মেট্রোপলিটন ইউনিভার্সিটি

Metropolitan
UNIVERSITY

METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY JOURNAL

Contents

Reading *Things Fall Apart* Ecocritically

Fakrul Alam, PhD∗

Abstract

One of Chinua Achebe's goals in writing Things Fall Apart *was to correct a whole history of misrepresentations of his people and country in occidental discourse. In his essay, "The Biafran Cause", he quotes approvingly a Dr. Emmanuel Obiechina who had declared that "a purpose, implicit or explicit" of the African writer is "to correct the distortion of West African culture [and] to recreate the past in the present in order to educate the West African reader and give him confidence in his cultural heritage". In another essay, Achebe declares unequivocally that it is part of his "business as a writer to teach" any African boy with an inferiority complex induced by colonial stereotyping about his world to believe "that there is nothing disgraceful about the African weather, that the palm tree is a fit subject for poetry".*

To put Achebe's position positively, among the reasons he wrote Things Fall Apart *was to show a continent where, especially before colonial invasion, people lived in a complex, diverse and fruitful relationship with the African environment. One effect of colonization was the disturbance of this balance; the task of the writers of the continent, therefore, was to highlight the organic nature of the relationship and to portray its subsequent disruption. Among the ways in which Achebe achieves this end is to use a language that is rich in proverbs and to deploy figures of speech that are grounded in the landscape to represent the embeddedness of Igbo society in its natural environment. The overall effect of Achebe's perspective on the African's links with the land and a consequence of his narrative technique are to give his African readers the sense that he is using the novel form to make them realize what it was to dwell in a harmonious relationship with the world, thereby raising their ecological consciousness. He also intends to demonstrate through his fiction how the coming of colonization induced a sense of strain in the African's connection to nature; among the things that fell apart in the continent was the oneness of African nature and culture.*

I propose to attempt a reading of Things Fall Apart *from an ecocritical perspective to show that he was writing the novel in part to make his West African readers aware of the extent of the embeddedness of their forefathers in the environment; I would like to illustrate the way he conveys through his writing and use of language the rich connections between the African and the land. I also intend to indicate the extent of the damage in the relationship between Africans and their natural world caused by the advent of colonization. Finally, through my paper I hope to emphasize Achebe's profound consciousness about the vital relationship the African must have to the natural world to make themselves whole again.*

I

One of Chinua Achebe's goals in writing *Things Fall Apart* was to correct a whole history of misrepresentations of his people and country in occidental discourse. In his essay, "The Biafran Cause", he quotes approvingly a Dr. Emmanuel Obiechina who had declared that "a purpose, implicit or explicit" of the African writer is "to correct the distortion of West African culture [and] to recreate the past in the present in order to educate the African reader and give him confidence in his cultural heritage" (Achebe, *Morning*, 117) In the essay, "Publishing in Africa",

∗Professor, Department of English, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Achebe notes that what the African writer must do is draw on the "spiritual bond that exists between the true artist and his community" (Achebe, *Morning,* 87) to take himself and his readers into a meaningful future. To this end, Achebe says in another prose piece called "Named for Africa", the African writer could draw on the tradition of folk story-telling which "had the immemorial quality of the sky and the forests and the rivers" (Achebe, *Morning*, 101). In the essay significantly titled "The Novelist as Teacher', Achebe declares unequivocally that it is part of his "business as a writer to teach" any African boy with an inferiority complex induced by colonial stereotyping about his world to believe "that there is nothing disgraceful about the African weather, that the palm tree is a fit subject for poetry" (Achebe, *Morning*, 58).

To put Achebe's position positively, among the reasons he wrote *Things Fall Apart* was to depict for his African readers a continent where, especially before colonial invasion, people lived in a complex, diverse and fruitful relationship with the African environment. The overall effect of Achebe's perspective on the African's links with the land is to make his African readers realize what it was to dwell in a harmonious relationship with the world, thereby raising what we would now term their ecological consciousness, that is to say their sensitivities about the importance of preserving the intimate link between the land and themselves. He also intends to demonstrate through his fiction how the coming of colonization induced a sense of strain in the African's connection to nature; among the things that fell apart in the continent with the coming of the white man, he implies through his inaugural novel, was the oneness of African nature and culture.

I propose in this paper to attempt a reading of *Things Fall Apart* from an ecocritical perspective to show that Achebe was writing the novel in part to make his African readers aware of the extent of the embeddedness of their forefathers in the environment; I would like to illustrate the ways through which he delineates the manifold connections between the African and the land. I also intend to focus on his depiction of the damage caused in the relationship between Africans and their natural world by the advent of colonization. Finally, through my paper I hope to emphasize Achebe's profound belief in the importance of the connections Africans must reactivate with nature to make themselves whole again.

II

Ecocriticism has been glossed as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" and has been hailed as a recent branch of literary studies that takes "an earth-centered approach to the study of texts" (Garrard, 1). But because the subject has in it facets that may make it seem like a new version of "pastoral" or an updating of "wilderness' studies", approaches that are either too aesthetic and sophisticated or nostalgic and westernized, I hasten to add that I see it in this essay as related to the trope of "dwelling", a trope that Greg Garrard has defined in his very useful introductory book on Ecocriticism as something that "implies the long-term imbrication of humans in a landscape of ancestry, and death, of ritual, life and work" (108)[1]. Dwelling, for Gerard, involves the nexus between the lived life of a community and its rituals, between the human and the inhuman, between nature and culture. In building dwellings, a community roots itself in the

physical world, and that world becomes a locus of memory and desire, till the land takes on a "figural" as well as a "literal" value (115). This is also to say that members of most indigenous communities have lived in harmony with nature, not necessarily in Edenic innocence but in land tilled with "considerable knowledge and skill but always within the terms of their own cultural cosmos" till their way of life in many instances was disrupted by the coming of the colonizer from other continents (135).

It can be pointed out here that while some recent African writers and critics have been wary of Ecocriticism, not a few have seen in it ideas that could be utilized for their writings and made use of it to arraign the colonial presence in their continent. In "Ecoing the Other(s): the Call of Global Green and Black African Responses, " William Slaymaker thus directs us to the Nigerian poet Niyi Osundare's writings and the life and works of the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa as examples of African writers who had committed themselves to ecoactivism. Slaymaker observes that while Wole Soyinka does not share the ecoactivism of Osundare and Saro-Wiwa, he too has authored works that "connects his love of place and his respect for culturally important natural sites around life" (687). Slaymaker believes that the Kenyan writer Ngugi also emphasizes through his writings "the natural relations of the Agikuyu to their land" (688).

Byron Caminero-Santangelo's "Different Shades of Green: Ecocriticism and African Literature" is another recent essay which shows how Ecocriticism is being used to explicate the achievements of the most important writers of African literature. He sees Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*, for instance, as a work that can be "aligned with much early nationalist and anti-colonial African literature which embraced a pastoral vision of a pre-colonial order aligned and in tune with nature over and against a corrupting, mechanized European modernity" (703). Ngugi, in other words, is writing a work which "romanticizes pre-colonial (especially animist) societies as in harmony with nature" (ibid.).

Both Slaymaker and Caminero-Santangelo do not mention Achebe at all in their essays tracing the links between Ecocriticism and postcolonial African literature, but as I hope to show subsequently, he is among the pioneers of African writing in presenting a pre-colonial land exhibiting the close connections between nature and culture that was then disrupted by colonization. What Achebe does so splendidly in *Things Fall Apart* is to represent the intimate relations West Africans had with the natural world before things started to "fall apart" from them as a consequence of colonization. What is distinctive about the novel is the manner in which it shows the close links between the Igbo people and their physical environment. One is reminded by Achebe's narrative focus of Frantz Fanon's comments in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) of "the passionate search for "a national culture which existed before the colonial era" (Fanon, 371) by writers from countries scarred by colonization. According to Fanon, the typical "native intellectual" went through three phases of evolution. In the first, he "assimilated the culture of the occupying power"; in the second, "he decides to remember who he is" by recalling past memories of his world "from the depths of his memory"; but in the third or "the fighting phase", he feels the need to arouse his people by composing works "which express the heart of the

7

people" (Fanon, 377). Surely, Achebe is with Soyinka and Ngugi, a writer in transit from the second to the third phase. As the critic Bu-Buakei Jabbi puts it in his essay, "Fire and Transition in *Things Fall Apart*"*,* Achebe's "fundamental theme as a beginning novelist was the neo-negritude assertion of dignity in the African past" (201). African writers, Achebe is convinced, must become political and resort to their own story-telling traditions to tell the story of belonging, of dwelling in the midst of their land, of being alienated from it, and of trying to offset the loss of heritage, if only to make their people whole again (Searle, 61, 65).

III

Things Fall Apart is not only the story of Okonkwo, a headstrong and proud man who is forced to commit suicide after being humiliated by the white men, it is also the story of the African community of Umuofia to which he belongs and its changing fortunes because of the coming of Europeans. What one notices about the first two-thirds of the novel is how Okonkwo's story is embedded in that of his community. As Neil ten Kortennar points out in his essay, "The Centre is Made to Hold in *Things Fall Apart*," Achebe tells his story of Umuofia and its controversial member Okonkwo synchronically until the coming of the colonizers. Then the narration becomes diachronic. The implication of this narrative strategy, in Kortennar's words, is that we see the Umuofia community as "an ahistorical, organic whole disrupted and set upon the path of the history by the brutal entry of the Europeans" (139).

It is interesting to read that Okonkwo's father Unoka lived in perfect harmony with his people and the land, while Oknokwo himself had a troubled relationship with it. In the eyes of the son Unoka is a failure, but we come to like him despite his son's complexes about his father, because "he loved the season of the year, when the rains had stopped and the sun rose every morning with dazzling beauty" (Achebe, *Things,* 4). For sure, he and the villagers are also aware of the darker aspects of nature, but they have learned to balance apprehension of dark nights with enjoyment of moonlit ones, knowing what to avoid and what to take pleasure in. They key to survival was to realize as the clan does when the rainy season overwhelms them that "nature was not interfered with" (31). Unoka's death is indicative of the balance and good sense the community has achieved in rooting itself in the land, for when he is afflicted by a swelling of his body parts, the people of the village take him to the Evil Forest and leave him to die in isolation, no doubt because it knew that someone with contagious diseases such as small pox or leprosy or a virulent infection was best isolated from others.

On the whole, pre-colonial Umuofia is shown to be the dwelling of contented men and women. Despite occasional bad harvests due to inclement weather or locusts, it supported the hard work of people who respected the earth and satisfied its yearnings. This is why when the characteristically intemperate Okonkwo beats up his wife, Ezeani, the priest of the earth goddess, Ani, rebukes him saying, "Our forefathers ordained that before we plant any crops in the earth we should observe a week in which a man does not say a harsh word to his neighbor. We live in peace with our fellows to honor our great goddess of the earth without whose blessing our

crops will not grow" (28). But even Okonkwo knows that the earth goddess had to be appeased since she was "the source of all fertility" (33). That is why he mostly succeeds in life and ends up becoming a powerful and rich member of the community despite starting as a simple sharecropper. It is only when he exceeds the limits set on men, as when he kills the boy Ikemefuna with his own hands needlessly although the child was in his care that he is criticized by members of his community for doing something unnatural.

In the second part of *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo is exiled from Umuofia because he has accidentally killed a member of the community, but this is due to his bad luck or the workings of his *chi* or personal god than to a personal failing. Interestingly, fratricide too is seen as "a crime against the earth goddess" (113), accidental or not, and Okonkwo has to settle with his mother's clan in the village of Mbanta for seven years. Here again his capacity for hard work means that he will be eventually rewarded by the earth and he will be able to rebuild his life in the new community.

It is during his period of exile in Mbanta that Okonkwo first hears of the coming of the white man on "an iron horse" (125), as ominous to the villagers as the locusts that periodically afflict the land. Soon the whites bring their religion and win over outcasts and people like Okonkwo's son Nwoye, who had been alienated from his father's harsh ways ever since the murder of Ikemefuna. Significantly, one of these outcasts kill "the most reverend animal in Mbanta and all the surrounding clans" (145) the python, and in doing so infuriates the Ibos, particularly Okonkwo. Even before he returns to Umuofia at the end of seven years, he has found out that the white men's religion as well as government had spread over the land and converted many dissatisfied Igbos like Nwoye.

The coming of the white man on an iron horse and the destruction of the royal python are symptomatic of the problems caused by the strangers. Although Mr. Brown, the first white missionary, seems conciliatory and preaches the form of Christianity that appeals to mild-mannered men such as Nwoye, the Umuofians have split because of them and have become vulnerable. Part Two of the novel thus ends with one of the oldest members of the community talking about 'an abominable religion' that had divided the Igbos (152), causing some of them to abandon their people. He is fearful about Okonkwo's future and that of the clan; he can see the beginning of the end of their way of life.

Part Three of the novel finds Okoknwo back among his people in Umuofia, but it now contains a court house and a prison where the white men incarcerate anyone who offends them or transgresses their laws. As his friend Obierika tells him, the whites have "put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart" (160). Things become worse when the accommodating Mr. Brown is replaced by the aggressive Reverend James Smith. With his encouragement, Enoch, the turncoat slayer of the royal python, kills an ancestral spirit till "Umuofia is thrown into confusion" and the land seems to be full of "a strange and fearful sound" (168). The connections between the land and the community has come under severe strain and "the eerie voices of countless spirits" (169), disturbed and militant, raid Mr. Smith's

church to flush out Enoch and then burn it. To the enraged Umuofians, the church and people like Mr. Smith and their lackeys among the converts had "bred untold abominations" (171).

For the white invaders, the destruction of the church is the last straw. The white District Commissioner captures the Umuofian Okonkwo and the other men responsible for the attack and humiliates them. His court messengers then broadcast through the land his decision to release them only after a hefty fine had been paid by the clan for them. Through a whole series of negative constructions Achebe portrays the dark and depressing shadow that has benighted the land, straining its people till they are on the verge of collapse:

> It was the time of the full moon. But that night the voice of children was not heard. The village *ilo* where they always gathered for a moon-play was empty. The women of Iguedo did not meet in the secret enclosure to learn a new dance to be displayed later to the village. Young men who were always abroad in the moonlight kept [to] their huts that night. Their manly voices were not heard on the village paths as they went to visit their friends and lovers. Umuofia was like a startled animal with ears erect, sniffing the silent, ominous air and not knowing which way to run. (176-77)

The sense of oneness with nature, the sense of a dwelling, of an environment where one feels at home is gone; the harmony and balance that sustained the community have disappeared; and the traumatized villagers have lost their sense of place and consequently have no sense of direction anymore.

The villagers collect the money needed to release the captives. But when they meet again to decide on how best to drive the strangers out, court messengers appear on the scene to disrupt the meeting. It is at this point that Okonkwo slays one of them. Realizing that he would be hanged publicly for his action, Okonkwo kills himself, committing in the process the ultimate abomination, for a man who takes his own life has committed "an offence against the earth" (186) and will therefore not be buried by his own people and would end up buried like a dog.

Things Fall Apart thus ends with the Umuofians traumatized, one of their standard bearers destroyed, and the land itself degraded. And yet the novel had begun with a country where Ani, the earth, cared compassionately over the Igbos. Together with Agbala, the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves, and through their priests and priestesses, they had once upon a time ensured "mystic unity and eternal order" (Wren, 131) over the universe. Though there were strains in the community these were contained in complex and manifold ways. But Achebe leaves us with no doubt that no matter how severe and proud a man Okonkwo was, and no matter how rigid the society in which he lived could be, the catalyst that destroys the fabric of the community and upsets the balance that sustained it is the coming of the white man. As the African critic Abiola Irele states it, Achebe's novels "deal with the social and psychological conflicts created by the incursion of the white man and his culture into the hitherto self-contained world of African society, and the disarray in the African consciousness that has followed" (80). And as for Achebe himself, as he put it in an interview, it is his belief that the European invasion resulted in Africans

losing their "grip over history". It also led to their losing "their memory of Africa", a massive loss since "the "past is all we have" (Searle, 61, 63). That is why he had endeavored to tell the story of Okonkwo and Umuofia's destruction, for the story of their strengths and weaknesses must be told as effectively as possible if the people of Nigeria were to achieve some sort of balance again.

IV

To tell the story of the falling apart of the Umuofians, Achebe resorts to the story-telling techniques and traditions of his people. When in an interview with Charles H. Rowell, he is asked what he means by identifying himself as a storyteller, this is what he has to say:

> ...we mustn't forget that we have a certain link of apostolic succession; if you like, to the old *griots* and storytellers and poets. It helps anyway; it gives me that sense of connectedness, of being part of things that are eternal like the rivers, the mountains, and the sky…. (Rowell, 269)

This sense of "connectedness' and of being in the tradition of oral story-telling is most clearly manifested in Achebe's use of Igbo proverbs and his use of metaphors and similes that arise from the African story-teller's oneness with the physical environment.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the narrator signals the centrality of proverbs rooted in nature in the opening pages of his narrative when he tells us: "Among the Ibos the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten" (6). The story of Okonkwo's rise and fall and of his community's disintegration is thus strung with proverbs. For instance, Okonkwo on the rise is admired for his wily qualities which are said to make him "as slippery as a fish in water" (3). His physical prowess makes him highly visible in Umuofia where his fame is said to have grown "like a bush-fire in the harmattan" (ibid). He is accepted by the elders of the community, one of whom graciously accepts his present of kola nut and alligator pepper. The elder acknowledges his status and right to be himself by telling him, "Let the kite perch and let the egret perch too" (17-18). In fact, this elder helps Okonkwo consolidate his presence in the community since he is convinced that "you can tell a ripe corn by its look" (20).

For the narrator, nature is the source of the most vivid comparisons. Ikemefuna, the child Okonkwo had adopted, is said to have been growing in his household "like a yam tendril in the rainy season" (47). When Okonkwo's favorite daughter Ekwefi is frightened, the narrator tells us that she is "like a hen whose only chick has been carried away by a kite" (93). When her fear becomes that of the community, the narrator notices fireflies going around "with their tiny green lamps, which only made the darkness more profound" (94).

Achebe makes it quite clear that for the story-teller of a people who live in harmony with the land, nature is the source of all the figures of speech necessary for their story-telling. In Chapter 11 of the novel we have a story-telling episode where Ekwefi, another of Okonkwo's wives, narrates the story of a tortoise and birds to her daughter Ezinma. When she finishes her story Ezinma herself begins to narrate

11

another story; this time one about a tortoise and cats. Noticeably, everything ends up as a story. In the stories of the clan, nature plays an integral part and often provides the characters as well as the metaphors. Thus when towards the end of the narrative the humiliated clan men try to organize and put up resistance against the invaders, the strategy they are asked to adopt is compared to the one that Eneke the bird used "to fly without perching like a twig" (183).

It is significant that the proverbs and the metaphors of the first part of the story begin to disappear as the whites make their presence felt in Umuofia. The proverbs that replace them are often from the tradition of the white colonizers. In one obviously ironical instance, we learn that Mr. Smith punished a woman who had converted to Christianity "for pouring new wine into old bottles" (166). But the more repugnant Mr. Brown seems to see only through a reductive perspective based on the principle of puritan allegory where "the world was a battlefield in which the children of light were locked in mortal conflict with the sons of darkness" (166). The district commissioner for his part uses an animal metaphor, but there is obvious irony in his telling the clan men that if they played "any monkey tricks they would be shot" (186). The one noteworthy metaphor associated with the clan in the concluding chapters is, significantly, an animal one that is from everyday experience that has become folk wisdom, for one of the elders talk about their predicament as comparable "to a toad jumping in broad daylight" (182), a sure sign of desperation.

To the Umuofians nature in its bounty provide them with endless images with which they can weave their proverbs, metaphors and stories. To the whites the native mode of speech seems wasteful and decorative. This, at least, is what goes through the irate District Commissioner's mind when he is trying to find out where Okonkwo has disappeared, for he thinks then: "one of the most infuriating habits of these people was their love of superfluous words" (185).

At this level, *Things Fall Apart* dramatizes what the critic Ato Quayson has called " the struggle between an organic esthetic…indigenous to the culture and an esthetic…that comes with colonialism" (833). Overwhelmed by the whites, the proverbs and the metaphors of the Igbos seem to suffer like the people themselves. No doubt because the district commissioner is intent on straightening out the language and the narratives of these people as well as their politics, he resolves to title his account of his experience in the region, *"The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of Lower Niger"* (Achebe, Things, 187). But Achebe himself takes the opposite tack in writing his tale of the way things fell apart for his country. His mission was to bring the land and its stories alive by using a vibrant narrative strategy dependent on indigenous story-telling traditions and techniques. As he puts it in his famous essay, "Colonialist Criticism': "every literature must seek the things that belong unto its peace, must, in other words, speak of a particular place, evolve out of the necessities of its history, past and current, and the aspirations and destiny of its people" (Achebe, *Hopes,*74).

IV

This reading of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* has indicated that he has presented through his novel a West African world whose inhabitants had bonded

with their physical surroundings, learning to live in it, respect, and get sustenance from it. They had made their landscape a place where memory, work, cultural practice, and rituals had intermingled, creating a balance in their lives that made life meaningful for them. People had become one with place and culture and nature had merged for the Igbo Achebe, I have tried to show, had drawn inspiration from his remembrance of a time when his people had adjusted themselves to their environment and felt that there was something from it that present-day Africans would learn from. He had, it can be said, been inspired by his ecological consciousness to write his narrative of Umuofia and its inhabitants. Wendell Berry, a major American poet and advocate of the environment movement has observed that "A human community… must collect leaves and stories, and turn them to account. It must build soil, and build that memory of itself" (Garard, 115) and it is part of Achebe's achievement to have done so in his novel.

But Achebe's success as a novelist in *Things Fall Apart* is also to show how the coming of imperialism had impacted adversely on the lives of people who had been dwelling in harmony with nature and how the coming of the whites had disturbed the balance achieved by the West Africans in their dealings with their environment. Through his narrative strategy, his use of time, and his mastery of language and deployment of proverbs and metaphors, Achebe has succeeded in depicting the manner in which the community became troubled and the land became polluted[2] by the advent of colonization. By the time he concludes the novel we come to realize that the Igbo world had become traumatized and the complex ties forged between nature and society by the clan had become unsettled because of the actions of men like Mr. Brown and the District Commissioner.

This paper has attempted an ecocritical reading of Achebe's great novel to show how he wrote it from what would now be called an ecological consciousness to suggest that Africans learn to value the land that they dwell in and to point at the importance of respecting the natural world. Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart,* of course before the discipline called Ecocriticism was born, but I have found its central tenets useful to articulate what I find valuable in the novel. Ursula K. Heise, an American proponent of Ecocriticism, has defined the parameters of the subject thus: 'Ecocriticism analyzes the ways in which literature represents the human relations to nature at particular moments of history, what values are assigned to nature and why, and how perceptions of the natural shape literary tropes and genres" (1097). Hopefully, this reading of *Things Fall Apart* has shown that Ecocriticism as a subject has a lot to offer us as we attempt to offer new readings of the texts emanating from our part of the world. Surely the time has come for us to read texts like Bibhutibhusan Bondhopadhay's *Aronayk* and Hassan Azizul Huq's recently published *Agun Pankhi*, as texts that have been shaped by an ecocritical consciousness and for their relevance to our time.

Works Cited

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann Educational Book Ltd.
1958.

-----. *Morning Yet on Creation Day*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976.

-----. *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays*. New York: Anchor Books/
Doubleday, 1989.

Caminero-Santangelo, Byron. "Different Shades of Green: Ecocriticism and African
Literature". In *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*.
Ed.Tejumola Olaniyan and Ato Quayson. London: Blackwell Publishing,
2007:698-706.

Fanon, Frantz. "On National Culture". In *Literature in the Modern World: Critical
Essays and Documents*. 2nd rev. edition. Ed. by Dennis Walder.Oxford:
OUP,2004:371-77.

Garrard, Greg. *Ecocriticism*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Heise, Ursula K. In "Forum on Literature of the Environment". *PMLA*, 114:5 (Oct.
1999): 1089-1104.

Irele, Abiola. "The Tragic Conflict in the Novels of Chinua Achebe". In *Chinua
Achebe's* Things Fall Apart: *A Critical Companion*. Delhi: Worldview, 2003:
81-96.

Jabbi, Bu-Buakei. "Fire and Transition in *Things Fall Apart*". In *Chinua Achebe's*
Things Fall Apart: *A Casebook*. Ed. By Isidore Okpewho. Oxford; OUP,
2003: 201-220.

Kortenar. Neil Ten, "How the Center is Made to Hold in *Things Fall Apart*". In
Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart: *A Casebook*. Ed. By Isidore Okpewho.
Oxford; OUP,2003: 123-146.

Quayson, Ato. "Modernism and Postmodernism in African Literature". In *The
Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature*, Vol.2. Cambridge,
CUP, 2004: 824-853.

Rowell, Charles H. "An Interview with Chinua Achebe". In *Chinua Achebe's* Things
Fall Apart: *A Casebook*. Ed. By Isidore Okpewho. Oxford; OUP,
2003: 249—272.

Searle, Chris. "Chinua Achebe with Chris Searle". In *Writing Across Worlds:
Contemporary Writers Talk*. Ed. By Susheila Nasta. London: Routledge,
2004.

Slaymaker, William. "Ecoing the Other(s). The Call of Global Green and Black
African Responses". In *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and
Theory*. Ed. Tejumola Olaniyan and Ato Quayson. London: Blackwell
Publishing, 2007: 684-697.

Wren, Rober M. "The 'Pacification' of Umuofia: *Things Fall Apart*". In *Chinua
Achebe's* Things Fall Apart: *A Critical Companion*. Delhi: Worldview, 2003: 118-157.

---

[1] Garrad has separate chapters on all of these "tropes" of Ecocriticism in his very lucid book on the
subject. In addition to "Pastoral", ""Wilderness', "Dwelling", and Animals", he discusses tropes such as
"Pollution' and "Earth" to urge his readers to reconsider "the idea of 'the human' (*Ecocriticism*, 15).

[2] The death of Okonkwo as a suicide means that to the clan his body, when buried, will pollute the earth.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *No One Writes to the Colonel*: Demythificaiton of El Dorado and the Matrices of Violence and Hunger

Suresh Ranjan Basak, PhD*

Abstract

In almost all his major works Gabriel Garcia Marquez has persistently returned to Colombian / Latin American history and politics, more so, to the miasma of colonial rule and postcolonial disillusionment. The experiences of Colombia's Spanish past, her postcolonial political reality, revolutions ending in autocracy, split of the nation into Liberals and Conservatives, rebellions, violence, civil war, emergence of cocaine empires – all have gone into the making of the plinth of his fiction. No One Writes to the Colonel *bears a strong relevance to the Latin American history of revolutions and independence, and its shift from collective dreams to hellish nightmares in the very passage from colonial engagement to disengagement. The present paper attempts an examination of Garcia Marquez's ironical demythificaiton of El Dorado via the story of a seventy-five year old war veteran whose contribution towards the nation's independence remains unrecognized and unrewarded by the country he once fought for or by the government he often fought against. This paper will also examine how hunger and violence, as new matrices, strongly critique the myth of decolonization again through the colonel who, in a theoretically decolonized space, continues negotiating with the old colonial syndromes for true postcolonial economic and political emancipation.*

El Dorado Past

In his Nobel Address, 1982 Gabriel Garcia Marquez alluded to the European myth of El Dorado as a signifier of the colonial greed that lurked behind and beyond the mission of exploration prompting a massive diaspora of the European invaders and colonizers:

> El Dorado, our so avidly sought and illusory land, appeared on numerous maps for many a long year, shifting its place and form to suit the fantasy of the cartographers… one of the many unfathomed mysteries of that age is that of the eleven thousand mules, each loaded with one hundred pounds of gold, that left Cuzco one day to pay the ransom of Atahualpa and never reached their destination. Subsequently, in colonial times, hens were sold in Cartagena de Indias, that had been raised on alluvial land and whose gizzards contained tiny lumps of gold. ("Nobel Lecture" 87)

El Dorado, meaning "the Golden" in Spanish, is the mythical land of gold located in the South America, constituted of seven golden cities, and ruled by a fabulously rich king who had the luxury of powdering himself with gold dust. This set the Spanish explorers like Francisco Vazquez De Coronado and the English explorers like Sir Walter Raleigh to undertake excruciating expeditions in the 16th century in search of El Dorado. The 16th century was also the period of military conquest in Spanish

*Professor and Head, Department of English &
Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

America, colonization of lands and peoples, evangelization, exploration and mapping of the Americas while the whole process left a trail of acculturation, hybridity and deracination in the wake. The three-century-long Spanish occupation was initiated and expanded on the premises of hypothetical El Dorado which in the course of colonial rule got transformed into an extended metaphor of alien infiltration and overlordship. The myth of El Dorado that prompted, as Garcia Marquez suggested, the first invaders to tear the land up subsequently ended in a myth of usurpation. Like Columbus' "fabulous plants", "mythical animals" and "beings with supernatural power" (qtd. in Palencia Roth "Intertextualities" 42) which improvised a tantalizing myth of the New World, the El Dorado myth came out as a psycho-geographical extension to the invaders' dream of possession and the natives' anxiety of dispossession over everything the myth signified.

The myth, crystallized in the similitude of orientalism, suffered a serious deflation in the heat of colonial cauldron resulting in disenchantment as always was the case in all colonial contact zones. To put it reversely, the demythification of El Dorado began with the rise of postcolonial awareness of accompanying hunger and disillusionment. Historically the passage to postcolonialism yielded a politically rift-ridden, economically emaciated, and socially volatile Colombia where the 'magic' of El Dorado persisted in fiction to compensate a stark reality better known as 'the Colombian reality'. With the colonial El Dorado gone, there stayed back only the relics of El Dorado: an exhausted illusion of the past resources, wastages of revolutions and euphoria of independence deflated by violence and hunger.

Violence: An Updated Colonial Legacy

It might be an irony that the people who won independence through the barrels of guns should inherit a legacy of violence, and that they should learn to live peacefully with violence. In *Living to Tell the Tale* Garcia Marquez re-presents this everyday truth; "Tension", in his country's context, is "another kind of daily bread" (229). This is not the fictional reality but the glaring reality of Colombia where violence in the postcolonial years attained an institutional status. The drama of unrelenting violence and the prose of hunger, La Violencia and La Hambre jeopardized the postcolonial dreams of Colombia. The sixty-year old civil war of 1840, the War of a Thousand Days 1899-1903, the "bogootazo" or Gaitan killing in 1948, the wild growth of indigenous dictators, and their repression, oppression and killings took the toll of millions of Colombians. In Garcia Marquez's words, they were never allowed to have "a moment of rest" from violence or "a moment of serenity". The tragedy is not Colombia's alone, it is the tragedy of all Latin American nations:

> In the meantime, twenty million Latin American children died before the age of one – more than have been born in Europe since 1970. Those missing because of repression number nearly one hundred and twenty thousand… Numerous women arrested while pregnant have given birth in Argentine prisons, yet nobody knows the whereabouts and identity of their children… nearly two hundred thousand men and women have died throughout the continent, and one hundred thousand have lost their lives in three small and

16

ill-fated countries of Central America: Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. ("Nobel Lecture" 88)

The intensity of the nightmare can hardly be measured with figures; still figures suggest the tales not yet told. Against this backdrop of demythified postcoloniality, Colombia had its due share of nightmarish violence. Most of the works of Garcia Marquez grow out of this hot bed of violence and independence mistaken for postcoloniality.

Published in 1958, *No One Writes to the Colonel*, like its predecessor *Leaf Storm* (1955) remaps the old territory of violence and its constituent maladies – all placed in postcolonial time and space. It is the matrix of violence that has given rise to other determinants e.g. hunger that again has foiled the dreams and sacrifices of those who brought the semblance of postcoloniality. Vargas Llosa referred to this implicit matrix of violence as catalyst to the explicit narrative of hunger and disappointment. Rene Prieto agrees with Llosa: "The **Violencia** which tore through Colombia starting in 1948 is suggested, implied, alluded to throughout" ("Communication" 42). Though *No One Writes to the Colonel* is a novel of penury and hunger, it is the political philosophy of violence which, to a large extent, forms the premise of hunger in a cause and effect sequence. The novel begins with the hint of civil war: "For nearly sixty years – since the end of the last civil war – the colonel had done nothing else but wait" (1). The sterile period of hopeless waiting began with the referred civil war. It is suffixed by continual ruptures of violence, repression and militarism, and continuous gliding into the ridges of abject poverty. The decaying Colombian town Macondo serves as the mini stage of this historical shift of emphasis. The colonel, Macondo's signpost of past bravery and present ignominy is its archetypal citizen who has gone through the wars, seen much of its fire, and been now left as a leftover of history. Through him the silhouette of the evil hours is drawn, and the degenerative forces are commented upon. Within the purview of the text as well as within that of the space referred to, unnatural death has become so natural that the colonel has not known natural death for long years: "It's the first death from natural causes which we've had in many years" (5). It is not death but the naturalness of death that has taken leave of Macondo. Though violence is a prerogative of colonialism, institutionalization of violence is not always a postcolonial syndrome. But this syndrome has been dangerously active in postcolonial Colombia and other Latin American countries. For factors within and beyond the national borders, the legacy of revolutionary wars has ended up in militarization of the laws and the rule. Sabas, the colonel's friend bitterly refers to this: "I always forget that we are under martial law" (8). Being under martial law, and that too for regimes on end is not the kind of fate deserved by the colonel and his compatriots.

The fabric of violence and persecution is interwoven in such a way that its foreboding is given to regulate the heart-throb of Macondo and its people. When the poor musician dies, his funeral procession is re-directed by the mayor disallowing it to "pass in front of the police barracks" (08). The ground for such a prohibition is strongly colonial in texture and symptomatic of military arrogance. It is violence that has made the colonel and his wife literally orphan: "we are the orphan of our son" (10). Their only son Augustin was shot dead by police for distributing clandestine

17

literature (10). The father has had the same tragedy, only with the difference that he escapes the catastrophe narrowly:

> The colonel felt the dry snap, articulate and cold, of a rifle being cocked behind his back… And then he saw, close up, for the first time in his life, the man who had shot his son. The man was directly in front of him, with his rifle barrel aimed at the colonel's belly. (57)

An inch away from the corridor of death, the colonel visualizes the state-sponsored assassin of a police whose bullet is as indemnified as his gung-ho verdict. The intermittent references to midnight curfew and its infiltration into private life serve as the hangover of violence and repression. The curfew tolls when the colonel finishes scanning the newspapers for news of veteran pension (23). The curfew tolls again when the town sinks in deluge, more locally, when a leak begins somewhere in the colonel's house (29). The curfew tolls finally when the chilly night air gets laden with the anguished asthmatic breathing of the colonel's wife (64). The fabric of private life is thus re-adjusted with the texture of the state-run measures aimed at curbing civil discontent and disobedience. The sample cases of mayoral interference, trigger-happy policing and routine curfew stretched over the length of the novel produce an effect of ironical rebuff to the postcolonial aspirations of Colombia via Macondo.

