an ideal in line with the aspiration of Sinhala Buddhist rulers.[63] The assumption here is that the island is Dhammadipa (island of *Buddha dhamma*) and as such punishing those deviating from *dhamma* forms part of Vibhishana's responsibility. *Yatika*s (priestly petitions) recited to Vibhishana do describe his bearing of weapons showing this warrior side of him.

Here is a succinct version of Vibhishana's profile as known from the generic *yatik*a recited to him by the contemporary *kapurala* (Shrine priest) in his Kelaniya *devalaya*:

"Going in the island of Sri Lanka- shining with bright splendor,
Taking a king at that time- he became famous as king Vasvis.
Having this king as husband- the Queen named Naikasi
Begot a Prince and he became famous by the name Vibhishana.
Full of steady, deep virtues-endowed with a fierce radiance of
glory,
The Prince named Vibhishana glittered in the world like the Sun.
His glorious brother named Ravana, who defeated the three
worlds,
The Princess named Sita, the Queen of Prince Rama,
Kidnapped and brought her here. In the war that followed
Vibhishana crossed over to the side of Rama leaving his brother
Ravana.
Prince Rama defeated Ravana in the war and became victorious,
Saved Princess Sita in this lovely Lanka,
Handed over Lanka to Vibhishana for protecting its people.

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62. Harishchandra Abeyaratne, *Historical Information from Uttamala Sandesa (Medieval Sri Lankan History)* (Colombo: S. Godage Publications, 2003), 84-85.
63. Robert Decaroli *Haunting the Buddha*, p. 9

This is how Prince Rama returned to Dambadiva (India)."[64]

The above verses, although surprisingly brief, agrees in general with the outline of Valmiki's *Ramayana*. At the same time, using phrases such as "kidnapped and brought her here," "in this lovely Lanka" the prayer clearly identifies "Lanka" with Sri Lanka and Vibhishana as the native to the island. While it certainly praises Vibhishana as the protagonist of the story, it does not miss the opportunity to take pride in Ravana's valor. There are no laudatory remarks for Rama except for a simple statement that Rama returned to India with Sita only after entrusting Lanka to Vibhishana so that he would protect its people. Notice that not just Vibhishana but Ravana also receives praise as a "glorious brother... who defeated the three worlds". The poem also succeeds in drawing a boundary line between outsiders and insiders: Rama and Sita to India and the brothers, Ravana and Vibhishana to Sri Lanka. This is probably a reflection of how Rama disappeared into Vishnu who himself was downsized, while Vibhishana who started as *yaksa* with credentials as native to and the ruler of the island organically acquired the same stature as Vishnu in the Sinhala Buddhist cosmos. At least, this is true in his *devalaya* at Kelaniya where multitudes of his devotees, continue to throng to worship him.

CONCLUSION

As laid out in this paper through sketching the progression of the concept of guardian deities, religious leaders of Vedic, Buddhist and Puranic religions incorporated the concepts and cults of various tribes into their respective religious practices as a way to bring them into their fold. The concept of guardian deities, as has been argued, first was appropriated by Vedic priests who for the most part were

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64. *Yatika* recorded when the *kapurala* recited his praise to Vibhishana in his shrine at Kelaniya. Translated by Udaya Meddegama.

reticent in accepting tribal cults as guardian deities while the Buddhists made quick progress in winning over different tribes by folding their cults into part of the Buddhist pantheon of deities. The Buddhists also included Vedic and *puranic* deities in this scheme. These accommodations did not change Buddhist soteriology, as these deities were organized hierarchically and mobilized functionally to serve the purpose of the Buddha. This strategy of accepting and subordinating an assortment of deities was followed by Sinhala Buddhist monks and rulers. Tracing the evolution of the *satara varan devi* with a focus on Vibhishana, along with his companion guardian deities, demonstrates how these adaptations fit the religious sentiments of different groups and are tactical, political and context oriented. This proved to be effective in maintaining Buddhism as the religion of the majority while meeting the practical religious needs of average Buddhist practitioners. In places like Lankatilaka and Kelaniya, devotees continue to approach the Buddha in the *viharaya* to make merit and then pray to their chosen deity in the *devalaya* for worldly concerns, thereby addressing the "dual orientations" of the religion: the *lokottara* (ultimate) and *laukika* (immediate or practical).

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SOMETHING ABOUT NAMES:
Saadat Hasan Manto
on Naming, Religion, History,
and Progressive Urdu Literature

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سَعادَت حَسَن مَنٹو

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Saadat Hasan Manto (1912–1955) is among the most celebrated and influential Urdu writers of the 20th century. Although chiefly remembered and studied for his fictional writings on Partition, Manto also produced a sizeable corpus of nonfictional works across an array of genres, from autobiographical writing to satirical essays. Among the latter is *Kuchh Nāmoṅ ke Bāre Meṅ*, "Something about Names," translated here for the first time (as far as the translator is aware) into English and annotated.[1]

"Something about Names" was published in *Talkh, Tursh, aur Shīrīn* [*Bitter, Sour, and Sweet*] a collection of short essays, many of which are semi-autobiographical. Manto had published most of the essays in the collection shortly after moving from Bombay to Lahore in 1948 in the Urdu daily newspaper *Imroz* [Today], which was founded by in part by the celebrated Urdu poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz (1911-1984).[2]

"Something about Names" is only one among a number of works by Manto which take satirical aim at progressivism and progressives. Among the most outstanding of such works available in English is, "Taraqqī-pasand" [(A/The) Progressive], which includes subtle and not-so-subtle critiques of attitudes about labor, gender, language, class, sex, the aesthetic value of progressive literature, and power of progressivism as a cultural symbol.[3] Yet the critique of progressivism in "Something about Names" is distinguished by the way in which Manto, playfully mocking contemporary trends in naming practices,

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1. Excerpts from an early draft of the present translation appeared in Gregory Maxwell Bruce, "Names and the Critique of History in Urdu Literature," *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* 12 (2015).

2. Leslie Flemming, *Another Lonely Voice: The Life and Works of Saadat Hasan Manto* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1985), 17-18.

3. For an English translation, see Muhammad Umar Memon, tr., "A Progressive," *The Annual of Urdu Studies* 25 (2010), 178-186.

draws attention to the absurdities of attitudes that see progressive aesthetics and practices as incompatible with religion. Indeed, the relationship between religious community and naming motivates much of the content of the essay, from his humorous take on the culture of naming among South Asian Muslims to his use of the loaded term shuddhī [purity] to describe the processes by which Muslim film actors adopted Hindu stage names.

