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## EDITORIAL

### From Illusion to Reality – The Nation at 75

‘The Mirage of Immortality’ is a term used by Arnold Joseph Toynbee, an English historian and a philosopher of history. He used this term observing the blindness of a group of people who ardently believed that their culture and civilization was superior to all others and was the final form of human society. This was in the context of the terrible decline of the Western world after the devastating war in 1914 and the international disorder that persisted even after 1919.

The colonial powers once believed that it was their burden to civilize the entire planet Earth. The poem written by the English poet Rudyard Kipling titled ‘White Man’s Burden’ (1899) is a typical example of the same. Those who lived in the global north thought that it was their moral obligation to civilise the rest of the world. This white men’s burden syndrome coupled with the desire to exercise sovereign power still persists in different forms, including through the native elites possessed by the colonial spirit.

Observing the phenomenon of existing sovereignty in hybrid forms in the context of globalisation, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri called it Empire. It is not the imperialism of the 19<sup>th</sup> C variety but a new form of exerting sovereignty upon common people. Modern sovereignty doesn’t organize around one central conflict but rather through a flexible network of micro conflicts.

In fact, sovereignty is a positive term which has been deployed to define a nation. Especially in the context of a globalised world, sovereignty needs to be reasserted to avoid cultural invasion. However, reassertion of sovereignty of a nation in a way creates a space for the reassertion of the sovereign power of the state over its citizens. There are new strategies of power to handle the ‘politics of differences’ by means of which the state creates the binary of ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’.

In order to define 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in a nation, the state employs its apparatuses to manufacture narratives. By creating and sustaining a conflict between outsiders and insiders, the leadership of the state can enjoy political advantages. Herein comes the role of categorical statements and hate speeches even from those who are part of state administration.

The recent controversy over the use of the bulldozer can be seen within this context. Bulldozers are usually used in India as an extrajudicial tool to remove illegal constructions but now in India it has entered the political lexicon. During the Emergency in India during Indira Gandhi's regime, her son Sanjay Gandhi used the 'bulldozer' for political purposes. After a long gap, it was used again in the assembly election in Uttar Pradesh in 2017, where it was used to give a political message aimed at criminals. However, some episodes from more recent incidents in different states show how the bulldozer can be used to criminalise those with political differences.

The exercise of the sovereign power vested in the state is ideally meant to maintain justice and peace in state. If it is being misused for political vendetta it lays itself open to eventually be countered by innovations capable of altering the power itself. Those living in the mirage of immortality may not realise this.

Therefore, the politics of the bulldozer has to give way to the politics of dialogue. Authoritarian politicians live in political bubbles where the governments are unable to give ear to the cry of the common masses. Political bubbles are the breeding grounds for hatred and misunderstandings. The sooner we burst those illusory bubbles, the quicker we can get back to the path of progress and justice for all citizens. Hence, by encouraging the politics of dialogue let us redeem the spirit of democracy.

Dialogue in democracy is meant for dialogical living and better understanding. This will also help in strengthening the legitimacy of institutions by building consensus and trust in their proper functioning. Multilevel dialogue should be initiated

by Government institutions at various levels of society through ensuring the participation of citizens with the aim of building sufficient consensus on critical challenges.

As India celebrates *Azadi Ka Amruth Mahotsav*, the 75 years of its Independence, the key challenge before the Government is that of initiating dialogue at various levels. The very survival of a mature democracy desperately depends on the resumption of this dialogue.

**Rev Dr Abraham Mathew**

*Managing Editor*

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## RUSSIA – UKRAINE CONFLICT: ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLITICS

*-Sebastian N\**

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The February 2022 attack of Russia over Ukraine raises serious questions on the stability of Europe and the power equations in international politics that have evolved after the end of cold war and subsequent disintegration of the USSR. Beyond the security concerns and conflict of interest between Russia and Ukraine, the war has larger manifestations in the context of Russia's efforts to rebuild its past glory. It had been predicted by many that the end of cold war and disintegration of the USSR would bring major changes in the structure of the international system and the behavior of actors associated with it. In this context, this article attempts to look into the issues associated with the current crisis in Ukraine and its implications for regional and global politics.

Russia, the successor of the erstwhile USSR, isolated itself from global power politics for some time, even though it tried to expand its influence in the regional politics of Eurasia. Though Russia could manage its influence in most of those new states which were part of erstwhile USSR in the initial years, slowly and gradually, these states started moving away from Russian influence. During this period, the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia who were part of former USSR, joined the NATO. Besides, the Eastern European states who were once part of the Soviet led Warsaw pact also joined EU and NATO and thus migrated to the western camp (Walker, 2015). Russia, with its weak economy and political power, could not resist this move, despite the fact that such developments were against the promises made by the western countries during the time of disintegration of the USSR. There are enough indications that, with its massive socio-political and economic transformation during the last two decades, Russia seeks a reentry into global power politics.

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Even after the collapse of USSR, Russia remained one of the major military powers in the world. However, political instability, lack of a powerful leadership and economic problems have weakened Russia. Nevertheless, the emergence of Vladimir Putin as a strong leader changed its destiny. Centralization of power under Putin and the rapid rebuilding of economy further increased the aspirations of the political elite of Russia (Myers 2015; Gassen 2017). Russia started pushing its interests aggressively and ignored the opposition from neighbouring states, the European Union and the US. This has engendered fresh security issues in the region as those anti-Russian regimes tried to resist Russian plans by taking support from the Western countries, particularly, the US and the European Union.

### **Ukraine Russia Conflict: Ethno – Religious Issues**

The emergence of sharp ethnic differences has been pointed out as one of the reasons of the current conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Ukrainians and Russians are the two major ethnic groups in Ukraine who constitute 77.85% and 17.3% of the population respectively. Both these groups have their own distinct language and cultural practices. Russians reside in the Eastern (mainly in the Donbas region) and Southern (Crimean Peninsula) parts of the country whereas the Ukrainians are concentrated in the Central and Western parts of Ukraine (Marples, 2015). As per 2021 estimates, there are 43.4 million people in Ukraine, of which only 37.3 million are governed by central government at Kyiv. Around 2.3 million people live in Crimea and Sevastopol, which are directly under Russian control, while another 3.85 million people live in eastern Ukraine under the control of Russian backed rebels of Donbas. Russia has been accusing the Ukraine government of human rights violations against the Russian ethnic groups residing in Donbas.

Religion is an important factor that links Russians and Ukrainians. 74% of the Ukrainians are Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox Christian population in Ukraine is concentrated in Central (76.7%), South (71%), and Eastern (63.2%), parts of the country (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2016). Currently, there are three Orthodox Churches in Ukraine – Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate (founded in

1992), Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate, and Ukraine Autocephalous Church (founded in 1917). Around 36% of the Orthodox Christians in Ukraine accept the authority of Kyiv Patriarchate while 30% accept the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate. A very small section, around 0.4%, of the orthodox Christians belong to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. Interestingly, the remaining substantial section of the Orthodox Christians in Ukraine remain independent from both Kyiv and Moscow Patriarchates (Marples, 2015; Kiryukhin 2015).

The political developments in Ukraine since 2013-14 gets reflected in the religious sphere as well. With tensions increasing between Russia and Ukraine, the orthodox Christians in Ukraine who have had more than a 300-year long connection with the Moscow Patriarchate moved away from its authority and became more autonomous under the Kyiv Patriarchate. As the Ukraine's Kyiv Patriarchate and Autocephalous Church were not recognised by other orthodox churches across the world, the Moscow Patriarchate remained as the only legitimate Orthodox Church in Ukraine until 2018. In 2018, the Orthodox Christians belong to Kyiv Patriarchate, Autocephalous Church and a section from the Moscow Patriarchate of Ukraine merged and established a common Church for Ukraine - the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The Russian Orthodox Church, the largest among all Orthodox churches in the world, did not accept this new Church. However, the most powerful among the Orthodox Patriarchs - Patriarch of Constantinople - and some other Orthodox Churches recognized the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine. This new development has really challenged the spiritual backing for the political claims of Russia over Ukrainians.

Apart from the political and ethnic differences, the religious differences also can be seen as a reason for the current developments in Ukraine. The influence of the Russian Orthodox Church was an element of soft power used by Russia in its relation with Ukraine. The loss of its spiritual authority over the third largest Orthodox Community in the world was definitely a setback for Russia. As is evident, the Moscow Patriarchate's influence is now limited only to those Ukrainians who belong to the category of ethnic Russians, particularly those who live in the Donbas region and Crimea.



## **Russian Response to Ukraine's Attempts for NATO Membership**

Ukraine is the largest among the new states formed after the disintegration of the erstwhile USSR. It became an independent country in 1992. It shares a long border with Russia in the northern and eastern parts of the country. The relation between Russia and Ukraine was cordial in the initial years and Russia formally accepted its boundaries with Ukraine through an agreement in 1997. However, the situation changed drastically when Ukraine planned to strengthen relations with its western neighbours. The economic and geopolitical interests of Ukraine were the major driving forces of such a policy shift (Jenkins, 2014). As a culmination of this, in 2008, two neighbouring states of Russia who departed from former Soviet Union - Georgia and Ukraine - approached NATO for membership. The move was strongly supported by the US. But many western European countries opposed it, as they did not want to destabilize the security structure of Europe. In this context, NATO has kept the option open for a future entry of both these states into NATO.

The tension between Ukraine and Russia aggravated further in 2013, when the President of Ukraine, Victor Yanukoyvch, a pro-Russian leader, declined to sign an agreement with European Union. This provoked popular agitations against President Yanukoyvch demanding closer ties with the West. As a result of these agitations, a new election was held in 2014. Though Victor Yanukoyvch managed to win the election, he was accused of extensive election manipulations. The country witnessed unprecedented street protests for fair elections<sup>1</sup>. The protests led to the exit of Yanukoyvch and the collapse of his Russian backed regime in Ukraine.

It is possible to link the current crisis in Ukraine with the events in 2013-14. The expulsion of Victor Yanukoyvch from power led to an internal conflict in Ukraine. The pro-Russian elements in the Crimea peninsula of South Ukraine and the Donbas region of Eastern Ukraine declared independence from the pro-West

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<sup>1</sup> These protests are popularly known as Euromaidan revolution, Maidan revolution and also Revolution of Dignity.

government in Kyiv (Petro, 2015, Snyder 2019). Using this as a pretext, Russia invaded the Crimean peninsula, conducted a referendum and annexed it to Russia. It also sent its troops to the Donbas region to support the pro-Russian rebels fighting against the Ukraine government<sup>2</sup>. In Donbas, the fight between the separatists backed by Russia and the central government at Kyiv has been continuing since 2014. Some areas in this region is now controlled by rebels<sup>3</sup>.

In 2021, Putin toughened his position on Ukraine. He made certain provocative statements, arguing that Ukraine was a creation of USSR and therefore was not an independent entity. The Ukrainian leadership was always suspicious of Russian moves. When Ukraine wanted to join EU, Russia wanted it to be part of the Eurasian alliance for which the latter put pressure over Ukraine. However, Ukraine was more determined in its plans to look towards the West by joining NATO and EU, particularly after the Russian invasion of Crimea peninsula in 2014 and their intrusion in Donbas (Walker 2015; Metre, 2015).

### **The West in Russian War Against Ukraine**

Russia's re-entry into global power politics after a brief interlude and Ukraine's move to join NATO and EU have led to a deterioration in the relations between the two states. It is obvious that, being a sovereign state, Ukraine has every right to decide in this matter. However, it was not very easy for Ukraine to take such a decision, given the ground realities in the region, particularly the vigorous opposition of Russia. Russia always treated NATO expansion to Ukraine and Georgia as a major threat to its security. Ukraine's plans to ignore Russian opposition to its efforts at NATO membership was certainly provocative from the Russian point of view.

The western powers have supported Ukraine in its resistance to the Russian invasion by providing sophisticated weapons

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<sup>2</sup> In Donbas, Russia supported the two republics by pro Russian Rebels, the Donetsk & Luhansk (Anieri, 2019). In the midst of current crisis, Putin officially recognized Donetsk & Luhansk as two republics.

<sup>3</sup> In 2019, by acknowledging the Russian invasion of Crimea and Donbas region, Ukraine stated that 9% of the total area of the country is temporarily occupied by foreign powers.

and financial aid<sup>4</sup>. This has helped Ukraine to hold on to its besieged cities and even fight back. NATO and the western states have certain limitations when it comes to taking military action against Russia. Firstly, Ukraine is not a member of NATO and therefore, NATO cannot send its forces to liberate/protect Ukraine<sup>5</sup>. Ukraine is not a member of the EU either. Moreover, none of the European states wants to engage in a direct military confrontation with Russia. The demands for declaring Ukraine's airspace 'no fly zone' was also not accepted by the western powers because any move to impose no-fly zone would ultimately drag them into war with Russia.