The matrix of violence is seen to operate here in a cause-effect sequence; the harsher the repressive measures are, the subtler are the ways of disobedience. Newspapers run under the sword of Democles; censorship allows only the half-truth, the tampered one, leaving the other half closed for the readership. This has given rise to clandestine literature – a secret circulation of what has been censored. These are the papers that contain the censored items, as the colonel's doctor friend puts it: "That's what the newspapers didn't print yesterday" (16). Except the beneficiaries of independence, almost all the characters – the colonel, doctor, Augustin's friends are involved in it. Garcia Marquez, in the narrator's role, postulates here the supplementary ills of prolonged militarism viz. emergence of underground press, insurgency, counter-insurgency and escalation of civil war: "The colonel had assumed as much. It was a summary of events in the country, mimeographed for clandestine circulation. Revelations about the state of armed resistance in the interior of the country" (16). Caught between the distant uproar of "armed resistance" and the local reality of a police state, the anaemic Macondo gets transformed into a mini Latin America in *No One Writes to the Colonel*. This is how the novel, Mario Vargas Llosa observes, embodies a "dry, harsh, asphyxiating reality" – "the understated daily horror of life in America" ("Amadis" 57).

Matrix of Hunger: When Stones Are Put to Boil

No one Writes to the Colonel is an epic of demystified postcolonial hunger – the hunger that eats up the bonemarrow of independence. An important shift can be observed in Garcia Marquez's treatment of thematics from *Leaf Storm* to *No one Writes to the Colonel*. The focus is transferred from traditional aristocracy, central in *Leaf Storm*, to the dialectical positioning of the nauveau-rich bourgeoise against the

lumpen proletariat in *No one Writes to the Colonel*. A new matrix emerges besides violence: it is the matrix of hunger or in other words, the matrix of money or absence of money. Mario Vargas Llosa puts it in flat terms of peso:

> Here the monetary unit is peso and everything in life is referred to money, everything is measured and conditioned by money: Don Sabas' situation, the colonel's drama, his wife's anxieties. Here we know what things "cost": a rooster can cost 900 pesos, a pair of shoes 13 pesos, a watch 40 pesos. Social hierarchies, happiness and unhappiness, things are valued in monetary terms: this did not happen in *Leaf Storm*. (qtd. in Gutierrez Mouat 19)

What Vargas Llosa overlooks is the distance between peso of illusion and peso of reality – the dispossession and possession of peso that makes all the difference, and that promotes the hierarchial gap between the petitbourgeoise and the proletariat. As the narrative unfolds, the figure 900 proves only hypothetical and tentatively dysfunctional, the reason being, the rooster never gets sold at 900 pesos nor does the watch at 40 pesos except that the figures prolong the colonel's illusion and his wife's exasperation. Characteristically enough, Garcia Marquez employs here the socialist matrix of hunger to measure the depth of the colonel couple's penury and patience compounded by the domestic and political economy of Macondo in a postindependence conundrum.

Poverty: A Materialistic Autopsy

The novel begins with a grim snapshot of poverty. One October morning the colonel opens the coffee can to find "only one little spoonful left". He removes the pot from the fire, pours half the water – the amount meant for his own coffee – on to the earthen floor, and then scrapes "the inside of the can with a knife until the last scrapings of the ground coffee, mixed with bits of rust" (1) falls into the pot. When his wife is given the cup, she asks about his own, and it follows a sweet lie: "I've had mine. There was still a big spoonful left" (1). The morning ritual of coffee thus sets the matrix of poverty in operation in the novel.

The seventy-five year old war veteran colonel lives with his ailing wife in a house that has already been mortgaged. The whitewash of the worn-out walls is flaking off; water leaks through its palm-thatched roof when it rains. The colonel earns nothing. He has been waiting for war pension for the last fifteen years but it never comes (23). Poverty has been an old companion to the family but it has settled rather menacingly after the death of their son Augustin nine months ago. To feed the three – the couple and the rooster – they have to sell away Augustin's sewing machine. Their smallest savings have long been exhausted. Nothing valuable is left in the household that can be sold. Nobody would buy the clock or the picture. The only thing that remains to be sold is the rooster, but the couple is divided as to whether Augustin's fighting cock should be sold or fed as the third hungry mouth. Against this background of proletarian domestic economy Garcia Marquez furnishes more pungent details to draw a disappointing vision of postcoloniality.

The few articles of everyday use that they still possess have gathered similar subaltern dust. The umbrella eaten away by the moths looks like "circus clown's umbrella". The colonel bitterly remarks: "The only thing it's good for now is to count the stars" (4). The pair of shoes the colonel uses are so dog-eared that his wife advises him to throw them away: "Those shoes are ready to throw out." The colonel feels desolate: "They look like shoes of an orphan. Every time I put them on I feel like a fugitive from an asylum" (10). The remaining pair, the patent-leather ones, are "monstrosities" of "forty years old". The comb the colonel's wife uses has some teeth missing. The colonel does his shaving without a mirror, just feeling the touch of skin. The detachable collar of his shirt is irremediably torn, and so, unfit for a tie. As they have no money to buy new clothes, the colonel's wife makes cyclic use of worn-out clothing and performs "eternal miracle of creating an apparel out of nothing" (18). In fact she tailors a shirt of "three different colors of materials except for the collar and the cuffs" for her husband knowing perfectly well that it would give him a carnivalesque appearance. The physiology of poverty thus drawn serves as a preliminary to the inner drama – the psychology of hunger, submission and defiance epitomized in the struggle of the trio – two subhumans and an animal "pal".

Poverty: From Physiology to Psychology

The novel is overtly built on the physiology of poverty, then expanded beyond the digestive tract of "fungus and lilies" to psycho-behavioural patterns of the characters – patterns induced and defined by poverty and politics. The passage from physiology to psychology of poverty is asterisked by some animate and inanimate determinants, for example, sewing machine, antic clock, non-saleable picture, coffee, corns, carnivalesque dress, letter of pension, rooster etc. As signposts of subaltern life, these objects overreach their commodity value and percolate down through the biological crevices of everyday existence.

The colonel's sarcasm "Life is the best thing that's ever been invented" (42) presumably connotes a kind of life that cannot possibly be further stretched: miserable and unbearable. His earlier gimmick "Nobody dies in three months" (33) can be viewed as a forced mockery of biological truth – a lullaby to postpone hunger and the accompanying morbidity. He unconvincingly tries to share with his wife a dream he himself half-believes: beyond the test span of three months there lies the golden time. Life driven from pillar to post – from nine-month-long post-Augustin impoverishment to the distant prospect of hypothetical solvency to be brought by the ever illusive pension and the rooster (if it wins at all) is indeed not the promised life to a veteran's family. Both the colonel and his wife know well that the ritual of body – its paraphernalia of needs has started parading over their souls. Poverty has already taken its toll over dignity; mortgage of house, debt to the doctor and purchase on credit from grocers have brought them down to the level of beggars. A paradigmatic study of the aforesaid determinants would show how the lack of physiological input has gone to produce psychological output of the couple.

Of the determinants, the rooster has been developed in the novel as a catalyst of poverty besides the other roles assigned to it. To the colonel, it is a legacy left by Augustin, and so, to be taken care of. To his wife, it is an "ugly rooster" that looks

like a freak; "his head is too tiny for his feet" (9). The couple cannot feed themselves, let alone the rooster. Still the colonel is determined to keep it, and his wife to get rid of it. He considers it "the best in the district" and "worth about fifty pesos" (8), and she considers it an "expensive illusion" with the premonition that "when the corn is gone we'll have to feed him on our own livers" (10). Feeding it on their own livers has airs more of a suppressed psychological agony than of a biological truth. The proceeds of Augustin's sewing machine subsist them for nine months. During this long stretch of time they have "spent that money penny by penny, parceling it out between their needs and the rooster's" (18). Now in October, the time the narrative begins, they are left with "only two twenty-cent pieces and a ten-cent piece". The rooster, a symbol of resistance and fight for the colonel and Augustin's friends, is still a third mouth to feed. The colonel's wife spends the last dregs of the cents on the rooster's corn. She tells her husband in a mood of resignation: "Buy the corn. God knows how we'll manage." A time comes when they glide further into the abyss of pennilessness where the distinction between the humans and the animal becomes a virtual non-entity. With no other alternative left open, the couple shares the corn given to the rooster by Augustin's cock-loving friends. When the corn mash is served, the colonel wants to know: "Where'd it come from?", the woman answers: "From the rooster." Though sympathetic to her husband's plea, she can neither afford nor accept the extra burden of an ominous bird that feeds on their food and peace of mind. She even considers it a sin: "It's sin to take the food out of our mouths to give it to a rooster" (33). It is therefore evident that "food" / fodder, thus linked with "sin", gets extended to other premises beyond physiology – premises of ethics, religion and psychology.

With the colonel visibly doing nothing to scrape a living, the saleable items all sold out, and the few remaining cents all spent, the colonel's wife takes the most painful decision of her life to ask for a loan from Father Angel on their wedding rings. Father blatantly refuses saying: "it's a sin to barter with sacred things" (45). It is not that the woman is unaware of it but circumstances have forced her to think of such a heartless sale. The anguish, pain and helplessness incorporated in it can only be understood in terms of subaltern psychology of poverty. This is a desperate culmination of her older anguish: "we're rotting alive" (4).

The eternal conflict between dignity and poverty tends to manifest in the couple. The colonel may not have the prosperity of the class of Sabas but he enjoys the social dignity of a war veteran. Still the dignity is cowered every moment in the face of Sabas's affluence or in the act of borrowing. The colonel feels small in presence of wealthy Sabas; the latter's window offers an altogether different view of rain (38); his coffee sweetener tablets impregnate the colonel's saliva with a sad sweetness (39); his three-hour-wait for Sabas fetches only a double "I'll be right back" (48-9) but no attention. He finds it demeaning to go on borrowing: "He had to grit his teeth many times to ask for credit in the neighborhood stores" (31) or as he says: "I'm tired of going around asking favors" (29). His every step towards mitigating hunger is met with a compromise with his innate pride and dignity. His pragmatic wife snipes at his false notion of dignity: "You're dying of hunger. You should realize that you can't eat dignity" (46). But ironically she herself suffers from an equal sense

of dignity and is equally apprehensive of her neighbours' knowledge of their poverty:

> 'So now everyone knows we're starving.'
> 'I'm tired,' the woman said, "Men don't understand problems of the household. Several times I've had to put stones on to boil so the neighbors wouldn't know that we often go for many days without putting on the pot.' (45)

The new paradigm of poverty – stones on to boil is not in the least a mime of culinary art; it is a middle class attempt to conceal proletarian hunger, more so, to salvage the left-over dignity perforated by disgraces. While doing so the colonel's wife tries to deceive not only her neighbours but also her own self. This exposes a psychology at the crossroads of desperation and helplessness arisen out of her / their incapacity for accepting the indignity of poverty and lack of initiative to win over it. Though she talks of being "fed up with resignation and dignity" and vows "to give up affectation and pretense" (46), the text provides little evidence beyond ad hoc arrangements to postpone hunger. Nor does it provide any foreseeable reason to hope against hope in the years they are yet to live out. The situation at hand seems to be compounded by their old age, loss of Augustin, illusion of pension and lastly, the liability of a rooster. Though the colonel informs of his being hired in a clarinet factory, it seems another piece of mockery by the seventy-five-year-old old man. Even before the death of Augustin, for forty years they have been living in privation; Augustin's death has only exacerbated it. The illusion of pension has been transformed not only into a routine dream but also an ethereal asset to mortgage and to borrow on. The rooster, despite its synonymity with Macondo's hope and defiance, happens to increase a burden too heavy for his old shoulder to carry. To Sabas, this is pure "madness" and "idiotic stubbornness" (40-1). So in the face of all rhetorical defiance of hunger, hunger remains instrumental in synthesizing the couple's physiology and psychology.

Dialectic of Wealth and Poverty: The Species of Sabas and the Colonel

"Man is what he eats": formulated Hegelian disciple Ludwig Feuerbach. Marx contradicted it saying: "Or doesn't eat" (Woodfin and Zarate 7). *No One Writes to the Colonel* focuses on a decaying postcolonial society with two distinct sets of people: who eat, and who cannot afford to eat. Both from the viewpoints of Hegelian "ideas" and Marxist "matter", the entire society seems to be divided and placed antithetically: Sabas typifying the burgeoning petit-bourgeoise and the colonel the local gentry dwindling away to proletarian status. They are dichotomous not only in terms of "matter" or money but also in terms of "ideas".

In an otherwise poverty-stricken Macondo Sabas is a metonym for affluence. His appearance has been carved out to befit his stature: "A small man, corpulent, but with flaccid flesh, he had the sadness of a toad in his eyes" (38). Short in height, fat in diameter and fragile in skin, Sabas has a rare proximity to a toad with suggestion of melancholia and ugliness. He wears a ring with a black stone next to his wedding band – the band that tied him to an imbecile and neurotic wife. The colonel's wife

gives a more accurate picture of Sabas and his rise to the present status: "There is my friend Sabas with a two-story house that isn't big enough to keep all his money in, a man who came to this town selling medicines with a snake curled round his neck" (46). Virtually a street-man, a quack-like medicine man, Sabas has climbed up the ladder of prosperity with no magic lamp except that of corrupt liaison with the new rulers, particularly the mayor. His access to surplus money is the outcome of a strategic alliance with the forces of corruption rampant in most postcolonial space. The doctor makes a caustic reference to "his (Sabas's) infamous patriot pact with the mayor" which the credulous mayor believes to have been done to save his skin. The doctor adds: "And that's how he could buy the property of his fellow-partisans whom the mayor kicked out at half their price" (55). He tells the disbelieving colonel: "Don't be so naive. Sabas is much more interested in money than in his own skin" (55). To be interested in money is not a crime but if the means to amass it is the usurpation of others, then it is surely a crime. Sabas suffers from no moral scrupple to cheat his friend the colonel by raising the expectation of the couple as regards the price of the rooster which he declares as high as nine hundred pesos. The colonel's wife, boarded on the tentative sale, mentally organizes "the budget for the next three years without their Friday agony" (51). But when Sabas is offered to buy it, he not only reduces the price but also thinks of making money out of a re-sale: "I have a customer who might give you four hundred pesos" (54). The symbolic town that has given him plenty of money to roll on, plenty to staff his safe full, and build a two-storied magnificent building is a town "rotten" to him: "This town stinks" (38). What stinks is not the town but Sabas himself. He belongs to the species of the Latin American leaders who left their revolutionary legacy to enter into an entente with the centre of power first to escape persecution, then to have access to wealth. The text corroborates the shift: "It was Sabas, the godfather of his dead son, the only leader of the party who had escaped political persecution and had continued to live in town" (7). His rise to power and wealth speaks of a stinking socio-political reality. He is not alone to reap the fruits of revolutions in terms of peso; he has a bandwagon of compatriots who promise a heaven at the time of election and finds it convenient to forget when it is over. These are the people who have done their duty "by making a thousand pesos a month in the Senate for twenty years" (46) at the cost of those who have grown poorer and penniless in the corresponding time. Against the central presence of the senators, the mayor and Sabas, the peripheral presence of the colonel couple, "Augustin's companions – workers from the tailor shop", the dead musician, the women "in the poor neighborhood" (8), "the whole town – the lower class people" (62) confirms the dialectic of wealth and poverty formulated throughout the novel. The dialectic is based on "the same story as always", as the colonel's wife sums up, "we put up with hunger so others can eat. It's the same story for forty years" (67). For forty or eighty, the archetypal Macondo reaches no economic synthesis beyond the widening premises of thesis and antithesis. If it ever reaches anywhere, it is a highly abortive synthesis expressed in the colonel's monosyllabic "shit":

> 'There are still forty-four days left to begin to think about that,' the colonel said.
> The woman lost her patience.

'And meanwhile what do we eat?' she asked, and seized the colonel by the collar of his flannel night shirt. She shook him hard.

It had taken the colonel seventy-five years – the seventy-five years of his life, minute by minute – to reach the moment. He felt pure, explicit, invincible at the moment when he replied: 'Shit.' (69)

This desperate departure from the colonel's life-long cultivated savoir-faire is the admission that one who stinks is not necessarily the one who eats shit.

Works Cited

Atwood, Margaret. "A Slave to His Own Liberation." The New York Times Book Review, 16 September 1990: 1, 30.

Garcia Marquez, Gabriel. *The General in His Labyrinth*. Trans. Edith Grossman. New Delhi: Penguin, 1991.

---. *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. New York: Harper & Row, 1970.

---. *Living to Tell the Tale*. Trans. Edith Grossman. London: Jonathan Cape, 2003.

---. "Nobel Lecture, 1982." Trans. Marina Castaneda. *Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Powers of Fiction*. Ed. Julio Ortega. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990. 87-91.

---. *No one Write to the Colonel*. Trans. J. S. Bernstein. New Delhi: Penguin, 1996.

Gutierrez Mouat, Ricardo. "The Economy of the Narrative Sign in *No One Writes to the Colonel and In Evil Hour*." *Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Powers of Fiction*. Ed. Julio Ortega. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990. 17-33.

Planecia-Roth, Michael. "Intertextualities: Three Metamorphoses of Myth in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*." *Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Powers of Fiction*. Ed. Julio Ortega. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990. 34-60.

Prieto, Rene. "The Body as Political Instrument: Communication in *No One Writes to the Colonel*." *Gabriel Garcia Marquez: New Readings*. Ed. Bernard McGuirk and Richard Cardwell. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987. 33-44.

Vargas Llosa, Mario. "Amadis in America." Trans. Seren Hall. *Garcia Marquez*. Ed. Robin Fiddian. London: Longman, 1935. 56-62.

Woodfin, Rupert, and Oscar Zarate. *Introducing Marxism*. Ed. Richard Appignanesi. UK: Icon, 2004.

Frost of Pessimism

Binoy Barman, PhD*

Abstract

Four-time Pulitzer winner Robert Frost (1874-1963) was arguably the most popular poet in the United States during the twentieth century, and still he retains his popularity not only in US but among the international audience, as a nature or pastoral poet with modern philosophical vision. His universal appeal is due to his sublime art, an act of clarification of life, which, without even simplifying the truth, makes him accessible to everyone. He drew his images in poetry from the New England countryside and his language from New England speech. Although his images and voice often seem familiar and old, his observations have a tinge of skepticism, which may not be evident in the first reading but need several attempts for discovery. In being both traditional and skeptical, Frost's poetry provides a link between the English poetry of the 19th century and the American poetry of the 20th century. In the present article I have tried to establish Robert Frost as a pessimistic poet. I have examined a wide range of poetry composed by him and garnered instances for my thesis. I have argued that Frost's poems appear simple at first glance, but reveal themselves to be subtle and enigmatic upon further scrutiny. His poetry harbors pessimism at the core. As I have observed, Frost's pessimism has been expressed through the themes of death, decay, destruction, frustration, anxiety, loneliness and agony. Existentialist theme like absurdity of life also features prominently in his poetry.

1. Introduction

Pessimism denotes a tendency to expect bad happenings, i.e. a tendency to see only the negative or unpleasant aspects of all things. It also refers to a doctrine that all things become evil or that evil outweighs good in life. Pessimism may generally be identified with a mood of negation expressed towards life and world. It is an ideology which prevents a person from getting too complacent in thinking and actions. An artist who cherishes a pessimistic philosophy loses faith in scriptural truths and builds a spiritual world of his own replete with complex equations of life. However, pessimism is not negating truth per se; rather it is a careful leap towards truth, to clutch at the phenomena in deeper level. Being pessimistic, one only avoids the hype of wholesale consolations and takes shelter in some personal contemplation of practical value. He becomes a solitary sage, preferring night to day, darkness to light, for the comparative advantage of self-enlightening meditation.

Robert Frost, presumably the most influential American poet in the twentieth century, was a pessimist in his poetic vision. A master artist of nature depiction, with richness of imagery and symbolism, Frost delicately incorporated pessimism in his poetry. He cannot be termed plainly as a nature or pastoral poet, as the sense applies to William Wordsworth and Edmund Spenser. He is a great reader of nature with deep philosophical vision, embedded in a bleak aesthetics. His poetic compositions are congruous, as it were, with the rhythm of nature, but what sounds ironic is that his search for symmetry ends in asymmetry, to his dismay. His depiction of nature is

*Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, Daffodil International University, Bangladesh

loaded with an acute sense of gloom. He is found to be more concerned with negative forces in nature rather than the benign ones, or he discovers darkness in light – sun-spots in the sun. Beneath the bright surface of his poetry, a condensed darkness is at work. As readers delve deep into his verses, they are sure to feel the chill of pessimism – a dark world wrapped in the beauty of nature. His poems are like sugar-coated pills, which give a sweet taste initially but leave bitter feeling in tongue finally.

In this paper I have attempted to bring into light Frost's pessimistic philosophy, collecting instances from a good number of poems. This is an odyssey of finding truth – the true nature of a poet. As I have observed, Frost's pessimism has been expressed through the themes of death, decay, destruction, frustration, anxiety, loneliness and agony. Existentialist theme like absurdity of life is also evident. There is reason to be convinced that Frost was entirely conscious of the complexities of modern life and his poetic lines hit upon the very crisis of contemporary times. Kantak's (1990, p. 166) remark is enlightening in this respect:

> Frost's world has so little to do with the early bucolic tradition and he so much involved with the sophisticated world of man's knowledge that there is no question of his juxtaposing a modern complex world with a simplified construct for the purpose of the kind of illumination that the pastoral affords.

Thus Frost's pessimism is rooted in the crisis of modern life, floating in the void of meaninglessness. The invocation of urbanity as an antidote to the spiritual crisis hits a snag, which inspires the poetic persona to take shelter in nature, which is however not devoid of danger. Therefore the groan of helplessness of life becomes intense in Frost's poetry, defying any romantic escape.

2. Surface Meaning and Deep Meaning

It is often said that Frost's poems are easy to read but not easy to understand. Almost all of his poems contain a secret message. That message has to be extracted diving beneath the surface level. At first glance things look nice and orderly, but once the surface has been scratched, the real complexity surfaces. His poems are rather elusive. Under the apparent simplicity of his verses lurks a hidden commentary on both life and nature. Frost uses simple words to describe complicated phenomena. He utilizes ordinary techniques to cause an extraordinary effect, which is mainly brought through the expert use of symbols, images, irony and paradox. For Frost, the hidden meaning is shadowy – in fact, too shadowy to figure out:

> But whenever the rood came white
> The head in the dark below
> Was a shade less the color of night,
> A shade more the color of snow.
> ("They Were Welcome To Their Belief" 9-12)

Frost creates deeper meaning in an extremely subtle way. The deeper meaning entails the deeper realization of life and the deeper realization entails a dark reality.

With a process of unfolding secrets, readers meet pessimism at the end of tunnel. Frost is conscious of the whole process. In nature lyrics, Frost presents a comparison between the outer scene and the inner psyche, to use his own phrase, 'outer and inner weather' (Baym 2003, p. 1879). Geddes (1996, p. 46) makes the same observation:

> Initially few readers progress in their appreciation beyond the deceptively simple surfaces of his poems. But Frost writes symbolic poetry; to arrive at certain basic truths about life, he explores feelings and thoughts obliquely through the use of simple bucolic incidents. Poems as immediately accessible as "Stopping by Woods", "Mending Wall", and "Birches" possess levels of meaning that are dark and profound – like subtle literary parables.

The observation is echoed by Stanford, with an explanation (1999, p. 1190):

> Frost's poems often seem deceptively simple because he draws on familiar subjects, often depicting scenes from the natural world as well as people with easily recognized strengths and failings. Frost's language, while powerful and evocative, is easily accessible to most readers and so it is easy to overlook the way his poems often depend on ambiguity for their impact.

At the deep level the poet sprays the frost of pessimism in the atmosphere around him. The readers get a stunning effect as if from the tune of pipe played by a snake charmer. Frost's poems often contain multiple layers of meaning, just more than two, where unwrapping one layer leads to the other, deeper and deeper, continually. On writer's part, it is a great craftsmanship of encoding meaning in hierarchy. There is no end of mystery. Resolution of one mystery just opens the door of another.

3. Pessimistic Themes

3.1. Horror of Death

The theme of death figures prominently in the poetry of Frost. Death is the end of human life and the thought of it gives rise to a bizarre mood of sadness. It is the unavoidable, though unwelcome, destination of life. All human hopes and aspirations are lost in death so nothing can be more tragic than it. Frost sometimes seems to be obsessed with morbidity and mortality. He proclaims the incomprehensibility of death with his powerful prophetic incantations, making readers somber and heaving deep sigh in their private moments. In "The Death of the Hired Man" readers, with horror, discover the dead body of farm laborer Silas sprawling pitifully on chair at a lonely corner of the house of Warren and Mary. The 'miserable sight' fills the eyes of any sensible reader with tears. In "The Impulse" section of "The Hill Wife" the loving sporty girl finds her 'finalities besides the grave'. Why are all these deaths, unexpected and untimely, after all? No answer on writer's part. Only the readers are thrown into a fearful fantasy.

Frost's other poems including "In a Disused Graveyard", "The Onset" and "The Witch of Coös" witness the horror of death. It is felt as the most irresistible destructive force. The death reference can also be found in "The Wind and the Rain",

"Out, Out–", "Departmental", "The Quest of the Purpled-Fringed", "The Draft Horse", "A Leaf Treader" and "Not Quite Social". In "A Leaf Treader" the fallen leaves beckon men to death. In "Not Quite Social" death is consequential, coming through self-approval:

> Anyone is free to condemn me to death –
> If he leaves it to nature to carry out the sentence
> I shall will to the common stock of air my breath
> And pay a death tax of fairly polite repentance. (Stanza 4)

3.2. Pangs of Loneliness

The loneliness of human life has found a spacious room in Frost's poetry. "Desert Places" stimulates images of depressing loneliness. In the poem the speaker is a man who is traveling through the countryside surrounded with a peculiar feeling of abandonment and isolation. The word 'desert' itself is associated with harsh living conditions. There animals are smothered in their lairs and the speaker is too 'absent-spirited'. The closing line 'To scare myself with my own desert places' gives a message of self-intimidation. He is scared of his own loneliness, his own desert places. A paradoxical element may be found in the poem. The speaker views a snow-covered field as a desert place. 'A blanker whiteness of benighted snow' causes an effect of numbness. Whiteness symbolizes emptiness, nothingness and death. He recognizes that this winter place is like his life. He has let loneliness creep into his life and totally take over like the snow had crept up on the plain to silently cover it up.

The pangs of loneliness are also evident in the poem "The Most of It". The poem begins with the man, a nameless individual, in a mysterious, unidentified location. He is surrounded by a lake, by 'tree-hidden' cliffs, by a 'boulder-broken beach'. The poem ends in disappointment. The animal is unwilling and unable to provide the man with the companionship he needs, and the whole event proves nothing but an anticlimax: '- and that was all.' The readers look back and hear the cry of loneliness again:

> He thought he kept the universe alone;
> For all the voice in answer he could wake
> Was but the mocking echo of his own
> From some tree-hidden cliff across the lake. ("The Most of It" 1-14)

The pangs of loneliness may be felt in "Bereft", "An Old Man's Winter Night", "Ghost House" and other poems. Frost's poetic approach to loneliness emanates from his pessimistic philosophy of life. Montgomery (1962, p. 148) makes it clear:

> Frost's view of man's nature, then, is consistent throughout his
> poetry. Each man is, in a sense, a stranger in this world, and so he
> remains. His is not to question why he is alone or why the world
> seems to be against him.

3.3. Decay and Destruction

29

Nothing is permanent in this world; everything is subject to decay and destruction. This aspect of nature makes Frost ponder to provide him with necessary poetic artifacts. In "Nothing Gold Can Stay" he observes that golden moments fade away in life as in nature. 'Leaf subsides to leaf' implies autumn, when the leaves begin to turn gold and fall to the ground. The poem also illustrates the loss of innocence. As the seasons change, life progresses and innocence can no longer be sustained. The color gold represents the process of ageing which is associated with overwhelming feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. We can hear the symphony of decay in the rhymed lines:

> Nature's first green is gold,
> Her hardest hue to hold.
> Her early leaf's a flower;
> But only so an hour.
> Then leaf subsides to leaf.
> So Eden sank to grief,
> So dawn goes down to day.
> Nothing gold can stay. ("Nothing Gold Can Stay")

Human body is also subject to decay and deformation. Human beings cannot retain their youth and beauty for ever. We may find regrets of lost beauty in "Provide, Provide" (1-3):

> The witch that came (the withered hag)
> To wash the steps with pail and rag
> Was once the beauty Abishag.

In "The Wood-Pile" we see that noble life dedicated to the welfare of downtrodden humanity finds salvation at the cost of its own doom. Life is seen as a pile of wood in the deserted forest – 'The wood was grey and the bark warping off it / And the pile somewhat sunken'. It has been lying untouched for many days there, waiting to be used by the people needing warmth. The wood-pile seeks (39-40):

> To warm the frozen swamp as best as it could
> With the slow smokeless burning of decay.

The desolation of decay becomes unbearable in "Directive". Nobody is ready to discover a doomed house in a doomed place. It does not seem to be a reality at all as life appears to be only a shadow. Frost writes:

> Of detail, burned, dissolved, and broken off
> Like graveyard marble sculpture in the weather,
> There is a house that is no more a house
> Upon a farm that is no more a farm
> And in a town that is no more a town.

In "Wind and Window Flower" flowers wilt and love rots. In "The Oven Bird" the midsummer and mid-wood bird is reluctant to sing as 'leaves are old and that for flowers'. The nature has changed with a sign of poverty – 'a diminished thing'. Life is ultimately removed from sweet music. It becomes barren and lackluster.

The tragic aspect of life, with decay and destruction, is also prominent in his other poems including 'Home Burial', 'The Fear', and 'A Servant to Servants'. In "Fire and Ice" he draws a picture of the destruction of the universe. Ultimately man can stand nowhere. He is doomed to be destroyed.

3.4. Bitter Frustration

Human life is full of frustration. Frustration comes from unfulfilled dream, making life replete with sighs and regrets. In "The Road Not Taken" the speaker was bound to choose a path in the forest but he later looked back and thought what could have happened if he had choosen the other path. He became nostalgic thinking the untrodden course. He could not go back to the initial juncture and change the consequences any more. So memory and rumination accompanies him now. It is a harsh reality of life that the passed time cannot be made otherwise and decision cannot be revoked. There is no return and no way to correct the errors of life. Once chosen, set for ever. It evokes a mood of sadness. Just hear the sigh:

> I shall be telling this with a sigh
> Somewhere ages and ages hence:
> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
> Took the less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference.

Hamilton (1969, p. 18) says, "The air of loneliness, or irretrievable error that hangs over the poem is a beguiling means of disguising its essentially inert bleakness." Readers may also discover a sentiment of indecision in the poem. Indecision is the trait of modern life. Man cannot decide what to believe, what to do, what course to take. They are always in a fix of dithering.

Even his most celebrated poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" which starts rather in a happy mood is not devoid of the tone of despair. Its welcome note of solitude is only apparent. In depth it illustrates a dark complexity. The poem captures images of loneliness and indecisiveness by selective word choice. For instance, woods are depicted as dark and deep, as inviting as death. It is a place of isolation. The speaker also uses images of darkest evening and frozen lake to solidify the mood of isolation. The speaker is riding into the darkness on an unknown journey, only to find himself caught between the woods and frozen lake. In a sense, he is caught between old patterns and new possibilities. The woods represent the unfamiliar while the frozen lake represents the familiar. The speaker is afraid to venture out into the unknown. In general, people live in fear of change. A tune of frustration should not be missed out when the speaker says he has promises to keep before he sleeps. Many things are yet to be accomplished but the days are numbered. Promises and their unfulfilment make the person pensive. The last stanza answers the question why he stopped by the woods. He stopped because he was attracted by their dark beauty. And the repeating final line takes the readers beyond the literal meaning inviting them to read 'sleep' in the meaning of death. (DiYanni 2004, p. 529)

The sorrow of unfulfilled dream is grossly noticed in the poem 'After Apple-Picking'. The orchard owner has filled many barrels with apples while one barrel is

still half-filled and there is little hope that it will be filled up this season around. 'And there is a barrel that I didn't fill / Beside it, there may be two or three / Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.' (3-5) This gives rise to a feeling of frustration. Human minds are never satisfied with hundreds of achievements. They want more and more and it never ends. Mismatch of expectation and fulfillment is a source of great agony for humans.

3.5. Failed Communication and Relation

Frustration in human life may also emanate from the inability or breakdown of communication and the broken relation. Humans try to communicate with each other but they may fail to do so in the long run. Nothing is more disappointing than being unheard by the person at whom words are targeted. "Mending Wall" focuses on the communication problem in human society. A big wall separates humans from one another. The poet thinks that this wall cannot be crossed. It is insurmountable. And so he concludes with an ironic remark: 'Good fences make good neighbors.' People become separated without even realizing it because they become so caught up in what is happening in their lives. The fact that they do not take notice of one another creates a place that becomes more and more divided by differences.

The poems "Putting in the Seed", "Snow", and "A Time to Talk" bear the evidence of agony from failed communication. The frailty of human relationship has been expressed with allegory of flower and breeze in the poem "Window and Window Flower". At the end of some intimate relation, two are separated.

> But the flower leaned aside
> And thought of naught to say,
> And morning found the breeze
> A hundred miles away. ("Window and Window Flower", last stanza)

Hamilton (1969, p. 21) explains Frost's theory of separation in the following terms:

> …Frost was popularly admired for his promotion of ideals of separatedness, of self-reliance. Many of his nature poems concern the intrusion of one natural phenomenon upon another, and many of his lyric and dramatic poems present situations in which withdrawal, separation, standoffishness, are positively recommended. At his best, Frost's doctrines of self-reliance shaded into very moving confrontations of solitude, of alienation, of a low-spirited sense of exclusion, settling foe tough, short-term objectives.

3.6. Ugly and Unruly Nature

Frost regards nature as a beautiful but dangerous force, worthy of admiration but nonetheless fraught with peril. Nature does not offer unmixed blessings for humans but also curses. Nature can be ugly and unruly. We may find the ugly face of nature in "Design". Frost utilizes a triangle of symbols to drive his purpose home. Spider, moth and heal-all – the three agents of nature, which are all of the same color

'white', portray some evil design in nature. According to Jarrell's (1962 p. 89) evaluation, this little albino scene is too widely catastrophic to be accidental, too impossibly unlikely ever to be a coincidence: accident, chance, statistics, natural selection are helpless to account for such designed terror and heartbreak, such an awful symbolic perversion of the innocent being of the world. Nature completes an arrangement of killing on hill-top. There will be blood-shed and unheard cry. The evil design of nature is explicit (13-14):

> What but design of darkness to appall? –
> If design govern in a thing so small.

Much of Frost's poetry is concerned with how people interact with their environment, and though he sees the beauty of nature, he also sees its potential dangers. "Once by the Pacific" starts with a storm, but it turns out to be more than just a storm. It even gets mysterious in the lines that follow; it talks of 'dark intent'. People should prepare for further danger, because ocean will be more furious. The apocalyptic message is clear (9-14):

> The cliff in being backed by continent;
> It looked as if a night of dark intent
> Was coming, and not only a night, an age.
> Someone had better be prepared for rage.
> There would be more than ocean-water broken
> Before God's last 'Put out the Light' was spoken.