This translation of "Something about Names" is based on the version published in Kulliyāt-i Manṫo [The Complete Works of Manto].[4] Page numbers are given in brackets to facilitate study and comparison. The annotations offer brief biographical information on the many people mentioned in the text, most of whom have not been studied in English and some of whom have hardly not been studied in Urdu. One of the remarkable aspects of "Something about Names" is the density of allusions to Manto's immediate intellectual milieu. As much as any of Manto's writings, it offers glimpses of the people in his world and insight into his attitudes about culture, history, religion, and Urdu literature. Urdu historians and critics have developed large corpus of secondary literature over the course of the last century. In English, two intellectual biographies have studied Manto's life and writings.[5] Readers familiar with this corpus of literature will find that "Something about Names" opens new spaces for thinking not only about Manto's world, but about Urdu intellectual culture at this important moment in the history of South Asia.

Few, if any, Urdu writers have been translated as extensively into English as Manto, and fewer still have been translated by such competent translators as Khalid Hasan, Muhammad Umar Memon, Tahira

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4.   Saʿādat Ḥasan Manṫo, *Kulliyāt-i Manṫo* (Islamabad: Narratives, 2012) 6: 395-398.

5.   Two English-language intellectual biographies have been especially influential: Leslie Flemming, *Another Lonely Voice: The Life and Works of Saadat Hasan Manto* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1985), 17-18; Ayesha Jalal, *The Pity of Partition: Manto's Life, Times, and Work across the India-Pakistan Divide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

Naqvi, Frances Pritchett, and Linda Wentink, to name but a few. The critical mass of Manto translations has given rise, in the last two decades, to a rich debate on the theory and method of translation, not only of Manto, but also more broadly of colonial- and postcolonial Urdu writing into English.[6] "Something about Names" presents the kind of challenges that other translators have encountered while translating Manto's work, including historical references, wordplay, and cultural allusions. Yet it is distinguished from many of Manto's similar writings by the sheer density of references to personalities in Urdu literature, Indian cinema, Islam, and South Asian history. The annotations briefly introduce readers to the personalities and historical contexts mentioned in the piece.

TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT

SOMETHING ABOUT NAMES

When a child is born, first they inquire and think, "Whom does he take after most? The family of the maternal grandparents or the family of the paternal grandparents? Are his features his paternal uncle's? maternal uncle's? maternal aunt's?" One person will tell you that his nose is entirely his father's; another that it is a perfect match to his mother's; still another will go and liken it to his maternal aunt's brother's papa's paternal uncle's paternal grandfather's nose.

Sometimes such a distinctive child is born that no indication of his facial features is found anywhere; not even after searching the features of the family tree of his ancestors and forefathers. But old women are such Columbuses that they manage to discover even this America and remove the perplexity of this distinctive child's mother and father.

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6. Alok Bhalla, "The Politics of Translation: Manto's Partition Stories in English," *Social Scientist* 29 7/8 (2001), 19-38; M. Asaduddin, "Manto Flattened: An Assessment of Khalid Hasan's Translations," *The Annual of Urdu Studies* 11 (1996).

Of course, the child must be born after the determined time, but the trouble is that, apart from matching facial features, many other points of question, too, are born when it is born. We shall not mention all these intricate issues here because the single issue of naming the child is itself sufficient for this discussion.

A son or daughter, whatever was in your lot, has been born. His facial features, after a great deal of stretching and straining, have finally been matched to someone's. But there is no break yet, for boys and girls newly come into this world should certainly have some name or another. If you are a dictator type of human being and pay absolutely no regard to the feelings of your friends and relatives, then you will go ahead and assign the name of your created lump of flesh and bones in a snap and sleep easily. But for the mother and father who are a bit more worldly-minded, assigning the name of their dear little boy or girl will become a permanent source of anxiety.

A letter from Khālū jān [mother's sister's husband] will arrive from Dhaka, "I have prepared, with great effort, a list of one hundred names for the little darling (may God grant him a long life). Name him whichever of them you like…" A letter from Chacchī jān [father's brother's wife] will be received from Rawalpindi: "I have proposed sixteen names for the little darling, but would any of them appeal to you, anyway? Still, I present whatever I have managed to come up with." If Nānā jān [maternal grandfather] is still alive, he will write this letter from the edge of the grave,

> The confines of life, the bondage of grief; in principle, both are one.
> Before death, why would a person find release from grief?[7]

> But my dear! I have found release from my grief! You are expecting a child. My whole life has begun to bloom. Allah, hallowed

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7.   A couplet by Mirza Ghalib.

and exalted, has after all this time commanded that your life-tree be laden with fruit. Lakhs and lakhs of thanks for this... I am sending a short list of one thousand names. [396] I strongly hope that you will select one or another among them for the little sweetheart."

If esteemed Dādā jān [paternal grandfather] is drawing his final breath somewhere nearby, he will sit with the 1,300-year-old accounts and narratives of the history of Islam, select each and every name of all the renowned people in it, and lay them out in front of the parents to select one from the pile for the star of their eyes, the little darling prince. To whom should a person listen, and to whom shouldn't he? Whose advice should he heed, and whose shouldn't he? Whose heart should he keep so as not to disappoint, and whose should he return... If he spends time carefully reading the lists of names and keeping the emotions and feelings of his relatives and friends in mind, it is quite possible that the child will grow old and begin to take a second look at the name given by his parents. Thus, it has been seen that parents generally worriedly assign the name of the darling little piece of their heart in a hurry.

Sometimes superstition, in addition to worry, haste, and perplexity, enters into the appointing of the names of children. If the boy or girl has been born after a long time or after great supplication and prayerful promises, its name, too, will be given accordingly. If it is a boy, then, for example, Allah Datta ["God-Granted"], Piran Datta ["Pir-Granted"], Khuda Bakhsh ["God-Bestowed"], Nabi Bakhsh ["Prophet-Bestowed"]. If it is a girl, then Allah Datti ["God-Granted"], Piran Datti ["Pir-Granted"], Khairatan ["Charity"], Hayatan ["Life"], etc. And if God has given a boy or girl after a great number of children have died, then the name will be something like this: Allah Jiwaya ["Brought-to-Life-by-God"], G̱ẖasītā ["Tugged along"], Kalan ["Little dog (f.)"], Kalwa ["Little dog"], or Kalb-e Ali ["Dog of Ali"], etc.

English has an idiom. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him."

But because one does not seek to hang the child, efforts are made to choose the very best of best names for him. Parents expend great labor and effort in this regard. Augury is taken from the Quran. Horoscopes are commissioned and prepared. Astrologers and fortune-tellers are consulted. The opinion of pīrs and faqīrs is sought. Then at last an appropriate and suitable name is found for the boy or girl. But as soon as children reach the age of maturity and consciousness, they begin to take a critical look at their name. The emotions and feelings of the parents are set aside and they begin to feel disheartened and discontented with their name.