The response of the West has mainly taken the form of economic sanctions and other penalties on Russia. Russia found itself faced with extensive sanctions on it in a very fast pace. The unprecedented sanctions have damaged the Russian economy very badly (Clarkson, 2022). The US removed the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status given to Russia and put a complete ban on oil import from and technology export to Russia. It also put a ban on the Russian Central bank. The overseas assets of the bank have been frozen. Japan, South Korea and many European countries also extended economic sanctions over Russia. Besides, many international business groups, financial institutions and media houses have also stopped their activities in Russia or withdrawn from the Russian market. In a major move, the US government put sanctions on Gazprom, the company undertaking the construction of the gigantic Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project between Germany and Russia<sup>6</sup>. No doubt, all these measures have brought massive damages to Russian economy. The Russian stock market remains closed and other economic activities are stalled (Kingsly 2022).

### **Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine**

The Russian attack on Ukraine has led to a massive exodus from the country, causing the biggest refugee crisis in Europe

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<sup>4</sup> US gave lethal weapons, anti-tank missiles and \$800 million additional military aid to Ukraine (Kirby, 2022).

<sup>5</sup> As per the Charter, NATO cannot intervene to ensure the security of a non-member state.

<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, this pipeline passes through the territory of Ukraine.

after the Second World War. Over 4.6 million Ukrainians have fled to neighbouring countries like Poland, Hungary, Romania, Moldova etc as refugees. Poland alone has received around 2.2 million refugees (Roy, 2022). Another 7 million Ukrainians are internally displaced. Together they constitute a quarter of the total population of the country. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees has categorized the Ukraine crisis as a Level 3 Emergency<sup>7</sup> (Whiting, 2022).

Civilian casualties in the war have been quite high. The indiscriminate bombings by Russian forces have caused the destruction of civilian infrastructure in the major cities of Ukraine. The media reports and estimates of human rights agencies indicate that more than 2000 civilians have died in Kyiv and other major cities and many more have been wounded in the air attacks by invading forces. There are reports that 900 civilian bodies were found in Kyiv where the Russian military attack was concentrated. Attacks on power stations have led to power supply disruptions for long hours. The blockage of supply lines has caused shortage of food, water and medicines. The evacuation of civilians from the war zone has also not been effective due to frequent air raids (Roy, 2022).

On the other side, the efforts of the United Nations (UN) to make an effective intervention to stop the war have also failed. The Security Council of the UN failed to pass the resolution condemning Russia due to the use of veto power by Russia. Both China, another permanent member, and India, a nonpermanent member, in the Council abstained from voting, which further weakened the efforts of the UN. However, the General Assembly of the UN passed a resolution with an overwhelming majority of 141-5 in early March, condemning Russia for its invasion of Ukraine and demanding immediate Russian withdrawal (Roy, 2022). The war in Ukraine has been a test to the UN as the Security Council was once again paralysed by the Russian veto (Patrick, 2022). It has exposed the limitations of the organisation in guaranteeing protection to a small state from an arbitrary attack by a powerful state. The question that Vladimir Zelensky, the President of Ukraine, asked at the UN General Assembly

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<sup>7</sup> PLevel 3 is the highest form of Refugee crisis, according to UNHCR

- Where is the security that the UNSC needs to guarantee? - remained unanswered.

## **Ukraine War and Its Implications to World Politics**

The course of the war indicates that Russia is not able to achieve anything substantial from the military action against Ukraine. What Russia expects to accomplish through the current attack is a regime change in Ukraine. Putin aimed to expel President Vladimir Zelensky from power and bring in a pro-Russian government in Ukraine. But the unexpected military resistance from Ukraine has ruined Putin's designs. Against the expectations of Russia, Ukrainians were able to hold on to the capital city, Kyiv. The Russian strategy was to capture Kyiv and put pressure on Zelensky to step down from power or to accept the conditions imposed by Russia. The strong civilian resistance organized by Ukraine also countered Russian invasion effectively.

In his article written in the *New York Times*, Patrick Kingsley (2022) argues that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has critical impacts on world politics. Apart from energy crisis<sup>8</sup>, negative impacts on global economy, and food security<sup>9</sup>, it also created major challenges to the current world order based on American hegemony and also to the security and stability of Europe. The security of the states which were part of the former USSR is at risk due to the expansionist plans and aggressive military moves of Russia. Putin's plans to rebuild Russia and revive its superpower status can be perceived as existential threats to these states (Kappeler, 2014; Metre, 2015).

Russia accuses the US and Western European countries of trying to manipulate Ukraine and Georgia against it. With the extension of membership to the Baltic republics, NATO had already reached Russia's doorsteps (Metre, 2015; Walker, 2015). In case Ukraine also joins NATO, the western military alliance could reach much

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<sup>8</sup> As a result of the war, the world energy prices are increased rapidly due to shortage of supply and disruption in supply chains. 1/3 of Europe's total gas requirement is met by import from Russia. Moreover, this is shipped through Ukraine (Kingsley 2022).

<sup>9</sup> 30% of total global wheat export is from Russia and Ukraine and grain supplies are primarily routed through Black Sea.

closer to the Russian border, something that Russia has always been anxious about. Russian President Vladimir Putin had made certain moves with regard to his country's security and regional interests, in view of Ukraine's fresh move to join NATO. In December 2021, Russia made certain written demands to US and NATO which it termed essential for the future security of the country (Bilefsky, Perez, and Nagourney, 2022). The demands were; (a) Ukraine should never join NATO, (b) NATO should bring down its forces from Eastern European countries, (c) the 2015 ceasefire in Ukraine needs to be implemented (ibid). The demands were not accepted by NATO and the US. Subsequently, Putin declared his current 'special military operations' to 'demilitarize and de-nazify' Ukraine, to stop the eight years long genocide and atrocities by Ukrainian military against the Russian ethnic people in the Donbas region and to free Ukrainians from the oppressive government of Zelensky (Bilefsky, Perez, and Nagourney, 2022)

Putin, in his 22 years in power in Russia, made the country stronger. The NATO expansion was always his major concern. He continued accusing NATO and the US and threatened neighbours, particularly Ukraine and Georgia, over their move to strengthen ties with the western block (Myres, 2015; Masters 2022). While initiating the current military action, Putin's major aims were to capture Kyiv, topple the existing government and expel Zelensky from power, install a new government in Ukraine and thus sweep the country back into Russian orbit. After major setbacks to his move to capture Kyiv and to expel President Zelensky, Putin now postulates that the main objective of military action is the liberation of Donbas.

Demilitarizing Ukraine and making it a neutral state was another set of aims that Russia had, while sending its troops to Ukraine. Russia, aggressively pushes this demand in the mediations to stop the war and to retreat from Ukraine. In the latest peace talks held on 29 March 2022, Ukraine proposed four points in response to Russian demands (Bilefsky, Perez, and Nagourney, 2022):

- (a) Ukraine would become a non-bloc, non-nuclear state with no foreign military bases in its territory
- (b) Strict, legally binding guarantees needed from UK, USA, France, China, Turkey, Canada, Italy, Poland and Israel that they would protect Ukraine in the event of any external attack
- (c) In the situation of any security threat to Ukraine, the guarantor states would have to hold consultations and come to Ukraine's defense, within three days
- (d) Ukraine would be allowed to join in EU

As far as the status of Crimea is concerned, Ukraine suggests a 15 years' time period to discuss and settle the dispute. But Russia is not ready for any discussion on Crimea. On Donbas, Ukraine demands Russian troop withdrawal from its territory as a precondition for any discussion with the rebels. The Russian demand for demilitarization, according to them, is a crazy demand that cannot be considered at all.

## Conclusion

The Russian attack on Ukraine has destabilized the security structure of Europe. Besides, it has created human casualties on a large scale, infrastructure damages, economic miseries and human exodus. The chances of an early settlement of the crisis is limited, given the complexity of issues connected to it. Certainly, Ukraine's intention to join NATO and EU are the immediate concerns of Russia. Russia demands an assurance from NATO that Ukraine and Georgia will not be admitted to NATO. It also wants complete neutrality of Ukraine. Though Ukraine President Zelensky is ready to accept neutrality, he laid out one basic condition - that the Western powers should guarantee the security of Ukraine.

To conclude, it is very clear that the demands of both the parties are difficult to meet in the current situation. The status of Crimea and Donbas would remain as a major hurdle. Both these areas are integral part of Ukraine as per the 1997 border agreement between Russia and Ukraine. Crimea has been annexed by Russia by violating international law and all international norms



and subsequently, merged it with their territory. Donbas region is under the control of Pro-Russian rebels. Russia is using its military might to force Ukraine to accept that Crimea is part of Russia and Donbas is an independent territory. It is impossible for Ukraine to accept both these demands. In this situation, an effective and longstanding ceasefire agreement between Russia and Ukraine will still remain a distant possibility.

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## THE MEDIATOR ROLE OF INTERNET ADDICTION BETWEEN GENDER AND LIFE SATISFACTION

*-KC Barmola \* and Chaitali Gawas\*\**

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### Abstract

Impact of technology on human behaviour is now clearly visible. The technology of internet has influenced adolescent's behaviour vastly. The current study attempted to find the mediating role of internet addiction between gender and life satisfaction. A total of 500 Indian college going students were examined using Internet Addiction Test (Young, 1998), Life Satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). The data were analyzed using the Pearson correlation, and regression. The results of regression analysis revealed that internet addiction mediated the relationship between gender and life satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.230$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding suggests that internet addiction can be a good predictor of life satisfaction in view of gender difference. To promote life satisfaction, individuals should behave in such a way so that internet uses does not lead to dissatisfaction in life.

**Keywords:** College Students, Gender, Internet addiction, Life satisfaction.

### Introduction

The use of the internet is widespread in India; according to nationally representative data, around 20% to 40% of college students in India are in danger of developing an internet addiction. When it came to gender, males showed a much higher frequency of Internet Addiction than females (Joseph et al., 2021). Young characterized Internet addiction as a person's inability to control their urge to use the Internet, which leads to psychological,

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social, educational, and/or occupational issues (Young, 1998). Internet use has become an inextricable part of human life, and its limitless potential has revolutionized the globe. Information sharing, business opportunities, communication, learning, relationships, socialization, shopping, and entertainment are all now available with a simple click thanks to the internet (Naughton, 2016). The internet has now become integrated into Indian culture, and India is now the world's second-largest internet user. With 665.31 million internet users in 2019, India's internet and broadband penetration is constantly expanding (DOT: India, 2021). The misuse of the internet has become a global health risk that is rapidly and continuously increasing. Over the years, there have been numerous arguments in the field of internet addiction (IA). In the 11th edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) and Related Health Problems, WHO includes internet gaming disorder in the chapter on drug and behavioural addiction (Scutti, 2018)? There are several questions about the definition of IA as an illness right now, particularly internet gaming disorder. (Wang et al., 2019). Most academics, on the other hand, define Internet Addiction as an impulse control disease marked by excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, desires, or behaviours related to computer use and internet access that cause impairment or discomfort (Tao et al. (2010). To quantify IA, a variety of scales, questionnaires, and tools have been produced over time. The Internet Addiction Test (IAT), created by Young, is the most widely used and trustworthy scale. The scale consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale yielding a total score with a range of 20 to 100 (Young, 1998). According to studies conducted in various parts of the Indian subcontinent, the frequency of IA among college students ranges from 5% to 46.7 percent (Balhara et al., 2018). IA can diminish the productivity of the younger generation and create cognitive dysfunction, poor academic performance, as well as physical, mental, and behavioural issues (Mathew & Krishnan, 2020).

In a meta-analysis covering 34 global jurisdictions, men show a stronger inclination toward Internet addiction than women,

suggesting that gender-related disparities in Internet availability and societal norms may explain for the gender differences in Internet addiction (Su et al., 2019). Gender differences in Internet addiction have larger impact sizes when there is a significant gender gap in Internet usage ( $B = 0.223$ , 95 percent CI: 0.086–0.360). Furthermore, the more social norms favour men engaging in potentially addictive behaviors such as smoking and drinking alcohol, the more men demonstrate higher Internet addiction tendencies than women. (Su et al., 2019). From a global perspective, a recent meta-analysis involving 34 global jurisdictions found that men's Internet addiction was only slightly higher than women's ( $g = 0.145$ ), and that these gender differences in Internet addiction may be partly caused by gender-related gaps in economy and Internet penetration (Su et al., 2019).