The destructive force of nature can be discerned in other poems like "Into My Own", "The Flood", and "Atmosphere". "In Flood" we notice how water brings inconveniences to human habitation. In "Atmosphere" we see how wind causes havoc on earth. The poet writes (1-3):

> Winds blow the open grassy places bleak;
> But where this old wall burns a sunny cheek,
> They eddy over it too toppling weak

The nature is often hostile towards men, as Frost sees it. We feel helpless 'when the wind works against us in the dark, and pelts with snow'. ("Storm Fear" 1-2) The helplessness of life in nature is the central theme of "The Runway". The ugly face of nature is also evident in "Afterflakes" and "There are Roughly Zones". Frost's sight is often caught by the dark side of nature and his poetic compositions tend to highlight it. Notice how he depicts trees:

> One of my wishes is that those dark trees,
> So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze,
> Were not as 'twere, the merest mask of gloom,
> But stretched away unto the edge of doom. ("Into My Own", first stanza)

A bleaker description of trees is available in "The Sound of Trees": 'Some day when they are in voice / And tossing so as to scare / The white clouds over them on.' (21-23) We may notice his diction ('shadow', 'black') while describing a mountain in "The Mountain" 1-4): 'The mountain held the town as in a shadow. / I saw so

much before I slept there once: / I noticed that I missed stars in the west, / Where its black body cut into the sky.' Frost's depiction of nature culminates in ambiguity and evasiveness. Kantak (1990, p. 173) notes:

> The ambiguity and evasiveness generally charged to Frost's account seems to be conceived by him as an inevitable effect of the nature of reality and our efforts to understand it.

3.7. Predicaments of Human Civilization

Human civilization has grown out from the blood and bones of the tamed and defeated. The victors have occupied lands and claimed them to be their own, displacing the natives. It is the unnoticed part of the history of the world. The sensible poetic mind cannot but feel the sorrow of displacement and its concomitant depression. The gift of conquest comes from a sea of tears. "The Gift Outright" churns out the result of European aggression on the American land (14-16):

> To the land vaguely realizing westward,
> But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced,
> Such as she was, such as she would become.

The tragic story of subjugation and annihilation of the Red Indians has been portrayed in "The Vanishing Red". The aggression of Europeans on the native Indians is also conspicuous in "Flight". He voices against the repression on minority, allegorically, in "A Minor Bird". Frost is against any kind of coercion and exploitation. His mind attains great aversion to suppressing even a small entity. He clearly says: 'And of course there must be something wrong / In wanting to silence any song.' ("A Minor Bird" 7-8)

Human intervention has spoiled the sanctity of nature. We can check "Good Hours" for a ready reference. Frost also identifies a lack of harmony between man and nature in "The Door in the Dark". The poet's mind is only wounded by the troubles humans cause to nature. He feels embarrassed.

Even science cannot save humans from embarrassment. Science solves problems of material dimension, but the questions of spiritual and moral nature remain unresolved. This is a further point of frustration for Frost. Lynen (1962 p. 185) notes:

> We have seen that his special way of depicting nature is a means of dealing with the problem which science posed for the modern poet. It therefore appears that his pastoralism provides a means of dealing with the similar problem. It is that of preserving within the disorganized world created by science the sense of order and unity a meaningful life requires. In his pastorals, Frost's dominant motive is to reassert the value of individual perception against the fragmenting of experience resulting from modern technology. They thus deal with one of the most fundamental concerns of twentieth-century thought. It is an issue which has had no small effect on Eliot's and Pound's efforts to develop a concept of

culture. One sees it too as a motive in Yeats' thought. It is the central theme of countless modern works of social criticism.

3.8. Existentialist Absurdity

The poem "West-Running Brook" illustrates the existentialist theme of meaninglessness in life. The brook rolls on towards west in a mood of indifference. The flow of water is the metaphor of life. It is not all fair but foul, as the poet observes: 'Flecked the dark stream and flecked the darker pool / Below the point, and were at last driven wrinkled.' The poet is at times terrified with the flow, as 'It seriously, sadly, runs away / To fill the abyss' void with emptiness.'

Humans cannot be happy with their designated place in nature with their severely constrained capacities to understand it. This incapacity comes out of their own nature, particular psychophysical shape, to use a notion employed by philosopher Immanuel Kant. Man is detained in the prison of the world. 'Man acts like a poor bear in a cage. / That all day fights a nervous inward rage.' ("The Bear" 13-14) In the poem the speaker contrasts bear and man, asserting that man's philosophical inquiries and scientific studies can make him a blind, comical, and pathetic creature. Humans cannot understand nature, understand even themselves. They cannot go deep into reality. What remains for them to do at last is lying on the sea-shore and counting the waves. For the poet:

> They cannot look out far.
> They cannot look in deep.
> But when was that ever a bar
> To any watch they keep?
> ("Neither Out Far Nor In Deep" 13-16)

Humans are destined to suffer the physical and mental pains because of the very nature they have. They look around them and feel the big void. Gradually their existence melts into nothingness. Human mind is a constant watcher but without ever discovering any meaning of life. 'He is watching from the woods as like as not.' ("The Smile" 12) Human ears hear the call of mysterious nature but they stumble and lament in the pursuit of deciphering the message. The poet provides the metaphor:

> Far in the pillared dark
> Thrush music went –
> Almost like a call to come in
> To the dark and lament. ("Come In" 17-20)

Frost observes nature but cannot decide anything about it. He cannot utter anything with certainty. It is the modern man's predicament – a post-modern dilemma. He is held from speaking – 'No expression, nothing to express'. ("Desert Places" 12) The futility of life on earth has taken effect in the following lines:

> 'Tis is the essence of life here,
> Though we chose greatly, still to back
> The lasting memory at all clear,

35

> That life has for us on the wrack
> Nothing but what we somehow chose;
> Thus are we wholly stripped of pride
> In the pain that has but one close,
> Bearing it crushed and mystified. ("The Trial by Existence", last stanza)

According to Frost, human life is not heroic in an epic sense. It is a life of staying – a momentary stay against confusion. Life goes on struggling helplessly against the sinister forces of nature. It is to be continued without any provision of complacency. "This solution is certainly not transcendental. This is not a life in conformity with nature, nor a life striving to be merged into nature. On the contrary, it is rather an endless battle against the decaying flux which nature, lacking mind, is continually victim to and therefore continually illustrates. Because the flux endures as long as existence endures, the battle against it is endless." (Baym 1993, p. 150)

3.9. Eternal Oscillation:

Strain in modern life with all its complexities is depicted in Frost's poetry. Modern life has restlessness, among other things, which is met in the poem "Birches". 'And life is too much like a pathless wood / Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs / Broken across it, one eye is weeping / From the twig's having lashed across it open.' (44-47) Life swings back and forth, up and down, like a birch twig. This oscillation is captured by the lines:

> That would be good both going and coming back.
> One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

The cycle of going up and down is also evident in "In Hardwood Groves". The heave of life never ends. Is there any way to get out of it? Frost's answer is vague. His "Directive", for example, with its rich words and images, directs a reader to escape the present that is 'now too much for us' by remembering a past time and place, which memory has 'made simple by the loss / of detail.' The poem concludes with symbolic lines about the value of returning to one's roots: 'Here are your waters and your watering place. / Drink and be whole again beyond confusion.'

4. Dark Truths

Frost looks at nature through a tinted glass of pessimism and picks up the darker truths for himself and for audience. He depicts nature in such a way that after reading his poems, readers feel gloomy rather than ecstatic. Reading Frost evokes just the opposite feeling of reading Wordsworth, whose poetry is always associated with joy and pleasure. Frost intentionally injects a dark message in the apparent glamour of words. The readers however have to labor a bit to decipher the message. Frost approaches reality in his own reserved way to understand it with pessimistic view. He is transformed into a prophet of darker truths. It is now almost a universal claim about Frost. When President John F. Kennedy dedicated the Frost Library at Amherst in 1963, he stressed this very thought: "If Robert Frost was much honored during his lifetime, it was because a good many preferred to ignore his darker truths." (Gerber 1966, p. 139) Frost's poetry runs between two main attitudes –

36

direct facing of inner loneliness and intent exploration of sinister order and possible chaos. Bower (1963, p. 129) maintains:

> […] all these attitudes have their place in the large Frostian armory
> of defense against a world often inscrutable, and often frightening
> when too well understood.

Frost discovers truth in its uncertainty, subjectivity and transience, perceptible in existentialist philosophy. He has no faith in absolute truth of Descartes, Spinoza or Hegel, but his position regarding truth is rather like Hume, Nietzsche and Sartre. Absolute knowledge is not possible and all human statements lack certainty. He stood between Platonic idealism and Emersonian transcendentalism. (Thompson 1962, p. 25) We meet *Frostian truth* in "A Boundless Moment": 'We stood a moment so, in a strange world, / Myself as one his own pretense deceives; / and Then I said the truth (and we moved on). / A young beech clinging to its last year's leaves.' (last stanza) In "Beech" (10-12) we are told: 'Thus truth's established and borne out, / Though circumstanced with dark and doubt-- / Though by a world of doubt surrounded.' Elsewhere, he defines truth as:

> One drop fell from a fern, and lo, a ripple
> Shook whatever it was lay there at bottom,
> Blurred it, blotted it out. What was that whiteness?
> Truth? A pebble of quartz? For once, then, something.
> ("For Once, Then, Something" 12-15)

Frost's poetry propagates a dark reality through a mood of despair and depression. He is adepter at portraying the dark aspects of life than the bright. His metaphors are intended to describe a sinister view of life and nature. The darker aspects of Frost's poetry have been portrayed through rich symbolism, vivid imagery and clever diction. Frost's darker lines reflect his pessimistic philosophy of life. The biographical note in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (p. 1901) reveals the true character of Frost and his poetry:

> Even Frost's adoring public was often hoodwinked by his pithiness
> into missing the menacing forces into work beneath the surface.
> Astute readers saw an altogether different sensibility, however, one
> possessed of a propensity toward darkness and terror, in which is a
> momentary stay against confusion.

5. Making of Pessimism

Robert Frost developed a pessimistic philosophy in his early adolescence and cherished it throughout his life. This philosophy is largely attributable to the turmoil in his personal life. In his life he suffered severe pangs and pains. He lost his father when he was only eleven and his mother struggled to maintain the family. He got admitted into a college but left it to earn his own bread. He got negative signals many a time from the girl he loved -- Elinor White, whom however he later married. He witnessed the death of two of his children – daughter Marjorie and son Carol, and the demise of his wife. His sister Jeanie was mentally sick and stayed at a hospital in

Maine until she died. He got into poultry business but failed. His health broke down and had to change weather from time to time. He had to go through considerable financial strain. During his days of distress and depression, he even contemplated suicide. In his poetic career he also faced many hostilities and adverse comments which also helped him to form a negative view of the world. He was exposed to the seamy side of life and got chilled. He realized that the world is not heaven; and when we talk of heaven we are also not sure of it. All these harsh realities pushed him towards a pessimistic philosophy. The inward and outward burnings characterized his life and art with a touch of negativity. Hamilton (1969, p. 23) comments:

> And here is perhaps the most interesting of all the Frostian paradoxes: wholly alive to the ugly, unloving elements in his own nature, he now and then depicted these elements with maximum accuracy, without any self-forgiving glossing-over or moralistic condemnation.

Frost died in Boston in 1963 amid his illness. He liked poetry and led a life of a poet throughout. He never refrained from writing poetry. He did not band with the fashionable structuralist and modernist movements of his time. He was a lonely walker, following the great traditions of pastoralism and romanticism. He was traditional in his themes but modern in his handling of these themes. He brought about novelty in nature depiction with his philosophical conviction. He elevated aesthetics to an unimaginable altitude, with his fabulous craftsmanship. He did not go with the flow. He wanted to be different and became so. He allegorically narrates the situation in the poem "The Road Not Taken" (18-20):

> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference.

For Frost, any poem is the result of enthusiasm passed through an idea. When he felt any enthusiasm for writing, he would constrain it with pessimism. And when the enthusiasm was shaped into an idea it lost its glee; it would become the music of pain. His poetry is the shining moon that cannot hide the scars on its face. Frost is a magician, but his is black magic. With the touch of his magic wand, light becomes gloom blooming aplenty in human soul. Eventually, his poem begins in delight but ends in wisdom – wisdom of a seasoned soul. That is his poetic theory, to which all his poems stick. Lionel Trilling rightly calls Frost a poet who terrifies and compares him with Sophocles, who wrote great tragedies in Greek literary history. Sweeney and Lindroth (1965, p. 79-80) summarizes the philosophy of Frost in the following terms:

> He was loved by the people chiefly because he made plain to them the terrible things of human life; they felt, perhaps, that only a poet who could make plain the terrible things could probably give them comfort.

6. Conclusion

Frost is a constant searcher of truth. For all his descriptive realism, he is temperamentally a poet of meditative sobriety. The truth he seeks is in the heart of humanity and in common objects. (Perkins and Perkins 1999, p. 1310) Robert Frost is s social philosopher in verse, rather interested in dark truths. There is rarely any poem written by Frost which does not bear the scar of pessimism, explicit or implicit. Readers may browse through the pages of 'A Boy's Will', 'North of Boston', 'Mountain Interval', 'New Hampshire', 'West-Running Brook', 'A Further Range', 'A Witness Tree', 'Steeple Bush', 'A Masque of Reason' and 'A Masque of Mercy' to explore his dark world. Although Frost concentrates on ordinary subject matters, his emotional range is wide and deep, and his poems often shifts dramatically from a tone of humorous banter to the passionate expression of tragic experience. We must acknowledge that many of his poems start with an optimistic tone but inevitably ends in pessimism. I shall term it the 'Frostian structure of poetry'. Frost is a pessimist in the core of his poetic entity. His pessimism is not however aimless. The void runs towards fulfillment. Ellmann and O'Clair (1988, p. 242) note, "Like so many new England writers – Hawthorne and Melville among them – he is a student of the darkness, aware of its encroachments, yet hopeful that it can, by art and understanding, be overwhelmed." Frost is placed beside Buddha, the great sage of sorrow, as his reincarnation in the twenty first century poetic scene. Ultimately darkness is removed by cosmic light when the state of nirvana is achieved. He accepts pain or pleasure with indifference but expects more of the former than of the latter, saying that he makes a virtue of his suffering. Hopkins' (1990, p. 176) remark is remarkable in this regard: "His daemonic drive has pushed road-blocks out of the way, or run them over – the disappointments, the deep sunk grief, the terrible moments of self-doubt." Frost utters with an air of resilience:

> The hurt is not enough:
> I long for weight and strength
> To feel the earth as rough
> To all my length.
> ("To Earthward" 29-32)

Works Cited

Baym, Nina. "An Approach to Robert Frost's Nature Poetry". Ed. Manorama Trikha
, *Robert Frost: An Anthology of Recent Criticism.* Delhi: Ace
Publications. 1990.

Baym, Nina. Ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature.* Shorter sixth
edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 2003.

Brower, Reuben A. *The Poetry of Robert Frost: Constellations of Intention.* New
York: Oxford University Press. 1963.

DiYanni, Robert. *Literature: Approaches to Fiction, Poetry and Drama.* Boston:
McGraw, 2004.

Ellmann, Richard and Robert O'Clair. Eds. *The Norton Anthology of Modern
Poetry.* Second edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1988.

Ferguson, Margaret, Mary Jo Salter and Jon Stallworthy. Eds. *The Norton Anthology
of Poetry.* 4th edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1996.

Geddes, Gary. Ed. *20th Century Poetry & Poetics.* 4th edition. Oxford and New
York: Oxford University Press. 1996.

George Perkins and Barbara Perkins. *The American Tradition in Literature.* 9th
edition (Shorter edition in one volume). Boston: McGraw, 1999

Gerber, Philip L.. *Robert Frost.* Bombay: Popular Prakashan. 1966.

Hamilton, Ian. Ed. *Robert Frost: Selected Poems.* London: Penguin Books. 1969.

Hamilton, Ian. *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry in English.*
Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1996.

Hopkins, Vivian, C. Robert Frost: Out Far and In Deep. In *Robert Frost: An
Anthology of Recent Criticism.* Delhi: Ace Publications. 1990.

Jarrel, Randall. "To the Laodiceans". *Robert Frost: A Collection of Critical Essays.*
Eaglewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1962.

Kantak, V. Y. "Poetic Ambiguity in Frost". *Robert Frost: An Anthology of Recent
Criticism.* Delhi: Ace Publications. 1990.

Lynen, John F. Frost as Modern Poet. In *Robert Frost: A Collection of Critical
Essays.* Eaglewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1962.

Nelson, Cary. *Anthology of Modern American Poetry*. New York: Oxford University
Press. 2000.

Stanford, Judith A. *Responding to Literature.* Third edition. California: Mayfield
Publishing Company. 1999.

Sweeny, John David and James Lindroth. *The Poetry of Robert Frost: a Guide to
Understand the Classics.* New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1965.

Thompson, Lawrance. "Robert Frost's Theory of Poetry". *Robert Frost: A
Collection of Critical Essays.* Eaglewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
1962.

Harmony, Violence and Humanity: Reminiscing Partition 1947 in Light of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*

Rama Islam*
Mohammad Shafiqul Islam**

Abstract

15 August1947 is an eventful day for the Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and the followers of other religions in postcolonial India. India disintegrated because of the violence of Hindu-Muslim and Muslim-Sikh conflicts during the partition of British India. Subsequent to the declaration of Partition, the Indian State of Punjab divided into East Punjab and West Punjab by the most appalling communal butchery that India had ever seen. Train to Pakistan (1956) by Khushwant Singh deals with the pain and horror of the haunting memory of partition that brought disharmony in harmonious Mano Majra, a small village in the Punjab. This article seeks to shed light on the historical events of partition in conferring legality to the politics of communal and national animosities and hostilities. The Partition of India was, on the one hand, a violent consummation of a long process of mutual demonization and dehumanization of the Hindu and Muslim extremists. This paper also explores the gruesome communal massacres that occurred in the Punjab and plunged the lives of the peace-loving people into despair along with an examination of love and humanity that saved hundreds of lives at Mano Majra.

Introduction

Train to Pakistan (1956*)* by Khushwant Singh is one of the most remarkable novels portraying the shocking historical tale of India-Pakistan partition of 1947, when Britain declared India and Pakistan as independent countries. Though political leaders had a dream to achieve freedom, the British colonialists divided India into India and Pakistan and brought fractured freedom. The novelist depicts the realistic picture of the social situation like the savagery, meaninglessness of human life and the sufferings of the refugees' experiences. The novel ends with the note that love and humanity stop violence and bring back harmony at Mano Majra.

In Indo-Anglican literature the partition literature is a discipline of art. And the story of *Train to Pakistan* is based on the trauma of partition and transcended sensationalism. As Devendra Satyarthi put it in *Indian Writing in English*, "No literature based on hate and prejudice can really be great. It was a drama of degradation and shame, a drama of human decay, showing how two minds of the two communities were poisoned by the dogma of the two-nation theory" (qtd. in Iyengar 324).

Historical Perspectives

India is a land of many religions and many ethnicities. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism originated here and in the 1st millennium AD, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity arrived and mingled into the region's diverse culture.

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh
**Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, Bangladesh

India's culture, tradition and heritage are remarkable for the harmonious relationship among the people from all these religions. Jaswant Singh claims in *Jinnah*: *India-Partition-Independence*:

> India is a cultural ocean, rivers of many faiths empty here; in that same vein Islam, too, is a part of those cultural layers, absorbed by what exists, mixing then with the rest to become an inseparable part of the marvel that is India. (13)

The social relationships among various religious communities were cooperative without any severe conflict despite religious distinctions. The culture and unity of ancient India were distorted by the foreign colonizers from different races. Dravidians' blood still flows in the vein of Indians. Alexander the great from Greece was the first well-known settler in north-western India. From the early second millennium AD, Islam had come in India predominantly with the invading Islamic forces and became a part of Indian cultural landscape. Hinduism faced a very hard competition with Islam when Asians and Persians descended upon the Indian subcontinent carrying in their hands the flag of Islam. Edmund Burke says in *Speech on the East India Bill*, "The Asiatic conquerors very soon abated of their ferocity, because they made the conquered country their own" (52). The Mughals created imperial system which stamped upon the Indian people "oneness of rule and sameness of political experience" (12). The coming of European merchants started on 17 May 1498 with a Portuguese mariner, Vasco da Gama. In 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted to a body of English merchants under the title "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the Indes" (493). All these European nations created a considerable population of mixed Indo-European blood.

Background to Partition

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772 – 1833), Keshab Chandra Sen (1938 – 1884), Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820 – 1890), Dayananda Saraswati (1824 – 1883) and Swami Vivekananda (1863 – 1902) created in Indian mind a desire for liberation in different times. By the end of the nineteenth century several patriotic movements had started in India and secular nationalism and *Sarva Dharma Sambhava* (equal respect for all religions) were India's "official ideology" (Varshney 56). Religious nationalism, associated with both Hindus and Muslims, led to the decolonization of Indian Sub-continent in 1947. The Muslim League held the idea that Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations. As Ranjit Guha writes, "Indian nationalism achieves its entitlement through the systematic mobilisation, regulation, disciplining and harnessing of 'subaltern' energy" (qtd. in Gandhi 111). As the Congress was the promoter of the demand for national movement, some Muslims generally kept themselves detached from nationalist movement due to their relative backwardness in education. Sir Syed Ahmed showed indifference and the Congress intentionally adopted the policy of "divide et impera" (Sinha and Bannerjee 658). But Maulana Azad confessed, "Every fiber of my being revolted against the thought of dividing India on communal lines. I could not conceive it possible to tolerate this, unless he

(Jinnah) has rooted out the spirit of Islam from every corner of his being" (qtd. in Tharoor 107).

The first official expression of the policy, the "divide et impera" policy, may be noticed in Lord Minto's reply to the deputation of Muslim leaders led by Aga Khan in 1906. He promised them what is known as 'Separate Electorate' (Sinha and Banerjee 658) which enlarged the political separation between the Hindus and Muslims and assured that their political rights and interests as a community would be safeguarded. Following the divide-and-rule policy, the British classified people according to religion in India. In 1916, with a joint scheme of reforms Congress placated the Muslim League by accepting the system of separate electorate. The growing strength of the nationalist movement made it necessary for the British Government to listen to the demands of the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted to solve the communal problems by the principles of tolerance and sacrifice, the essentials of Indianness. Some Muslim leaders rejected the conditions of *ahimsha* (non-violence), and the Europeans secretly supported them. Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876 – 1948), the leader of Muslim League, strongly protested the policy of "Hindustan for the Hindus" (673). The Second World War offered a new political opportunity to India, widened the gulf among three parties – the British Government, the Congress and the League. 'Hindu-Muslim unity', the principal proponent and voice of separation between the two, has been declared firstly by Gopal Krishna Gokhale and subsequently by Sarajini Naidu. Refusing this transcendental idea Jinnah developed the theory of "two nations" and got support from some Muslim leaders. He asserted, "Muslims of India were a separate nation", and "India was not one nation" (J. Singh 7). In the presidential address at the Lahore session of the League held in March 1940, Jinnah emphasized:

> […] The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures …. To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one as a numerical minority and other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a State. (Sinha and Banerjee 680)

Maulana Azad was different from Jinnah, as Mohammed Sarwar said to Randy Diggs in an interview, "Jinnah claimed to speak for India's Muslims and to assert their claims to bring a separate nation, while Maulana Azad worked in the secular (Jinnah said Hindu-dominated) Indian National Congress to remind his fellow Muslims where their homeland really was" (qtd. in Tharoor 107). British colonial policy, divide and rule, formed a gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims. The evil effects of communal representation were so patent that even the author of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report could not justify it:

> Division by creeds and classes means the creation of political camps organized against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans and not as citizens; and it is difficult to see how the change from this system to national representation is ever to occur. (Sinha and Banerjee 681)

On 10 May 1942, raising the voice against the British, Mahatma Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan*: "Leave India in God's hands, or in modern parlance, to anarchy. Then all parties will fight one another like dogs or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement" (qtd. in Sinha and Banerjee 683). The resolution of the Congress Working Committee was confirmed by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on 8 August 1942, and it was declared:

> [...] the immediate ending of British Rule in India is an urgent necessary, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom. (684)

Thus the political partition of India became inevitable after the bloody riots of 1946-47 between two communities in both India and Pakistan. Violence began in Calcutta on 16 August 1946, sparked by Jinnah's call for 'Direct Action'. It then spread to the Bengal countryside, where the main victims were Hindus. The turmoil was gradually spreading in different places of India and Pakistan.

Partition of India: The Effects

On 3 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten published a statement outlining his solution to India's political problem. It provided for the partition of India and of three disputed provinces – Bengal, Assam and the Punjab. The Mountbatten plan was accepted by the principal political parties. East Bengal and West Punjab decided to join Pakistan; West Bengal and East Punjab preferred to remain within the Indian Union. British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act which led to the end of British rule and the partition of India on 15 August 1947.

The momentous political changes would not solve the political problem but would create a permanent problem in the simple and regular life of the innocent Indians. Acharya Kripalani, the President of the Congress, issued a statement on 14 August 1947: "it was a day of sorrow and destruction for India" (qtd. in Azad 225-26). There were hardly any riots between different religious communities before partition at their inhabited places. Partition created antagonism among Indians and drew artificial boundaries across this sub-continent. It stimulated bloodshed, displacement, identity crisis and horror. The Indian state of Punjab was created in 1947, when the Partition of India split the former Raj province of the Punjab between India and Pakistan. The mostly Muslim western part of the province became Pakistan's Punjab Province; the mostly Sikh and Hindu eastern part became India's Punjab state. Many Hindus and Sikhs lived in the west, and many Muslims lived in the east, and so the partition saw many people displaced and much inter-communal violence. The process of partition had claimed many lives in the riots. In the Punjab communal riot began with murder, killing, looting, conversion and cruelty. The Hindus and the Sikhs of East Punjab attacked Muslim villages through burning houses and slaughtering innocent men, women and children. In West Punjab Muslims were haphazardly killing men, women and children of Hindu and Sikh communities. According to Maulana Azad, "The whole of the Punjab, East and

West, was becoming a graveyard of destruction and death" (228). The largest migration in the sub-continent started after 1947: Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were forced to flee their homes and became refugees. More than 5 million Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India and the Muslim inhabitants migrated to Pakistan. It was one of the most traumatic experiences for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike. Millions of refugees came to India from West Punjab and millions left East Punjab for Pakistan. Millions of them were killed in communal violence. Thousands of refugees from West Punjab occupied the houses which were left vacant by Muslims. "Ghost trains" full of severed breasts of women would arrive in each of the newly-born countries from across the borders. Women, especially, were used as instruments of power by the Hindus and the Muslims. It is referred in *Freedom at Midnight* by Salman Rushdie: "The women were stripped, repeatedly raped, then paraded shaking and terrified through the city to the Golden Temple where most had their throats cut" (341).The process of partition had claimed many innocent lives.

Train to Pakistan and Partition

Train to Pakistan reflects the painful memories of riot after the partition, the emotions that people experienced when they were forced to abandon their homes in both India and Pakistan because of their religious beliefs. The novel also concentrates on the love-relationship between a Sikh boy and a Muslim girl and the humanity of Iqbal, Juggut and Meet Singh. The political leaders had sown the seeds of communal suspicion. But there is the presence of humanity based on love that raises hope. Khushwant Singh, the writer of the novel, focuses on two contrastive pictures of human life in the novel: dissonance and harmony.

Mano Majra before Partition

Khushwant Singh is obsessed with the struggles of refugees who suffered much psychologically. The deplorable condition of the refugees had an adverse effect on Mano Majra, a tiny border village on the banks of the Sutlej with a railway bridge spanning the river between India and Pakistan. Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims had lived together in this village peacefully and in relative harmony for centuries. It was always known for its railway station and the train was very important to the people. Only two trains, one from Delhi to Lahore in the morning and one from Lahore to Delhi in the evening, were scheduled to stop here for a few minutes. When the train ran smoothly, there was harmony among people of all religions and noise of the train was a blessing to them. The peace-loving people of this village used to start their daily work with the sound of the train and "As the midday express goes by, Mano Majra stops to rest and men and children come home for dinner and *siesta* hour" (5). After having lunch, men took rest under the *peepul* tree and sat on the wooden platforms and talked and dozed. After evening when the whole village became silent, the whistling and puffing of engines, the banging of buffers, and the clanking of iron couplings were heard all through the night. The Sikhs and the Muslims prayed every morning and evening and both these communities were leading their daily lives peacefully and harmoniously.

In *Train to Pakistan* Singh also portrays problems of the principal characters, which they faced everyday. The protagonist Juggut Singh, the village gangster, who was in love with a Muslim girl Nooran, redeemed himself through his good deeds. Being a Hindu, he also saved many Muslim lives. Their love-relationship was also a sign of peace and harmony among Sikhs and Muslims during colonial period. The separation between Jugga and Nooran at night indicates the separation between two communities. Jugga told Nooran: "I will never come to see you again. If Allah forgives me, I will never do it again" (16). Love and humanity saved the lives of innumerable people from pathetic deaths.

Mano Majra during Partition

The gruesome incidents, the riots, plunged the harmony into dissonance, peace into turmoil, unity into disintegration and colonial world to postcolonial world. Singh writes, "It had always been so, until the summer of 1947" (6). The harmonious, friendly and brotherly relationship among various religious groups turned sour. Animosities started and irrationally Sikhs were slaughtering Muslims, Hindus were butchering Muslims and Muslims were burning Hindus alive. Violence was inflamed with reports, of the refugees, of the indiscriminate murder, rape. The rioting mobs were wrecking homes, shops, temples and mosques. Exceptionally the Muslims of Mano Majra were still living in peace with the Sikhs. "No one in Mano Majra even knows that the British have left and country is divided into Pakistan and Hindustan" (24), though some were familiar with Gandhi and Jinnah. After partition when train came, the station was crowded with Sikh and Hindu refugees from Pakistan or with Muslims from India.

Two innocent humanists like Iqbal Singh, the social worker, and Jugga, the hero, were also seriously affected by the Partition of 1947 and they were falsely blamed and arrested by the inspector. Iqbal had a confusing identity which was in his name 'Iqbal' and 'Singh'. In the midst of the struggle Iqbal arrived from a modern urban centre in India to organize and mobilize the villagers for social activism. The Punjabi rural folk had mixed feelings about Iqbal. He was much concerned about the train and observed that a train from Pakistan was full, "From the roof, legs dangled down the sides onto the doors and windows. The doors and windows are jammed with heads and arms" (47).

Iqbal tried to make the people understand the significance of freedom, human rights. The people were so simple that independence had little meaning to them because they thought they would not be benefited from it. Iqbal put in, "Why, don't you people want to be free? Do you want to remain slaves all your lives?" (51) The Muslim man replied that "Freedom is for the educated people, who fought for it. We were slaves of the English, now we will be slaves of the educated Indians – or the Pakistanis" (52).

Mano Majra after Partition

Because of the social and political changes in India the voice of reason disappeared and violence emerged. Gradually the train became irregular and it

represented the symbol of death, disharmony and disintegration. The villagers were stunned and the daily routine was getting hampered. Abandoning chores, they were on the roofs looking towards the station when the first ghost train came. Peace began to disappear and Meet Singh and Imam Baksh were anxious about the bad times. The reality struck fear into their simple hearts when the Muslims of Mano Majra were ordered to vacate the place and leave immediately. In fact people had a hunch that something will happen and the station became "a black wall" and "the village was stilled in a deathly silence" (88). The sight of so many corpses of men and women and children produced a cold numbness to the people. There was no peace anywhere and it was "just a big heap of ashes and bones. There were many sculls lying about" (102). Victims from Hindus and Sikhs started coming from Pakistan for the refugee camps and Muslims of some villages started leaving for the refugee camps somewhere else. Khushwant Singh writes:

> The riots had become a rout. By the summer of 1947… ten million people – Muslims and Hindus and Sikhs – were in flight. By the time the monsoon broke, almost a million of them were dead, and all of northern India was in arms, in terror or in hiding. (qtd. in Iyengar 498)

Mosques were desecrated by the slaughter of pigs in the premises and copies of the holy Quran were torn up by infidels. A Sikh refugee from Pakistan says, "Never trust a Mussulman" (K. Singh 128). Women were the victims of circumstances as "A lot of women are being abducted and sold cheap" (73). It was known from Sikh refugees that in Pakistan Sikh women were, "jumping into wells and burning themselves rather than fall into the hands of Muslims. Those who did not commit suicide were paraded naked in the streets, raped in public and then murdered". (128)

The Sikhs of Mano Majra became angry with the Muslims because there was much *zulum* (oppression) in Pakistan. M. J. Akbar, India's one of the brightest journalists, denounced Jinnah as having "sold the birthplace of the Indian Muslims for a bowl of soup" (qtd. in Tharoor 109). The Sikhs were saying: "Let them come! We will give them such a beating they will not dare to look at Mano Majra" (K. Singh 134). The Lambardar advised them to go to the refugee camp while this trouble was on.

Thus political Partition created disharmony between two communities. Though the people of Mano Majra wanted to live together peacefully without any communal feeling, they felt forced to separate because of religious differences. Nooran was different in this respect and so she was reluctant to go to Pakistan. Religion could not stop her feelings of love for a man from another community. But her father told her, "Hundreds of thousands of people are going to Pakistan and as many coming out. Those who stay behind are killed" (136). She went to Jugga's mother to say about their affair and *Sat Sri Akal*. The communal spirited mother of Jugga said, "Get out, you bitch! …You, a Muslim weaver's daughter, marry a Sikh peasant! Get out, or I will go and tell your father and the whole village. Go to Pakistan! Leave my Jugga alone" (138).

Suddenly a dozen trucks with soldiers, Muslim and Sikh, appeared. One of the trucks was full of Pathan soldiers and the other full of Sikhs. The Pathan soldiers

also joined the Muslims. For a few minutes Mano Majra echoed: "All Muslims going to Pakistan come out at once. Come! All Muslims. Out at once" (141). Instantly the Muslims began to come out of their homes to go to the refugee camp of Pakistan. That night the helpless victims went from house to house – sharing, talking, crying, and swearing love and friendship.