What should have been done is that children remain totally nameless until the age of maturity and consciousness. As soon as the boy or girl is able to write a poem or story, he should be told, "Okay dear, now name yourself whatever you want." By doing it this way, neither will the parents be heartbroken nor will the children ever have occasion to complain.

If the famous progressive poet Nazr Muhammad's name had been in accordance with his nature and temperament, he would clearly never have been touched by the need to cut and crop it. If he had remained content with Nazr Muhammad, Urdu literature would certainly be deprived of the progressive poetry of N.M. Rashid today.[8] In the very beginning, that is, immediately after the cutting and cropping, he must have felt some estrangement and alienation from his

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8.   N.M. Rashid (1910-1975) was an Urdu writer celebrated for his pioneering work in Urdu free verse. Together with Patras Bukhari, Rashid was instrumental in bringing talented Urdu writers to Delhi to work in All India Radio. Manto joined the staff in 1941, and is said, despite his resistance to authority and criticism, to have taken Rashid's criticisms of his writing. After moving to Lahore in 1948, Manto became involved in the Ḥalqah-i Arbāb-i Żauq [Circle of the Lords of Taste], a society of writers led by Rashid. Other writers tied to the society included Miraji and M.D. Tasir, both mentioned in Manto's essay. Leslie Flemming, *The Life and Works of Saadat Hasan Manto* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1985), 11-19; for Rashid in English, see A. Sean Pue, *I, Too Have Some Dreams* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Salīm Akhtar, *Urdu Adab kī Mukhtaṣartarīn Tārīkh* (Lahore: Sang-i Mīl Publications, 2000), 462-463.

name, but now he has grown so accustomed to it that if someone were to call him Nazr Muhammad, he would think someone else was being called.

There is another poet. The name that his parents gave him is Fazl-e Din. But in this era, when *dīn* [religion] and its *faẕl* [virtue] have no importance at all, how decayed and dilapidated does this name seem? Fazl-e Din acutely sensed this. Thus, he immediately changed this old name into a name as romantic as Anjum Rumani [Stars Romantic].[9] As soon as this burden was lifted from his chest, he began to write poetry that is very light and easy. If he had allowed his name to remain Fazl-e Din, literary critics would have surely tossed his work into the clay pot of old poetry.

Waqar [dignity] Ambalwi first give himself the name Atif Maulanwi.[10] Thus, most of his essays were published under this name in *Humāyūn*. [397] But when he saw his original name, Kazim Ali, set before Atif Maulanwi, the change did not seem dignified [bā-waqār] to him. Thus, he transformed again, and became Waqar Ambalwi.

Abul Kalam Azad was first Muinuddin Ahmad.[11] Saghar Nizami

9.   Anjum Rūmānī (1920-2000), mathematician, teacher, school administrator, and member of the Ḥalqah-i Arbāb-i Żauq [Circle of Lords of Taste], a community of Urdu writers centered in Lahore. Critics have noted that his lyrical ghazal poetry incorporated patriotic themes; he also wrote a sizable number of lampoons and satires that became popular. Yāsmīn Anjum Jawed, ed. Kulliyāt-i Anjum Rūmānī (Islamabad: Rūdād Publications, 2001).

10.   Waqar Anbālawī, novelist and journalist, owned of the newspaper *Safīnah* and edited of the weekly Urdu magazine *Shahbāz*. He also assisted in the publication of *Iḥsān*, an Urdu daily published from Lahore. Khursheed Kamai Aziz, *A Historical Handbook of Muslim India, 1700-1947* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1995), 2:643, 666.

11.   Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), journalist, theologian, and politician. Gail Minault, "Azad, Abul Kalam," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

was Samad Yar Khan.[12] His teacher Simab was Ashiq Husain.[13] Mr. Josh was Shabbir Hasan Khan.[14] Jigar Muradabadi was Ali Sikandar.[15]

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12. Sāghar Niẓāmī (1905-1983), journalist and poet. After dropping out of high school, he apprenticed himself in 1922 to the journalist Sīmāb Akbarābādī (q.v.). He eventually became involved in politics and joined the progressive writers movement. Mālik Rām, "Sāghar Niẓāmī" in ˉāmin ˝Alī Khān, ed., *Sāghar Niẓāmī: Fann aur Shakhṣiyat* (New Delhi: Sāghar Niẓāmī Memorial Academy, 1985), 73-80.

13. ˝Āshiq Ḥusain Sīmāb Akbarābādī (b. ca. 1882; d. 1951). Biographer, journalist, poet, and translator. ˉiyā Fatḥābādī, ˝*Allāmah Sīmāb Akbarābādī kā Sawāniḥī Khākah* (Delhi: Bazm-i Sīmāb, 1984).

14. Josh Malīḥābādī (1898-1982). Known as the poet of revolution and the poet of youth, Josh was a major figure in the Progressive Writers' Movement, which brought together writers from multiple linguistic and regional traditions with a shared commitment to leftist politics. Josh is credited with repurposing the marṡiyah (elegy) genre in Urdu, with its focus on the martyrdom of Ḥusain (the grandson of the Prophet) for the purpose of political resistance and social reform. Zafar Maḥmūd, *Josh Malīḥābādī: Shakhṣiyat aur Fann* (Delhi: Taraqqī-i Urdu Bureau, 1989), 11-33; Sayyid Iḥtishām Ḥusain, *Josh Malīḥābādī: Insān aur Shā˝ir* (Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy, 1983).

15. Jigar Murādābādī (d. 1960), Urdu poet most famous for ghazal poetry, which is largely credited with sustaining classically-inspired aesthetics in Urdu love poetry through the nationalist period, in which the progressive movement dominated literary production. Jigar also wrote topical verse on subjects ranging from the Bengal famine and Gandhi to Islam. Mohammad Islam, *Jigar Murādābādī: Ḥayāt aur Shā˝irī* (Karachi: Dabistān-i Jigar, 1979)

Syed Jalib was Basharat Ali.[16] And Nuh Narwi[17] was Bande Hasan.[18]

Qatil Shifai's parents certainly did him wrong when they named him Aurangzeb. Progressive poetry and traditionalist, conservative

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16.   Jālib Dihlawī (1847-1930) was a journalist and activist. Born into an aristocratic family and educated at Delhi, Jālib worked edited a number of influential newspapers and journals throughout his career, including *Akmal al-Akhbār* of Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān, *Paisah Akhbār*, *Hamdam* of Lucknow (founded in 1912 by ʺAbd al-Bārī of Farangī Maḥall, financed by the Rājah of Maḥmūdābād, and, from the late 1920s, supported by the Muslim League), and *Hamdard* (owned by the nationalist writer Muḥammad ʺAlī Jauhar). At *Hamdam*, Jālib mentored a young Shaukat Thānawī (q.v.), who remembered him as a brilliant editor, an irascible stickler for Urdu idiom, the possessor of an incredible memory, an opium user, and a bibliophile. Ahmad Saeed, *Muslim India (1857-1947)* (Lahore: Institute of Pakistan Historical Research, 1997), 183-184; Khursheed Kamai Aziz, *A Historical Handbook of Muslim India, 1700-1947* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1995), 2:644, 659; Shaukat Thānawī, *Shīsh Maḥall* (Lucknow: Nasīm Book Depot, 1981), 78-79.