One of the many facets of good mental health is life satisfaction. It's a judgmental and cognitive process. It is a cognitive product that involves a comparison process between the individual's current life situation and internalized standards, allowing respondents to use the information they subjectively deem relevant when evaluating their own lives. It is not a direct, verifiable experience, nor a known personal fact (Diener, 1984). It is the way a person perceives how his or her life has been and how they feel about where it is going in the future. Shin and Johnson (1978) define life satisfaction as "a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria". Satisfaction judgments are based on a comparison of one's circumstances to what is considered to be a suitable standard. It's vital to note that determining how content people are with their current situation is based on a comparison to a benchmark that each individual chooses for himself or herself, rather than an externally imposed one. Life satisfaction is a scale that ranges from negative to positive in terms of one's sentiments and attitudes about one's life at a certain point in time. It's one of the most important predictors of subjective happiness (Diener, 1984). Subjective well-being represents a hedonic well-being concept

with roots in the mid-seventies when Andrews and Whitey (Andrews, 1976) introduced a well-being structure consisting of three factors: cognitive evaluation, negative affect, and positive affect. Diener (1984) rephrased the concept using a narrower name - subjective well-being - with the intention of accentuating the importance of assessing the subjective experience of life in contrast to an assessment of life conditions using an absolute, fixed standard as a reference. According to him, subjective well-being covers two main components: one affective including negative and positive emotions, and one cognitive; namely life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). He also explained that subjective and objective perspectives are used to explain the determinants of life satisfaction or quality of life. The subjective construct hypothesizes that perceived quality of life is influenced by personality or dispositional factors (e.g., optimism, pessimism, isolation, self-worth, and neuroticism). On the other hand, the objective construct proposes that life quality is affected by environmental or situational factors (e.g., family, job, leisure, neighborhood, community, and satisfaction with standard of living) (Leung, 2009). According to the objective determinants of life quality, people's quality of life tends to be a direct function of their evaluations of important life domains such as social support, leisure activities, and standard of living of overall life (Diner, 1984 and Andrew, 1976). Life satisfaction can also be looked at in a new one as influenced by a family. Family life satisfaction is a pertinent topic as everyone's family influences them in some way and most strive to have high levels of satisfaction in life as well as within their own family. Greater life satisfaction within a family increases through communication and understanding each member's attitudes and perceptions. People who personally valued material items were found to be less satisfied overall in life as opposed to people who attached a higher amount of value to interpersonal relationships. But people are becoming isolated from their families as they are spending much time on the Internet. Loneliness is the most important variable associated with Internet addiction and its dimensions (Bozoglan, 2013).

The above discussed review of literature clearly states how important internet has become as a part of young adults' life. This demands preparation and capability-building among college going students to meet the challenges of internet technology. To highlight and understand the impact of internet technology on human behaviour, the current study attempted to find the mediating role of internet addiction between gender and life satisfaction among college students.

## Methods

The present study used a correlation design. The study was conducted among undergraduate students of arts, science, and commerce streams in Goa, India. The students' age group was 17-21. Only students using the internet on a daily basis were included in the study. Undergraduate students who belonged to courses other than B.A. B.Sc. and B. Com were not part of the study. The sample of 500 students for the study was chosen purposively. The variables of the study are Internet Addiction, and Life Satisfaction. Internet Addiction Test (IAT) by Young (1998) was used to collect responses and these were interpreted and classified as mild addiction, moderate addiction and severe addiction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin (1985) was administered to collect responses from the participants. The responses collected during the study were analyzed with the help of SPSS software.

## Results

The ranges, means and standard deviations of the continuous variables are shown in Table 1 and 2 on level of internet addiction and life satisfaction. In the present study out of 500 students, 215 ( $M=25.92$ ,  $SD=5.07$ ) students were mild addicted, 185 ( $M=23.23$ ,  $SD=5.44$ ) were moderate addicted and 17 ( $M=24.82$ ,  $SD=3.28$ ) were severely addicted. The minimum score in mild addicted students was 10 and maximum 35. The minimum score in moderate addicted students was 10 and maximum 37. The minimum score in severe addicted students was 18 and maximum 30.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics								
Life Satisfaction					95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Normal	83	25.2530	5.63275	.61827	24.0231	26.4830	12.00	34.00
Mild Addiction	215	25.9209	5.06484	.34542	25.2401	26.6018	10.00	35.00
Moderate Addiction	185	23.2270	5.44461	.40030	22.4373	24.0168	10.00	37.00
Severe Addiction	17	24.8235	3.28320	.79629	23.1355	26.5116	18.00	30.00
Total	500	24.7760	5.38366	.24076	24.3030	25.2490	Total	500

There were 219 male student and 281 female students in the study. The mean value for male student was (M=39.56) and for female students was (M=34.21). High mean on internet addiction indicates higher possibility of internet addiction among male students. Low mean on internet addiction means lower internet addiction possibility among female students. On the other hand, mean value of Life Satisfaction among both male (M=24.9) and female (M=24.6) students was similar. It means satisfaction in life was similar among male and female college students.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics									
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Internet Addiction	Male	219	39.5571	17.63286	1.19152	37.2087	41.9054	9.00	84.00
	Female	281	34.2135	15.62178	.93192	32.3791	36.0480	7.00	81.00
	Total	500	36.5540	16.72754	.74808	35.0842	38.0238	7.00	84.00
Life Satisfaction	Male	219	24.9726	5.12497	.34631	24.2901	25.6552	12.00	37.00
	Female	281	24.6228	5.58122	.33295	23.9674	25.2782	10.00	35.00
	Total	500	24.7760	5.38366	.24076	24.3030	25.2490	10.00	37.00

Table 3 presents the correlations among the variables in the current study. There were significant correlations between Internet addiction and Life Satisfaction. Internet addiction mediated the associations of gender with life satisfaction. Adolescents have to cope with massive stressors caused by biological, cognitive and social changes that occur across development from childhood to adulthood. Furthermore, the social gender role theory also indicates that men are socialized as independent, self-reliant and to suppress emotions, while women are socialized as warm,



supportive, compassionate, sensitive to the feelings of others, and emotionally expressive with fewer restrictions (Reevy and Maslach, 2001). Therefore, women are more likely to be accepted by others if they express negative emotions in social interactions than men.

Table 3: Mediated effects of Internet addiction on life satisfaction						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	24.973	.364		68.612	.000
	GENDER	-.350	.486	-.032	-.721	.472
2	(Constant)	27.904	.665		41.934	.000
	GENDER	-.746	.479	-.069	-1.556	.120
	Internet Addiction	-.074	.014	-.230	-5.206	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction

The present study tested the extent to which the relationship between gender and life satisfaction is mediated by internet addiction. Regression coefficients indicate the significant effect of gender on life satisfaction ( $\beta = -.230, p < .001$ ). This may indicate that internet addiction mediated the association between gender and life satisfaction.

Discussion

The mediated role of internet addiction with gender and life satisfaction was assessed. Results revealed that the mediator role of internet addiction was prominent in serial models. Mediator Roles of Internet addiction direct effect was significant, which indicated that internet addiction fully mediated the indirect association between gender and life satisfaction. It appears that people with internet addiction are to some extent more disturbed than people without internet addiction (Nie et al., 2016). Some recent study has provided neural evidence of pathogenesis of internet addiction in close relation with self-control. Authors have found association between internet addiction and some malfunctioning in brain cortices, especially in and between right dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC) and between the right DLPFC and the medial prefrontal cortex/rostral anterior cingulate cortex (mPFC/rACC) which suggest the redcued



efficiency of cognitive inhibitory and control mechanisms of brain cortex in individuals with high internet addiction scores. Another finding of the study was about gender differences. Results of the present study suggest that male university students gained more scores in internet addiction, comparing to female participants. This finding is in line with previous studies which have shown that gender affects type of internet uses as well as the level of tendency to internet use/internet addiction (Lachmann et al., 2016a). Authors have found that men are more likely to use the internet in order to satisfy their need for power, status, dominance, and sexual fantasies, while women are in search of supportive friendly groups, romantic relations, and relationships in which they can hide themselves from the others. These differences to some extent reflect society's differential attitude for each gender (Saliceti, 2015).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights two important issues about internet addiction among Indian students. First, there is significant relation between gender and life satisfaction and internet addiction as a predictor. It would be sound to suggest incorporation of life skills in university students in order to improve their lifestyle and therefore, to reduce the probability of internet addiction in the society. Because of wide adverse outcomes of internet addiction on individuals, this suggestion would be beneficial both in short- and long-term to improve mental health and consequently life satisfaction of the next generation. The second is the higher rate of internet addiction among male university students. In Indian society, the majority of working hands consist of men. This being the case, internet addiction may harm the next generation's overall potential, which would in turn paralyze the country's healthy economic development. Moreover, these young men would be the future fathers of society and such addictive behavior would affect the quality of life of next generation families. It appears that internet addiction is more than just a simple individualistic addictive behavior and has a wide range of side effects on society. There is a great need to carry out further research on internet addiction so as to identify other contributing and regulating variables/components in relation with this increasingly widespread habit .

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## ANALYSING THE ROLE OF FOOD POLITICS IN THE FORMATION OF 'IDENTITY POLITICS' AND 'HINDU NATIONALISM' IN INDIA

*Tanvhi Ghosh\**

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### **Abstract:**

Food today has become a means of empowerment which also brings the idea of identity politics. Food politics has begun to influence the political scenario of the country. There has been a shift in the whole discourse. Food security now has been considered a part of basic Human Rights since it is being studied in relation to one's individual identity or religious identity. However, food often appears to be the reason behind conflicts between two religious' groups- Hindus and Muslims since the British rule. The practice of cow slaughter resulted in communal conflicts in India which is still being witnessed in the country even after Independence. Numerous religious and political movements have arisen from time to time for the protection of cows, whose slaughter has been vehemently opposed by Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and Sikhs. In fact, historical records proved that both Hindus and Muslims supported the need for "cow protection" on the one hand and on the other hand viewed "cow-slaughter" as religious freedom. Before the British administration's propaganda of using cow-sacrifice as a part of divide and rule policy to create communal divide, cow slaughter never resulted in communal conflicts. The cow protection movement became more active in colonial times, which gave rise to 'Hindu Nationalism'. This resulted in cow-related riots and violence which became the main source of communal conflicts in India.

**Keywords:** Cultural Identity, Cow-Protection, Cow- Slaughter, Hindu Nationalism, Human Rights, Religious Conflicts, Supreme Court.

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The first War of Independence began on May 10, 1857 where large sections of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims united to challenge the dehumanising rule of the greatest imperial power i.e. Britain. This extraordinary unity made the firangees (British) realize that they could continue their rule in India only if they could divide the two largest religious communities- the Hindu and the Muslim along communal lines. Accordingly, urgent actions were taken to create antagonistic relations between these two groups. This was the reason that made the then Minister of Indian Affairs, Lord Wood to confess soon after crushing militarily the Indian liberation war that "We have maintained our power in India by playing off one part against the other and we must continue to do so. Do all we can, therefore, to prevent all having a common feeling." Thus, in order to implement this divide and rule policy, the British with their Indian stooges developed the theory that Hindus and Muslims belonged to two separate nations. As such, this strategy of the British rulers led to the birth of the two-nation theory which was specifically created in order to help the British to operate communal divide in India (Islam, 2020).

Notably, in order to have a successful implementation of their strategy of creating communal divide, the British made Hindus and Muslims to clash over cow-sacrifice, which was nothing but a part of their divide and rule policy. A number of studies proved that the Indian Muslim or people of other religious groups who survived on animal flesh, for centuries slaughtered camels, buffalo, sheep, goats, etc. for food and cow-slaughter rarely strained the relations between the Hindus and Muslims in India. In fact, history reveals that Muslim rulers like Babur and Akhtar took initiatives to have a control on cow-slaughter as a sign of respect towards the Hindus. In 1857, Bahadur Shah Zafar even put a ban on the sacrifice of cows in Delhi. But the British in order to fulfil their own need of beef for the army encouraged the Muslim butchers to slaughter cows and also encouraged them to have beef. The Indian Muslim butchers slaughtered cows on the orders of the British authorities who intended to create a rift between the two religious communities (Salim, 2021).