The ghost train, without any lights and sound, came from Pakistan to halt at Mano Majra. The dead bodies in the train were described: "Some were without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, many women's breasts were slashed" (151). As bad messengers, crows began to caw and the sky was soon full of kites and vultures, birds of prey. There was a massacre and hundreds of corpses were floating on the Sutlej. People were waiting for the permission of the government to go to war against Pakistan. But the Muslims in Pakistan were stopping trains and killing everyone, old, young, women and children. The aggressive refugee from Pakistan said:

> For each Hindu or Sikh they kill, kill two Mussulmans. For each woman they abduct or rape, abduct two. For each home they loot, loot two. For each trainload of dead they send over, send two across. For each road convoy that is attacked, attack two. That will stop the killing on the other side. It will teach them that we also play this game of killing and looting. (157)

There was intimidated silence till Meet Singh, the priest, said haltingly: "I was going to say, what have the Muslims here done to us for us to kill them in revenge for what Muslims in Pakistan are doing. Only people who have committed crimes should be punished" (157). It was the small voice of sanity, reason and humanity for harmony. Some villagers felt very uncomfortable thinking of massacre against Muslims and some were ready to be guided by him. A boy also said, "Tomorrow a trainload of Muslims is to cross the bridge to Pakistan. If you are men, this train should carry as many people dead to the other side as you have received" (159). For the communal sense Hindus and Sikhs were ordered to prepare for an attack on their neighbour on the next train to Pakistan.

Love and Humanity

Singh portrayed a realistic picture of the social situation during those times. The political issues became religious issues. Partition imposed the human tragedy on Indian Punjabis (Sikhs and Muslims) when another ghost train without lights and sound was supposed to go to Pakistan from India. Communal men like Malli decided to kill Muslims and throw them away into the river. They also decided that they would burn the homes of Muslim families in Chundunnugger and the Sikhs would occupy the homes of Muslims. They also planned to send the Muslims to Pakistan by the night train. In such madness, humanity – or the simple uncalculating love of a Sikh for a Muslim – asserted itself and saved the situation. The hero of the novel Jugga, a self-confessed *budmash* (rogue), realized that the attack on the train must mean hazards to his Muslim beloved. He was against the massacre and made up his mind to prevent the attack at the risk of his own life.

In response to Iqbal Singh's query about the condition of Mano Majra, Meet Singh said, "Trainloads of dead people came to Mano Majra. We burned one lot and buried another. The river was flooded with corpses. Muslims were evacuated, and in their place, refugees have come from Pakistan" (175). There would be an attack in night train for killing the Muslims of Mano Majra and Chundunnugger. Iqbal was repeatedly requesting Meet Singh to stop the plan of mass-destruction saying, "You cannot let this sort of things happen! Can't you tell them that the people on the train are the very same people they were addressing as uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters?" (177). We find the same humanist concern in Raja for the Muslims in *Clear Light of Day* by Anita Desai. Raja says, "Bim, there will be more riots – killing – they'll slaughter every Muslim they can find – anywhere." (94)

When the people realized that this particular train would be carrying their own previous friends and neighbours, they too were looking helpless. At night, according to the plan, the 'avengers' tied the rope "stiff as a shaft of steel", and awaited the coming of the train in tense anticipation. But Jugga managed to get near the rope and slash it away:

> He went at it with its knife, and then with his teeth. The engine was almost on him. There was a volley of shots. The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the centre as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan. (190)

The plan for vengeance of the Hindus against the Muslims by exploding the train was foiled by Jugga, whose beloved Nooran was also on the train. He came forward to save many lives out of his strong sense of moral responsibility. The novel ends with a sense of relief and excitement. Religious difference did not stop Juggut Singh from the sacrifice to save the train crowded with Muslims going to Pakistan. The Partition caused killing, raping, looting and so on, but there is a ray of optimism in a crushed world because of love and humanity.

Conclusion

Train to Pakistan analyses the biggest cause of the partition that forced people to give up everything they previously had including their old identities. Thus India gained freedom and lost unity. Partition also attests that man is essentially sincere, committed to upholding humanity to survive and sustain it. The most traumatic moment of the twentieth century in India was the political partition which brought a permanent separation between Indians. Mohammed Sarwar said in an interview with Randy Diggs, "Muslims didn't partition the country – the British did, the Muslim League did, the Congress Party did. There are more Muslims in India today than in Pakistan" (qtd. in Tharoor 111). He said this as the clarification in response to a young Hindu boy's charge against the Muslims to have been responsible for partition. Following the decision of partition the Punjab was swept by the inter-communal killing, the awful experiences of the innocent people, the flight of the refugees, the train massacres, the rape and abduction of women from both communities. The violence during the communal riots of the Punjab was against humanity. The barbaric and sadistic incidents after partition have been skillfully and

resourcefully delineated in the novel *Train to Pakistan*. Khushwant Singh was also successful in proving the praxis that the fundamental goodness lies in the heart of humans and it was revealed by some characters who came forward to protect humanity and saved human lives from another tragedy and massacre.

Works Cited

Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2005.

Burke, Edmund. *Speech on the East India Bill*. Dhaka: Friends' Book Corner, 2006.

Desai, Anita. *Clear Light of Day*. New York: Harper, 1980.

Gandhi, Leela. *Postcolonial Theory, A Critical Introduction*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Iyengar, K. R. Srinivasa. *Indian Writing in English*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 2005.

Lapierre, Dominique, and Larry Collins. *Freedom at Midnight*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 2009.

Singh, Jaswant. *Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co, 2009.

Singh, Khushwant. *Train to Pakistan*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2007.

Sinha, Narendra Krishna, and Anil Chandra Banerjee. *History of India*. Calcutta: Amiya Ranjan Mukherjee, A. Mukherjee & Co. Private Ltd.: 1967.

Tharoor, Shashi. *Riot*. New Delhi: Viking, 2001.

Varshney, Ashutosh. *Ethnic Conflic and Civic Life*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Gestaltic Approach in Translation Theory: An Attempt to Minimize the Gap between Foreignization and Domestication of Culture in Translation

Shah Ahmed*

Abstract

Ever since Richard Hoggart coined the term 'Cultural Studies' in 1964, the term has been gradually applied sociologically, politically, economically or critically by celebrating either large forms (like literature) or specific texts or images (like Waiting for Godot). But since cultural implications were brought to the concept of translation, a great problem has cropped up in Translation Studies or Translatology. The theorists perennially argue about the extent of cultural identity of the original writer as well as the translator. Whether the translator will domesticate the original text to his readers or render the text as foreignized as possible in translator's social context seems to be a puzzling setback in Translation Studies. This paper highlights the issues regarding cultural implications and underlines the debate of Domestication vs. Foreignization. Setting the existing debate, it gradually focuses on Gestaltic principle, a holistic approach which expounds the interpretation of the whole rather than the parts and finally introduces the Gestaltic approach in translation theory as a solution to the long-standing problem in the field which will try to minimize the gap between two cultures.

Introduction

Translation is as old as human civilization and has become an arc of communication in the contemporary world, termed as 'age of translation'. But the importance of translation in the shaping of world history and culture has not yet been fully accounted for by literary historians and cultural theorists. From the earliest time to the 17th century the conception of translation was considered as facilitating communication and remained locked in theological domain. Nowadays it plays an increasingly important role within the multilingual context, in all areas of social domain: "literary and commercial, pedagogical and technical, propagandistic and diplomatic" (Venuti, *The Scandals* 03). Since the major shift in paradigm known as 'the cultural turn' in the 1980s, most disciplines in the humanities generally acknowledged the extent to which today's global culture is predicated upon the movement and encounters of various peoples and cultures, translation assumes a broader definition beyond the mere passage from one language to another to include the various aspects of transnational and transcultural encounters that constitute the subtexts of contemporary global culture. Translation, therefore, in its pragmatic and metaphorical conceptualizations, is an indispensable instrument in the creation and diffusion of cultures within the global community. In this connection, the debate over domestication versus foreignization of translation has got much light from the translation theorists. A good number of veteran theorists like Schleiermacher strongly suggest that the translator should foreignize source text (ST) culture, i.e. the culture and the backdrop the original writer into the target language (TL) culture and ethnicity. Again many a modern critics like Lawrence Venuti upholds the domestication of foreign culture into the translator's own culture, society, history and

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

politics. The domesticating theory seems to be logical but it goes against the trends of globalization: it resists the diffusion of culture. This article is an endeavor to introduce a holistic approach as opposed to the elementistic approach (domestication or foreignization) in translation from the theory of Gestaltism which points up that to get at a corollary over any phenomena the whole, and not the parts, should be brought to interpretation: interpretation of the whole rather than parts gives way to a holistic judgment

Culture in Translation

In the 20th century the term 'culture' has earned a sort of comprehensiveness as well as complicatedness as it has been incorporated in all arenas of knowledge. Sherry Simon appositely says:

> It asserts that culture is to be found everywhere even in high arts or in world civilization. The idea of culture as an envelope which securely binds all the members of a national community within the same coherence of meaning today belongs to the realm of myth. (58)

Culture, in fact, is indissoluble from any form of creative beauty. So to draw a direct definition of culture has proven to be surprisingly, even notoriously, difficult. In an attempt to define culture Raymond Williams (1921-88) initially says, "Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language … because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct systems of thought" (07). Culture, indeed, addresses three salient categories of human activity: the 'personal,' whereby we as individuals think and function as such; the 'collective,' we function in a social context; and the 'expressive,' society expresses itself:

> The way people behave while eating, talking with each other, becoming sexual partners, interacting at work, engaging in ritualized social behavior such as family gatherings, and the like constitutes culture. This broad definition of the term includes language and arts, but it also includes the regularities, procedures, and rituals of human life in communities. (Rivkin 1233)

How is it possible to translate a text through the mere transfer of language regardless of cultural implications in the SL and ST texts? This has become a potent question in translation theory. With the rise of hermeneutics in literary theory, the interpretation of a text has got impetus in literary criticism. This theory, if applied to translation process, accentuates that translation without understanding and interpreting texts is impossible, and it is and must be the initial step in any kinds of translation. This interpretative theory of translation, besides focusing on translation as a product and process, analyses the process of interpretation, comprising wide fields of linguistics, psycho-linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, cultural context, communicative competence, within the framework of translation-oriented text analysis. This is in fact a multilateral approach on the phenomenon of translation. Hermeneutically it can be said that no translation is possible without interpretation. And the method of

interpretation incorporates culture to be considered first and foremost in the process of translation.

Modern theorists insist that the scope of translation studies needs to be broadened to take account of the value-driven nature of the socio-cultural framework. They converge on the point that translation is a re-creation of the original as held by Rabindranath Tagore "ভালো কবিতা মাত্রেকেই তর্জমায় নতুন করে সৃষ্টি করা দরকার" (all good poems should be created anew in translation (qtd. in Jafar 37). According to Vinay Dharwadker:

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. For if the sentence is the wall before the language of the original, literalness is the arcade. (127)

This re-creation or 'real translation' takes place in consideration of and in difference with SL and ST cultures and societies. Cultural meanings are intricately woven into the texture of the language. A work of literature comes into being through the context of its culture and society: it delineates the way of life of the people, their behaviour, preferences and idiosyncrasies which are determined and shaped against the norms of their society and culture. In another word, the texture of any text is garnered from the social milieu and cultural backdrop. Cristina Mallol Macau's words are appositely citable here:

> Literature … is never monolithic (in each step of its evolution it is full of directions and different tendencies) but it is a collection of different literary forms (that go from verse to popular literature). These forms are integrated in a society in a given time and with a predetermined ideology. (48)

As culture is everywhere, research or interpretation on any literary text calls for a profound look into the culture it is related to. Philip Smith has termed culture as "text" and established its affinity with any narrative and hermeneutics. He asserts: "Today it is a commonplace to observe that culture or social life is a text and that it has to be interpreted" (182).

To incorporate this omnipresent culture in translation one of the most meaningful definitions is that given by Gideon Toury : "Translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions" (201). He sees translating "as an act and as an event characterised by variability" and "historically, socially and culturally determined, in short, norm-governed". Toury, together with other scholars who analyzed this theory, gives priority to the thought that translation is controlled by social systems; these systems are multiple; consequently, they are polysystems; so it is irrelevant to talk about equivalence. The social system is a macro level that indicates how a translation should be. Translation, in a true sense, involves the transposition of thoughts expressed in one language by one social group

into the appropriate expression of another group: it entails a process of cultural de-coding, re-coding and en-coding. The process of transfer, i.e., re-coding across cultures, should consequently allocate corresponding attributes vis-à-vis the target culture to ensure credibility in the eyes of the target reader.

The Debate: Domestication vs. Foreignization

The theorists agree on the premise that the more a translator is aware of complexities of differences between cultures, the better a translator s/he will be. Translation theorists have been cognizant of the problems attendant upon cultural knowledge and cultural differences at least since ancient Rome. Cultural knowledge and cultural differences have been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence. The main concern has traditionally been with words and phrases that are so heavily and exclusively grounded in one culture that they are almost impossible to translate into the terms – verbal or otherwise – of another. What should a translator do in the case of cultural implications which are implied in the background knowledge of SL readers? What should an English translator do when he translate, for example, Shamsur Rahman's "স্বাধীনতা তুমি " which carries many references of Bengali literature, and climatic, social and pastoral settings, idiosyncratic expression of emotion and many Bengali culture-bound words whose origin and use are intrinsically and uniquely bound to the culture concerned. Long debate has been held over when to paraphrase, when to use the nearest local equivalent, when to coin a new word by translating literally, and when to transcribe. All these "untranslatable" culture-bound words and phrases continued to fascinate translators and translation theorists. This debate led the theorists to two facets of translation: foreignizing and domesticating the cultural implication to the TL readers. The debate over whether translation should be source culture oriented (foreignization) or target culture oriented (domestication) has recurred from Schleiermacher (as the terms **naturalizing** and **alienating**) and has especially been a focus of discussions in Lawrence Venuti's writings.

Schleiermacher, the translator into German of the complete works of Plato, proclaimed the translator's subservience to the forms and language of the original. Perhaps he furthered Shelley's stress on the **seed-plant** relationship in apropos of translation vividly described in *A Defence of Poetry* when he warned that:

> […] it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its colour and odour, as to seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower – and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel. (23)

Friedrich Schleiermacher believes that it is impossible for Ubersetzer (one who translates scholarly and artistic texts) to translate scholarly and artistic texts since the ST meaning is couched in language that is very culture-bound and to which the TL can never fully correspond. The solution to this problem is, according to him, to bring the ST writer and the TT reader together, i.e. to give translation "the right

outlandish flavour" (Bassnett 70). Schleiermacher affirms "there are only two possibilities" in translation: naturalizing and alienating:

> Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him [foreignization], or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him [naturalization]. These two paths are so very different from one another that one or the other must certainly be followed as strictly as possible, any attempt two combine them being certain to produce a highly unreliable result and to carry with it the danger that writer and reader might miss each other completely. (49)

He strongly preferred the former option — moving the reader towards the writer i.e. the translator highlights the otherness of the translated text, by striving to adhere so closely to the foreign text as his own language allows. For this purpose of translation, "the translator must adopt an alienating (as opposed to naturalizing) method of translation, orienting himself or herself by the language and content of the ST" (Munday 28).

This theory was shared by a number of nineteenth-century English translators. F.W. Newman, for example, declared that the translator should retain every peculiarity of the original whenever possible, "with greater care the more foreign it may be" (qtd. in Bassnett 70). In the twentieth century the Schleiermacher's concept is reflected in "The Task of Translator" by Walter Benjamin. Benjamin observes that human languages maintain a relationship of affinity – not through being like each other or similar to each other, but through "kinship". Benjamin's vision of equality between source and translated texts is closely bound up with an antithesis which, though hardly a new invention, has received crucial attention in Translation Studies in our day, namely that between the *domestic* and the *foreign*, or, to use the somewhat inelegant prevailing terms, "Domestication" and "Foreignization". Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson advocate this method in the 21st century saying that surfacing the original writer in the translated text is the "most proper for translation" (550).

The 'alienating' and 'naturalizing' opposites are taken up by Lawrence Venuti as 'Foreignization' and 'domestication' in his almost all writings, especially in the two books *The Translator's Invisibility* and *The Scandals of Translation* which trace the history of translation from the seventeenth century to the present day. His theory diametrically opposes Shcleiermacher's when he says:

> Translation never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign text to be received there. The foreign text, then, is not so much communicated as inscribed with domestic intelligibilities and interests. ("Translation" 482)

In this approach the translator investigates the cultural consequences of the domestic values which are simultaneously inscribed and masked in foreign texts during this period. Venuti locates alternative translation theories and practices which give way to fluency for the TL readers. Unlike Schleiermacher, Venuti stresses upon the domestication of the foreign cultural and social implications because it involves downplaying the foreign characteristics of the language and culture of the ST. A foreignizing strategy, on the other hand, attempts to bring out the foreign in the TT itself, sometimes through calquing of ST syntax and lexis or through lexical borrowings that preserve SL items in the TT. The norms of translation, as he says, may be linguistic or literary but they cannot help including "a diverse range of domestic values, beliefs, and social representations which carry ideological force in serving the interests of specific groups" (*The Scandals* 29). Instead of Schleiermacher's preference that "the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer", Venuti proposes that the translator should leave reader alone and move the writer in the culture of the reader. The translators should, Venuti means to say, diminish the original writer and vanish the marks that indicate the manipulation of the original by the translator. Here he introduces the concept of translator's "invisibility" in translated text. According to Venuti, "The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text" (*Translator's* 1). He substantiates this citing Norman Shapiro's quote: "I see translation as the attempt to produce a text so transparent that it does not seem to be translated" (*The Translator's* 01). To clarify the invisibility of the translator he spells out that the only valid way of translating is to produce a translation which reads *fluently* and *idiomatically* and is so *transparent* in reflecting the foreign writer's intention in the target language that the translation could be mistaken for an original text. A translator can earn invisibility by tending to translate "fluently" into his/her language to render the TT idiomatic and readable and thus creating an "illusion of transparency":

> A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text — the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the original. (Venuti, *The Translator's* 01)

The concept of domestication refers here to the concept of ethnocentrism: the belief in the superiority of one's cultural identity and group norms over those of another, much of which stems from one's socialization into membership of one's language community. To defend minority culture literature from the influence of majority cultures, Lawrence Venuti advocates 'foreignised' translation processes (also called 'minoritised' translation)--approaches that 'promote cultural innovation as well as the understanding of cultural difference' (*The Scandals* 11). The alternative to this approach is a 'domesticated' translation. Venuti agrees with Schleiermacher and offers the following definitions for the two translation approaches:

Domesticated translation is:

> [...] an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving [target-language] cultural values, bringing the author back home....

Foreignizing translation is:

> [...] an ethnodeviant pressure on those [the target-language cultural] values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad. (*The Translator's* 15)

In other words, a domesticated translation adopts a transparent, fluent style to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text while, on the other hand, a foreignized translation deliberately breaks target language conventions by retaining something of the strangeness of the foreign text**.** Weissbort and Eysteinsson poignantly contradict Venuti giving the countervailing: "The ethnocentric violence performed by domesticating translation rested on a double fidelity, to the source language text as well as to the target language culture" (551). Again to strike a chord with Venuti, Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday, for example, bend toward domesticating translation as it is to them "a translation strategy [...] in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order *to minimize the foreignness* of an ST" (338). Michael Cronin adds to the visibility of translators: "Too much visibility can produce blindness, not insight**"** (111). In this way the controversy between Foreignization or domestication continues persistently possibly because "There is no muse of philosophy, nor is there one of translation" (Benjamin 58).

Necessity of a New Turn in Translation Studies

Translation is a phenomenon nowadays. It is not expected to be revolving on this insular gamut of domestication and foreignization. André Lefevere asserts " the activity called 'translating', which involves mediation between at least two code systems should not be confused with the wider cluster of problems associated with 'translation', or 'translation studies'" (75). Moreover, it is the age of globalization, and of diffusion of cultures. Globalization can always be an important aspect of translation. Translation can be used to bring cultures closer. At present, the process of globalization is moving faster than ever before and translation must keep pace with this faster-moving globalization. So a holistic approach between the two opposing theories: domestication and foreignization has become drastically important to further the phenomenon of translation.

In the 20th century with the beginning of critical theories literature has got a new turn in interpretation (from Liberal Humanism) "because the knowledge of critical theory has become over the last decade or so, a mark of status, an educational "property" for which students and professors compete" (Tyson 1). The rush of critical theories, such as Structuralism, Deconstruction, Marxism and Psychoanalysis, stresses that nothing can be judged from within and that to determine the nature and meaning of any phenomenon and analysis of the whole structure around a text is a binding necessity. "Meaning or significance isn't a kind of core or essence *inside* things: rather, meaning is always *outside*" (Barry 40). Such

theorists claim that meanings within a literary work are never fixed and reliable, but always shifting, multifaceted and ambiguous. Consequently time has come to view translation not from within the text, but rather from a whole structural point of view: not from a worm's view but from a bird's eye view. From this point of view Gestaltic principle, which has been applied to almost all aspects of human learning and gained much exposure as a critical theory can help translation be viewed beyond the insular circle of two cultures.

Gestalt Theory in Psychology and Literature

The term 'Gestalt' has come from the German noun *gestalten* meaning shape, pattern, form or configuration, and is used in English because there is no precise equivalent. The theory that living matter or reality is made up of organic or unified wholes that are greater than the simple sum of their parts is called Gestalt theory or principle. In another word, it is a set of things such as a person's thoughts and experiences considered as a whole and regarded as amounting to more than the sum of its parts. Webster Dictionary gives a general definition as "any integrated structures or patterns that make up all experience and have specific properties which can neither be derived from the elements of the whole nor considered simply as the sum of these elements" (Gestalt, *Webster*). In Gestalt principles, a one-to-one correspondence between elemental attributes is not essential for relationships to be discerned; structural similarity is another powerful form or relationship. To derive a clear understanding of Gestaltic Principles we can refer here to our body: our body is not a machine. The whole person cannot be understood by some its parts. The parts are different from the whole and vice versa. To infiltrate anything a holistic view is indispensable: "Reductionism is wrong, because organisms possess properties at a certain level of organization that cannot be explained in terms of properties at lower levels" ("Holism" 2). How people work, love, or vote is not determined by our genes. These are Gestaltic or holistic views.

David Macey defines it as "a perpetual structure or unity which is functionally greater than the sum of its parts, and which cannot be understood by analyzing its constituent elements" (160). Nowadays it has become a general term: "The *gestalt* of something is its total, holistic quality – tangible and intangible, qualitative and quantitative, subjective and objective" (Goldwag 332). Max Wertheimer is the first man to apply this term to psychology in 1924 as a theory of mind and brain that proposes that the operational principle of the brain is holistic, parallel, and analog, with self-organizing tendencies; or, that the whole is different from the sum of its parts ("Gestalt Psychology", Wikipedia). The theorists generally stress the predominance of the whole over the parts, proposing that observers tend to perceive any object only in relation to its surroundings:

> There are wholes, the behaviour of which is not determined by that of their individual elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole. It is the hope of Gestalt to determine the nature of such wholes. (Wertheimer 03)

Macey says only through a holistic or gestaltic observation the phenomena are to be judged: "The basic model is that of the interplay between figure and ground: every act of perception involves the differentiation of a pattern or figure from the ground around. The good gestalt is the pattern that finally supersedes all" (160).

Gestaltism has gradually derived multifaceted usage beyond psychological application. American Heritage Dictionary gives wider definition: Gestalt is "a physical, psychological or symbolic configuration or pattern so unified as a whole that its properties cannot be derived from its parts" ("Gestalt", American). Gestalt theory has often been applied to the study of literary arts and in the visual perception of organized patterns in the decorative arts. Theorists apply it to literature noting that meaning is manifested in individual words and that reading is therefore not simply a matter of identifying individual linguistic signs. In this sense it has noteworthy similarity with structuralism which puts forward the idea that only getting through the whole structure, one can come to an understanding. As nothing can be understood without analyzing the whole, similarly a part or a sentence fails to give the whole meaning of a text. Any reader consciously or subconsciously makes a configuration, pattern or grouping of parts (sentences, chapters, acts, scenes etc) and form a coherent structure. In this sense the concept of pattern corresponds to the concept of text in that a text is similarly a coherent, integrated whole made up of distinguishable, yet related parts whose totality is subject to both the existence of all its parts and an uninterrupted relation between them.

Gestaltic Approach in Translation

As Gestaltic principle can easily and logically be applied to literary critical theory, it can be introduced to translation as well. The fundamental formula of Gestalt theory can be perfectly applied to the processes translation involves, as these processes are first and foremost intellectual. In all likelihood Dr Ghilad Zuckermann first incorporates gestaltism into translation: "Translation is often either beautiful or faithful. In other words, with regard to the SL lexical item, it is either 'gestaltistic' or literal" (5). But unfortunately he did not touch upon the theory and elucidate why a beautiful translation is gestalic. But this clue is patent enough to inspire theorists to elucidate the relationship. Jeremy Hawthorn has recently incorporated gestalt into hermeneutics: "The word Gestalt is accordingly often used in connection with the claim that in matters of perception or INTERPRETATION the whole is greater than the part" (142). In a text, which is a whole, sentences form 'parts'. The relationship between these parts is manifested in the form of standards of textuality including cohesion, coherence and intertextuality. Lack of any part interrupts the relationship between the parts in a text and affects its totality. Farahzad says "the totality of this whole is the combination of all its parts, and exists only if:

a) none of these parts is lacking, and
b) the relationship between them is not interrupted anywhere" (3).

In this respective the ST and the TT form two wholes which are independent of one another, because each is a creation in a different language, and at the same time related, because not only they share the invariant core of meaning but also they relate

to one another through intertextuality. The totality of each is maintained only when conditions (a) and (b) are met. In the actual process of translating, the translator uses (or should use) the invariant core of meaning present in one whole (ST) to create new whole (TT). Translating is therefore creating a new whole from the substance of a former one. This new text is subject to the principles of totality and part-whole relations, i.e. of gestaltism. If the translator cannot grasp this totality, his/her translation lacks in credibility: "when he or she fails to complete the whole, he or she experiences cognitive dissonance" (Farahzad 1).

The Gap Minimized

As "phenomena are irreducible from the whole" ("Gestalt", *American*), translation, if the translator applies gestaltic view to his translation, will reach above the impasse of domestication or foreignization. Language should be actually, not only in theory, considered part of a whole (a particular culture), and that whole should be viewed as part of greater whole (the entire human culture). Similarly, a literary work is part of a national literature and that national literature is part of the whole world literature. The ideal translator should be fully aware of these facts and try to produce a cross-cultural translation. The behaviour of these wholes is not determined by that of individual parts they consist of; these part-processes are determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole. A translation, as part of a literature, and consequently of a culture, must be viewed and analyzed according to its dynamic functional relationship to the whole from which it was lifted or one can never understand and value it properly. However, the nature of these wholes falls within the range of contemporary Gestalt theorists and philosophers. Ovidiu Matiu compares target-language text with "a melody whose form is deliberately altered". He explains Wertheimer's theory in relation to translation:

> The listener/reader is able to recognize the melody/text despite the new elements it contains. The changed melody/text must contain a factor or an element which enables the listener/reader to recognize in it the original. This is the form-quality, or the Gestaltqualität, as Wertheimer would put it, of the original piece. This element (be it the rhythm, the rhyme, the general atmosphere etc.) of the original text is essential and must be preserved in the target-language text; it is part of the original form and must survive all changes that occur in the process of translation, according to the holistic theory Wertheimer proposes. There must be also a special type of metaphysical element that transcends the basic processes of translation, a "higher process" that "produces" the unity between the source and the target-language text, between the source and the target culture and between those and the human culture as a whole. (05)

Some sceptical people might doubt that it is not possible for a translator to hold the totality of the elements human culture consists of, and thus perfect translation is a fable. This is a truism. Every source text can and should be viewed as a part which is determined by the character of the entire whole, and any translator can have command over this link between part and whole. And so the ideal translator, the ideal multi-cultural and multi-lingual person, is precisely that person who manages

61

to grasp "the musicality of an entire symphony from a short melody, and thus multi-is just a question of generating that higher process of the mind and not one of time and volume of knowledge" (Matiu 5). The ideal translator is that person who perceives what happens in every aspect of the source culture and becomes aware that this depends upon what the whole is and manages to render that single part, in a different structure of language of a different, though not utterly alien, culture. Nevertheless the translated version of the original should not seem totally foreign to the target-language society and culture. Therefore, the sensations that the two sources and target-language texts produce must be in conformity with the whole-conditions of the two cultures, respectively. The translator's role is then to explore these whole-conditions and discover their influences upon the reader of the source and that of the target-language text. And thus the debate of domestication and foreignization can be killed. The readers do not react to sensations but to something that is coloured and exciting, gay, strong, affecting, i.e. their reaction does not come out from the text but from the feelings, emotions it is suffused with. These feelings and emotions are the components of the ST that the translator should seek to preserve in his translation, an ideal translation in deed.

Conclusion

Diversity of culture or multilateral communication is the catchphrase of the modern era. Every matrix of intellectual realm is being discussed and analyzed from this outlook. Translation has come to be viewed from this stance too. It is not time to restrict the concept of translation in the concave of foreignization-versus-domestication debate: this attitude rather insularizes the vast concept of translation. An attempt has been made here to portray an ideal translator working with a part, and at the same time, considering the whole. The Gestaltic approach of the translator is "[…] so unified as a whole that its properties cannot be derived from its parts" ("Gestalt", *American*), and can produce ideal translation which will function itself as part of a whole. What a Gestalt theory of translation proposes is a new type of translator for a new world in which translator performs a bi-cultural, moving ideally towards a multi-cultural activity. The translator should keep in mind that the whole is what matters and not the separate parts it consists of. That is the reason why an isolated 'bad' translation brings little damage to the whole it belongs to. In other words, a holistic approach to translation made by a bi-/multi-lingual/cultural translator is the ideal translators must pursue, engaging themselves in an aggregate and not a piecewise thinking process. With a Gestalt cultural-therapy translation will bridge the gap between cultures and bring one culture closer to another and finally facilitate global communication. Macey can be hopefully cited here to give a finish to this paper "the good gestalt is the pattern that finally supersedes all" (160).

Works Cited

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 2nd ed., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.

Bassnette, Susan. *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator". *The Translation Studies Reade*r. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. 2nd Ed., London: Routledge, 2004.

Cronin, Michael. "Translation and De-materialization of Space". *Translation and Globalization*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Dharwadker, Vinay. "A.K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation". Ed. Susan Bassnette and Harish Trivedi. *Post Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Farahzad, Farzaneh. "A Gestalt Approach to Text Manipulation in Translation." July 16, 2010.
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED429437&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED429437

"Gestalt". *The American Heritage Dictionary*. 2nd Ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991

"Gestalt". Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language: Unabridged. 2nd ed. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.

"Gestalt Psychology". 10 October 2009.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestalt_psychology.

Goldwag, Arthur. "Gestalt". *Isms and Ologies*. London: Quercus, 2007.

Hatim, Basil and Jeremy Munday. *Translation: An Advanced Resource Book*. London: Routledge, 2004

Hawthorn, Jeremy. "Gestalt". *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*. Fourth ed. London: Arnold, 2003.

"Holism". Oxford Companion to the Body*. September 18, 2011.*
http://www.answers.com/topic/holism

Jafar, Sikandar Abu. Trans. Introduction *Rubayyat*: *Omar Khayyam*. Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1966

Lefevere, André. "Composing the Other". *Post Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. Ed. Susan Bassnette and Harish Trivedi. London: Routledge: 2002.

Macau, Cristina Mallol. *Teaching Foreign Languages through Translation: Considering Multiple Intelligences*. Diss. Director: Dr. María González Davies, Academic year: 2002-2003, Biennium: 1998-2000.

Macey, David. *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*. London: Penguin Books, 2008.

Matiu, Ovidiu. "Translation and Culture". American, British and Canadian Studies. July 12, 2011. *http://abcjournal.ulbsibiu.ro/Ovdiu%20Matiu.html*

Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. London: Routledge, 2001

Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan. "Introduction: The Politics of Culture". *Literary Theory*: *An Anthology*. Ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. 2nd ed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004

Schleiermacher, Friedrich. "On the Different Methods of Translating". *The Translation Studies Reader*. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 2004.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. "A Defence of Poetry" *English Critical Texts: 16th Century to 20th Century*. Eds. D. J. Enright and Ernst De Chickera: London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Simon, Sherry. "Translating and Interlingual Creation in the Contact Zone: Border Writing in Quebec". *Post Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. Ed.

Susan Bassnette and Harish Trivedi. London: Routledge, 2002.

Smith, Philip. *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc, 2001.

Toury, Gideon "The Nature and Role of Norms in Translation". *The Translation Studies Reader.* Ed. Lawrence Venuti. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2004.

Tyson, Lois. Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2008

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Scandals of Translations: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. London, Routledge, 1998.

---, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, London: Routledge, 1995.

---, "Translation, Community, Utopia". *The Translation Studies Reader.* Ed. Lawrence Venuti. 2nd Ed., London: Routledge, 2004.

Weissbort, Daniel and Astradur Eysteinsson. Eds. *Translation: Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Wertheimer, Max. "Gestalt Theory". *Source Book of Gestalt Psychology*. Trans. Willis D. Ellis. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1938. 13 August 2009. http://books.google.com.bd/books?id=T432HyCzw2oC&dq=Sourcebook+o f+Gestalt+Psychology&printsec=frontcover&source

Wiersema, Nico "Globalisation and Translation: A Discussion of the Effect of Globalisation on Today's Translation". 25 October 2009 http://www.accurapid.com/Journal/27liter.htm.

Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society*. London: Penguin, 1976.

Zuckermann, Ghilad. "Review of the Oxford English-Hebrew Dictionary". International Journal of Lexicography, Vol. 12, No. 4. 1999. 15 September 2009. http://www.zuckermann.org/oehd.html

Interplay of Literary Forms in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

Tanvir Hasan Malik*
Sharif Rakib Hasan**

Abstract

The intent of this article is to delve into the objectives behind George Orwell's adoption of five literary forms in Animal Farm. The author blends five literary forms together with an inventive panache which lends itself to a new dimension to political writing. The admixture of beast fable, satire, allegory, fairy story and novella brings interesting techniques into play to augment its effects. Each genre contributes its own characteristics and hangs together with others succinctly; and the outcome is a relentless and scathing attack on the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin. This composite of genres vivifies the effects of the author's brainchild to satirize the Russian Revolution and, more importantly, the subsequent distortion of its rudimentary principles.

Orwell is essentially a political writer and was at pains to turn political writing into an art and to forge a new literary genre that would be concise, attractive and would also encourage people to break free from their insular political-mindset. Orwell wrote: "The business of making people conscious of what is happening outside their own small circle is one of the major problems of our time, and a new literary technique will have to be evolved to meet it" (270). To this end, he struck on the idea of amalgamating several literary forms to realize a vehicle for expressing his political thoughts. He fused five such forms: fable, satire, allegory, fairy tale and novella; and the outcome is *Animal Farm* (1945). In order to introduce the facts of the Russian Revolution, he chose the popular fable form with personification of beasts as characters. He picked satire as his primary concern was writing a political book: he wanted to criticize and point out the ills that existed in the Russian communist society under Joseph Stalin. Allegory gave him an opportunity to use symbols copiously and to tell the story of the Revolution not directly, but in an implied fashion. He employed fairy tale in order that he could camouflage the serious message of the book in a format that could pass for a children's book. At last he cast the story in the novella format since the short length of the book would ensure a pleasant reading with its lucid and taut language. His aim was to write a critique of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent distortion of its rudimentary principles but he also encapsulated in his story the characteristics of human revolution.