17.   Nūḥ Nārawī (1879-1962). Poet. His father was educated in Arabic and Persian, supported the British, worked as a sub-judge in the 1870s, and was friends with the famous Urdu satirist Akbar Allahābādī. Nūḥ studied the Quran, philosophy, and some English, and developed advanced command of Persian. Like many poets of his generation, he took corrections from Dāgh Dihlawī. He also corresponded with Akbar Allāhābādī, who wrote the introduction to Nūḥ's first collection of verse. He seems to have made a living as a performer in poetry assemblies and by contributing poetry to journals. Ẓafar al-Islām Ẓafar, *Nūḥ Nārawī: Ḥayāt aur Shaʺirī* (Bheonadi: National Book Depot, 1976).

18.   Many of the names listed here had overlapping careers. Sīmāb mentored Sāghar Niẓāmī at the beginning of the latter's career in journalism and poetry, though Sāghar eventually parted ways with him. Both spent some time at Lahore working for Tajwar Najībābādī, who had hired Jigar Murādābādī. Sīmāb and Josh are remembered as rivals in the fields of journalism, poetry, and reform. ʿiyā Fatḥābādī, *ʺAllāmah Sīmāb Akbarābādī kā Sawāniḥī Khākah* (Delhi: Bazm-i Sīmāb, 1984). Josh and Sāghar were closely tied to the Progressive Writers Movement, and cosigned a statement in 1943 calling for writers to build revolutionary unity among Indians. Sajjād Ẓahīr, *The Light: A History of the Movement for Progressive Literature in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, trans. Amina Azfar (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Aurangzeb?[19] Who isn't familiar with Miraji's work?[20] He, too, is a poet, and such a progressive poet that most of his work is beyond people's understanding. His original name was Sanaullah [praise of God], the meaning of which is clear. If he had remained Sanaullah, he would have been compelled to write poems whose meaning would have been clear, but because this was not Sanaullah's purpose in life and he wanted to write mysterious kinds of poetry, he had to name himself something of this kind.

Mirza Adib, B.A. Honors, is not a poet, but he is certainly a short story writer bearing a poetic temperament.[21] His original name was Dilawar Ali. Neither is he dilāwar [brave, bold; lit., heart-bringer], nor does he carry his heart in hand like a lover. Thus, as soon as he sensed distance between his name and his character, he passed all stages of progress and, in a single bound, became Mirza Adib, B.A. Honors.

There are two famous critics of Urdu drama whose names are always stuck together. I mean Muhammad Umar Nur Ilahi. Shaukat

19.   Qatīl Shifā'ī (1919-2001). Poet, film lyricist, journalist, and editor. He came from a well-to-do family, the grandson of a book-bindings craftsman and the son of a businessman. Qatīl dropped out of high school in 1935 after the death of his father and opened a sports shop, the first of a series of abortive attempts at success in retail businesses. After a brief, successful career as a banker, he found work in 1946 writing film songs for Bombay cinema. Thereafter, he edited a film journal, earned a living as an editor of literature, and wrote film lyrics. He spent much of his life at Rawalpindi, where his poetry was nurtured by local writers, including Anjum Rumani. He moved to Lahore in 1947 and remained there for much of the rest of his life. Tasnīm Kauśar Quraīshī, *Qatīl Shifā'ī: Shakhṣ aur Shā″ir* (Lahore: Maktabah-i ″Āliyah, 1991).

20.   Mīrājī (1912-1949). Mīrājī and Manṭo worked together at All-India Radio in Delhi from 1941-1942. They were close friends and drinking companions. Leslie Flemming, *Another Lonely Voice: The Life and Works of Saadat Hasan Manto* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1985), 11-18; Rashīd Amjad, ed., *Mīrājī: Shakhṣiyyat aur Fann* (Lahore: Academy-i Adabiyyāt-i Pakistan, 2006). For a study of Miraji in English, see Geeta Patel, *Lyrical Movements, Historical Hauntings* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

21.   Mirzā Adīb (1914-1999) was a dramatist, short story writer, autobiographer, and the author of short biographies. Rashīd Amjad, ed., *Mirzā Adīb: Shakhṣiyyat aur Fann* (Lahore: Maqbūl Academy, 1991).

Thanwi's original name is Muhammad Umar.[22] My thought is that when Shaukat began to write wit and humor in Thanah, because he would have to find some divine light [nūr-i ilāhī] for himself, he imbibed divine fear [khauf-i ilāhī] and changed his name. And God knows best what is right.

There is quite a bit to be impressed by in Dr. M.D. Tasir [impression], but when you move toward his original quality, all that remains is Muhammad Din, with which the quality of a doctor seems mismatched and unfitting.[23] Ahmad Shah Bukhari feels right only in the form of A.S. Bukhari.[24]

"Ahmad Shah" did not entirely fit with his humorous writing be-

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22.   Shaukat Ṫhānawī (b. 1904 or 5; d. 1963). Urdu humorist, journalist, dramatist, and radio personality. The son of a police official. Shaukat started his long career in Urdu journalism under Jālibī at Hamdam, then worked for a number of papers and journals. In 1938, he began work at Lucknow Radio Station, writing and performing humorous programs and dramas. In 1943, he moved to Lahore to write stories for a film company. He moved back to Lucknow for a time, but returned to Lahore in 1946 to continue his work in motion pictures. After Partition, he was put onto the staff at Radio Pakistan. He continued to work for the radio until 1963, and was celebrated as a voice actor. The government of Pakistan sent him to London in 1957. Thereafter, he worked for the newspaper Jang. Sa˝īd Murtaˌā Zaidī, *Shaukat Ṫhānawī* (Lahore: Maghribī Pakistan Urdu Academy, 1988).

23.   Muḥammad Dīn (M.D.) Tāśīr (1902-1950). Educator and writer. Born at Lahore, he earned a doctoral degree from Cambridge and returned to teach at various colleges in Lahore and Punjab. Ahmad Saeed, *Muslim India (1857-1947)* (Lahore: Institute of Pakistan Historical Research, 1997), 327.