It is to be noted that Barrister Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar, in his 'Appeal to the English Public on behalf of the Hindus of N.W.P and Oudh' (1893) after Hindus and Muslims fought over cow-slaughter wrote that before the British rule, the Hindus and the Muslims never clashed over cow sacrifice and the idea of cow-sacrifice was propagated by the British rulers. Likewise, renowned Muslim writers like Farsi Akhbar pointed that the animosity between Hindus and Muslims was rooted in the beef eating practice of the British. Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi in his speeches at Bettiah, Muzaffarpur including other places stated that the British were killing more than 30,000 cows every day for their meals and that the Muslims occasionally consumed beef. He too pointed that India would regain its honour only by protecting her cows and accordingly Muslim scholars supported Gandhi in his cow-protection movement. But the British even went to the extent of projecting cow-slaughter as a right (right that was never there in the first place) of the Muslims and this propaganda of the British created a rift leading to numerous communal riots and a partition of the country (Salim, 2021).

Notably, cow protection took on clear Brahmanical and political tones in the 1870s. The Sikh Kuka sect in Punjab first organised cow protection movement and soon afterward it was the Arya Samaj, led by Swami Dayanand Saraswati which became strongest advocate of cow protection movement. In February 1881, Dayanand Saraswati published a pamphlet named 'Gaukarunidhi' or 'Ocean of Mercy' in view of condemning meat-eating and accordingly suggested laws for Gaurakhshini sabhas. The network of Gaurakhshini sabhas emerged stronger and wider through the 1880s and 90s but such sabhas got disbanded after violent anti-cow slaughter riots took place in Azamgarh, Balia and Ghaziapur. Even after the disbanding of sabhas, more communal riots took place in Ayodhya in 1912 and 1913 and in Shahabad in 1917 (Roychowdhury, 2018).

Again, the sanctity of the cow came to be firmly established as consent among the masses when the nationalist movement gathered momentum in the country by the early 20th century.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who took initiatives in support of cow protection and soon cow as a symbolism of Hindus began to gather important position in the Congress' nationalist project. On October 6, 1921 Gandhi in his weekly journal 'Young India' wrote the following lines: "The central fact of Hinduism is cow protection. Cow protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond this species. The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible". However, though the Congress did not feature the cow as its prime symbol as cow protection was viewed as alienating the Muslims and would stand as an obstacle to their larger nationalist project but the sanctity attached to the cow in popular discourse had over time began to appear as a strong feature of nationalist sentiments. This was particularly witnessed in the way the cow was represented in the print media. Renowned historian, Charu Gupta writing about the representation of the cow in the nationalist project, said that "the cow has the potential to be represented as the mother of all Hindus and of a Hindu identity and nationality, requiring protection from non-Hindus". Further, pamphlets with different images of the holy cow with certain themes were circulated like images of cows depicting cows in the act of being slaughtered by Muslim butchers or image of cow, in every part of whose body groups of holy persons and holy deities were depicted etc. (Roychowdhury, 2018).

Shamsul Islam in his article "India's first war of Independence, and the legacy of Hindu-Muslim unity" deals with India's first war for independence against the British in 1856, which was joined by Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. This article tries to clarify how the people of India having different religious background got united to fight against the colonial rule and later on how the British in order to continue their imperial power in India created communal divide around food habits that is cow slaughter which resulted to communal violence in India.



Adrija Roychowdhury in the article “Why the cow is worshipped in Hindutva politics” tries to articulate the way the cow has been traditionally embedded in the Indian psyche and the way the cow is used as a sword every now and then by those exercising or aspiring to power, thus pointing to the special position the cow holds in India.

The crucial political areas relating to human rights and judgements of Supreme Court in respect to food (cow slaughter) have been controversial aspects of religion in India. The issues and problems leading to religious or communal conflicts revolving around food habits and how food appears to be the hallmark of cultural identity of a particular religious group has gained immense importance of late. This statement can be clarified through the present political scenario of the country where the BJP-led government has been seen to promote the idea of Hindu Nationalism based on the idea of ‘Hindutva’.

The key questions to focus on are as follows:

- (1) Whether the British sowed the seeds of communal divide between Hindu and Muslim based on cow-slaughter
- (2) Did conflict around cow-slaughter give birth to Hindu Nationalism?

After India’s independence in 1947 following the creation of two separate states- India and Pakistan, the newly created India witnessed numerous communal riots over cow slaughter. Between 1948 and 1951, Azamgarh, Akola, Pilbhit, Katni, Aligarh, Calcutta, Delhi, Nagpur and Dhubri witnessed a spate of communal riots over cow slaughter. Again, during the 1966 anti-cow slaughter agitation, almost 100 members of the Indian Parliament signed the petition to put a nationwide ban on cow slaughter. Further, Hindu sadhus (monks) gathered in Delhi and launched cow protection agitation i.e. go-raksha and demanded a ban. However, the newly nominated Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi continued her father Jawaharlal Nehru’s policy of no national ban on cow slaughter (Cow protection movement).



Apart from the above-mentioned communal riots, in 2002 in Jhajjar district, Haryana, five Dalit youths were killed by a mob over accusations of cow slaughter. Reportedly, as per the Human Rights Watch, the mob was led by the members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Notably, there has been an increase in cow protection related violence since the rule of Bharatiya Janata Party led by Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister. The violence included notable killings in the form of lynching at Jharkhand, Alwar and Dadri. As per the report of the Human Rights Watch, after 2014, communal violence over cow slaughter included instances of harassment, assault, extortion targeting Muslims and lower-caste Hindus. Again, as per the Reuter report based on IndiaSpend analysis, a total number of 24 Muslims were killed and 124 were injured between 2010 and June 2017 in cow-related violence (Cow protection movement). The vigilante groups have recently started to take actions to protect the cows. IndiaSpend has recorded 66 hate crimes where 97% were reported after pro-Hindu nationalist government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi started to govern. In response to the brutalities of killings in the name of cow protection, the Supreme Court in 2018 asked the Indian Parliament to enact a separate law to punish the offenders (Jain, 2019).

It is to be noted that cow as a similar religious symbol was used during the nationalist movement to unite large members of Hindus across class, caste and regional diversities as a means to forge a common Hindu identity against a colonial power. The cow as the common symbol of Hindu identity is again being used to unite Hindus across multiple identities. The only difference is that now the ruling party members are fanning and even supporting hatred against the Muslims of the country who are viewed as a threat to the country and are treated as outsiders (Jain, 2019).

It is important to note that cow slaughter is banned in most of the states like Assam including Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, New Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and

Kashmir, etc. (NEWS18). Notably, the Supreme Court of India has dealt with many cases regarding cow slaughtering. The issue was first addressed in the landmark case of Mohammad Hanif Quareshi vs State of Bihar in 1958. The Muslim butchers filed the petition that prohibition of cow slaughter is against fundamental rights under article 14 (right to equality), article 25 (freedom to practice religion) and article 19 (1) (g) i.e. right to carry on trade. But inspite of the fact, the Supreme Court several times constantly upheld total ban on the slaughter of cows but not on other cattle breeds. But in a controversial judgement of 2005, the court upheld a total ban not only on the slaughter of cows but on the slaughter of all cattle based on the argument that cattle remained useful even after a certain age, not only in terms of manure but also as a source of biofuel (Dutta, 2017).

From the foregoing, one can conclude the following: (1) It was the British who sowed the seeds of Hindu-Muslim divide based on food habits of both the religious communities

(2) The cow protection agitation against cow slaughter simultaneously led to the birth of 'Hindu- Nationalism' imbued with the ideology of 'Hindutva politics'.

The debate regarding cow protection and cow slaughter has led to religious conflicts between two dominant religions- the Hindu and Muslim. Even during the colonial period the colonizers initiated the 'Divide and Rule Policy' dividing Hindus and Muslims based on their food habits where the Muslims abstained from eating pork and the Hindus abstained from eating beef. In fact, today in most of the cities, there is the availability of two to three kinds of meat, mostly chicken and mutton which are included in the foods of both Hindus and Muslims. Further, the states like Maharashtra and Haryana have banned all buffalo meat, bull meat and of course beef. The dominant Hindutva mind-set is creating chaos and affecting not just eating habits but also livelihoods. The lives and eating cultures of the population are under vigorous testing in India. The issue of cow slaughter came to forefront once again with the election of BJP Government leading the core values of Hindutva. The cow-protection vs cow-slaughter debate seems to be an ongoing one as of now.

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## REDISCOVERING A NATIVE POLYMATH: A READING OF REV. GEORGE MATHEN'S *BALABHYASANAM*

*Liju Jacob Kuriakose\**

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### Introduction

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2021, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi announced that fourteen engineering colleges across 8 states will be offering undergraduate courses in 5 different Indian languages, marking a paradigm shift in the way higher education sector had historically addressed India's linguistic plurality. The possibility of learning through one's local language and revamping structures inherited from our colonial past has the emancipatory potential of freeing technical knowledges from the shackles and expressive limits of a single, often unfamiliar language.

The Draft National Education Policy (2019) and the final National Education Policy (2020) have already initiated a range of debates on India's educational system, particularly on developing and experimenting with indigenous pedagogical practices. Interestingly, the same discussions that the new National Education Policy is trying to address, were taken up by a missionary polymath around 150 years ago in a lecture titled *Balabhyasanam* published in 1867<sup>1</sup>.

The present article is at once a tribute to a forgotten missionary polymath and a close reading of his still-pertinent treatise on education. In the first part of this article, the life and contributions of Rev. George Mathen are expatiated in an attempt to reclaim his

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<sup>1</sup> A translation of the original Malayalam text by the author of this article is currently in the offing. The quotations used in this article are taken from this unpublished translation.

place amongst the greatest contributors to the growth of modern Malayalam language and literature. The second part attempts to read Rev. Mathen's *Balabhyasanam* as the first attempt to develop an indigenous educational philosophy, which remains relevant to this age.

### **A Forgotten Prodigy**

Rev. George Mathen or Mallappallil Achen was one among the early luminaries who provided an impetus for Kerala's socio-cultural renaissance during the Nineteenth century. As a man of 'many firsts', from being the first native Anglican priest in Kerala to the editor of Kerala's first daily and being the first native grammarian to the first proper practitioner of prose writing in Malayalam, Rev. Mathen has been described as the one who has "built a permanent framework for Malayalam literature and thus made all Malayalis indebted to him..." (Iyer).

While attending to his busy ministry amongst the budding Anglican Christian community in Pathanamthitta (CMS), Mathen engaged with the larger concerns relating to language, society, and pedagogy. As an educationalist, he himself was instrumental in founding a Missionary school in Kaipetta, which was actively involved in educating the enslaved community of the region. He also helped with the establishment of the Cambridge Nicholson Institute at Kottayam and was later its principal.

Perhaps, his most notable contribution to the Malayalam language was his role in modernizing Malayalam prose. It was Rev. Mathen who introduced Western punctuation marks into Malayalam prose where it was previously the norm to write long convoluted sentences without breaks or pauses. Also, at a time when Sanskrit loanwords were deemed superior to Malayalam words of Dravidian origin and were used for pomposity in writing, Rev. Mathen was keen on using words of regional flavour, whenever possible.

Rev. Mathen's modern-day repute lies primarily in a work published in 1863, titled *Malayazhmayude Vyakaranam*, the first grammatical treatise on Malayalam language written by a native with the professed aim of displaying that the language's "natural capabilities are as good as those of any other language of South India, requiring only cultivation to develop its riches and beauties". Although the text was prepared much prior to the publication of the renowned grammatical treatise on Malayalam by Herman Gundert in 1851, the author could only publish the same after a decade, in 1863, owing to financial constraints.

His other prose writings, including *Vedasamyukti*, *Satyavadakhedam*, *Kozhu Muthalaayma*, *Marumakkathayathalulla Doshangal* along with *Balabhyasanam*, have remained in relative obscurity. As the co-editor of *Vidyasangrah* magazine along with Rev. Frances Collins, Rev. Mathen published prose articles every week, often anonymously. In these pieces, Rev. Mathen exhibited his interest in diverse knowledge systems and wrote on subjects such as geography and science.

For example, in an essay titled *The Earth is Spherical* he writes:

The spherical shape is the most natural shape of all objects... Other shapes are caused by certain external factors.. Water droplets are always spherical... We can simply gaze at and discover the shape of celestial objects such as the Sun and the Moon.