Orwell opted for the beast fable genre for several reasons. Firstly, the beast fable demanded that he use animals as characters in the tradition of Aesop. The animals could stand for real political personages with their human attributes and behaviour just as in Aesop's fables each and every animal exemplifies and epitomizes basic human characteristics. Orwell's animals are no exception. Moses the Raven's

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Eastern University, Bangladesh
** Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Eastern University, Bangladesh

demeanour lays bare the clergy's slavish allegiance to the state machinery. Benjamin the donkey's intense skepticism is only a manifestation of an incorrigible cynic. Boxer's unflinching devotion expresses the masses' unquestionable faith in their rulers.

The influence of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is also writ large on *Animal Farm* as far as the personified farm animals are concerned. The equine population– Houyhnhymns-- in *Gulliver's Travels* can not only speak but also are intellectually far superior to their human counterpart Yahoos; in *Animal Farm*, all the farm animals can talk and some animals are put on a pedestal intellectually in comparison to others. For example the pigs' intelligence is head and shoulders above the general animals who cannot remember beyond the letter A. Even Muriel's (who can read fairly well barring Benjamin) reading skills are poor when pitted against the pigs'. This brings to the reader's mind the distinction between the Houyhnhymns and human in Swift's magnum opus. Jeffrey Meyers says: "Orwell…was undoubtedly influenced by the talking horses in Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels*" (130).

However, the anthropomorphism in the two books does have its differences. The traditional human and equine statures are completely reversed in *Gulliver's Travels* and the intellectually superior Houyhnhymns dominate the inferior Yahoos. There exists a tension between the species i.e. the horses and the humans. The Houyhnhymns' sneering attitude towards the Yahoos and the Yahoos' self-loathing and angst bring the Marxist idea of class-struggle into play. The Houyhnhymns assume the station of the bourgeois here and, the Yahoos, the proletariat. Contrarily, in *Animal Farm*, even though the class-struggle is all too evident, it builds gradually up and is seen to exist in the animal community only– humans do not figure here. The so-called intellectually superior animals take on the bourgeois status and the general animals are relegated to the proletariat position. The tension here is not cross-species but intra-species. The discrimination manifests itself within the animals.

As to why Orwell kept humans out in *Animal Farm,* when it came to class-struggle, is easily understandable: he employed the two sets of animals with human attributes and their actions are but human actions; animals have replaced human beings. Thus, actual human characters would be redundant here.

Secondly, he chose the personified animal characters to avert going into detailed characterization; on the surface, as the characterization concerned animals, they did not have to be delineated elaborately like actual human characters in a novel: the emotional as well as the psychological facets of human characters required little attention so far as character-portrayal went. The character-portrayal of Napoleon and Squealer needed less effort as opposed to the portrayal of human characters in his other novels e.g. there was no scope for inserting John Flory's sense of shame as a social outcast in *Burmese Days* here or Gordon Comstock's inner conflict about whether to give in to or rebel against the inane money-driven capitalistic values in *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* is all but absent here. This was, at the same time, a device that Orwell worked out to stave off allegations that the portrayal of the protagonists in his novels was rather weak. Jeffrey Meyers writes: "…his creation of characters

was always rather weak, and the flat symbolic animals did not have to be portrayed in depth" (131).

Thirdly, Orwell could convey a moral, like all fables do, through the book. The message is redolent of Lord Acton's famous comment on the true nature of political power: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are always bad men" (Cohen and Cohen 1). The same message can also be traced in Orwell's comments in his essay on James Burnham: "History consists of a series of swindles, in which the masses are lured into revolt by the promise of Utopia, and then, when they have done their job, enslaved over again by new masters" (177). When the animals drive the human beings away from Manor Farm, they are hopeful about the better days awaiting them. Theirs is a hope built on egalitarian principles that their produce would be shared out equally. Nevertheless, little by little, the intellectually superior animals start behaving like their erstwhile master Mr. Jones. Here, the powerful few suppress the powerless masses and this is diametrically opposite to the animals' initial set of beliefs. The author here wants to communicate the message that power is bound to get corrupt once it is concentrated in the hands of a few. He also wants the reader to be alive to the ills of a totalitarian state. Although not as acrid a criticism of totalitarianism as it is in his *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Animal Farm* can be considered a warning against it.

The author's personal association with animals also played a part in choosing the genre. He reminisced: "Most of the good memories of my childhood…are in some way connected with animals" (345). He had lived on a farm in Wallington, Herfordshire in the eastern part of England for some time and his experience there comes in handy as far as writing the book went. He even had a goat named Muriel– an animal character in the book. During his stay on the farm and also before and after it, he came to dislike pigs; he especially had a pig that horrified him. He wrote about the pig: "I have tried the experiment of keeping a pig… he is so destructive and greedy…They (pigs) really are disgusting brutes…." (458). This antipathy to pigs is quite evident in the general portrayal of pigs in *Animal Farm*– especially Napoleon and Squealer. Napoleon is these 'destructive' and 'greedy' attributes incarnate. Snowball's banishment, appropriation of the idea of the Windmill and assuming the presidentship of Animal Farm are just a few examples of his avaricious nature. Squealer's cunning is manifested in the way he explains away to the general animals every commandment's violation by the pigs. In order to make sure that the animals are totally tractable, he warns against Jones's return if the pigs are not in control.

Orwell chose satire primarily in order that he could voice his disapprobation of the Stalinist Era in Russia and the gradual degeneration of basic communist doctrines. First, by relegating the humans to animals, Orwell kick-started his satirical onslaught. Almost every single detail in the novella has its historical parallel that enhances its satirical offensive. From Old Major's speech, the Battle of the Cowshed to the pigs' meeting with their human neighbours at the end of the novella-everything has been 'diminished' or made to seem 'ridiculous'. The codifying of Old Major's teachings by Snowball into the Seven Commandments and their ultimate purposeful distortion one after another hammer the ills home of the Soviet Regime under Stalin. For example, when the last commandment "All animals are equal" (15)

gets changed into "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (90), the extent of the corruption and despotism in Russia under Stalin becomes obvious. Napoleon's or Stalin's devious machinations are satirized.

Religion too has been put under the microscope in *Animal Farm*. When Old Major's teachings are put into the form of the Seven Commandments, one is immediately reminded of Moses' assumption of the Ten Commandments from Yahweh on Mount Sinai. The very comparison between these two sets of commandments is an abomination of the Biblical Decalogue and it also undermines its solemn nature. By bringing down the Biblical number of commandments from ten to seven, the author diminishes the value of religious imperatives. Also, when heaven is compared to Sugarcandy Mountain, Orwell ridicules the carrot-and-stick-approach of religion which promises eternal beatification for the gullible masses. Orwell also thinks that because of the innate nature of religion, autocrats and totalitarian rulers will always use to serve their ends and that is why Moses makes his entry to Animal Farm again and is rehabilitated by Napoleon; notwithstanding his anti-religious stance, Napoleon lets Moses live on the farm in opulence.

Orwell also interspersed his disapproval of Marxism in this satire. By comparing Marxism to Animalism, Orwell denigrated it. He differs with Marxist views on some points in the book although it is not an attack on Marxism as such. On the issues of religion and the means to achieve revolutionary goals he criticized Marx. Of all the animals, only Moses sleeps through old Major's speech. He represents Christianity or the clergy in the book. He does no work, sits idly on a pole and tells stories of a mysterious Sugarcandy Mountain where every animal goes after their death. After Old Major's death while the animals strive to spread Animalism only he is too stubborn to pay any attention. When the Revolution takes place he vanishes into thin air. He returns later only to be used in the same way by Napoleon as he was by Mr. Jones. Even though he is useless when spoken in terms of practicality, the general public fall for his assertion of life after death. The point Orwell wants to make here is that the general people would always be in awe of the unknown and the mysterious: God. Marx had predicted that after the communist revolution religion would fade away from people's minds. But here Orwell was of the opinion that some people would always have implicit faith in religion.

The second issue that Orwell satirises Marxism as well as Trotskyism is the way Marx and Trotsky thought the Revolution could be realized. After the Battle of the Cowshed, the hard-working Boxer, when he thinks he has killed a human by accident, says in dejection: "I have no wish to take life, not even human life" (28), Snowball galvanizes Boxer by saying: "No sentimentality, comrade…War is war. The only good human being is a dead one" (28). Orwell criticises the militant, hard-line attitude of classical Marxism and Trotskyism to bring about the Revolution by any means necessary. The goodness and sympathetic strain of Boxer's character gets choked here by Snowball's flagrantly materialistic ethos. Snowball exhorts Boxer to shun emotion in all its manifestations and to replace it with callous apathy. "The only good human being is a dead one" here bears special significance since, according to Orwell, it underlines Marxism's hard-nosed and unfeeling nature. This stance on the author's part brought him much criticism from the Marxist quarters. Marxist critic

68

Raymond Williams called Orwell: "a reactionary and a revisionist who made an unacceptable accommodation to capitalism" (69). After the publication of the book Orwell was described by leftists as having run "shrieking into the arms of the capitalist publishers" (Simms 294).

The author also employs the satirical device to infuse some comically mordant effects into the book. These comic effects are mainly of the satirical type-- they amuse but at the same time they cut deep. They "deride" the events in the book. As M.H. Abrams says: "It (satire) differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter as an end in itself, while satire "derides"; that is, it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt that exists outside the work itself" (187). In the book, Snowball "formed the Egg Production Committee for the hens, the Clean Tails League for the Cows, the Wild Comrades Re-Education Committee..." (23). These "committees" clearly satirize or poke fun at the activities Trotsky busied himself with after the Bolshevik Revolution. When a sheep confesses to having urinated in the drinking pool egged on by Snowball and was later butchered along with the other animals, we find this urinating hilarious but the massacre heart-rending. Actually, this confession-massacre satirically alludes to the mass executions called the Great Purges which killed at least three million people in the Stalinist era. Here is one example of one such Purge: "During the 1937-38 purges 8 million party workers were arrested and sent to Gulag labour camps of Tundra and Taiga. Of these unfortunate millions, one million were butchered outright and several millions died in labour camps" (Mital 97). "By 1938 … about 7 million Purge victims were in the labour/death camps, on top of the hundreds of thousands who had been slaughtered outright. In the worst camps, such as those of the Kolyma gold-mining region in the Arctic, the survival rate was just 2 or 3 percent" (Jones).

The use of allegory gave an impetus to Orwell's treatment of the October Revolution. Although there had been a clear division between the capitalist West and the communist Soviet Union, during the Second World War the Allied Forces included Russia and the Russians played a crucial part in defeating Hitler. Newsinger says: "When Orwell wrote the book, cooperation between Russia and the West was still the order of the day..." (*Animal Farm* Review). At a time like this it was only natural for Orwell to disguise his tale in the form of an allegory. He could express the happenings not literally, but metaphorically. By drawing exact parallels between actual events and allegorical ones in the book, he could satirize them without attacking them too openly.

Orwell employed allegory for other reasons too. In the allegory itself, he interspersed other little allegories which underlined like Mr. Jones' feeding Moses with bread soaked in beer. This soaking of bread in beer is an allegory for the workers' flesh soaked in their blood on which the religious establishment thrives. The Catholic ritual of baptism is brilliantly made use of here. The genre also let him use symbols copiously. Every character in the book or inanimate object was symbolized. For instance, the Farm stands for the Soviet Union, Mr. Jones symbolizes Tsar Nicolas II, Old Major represents Karl Marx, Snowball, Trotsky, Napoleon, Stalin, etc. Symbols gave him a chance to reinforce the significance of each character e.g. the character of Napoleon, though representing Stalin, goes

beyond his personal attributes. Almost all moves on Napoleon's part in the novella may not have taken place in the actual case of Stalin but, once we are convinced the former symbolizes the latter, the latter's negative lineaments are augmented which adds to the satirical effect of the character.

Allegory would also let Orwell write his most impersonal book ever. Flory in *Burmese Days*, Comstock in *Aspidistra Flying* and Bowling in *Coming Up for Air* represent the Orwellian hero who is largely modelled on Orwell himself. This book is the only one where there is no evident Orwellian protagonist with his sense of disorientation, deep distrust in capitalistic values and foreboding for the forthcoming totalitarian spectre. Napoleon or Squeler, although symbolizes humans, can hardly be expected to indulge in ontological dilemmas. They are busy with keeping a materialistic existence- not opposing or criticizing it. As such neither can represent the author's biographical elements. The author is rather an observer of collective affairs than a subjective partaker of the storyline. Raymond Williams says: "*Animal Farm* is unique in Orwell's writing in the absence of an Orwell figure. It is in this sense a more complete projection of his way of seeing the world than anything else he wrote" (69).

Orwell named his book *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* when it first came out in 1945. Even though he dropped the phrase "A Fairy Story" from the title of the book, the author's inclusion of the genre 'fairy story' bears significance: in the guise of a children's book, he presented a grave denunciation of the distortion of the egalitarian principles of communism in Russia and also anywhere in the world for that matter in the broader sense. Orwell knew all too well that if he was to write a book with talking animals as the characters in it, the best way to call it would be a fairy tale. Structurally, the novella conforms to the criteria of a typical fairy tale. When analysed with Russian formalist critic Vladimir Propp's thirty-one generic functions, the plot of *Animal Farm* conforms to most of them. For example, "trickery" appears when the pigs feed the other animals with concocted stories and arrant lies; "villainy" is evident, on the one hand, in Napoleon and Squealer, and on the other, in the humans' characters; 'struggle' evinces itself in the animals' collective efforts to build the windmill and to work hard to produce a good harvest in the face of immense adversities; 'victory' comes to the animals in the form of their winning the Battle of the ironic twist when the pigs make the other animals their slaves by taking on the humans' place ; 'transfiguration' occurs when the other animals, at the end of the book, watch in consternation the pigs' transmutation from animals into humans. Other Proppian functions like 'punishment', 'violation' etc. are also present in the plot of *Animal Farm* (Barry 226).

The author employed the literary form of novella for some simple reasons. First, the short size of the book would ensure that the reader did not get bored of its size and it would also make it possible for the reader to finish reading it within a short time. Secondly, in the post-Second-World-War Europe shortage of printing paper must have been under the author's consideration when he was thinking of the slimness of the book. Because of paper-shortage the book could only be published in a limited number of copies. "Shortage of paper after the World War II restricted the number of copies of *Animal Farm* printed in Britain" (Davison i). Thirdly, the

saleability of the book must have been a concern to the author as well. The novel–less than one hundred-page-long could sell at a cheap price at a time when Europe was reeling under the ravages of the War and buying a book was a luxury. In other words, the genre novella made sure the size of the book was slim and which in turn kept the price low.

Orwell was careful in blending all these genres into a fable-satire-allegory-novella-fairytale and the outcome was a success– both critically and financially. George Woodcock writes: "(Orwell) produced a book so clear in intent and writing that the critic is usually rather nonplussed as to what he should say about it; all is so magnificently there" (192). However, with rave reviews also came searing comments by some critics. A.C. Ward says: "*Animal Farm* received unmeasured praise, but as satire it is naïve and laboured. Its immediate fame may indeed be said to have hung upon one phrase– easily remembered, and doomed to end as a cliché too easily quotable– "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (85).

The success of the book is also evident in its universality. It may have laid out its plot using the Russian Revolution as its background, but it symbolizes any revolution anywhere, any time in human history. This book becomes relevant whenever or wherever the majority misuse power in order to deceive the helpless minority. David Daiches says: "He was of course thinking of Russia under Stalin but he was also making a more universally applicable point concerning revolutions, the people who make them and the people who take control once they are made" (211). The book thus cannot be attributed to one human struggle only at any given time; it transcends geographical as well as temporal boundaries and, hence, has become universal and timeless.

By amalgamating the five forms, Orwell presented to the world his literary *tour de force.* Beast fable became necessary to him because he wanted to convey a moral; allegory gave him a chance to create a book without having to expose the actual facts; fairy tale provided him with ample opportunities to disguise the serious objective of the book; satire let him voice his reservations about the injustices perpetrated by Stalin in Russia and the form novella gave him a chance to write the book within a short span of time and space. The book's clear and easy language does not get in the way of conveying its grave message, the symbolism underlines the allegorical form, the talking animals seem totally convincing in the fable and fairy story forms, the slimness of the book ensures a quick reading and the satirical style is in line with the author's motive. The literary forms, sewn together with flair, enhance the readability of the book.

Works Cited

Abrams, A.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Bangalore: Prism, 1993.

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.

Cohen, J.M., and M.J. Cohen. eds. *The Penguin Dictionary of Quotations*. London: Penguin, 1960.

Daiches, David. *A Critical History of English Literature*. Vol. 4. London: Martin & Warburg Ltd, 1960.

Davison, Peter. "Foreword". *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. London: Penguin, 1989.

Jones, Adam. *Case Study: Incarceration and the Death Penalty.* Gendercide Watch (1999-2002). 6 Nov 2007
    <http://www.gendercide.org/case_imprisonment.html>.

Meyers, Jeffrey. *A Reader's Guide to George Orwell*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1975.

Mital, Nemisharan. *World-Famous Crazy Despots*. Delhi: Pustak Mahal, 1991.

Newsinger, John. "*Animal Farm* (review)". Europe-Asia Studies, (Nov 1996). 8 Nov 2007
    <http://netcharles.com/orwell/ctc/docs/afarmrev.htm>

Orwell, George. "James Burnham and the Managerial Revolution." *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*. Vol. 4. Ed. Orwell, Sonia, and Ian Angus. London: Penguin, 1968.

Simms, Valerie J. "A Reconsideration of Orwell's 1984: The Moral Implications of Despair". *Ethics*. Vol. 84, No. 3, 1974.

Ward, A.C. *Twentieth Century English Literature*. London: The English Library, 1964.

Williams, Raymond. *Orwell*. London: Fontana, 1974.

Woodcock, George. *The Crystal Spirit: A Study of George Orwell*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1966.

Voice of the Voiceless: A Subaltern Study of *The Hungry Tide*

Kazi Md. Siful Aspea*

Abstract

Telling the story of a quest into the past or putting historiography adjacent to the story raises the question of representation which functions and speaks from certain subjective positions giving little scope for unifying grand narratives. As a Postmodern novel The Hungry Tide is balanced by the presence of many narratives. In this novel, the representation of history of Morichjhapi Revolution from a very diverse view has hitherto received wide critical attention and has also raised some queries on subaltern studies. The article mainly focuses on Morichjhapi Revolution and seeks to find the authentic voice of the revolutionaries. The Bengali Refugees, who were dislodged in the time of the partition of Bengal in 1947 and those who were forced to take refuge in West Bengal in 1971 in the time of the Liberation war of Bangladesh, settled in the Sundarbans. In particular, it examines the modes used by Ghosh in representing the Sundarbans which is socially, politically, and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structure. This textual focus also forms the base for larger points about Ghosh's writing, his critique of contemporary Elite Politics and Cultural Imperialism.

The Subalterns, defined as an oppressed class which has no longer relation to the industrial labour, but "proletariat' is the term which is defined as oppressed class, within historical relation of hegemonic power, has some wider range. According to Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies, the term ''Subaltern'' is taken from Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (1971), where "Subalterno" euphemistically stands for the proletariat. Subaltern history is thus "history from the below," giving voice to those who have been written out of history. The subaltern study began in India as a challenge to the established historiography of Indian nationalism wherein official and elitist accounts have no place for the struggles of the poor and the outcast. (Hawley, Encyclopedia 425)

In the novel *The Hungry Tide,* history of the people who settled in the Sundarbans is tied together with the story of subaltern subversions of official history of the state-led brutal deportation of Bangladeshi refugees from the Sunderbans. Amitav Ghosh sets his novel, *The Hungry Tide,* in this tide country to tell the history of the Bengali refugees who settled in the Sundarbans. If at its most apparent level the novel is a reading of the texts of the Bengali refugees, it is also, at a second, somewhat deeper level, a spectacularly complex engagement with the voiceless subalterns. The novel is the re-telling of the history from the reverse end, that is, from the perspective of the voiceless subalterns who reject and replace the official history of violent evacuation of Bengali refugees from the Sundarbans, mainly from the Morichjhapi, an island in the Sundarbans.

The Sundarbans, the largest mangrove frost of the world, consists of 10,200 sq km spread over India (4200 sq km) and Bangladesh (6000 sq km). Another 5400 sq km of non-forest, inhabited region in India, along the north and north-western fringe of mangrove forest, is also known as the Sundarbans. The tidal surge from the Bay of

*Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

Bengal can cover three hundred kilometers, constantly reshaping or devouring islands. This forest is the tide country where beauty lies in its unique natural surrounding. Thousands of meandering streams, creeks, rivers and estuaries have enhanced its charm. The Sundarbans meaning beautiful forest is the natural habitat of the world famous Royal Bengal Tiger, spotted deer, crocodiles, jungle fowl, wild boar, lizards, rhesus monkey and innumerable varieties of beautiful birds. In this amazing forest, there are people who try to search out a living. It is a region whose fishing folk easily traverse the imaginary boundaries of the modern nation-state, crossing the border as the wind and the tide take them.

Sir Daniel Hamilton, a visionary Scotch man, bought ten thousand acres of land in 1903 in this wild region and set out to build an ideal community, by offering free land to those willing to work as long as they accepted the others as equals, regardless of caste, race or ethnicity. In the very early of the twentieth century it was a very difficult life that leaves most women widowed at a very young age as tigers and crocodiles had preyed their husbands when they were busy in searching food on the rivers and jungle. The land in the Sundarbans was barely farmable if the saltwater of the hungry tide can be kept from flooding the fields. So the setting of the novel allows Amitav Ghosh to create a setting where everyone is on an even footing. It is not just the legacy of Sir Daniel Hamilton, but the hostile environment that erases all societal strata because everyone is equal in the struggle to survive in the hostile environment and against state terrorism. This theme runs continuously throughout *The Hungry Tide.*

Kusum, a very ordinary woman, fights for the right of people and state terrorism, and in the process, sacrifices her life. Nirmal, a poet at heart who is also a visionary but who poorly spent his days because he never lived up to his revolutionary ideals but finally he became the medium as we came to know about the revolution through his dairy to Kanai which he maintained in the time of Morichjhanpi revolution. Nilima, the wife of Nirmal, is building a cooperative trust which brings hope to many lives. She, however, is unwilling to do anything that might upset the government whose favors she needs. The couple's middle class background and college education bring them no luxury, except the gratitude and respect from the locals in the tide country for the services they provide. Piya Roy is a scientist, and studies river dolphins. Piya often works in areas where she knows neither the customs nor the language. She has come to the Sundarbans to find more of these rare creatures. Kanaia, living in Delhi, comes to the Sundarbans being summoned by Nilima because of a package her late husband left him some 20 years before his death and which has just been found. Fokir, perhaps the most truly learned soul in the novel, is an illiterate man, but possesses much more knowledge of the river and its wildlife than all the outsiders who do not understand him and the Sunderbans. Through Fokir the whole of the Sunderbans and its wildlife become very clear and familiar to the outsiders who are there for various purposes. His love and knowledge for the wild life of the Sunderbans make him a true son and voice of the forest.

The poor and the outcast coming to the Sundarbans as refugee are from both Bangladesh and the low land of West Bengal. The refugees' plight is in the first place the product of Partition of Bengal in 1947 and the events associated with the 1971

Liberation war of Bangladesh. The refugees who crossed over from East Pakistan in the forties and fifties were forced to being resettled outside West Bengal mainly in the Dandakaranya camp in Madhya Pradesh. They were also sent to various uncongenial areas outside West Bengal with the assurance that they would gradually be relocated to West Bengal. The richest class of the refugees found almost a comfortable place amongst relatives and friends in Calcutta, but the poorer sections of the refugees squatted on public and private lands and tried to resist the eviction in the alien lands outside the West Bengal. In 1971 the further waves of refugees from Bangladesh made the problem very severe and the new refugees were also bound to follow the resettlement. The conditions of such resettlement in the Dandakaranya camp in Madhya Pradesh were harsh and alien so the refugees were trying to go out from the resettlement camps. In 1978 a group of refugees fled from the Dandakaranya camp in Madhya Pradesh and came to the island of Morichjhapi in the Sundarbans with the target of settling there. They cleared the land for agriculture, and began to fish and farm. They started new lives with a full arrangement of daily consumption such as living house, schools, markets, roads, hospital, tube wells, and they managed to find out sources of income by establishing cottage industry.

The decision to move out of Dandakaranya to return "Home" - if not to Bangladesh, at least to West Bengal and the Sundarbans was taken as their promised land in 1978 by the refugee community. In the way to the Sundarbans they faced lots of hurdles as they were detained at railway stations for days without food and water. Almost 40000 refugees finally reached the Sunderbans to resettle their lives. Its members settled down on one of the islands, Morichjhanpi – that on which Nilima's hospital stands - and began to create the base of an organized micro society, as was dreamt by Sir Daniel: "Here there would be no Brahmins or Untouchables, no Bengalis and no Oriyas. Everybody would have to live and work together" (Ghosh 51).

But the Indian Central Government took several decisions which went against the people of this tide region. One such decision was The Tiger Conservation Project in the Sundarbans which prompted the state-led violent eviction of Bangladeshi refugees from the islands. In 2000 the government handed over large tracts of the islands to a private company for an Ecotourism Project. The refugees who settled in this tide country protested against the government decisions to save themselves from being refugee again. Because the refugees who settled in the island continued to relate, personally or explicitly, the island with their homeland in one way or another, and their collective consciousness and unity were importantly defined and marked by the existence of such a relationship. The refugee encompassed internal arguments of identity that who they were and where they were going and at the same time they recognized a very collective responsibility to the home island, Morichjhanpi, and that's why they decided not to leave the island. Both Nirmal, the poetic minded revolutionary, and Kusum, mother of Fokir and a very ordinary woman, find themselves drawn into the refugees' struggle.

Amitav Ghosh's work often concerns historical events and his characters are also the products of these events. In *The Hungry Tide*, he concentrates on the lives of some subalterns whose history had been overlooked by official history as the lives

and the struggle of those people were neglected and overlooked by the state. In *The Hungry Tide* Amitav Ghosh makes a fresh look on the matter and tries to give a voice to the characters. So in the novel Fokir, Kushum and Nirmal are the characters whose voice is no more voiceless. To give voice to the voiceless is sometimes very crucial as the fusion of 'Fact and Fiction' sometimes creates problems in representation:

> As this kind of novel makes clear, there are important parallels between the process of history-writing and fiction writing and among the most problematic of these are their common assumptions about narrative and about the nature of mimetic representation. The postmodern situation is that a 'truth is being told, with "facts" to back it up, but a teller constructs that truth and chooses those facts'. In fact that teller- of story or history- also constructs those very facts by giving a particular meaning to events. (Hutcheon 351)

In *The Hungry Tide* Amitav Ghosh tries to give meaning to the fact of Morichjapi Revolution from the end of those who are classed as the subalterns. In the novel Ghosh represents the way that determined the political loyalties and commitments of the subaltern refugees and focused on their exilic yearnings for a lost homeland. The novel also celebrates the shared collective-consciousness of those subaltern refugees and engaged in giving voice to the voiceless by raising the question of representation of those voiceless refugees in the official history of the state. So, through the novel, the voice of these voiceless subalterns answers the Spivakian question in a very positive way that: Yes, the Subaltern can speak. The question of identity also plays an important role in this regard. The identity crisis of the refugees in the Morichjaphi also shifts perspective and moves between power and subordination. These shifts of perspective make the revolution inevitable in the island because this is become the only ground for the characters to resist state-power to locate their "spatial identity":

> The concept of "spatial identity" also provides a location for identity to not only realize its individual, social, ethnic and class positions in relation to such spatial constructs as nation or region but also to mount resistance against power, inequality and subordination. (Islam 5)

The game of dislocation and cruel running away of the refugees began with the birth of independent India and there was no going back from the cruel game of running away so the subversion of established ideas of a 'spatial identity' which goes against the politics of the elite becomes palpable through the developments of the characters. The resistance of the refugees emphasizes the absolute problem of relocating the dislocated and the subaltern refugees alone determine the courses of the events that lead the revolution. It is not an attempt to deny the legitimacy of difference at a certain level of identity and activity, but this counters the colonial tendency of representing the traditions of pre-colonial era which is also very evident in Ranjit Guha's Introduction of Subaltern Studies:

> Parallel to the domain of elite politics there existed through the period another domain of Indian politics in which the principal characters were not

the dominant groups of the indigenous society or the colonial authorities but the subaltern classes…. ("Introduction" 4)

The absence of subaltern history in the colonial discourse of India was not just a result of estrangement but also for the presence of the British Raj as the only firm force. In the post-colonial period the position of British Raj was taken up by the central government of India. So the struggle of the subalterns in the Sundarbans against the central government of India is a struggle to keep themselves in their promised land. The national elite could not realize the struggle of the subalterns as the elite had already taken the position of the former colonial power and the refugees were left with no other option than to feel the surpassing influence in all its quietness and sense of exploitation after dealing with this elite version of history. So the history of the subalterns was as muted as ever in the post-colonial India.

In *The Hungry Tide,* the state government of West Bengal along with the central government of India plays a very vital role as an imperialist power when they try to evacuate the refugees from their land in Morichjapi. The battle over land is a timeless phenomenon and it happened in colonial time in between the colonizer and the colonized; it is happening now in between the elite political class and the subalterns on the issue of owning the land and the future of the land.

Edward W. Said perfectly said in his work *Culture and Imperialism* that the main battle over land and the question of the right to settle and work on it is still the same as the colonial time and sometimes in the aftermath of colonial power the state Government took the role of imperialist colonial powers as he says:

> The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future- these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided...." ("Introduction" xiii)

The Central Government of India tried to evacuate the land by a hegemonic propaganda that this jungle was an empty place where only wild creatures lived and there was no settlement of human beings. This propaganda was true to the people who had not any knowledge about the fact. When Nirmal comes to the contact with the people of the tide country he realizes that this propaganda is very baseless and against the truth. Then he said: "To me, a townsman, the tide country's jungle was an emptiness, a palace where time stood still: I saw now that this was an illusion, that exactly the opposite is true." (Ghosh 224) This hegemonic propaganda is mainly for the Tiger Projects and for the shake of ecological balance. It is of course of global importance that the Sundarbans and its tigers must be saved. Already many people in Bangladesh, India and beyond have gone out of their way to help the project but for the shake of that project the state government forcibly evacuates the region's refugee settlers. The evacuation process was in question as the central government took the brutal ways to evacuate the settlers from the region. When the question of humanity comes to combat with the other issues then it is the human right which must be upheld. But the state government, with the help of Indian central government, stood against the human right and was ready to evacuate the islands of the Sundarbans. It becomes clear when Kusum tells Nirmol Bose:

> […] saar, this island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals, it is a part of a reserve forest, it belongs to a project to save tigers, which is paid for by people from all around the world. Who are these people, I wondered, who love animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them? […] As I thought of these things, it seemed to me that this whole world had become a place of animals, and our fault, our crime was that we were just human beings. (Ghosh 261-62)

Though the revolution starts against the state decision but the revolution could not come to a successful end, because the government brutally bunged the revolution. That brutality leaded to a massacre where most of the Bengali refugees were killed very cruelly and rest of the refugees were forced to left the island of the Sundarbans. These kinds of small scale revolutions and resistances can not come to an end successfully for poor organization, very local setting, and for proper leadership. It is noted that except a very few, these kinds of small scale of revolutions end in complete surrender and submission to 'State's Will' and the ungrudging resolution that proceeds. Overall these kinds of Revolution and Resistances have to face the fierce government or very well organized power but the power of these kinds of resistances lies in the power of shared cultural knowledge, local myth and common belief of the communities:

> In doing so, Subaltern Studies have not only uncovered new arenas of contest and a new level of analysis but have also brought into relief the limitation of frameworks confined to the study of resistance. Subaltern Study has defined a subaltern consciousness separate from hegemonic cultural forms, and rooted in myth, religion and magical belief, that was realized in the practice of rural resistance. (Sivaramakrishnan 217)

Though the revolution of Morichjhapi was not a vision to the settler refugees, it was the question of their existence; it was the consciousness of the masses. It was the extraordinary revolution because it was a revolution from "The below". This is a revolution from 'the below' because the revolution speaks directly to the heart of the refugee experience and the experience is characterized by loss and trauma. No wonder Ghosh uses the myth of Bon Bibi as his focus at the beginning of the revolution because the myth is the common consciousness of power and security among the people who live in the Sunderbans. We find the feelings of Nirmal about the revolution in his dairy as it is the consciousness of not only Nirmal but also the consciousness of all masses:

> […] between what was happening at Morichjhapi and what Danial Hamilton had done there was one vital aspect of difference: this was not one man's vision. This dream had been dreamt by the very people who were trying to make it real… how astonishing it was that I, an ageing, bookish Schoolmaster, should live to see this, an experiment, imagined not by those with learning and power, but by those without. (Ghosh 171)

However, the revolution can not and does not last as the small scale revolutions and regional upheavals are forcibly subdued by the authority. The Morichjhapi revolution is also brutally subdued by the government forces which recruit gangster elements for the evacuation of the refugee settlers, and in its aftermath Kusum was killed, while Nirmal, whose journal ends at the moment of the repression, having got mixed up in the events loses his sanity and dies soon after. The history of voiceless subalterns is exhausting under the interminable burden of tragic massacre and nothing has helped them relocate themselves in the mainstream history of the nation. The whole is a story of ruin one after the other till even the whole refugee community is dislodged, dislocated, and finally massacred with none to scream, none to mourn and none to remember.

The revolution comes to an end with the killing of Kusum as failure and the history of Morichjhapi revolution has been muted as the history of subaltern always meets the same fate. Though Kusum is a woman but her role in that revolution is very significant as she is the central figure of the revolution. So the voice of Kusum along with the voice of the refugee settlers were muted for ever but Kusum's voice was not in the official history of the evacuation mainly because she was a woman. Kusum as a female and also as a member of the subaltern class was confined in the shadows of official history and representation. Her voice could never be heard to speak if there were no conscious attempts. The novel goes searching for a self-governing and essential female consciousness which can be exposed and readily represented with recourse to the assumptions concerning prejudice. The killing of Kusum and the massacre gain a very strong voice in the novel *The Hungry Tide.*

Indian Central Government was forced to stop the evacuation project for the protest movement of the people of India on that very moment we find that *The Hungry Tide* is the novel where the ever muted voices of the subalterns speak out. The subaltern characters of the novel were driven away from the elitist version of the official history of Morichjapi but still they have a strong presence in the subversion of the history. *The Hungry Tide* offers places for the analysis of marginalized subject positions, which are attentive to culturally specific constructions of identity. The Morichjhapi revolution therefore draws attention to the conditions of social, cultural, political and economic histories and their impact on the representation. So it is true that Amitav Ghosh has given a very strong voice to the subalterns in the novel *The Hungry Tide.*

Works Cited

Ghosh, Amitav. *The Hungry Tide*. Delhi: Rovi Doyal, 2004.

Dixion, Robert, "The Writing of Amitav Ghosh". *Amitav Ghosh*: *A Critical Companion*. Ed. Tabish Khair. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2005.