24.   Aḥmad Shāh (Paṭras) Bukhārī (1898-1958). Urdu satirist, translator, educator, Director at All India Radio, and Pakistani state official. Educated in English literature at Lahore and Cambridge, he taught English in colleges at Lahore, then eventually was hired as a high-level administrator at All India Radio in Delhi (1940-1946), where Manto worked beneath him. In the 1950s, he was appointed as a delegate of the Pakistan government to the United Nations and served on various human rights committees. He died in New York. Ahmad Saeed, *Muslim India (1857-1947)* (Lahore: Institute of Pakistan Historical Research, 1997), 107; Sajjād Ẓahīr, *The Light: A History of the Movement for Progressive Literature in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, trans. Amina Azfar (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 184-186; Shīmā Majīd, ed., *Kulliyāt-i Paṭras* (Lahore: Book Ṫāk, 2003) 1:23-28; Shaukat Ṫhānawī, *Shīsh Maḥall* (Lucknow: Nasīm Book Depot, 1981), 63-64.

cause people's thoughts would turn towards Ahmad Shah Abdali,[25] who was interested in plundering and pillaging more than writing humor and wit. Bahzad Lakhnawi is in origin Nur Muhammad.[26] Although it is true that quite a bit of light pours from his beard and wide brow, during the time of his employment in the railway, when he realized that his natural disposition was more closely tied to colors than to light, he immediately transformed himself and became Bahzad Lakhnavi, and very tranquilly and contentedly began to write poetry. If Khizr Tamimi had remained Maula Bakhsh, he would clearly have had the same stature in the literary world that the master's stick has in schools.[27]

It is well-known of the famous writer of film songs D.N. Madhok[28] that he a person free from care, but he, too, did not like his original name, which was Dinanath, and colored it a western color like Dr. Muhammad Din Tasir.

While on the subject of films, let us discuss good and evil with re-

25. Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī (r. 1747-1772) was an Afghan ruler and founder of the Durrānī empire. Historians remember him for his repeated military campaigns in India, beginning with his career as an assistant to Nādir Shāh in 1739, then again as the leader of his own army between 1747 and 1769. Nichols, "Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*, Brill Online.

26. Bahzād Lakhnawi (1900-1974) was a lyricist who worked for All India Radio. He is remembered for his ghazals. In contrast to Manto, Shaukat Thānawī gives his original name as Sardār Ḥusain. Thānawī did not hold his poetry in high regard. Shaukat Thānawī, *Shīsh Maḥall* (Lucknow: Nasīm Book Depot, 1981), 59-60.

27. Khiᵣr Tamīmī (1909-1974). Poet, journalist, and lawyer. He wrote verse in Urdu and Punjabi.

28. Dina Nath Madhok (1902-1982). Film lyricist and director. Madhok is remembered as bringing folk and dialectical sensibilities (as opposed to the conventions of the theater or Urdu poetry) to his lyrics. He collaborated on projects with Ghulām Ḥaidar, and is credited with introducing audiences to megastar Naushad. Ganesh Anantharaman, *Bollywood Melodies: A History of the Hindi Film Song* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2008), 100-104, 130-132; Raju Bharatan, Naushadnama: *The Life and Music of Naushad* (New Delhi: Hay House Publishers, 2013). *The Internet Movie Database*, "D.N. Madhok" (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0534864/?ref_=fn_nm_nm_5).

gard to the purity [shuddhī] and sanctity of names.[29] Puran Bhagat was being made. Debaki Bose selected a young Muslim of Lucknow, Ali Mir, commonly known as Mujjan for the role of Puran.[30] But the question arose: Would the Hindu community object? The form of such a great bhagat [holy man] [398] has been assumed by a Muslim! Thus, with this question in mind, Ali Mir's name was purified [shuddhī] and was presented in the film as Kumar.

After that, it became a fashion to feature Muslim actors and actresses having given them Hindu-like names. Zakariya Khan, who is a pure Pathan, became Jayant,[31] and Yusuf, Dilip Kumar Kashmiri Nazr was purified and he became "Amar."[32]

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29.   shuddhī [purity] is a term closely associated with the proselytizing efforts of the Āryā Sāmāj, a Hindu revivalist movement which began in the late-19th century. By the 1930s, the shuddhī movement had become a massive conversion campaign and led prominent members of the Muslim community in India to found defensive movements at local and broader institutional levels. Yoginder Sikand, "Arya Shuddhi and Muslim Tabligh: Muslim Reactions to Arya Samaj Proselytisation 1923-1930" in Rowena Robinson and Sathianathan Clarke, eds., *Religious Conversion in India: Modes, Motivations, and Meanings* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 98-118.

30.   *Puran Bhagat* (1933). Directed by Debaki Bose. The story of Prince Puran, whose father is cursed and forbidden from seeing his son until he turns 16. Puran is sentenced to death, but is rescued by a mystic who sets him on the path of asceticism. When the evil general who sentenced him overthrows the king, Puran leaves his ascetic life to depose him, ultimately returning to his asceticism. Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema* (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 257.

31.   Jayant (1915-1975). A major star from the late-1930s until his death and the father of Amjad Khān (famous for his role as Gabbar Singh in *Sholay*). He is said to have been given the name Jayant by director-producer Vijay Bhatt. Ed., "Jayant," *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0004099/

32.   Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān (known as Dilip Kumar) (b. 1922). Indian film star. Born in Peshawar, he moved to Maharashtra and eventually found work in Bombay, first at an army canteen, then later in film. He is celebrated for his portrayal of tragic characters and swashbuckling heroes. Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema* (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 132.

Now take actresses. Tajwar[33] (this Tajwar has no relationship to Mr. Tajwar Najibabadi)[34] began to harmonize and resonate in films after becoming Veena [the name of a stringed instrument], and when Shahida was made famous in films, her name was Nina.[35]

Two-part names, too, were given to give the smell of Hindu-Muslim unity. For example, Mumtaz Shanti,[36] Gita Nizami,[37] etc. etc. One

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33.   Vīnā (Veena), born Tājwar Sulṭānah (Tajour Sultana) (1926-2004). Bollywood star active from 1942-1983. Among her early performances, her portrayal of the Rajput queen Rājkumārī in Humāyūn (1945) is especially celebrated. Later roles include the queen in Satyajit Ray's Shaṭraj kī kẖilāṛī (1977). Ed., "Veena (I) (1926-2004)," *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www. imdb.com/name/nm0474940/

34.   Tājwar Najībābādī (fl. 1910-1951) Journalist, publisher, and academic. In addition to owning and editing some important Urdu magazines, he also oversaw Urdu Markaz at Lahore, which brought together a number of prominent Urdu writers for the purpose of translation and original writing. Khursheed Kamai Aziz, *A Historical Handbook of Muslim India, 1700-1947* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1995), 2: 634, 651, 661.