It must be remembered that Mathen was writing about scientific concepts at an age when there was no serious scientific writing taking place in most of the Indian languages. One may observe Mathen's immense desire in enriching the language as well as in educating the general public on scientific matters. Unbeknownst to many, is the fact that Rev. Mathen was the first to translate philosophical texts to Malayalam as well. His contributions to Malayalam prose are extolled by Ullur S Parameswara Iyer in his history of Malayalam literature, titled *Kerala Sahithya Charithram*. He writes, "Rev. George Mathen was the first Keralite to introduce

a prose style in the Western tradition and to write books and essays on various subjects within that tradition”.

The contributions of Rev. Mathen towards the development of modern Malayalam prose unfortunately often do not find a space in popular historiographies of the language and its literature. Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Thampuran, an aristocratic Hindu nobleman who was instrumental in popularizing prose writing in Malayalam albeit decades later, is generally considered as the progenitor of prose writing in Malayalam. The reasons for the same may be multitudinous. For instance, Rev. George Mathen wrote in prose during a time when there were not enough schools where prose texts were taught. Hence, Mathen was able to cater only to a smaller crowd.

Even as early as 1932, writers such as Chithramezhuthu KM Varghese, had challenged this general disregard towards George Mathen. Varghese, in a rebuttal against an article written by D Shankarayyar which credited Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Thampuran as the progenitor of prose writing in Malayalam, attributed this to a general disinterest by the mainstream scholars in acknowledging a native Christian missionary as the exponent of early Malayalam prose.

Varghese writes candidly in a response written against this tendency:

It must be understood by Mr Shankarayyar, who is a historian of Malayalam prose that, much before Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Thampuran endeavoured to write books in Malayalam as the president of the book committee, it was a Syrian Christian priest named Geevarghese Kathanar<sup>2</sup>, who had embraced the bosom of Goddess Kairali and had thought, critiqued, wrote essays and published books on topics such as language, ethics,

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<sup>2</sup> Rev. George Mathen was also referred to as Geevarghese Kathanar. Geevarghese is the variation of the name George with roots in Syriac. Kathanar is an archaic term used to refer to Christian priests in Kerala.

justice, vedanta, pedagogic writing, sociology, astronomy, geography, criticism, politics, and history. Unfortunately, it can only be said at this juncture that the Christian community is not responsible for the fact that he was not born to a Thampuratti or Koil Thampuratti<sup>3</sup>.

Regardless of the reasons attributed, it is true that Rev. Mathen's contributions have remained in comparative obscurity.

### ***Balabhyasanam: An Indigenous Philosophy of Education***

Unlike his other prose writings, *Balabhyasanam* was originally delivered in the form of a lecture. It was upon the invitation by the then Diwan of Travancore, T Madhava Rao that Rev. George Mathen delivered the lecture titled *Balabhyasanam* on August 18, 1867, at the Division Court, Kollam. It was published as a long essay in the same year.

Mathen structures the lecture in a tri-partite manner and discusses various aspects of an ideal educational system. In the first part, he discusses the question of what education entails. In the second part, he is concerned with an ideal structure of education. Finally, he recommends that the language of instruction in schools should ideally be one's native language. The treatise, particularly the last part, is relevant today, particularly in context of the new education policy, as Mathen was the first to promote a pedagogic vision that argued for the use of native language as a language of instruction.

However, Mathen's text goes beyond the mere promotion of the native language and provides a philosophical foundation for education. Though the published text was titled *Balabhyasanam*, a compound word which can roughly be translated as 'child education', it is evident from the text that it goes beyond it to present a larger theoretical vision on the purpose and pertinence of education.

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<sup>3</sup>. Thampuratti is a Malayalam term for a Princess. Koil refers to a particular position of power amongst the nobles of Kerala.



Mathen's contribution to the development of an indigenous pedagogy is two-fold. Firstly, he promoted an indigenous educational system in the vernacular that encourages learning with an organic pedagogy that is conducive to critical thinking. Secondly, he took it upon himself to write and publish texts and treatises that would lay the foundation for a great prose tradition in Malayalam, and help establish a culture of writing and publishing educational texts.

### **A 'Glocal' Pedagogy**

Nineteenth-century Kerala was witnessing a paradigm shift in the way education was being practiced. While it remained true that education was simply unattainable for certain classes and castes of the society, it was no longer limited to the learning of Sanskrit for ritualistic purposes. When the British opened schools and other educational institutions, the elite class embraced missionary education and endeavoured to spread the fruits of their education and literary interests to the public sphere.

Robin Jeffrey while referring to village schools in Kerala during the British era, writes:

[t]he curriculum of old schools stressed learning through recitation rather than through literacy. Teaching people to read and write need not be the main aim of schooling... Literacy became a desirable goal only from about the 1860s onwards as a result of government policy, economic opportunities, and the growing availability of things that could – or had to – be read

It is in this historical context that, George Mathen presents before the audience an 'ideal' form of education for children in their native language. While doing so, Mathen is also explicating a new philosophy of education that is a drastic departure from the traditional understanding of education in Kerala.

In the first part of his essay, Mathen establishes the idea that human beings are not essentially limited by their inborn abilities as animals are. Through formal training and education, any

person, regardless of their innate skills, can vastly improve themselves. This argument is very pertinent in establishing the value of pedagogy in a country enmeshed in caste politics. He says, “the differences amongst human beings at the time of birth, can be evened out through education. In fact, the differences made by education will outshine the differences that exist at the time of birth.” He continues, “If a member of the Malambandaram tribe is brought here at a youthful age and is taught in school... this will become evident”.

He further defends the right for everyone to attain education regardless of their origin or their level of intelligence. It is an argument that is diametrically opposite to the epistemology set forth by the caste system. If anyone can become intelligent through education, then, any division of labour based upon the status of birth will become obsolete. Mathen thus, vouches education to be inclusive and approachable.

While he does not explicitly address the issue of caste and its discriminatory practices at any point of the lecture, given Mathen’s own background in working towards the betterment of enslaved castes, it can be understood that his philosophy of pedagogy was focused on addressing the social inequalities within the Kerala society. He further problematizes the notion that intellectual ability is inborn in certain castes, asserting that any individual, regardless of his birth status or caste, can become erudite through education.

He takes examples from history that are relevant to his audience and explicates the idea:

When Julius Caesar first encountered the British, whose power we fear, under whose rule we experience peace, by whose rules we made ourselves better, whose chivalry we respect, and whose sense of righteousness we learn from, they were in fact primitives adorning themselves with face paint. They did not know how to farm or trade, nor did they

wear any clothes, and were sustaining themselves solely through hunting. Now, there is no race on the face of earth that can outsmart them, be it in terms of power, wealth, or intelligence. Therefore, it is not that only people of certain countries or castes can benefit through education.

He also uses the example of Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1809-1891), who was the first African bishop of the Anglican Church, to argue that, regardless of one's racial affiliation and associated traits (according to Linnaeus' now obsolete division of human beings into different species), individuals can greatly better themselves through learning.

It can therefore be said that he was one among the first native Indian educationalists to propagate education as a possible solution to India's caste inequality. When the dominant ethos of the society assigns intellectual superiority to certain communities, it requires an epistemological revamping of the philosophy of education itself to counter it.

He also indirectly addresses the question of whether all students of the society can perform equally well given the cultural and educational privileges that some may enjoy over others. Instead of taking an idealistic approach and painting a rosy picture, he argues that education should not, at any cost, be left to the elites or the most intelligent. Even the weakest amongst students shall still benefit from education, albeit at his/her own pace.

He writes metaphorically:

While one may sprint towards the school, couldn't another person walk towards the same? Despite the delay, the latter shall also reach the same destination. If the one who is running takes breaks in between, it will become possible for the latter to catch up or even reach before the runner does. Also, just as people can be different in terms of intellectual capacities, the nature of their intellect may also differ. Some

can only apply their intelligence in a superficial manner, while some have the ability to understand the nuances of the same. Some can only reach the veranda of the school, while some may even enter its sanctum sanctorum. Is it not possible for those who cannot enter the school and enjoy its comforts and specifics, to stand nearby and find happiness in the splendours outside?

### **Developing a Paradigm for Education**

In the second part of the lecture, Rev Mathen is concerned with an ideal model for education, as it is important to structure education well in order to reap its benefits to the fullest. To develop an ideal model, the writer lists out the benefits of education, viz. knowledge acquisition, cognitive stimulation, and the development of good habits.

Mathen also stresses the importance of developing critical abilities as opposed to rote-learning, which was common during his times. It was customary for young children from upper castes to recite Sanskrit texts and memorize them. Mathen found this to be an exercise that does not help with one's cognitive development. He says, "everyone would agree that it is more useful to learn by understanding the concept than by memorizing it like a parrot. That would be an exercise for the intellect as well."

Throughout the text, it can be found that Mathen expresses a desire to standardize education as a system that would impart fundamentals of science, history, economics etc. for the overall betterment of an individual. He realizes the need for school education to be universalist in nature, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected. He writes, "[W]hen our country lay on its own, it was a pond and now, due to a canal called trade, we have been linked to the vast ocean. Therefore, we are bound to know about the happenings of all the countries out there."

He criticizes the then prevailing system as being outdated and finds it prioritizing information that seldom has any relevance in

the modern world. "As soon as children learn the alphabet and arithmetic, they are taught Paralper<sup>4</sup>. However, it is only useful for those who become mathematicians calculating *Nalupakkam*<sup>5</sup>. It must be wondered whether even one percent of those who study it can make use of it for identifying *Nalupakkam*. The rest will waste the time spent in repeating it for the purpose of studies." According to him, texts such as the Panchatantras would help improve one's language, and subjects such as history, geography, mathematics etc. would provide each student with relevant understanding of the fundamentals that would help them in their everyday life.

## The Language Question

During the nineteenth century, Malayalam was in the process of being standardized due to the influences exerted by both the missionary enterprise as well as by the native elites. The development of a standardized prose style in Malayalam divided the Malayalee public sphere into two camps, one advocating an undeclared but also indiscriminate Sanskritization of the language and the other, arguing for a limiting of the same and instead using "words of the genuine native stock that occur frequently in idioms of daily current use". The latter came to be dubbed as *Pathiri Malayalam* (Missionary Malayalam).

During the same period, Rev. Mathen must have engaged with the need to identify an ideal language for instruction. From his own writings, it becomes evident that people of his times had preferred education in English over the vernacular. He was "deeply disheartened to hear that our Malayalam schools are rendered useless due to our people's lack of interest". Therefore, he sets out to explain various reasons for education in one's mother tongue and in doing so, presents a critique of the prevalent systems of education prevalent then.

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<sup>4</sup> A method of representing numbers using the alphabet that was once popular in south India, particularly Kerala.

<sup>5</sup> An astronomical or astrological calculation.

Mathen critiques the traditional dependence of texts written in Sanskrit. As a contemporary of prominent missionary lexicographers in Malayalam, including Herman Gundert and Benjamin Bailey, who addressed the need for a standardized vernacular to replace Sanskrit in the public sphere, Mathen echoes their spirit in pushing for textbooks in Malayalam. Within his lecture, Rev. Mathen uses the example of Latin to prove that, while classical languages were once the sole source for varied kinds of knowledge, it no longer serves as the medium for the study of science or mathematics in Europe. In order to achieve this goal in the context of Kerala, Rev. Mathen stresses the need to publish textbooks in the vernacular. In doing so, Rev. Mathen also echoes Heidegger who has famously said, “language is the house of being.” Mathen lauds the ability of the vernacular to shape human behaviour. His concern with language also centres around how evocative the language of instruction can be.

He says:

To evoke feelings such as aversion towards the bad, love towards the good, respect towards the mighty, fear towards the dangerous, it is quite evident that foreign language will not prove as useful as one’s mother tongue. Since the basic purpose of education is not the accumulation of knowledge, but good manners, a reduced sense of such emotions will be its foremost fault.

## Conclusion

Rev. Mathen’s emphasis on the vernacular tongue has made his educational philosophy popular even today. However, focusing on that aspect alone would be a grave injustice to the larger ethos of his philosophy, which envisions the moulding of a system of education that would create responsible citizens of the world who are knowledge-seekers equipped with critical thinking and analytical skills. This would make him as relevant to any modern Business School or Liberal Arts University in India as Peter Drucker or Wilhelm Humboldt. Furthermore, Rev. George Mathen’s philosophy of education can be encapsulated as one

that endeavours to make education accessible, engaging, and relatable to students belonging to all sections of society. In an age where educational institutions foreground various forms of discrimination to deny equal rights and justice to students from underprivileged backgrounds, Rev. Mathen's philosophy is ever more pertinent.