Guha, Ranjit. "Introduction". *Subaltern Studies*. Ed. Ranjit Guha. Vol: 1. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Hawley, John C., ed. *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004.

---. *Contemporary Indian Writers in English, Amiitav Ghosh*: *An Introduction*. Delhi: Foundation Books, 2005.

Hutcheon, Linda. "The Politics of Postmodernism". *Postmodernism and the ContemporaryNovel- A Reader*. Ed. Bran Nicol, Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2002.

Islam, Syed Manzoorul. "Reviewing Identity: Recognition, Representation and Postmodernism" *Metropolitan University Journal*, Vol: 2, No: 1, 2009. 5-14

Said, Edward W. "Introduction". *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage, 1994.

Sivaramakrishnan K. "Situating the Subaltern: History and Anthropology in the Subaltern Study Project". *Reading Subaltern Studies*. Ed. David Ludden. Delhi: Parmanent Black, 2008.

Spivak, G.C. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*: *A Reader*. Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. London: Longman, 1994.

Representation of Daily Events in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch*

Amanee Khandker*

Abstract

Jane Austen's masterpiece Pride and Prejudice and George Eliot's critically acclaimed Middlemarch have one thing in common though they are never the novels of a similar kind. The resemblance lies in the temporal structure of the novel – the narratives give significant stress on projecting the daily happenings in the same order they naturally take place. The plots include selected scenes organized in the chronological order and the narratives focus on the passing of time. The scenes project the simplest to the most difficult times of the daily life of basically the central character and at the same time, monitor the development of the character's thoughts, attitudes, reactions and counter-reactions, which are related to the development of the storyline. This study shows how without reordering the events in an artificial and organized way, the narratives of these two novels hint on the small points of development in a character's actions, thoughts and inner feelings, and portray what can be called living a life as a social being, as an individual human being and as a woman.

Jane Austen and George Eliot have always captured the flavour of life in general – life of average social beings, which does not always include sensational or uncommon events. The storylines of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch*, in the same way, do not focus on any stunning or shocking element or any thrilling experience of life. Considering the longitudinal structure of time and actions, the plots of these novels develop simply from the daily happenings and thus show how unspoken, insignificant and momentous flashes of life can make stories too.

Linda Schermer Raphael, in the "Introduction" of her book, *Narrative Skepticism: Moral Agency and Representations of Consciousness in Fiction* writes, "The relationship between the inner lives of fictional characters and beliefs about what it means to lead a good life is a difficult one to determine: yet it is central to our understanding of character and fiction." (13) To add to this, when the authorial intention is to explore the human mind and its emotions, the cause and effects of every human act, then it seems to be a very difficult task. However, if the novelist is able to reflect this in his or her work, surely the credit lies in his or her method of organizing the narrative structure. The supreme intention being exploring the workings of inner mind, Jane Austen and George Eliot, in their own particular ways, have always reflected on human psychology from different levels. In this specific area, they have been very much similar to each other, though the strategies they used make their novels different. This study is based on one of the most representative novels of each author – *Pride and Prejudice* of Jane Austen and *Middlemarch* of George Eliot – and examines the various aspects of the narrative arrangements of these two novels to interpret the authorial intentions besides exposing the daily happenings of human life.

*Senior Lecturer, Department of English, World University, Bangladesh

The stories of both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch* generate naturally from the realities of daily life. There is no authorial control in the temporal structure and the narratives always maintain temporal continuity. Even, there are occasions when it seems that the narrative desire is simply to produce the daily events of some families and some individuals. Surprisingly, such simplest elements of daily life – the happenings and non-happenings – prove to be the most valuable aspects to reflect the pattern of the gradual progression of individual life-story. The daily actions and reactions are related to some innermost thoughts and aspirations. These two novels record almost every point of weak and strong tribulations of an individual's mind and show the different relations between inner feelings, outward actions, inner thoughts and outward reactions.

The simplest psychological changes of mind in daily life, that include both ordinary and extraordinary situations, sometimes create psychological complexity. This complexity is related to incoherence and disassociation of ideas and thoughts of daily life. Complexity is felt because of the variability, disorderly display of emotions and attitudes, interplay between monotony and confusion, conflict between dullness, sorrow and excitement, and the unexpected imbalance resulted in the suddenness of intense and relaxed moments. In several parts of the novels, the series of sequences do not have any meaningful progression and thus produce an effect of monotony. On the other hand, sudden or uncommon happenings or surprising moments are not inputted systematically but rather abruptly placed in a specific part of the novel. Such events are present to produce sudden effects of awe, shock or joy, as it happens or occurs in everyday reality. Thus the uncommon events that break the monotony of daily life hint at the unpredictability and inconsistencies of everyday life the reality is full of. Therefore, it may not be appropriate to mark these inconsistencies in different parts of their novels in a negative way though A. Walton Litz describes Austen's way of narrating the story sequentially as "inconsistencies in tone and point of view" (72). In this sense, the narrative of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* is consistent in tone and point of view. The point is that in this novel, the narrator i.e. Jane Eyre herself, is telling her own story. Being active in the story, the narrator projects the daily events from her perspective only and the tone of the narrative naturally remains subjective throughout. Also the narrator has selected to focus on those parts of daily life that take the story further and that she observes as a character of the story. There are places in the novels where she omits a week (Chapter Two of Volume Five) or a month (Chapter Seven of Volume Two) from her narration. In contrast, Austen or Eliot's novel, first of all focuses on the daily lives of the place selected as the setting and uses both the description of the narrator-observer and the comments or feelings of certain characters to illuminate the real situation in a balanced way. In this case, the method is to present the sequential or consequent happenings of daily lives rather than projecting only the story-related sequences. Therefore, events indirectly related or not related can also be included in the novel and it is not surprising to see multiple stories too. This specific characteristic of the novels of Austen and Eliot has made them term inconsistent.

However, consistency lies in the theme and content of the authorial messages. A unity is there underneath the disunity and disillusion. Beneath all these disorders

there lies an organized pattern – that shows the systematic development of feelings based on cause and effect of every action. These works are based on two levels: the general or social level and the individual or personal level. Both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch* bring forth the multi-leveled interpretation of daily life. The simplest to the most complex events of daily life are re-presented with re-consideration of each scene to highlight the way of society on the whole from the particular level – monitoring the life of an individual in a society and from the central level – reflecting on the workings and developments of the mind. The purpose being the same, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch* are different in their development of narrative structure, in their use of various elements in the narrative arrangement, in the frequency of putting authorial stress and disclosing the authorial philosophy.

In case of Jane Austen's novel, the authorial presence almost always remains implicit and the narrator acts as the historian who records the important and unimportant happenings of every consecutive day. The progression of daily events is stressed more than anything else. Many chapters begin with the reference to "next day" – signifying the passing of a single day (chapters 17 and 19 for example). Thus, the narrative pattern in *Pride and Prejudice* stresses on the succession of days. Sometimes, the chapters point out the happenings of each part of the day – there are developments though they do not always seem to be significant. The following references to text can show how every sequence of daily life is pointed out in the same serial as they appear:

(1) The narrator refers to a letter by Mr Collins in Chapter 13, where he writes to Mr Bennett,

"If you should have no objection to receive me into your house, I propose myself the satisfaction of waiting on you and your family, Monday, November 18th, by four o'clock..." (PP 108)
... ...

(2) "Mr Collins was punctual to his time, and was received with great politeness by the whole family." (109)
... ...

(3) "He was interrupted by a summons to dinner; and the girls smiled on each other. They were not the only objects of Mr Collin's admiration. The hall, the dining-room, and all the furniture were examined and praised..." (109)
...

(4) "During dinner, Mr Bennet scarcely spoke at all; but when the servants were withdrawn, he thought it time to have some conversation with his guest, ..." (109)

However, these little improvements of story may not seem to add anything to the development of the plot but, separately and collectively, they visualize the pattern from the birth of any feeling to its ultimate outburst.

The authorial intention behind projecting the daily happenings has been to show the growth and stages of emotions and feelings. For this, the scenes reflect stark reality. Jane Austen limits her plot within the domestic sphere – bringing out every

detail of the domestic life. The unimportant features of daily life are equally stressed with the significant changes that are intermixed with them. Moreover, the narrative pattern stresses on the succession of days to hint on the monotony prevalent in English provincial life. Compared to *Middlemarch*, the scope of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* is narrower as the focus is only on one Bennet family and the narrative portrays the family members interact with some other families and go through the social duties. Projecting such a limited sphere, Austen leaves the part of interpretation and analysis for the readers. The narrator highlights the daily actions but the inner motives of actions are not always clarified. Only, there is an abstract hint on the stimulus that enforces the individual to act in a certain way. Pride makes Catherine de Bourgh act in that arrogant way towards Elizabeth, snobbery makes Miss Bingley behave and speak in that way. Weariness and anxiety for her daughters' future make Mrs. Bennet crazy and ridiculous. Thus, Austen shows how the social customs, rules, and regulations manipulate the simplest attitudes of individuals and motivate human interactions in their daily lives. However, through some instances of daily lives, Austen stresses upon the complexities of interactions between individuals in daily life.

However, the central authorial intention has been to focus on the workings of the mind of Elizabeth Bennet and showing the changes in her feelings and thoughts. The gradual process through which Elizabeth's mind develops to a certain direction draws the picture of an unrelenting progress from ignorance towards better judgement and ultimate realization. Very systematically, the narrative announces each little change in Elizabeth's mind. For example, amidst every scene that shows or refers to the meeting of Elizabeth and Darcy, the narrator hints on Elizabeth's state of mind regarding Darcy:

(1) (Chapter Five) Elizabeth cannot forgive Darcy's pride as he has mortified hers.

(2) (Chapter Ten) Darcy's eyes were fixed on Elizabeth but "She hardly knew how to suppose that she could be an object of admiration to so great a man; ... She drew his notice because there was a something about her more wrong and reprehensible, according to his ideas of right, than in any other person present. ... She liked him too little to care for his approbation." (96)

(3) (Chapter 34)Darcy proposes to Elizabeth, which has been a matter of great astonishment "beyond expression". The narrator describes her reaction, "She stared, coloured, doubted, and was silent." In such a moment, Elizabeth goes through a complex feeling:

(4) "In spite of her deeply-rooted dislike, she could not be insensible to the compliment of such a man's affection, and though her intentions did not vary for an instant, she was at first sorry for the pain he was to receive; till, roused to resentment by his subsequent language, she lost all compassion in anger." (221)

(5) "Elizabeth felt herself growing more angry every moment;"... (224)

84

(6) "That she should receive an offer of marriage from Mr Darcy! That he should have been in love with her for so many months! ... was almost incredible! It was gratifying to have inspired unconsciously so strong an affection." (225)

This is how Elizabeth goes through complexities and confusion.

(7) Chapter 50 reflects the change in Elizabeth's thoughts about Darcy – she realizes her faults. The narrative declares, "She was humbled, she was grieved; she repented, though she hardly knew of what.

(8) "... could he know that the proposals which she had proudly spurned only four months ago, would now have been gladly and gratefully received!(325)

In this way, amidst all the simple daily proceedings, the narrative records the growth of a certain feeling – feeling of love. It starts in hate and dissatisfaction, that is then accompanied by wrong information and misunderstandings and later on, that goes through realization of errors and gives birth to the feeling of love.

The narrative structure of *Middlemarch* can be termed as 'projection of daily emotions'. The narrative stresses less on the day or part of the day and more on each and every change that occurs in the minds of some characters. This is based on the authorial philosophy, "We mortals, men and women, devour many a disappointment between breakfast and dinner-time;" (*Middlemarch* 51) In *Middlemarch,* each and every simple emotion is focused upon – that show the change in human beings. Recording the specific point of time, when a certain feeling takes a different shape or a certain thought is improved or changed or alternated, the narrative brings out those little affections of mind that ultimately become the cause of a great outburst. Like Austen, the main subject of such psychological experimentation in the novel is a female, Dorothea Brooke.

Most beautifully, Eliot projects how one fine morning there comes a dream and little by little everyday, Dorothea collects or gathers the feelings related to the dream, and suddenly she can even see the future in the surroundings of daily life.

There had risen before her the girl's vision of a possible future for herself to which she looked forward with trembling hope, and she wanted to wander on in that visionary future without interruption. (22)

However, through Dorothea the authorial voice hints on the fact that with the passing of time, an individual mind can realize the distance between dream and reality. The narrative records every significant and insignificant change in Dorothea's feeling. This change in thoughts and feeling is related with the passing of time.

(1) "...she looked as reverently at Mr Casaubon's religious elevation above herself as she did at his intellect and learning." (27)
(2) "... in these brief weeks Dorothea's joyous grateful expectation was unbroken..." (71)

(3) "Today she had began to see that she had been under a wild illusion in expecting a response to her feeling from Mr Casaubon, and she had felt the waking at a presentiment that there might be a sad consciousness in his life..." (175)

By recording every simple alteration in emotion, the author creates a complete picture that brings out every cause and effect behind any human lot. Moreover, Dorothea's actions, thoughts and reactions are analyzed from the philosophical point of view:

Dorothea had gathered emotion as she went on, and had forgotten everything except the relief of pouring forth her feelings, unchecked; an experience once habitual with her, but hardly ever present since her marriage, which had been a perpetual struggle of energy with fear. (321)

Thus the female mind is interpreted from three levels: one, the external sequence; two, the workings of inner mind; three, the philosophical explanation of the event. Also, some passages reflect the authorial anguish while describing a situation. The concluding chapter, "Finale" clearly mirrors authorial mind. Eliot comments,

[...] we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many Dorotheas, some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of the Dorothea whose story we know. (688)

Compared to Austen, George Eliot has always widened her point of focus to bring out parallel sequences to include in her multiple plot structure. Eliot shows the development of passions in a parallel way through two main parallel plots that centre on Dorothea and Lydgate. The developments take place according to their similar emotional situations. At every moment, these two characters attempt to make their ordinary life extraordinary. Their feelings develop from their unique aspiration and ambition and pass through struggles and conflicts and ultimately end in compromise.

However, such a finale is not the fate of those individuals, who always act in terms with the social obligations and limitations. They can easily cope with any new situation and the change in their mind results in peace and satisfaction. For example, the unthinkable decision of Dorothea's getting married to Casaubon is something very painful to accept for Sir James Chettam. Yet it is the matter of a moment when he changes his thoughts and takes it into a new direction.

And without his distinctly recognizing the impulse, there certainly was present in him the sense that Celia would be there, and that he should pay her more attention than he had done before. (51)

Ultimately, Chettam finds his satisfaction in Celia and is shown as a happily married couple.

Thus, the narrative in *Middlemarch* brings out the struggle of an individual mind from two levels: personal and social. On the social level, it is the whole web of life of which every individual is a part. Social control is in every matter of daily or private life of an individual. The narrative brings out the ways how individual life and emotions are entangled within this web called society. With this, Eliot points out

the relation between external events and internal matters. The narrative represents the ways how the internal problems reverberate in the external interactions and gives birth to complexities. Eliot writes in *Middlemarch,*

> I at least have so much to do in unravelling certain human lots, and seeing how they were woven and interwoven, that all the light I can command must be concentrated on this particular web and not dispersed over that tempting range of relevancies called the universe. (117)

To crystallize or signify such process of life, the narrative progression is sometimes paused for the authorial explanation of a certain situation. Linda S Raphael writes,

> Eliot's method suggests that rather than selecting a motto that guided her as she wrote, she chose mottos after she had created an event or an aspect of a character so that she might then counsel the reader even further in her interpretation. (60)

However, it seems that the process is two-fold: in the first place, the narrative originates in certain authorial philosophy. In the second place, it appears that the selection of scenes is not regulated accordingly. They are set free as they appear in the temporal structure. Yet the narrative discourse takes the role of stressing on the particular elements from those scenes that reflect the authorial implication. In these cases, the stress is on the mental progression of human mind – at times, it is the reflection of the general mentality, at times, it is the reflection of the individual mind – struggling under the control of social depressions and at other times, it is the workings of the female mind. All three positions are projected simultaneously with the skilful balance among the selection of scenes. In every case, the time sequence of the scenes never overlaps and all the events follow under the same time-scheme.

What is clear, the strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Middlemarch* are not the same. The difference lies in the method of putting the authorial stress and of disclosing the authorial philosophy. However, the authorial implications are the same and originated in similar authorial philosophy. The projection of daily events has been the most valuable tool the two authors used in these novels, which proves to be useful in disclosing various authorial implications.

Firstly, projection of daily happenings establishes realism strongly in the novels.

Secondly, it enables the authors to portray the complexities that lie in the relationship between individual and society. From the general level, the narrative focuses on individual's struggle in society in retaining individuality and individual's compromise to social obligations.

Thirdly, it enables the authors to crystallize the character in focus from various levels. The novels explore the changes of feelings and attitudes, draws the pattern of growth of mind from ignorance to realization. Eliot shows woman's change in feelings and attitude – starting from the sphere of dream and passion a woman finally reaches towards practicality and reason. Austen shows the process of a woman's growth of mind, rise of feelings, realization of errors. In the end of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennet realizes her faults and gains self-knowledge, and in

Middlemarch, Dorothea realizes her mistake of blending imagination with reality. The whole movement of life from dream, excitement, and aspiration to compromise is monitored in this novel. The authorial voice in *Middlemarch* expresses,

> Young and noble impulse" always struggle "amidst the conditions of an imperfect social state, in which great feelings will often take the aspect of error, and great faith the aspect of illusion. (688)

Thus, both Jane Austen and George Eliot have been able to sort out the source of the most complex situations regarding human interactions and relationships from the simple daily events. It is the simple attitudes and counter- attitudes that give birth to complexities that one does not take into consideration at first, but the most complex issues of human life regenerate from there. The more these two novelists have entered the arena of the everyday life, the better they have explored the central tendencies of human conduct.

Work Cited

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Penguin Books, 1972.

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre.* London: Penguin Books, 1996.

Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1994.

Litz, A. Walton. *Jane Austen, A Study of Her Artistic Development*. New York: Oxford UP, 1965.

Raphael, Linda Schermer. *Narrative Skepticism: Moral Agency and Representations of Consciousness.* Cranberry: Associated Press, 2001.

Mega Dams in the Himalayas, Global Warming and Environment

K. Maudood Elahi, PhD*

Abstract

Dams constructed all over the Himalayas for water management with an aim to mainly generate electricity are of great concern for whole of South Asian subcontinent, and the environment of the riparian countries. The governments of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan are planning to transform the Himalayan Rivers into the powerhouse of South Asia by building hundreds of mega-dams to generate electricity. Recently, China has also been included in the list. This paper assesses impending risks associated with the environment of South Asia under the climate change and global warming scenarios.

Introduction

A number of dams have been constructed across the Himalayas, extending from the Pamir in Pakistan to the Arakan Yoma in Myanmar for management of water resources. Such activities are not a matter of concern for any single country but the whole of South Asian subcontinent, and the environment of the riparian countries is likely to be worst affected. This paper aims at bringing forth some of the pertinent issues related to environmental consideration as well as sustainable water management of the whole region with reference to under the impending climate change and global warming scenario. It is based on mostly secondary sources of data with relevant personal observation and analysis from relevant persons associated with the issues of dam building and climate change. Specific source materials have been furnished at the end of the paper.

The Mega Dams on the Himalayas and Global Warming

The governments of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan are planning to transform the Himalayan Rivers into the powerhouse of South Asia by building hundreds of mega-dams to generate electricity. The proposed dam on the Tsangpo (The Brahmaputra) at Namcha Barwa (in eastern Tibet) by the Chinese may be added to this list. However, according to the Policy Analysts of the International Rivers the possible impact of climate change will jeopardize the viability of the hydropower projects as well as the safety of the dams (Internationalrivers.org). The Himalaya is one of the fastest changing regions of the world due to global warming. The mountain's glaciers, the source of most large South Asian rivers and a critical "savings account" of South Asia's water supply, are melting. In early February 2009, Chinese scientists warned that glaciers on the Tibetan plateau are melting at a "worrisome speed," according to Xinhua news agency.

*Professor, Department of Environmental Science &
Pro-Vice Chancellor, Stamford University, Bangladesh

Against these dramatic developments, the governments of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan are planning to build hundreds of mega-dams to generate electricity from the source waters of the rivers in the Himalayas. In India, there are already about 30 mega dams constructed during the last 50 years or so (Fig. 1).

Dam Status:
- ■ Proposed
- ■ Under construction
- ■ Existing

This map shows many, but not all, dam projects in India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan.
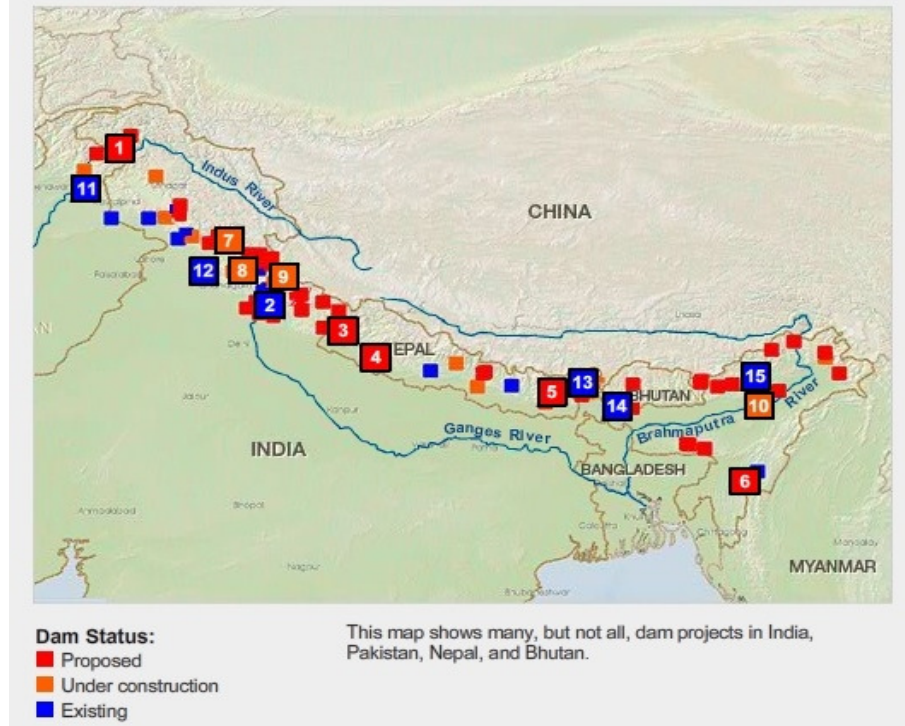
Fig. 1. Major mega-dams/hydro projects along the Himalayan mountai.

The mighty glaciers of the world's highest mountains – the source of most large Asian rivers, including the Indus, the Ganges and the Nu (Salween) as well as many other smaller rivers – are melting due to global warming. A dam-building boom in the Himalayas in times of global warming is like investing billions of dollars in high-risk, non-performing assets. In the Himalayas, "melting glacier water will replenish rivers in the short run, but as the resource diminishes, drought will dominate the river reaches in the long term," says Xin Yuanhong, a senior engineer with a Chinese team that is studying the glaciers of the Tibetan plateau (Internationalrivers.org).   Both the initial increase in river flows as well as the subsequent decline threatens the safety and viability of the planned hydropower projects as most of their designs are based on historical data of river flows, with the assumption that the pattern of flows will remain the same. Climate change scenario is most likely to falsify effectively this assumption. It is likely that dams will be subjected to much higher flows, raising concerns of dam safety, increased flooding and submergence affecting local ecology

91

and habitat of a number of species including a large number of ethnic populations, or much lower flows, challenging the performance of such large investments.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), in Nepal and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) agree that global warming will also lead to more storms and floods, especially in tropical and mountainous regions. A report by ICIMOD on the impact of climate change on Himalayan glaciers states: "On the Indian subcontinent, temperatures are predicted to rise between 3.5 and 5.5°C by 2100. An even higher increase is predicted for the Tibetan Plateau. Climate change is not just about averages, it is also about extremes. The change in climate is likely to affect both minimum and maximum-recorded temperatures as well as triggering more extreme rainfall events and storms."

These heavy storms and floods will jeopardize the economic profitability of hydropower projects, as well as the safety of these mountains of concrete.

It may be mentioned in this connection that according to scientific estimates the large dams in India are responsible for about a fifth of the countries' total global warming impact. The estimates also reveal that Indian dams are the largest global warming contributors compared to all other nations. A study by Ivan Lima and colleagues from Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE) estimates that emission of methane from all the reservoirs of the world could be 120 MT per annum. The study does not include the emission of nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide from large dams. If all these are included, the global warming impact of large reservoirs would go up further. The methane emission from India's dams is estimated at 27.86 % of the methane emission from all the large dams of the world, which is more than the share of any other country of the world. Brazil comes second with the emission of methane from Brazil's reservoirs being 18.13% of the global figure (Countercurrents.org).

Global warming might be the most serious challenge to the safety and efficiency of the proposed dams in the Himalayan region, but the funding gap appears to be hampering India and Pakistan moving ahead with the largest planned dams for the region, including the Diamer-Bhasha project. It also appears that strong local opposition to some of the major projects, including the West Seti project and the 3,000-MW Dibang project in Arunachal Pradesh, India, constitute larger obstacles for the project planners than anticipated. Planned public hearings for the Dibang project have had to be cancelled several times due to strong opposition.

River Diversion by Dam Construction: example of the Teesta

On the other hand, the ongoing marathon protests of the Affected Citizens of Teesta (ACT) have highlighted the numerous socio-cultural and environmental concerns associated with the development of a series of mega dams in the state in general and Dzongu in particular. With Sikkim's ambitious plans to harness the hydroelectric potential of the Teesta river basin through a mega plumbing exercise involving a maze of dams and tunnels criss-crossing the entire state's landscape, the question which comes to ones mind is: will the Teesta be allowed to flow free in any stretch of the river at all? For a while keeping aside the many tributaries and focus on

the main flow of the Teesta River, formed after the Lachung Chu and Lachen Chu join near Chungthang. At least four consecutive mega hydroelectric projects are planned on the main Teesta in Sikkim in the stretch from Chungthang to where the river enters North Bengal and then to Bangladesh. These are the 1200 MW Teesta III, 520 MW Teesta IV, 510 MW Teesta V and 500 MW Teesta VI. All these so called 'run-of-the-river' hydroelectric projects involve the construction of large dams which divert the river waters through long tunnels, before the water is dropped back into the river at a downstream location after passing through a powerhouse. Opposition to the projects testifies the low degree of participation of affected people in the relevant decision-making processes; and the lack of consideration for the social and environmental impacts of the planned dams. All of these things point to the need for a comprehensive review of the dam building program in each of the river basins in the Himalayas.

The long tunnels ensure that significant stretches of the river are bypassed for each project, for example 23 km. of the river is bypassed for the already commissioned Teesta V project. In the winter months 85 to 90 per cent of the river flow will be diverted through the tunnels. Throughout the year the river will be in full flow only in very brief stretches between two consecutive hydropower projects. The Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) based on the recommendations of the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) has already granted environmental clearance to three out of the four projects referred to above in the past – 1200 MW Teesta III, 510 MW Teesta V and 500 MW Teesta VI. The Teesta III & VI are under construction while Teesta V is already commissioned.

The three under construction or commissioned projects (Teesta III, Teesta V, and Teesta VI) will directly impact at least 71 km of the main Teesta River. This includes 63 km. due to bypassed stretches of the river in which the flow will be minimal and at least 7.6 km being the cumulative length of the reservoirs in the main Teesta River (not including the reservoir length along some of the tributaries). If the Teesta IV project is allowed to come up, an additional 12.12 km (7.75 km bypassed stretch of the river and 4.37 km being length of the reservoir), the last free stretch of the main Teesta river in the upper reaches will be destroyed. Totally around 83 km of the river will be directly (and seriously) impacted in Sikkim. The only stretch of the river which will be able to flow free is downstream of the Teesta VI project, a major portion of which flows along the Sikkim-West Bengal border. It is absolutely important that the last remaining stretch of the main Teesta river in its upper reaches in Sikkim (between the Teesta III and Teesta V projects) is allowed to flow unfettered to respect both the ecological and cultural heritage of a river which is closely associated with the identity of Sikkim. The only way this can happen is if the Teesta IV project is scrapped. Counter arguments are being made that a little over 20 per cent of the lean season flow will be there in the bypassed stretch of the Teesta IV project (between dam and powerhouse) due to releases from the dam and incremental additions by other tributaries. But when the ecological integrity of the main Teesta River has already been compromised to such a large extent in Sikkim by the three existing mega projects, it is required to allow full (100 per cent) flow at least in this stretch of the river between Teesta III and Teesta V.

It is to be seen if the EAC will allow the last remaining stretch of the main Teesta river in Sikkim between the Teesta III and Teesta V project to flow free, it does not require to conduct further Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to realize that the coming of the Teesta IV project will be the final nail in the coffin of the main Teesta river in Sikkim, since the other three mega projects mentioned above are already commissioned or under development. The Teesta IV project should therefore be scrapped at the 'Scoping' stage itself because of the above mentioned reasons. It is certainly not unreasonable for citizens of the state and rest of the country to expect that at least some stretches of the main Teesta River in Sikkim are allowed to flow free. The Lepcha community in Dzongu has repeatedly pointed out both to the Indian Government and the State governments of Sikkim that 7 mega hydro projects within Dzongu will not only destroy their culture, identity and livelihood but will also damage the ecology, environment and biodiversity of the area globally regarded as one of the 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world (it has been reported in June 2008, the Sikkim Government under Shri Pawan Chamling had scrapped four out of the six hydro projects located inside Dzongu in tune with the demands made by ACT. This only strengthens the case for scrapping the remaining two – Panan and Teesta IV) (Sikkim Express, April 21, 2009). Despite the   construction of reduced number of dams over the Teesta in Sikkim, the Teesta Irrigation Project in Bangladesh will ultimately prove useless resulting chronic water shortage in dry season, high flood in monsoon and consequent environmental and economic damages affecting a large population and natural habitat of many flora and fauna.

Dam Failures and Bursting Lakes

The sudden bursting of glacial lakes is another major concern for the safety of planned dams, and ultimately the rivers and peoples of lower valleys of the Himalayas. Glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) are a recent phenomenon. As glaciers in high-altitude regions such as the Himalayas melt, they can form large lakes behind temporary dams of ice and rock. When these moraine dams collapse, millions of cubic meters of water are released, resulting in massive flash floods.

The Dig Tsho dam failure in Nepal in 1985 was one of the most devastating glacial lake bursts in recent history. The bursting of this glacial lake near Mount Everest caused a huge flood wave that traveled down the valley, killing five people and destroying one hydropower station, many acres of cultivated land and 14 bridges. The effect was felt as far as the Indian areas down stream. Such a situation develops as the data needed to build hydropower projects in the Himalayas is not available in full or insufficient. It is not clear how often the dam gates of any planned dam in the Himalayas will have to be left open in order to allow for extremely high floods to rush through its gates (all the while not generating any power). Storms, strong rains and floods, which are predicted to increase with the warming climate, can also threaten the very existence of dam walls and can destroy even the most robust mountains of concrete planned in the Himalayas.

In January 2009, the government of Bhutan identified more than 2,600 glacial lakes in the country, of which 25 are considered to be at high risk of bursting, according to Yeshi Dorji of Bhutan's Department of Geology and Mines. While

Bhutan is aware of the risk of lake outburst and is improving its early warning system, the country, together with India, is still currently constructing one of the largest hydropower dams in the region, the 90-metre-high Tala project on the Wangchu River.

One billion people in South Asia and many millions in China are dependent on the Himalayan rivers. While predicting the future course of change to these lifelines from global warming is very difficult, it can no longer be presumed that there will always be abundant snow and glaciers in the Himalayas. If the Himalayan governments go forward with their planned dam boom, they deny that global warming is actually transforming their region and the planet earth (World Rivers Review. 24, (1), March 2009).

The Dam Projects Planned

The governments of the region, eager to make the dam-building boom happen, focus on the expected benefits while turning a blind eye to the uncertainties of global warming and the impending environmental consequences affecting a large number of populations. The governments of Nepal and Bhutan want to build large dams to earn revenues from the sale of electricity to India. India itself is eager not only to buy hydropower from its neighbors, but also to generate it in the mountainous regions of the country. Among the big projects planned for the immediate future, West Seti, Upper Karnali and Arun III, are all meant to sell electricity to India. With only a small percentage of that power being set aside for Nepal, it comes as no surprise that these large dams face opposition from the residents they will displace.

But some in Nepal also explain that the country will not even gain "hydro-dollars" from projects such as West Seti. Ratna Sansar Shresthar, a Nepali lawyer and financial analyst, explained that since the project is being built by foreign corporations, Nepal will not see much of the expected profits. "Since most of the project's equity comes from overseas – except for the government's 15 per cent share – only 15 per cent of the dividend will come to Nepal," said Shresthar. "Another major outlay is the repayment of a part of the principal and interest. As the project is borrowing from foreign agencies, these payments will never enter Nepal." The promises of high revenues for Nepal are, therefore, likely to remain unfulfilled (http://www.chinadialogue. net/article/ show/ single/en/2778).

In India, the basic driver for hydropower is the demand for electricity. The country continues to be plagued by power and energy shortages. Overall, peak power demand over 2007 was 108,886 MW, of which only 90,793 MW were met – a shortfall of over 16 per cent. Moreover, a large portion of the Indian society does still not have access to electricity. The government says that in 2006, one in four Indian villages was still without access to electricity. However, it is not clear that a lack of access to electricity can be blamed solely on the country's lack of generation capacity. India's electricity grid is known for its huge transmission and distribution losses of between 35 and 45 per cent. Recent increases in electricity costs for private consumers, as well as the reduction of subsidies, have further reduced poor people's access to the grid. More hydropower capacity will not necessarily increase people's

access to electricity. Since most of the projects are planned at high altitudes, they will be costly and so will the electricity that they generate.

More than 150,000 MW of new hydropower is proposed to be generated in the next 20 years in the four countries (India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan). At that rate, the Himalaya could become the most heavily dammed region in the world. Some of these dams, including the 3,000 MW Dibang project in India, the 1,000 MW Tala project in Bhutan, and the 4,500 MW costing US$12.6 billion Diamer-Bhasha Dam in Pakistan – are among the world's largest and most expensive dams planned.

Shockingly, this dam boom is not being analyzed for the biggest threat to hydrological projects of our time: global warming. While the government of Pakistan has been working for more than two years to find donors for the project, its finances are still on shaky grounds. In November 2008, Pakistan's National Economic Council approved US$1.5 billion toward the construction of the dam, and Pakistan's minister for water and power declared that Chinese companies would build the dam and "some Arab countries" would provide part of the financing. Around the same time, the World Bank refused to provide any funding for the project, dealing a severe blow to the government's attempts to find foreign backers. In response to this decision, the minister was quoted as saying that several alternative avenues for funding the project would have to be sought, including private sector loans and a surcharge on electricity.