35.   Nīnā (Neena) born Shāhidah (b. 1919; d. before 2007), was born at Aligarh. A rising star in the 1940s, she divorced her first husband and eventually married film director and head of Shalimar pictures W.Z. Aḥmad in 1946. The two moved to Pakistan shortly after Partition, but after Aḥmad's film Rūḥī (Roohi) was banned, it appears that both he and Neena mostly stopped working. Neena was close friends with Muḥsin's sister, Begum Khurshid Mirza (1918-1989; later film and television star). Begum Khurshid Mirza, *A Woman of Substance* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2005), 81-82; Shoaib Ahmed, "W.Z. Ahmed Passes Away," Dawn April 17, 2007 https://www.dawn.com/news/242776. Manto writes elsewhere that Neena's first husband, Muḥsin, encouraged her to begin acting to alleviate his own debt, and that the affair with W.Z. Ahmed began when she became involved with Shalimar Pictures. Saadat Hasan Manto, *Stars from Another Sky*, trans. Khalid Hasan (New Delhi: Penguin, 1998), 125-138.

36.   Mumtāz Shāntī (1926-1989). A major star in the 1940s, she appears to have stopped working in the early 1950s, only to reappear once in Aakraman (1975). Ed., "Mumtaz Shanti," *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0788396/; Ed., "Mumtāz Shāntī," Urdu Wikipedia, https://ur.wikipedia.org/wiki/ممتاز_شانتی

37.   Gītā Niẓāmī. Film actress of the 1940s remembered especially for her performance in the titular lead role in the film Panna (1944). Ed., "Geeta Nizami," *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0633298/

actress' name is Asha Posley.[38] Let someone try to understand! Sikh gentlemen have proven more steadfast in comparison to others when it comes to naming. It has been so many years since Sardar Kharak Singh has *kharak*ed,[39] but (bravo!) the idea to change that *kharkhar*ing[40] name has not yet been born in his heart.[41]

Before the Partition of India, there was a Widhwa Singh [Moon-like Lion]. He was absolutely never put off by this awkward name, and as long as his store existed here, he regularly advertised as "Bhāī Widhwa Singh kā Achār Shaljam" [Brother Widhwa Singh's Turnip Pickle].

Among the Sikhs, some are Lahora Singh, Peshawara Singh, Pahawara Singh. My thought is that even if one of them became a progressive poet, he still would not change his name.

If I should lose my head, fine; but let me not lose my Sikhness.

One must commend the pluck of the Sikhs. Otherwise, in all honesty and faith, who could spend his life with a name like Pahawara Singh?

Singers and mujra [dancing girls] are always far advanced in having light and beautiful names. There's Shamshad [box-tree], Gulab [rose], Nilam [sapphire], Almas [diamond], Anwari [of the most luminous], Mushtari [Jupiter], Zuhra [Venus], and these names have become so associated with this particular class that they have become the forbidden tree for others.

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38. Āshā Posley (1927-1998). Film star active from 1942-1986. Born as Ṣābirah (Begam) into a musical family, she began her career working in Lahore-based Punjabi cinema and is credited with playing the first lead role in a Pakistani film. Ed., "Asha Posley," *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0692695/

39. *khaṙaknā* [to bang, crash, rattle, stir; quarrel]

40. *kharkhaṙ* [shake; flourish; rattle; creak; snore; upbraid]

41. Also known as Bābā Khaṙak Singḥ (1868-1963). Sikh politician, Gandhi supporter, outspoken critic of the British. He was jailed numerous times, and is remembered as an advocate of Sikh rights and national unity. He retired to Delhi in 1947. Harbans Singh, ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1992), 493-494.
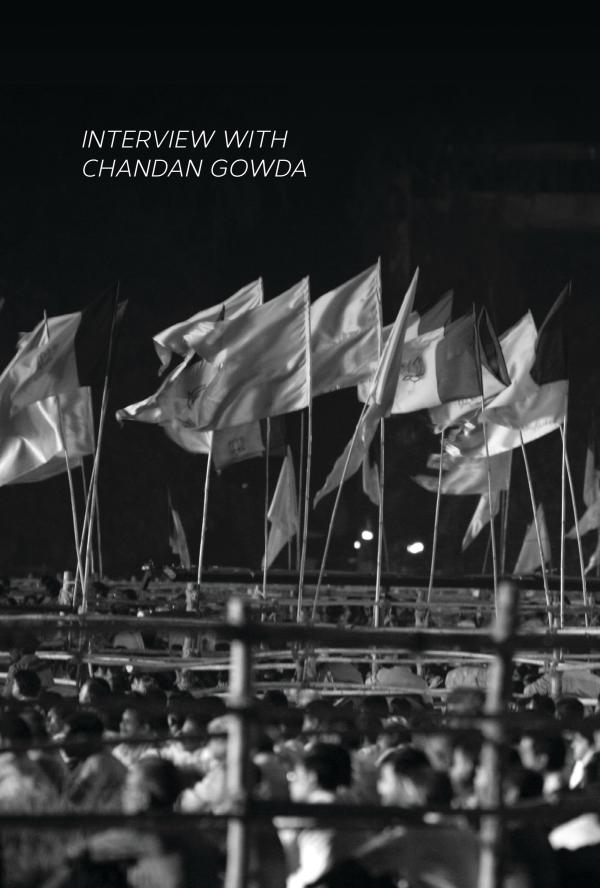
Among the singers, there are such strange and peculiar names as Babwa Bai, Chhoti Mui Bai, and Tamancha [slap; pistol] Jan.[42] The last-mentioned has reached the extreme limit of progressivism, but this is "common praise for discerning friends…" These days, like other commodities, there is also a shortage of names. New names are not available despite extensive and tireless search. My thought is that Tamancha Jan has opened an entirely new path. Such armed names can be formulated very easily.

Ṫop [Canon] Kumari, Anti-Aircraft Begum, Atom-ud Dīn. Tank Singh. Banduq [Rifle] Bano. Gola [cannonball] Bakhsh. Machine Gun Dās. Bulldozer Khan. Mine Kaur. Three Not Three Chand. Hand-Grenade Devi. Mortar Mil. Bomber Bai, D-1 Jan. D-2 Bos, and so on and so forth.