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## RESURRECTION AND RETRIBUTION IN THE SELECT WORKS OF ROSHI FERNANDO

*M. Aarthi Priya\**

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Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.  
Psalm- 34:14

### **Objectives:**

To bring out the psychological perspective of the refugees driven out from their motherland

To discuss about the comfort that the refugees gain by adapting themselves to the new atmosphere, culture and religion.

### **Historical Background:**

During the Sri Lankan Civil War (1983–2009) and the first and second JVP insurgencies (1971 and 1987–89, respectively), terrorism was a highly damaging phenomenon in Sri Lanka. The systematic use or threat of violence to frighten a people or government for political, religious, or ideological aims is a popular definition of terrorism. Sri Lanka has seen some of the most heinous acts of contemporary terrorism, including suicide bombings, massacres of people, and assassinations of political and social leaders, all of which constituted a serious danger to the country's society, economy, and growth.

Sri Lankan government troops were embroiled in an armed struggle with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant organisation fighting for an independent Tamil homeland in the island's north and east regions. The battle, which began in 1983 and lasted over three decades, is one of Asia's longest-running civil wars. In May 2009, the Sri Lankan

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military defeated the Tamil Tigers after a 26-year military battle, putting the civil war to an end. During the civil conflict, the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE are accused of committing various atrocities and human rights breaches, including war crimes. According to a UN estimate, as many as 40,000 people may have been murdered in the last months of the civil war, largely as a result of the Sri Lankan military's indiscriminate bombardment. The investigation also stated that the Sri Lankan military/government bombarded hospitals and humanitarian objects, refused humanitarian aid, infringed civilian and LTTE combatant human rights, and violated the human rights of individuals outside the war zone, such as the media. The battle wreaked havoc on the country's population, ecology, and economy for more than 25 years, with at least 100,000 people dead in the process. As a result of this Civil War some people were forced to leave their homeland and settle in some other countries as refugees. The refugees were often tormented by their new atmosphere and some were psychologically affected. Their only thought was returning to their motherland to be in their comfort zone. But this became a distant dream and many died pining for their motherland. Refugees found it difficult to adapt to the religions and cultures of the countries where they sought refuge. These torments have been well portrayed by some contemporary writers of Sri Lanka and Roshi Fernando is one among them.

### **Psychological Torments of the Refugees:**

Almost every short story written by Roshi Fernando centres on the subject of resurrection as a platform for refugees to live their lives. The central theme of Fernando's *Homesick*, a collection of short stories, is refugees and their changing lifestyles. Sri Lankan refugees are mentioned right away. Due to the ongoing civil conflict in their motherland, Tamil refugees are being forced to flee their nation. They remained in London and accepted Christianity as their new faith, giving them hope for the future. The researcher focuses on the hopes and resurrection that they are provided by religion, such as Christ, and terrorism, such as devil, which occupies them and forces them to seek retribution on others. The researcher has taken three short stories for

analysis in the present article. The study's findings highlight the suffering caused by the civil war and the following psychological upheavals of many refugees to adapt to their current settlements. Many Sri Lankan Tamil refugees continue to suffer from post-migration settlements, especially migration rules, which prolong their pain and psychological torture.

Expanding and negotiating these regulations to accommodate a wide range of cultural, social, and political human experiences would benefit refugees on their migration path. Seeking refuge in another nation may be particularly challenging, as many people must substantiate their asylum claims while also attempting to fit into a new community. To emphasise the concerns, this era is increasingly being referred to as a period of "secondary trauma" (Fazel 1). A refugee youngster will need to adjust to a new school and locate a friends' group once they arrive. Children may be forced to perform adult tasks too soon, such as serving as a key linguistic link to the outside world as in the short story "The Clangers". As these themes are widely discussed in the short stories of Fernando the selected short stories focus on resurrection and embracement of new culture and religion which gave them the comfort to live.

### **A Brief Introduction of the Stories Discussed:**

"Homesick" is a story about a Sri Lankan refugee who settles in London and keeps thinking about his motherland. Victor arranges for a party in his house where his neighbours and other Sri Lankan refugees are invited. The other short stories of the collection are continuations of this short story. The guests arriving for the party are Gertie, Shamini, Kumar, Chitra, Richard, Wesley, Clare and Renee Chatterjee. This short story is about Victor and his family. He loves his wife Nandhini and his children Preethi, Rohan and Gehan. He thinks of his motherland constantly and always feels homesick. It is only at the end that he finds that he has already found his home, which is none other than his wife Nandhini, who sowed the seed of resurrection in his mind.

“Nil’s Wedding” is about Wesley and his family. Wesley’s daughter wants to marry a man who does not belong to their clan. Wesley first opposes it and at last accepts the marriage as per Victor’s advice. They make arrangements for marriage as much as their financial status permits. The relatives started criticizing the preparation. But Wesley concentrates only on his daughter’s happiness. Nil is so confused whether she and her fiancé Ian can make the best match like her parents. Wesley consoles her that her mother also thought like that before their marriage, but now they are making the best match. And Nil at last marries him and finds her love.

The short story “The Comfort, the Joy” is about Clare. Clare loses her husband, her children and her whole family in an accident. She lives alone and in need of love and protection. Bunny, a young man accompanies her and gives her the protection that she wants. But it lasts until another woman comes into the life of Bunny. She meets Gwyn, her schoolmate, who also studies with her husband, Rob. He proposes to her but she does not want to marry him. She turns herself into a human bomb to take revenge on those who had driven them out from their home land. But with advice of Victor she gives up the idea of revenge, accepts Gwyn’s proposal, and at last finds joy and comfort in him.

### **The Theme of Resurrection and Retribution in Concurrence with the Stories:**

Roshi Fernando's story “Homesick” is about a Sri Lankan immigrant who has suffered greatly from his infancy. Victor, the protagonist, feels lonesome since he is away from his country in London. He has been in need of a home since he was a youngster. He has two children and is married to Nandhini. He is, nevertheless, still lonesome. Only then does he discover the family he seeks. He is frequently reminded of his birthplace, prompting him to return to his homeland. He, on the other hand, is unable to return. Victor embodies the sentiments of all exiles longing to return to their homeland.

Victor has thrown a party for his co-workers and neighbours at his home. He remembers the gatherings he used to go to

as a boy. "Victor is thinking of other parties, of his childhood: quiet, dignified, the productions of an excitable wife of a dour clergyman. Homemade marshmallows, he remembers, lightly coloured with cochineal, dusted with icing sugar" (Fernando 1). Preethi and Rohan, his children, are playing in the opulent kitchen when he hears their voices. Victor is a wealthy man who has everything he wants in life. But in his mind he nursed a spirit of vengeance against the people who had driven him and his family from his homeland, but he was totally transformed when he met Nandhini. Here Nandhini is compared with Mother Mary who raised Christ in a righteous way.

The guests begin to arrive at the residence after an hour. After a long time, the house is filled with joy and laughter. Victor's wife, Nandhini, looks after him and the rest of the family with great care. She never misses a beat when it comes to Victor. She always supports him and encourages him, even when things aren't going well. Victor prefers to side with her over his pals. Nandhini and her companion Shamini discuss about their family in Sri Lanka in the kitchen. Nandini and Shamini have one thing in common: both of them married Tamils against their parents' wishes.

Shamini brags a lot about the nice gifts she's bought for her older daughter Deider, who has terrible manners. Her younger daughter, Lolly, on the other hand, is well-liked by everybody. Shamini is a character who is continually remarking on a person's appearance. She says that, "And why did Gertie foster a black child, chiiiiii..." Shamini says, under her breath, to Nandini. 'What do you mean? ...'The blacks'...We are all the same in this house. Who are you to say you are better? All are welcome, Sinhala, Tamil, Burger, Black" (Fernando 11). Nandhini's words had an impact on her in the end. Roshi Fernando has given each character significance, and the short stories that follow are about their lives. They present both their internal and outward lives.

Victor is a man who after losing his family, friends, his motherland, his rights still feels compelled to hope in peace. He never suggests violence or revenge. He says, "Killing, beating, all of this - it is not the answer. Forgiveness - that is the answer" (Fernando 13). Victor tells the story of a group of migrants who

are merely looking for peace. An unnamed young man, on the other hand, has a different attitude in regard to peace. He says that there should be an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He seeks only revenge but not peace. But Victor insist him to live a peaceful life, reminding one of St. Matthew, in whose Gospel we see Jesus saying "Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. Give to those who beg of you, and don't say no to those who want to borrow" (5:38-48). After listening to Victor's advice, the other says:

'Forgiveness? What has your forgiveness done for you? You think the way things are in Sri Lanka is down to the Sinhalese? The Tamils didn't do so badly under the British, did they? Should we have forgiven after they left? Where would we be now? Still under Tamil rule, that is here, and no more Sri Lanka,' he says, clicking his fingers." (Fernando 13)

Victor and the young man think quite differently, which might be due to their age. But Victor keeps trying to change his attitude and also insisted that he read The Holy Bible, to come out from all his evil thoughts. Victor now turns himself to be a pastor and advises each and every visitor to change their thoughts to seek resurrection. Victor, on the other hand, while being a teenager, does not have such aggressive tendencies toward others. He misses his hometown, yet he has no desire to exact retribution or be vindictive towards anybody. He's on the lookout for inner serenity. As George Michael says, "You'll never find peace of mind until you listen to your heart" (Sweatt 1), Victor concentrates on the words of his heart to find his inner peace.

The celebration is done, and everyone has left. Victor is continually reflecting on the discourse as well as on his native country. Then he comes to a halt, since it is almost midnight. He lies down to sleep, but is unable to do so due to the noise upstairs. Suddenly, his relatives appear, wishing him a "Happy

New Year" (Fernando 16). "He remembers home, the New Year's when he was a teenager...the night heat and rain, and his mother's orchids, their silhouettes in the moonlight," he says again (Fernando 16). He recalls his father's stringing switch and his mother's face repeatedly. He feels compelled to remain with his mother, and then his mother's face goes away, leaving just his wife Nandhini's. He feels at ease when he is around her. He finally gets his home the way he wants it. "Nowhere he can find home, but if he found Nandhini, it would be there, in her, and he would be safe again. He looks for pinks and mauves" (Fernando 16).

As he recovers his vigour, he is able to influence the attitudes of others around him. Wesley's daughter has expressed an interest in marrying an Englishman. Victor seizes this opportunity to influence the attitudes of others around him. When Weasely makes a remark on the boy's language and nationality, Victor tells him that remarking on one's nationality is unnecessary. "We belong nowhere" (Fernando 18), he continues. "But if we belong anywhere, it is here. I have chosen here. We have chosen here. And that is it. We are here" (Fernando 18). He uses the term 'here' often to make people feel as though they are in their own house. He doesn't want them to take the path of retaliation.

The refugees who are Victor's friends and neighbours are unable to consider their current location to be their home. At the same time, they are unable to abandon their revenge against the people who drove them from their homeland. Victor has already considered exacting vengeance. But when he discovers his home, his perspective shifts. Similarly, he wishes for people to achieve inner serenity. Victor longs for tranquility and a place to call home, and now he has both. Victor is a character who bears comparison to Christ, who does not want humanity to engage in any form of violence. Because the stories are interrelated, Victor's impact may be seen in practically every one of them. Victor admires Londoners' faith and way of life, but he is concerned about his fellow immigrants who are merely out for retribution than resurrection. This is seen in the character of Wesley, one of Victor's visitors, who does not wish to live a tranquil existence and is also unwilling to leave his family in order to live a happy life. However, Victor's remarks cause him to reconsider his mind.

'Nil's Wedding' is a short story about a girl's attitude toward her marriage. The narrative starts with Nil, who is in her chamber on the morning of her wedding. Wesley's daughter, Nil, appears in the short story "Homesick". She hears everyone's voice, including her mother's, brothers, and sister-in-law's, which reminds her that the wedding day has arrived. Their home is crammed with relatives who are discussing the bride and groom. "I'll miss you guys, she says when Mohan enters the room, looking at a picture of her family beside her" (Fernando 124). She had the attitude of a young woman who will leave her home when they marry.

Everyone in Nil's house is preoccupied with Nil's wedding preparations. Nil is the only one remaining in the home who is unoccupied. She is, however, preoccupied with mentally preparing for her wedding. She goes for a walk down the roadside and investigates the locations she used to visit when she was a teenager; she is twenty-three years old at the time of her marriage. Ian, her fiancé, is the perfect fit for her, she decides.