Hydro-electric Projects in NE India and the Tipaimukh Dam

The people living in the Seven States of northeast India are blessed with ample natural resources. This region is rich in minerals, oils, green forests and abundant natural water in the form of flowing rivers. But the region is also under the threat of earthquakes as it within the very high seismic sensitive Zone-V. Therefore, any kind of major developmental projects involving interference with geological and hydrological formation needs careful planning backed by proper geological investigations and scientific studies.

The Arunachal Pradesh which is the richest State in the country in terms of natural water resources has already initiated activities to construct six mega dam projects on river Subansiri in three stages with a total installed capacity of 6,500 MW and on river Dehing in three stages with a total installed capacity of 14,500 MW through hydro-electric projects under the auspices of the National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC). But there has been a series of protests from the local people of Assam, from the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and other local organizations opposing the construction of a large concrete dam by NHPC for the 2000 MW Lower Subansiri Hydro-electric Project near Garukamukh of Dhemaji district adjacent to the Arunachal border. They all fear of probable adverse effects on the lives and properties in the vast human habitations downstream of the dam. Further, the experts from the Gauhati University, Guwahati IIT and Dibrugarh University, in their first report submitted on February 10, 2009, have already advised the NHPC not to continue with the construction activities of the mega dam. Their apprehension has been strengthened with the recent experience of unexpected floods, caused by sudden release of excess water from the Ranganadi Hydro-electric Project

located in Arunachal Pradesh, wreaking havoc by submerging vast areas within seconds in north Lakhimpur and Dhemaji districts along with Majuli in eastern Assam. The sudden floods in recent years in northern Bangladesh from the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries may as well be the outcome of those in the upstream.

There might have been two reasons for the unexpected and sudden flash flood and soil erosion on the downstream side of the 'dam site'. These are: (a) water body created in the upstream of the dam might have been overloaded due to unprecedented heavy rain or melting of snow in the mountain/hills due to global warming. In such abnormal situations, excess water from the reservoir might have to be released to save the dam from collapsing, which could cause heavy damage in the plains/valleys in the form of sudden flood, erosion, etc; and (b) possible collapse of the dam itself, mainly because of poor investigation of the site, or poor design and construction.

The critical question, however, is that in a very high seismic sensitive region, is it safe to construct massive hydro-electric power projects? The recent international studies indicate that the construction of a mega dam and creation of a huge water body in severe seismic sensitive regions on the earth is not advisable, considering the complex geological aspects. For example, the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that had struck the entire Sichuan Province of China in May 2008, killing more than 80,000 people and leaving more than five million homeless, was due to the failure of the 511-ft Zipingpu Dam, which holds 315 million tonnes of water and lies near a geological fault-line and only three miles away from the earthquake's epicenter. The scientists of China and the United States believe that the weight of water and the effects of water penetrating into the rocks could have affected the pressure on the fault-line underneath, possibly unleashing a chain of ruptures that might have led to the earthquake. This China earthquake has been termed as 'man-made' by the scientists. Geographically, we are living in a place of complex geological characteristics with seismically active faults spreading all over the region. The Mega Dam Hydro-electric Projects initiated by NHPC in geo-hydrological sensitive locations could be the cause of widespread loss of life and property due to sudden floods in the entire northeast India (The Assam Tribune, 24 March 2009). The similar disaster cannot be ruled out in the event of constructing the Tipaimukh Dam on the Barak River that runs along a similar geologic formation in the southern most part of Assam in northeast India.

The Tipaimukh project envisages construction of about 163 meter high rock-fill dam around 500 meters downstream of the confluence of river Barak with Tuivai to generate 1500 MW hydro- power. The MoEF recommended to the Northeast Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO), the executing agency, in late 2008 to study the impact of a dam-break scenario on the down stream regime of the dam site as there was no comprehensive EIA. However, a dam-break study by the Central Water Commission postulated that such an incident would submerge all densely populated villages and large towns like Silchar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Lakhipur etc. and about 20 small towns under 5.5 to 10 meters of water. On the other hand, scores of human settlements and ecologically vulnerable sites upstream in Manipur and Mizoram will also be submerged by the dam construction and consequent expansion of reservoir

(http://ne.icrindia.org/2008/11/17). In the long run, whole of the Surma and Kushiyara valley within Bangladesh not only runs the risk of total flash flood and prolonged submergence resulting loss of life and property of this densely populated country but also devastating consequences on the environment and local ecology.

Concluding Remarks

In the Himalayas the threat from the concrete works that would include huge walls damming the rivers, underground tunnels that could go scores of kilometer long, that could completely bypass and dry up the rivers for even longer lengths, the massive blasting that would be required for the same, the power houses, the roads, the townships, the mining that would be necessary to procure materials for the projects, the hundreds of kilometer long transmission lines meant for the power promised to be generated - threats from all this is indeed of Himalayan proportions. And even if it cannot dwarf the mountain itself, certainly it has the potential to destroy large parts of it permanently.

Putting aside the enormous cost involved in constructing nearly 80 dams in the four countries stated above, it would not be wrong to question the wisdom of constructing them in fragile, erosion prone, landslides prone, and active seismic zone. Even more importantly, area like the Arunachal Pradesh or Northeast India as such, is one of the important biodiversity rich hotspots on entire earth. It is the catchments of the rivers that are important economic, social, hydrologic, and cultural lifelines of hundreds of millions of people. The area is also inhabited by scores of ethnic minorities having little or no voice on development activities by the relevant governments, and therefore, their views on the use of water resources and biodiversity is hardly considered in true terms. These groups may pose a potential danger of insurgency once their traditional livelihoods are threatened.

Now add the climate change threats to this picture. Climate change that is already leading to receding of glaciers (which provide 70 per cent of the non-monsoon flows in most of the Himalayan rivers), which is going to increase the rainfall and also the frequency of high intensity rainfall events, that would also add to the threat of increased events of what is called Glacier Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), which happen when the stream flow blocked by natural causes like land slides and lead to flood disasters in the downstream area, and also increased sedimentation in the streams.

In view of the above the prudent course would be for the Himalayan countries to develop water resources in a way that helps people of the region adapt to the changing climate as well as hydro-geologic characteristics and reduces their risks. The concerned countries of this region, therefore, should work together to forge a common platform for water resource management planning vis-à-vis river basin management that should be above opportunistic short term political interests but dedicated to a longer term regional socioeconomic development of the people with a common goal to safeguarding and ensuring a sustainable regional environment.

General References

Angana Chatterji (Zspace page)
Himanshu Thakkar (Countercurrents.org, 20 May, 2007)
http://www.irn.org/
http://www.chinadialogue. net/article/ show/ single/en/2778,
http://www.alternet.org/story/17954,
http://counterpunch.org/jensen04222004.html,
http://www.irn.org/programs/finance/wb_at_60.pdf
http://www.tarunbharatsangh.com/about/rs.htm

Novel Application of Computerized HPLC Technique and Data Processing to Elucidate Pancreatic Malfunction

Abdul Rob, PhD*
Abdul Hoque, PhD**

Abstract

The pancreas is an important organ for various reasons including production of insulin and key digestive enzymes but clinically diagnosis of pathological condition of the pancreas is not very easy due to it anatomical location. Intrusive and expensive tests such as computed tomography, X-rays, and endoscopic retrograde cholangio-pancreatography *are often required for conclusive diagnosis. This may be a barrier in the third world countries. This research paper emphasized a novel non-invasive chronic pancreatic computerized* high-performance liquid chromatography (*HPLC*) *test developed by these authors and collaborators that is distinctive and thought to have wider applications including in the third world country such as Bangladesh. At least two HLPC methods of detection using ultraviolet and electrochemical are highlighted in this research paper. Both detection protocols may be utilized in Bangladesh and clinical analytical centers may find this article of great importance too. The application of computerized HPLC technique and data processing as described in this research paper to elucidate pancreatic malfunction will also be important as a teaching tool for university students to show how theoretical knowledge can be used to resolve a real issue.*

A. Introduction and Background to the Research

The pancreas is exceptionally an important organ and it is imperative for every one to understand what a normal pancreas does and what happens when it becomes malfunctioned. This article will provide information for general practitioners as well as a tool for the medical specialists. This commentary emphasized a non-invasive chronic pancreatic test developed by these authors and collaborators that is distinctive and thought to have wider applications including in the third world country such as Bangladesh**.** At least two methods of detection are highlighted in this research paper. Both may be used in Bangladesh and diagnostic centers may find this article of interest too.

B. Structure of this Research Paper

This research paper is structured out such away to give a flavor of the computerized technique together with protocol for data capturing to the reader. This is followed by introduction to the pancreas, since this organ is key to this research target. In order for the reader to appreciate the curiosity of this organ, its normal status is stressed followed by what happen in disease state. Also, the strategy for its diagnosis and problems are high lighted to lay down the foundation for this paper to develop a non-invasive protocol. The developed protocol utilized a computerized HPLC method. After data processing the results are analyzed and critically evaluated to lay down the novel features of this exiting research.

* Dean, School of Science & Technology, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh
** Associate Professor, Department of ICT, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

C. Computerized HPLC Technique

The computerized High-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), is a standard qualitative and quantitative analysis process used in investigative laboratory (Fig 1). The HPLC is very steadfast and repeatable, which makes it the ideal modus operandi for separating, identifying and quantifying molecules from multifarious mixtures of both chemical and biological components. The HPLC system contains four major components: firstly, the solvent delivery system known as the mobile phase which carries the samples through the column, secondly, the adsorbent known as the stationary phase; thirdly, the sample introduction system consists of some sort of injection port to introduce the sample to be analyzed into the solvent delivery system; and fourthly the detector. The type of detector used depends upon the type of sample the technicians are running and what molecules they are trying to isolate. The criteria utilized when choosing a detector include selectivity, signal-to-noise ratio, detection limit, linear range, time constant, drift and cell volume. Commonly used detectors include ultraviolet-visible detectors, mass spectrometers, refractive indexes, fluorescence detectors or evaporative light scattering devices and electrochemical detector (r34ef 6 and 7). We will look in some details of the two detection system used in this research paper namely the UV and electrochemical detector.

The frequently used detector in chromatography is the UV absorption detector, habitually as a diode array detector but also moderately as the simple single wavelength UV detector (ref 22). These detectors can be used when the ions of attention absorb in the UV wavelength or can be made to do so by suitable derivatization. The UV detector can often selectively perceive the solute ion of interest while other components in the assortment give little or no signal. A diagram of the fixed wavelength UV detector is shown in figure 2.

The electrochemical sensors for electrochemical detector for HPLC usually contains three distinct electrode elements namely the working, the counter and reference electrode (Fig 3). A fixed potential difference is applied between the working electrode and the reference electrode. This potential drives an electrochemical reaction at the working electrode's surface. A current flowing in the opposite direction at the counter electrode balances the current produced from the electrochemical reaction at the working electrode. The current resulting from the electrochemical reaction at the working electrode is augmented and, when plotted as a function of time, appears as a climax on the recording device. The potential applied to the working electrode is calculated within the context of a known potential, which is in turn obtained from the reference electrode (ref 23).

Figure 1: Application of Computerized HPLC Technique to Elucidate Pancreatic Malfunction (ref 7).
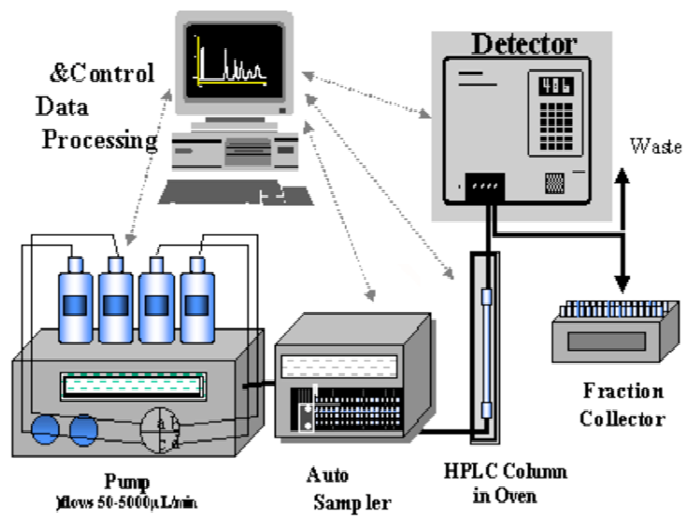
Figure: 2 Data collection using UV system is illustrated (Ref 22).
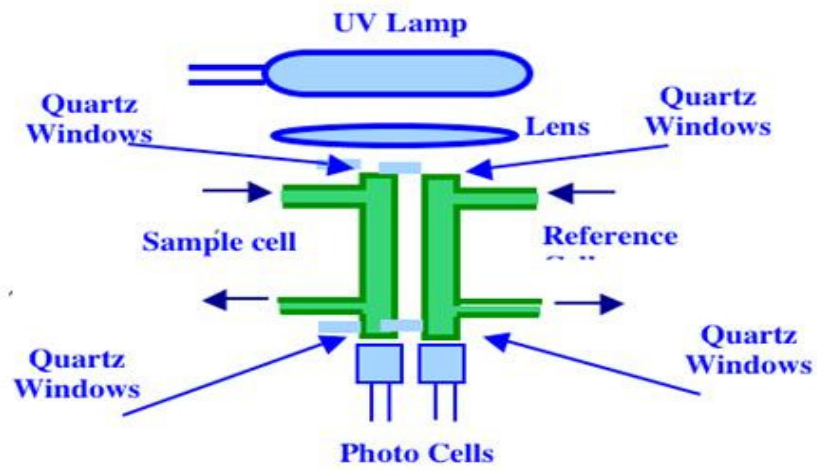
Figure 3: Data collection using electrochemical system is illustrated (Ref 23).
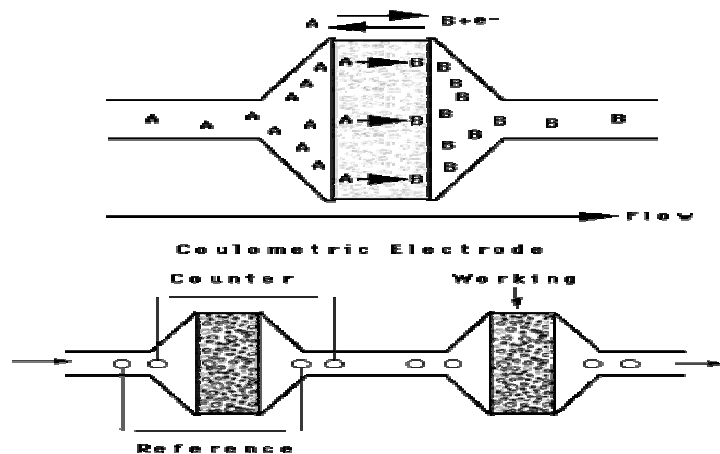
D. Data Processing

The statement data is frequently used to signify information (Ref 8). It often suggests large amount of information in a homogeneous format. Data processing refers to a discrete step in the information processing cycle. In this process, data is acquired, entered, validated, processed, stored, and output, either in response to queries or in the form of routine reports. Computer data processing is any process that uses a computer program to enter data and summaries, analyze or otherwise convert data into usable information (Fig 4).

Figure 4: HPLC-Data processing strategy (Ref 8)
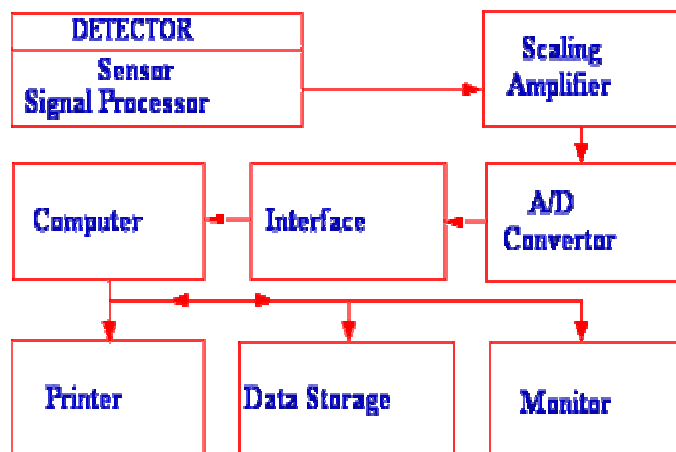
E. Position and Function of the Pancreas

It is first important to know the site and arrangement of this organ (see figure 5). The pancreas is essentially situated in the abdomen. It lies behind the stomach, in front of the spine, and is enclosed by the liver and the intestines. The pancreas is roughly six inches long and resembles a condensed bunch of grapes. It should be emphasized that the correct pancreatic function is imperative for the manufacturing of a number of hormones and digestive enzymes known as catalysts. The pancreas takes the principal responsibility in the endocrine system for secretion of hormones such as glucagon and insulin and other chemical substances, which are released into the bloodstream (reference 9 and 10).

Figure 5: Atlas of human anatomy and Schematic diagram of a pancreas (Ref 9 and 23)
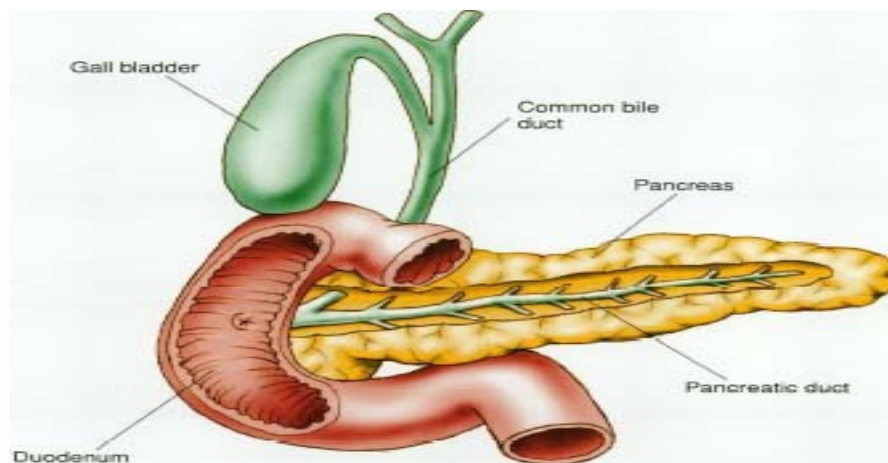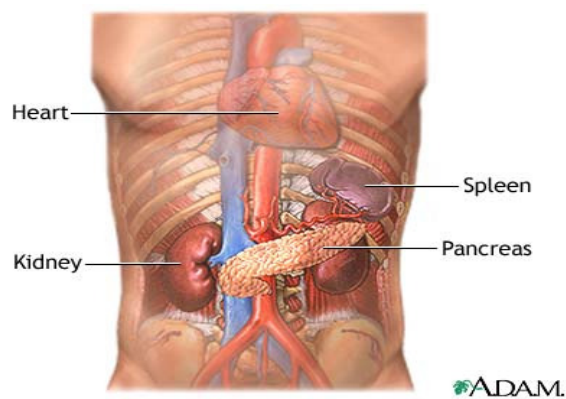
F. Common Malfunction of the Pancreas

It is important to reflect on the common anarchy of this organ. In fact, when the pancreas function is improper or reduced, a number of possible health complications can materialize such as pancreas cancer, pancreatitis, Type 1 Diabetes and Type 2 Diabetes. Furthermore, the position of the gland is anatomically buried in the stomach, which makes it difficult to perceive the problem. This makes the diagnosis bit difficult. Hence, clinically, the physical palpation of the gland is not viable, so blood tests and investigative imaging protocols are often desirable to aid the diagnose of the pancreatic disorder. Hence, this raises the costing and diagnostic complication.

G. Pancreatic Disorder & Common Symptoms

It is also important to appreciate the Common symptoms reflected due to this disorder. Fundamentally, the main symptoms of the pancreatitis are acute severe pain in the upper abdomen, which is frequently accompanied by vomiting and fever. Furthermore, clinically the abdomen appears tender and the patient feels and looks very ill.

H. Common Diagnostic Methods

It is vital to understand the general procedure for diagnosis of this complication. The diagnosis of this phenomenon is through measuring blood enzymes and by carrying out abdominal CT, X-rays, and ultrasound examinations. An invasive endoscopic retrograde cholangio-pancreatography (**ERCP**) analysis is often also performed (see figure 6). This is a technique that combines the use of endoscopy and fluoroscopy to diagnose and treat certain problems of the biliary or pancreatic ductal systems. Basically, in this test, a flexible endoscope is passed through the mouth into the intestine while the patient is casually sedated. A small artificial catheter is inserted into the pancreas ducts and an X-ray dye is injected. The internal framework of the pancreas can then be viewed by X-ray protocol (Ref 1,10, 11 and 14).

Figure 6: An invasive endoscopic retrograde cholangio-pancreatography (ERCP) analysis is shown (Ref 1, 10, 11 and 14)
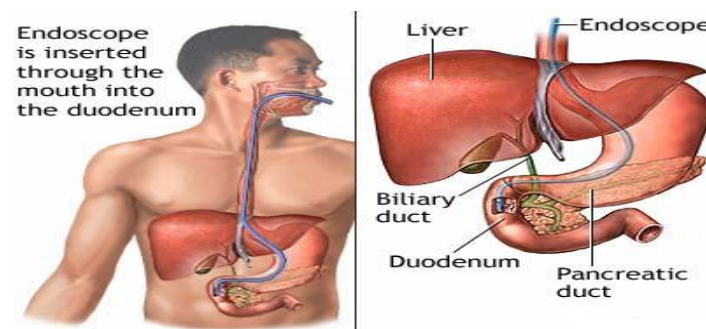
I. Non- Invasive Novel Diagnostic Protocol

It should be noted that most of the existing tests as highlighted above may be regarded as invasive and often have misleading outcome as well as undesirable affect (ref 17 and 18). Hence, a lot of research has been done to develop non-invasive procedures. In essence, in one particular non invasive test, exocrine pancreatic function can be assessed by determining the recovery in urine of a chemical named p-amino-benzoic acid (**PABA)** following the oral administration of a drug called **bentiromide** . However, misleadingly abnormal results often occur in patients with abnormal intestinal, liver and renal function. Thus, further research was carried out to combat this problem. Hence, Co-administration of radioactive compound called **14C-PABA** and the determination of the ratio of the recoveries of PABA to 14C-PABA, the PABA excretion index (PEI), have been used to eliminate these misleading results. Regrettably, this has the disadvantage of exposing patients to radioactivity and is undesirable in pregnancy.

J. Strategy to overcome Radiation Exposure Problem

We have reported (ref 2, 3 and 5) the development and optimization of a non-invasive **modified** test in which a drug called **anthracitic acid** is **substituted** for the radiolabel 14C-PABA as mentioned above (ref 4, 12, 13,15,16,17, 18, 19, 20 and 21). The above procedure is followed and the PABA and anthracitic acid in urine are determined using a computerized reverse phased chromatographic technique using an ultraviolet detector (HPLC-UV). The PABA excretion index is then determined as explained above. We have noted that the PABA excretion index values in patients with pancreatic malfunction determined using the computerized chromatographic method and after data processing (figure 1 and 2) were **clearly separated** from those in healthy controls This new non-invasive test is anticipate having wider applications including in the third world countries such as Bangladesh. However in certain circumstances this test could be expensive, as it requires specialist UV detection system. Furthermore, we have also developed an electrochemical detection protocol using the HPLC. This is believed to be cheaper and has not been reported elsewhere. The peak detection of the PABA and the anthracitic acid is carried out at 1180mv (HPLC-EC). We have found electrochemical detection is unique and specific. After data processing, in 14 subjects, the PEI values in patients with pancreatic steatotthoea were clearly separated from those in healthy controls (Table 1).

From these results, it is evident that the normal subjects have PEI in the range of 0.83-1.03. Patients without pancreatic disease (i.e. patients investigated using Lundh test-see reference 6 and ERCP, but found no evidence of pancreatic malfunction) have similar range ie 0.86-1.13. However, patients with pancreatic steatorrhoea (ie faecal fat greater than 21mmol/l) have PEI in the range of 0.16-0.32.

From the comparison of the linearity, specificity, accuracy, sensitivity and precision of the HPLC -EC method with the HPLC-UV method, it is apparent that the HPLC-EC method is superior to the HPLC-UV method. The results from the HPLC-EC method clearly distinguished between normal subjects and those with pancreatic disorder.

Table 1: The range of PEI in control subjects and in patients with pancreatic malfunction

Subjects	PEI Range	Mean PEI
Normal subjects	0.83-1.03	0.94
No evidence of pancreatic diseases	0.86-1.13	0.97
Pancreatic steatorrhoea	0.16-0.32	0.25

K. Conclusion

This research article has reflected a non-invasive test developed with two different detection protocols in collaboration with researchers in the UK that anticipated having application in the third world countries including Bangladesh whereas invasive testing is expensive and has undesirable affect (Ref 17 and 20). The article is expected to be of interest to general practitioners as well as medical specialist. Furthermore, *the application of computerized HPLC technique and data processing as described in this research paper to elucidate pancreatic malfunction will also be important as a teaching tool for university students.*

Works Cited

1. A S Mee, A H Girdwood, E Walker, N H Gilinsky, R E Kottler, and I N Marks. Comparison of the oral (PABA) pancreatic function test, the secretin-pancreozymin test and endoscopic retrograde pancreatography in chronic alcohol induced pancreatitis. *Gut*. 1985, 26 : 1257–1262.

2. Abdul Rob, Wayne H. Bradbury and Alexander R. W. Forrest. Reversed-phase liquid chromatographic method for the determination of p-aminobenzoic acid and anthranilic acid in urine: application to the investigation of exocrine pancreatic function. *Anal. Communication*, 1996, 33, 357-359.

3. Bradbury WH, Forrest ARW, Holsworth CD, Rob A and Worter JR. Preliminary evaluation of modified PABA test. The British Society of Gastroenterology, 46th annual meeting, Newcastle upon Tyne, 18-20 September 1985. Abstracts. *Gut* 1985, 26: 1134-1134.

4. S L Waller, The Lundh test in the diagnosis of pancreatic disease: a comment from the moderator. *Gut*. 1975 16 : 657–658.

5. Abdul Rob, Medical Review: A Novel Perspective -Exocrine Pancreatic Function and Diagnosis. *News from Bangladesh*, 2011 (ISSN 1563-9304) February 10. *Accessed* 16/02/2011

6. Lloyd R. Snyder, Joseph J. Kirkland, and John W. Dolan. *Introduction to Modern Liquid Chromatography*, Wiley; 3 edition (December 9, 2009)

7. Application of Computerized HPLC Technique and Data Processing. http://www.forumsci.co.il/HPLC/program.html . *Accessed* 16/02/2011.

8. The Acquisition and processing of Chromatography Data. http://www.chromatography-online.org. *Accessed* 16/02/2011.

9. Schematic diagram of a pancreas. http://www.the-human-body.net/pancreas.html. *Accessed* 16/02/2011.

10. An invasive endoscopic retrograde cholangio-pancreatography (ERCP) analysis is shown. http://findmeacure.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/ercp-1.jpg. *Accessed* 16/02/2011

11. Ammann RW, Akovbiantz A, Largiader F, Schueler G. Course and outcome of chronic pancreatitis. Longitudinal study of a mixed medical-surgical series of 245 patients. *Gastroenterology*. 1984 May;86 (5 Pt 1):820–828.

12. Mitchell CJ, Field HP, Simpson FG, Parkin A, Kelleher J, Losowsky MS. Preliminary evaluation of a single-day tubeless test of pancreatic function. *Br Med J* (Clin Res Ed) 1981 May 30;282(6278):1751–1753.

13. Arvanitakis C, Cooke AR. Diagnostic tests of exocrine pancreatic function and disease. *Gastroenterology*. 1978 May;74(5 Pt 1):932–948.

14. Kasugai T, Kuno N, Kizu M, Kobayashi S, Hattori K. Endoscopic pancreatocholangiography. II. The pathological endoscopic pancreatocholangiogram. *Gastroenterology*. 1972 Aug;63(2):227–234.

15. Arvanitakis C, Greenberger NJ. Diagnosis of pancreatic disease by a synthetic peptide. A new test of exocrine pancreatic function. *Lancet*. 1976 Mar 27;1(7961):663–666.

16. Gyr K, Stalder GA, Schiffmann I, Fehr C, Vonderschmitt D, Fahrlaender H. Oral administration of a chymotrypsin-labile peptide--a new test of exocrine pancreatic function in man (PFT). *Gut.* 1976 Jan;17(1):27–32.

17. Mitchell CJ, Humphrey CS, Bullen AW, Kelleher J. The diagnostic value of the oral pancreatic function test. *Scand J Gastroenterol.* 1979;14(2):183–187.

18. Hoek FJ, Sanders GT, Teunen A, Tijtgat GN. In vitro and in vivo analysis of the PABA test compared with the Lundh test--influence of intraluminal pH. *Gut.* 1981 Jan;22(1):8–13.

19. Hoek FJ, Sanders GT, Teunen A, Tijtgat GN. In vitro and in vivo analysis of the PABA test compared with the Lundh test--influence of intraluminal pH. *Gut.* 1981 Jan;22(1):8–13.

20. Sacher M, Kobsa A, Shmerling DH. PABA screening test for exocrine pancreatic function in infants and children. *Arch Dis Child.* 1978 Aug;53(8):639–641

21. Nousia-Arvanitakis S, Arvanitakis C, Desai N, Greenberger NJ. Diagnosis of exocrine pancreatic insufficiency in cystic fibrosis by the synthetic peptide N-benzoyl-L-tyrosyl-p-aminobenzoic acid. *J Pediatr.* 1978 May;92(5):734–737.

22. Raymond P. W. Scott, Ion chromatography (1985), part of the Chrom-Ed Series. 2nd editio , Weiss Publisher.

23 How electrochemical detection for HPLC works. http://www.esainc.com/resources/Detector_tech/How_EC_works. *Accessed* 16/02/2011

23 Atlas of Human Anatomy. http://www.pitt.edu/~anat/Abdomen/Pancreas/Pancreas.htm *Accessed* 16/02/2011

Design a Back-end Tool Using Open-source Technology for Loading Data into Data Warehouse from a Number of Data Sources

Ahsan Habib*
Md. Masum Billah**
Dr. Md. Liakot Ali***

Abstract

To fulfill the objectives of data warehouse, a number of front-end tools and back-end tools are required. In this paper it is shown how to develop a back end tool for loading data into data warehouse from many sources using open source Structured Query Language (SQL) engine MySQL. In this paper it is also shown how to test data loading into data warehouse using the developed back-end tool where data sources are multiple operational MySQL databases connected through computer network or backup databases stored in non-volatile media like CD, VCD, pen drive etc.

Keywords: Open Source Data Warehouse, Data Mining, Data Loading, Data Sources, SQL

INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Present State of the Problem

To fulfill the objectives of data warehouse, a number of front-end tools and back-end tools are required. Front-end tools include analysis, OLAP queries/reporting, data mining etc. while back-end tools include data cleaning, data loading and Refreshing etc. [2]. Vendor specific Structured Query Language (SQL) engines like Oracle, MS SQL Server, IBM DB2 provide data warehousing facility [3-4]. However, small and medium enterprise cannot take the advantages of the vendor provided DBMS due to its high Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) [7-8]. As a result open-source SQL engines are becoming popular nowadays. But open-source SQL engines have still no generalized data warehousing facility [5-6]. Recently OLAP queries tool is developed using open source DBMS [7]. It is necessary to carry out research project to develop different back-end tools using open-source technology. The objectives of this research are (a) to develop a back end tool for loading data into data warehouse from many sources using open source Structured Query Language (SQL) engine MySQL (b) to test data loading into data warehouse using the developed back-end tool where data sources are multiple operational MySQL databases connected through computer network or backup databases stored in non-volatile media like CD, VCD, Flash drive etc.

B. Vendor Provided Back-End Tools and Utilities

Vendor provided RDBMS MSSQL Server and Oracle contain back-end tools.

***Assistant Professor, Department of CSE, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh.**
****Senior System Analyst, Bangladesh Public Service Commission, Bangladesh.**
*****Professor, IICT, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Bangladesh.**

Oracle Data Integrator (ODI) is a back-end tool used in Oracle database management system. This tool is used for data extraction, loading and transformation. It allows heterogeneous access from a wide range of data sources such as SQL Server, MySQL, DB2, CSV, XML and many other databases and format. *SQL Server Integration Services* (SSIS) is also a back-end tool used in SQL Server database management system. It not only allows data extraction, loading and transformation but also provides excellent data cleaning facilities.

C. Open-Source DBMSs

Open-Source is a development methodology which offers practical accessibility to a product's source (goods and knowledge). Some consider open-source as one of various possible design approaches, while others consider it a critical strategic element of their operations. Before open-source became widely adopted, developers and producers used a variety of phrases to describe the concept; the term open-source gained popularity with the rise of the Internet, which provided access to diverse production models, communication paths, and interactive communities.

Open-Source software (OSS) began as a marketing campaign for free software. OSS can be defined as computer software for which the human-readable source code is made available under a copyright license that meets the Open-Source Definition. This permits users to use, change, improve and redistribute the software in modified or unmodified form. It is very often developed in a public, collaborative manner.

Available open-source DBMSs are MySQL, PostgreSQL and mSQL. MySQL is the most popular and best known open-source DBMS. It is distributed under General Public License (GPL) and Lesser General Public License (LGPL). This permits users to use, change, modify, and redistribute it without payment. PostgreSQL is also an object- relational database management system (ORDBMS). It is released under a BSD-style (Berkeley Software Distribution) license and is thus a free software. As with many other open-source programs, PostgreSQL is not controlled by any single company, but relies on a global community of developers and companies to develop it.

ANALYSIS AND DESIGN OF THE BACK-END TOOL

A. Data warehouse

A data warehouse can be defined as a "subject-oriented, integrated, time-varying, non-volatile collection of data that is used primarily in organizational decision making" [8]. Data warehouse is an essential element of decision support system. Its demand is growing rapidly for complex business decision and analysis. As a result, it has increasingly become a focus of database industry.