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42.   Tamānchah Jān (b. 1918; fl. 1997). Born Gulzār to an established family of courtesans at Lahore. She gained renown as a singer in her family's salon. In the 1930s, she began to record songs in Punjabi for Jenophone Records, a local label affiliated with Nath Kumar & Brothers studio, which had opened in the 1920s. In the 1930s, she turned down offers to act in film, but accepted work as a singer for Lahore Radio, where she sang both Urdu ghazals and Purbi ("Eastern") songs. According to one journalist, she achieved such fame that large numbers of courtesans adopted her name. Manto may have named the character Tamānchah Jān in his short story "Sulṭānah" after her. She lost patronage after Partition and spent the rest of her life in relative poverty, anonymity, and seclusion. Sheraz Hyder, "The Legend of Tamancha Jan," *The Friday Times*, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20130712&page=20/

*INTERVIEW WITH
CHANDAN GOWDA*

Chandan Gowda is a translator, writer, and sociologist who works on South Asian history and culture, issues of caste, developmentalism, social theory, Indian normative traditions, and Kannada literature. Gowda is currently working as professor of Sociology at the Azim Premji University, Bengaluru (India). He also writes extensively for newspapers and has published many translations of Kannada fiction and non-fiction writing in English, including the works of renowned author, UR Ananthamurthy (Oxford Book Press, 2015). In 2017, he edited a book on activist-journalist Gauri Lankesh's writings, spanning many languages titled, The Way I see It: A Gauri Lankesh Reader *(DC Books and Navayana, 2017). Dr. Gowda delivered a talk titled, "The Way she Saw it: Introducing Gauri Lankesh" at the South Asia Institute in The University of Texas at Austin on February 23, 2018 and discussed challenges and quandary of being a secular activist in modern India. The following interview was conducted after the talk.*

— Ramna Walia

THE INTERVIEW

Ramna: In your talk yesterday, you spoke about your concerns coming out of India with regards to the political climate and incidents in JNU, the murder of journalists like Gauri Lankesh, etc. Can you speak more broadly as to what these concerns are especially for sociologists, anthropologists, and scholars of South Asia in general? We have access to sociological data or means to produce material histories in a time when evidence is critical. What is the role of public intellectuals now? Is there a greater urgency now to participate in a certain kind of activism? What is the role of a scholar given this environment?

Gowda: There cannot be a global answer to this question. There is a significant difference in the role of Indian universities and scholars working abroad. And even in Indian universities, there's a great deal of diversity. The traditional model of scholarship where one says I do my work because of the laws serious engagement with one's work is always there, and the school of being a part of the public, in the sense

of training students when they graduate and being a part of local events. I think you can be a part of various activities be it a literature festival or be it a college lecture invitation or a government event that allows for discussion. As a scholar, you can be variously available and can be variously in demand given the proximity of the university and the things that are happening around it.

In the US, it is a bit different. There's a certain desegregation that you see, and that shows dissimilarity in institutional frameworks. There's the question of the role of scholars and their relationship with social movements. I think we have great precedents in front of us: you can look at the Dalit movement in Maharashtra or even Ram Guha's book which was a part of the environmental movement, the *Chipko* movement. So, you have a history of scholarly engagement with social movements. This is a trade-off in the sense that one can see the danger of being lured by having to respond to public issues. Given that there are events that need to be responded to with someone who has knowledge about it or an informed discourse about it. But I must add I'm not an absolutist in this regard because it does matter what kind of scholarly intellectual temperament you have. Putting yourself out there is not easy. You're really baring yourself in a way. You can be a part of a political movement without being a part of a visible conversation publicly.

Having said that, how public is our scholarship in terms of its own representativeness is critical. You're back to the question of India being a constellation of publics and in that, there is an Anglo national public where you see a certain kind of mind at work and I think it is important to have a sense or grasp of events across the country. But at the same time, locally grounded people have a sense of the pasts of discourse which is so rich and rare. It has a grasp of how the intellectual universe has formed over a period of time. This still provides meaning that there's adequate preparation for intervening responsibly. For this, it has to be rooted in the modern period, if asking for awareness of the pre-modern seems excessive.

Although in India, the past is a longer past. It is an alive textual field. We need both; a national discourse, but one that sufficiently reflects its own limitations, which is usually something you don't see. For instance, there was a recent survey of the five top intellectuals in India in the newspaper. Such exercise seems very superficial to me; the thought of having a list like that, not just because there are different publics, different histories and memories, but because the strength of the intervention would lie elsewhere. Through storytelling or filmmaking, you will appeal to a sense of continuity, not from the vantage point of having the historical knowledge on your side. That's the license that the creative artists have, and it can also be publicly minded or publicly oriented.

The other thing I must say is about is this idea of the intellectual. This is something we don't have a very good history of. What is the idea of a public figure in a Tamil society or Oriya society or Kerala society? I don't know if you want to call it the legitimacy question. I would say the question is that in the emergence of a spokesperson what would you expect that person to have before he or she is taken seriously? Does a rich variation in how this figure images and what then emerges? In Karnataka, Kuvempu is a great writer from the first half of the 20th century who did most of his work between the 30s and the 60s. He is conscious of the idea of *sakshi* – the writer bares the extraordinary responsibility as a witness to the truths of the era has mattered a lot to those who came after him. So, in France, you see committed intellectuals like Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. They have a history of the role of the intellectual who understands his or her rule in a given moment in history. This intellectual is varied depending on the context and it does not work within global frames. It is not important for historical reasons alone, you see now an anti-intellectual strain of contemporary discourse where you are trying to besmudge the validity of intellectual remarks by casting questions on their integrity. One has to understand, what are they trying to overturn here. There are cultures of recognizing who can speak and what

is expected of them because it is not necessary that a scholar is publicly oriented. The fact that scholars engage with seriousness about life itself is important enough even if the work does not purport to be self-consciously intervening to shift things the way they are. There is a sense in which good literature or good scholarship survives because at the core of it is a deep respect for life forms and some ethical regard. If we look at the contemporary Indian case; the way in which people have been expected to be public when there is such enormous distortions of historical events and episodes. As historians, people have felt obliged to offer corrections and clarify that this is not the case. So that is that mode of publicness. And there is another way of understanding this publicness when certain conversations and memories tend to make sense of multiple lineages running through a particular moment and many of these that don't get recognition. I think once again, by retelling things, by making visible or disclosing other currents, whether it's done in an academic journal, a newspaper article, a signature campaign or a sit-in, is a matter of consequence. In India, I think to this end, a bilingual sensibility helps, in fact, it is necessary, but I won't be militant about it.

Ramna: In India, right now we see a sense of urgency to publicly engage in such discourse at the institutional level on the one hand, like in case of JNU protests as well as the larger socio-political immediacy, to address issues of fascism and its call for an old Brahmanical order. This is no way is new, both in national and regional discourses. The regional discourse tends to get subsumed in this larger nationalist discourse. We've seen that in journalistic writing; in Gauri Lankesh's last editorial on the issue of fake news which was widely circulated after her death. Gauri's death has unveiled her whole body of work to a non-Kannada speaking audience. We've seen a new understanding affective kinship among various groups. How can we understand these various strands of discourses in terms of language for instance, beyond a central intellectual seat? Are we seeing disparate conversational spheres coming together?