Rosemary had always allowed them to go in and search for snails, ladybirds, butterflies. If I find a ladybird, I will count its dots, and times them by my age and then by Ian's age, and then I'll find the mean of our ages and divide the answer by that, and that will be how long we'll be married. She found a ladybird with one spot. This had never happened before, and she took it as an omen. A good omen or a bad omen, she wondered? . (Fernando 127)

Nil's parents, on the other hand, are preparing and giving tasks to others in the home. Nil returns to her home and prepares for her upcoming wedding. She walks into her parents' room and gets dressed. Wesley is not a wealthy guy, but he has gone above his station for his daughter's wedding. Nil's mother, Siro, assists her with the preparations. Nil believes that putting on her sari is an act of Sri Lankan theatre as she tucks it in. She also believes that she, Nil, was irrelevant in the scheme of things, only a vessel to transport the Sri Lankan methodology's rigour. Nil wears the jewels from her mother's wedding. They realise the catch is broken when her mother puts them around her neck. It makes no difference to Nil, but it does to her aunts.



‘Cumma na, nayther?’ Siro said uncertainly to the aunts. She patted the blouse down over the bump. ‘Ekka nena,’ her aunts muttered, smiling at Nil, but looking at each other uneasily. Nil knew her mother had said it doesn’t matter, does it? And her aunts had answered, of course not, but she looked at them and wondered why it would matter at all? It’s just a necklace, just a wedding. (Fernando 131)

Although the wedding may be trivial to the aunt, it is extremely essential to Nil's parents. Wesley and Siro have gone above and beyond to make their daughter's wedding a success. As a result, they pay little attention to what others have to say. They are solely focused on Nil's wedding. They treasure the present.

Before entering the wedding hall, Nil gathers her courage and speaks with her parents. For the first time, she admits to her parents that she isn't sure if she loves Ian or not. She's not sure if she and Ian can be as close as her father and mother were. "I'm sure your mother felt the same way about me on our wedding day, darling, Wesley chuckled. When you talk about our love, you can see years and years of practice. How can you acquire love if you don't put it into practice every day?" (Fernando 134). Wesley also insists that his daughter have faith in God, as The Almighty is the only one who can help her in all of her situations.

Nil does not need to follow in the footsteps of her parents, but she does require love in her life. That is exactly what she requires in her life at all times. "Love is all you need," (Fernando 136) her father insists. She is now prepared for her marriage. She takes her father's hand in hers and begins walking toward Ian's location. Even though it appears to be too theatrical for her, she begins to like it. Ian, who is watching from afar, enjoys her predicament as well as her juvenile behaviour. Nil grins as he looks at Ian after the wedding is finished. She considers,

I do love him, she thought. I love him as much as I think is necessary. He was not the reason for this feeling. He was not even part of the feeling. He seemed to be a distant, smiling force, representative of the future. She glanced



behind her and there was her father, and on his arm, Ian's mother. Behind them, her mother, escorted by Ian's father...She had married on a feeling, a tenuous emotion. She had needed to move forward. (Fernando 139)

Nil finally finds her love that she needs all through her life. Whenever she becomes depressed Ian says, "SMILE, darling" (Fernando 138) he clutches her arm. As per the Biblical reference, "O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more" (Psalm 10:17-18), Nil gained the love that she longed for since her childhood.

The short story "The Comfort, the joy" provides solace and delight by insisting that there is life after every failure. Claire, the protagonist, is a woman who has lost everything in her life. She loses both her husband and son. As a woman, she is subjected to numerous critiques and threats. She, on the other hand, never considers such things. She believes in The Almighty and also sticks to the words, "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (Corinthians 4:16). But she continues to hope that she will discover her love one day or another. Gerath, a junior to her, is introduced to her. She senses his protection but not his affection. Gerath also provides her with as much protection as he can. She refers to him as Bunny and says so, "Bunny does that, and then I don't need him, because simply: love is over, love is past" (Fernando 157).

But the protection only lasts until another female enters Gareth's life. She has the impression that she is unimportant in his life. She expresses her emotions in this way, "We're at this thing, and again, the feeling of rootedness. It comes, when I'm not in the middle of it all, when I'm on the side-lines, and I'm sober or semi-sober, I suddenly feel how a tree feels" (Fernando 158). Whenever she considers this, she thinks about her spouse and the affection they have. She realises she has no affections for anyone since she believes she died when everyone else did.

Claire has had enough and has decided to abandon her search for love. And it is at this time that she meets Gwyn, a classmate of hers. He greets her, but she has no idea where she met him. Then she realises he's a classmate of hers. In addition, he attends the same college as her husband, Rob. He harks back to her husband and her loved ones. Gwyn empathises with her sentiments and comforts her. He is always there to her whenever she requires assistance. "I like this man a little, because he stands shoulder to shoulder with me, yet says nothing, as if we are facing off the world, just for these few minutes" (Fernando 160). At that moment he says that he had an eye for her all the time.

Claire begins to like Gwyn as a friend. He brings her to sites that she and her husband used to visit, and he tells her about his recollections there. She enjoys spending time with him. She tells him about her affections for Gwyn as well as Bunny. Gwyn, on the other hand, dislikes Bunny because he believes he would kidnap her. He begins to argue with her, and she declares that she is starving for beautiful love and life. She is in desperate need of the life that her spouse has promised her. She understands that Bunny will not be able to provide her with the comfort and joy she desires, but she is unsure if Gwyn will be able to do so as well. She inquires as to whether he is married, since only then would he be able to comprehend her sentiments. He replies her that, "No. I'm not married. Never wanted to be. I live alone. I have girlfriends" (Fernando 162). He tells her that he only knows about her parents who enjoy their marriage and love each other. She exclaims that, "It's comfort and joy" (Fernando 162).

Claire and Gwyn sit for an hour or more together, talking about their love for one another. Gwyn declares his love for her and expresses his desire to spend his whole life with her. He now sees Rob in the persona of Gwyn. He inquires about her feelings for him. She's already admitted to having affections for him. Claire finally finds the love she's been looking for all of her life, "In the morning I wake to an empty bed – but he is there, watching, waiting, and I scoop him back, for the comfort, for the joy" (Fernando 164). In all her life she admits that she believed only in The Almighty and stuck to him always. The almighty also provided her with what she asked for.

## Conclusion:

As per the verse, “For I know the plans that I have for you’, declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future” (Jeremiah 29:11), The Almighty holds the hands of his believers till their last breath and his presence can also be felt everywhere. Believing is the only thing that The Almighty asks for. The protagonists in the above-mentioned short stories believed in the Lord and they find their inner peace. Even though they only had terrorism on their minds throughout their life, they gained a peaceful life after surrendering themselves to The Almighty.

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## BIBLE STUDY

### “WHERE IS YOUR BROTHER (SISTER)?”

### A CALL TO IDENTIFY WITH AND EMBRACE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

SCRIPTURAL TEXT: GENESIS 4:1-12

*Aravind Jeyakumar Moniraj\**

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My recent visit to Israel – the Holy Land - at the behest of the Swedish Theological Institute, Jerusalem, Israel, especially the study program of STI and the visits to significant places of the Holy Land changed my perspective in understanding the Bible esp. the Old Testament and its interpretations in the light of my direct witness of sites claimed as holy by rival faiths and the disputes over their ownership. The land of Israel esp. the city of Jerusalem is considered as the Holy City or Holy Place for some religious traditions due to various important reasons. It is the place of the origin of the Abrahamic religious traditions such as Judaism and Christianity and moreover, Islam is closely connected with this place. Some places are significant for Christians and some are important for Jews and Muslims. But one disputed place is significant for all the three Abrahamic religions and in fact it is one of the controversial places and a place of conflict across the globe, i.e., Dome of the Rock. This place is important for all the three faiths rooted from Abraham since they consider that the Dome was constructed around or above the Foundation Rock from where the entire creation process began which is mentioned in Genesis 1 and 2. It was the place where Abraham took his son Isaac to offer him as a sacrifice to God as it was instructed to him (Mt. Moriah, Gen. 22). It was the spot where the Ark of the covenant was kept and considered by the people of Israel to be the holiest of the holy in the early Solomonic Jerusalem temple (1 Kings 8:1-66).

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In addition, it is a significant place for the Muslims as well and Jerusalem is called in Arabic as *al Quds* (*Holy one*) or *Bayt al Maqdis* (*the House of Holiness*). According to the Islamic tradition, the Prophet Muhammad visited Jerusalem during his night journey and ascension to the heavens known as *al-Isrā' wal mi'rāj*. The angel Gabriel took Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Jerusalem in one night, and then to the heavens in one night. In this miraculous journey, the Prophet Muhammad met many other Prophets including Abraham, Jesus, and Moses where he received the commandment that requires Muslims to worship five times a day. An entire chapter in Qur'an (17) is named after this event as the ascension (*al-Isrā'*).

Until today the location of the Dome of the Rock is a conflict zone for which the recent clashes (beginning of April 2022) that took place during the Passover celebration of Jews, Easter celebration of Christians and Ramadan month of Muslims is a sad and disturbing example. The Jewish people claim that this was the place where the Solomonic and the Second Temple existed, which was ultimately destroyed by the Roman Empire in CE 70. Therefore, they want to rebuild the third temple as a fulfilment of the promises to their ancestors in the same location. Similarly, Muslims claim that this was a place which was used to dump garbage sometime later after the destruction of the Jewish second temple. But during 691-692 CE Umayyad Khalif Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan constructed the Dome of the Rock which is called Qubbat as-sakra. The Dome collapsed and later it was reconstructed and rebuilt in 1022-1023 CE. This particular place is important to all the religions traditions and each religion claims its control over this piece of land although their origin or roots go back to their one and only ancestor, Abraham.

Keeping this conflicting place between the brothers from the same ancestor as a background I would like to draw your attention to Genesis 4:8-12. This Old Testament passage which also narrates a story of conflict that happened between two brothers. Genesis 4 begins with the story of the second-generation humankind after the creation of the entire universe by Yahweh/Elohim.

Adam and Eve, the first human couple were blessed with two children, Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer by profession and Abel was a shepherd. According to some Old Testament scholars this passage describes the ancient rivalry that existed between brothers. Others opine that this passage comes under the category of etiological narrative which addresses the conflicts that existed between the farming and the shepherding communities in the later period (after the settlement in Canaan) and it is explained using an ancient story in order to affirm that enmity between different communities or communities with different professions that have existed since ancient times.

Besides, in the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament this narrative does not include the conversation that happened between Cain and Abel which impelled Cain to murder Abel. In most of the Rabbinic interpretations and in the Quran we come across the conversation that happened between Cain and Abel. In one of the Midrashic interpretation it goes like this, And Cain spoke unto Abel his brother, etc. (IV, 8). About what did they quarrel? 'Come,' said they, 'let us divide the world.' One took the land and the other the movables. The former said, 'The land you stand on is mine,' while the latter retorted, 'What you are wearing is mine.' One said: 'Strip'; the other retorted: 'Fly [off the ground].'  
Out of this quarrel, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, etc. Rabbi Joshua of Siknin said in Levi's name: Both took land and both took movables, but about what did they quarrel? One said, The Temple must be built in my area, 'while the other claimed, 'It must be built in mine.' For thus it is written, and it came to pass, when they were in the field: now field refers to nothing else but the Temple, as you read, Zion [i.e., the Temple] *shall be ploughed as a field* (Micah III, 12). Out of this argument, Cain rose up against his brother Abel.

Even though the Rabbinic interpretation present some of the missing events which are not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible/ Old Testament, I would like to reproduce the Hebrew text of this passage (Genesis 4:8-12) in order to understand the prescribed verses with their grammatical syntax and inner meanings which would ultimately lead us to understand the nuances expressed by the narrator while explaining the conflict that happened between two brothers – Cain and Abel. Furthermore,

this textual Bible study will help us to understand the conflicts that were happening in ancient times and which continue even today in the name of religion, which on the one hand gives less importance to “humanity” or the “other” in our midst and on the other hand ignore our responsibility for the care of our brothers and sisters, irrespective of their cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds, and also of the entire God given creation (nature and all that is in it). For a better understanding of this passage (Genesis 4:8-12) its Hebrew text has been presented below just the way it appears in the standard Hebrew Bible – Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia along with the transliteration of the passage. In addition, the English translation taken from the New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible is also given.

#### Genesis 4:8-12

<sup>8</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר קַן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בַּחַיֹּתָם בְּשָׂדֶה וַיִּקָּם קַן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ:  
<sup>8</sup> wayyo'mer qayin 'el hevel 'achiw wayehi bihyotam basadeh wayyaqam qayin 'el hevel 'achiw wayyahargehu.

<sup>9</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַן אִי הִבֵּל אָחִיד וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי אָנֹכִי:  
<sup>9</sup> wayyo'mer Adonai 'el qayin 'e hevel 'achika wayy'omer lo' yada'ti hasomer 'achi 'anoki.

<sup>10</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיד צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן־הָאָדָמָה:  
<sup>10</sup> wayyo'mer meh 'asita qol deme 'achika ts'aqim 'lay min ha'adamah.

<sup>11</sup> וַעֲשֵׂה אֲרִיר אֶתָּה מִן־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת־פִּיהָ לִקְחַת אֶת־דְּמֵי אָחִיד מִיָּדִי:  
<sup>11</sup> we'attah 'arur 'attah min ha'adamah 'asher patstah 'et piha laqachat 'et deme 'achika miyyadeka.

<sup>12</sup> כִּי תַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאָדָמָה לֹא־תִסָּפֵךְ תִּתְּכָהּ לְךָ נָע וְנָד תִּהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ:  
<sup>12</sup> ki ta'abod 't ha'adamah lo tosef tet kochah lak na' wanad tiyeh ba'arets.

<sup>8</sup> Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let us go out to the field.” And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” <sup>10</sup> And the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen; your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground! <sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you, its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”

Genesis 4:8-12 in its Hebrew text has been narrated in a more evocative way because of the textual nuances that are applied by the narrator not only to simply describe the event but also to explain it in a rhetorical way with all the Hebrew linguistic nuances in order to underscore what has happened in ancient times and what should not happen now when it comes to the issue of conflicts between communities. Based on the textual analysis I would like to bring out three significant insights from the passage which are mentioned below in detail.

### 1. Cain Failed to Protect Abel “His Brother”

This passage contains quite a few possessive articles or pronominal suffixes – v. 8. אָחִיו ('achiw) his brother, v.9 אָחִיקָא ('achika) your brother, v.9 אָחִי ('achi) my brother, v.10 דֵּמַי אָחִיקָא (deme 'achika). Possessive pronouns or pronominal suffixes are usually attached to the end of the Hebrew nouns and they express possessiveness of the nouns. In other words, the usage of the possessive pronouns along with the nouns is to underscore that something belongs to someone or something, or someone owns someone or something. In this passage the possessive pronouns are used with a positive connotation in order to underline a significant insight. If we read v.8 twice it has been mentioned ‘Cain said to Abel “his brother,” ...Cain rose up against “his brother” Abel and killed him.’ Again in v.9 God asks Cain ‘where is “your brother” Abel’ and he says am I the keeper of “my brother.” Finally in vv.10 and 11 God says ““your brother’s” blood.’ The remarkable thing to be noted here is that although the name of Cain and Abel are mentioned, again



along with those names in addition the possessive pronouns are suffixed to noun “brother” – his brother, your brother, my brother, your brother’s blood. Abel is Cain’s own brother and he is supposed to own his brother, because he is his possession, his belonging or his treasure. Instead of possessing his own brother he rose up against him and killed him. Thus, by purposely mentioning the possessive pronouns the narrator of this chapter subtly underscores how Cain failed to own and protect his own brother Abel, which led even Cain to reply to God “am I my brother’s keeper.” Yes of course Cain was supposed to be his brother Abel’s keeper in the sense of taking care of him instead of murdering him. Cain failed to own his brother. Similarly, we fail in today’s context to see as our own our brothers and sisters who are in need, even when they do not belong to our religion, community, linguistic background and so on. Through the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus taught a good lesson to the young man who wanted to enter the kingdom of God by following only the stipulations. He failed to identify who his neighbour was. He was unsuccessful in tracing the “others” who are in need and own them as his brothers and sisters. We are invited to treat as our own kin those who are in need, irrespective of their backgrounds. The conflicts that are happening in Israel between the Jews and the Arabs or elsewhere in the world in the name of religions are the result of forgetting that humanity is more important than those religious traditions that induce us to become enemies of others.

## **2. Cain’s Religiosity/Faith Failed to Love and Support Abel “His Brother”**

Another significant thing to be noted in this passage is that of the sort of religiosity that was practised by both Cain and Abel. The initial verses of Genesis 4:3-4 ‘In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering.’ Since both Cain and Abel were religious people, they both went to the sanctuary of God to offer their first share from their harvest or flock. However, Although Cain showed his spirituality by offering his gift in the presence of God, still he failed to practice his religious principle of loving others. He strictly followed the expectations

of his faith, limiting it only to the action of offering his gifts to God, but in terms of the practice of his religiosity or faith, he completely failed.

Here I would like to quote the statement made by Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb in relation to our faith and praxis. According to Imam Ahamed "Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need" Faith in God should lead a religious person to love his or her neighbour irrespective of his or her background. But in the case of Cain, at the moment when he realised that his offering was not accepted, he took his brother to the field and murdered him. In a fraction of seconds his religiosity went in vain since he failed to practice his faith. In fact, a religious matter became a point of departure for the murder. The religious site in Jerusalem "the Dome of the Rock" which represents a significant place for Muslims and Jews is becoming a place of conflict. Religion in becoming a tool to trigger conflicts between human beings from different racial, ethnic and religious groups. Religious fundamentalism has become a threat to the existence of humankind in today's context across the globe. If my faith makes me a violent person who raises my hand against my brother or sister then it is a pseudo faith, because none of the religions encourage violence. Let different faiths become a channel to unite humanity and respect the religious sentiments of one another in order to create a human society with peace and harmony. Let there not be any bloodshed in the name of religion and let us say no to killing of innocent lives in the name of preserving or safeguarding our faith. Let us follow the golden rule of Jesus Christ "Love your neighbour as you love yourself."

### **3. Cain's Act of Murdering Abel "His Brother" Is a Murder of the Whole Humanity and the Entire Creation (Nature)**

A few more substantial insights can be unearthed from vv.10-12. And the Lord said, "What have you done? Listen; *your brother's*

*blood* is crying out to me from the ground! And now *you are cursed from the ground*, which has opened its mouth to receive *your brother's blood* from your hand. *When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.*" Firstly, the phrase "your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground" is more meaningful in the Hebrew text. The word דָּם (dam) meaning 'blood' is not used in this verse in the singular form but deliberately mentioned in plural construct form – דְּמַי אָחִיךָ (deme 'achika) meaning 'the bloods of your brother.' I assume that the narrator is purposely using plural form in order to give a collective meaning, which can denote that 'by murdering Abel and shedding his blood on the ground, Cain killed not a single person but he killed the entire humanity.' If we harm a person in any form, it is equal to harming the entire humanity, but in contrast, if we save a person, it is like saving the entire humanity. Let not fundamentalist religious ideologies in any forms be a tool for destroying humankind that was created by God in God's own image and likeness.

Secondly, by shedding the innocent blood of his brother, Cain not only invites a curse on himself and on the entire humanity because of his action, but he brings a curse to the earth – i.e., the entire creation, v.12 – 'when you till the ground [אֲדָמָה ('adamah)], it will no longer yield to you.' Everything is interconnected – if we harm our fellow human being, we are harming the entire humanity and if we harm the entire humanity ultimately, we are distorting the entire creation of God. Genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature, is inseparable from justice and faithfulness to others" Human violence not only affects human beings, but as is evident in the text, it affects the land from which the voice of the victims is raised. Therefore, it is urgent and necessary to understand that "sustainable living involves being attentive to and taking responsibility for the effects of our actions.

Let us consider others as our own people and let us practice our faith and be the people of God by identifying ourselves with others who are in need and save not only our neighbours but also the entire creation from the hands of religious fundamentalists. שלום Shalom!

## NCCI NEWS

### **The *morcha* Moves on – and the Cross is but a Station**

Please join me in ushering ‘easter hope’ into a world torn apart by war, strife and toil – a hope that stands beyond the cross. It is our prayer that each one in this country, and the whole world, with the entire created order break forth in everlasting joy and praise at the possibilities of a *morcha* moving on.

With the dawn of the first Easter day came the hope of a new beginning – the news that the disciples wanted to hear since that fateful Friday afternoon. This news was crucial to the very existence of the women and men who followed Jesus as his disciples; without this news they were lost, their lives in jeopardy.

Mutual distrust, fear of the Jews and the Romans, as well as the mis-happening all around were all dinning the ear to a state of deafness refusing to believe in a reality and good news of hope coming their way beyond their situation and their existentialist contexts. COVID like contexts compound the situation in which a sense of impermanence set in leading to a situation of ‘eat, drink and be merry (any way) tomorrow you will die’ syndrome

Yet easter – the experience of life over death is crucial. It is seen to be expressed and experienced in recognising and acknowledging the familiar voices of the assuring contexts of the past as Mary experienced beside the tomb on easter morning. The disciples experienced this as well when they assuredly or even hesitatingly (but consciously) sought to embrace the unknown and the stranger.

With these experiences of life, Mary and the two at Emmaus rush back to the community of the faithful and the easter community gets expression. This community and expression is both evident and confident even until today and thus, the *morcha* moves on – with the cross being just a station ...

This process of recognising and acknowledging the familiar voices of the assuring contexts of the past as well as rest assuredly or even hesitatingly but consciously embracing the unknown, should be to us the mantra for moving on – forward unto Galilee. We should not be stuck at the cross to which the world ties us down.

**Rev. Dr. Asir Ebenezer**  
General Secretary, NCCI



church's auxiliary  
for social action

Member of **actalliance**

**POSITION: PROJECT OFFICER (WEST ZONE)**

**Introduction: About CASA:**

CASA is a national development and humanitarian organisation. Established in 1947, it works for the poorest of poor irrespective of caste, gender and religion. CASA works on issues of education, health, livelihood, women empowerment, climate change and humanitarian response.

**Location: Mumbai, Maharashtra.** Requires travelling to project locations in Western India for PME and nationally for meetings.

**Education:** Post Graduate in Social Work/Development Studies/ Social Sciences.

**Experience:** 10 years + of experience in social sector – Grass root & Marginalized Community Experience

**Age:** Less than 45 years.      **Work:** Full Time

**Remuneration:** Rs. 6, 60 ,000/- Annual CTC (Negotiable).

**Last Date for Application:** 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**JOB PROFILE AND KEY RESULT AREAS:**

To provide effective, efficient and visionary co-ordination to various activities of different programme of CASA at Western India level and also to have a clear understanding of changing CASA's development perspective in the complex operational environment to promote peace, justice and dignity of life in the lives of the poor, the excluded, the vulnerable and those victims of structural poverty caused by socio, economic and political disparities. **For detailed Job Profile & Key Result Areas, please visit the Careers/RFP page of our website: [www.casa-india.org](http://www.casa-india.org)**

**Apply by:** 20 May 2022

**Send in your CV in word format to:** 'thomas@casa-india.org'. Please put "Application for Project Officer, West Zone" in the email subject line. OR

**Application should reach the following address on or before 20 May 2022:**

**Chief Zonal Officer, CASA – Church’s Auxiliary for Social Action  
Methodist Centre, 21 YMCA Road, Mumbai 400 008.**

**ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED.**

**POSITION: ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (West Zone)**

**Introduction: About CASA:**

CASA is a national development and humanitarian organisation. Established in 1947, it works for the poorest of poor irrespective of caste, gender and religion. CASA works on issues of education, health, livelihood, women empowerment, climate change and humanitarian response.

**Location:** Mumbai, Maharashtra.

**Education:** Graduate/Post Graduate.

**Experience:** 8 years + of experience in Administration with NGO/ Not for Profit sector

**Age:** Less than 45 years.

**Work:** Full Time

**Remuneration:** Rs. 4, 20 ,000/- Annual CTC

**JOB PROFILE:**

The Assistant Administrative Officer will assist the Chief Zonal Officer in coordinating administrative procedures and provide support in all administrative tasks, Procurements Operations, and MIS etc. (For detailed Job Profile and Key Result areas, please visit the Careers/RFP page of our website: [www.casa-india.org](http://www.casa-india.org))

**Last Date for Application: 20th May 2022**

**Send in your CV in word format to: ‘thomas@casa-india.org’.  
Please put “Application for Assistant Administrative Officer,  
West Zone” in the email subject line. OR**

**Application should reach the following address on or before 20 May 2022:**

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