Gowda: The question of fascism in India, if it means a certain willingness to accept authority and certain fetishization of the value of political power, is prescient. From a sociological point of view, we can see how the notion of Hindu nationalism has come together with the idea of the political being in the country that doesn't want to engage in a conversation. That, I think, is a new thing. Regarding regional insularity, it is true that you could be truthful as an English-language journalist and be very critical in what you do, but the discourse can be centered around the ocean of rationality and reason. And then you have the deep world of cultural sentiments where English, by being an experience-distance language, you use it, but it does not express your being in the same way. This is why in "the regional worlds" you're treading into conceptual ground that is deeply, temporally layered, and has an experiential depth; which is why to engage with something like fascism that is now related to your political self or an idea to overcome it, I think regional humanistic traditions will be of greater importance to craft one's activism. You can see that a lot of discussions, even during the bhakti period, have actually asked for the overcoming of the ego as a great value to seek. And this overcoming of the ego is decidedly anti-fascist so if you are trying to get people to rethink their fascination with people who have political power or trying to rethink their own submission to political power then I think this tradition of thinking that we've had, which is suspicious of political power, is a very valuable one. And it can actually be very important for the survival of the civilization in the face of this kind of political climate. And I don't think it is a question of opinion at all; it is Indian languages that would help us address this fascistic desire.

Regarding your question about community, just as the fundamentalists want to fabricate a community at the level of the nation-state and make that the foundational community, often ignoring that we have many competing claims to this community, you're right that the secular activists are also interested in thinking about the community at that level. Can we think of a new India? India versus India being

thought of and arrived at the level of the nation is happening. While that happens, unlike the first group, the second group of people is not interested in demolishing any differences in linguistic communities or sub-sectarian communities. Having said that, I think it is vital for a very thick sense of community to exist outside the nation-state framework.

Ramna: We're seeing a big moment where we are rethinking some of these overarching, big categories. The nation-state is one such category that you mention and then there are these other big questions about democracy at large— at the level of law, policy, institutions. How do you think democracy is being reimagined today?

Gowda: At the level of law for sure. There is this commitment to modern India that does not have death penalty or these Victorian relics that exist such as law on sedition or homosexuality as a criminal offense. So, we see a commitment to modernize Indian society along a certain idea of modern society as a free, liberal space where individuals are allowed to do what they wish. So, we see legal scholars and judges who are committed do these changes. At the level of institutions, in social sciences, there's a certain awareness about mistakes made in the past, about working with secular frames, and how do we understand India better. Awakening to democracy is happening in different ways. We see that in understanding pluralism and understanding diversity, there is a contest there – you have some superficial claims about how one becomes cosmopolitan as seen mostly as a lifestyle affair and the truth challenges of being cosmopolitan in terms of questions of planning, architecture that express a keenness to work within the epistemic specificity of location. Much of the government sanctioned urban planning schemes as well as plans of building continue to be mainstream in their lack of regard for these sorts of discussions, and often for being derivative to some cherished models from elsewhere. It's an important question - how does one be democratic? And this is being asked in different domains, and it has different an-

swers because how one becomes democratic is not as self-evident as it may seem. You do want to avoid making democracy as a system that protects majoritarian imposition. Clearly, it is a delicate act of leaving room for the imagination, and a primary commitment to heterogeneity and diversity, and then managing how to work with these differences. If there is a problem with the fundamentalist posing of monolithic frames for understanding one's place in India, you also have a civil liberties frame which is also national, in asking a certain normative vision to guide action. And I think the commitment to democracy is of course important, but I feel that angle – the rights angle – does not find its importance to engage with local histories and the horizons of experience that inform local problems. There's a certain thinning down of the politics at the national level. You can see him comfortable sitting in a city and holding forth on various problems without engaging with it directly. There's a mainstreaming of dissent as well and while we welcome it, we need to be aware that there is an impoverishment as well.

Ramna: You have talked about the need for the left secularism to reinvent itself. The left and the right division is crude at one level but this division is more visible than ever. I'm fascinated by the use of social media, WhatsApp groups and new worlds of operation on both ends. On the one hand, you have hashtag campaign, 'I am Gauri' which is aiming to create a collective community and a sensibility to protest, but on the other hand, we have another kind of visibility that celebrates her death on social media. Social media has been a huge player in some of these divisions and language has played a very important role in some of these ideas that we've been talking about. For instance, the word secularism has been desecrated into *sickular* or press, and particularly liberal press, has been labeled as *presstitutes*. This relates to these larger ideas about democracy, freedom of expression, protest. And as you rightly said, if we say that there is one idea of democracy then we're saying that these majoritarian ideas should have

equal weightage – that people who protest Gauri's death and those who celebrate it are exercising a certain expression. How do you understand this conundrum?

Gowda: The social media challenge is of a unique kind and they're really pushing you to be creative. It's almost like an advertisement warfare. If this is one way in which you try to cultivate attention on a problem, how else do you cultivate another kind of attention to the same problem? And if you see the WhatsApp gambit, the genre of WhatsApp messages vary from being memes to lengthy essay forms with lengthy step-by-step argumentative style of presentation. Unfortunately, you're left with no choice but to engage. I think there's a new sense of a tactical set of requirements that one needs to master navigate the system now. How you go about it relies on your modus operandi.

On the question of the reinvention of the left, I will say that it will happen, and you can already see signs of it happening. One way in which it can and should happen is for activists who consider themselves to be on the left to really rethink their *apriori* suspicion of what on the outside seems like a religious phenomenon. A lot of ethical discussions that would have happened about a historical past will seem to only belong to the register of religion which might not always be the case. But if you exhibit a certain curiosity about who has asked serious moral questions about living responsibly and see what the answer will be. I think they will be surprised in terms of how radical the responses have been in the past. The lineages of your activist concerns, if you allow them to evolve and develop in an almost retroactive fashion, you see a lot of them have a living resonance. They are not just archival efforts. They are likely to illuminate some of the conversations that we are surrounded by. And the task, I think, now is to evolve that activist conversation into ethical anchors that reach deep and wide. I feel that right now we suffer from the fact that there is a short historical memory. And this needs to be worked out locally

to be understood better. But that's not all. Imagine that you discover an idea that is novel or radical in terms of value of labor or question of authorship— you can initiate conversations that extend beyond what might seem like a spatially delimited universe. This can have surprising new consequences in both catalyzing where one can look for as well as how one can carve out a new trajectory. There is a certain self-imposed indifference to ethical traditions or moral traditions in our past, in locally delimited areas or trans-locally. If you do maps of these traditions, they don't all fit into neat categories or areas. If right now, injustice is something you are concerned about, you will have to bring everything at your disposal to bear in responding to it. That's essential to rebuilding one's own sense of preparedness and understanding of what's happening. Often intuition might have to lead you and acting in good faith is important. But curiosity must run freely and allow deep engagement. The option of avoidance that the left has engaged with all these decades seems to be a mistake. That needs to be revised.

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