B. Data warehouse Architecture

Fig. 1 shows the data warehouse architecture. Its data extracting component extracts data from a range of different sources. Its data transforming component removes data inconsistency and data are represented in a consistent way. After

111

completion of data extraction and transformation, data are integrated and loaded into data warehouse using data loading tool. Refreshing tool periodically update data warehouse on the source data. In addition to the main warehouse, there may be several departmental data marts. Data in the warehouse and data marts is stored and managed by one or more warehouse servers. These server present multidimensional views of data through a variety of front end tools. It includes query tools, report writers, analysis tools and data mining tools. Finally, there is a repository for storing and managing metadata and tools for monitoring and administering the warehousing system.
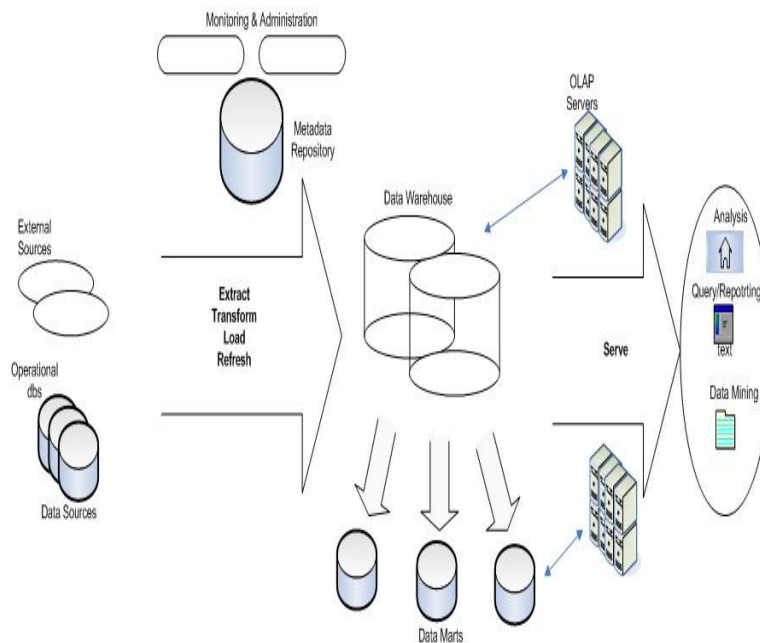
Fig. 1: Data warehouse Architecture [2]

C. Database Design Methodology for Data Warehouse

Entity Relationship diagrams and normalization techniques are popularly used for database design in On-line Transaction Processing (OLTP) environments. However, the database designs recommended by ER diagrams are inappropriate for decision support systems. Because the major concern of decision support system is faster query throughput and data loading (including incremental loads) rather than transaction throughput. Most of the data warehouses use a star schema to represent the multidimensional data model. The database consists of a single fact table and a single table for each dimension. Each tuple in the fact table consists of a pointer

112

(foreign key – often uses a generated key for efficiency) to each of the dimensions that provide its multidimensional coordinates, and stores the numeric measures for those coordinates. Each dimension table consists of columns that correspond to attributes of the dimension.

Distributed sales information of an imaginary organization is selected for the test case of this research. Sales related to four normalised table are shown in Fig. 2. The tables are *Sales,Customer, Site* and *Product*. The *sales* table of the operational database contain sales related detail information in normalized form. Sales information include *Site_ID, Customer_ID, Product_ID, Date, Quantity, adjustment, vat, waiver, total_amount* and *remarks*. The *sales* table contain three foreign keys. These are *Site_ID, Customer_ID* and *Product_ID* coming from *Site, Customer* and *Product* table respectively. *Site* table contains *Site_ID, Site_name* and *Site_address* information. *Customer* table contains *Customer_ID, Customer_name, Customer_address* and *Phone_number* information, while *Product* table contains *product_ID, Product_name* and *Sales_rate* information.

Customer	Sales	Site
<u>Customer_ID</u> Customer_name Customer_address Phone_number	Site_ID Customer_ID Product id Date Quantitiy adjustment vat waiver total_amount remarks	<u>Site_ID</u> Site_name Site_address

Product

<u>Product_ID</u>
Product_Name
Sales_rate
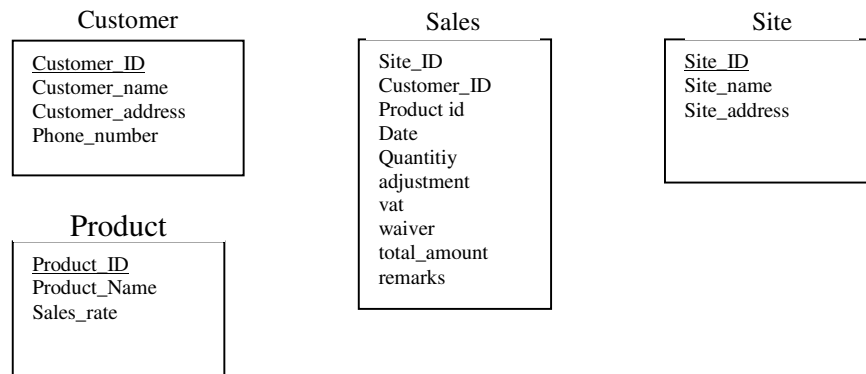
Fig. 2: Operational Database Schema for sales information

But all the sales information are not selected for data warehouse. Data warehouse schema includes only important measure attributes and dimensional attributes. Fig. 3 shows data warehouse schema for this research. This schema schema contains five tables : one fact table and four dimensional tables. The fact table is *sales_Fact* table and the dimensional tables are *Customer, Site, Product* and *Date*. The field of *Sales_Fact* table is selected from *Sales* table of the operational database. It contains a measure attribute *Quantity* and a set of foreign key *: Site_ID, Customer_ID, Product_ID* and *Date* from each dimension table.

113
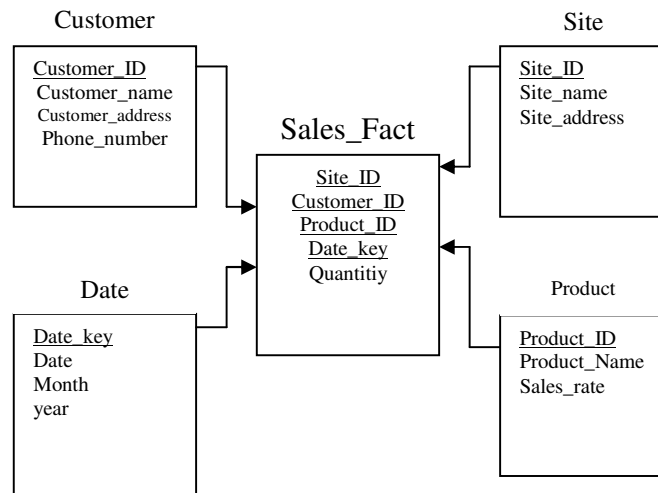
Fig. 3: Data Warehouse Schema for this Project

D. Critical Issues for Data Loading

The loading utilities for data warehouses have to deal with much larger data volumes than that of operational database. Two issues are critical for data loading. First issue is which measures will be taken if a failure occurs during the load. It has been solved using periodic checkpoints. It ensures that if a failure occurs during the load, the process can restart from the last checkpoint. The second issue is how to refresh the data warehouse. Extracting an entire database is too expensive. So we have followed incremental technique for propagating updates from the source database to the data warehouse. It incrementally refreshes a warehouse when the sources changes i.e. it only incorporates change information into data warehouse.

III. DESIGN OF THE BACK END TOOL

Fig. 4: shows data warehouse architecture with data loading. There are two types of warehouse architecture in terms of data loading. These are:

- ➤ **Source driven architecture**: data sources transmit new information to warehouse, either continuously or periodically (e.g. at night).

- ➤ **Destination driven architecture**: warehouse periodically requests new information from data sources.

114

The project tool supports both of the architecture.
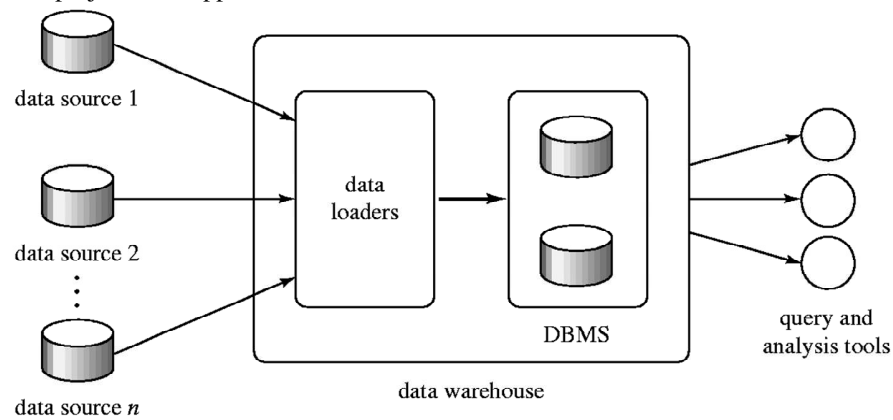
Fig. 4: Data Warehouse with Data Loading

In order to design data loading tool for data warehouse, the following steps are followed sequentially.

   (i)   Data sourcing and data profiling
   (ii)   Target schema design
   (iii)   Data mapping
   (iv)   Data extraction
   (v)   Script generation
   (vi)   Data loading

A. Data Sourcing and Data Profiling

Digital data may come from many sources and different format. It may be offline or online. It may be stored in main frame computer, database server, mini computer, personal computer or any other storage device. It may be stored as XLS, MDB, DBF, CSV, XML, WSDL, SQL script or text. Whatever its source is, it is identified first.
After identification of data source, data profiling activities are initiated. Major data profiling activities are to examine data structure, content, format, functional dependency, anomalies and derive data rules that will later be used within data warehouse.

B. Target Schema Design

In this phase, data warehouse schema is defined. Constraints, relations, checkings and data rules that are extracted from data source during data profiling are incorporated in data warehouse schema. It significantly ensures quality data loading from a range of different data sources. Star Schema is widely adopted data

115

warehouse schema. This database design methodology is used in this research. The project schema has been shown in Fig. 3.

C. Data Mapping

Once data source identification and schema design are completed then data mapping between source schema and warehouse schema are determined. Operational data sources contain detail transaction information. So selective fields from operational database table schema are mapped with data warehouse schema. Data mapping between *sales* table and *sales_fact* table is shown in Fig. 5.
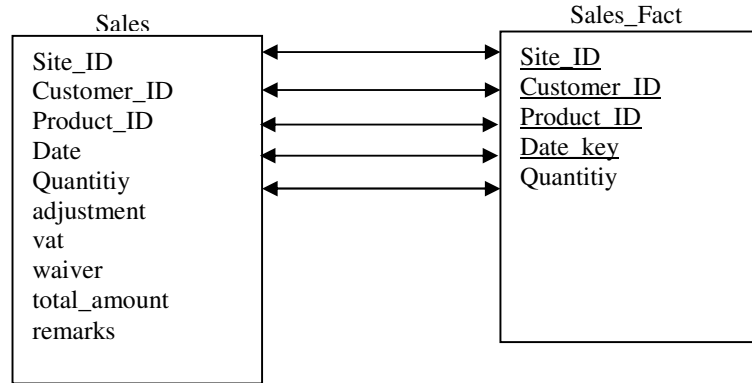
Fig. 5: Data mapping between *Sales* and *Sales Fact* table

C. Data Extraction

In this phase data are extracted from data source in accordance with previously defined data mapping. For example, the peer mapping between the two tables as shown in Fig. 5 is: {(Site_ID, 1), (Customer_ID, 3274), (Product_ID, 3), (Date_key, 23-10-2007), (Quantity, 10)}. Here, the values are extracted from source in accordance with data mapping between source and target schema.

E. SQL Script Generation

In this phase extracted data, mapped with corresponding schema are represented using SQL syntax. In this case, data are converted and formatted according to data type. A sample SQL script is: "insert into sales_fact(Site_ID, Customer_ID, Product_ID, Date_key, Quantity)values ('1', '3274', '3', format(23-10-2007,'yyyy-mm-dd'),10)"

F. Data Loading

In this phase Generated SQL scripts are executed into data warehouse SQL engine. If SQL engine does not find any error after parsing the SQL script, it will be executed and data are stored in data warehouse schema. When SQL scripts are

116

generated, each SQL command is terminated with a delimiter. So by marking delimiter, each SQL command is identified and executed into data warehouse.

G. System Infrastructure of Data Warehouse

The following Fig. 6 shows the system infrastructure of data warehouse. It includes
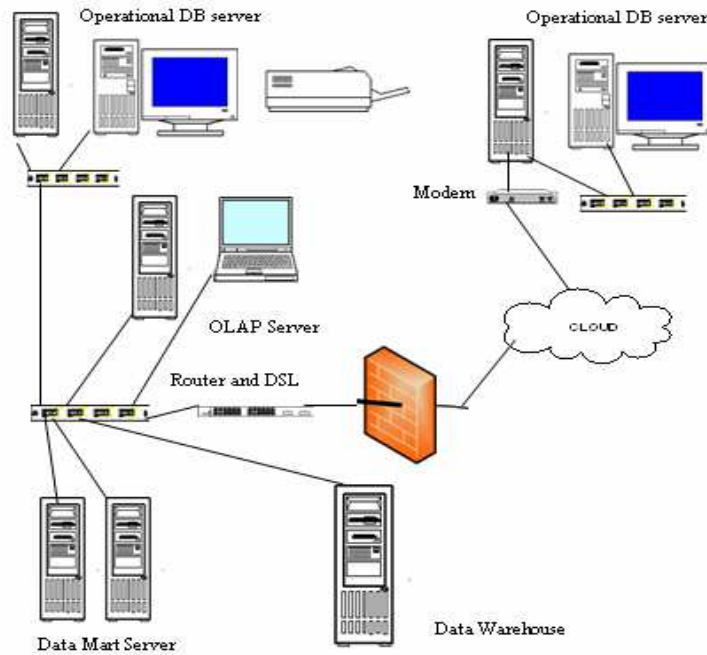
Fig. 6: System Infrastructure of Data warehouse [2]

distributed operational database servers, data warehouse servers, OLAP servers, data mart servers, work stations and client laptops which are connected through networks. Distributed operational database are the data sources of the data warehouse and they are connected through LAN, MAN, VPN or PSTN network. Data warehouse server contains information of all department of a organization whereas data mart server only contains information of one or more departments. Decision making queries, analysis and reporting tools access data mart and OLAP server through client computer.

IV. IMPLIMENTATION OF THE BACK END TOOL

Fig. 7 shows back-end tool's process diagram

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Database connectivity         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│      Fetching Target Schema and      │
│            Source Schema             │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│             Data mapping             │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Data extraction            │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│         SQL script generation        │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│         SQL script execution         │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  ↓
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Data into Data warehouse      │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```
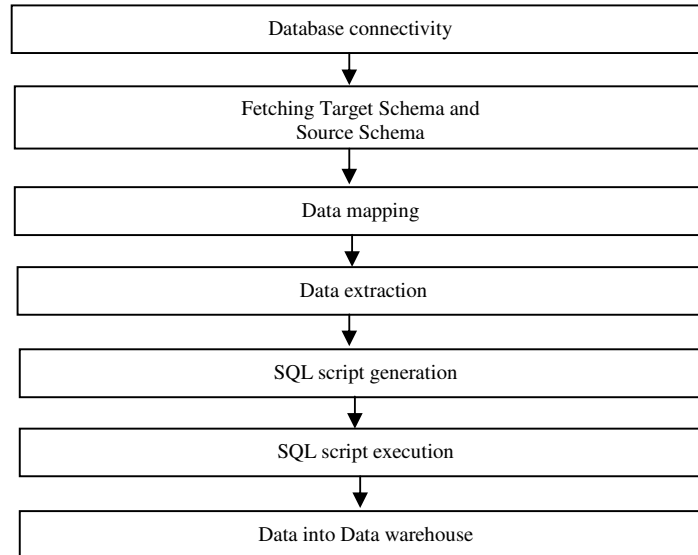
Fig. 7: Tool's process diagram

In order to load data from operational source to data warehouse, a number of software modules has been developed and integrated. For database connectivity a module has been developed that connect source database and data warehouse using Open Database Connectivity (ODBC). It allows database users to access database through the tool. The next module has been developed for accessing meta data information of both source database and data warehouse. These meta data information are fed as input for data mapping module. Data mapping module maps field of data warehouse schema with fields of source database schema. Now data extraction module extracts data from source database in accordance with mapped fields. After then extracted data are represented as SQL format through SQL generation module. Finally generated SQL commands are executed by SQL execution module and data are loaded into data warehouse.

A. Features of the Back-End Tool

The back-end tool contains the following features:
- ➢ The tool is user-friendly.
- ➢ The back-end tool can upload data into data warehouse from both operational database and backup database stored in hard drive, CD, DVD or any other media.

118

- This tool also periodically refreshes data warehouse on updated source data of operational DBMS connected through computer network.
- It uses record by record commit. So if any failure occurs during the data load from operational database, the process can restart from the last committed record. In case of data loading from SQL script, it uses periodic checkpoints. So if a failure occurs during the load, the process can restart from the last checkpoint. Hence, the tool loads data without loss of data integrity.
- It supports both source driven and destination driven data loading.
- This tool contains a automated PSTN network connectivity component.

B. Test Case Design Showing Data Loading into Warehouse

We have considered three operational databases as a test case to load data into data warehouse. The test data sets are as follows:

Table 1: Data Set of Site 1

site_id	customer_id	product_id	date_key	quantity	value	adjustment	vat	waiver	total_amount	remarks
1	10974	1	2008-08-11	7753	775300	0	233	388	775145	(NULL)
1	11121	2	2008-08-12	3509	350900	175	105	175	351005	(NULL)
1	11221	2	2008-08-04	9485	948500	0	285	474	948311	(NULL)
1	11707	2	2008-08-19	8402	840200	0	252	420	840032	(NULL)
1	11938	2	2008-08-05	1766	176600	0	53	88	176565	(NULL)
1	12522	2	2008-08-04	4305	430500	0	129	215	430414	(NULL)
1	12802	2	2008-08-30	5089	508900	0	153	254	508799	(NULL)
1	13169	2	2008-08-21	9635	963500	0	289	482	963307	(NULL)
1	13542	2	2008-08-20	2813	281300	0	84	141	281243	(NULL)
1	13769	3	2008-08-12	8089	808900	0	243	404	808739	(NULL)

Table 2: Data Set of Site 2

site_id	customer_id	product_id	date_key	quantity	value	adjustment	vat	waiver	total_amount	remarks	
2	10	3	2008-08-07	9504	950400	0	285	475	950210	(NULL)	
2	10079	1	2008-08-06	8393	839300	0	252	420	839132	(NULL)	
2	10089	3	2008-08-04	7335	733500	0	220	367	733353	(NULL)	
2	1022	2	2008-08-02	9635	963500	0	289	482	963307	(NULL)	
2	10508	2	2008-08-04	4670	467000	0	140	234	466906	(NULL)	
2	10645	3	2008-08-06	9496	949600	0	285	475	949410	(NULL)	
2	10668	3	2008-08-15	7767	776700	0	233	388	776545	(NULL)	
2	10681	1	2008-08-21	699	69900	35	21	35	69921	(NULL)	
2	10711	2	2008-08-17	5835	583500	0	175	292	583383	(NULL)	
2	10729	2	2008-08-10	1512	151200	0	45	76	151169	(NULL)	

Table 3: Data Set of Site 3

site_id	customer_id	product_id	date_key	quantity	value	adjustment	vat	waiver	total_amount	remarks
3	17097	2	2008-08-23	9977	997700	0	299	499	997500	(NULL)
3	28617	2	2008-08-07	9789	978900	0	294	489	978705	(NULL)
3	33054	2	2008-08-13	9973	997300	0	299	499	997100	(NULL)
3	48133	1	2008-08-25	9813	981300	0	294	491	981103	(NULL)
3	6314	3	2008-08-30	9858	985800	-493	296	493	985110	(NULL)
3	658	2	2008-08-21	100000	10000000	0	3000	5000	9998000	(NULL)
3	80649	1	2008-08-29	9855	985500	0	296	493	985303	(NULL)
3	82616	2	2008-08-06	9845	984500	0	295	492	984303	(NULL)
3	87489	2	2008-08-06	9934	993400	0	298	497	993201	(NULL)
3	9723	2	2008-08-07	9865	986500	0	296	493	986303	(NULL)

For each data set, the generated SQL script is given bellow. These scripts are executed into data warehouse. After execution of the generated SQL scripts of test case, data warehouse shows the data of table 4.

Generated SQL for Data set of Site 1

insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','10974','1', '2008-08-11',7753);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','11121','2', '2008-08-12',3509);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','11221','2', '2008-08-04',9485);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','11707','2', '2008-08-19',8402);
insert into sales_fact site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','11938','2', '2008-08-05',1766);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity) values('1','12522','2', '2008-08-04',4305);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','12802','2', '2008-08-30',5089);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','13169','2', '2008-08-21',9635);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','13542','2', '2008-08-20',2813);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id, product_id,date_key,quantity)values('1','13769','3', '2008-08-12',8089);

Generated SQL for Data set of Site 2:

insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10','3', '2008-08-07',9504);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10079','1', '2008-08-06',8393);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10089','3', '2008-08-04',7335);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','1022','2', '2008-08-02',9635);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10508','2', '2008-08-04',4670);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10645','3', '2008-08-06',9496);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10668','3', '2008-08-15',7767);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10681','1', '2008-08-21',699);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10711','2', '2008-08-17',5835);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('2','10729','2', '2008-08-10',1512);

Generated SQL for Data set of Site 3:

insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','17097','2', '2008-08-23',9977);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','28617','2', '2008-08-07',9789);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','33054','2', '2008-08-13',9973);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','48133','1', '2008-08-25',9813);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','6314','3', '2008-08-30',9858);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','658','2', '2008-08-21',100000);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','80649','1', '2008-08-29',9855);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','82616','2', '2008-08-06',9845);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','87489','2', '2008-08-06',9934);
insert into sales_fact (site_id,customer_id,
product_id,date_key,quantity)values('3','9723','2', '2008-08-07',9865);

Table 4: loaded data into the data warehouse

site_id	customer_id	product_id	date_key	quantity
1	10974	1	2008-08-11	7753
1	11121	2	2008-08-12	3509
1	11221	2	2008-08-04	9485
1	11707	2	2008-08-19	8402
1	11938	2	2008-08-05	1766
1	12522	2	2008-08-04	4305
1	12802	2	2008-08-30	5089
1	13169	2	2008-08-21	9635
1	13542	2	2008-08-20	2813
1	13769	3	2008-08-12	8089
2	10	3	2008-08-07	9504
2	10079	1	2008-08-06	8393
2	10089	3	2008-08-04	7335
2	1022	2	2008-08-02	9635
2	10508	2	2008-08-04	4670
2	10645	3	2008-08-06	9496
2	10668	3	2008-08-15	7767
2	10681	1	2008-08-21	699
2	10711	2	2008-08-17	5835
2	10729	2	2008-08-10	1512
3	17097	2	2008-08-23	9977
3	28617	2	2008-08-07	9789
3	33054	2	2008-08-13	9973
3	48133	1	2008-08-25	9813
3	6314	3	2008-08-30	9858
3	658	2	2008-08-21	100000
3	80649	1	2008-08-29	9855
3	82616	2	2008-08-06	9845
3	87489	2	2008-08-06	9934
3	9723	2	2008-08-07	9865

Conclusion

Historical, summarized and consolidated data are important for making business decision and analysis. Data loading tool of data warehouse is able to bring in data from a range of different data sources and integrates the information in a single system.

The objective of this research was to develop a back-end tool using open-source technology for loading data into data warehouse from a number of data sources.

122

In order to develop the project, we have designed data warehouse schema using open-source DBMS MySQL. We have developed an SQL generator that represents data as SQL format. We also developed data loader that execute generated SQL commands and load data into data warehouse. This tool also periodically refreshes data warehouse on updated source data of operational DBMS connected through computer network. It use incremental loading during refresh to reduce the volume of data that has to be incorporated into the warehouse. The tool contains an integrated PSTN network connectivity component that establishes dial up connection easily.

The developed tool has been tested for both operational database and backup database. It has already successfully worked for both operational database and backup database. The test results show that the tool generates SQL script correctly and loads data into data warehouse without loss of data integrity.

Works Cited

A. Sen and A.P. Sinha, "A Comparison of Data Warehousing Methodologies", Communications of the ACM, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 79-84, March 2005.

A. Silberschatz, H. F. Korth and S. Sudarshan, "Database System Concepts", 5th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2005.

S. Chaudhury and U. Dayal, "An Overview of Data Warehousing and OLAP Technology", ACM SIGMOD, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 65-74, March 1997.

M.A. Islam , " Online Analytical Processing System for Student's Information of BUET using Open Source Technology", M.Engg. Project Report, IICT, BUET, November, 2006.

R. Kimball, "The Data Warehouse Toolkit". John Wiley, 1996.

W.H. Inmon, "Building the Data Warehouse". John Wiley, 1992.

http://www.oracle.com/solutions/business_intelligence/dw_home.html (access on 30-05-2007).

http://www.microsoft.com/sql/solutions/dw/default.mspx (access on 30-05-2007).

http://www.mysql.com (access on 30-08-2007).

http://www.postgresql.com (access on 30-08-2007).

Productivity-Profitability Relationship: A Study on Private Sector Cotton Spinning Mills of Bangladesh

Tofayel Ahmed, PhD*

Abstract

The paper is aimed to measure and analysis of productivity and profitability relationship of private sector cotton spinning mills of Bangladesh. To conduct the study 53% of population has been taken as sample. In productivity and profitability relationship measurement linkage of profitability with physical productivity and linkage of profitability with value productivity have been used. In measuring profitability with physical productivity ratio of 'Profitability', 'Productivity' and 'Price Recovery' are used and in measuring profitability with value productivity ratio of 'Profitability', 'Capital Productivity' and 'Capital Share' have been analyzed. The combined influence of physical productivity and price recovery profitability of all the sample mills show a declining trend of 0.023 per annum. The annual decreasing trend of profitability and capital share is 0.001 and 0.009 respectively and the increasing trend of capital productivity is 0.0003.

Prelude and Statement of the Problem

From the very beginning, Bangladesh has been pursuing the policy of rapid industrialization for economic development and raising the standard of living of the general masses. But the industrialization process in the country has been very slow. Low productivity is a key issue for slow industrialization process, for poor productivity coupled with other problems resulted in several hundred sick & dead industries (ef. Rab, Abdur 1993). In fact, rising of productivity of people and economic system of Bangladesh is one of our primary concerns at the moment.

Increased net income is frequently associated with increased productivity, while contraction of net income may also be accomplished by an increase in productivity. It is essential to make the management of the enterprises aware of the fact that mere increase in profit without productivity gains will jeopardize the survival sometime in the long run. The present study has been undertaken to find the relationship between productivity and profitability of sample spinning mills.

Objective of the Study

The core objective of the study is to show the relationship between productivity and profitability. The specific objectives are to:
   (i)   measure inter-relationship between productivity and profitability;
   (ii) identify relation with profitability and physical productivity;
   (iii) identify relation with profitability and value productivity.

Coverage of the Study:

The study has undertaken the cotton spinning mills which are a part of the textile industry of Bangladesh. The cotton textile industry comprises of both spinning and weaving. Spinning is the feeder industry of weaving. The quality of textile depends

---

*Associate Professor and Head, Department of Business Administration, Leading University, Bangladesh

upon the quality of the yarn which is a product of spinning. Thus the yarn produced from the spinning mills is used as the raw material of weaving, i.e., of textile industry. The spinning mills are more homogeneous than the weaving mills in terms of variety of products, processes, costing system etc. Because of these factors of homogeneity spinning mills seem to be the most suitable for the study of productivity. The cotton spinning mills in the private sector are members of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA). There were 185 spinning mills under the BTMA (BTMA, Annual Report – 2003-04). Of them nineteen (19) spinning mills were listed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange and out of these 19 mills 10 mills were taken as sample of the study on the basis of the enlistment of the spinning mills in the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE). This is because the enlistment mills were suppose to be in good operating condition and the holding of Annual General Meeting (AGM) was almost regular. Besides, the availability of data from those mills was highly expected. These factors led us to select those mills as samples which were listed on the stock exchange. The samples with their installed capacity have been arranged in order of the number of spindles. However, the names of them have been omitted and named as A, B, C and so on, which appears in Table-1. If the number of mills listed the DSE is taken as the population, the chosen samples (10 out of 19) were about 53% of the population. The study covers a period of eight years from 1994-95 to 2001-02.

Table – 1

Sample Enterprises (Spinning Mills)

SL. Nos.	Sample Enterprises	Installed Capacity (In spindles)	Year of Commercial Production
1	A	1,20,000	1988
2	B	55,560	1986
3	C	53,760	1962
4	D	53,044	1992
5	E	51,508	1985
6	F	35,208	1970
7	G	27,408	1994
8	H	25,920	1981
9	I	24,000	1990
10	J	18,240	1994

Methodology

A combination of two or more methods for collecting data is widely used at present and advocated by many eminent scholars and social scientists (Ali 1983). In

the present study a combination of the interview and the observation methods have been used.

Interview Method: The collection of primary data and opinion survey have been done by the direct personal interview with the help of a prepared questionnaire. This method offers the opportunity to explain the questionnaire wherever it is necessary and thereby helps obtain the replies.

Observation Method: The observation method has been defined as a process of watching and listening to the person's behavior over time without manipulation or controlling (Black and Champion (1976). In case of the present research two executives drawn from each of the four functional areas viz., Production, Marketing, Administration and Finance of the 10 samples have been interviewed. Thus the number of total respondents becomes 80.

Relationship of Profitability and Productivity

Using profitability alone as the basis of evaluating the overall performance of an organization makes it difficult to identify the cause of profitability changes (Joseph Prokopenko, 1992). Changes in profitability depend on the changes in many other independent variables. Among the various independent variables, productivity is considered to be the most important one which has a good linkage with profitability. This linkage of productivity with profitability may be shown from the following two different concepts of productivity: (Ayub Islam, 2000)
  (i)   Linkage of Profitability with Physical Productivity;
  (ii) Linkage of Profitability with Value Productivity.

Linkage of Profitability with Physical Productivity

The linkage of profitability with physical productivity by segregating profitability into physical productivity and price recovery. Profitability is the product of physical productivity and price recovery. The following figure (i.e., Figure-1) shows this relationship clearly (Joseph Prokopenko, 1992).

Figure- 1
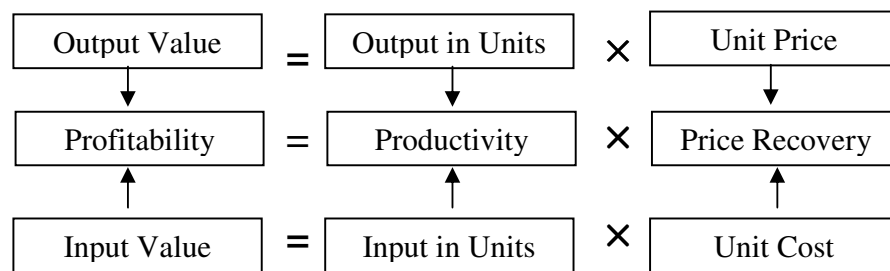
It is seen in the above Figure-1 that profitability is computed by dividing the output value by the input value, productivity is computed by dividing the output units by the input units and price recovery is computed by dividing the unit price by the unit cost.

127

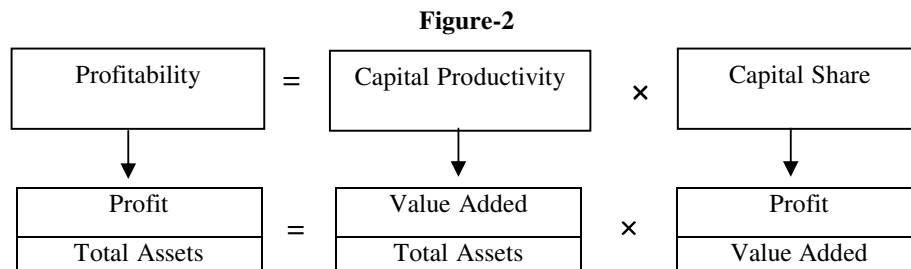On the other hand, output value is computed by multiplying the output in units by the unit price and input value is computed by multiplying the input in units by the unit cost.

Linkage of Profitability with Value Productivity: To compute Value Productivity value added is divided by the input factor. Profitability can be linked with this value productivity. The linkage of capital productivity with profitability in its relation to capital share is shown below (Masayoshi Shimizu et.al., 1991):

Figure-2

Profitability	=	Capital Productivity	×	Capital Share
$\dfrac{\text{Profit}}{\text{Total Assets}}$	=	$\dfrac{\text{Value Added}}{\text{Total Assets}}$	×	$\dfrac{\text{Profit}}{\text{Value Added}}$

Thus profitability depends on whether capital productivity is high or low and whether capital share is large or small.

Analysis and Findings

Profitability and Physical Productivity

Profitability is equal to the product of physical productivity and price recovery. To show this equation, the calculation of these three variables for the year 1994-95 of the sample mills is given below:

Variable	**Calculation**	**Result**
Productivity = $\dfrac{\text{Output Value}}{\text{Input Value}}$	= $\dfrac{21,93,022 \text{ Kgs}}{31,32,888 \text{ Kgs}}$	0.70
Profitability = $\dfrac{\text{Output in Units}}{\text{Input in Units}}$	= $\dfrac{\text{TK.38,99,85,102}}{\text{TK.31,45,04,115}}$	1.24
Price Recovery = $\dfrac{\text{Unit Price}}{\text{Unit Cost}}$	= $\dfrac{\text{Tk. 177.83}}{\text{Tk. 100.19}}$	1.775

The above computations reveals the results of productivity and price recovery are 0.70 and 1.7749 (or 1.775) respectively and the product of these two figures (0.70 and 1.7749) is 1.242 (or 1.24) which is equal to the result of profitability. Hence, the

128

relationship of profitability with physical productivity and price recovery is mathematically proved. Moreover, this relationship can be analyzed by the following three methods:

Analysis of Relationship through Trend:

It generally happens that a drop in productivity or in price recovery reduced profitability. Decreasing trend of productivity gives a signal for corrective action. But increasing trend of productivity does not necessarily lead to profitability on a short term basis. It is in the long run that increase in productivity leads to increase in profitability. Table-2 shows the trend of Productivity, profitability and price recovery of all the sample mills. The Table shows that their profitability showed declining trend (0.023) per annum along with decline in productivity (0.013) per annum. The price recovery showed increasing trend and the annual rate of increase was 0.004. With the combined influence of physical productivity and price recovery profitability of all the sample mills showed a declining trend of 0.023 per annum. However, the comparative trend changes of these three variables are shown in the following Figure by plotting the indices of Table-2 in the graph.

Analysis through Index Numbers:

Figure- 3

Indices of Physical Productivity, Profitability and Price recovery Trend of the Industry
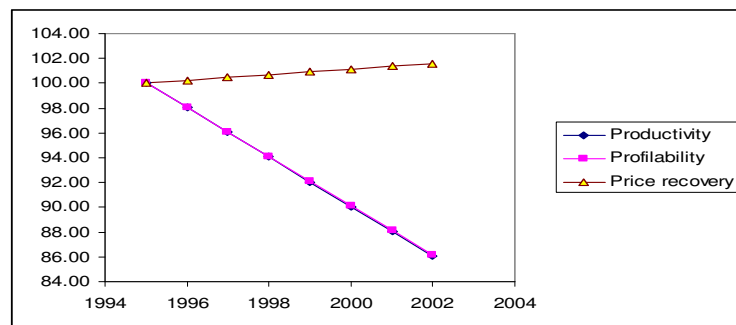
Figure-3 shows that the dependent variable- profitability was adversely affected by the independent variable- physical productivity. The price recovery increased very slightly during the period. The decrease of physical productivity went on the same decreasing line. Thus it may be concluded that the decrease of profitability was solely due to the decrease of productivity during the period under study. This situation is similar to fourth case of Productivity-Profitability relationship shown in Table-3. If this happens the sample mills will have to face shut down or bankruptcy. Therefore, their productivity should be improved by strengthening market research & advertising and formulating realistic market strategy & pricing policy.

Correlation and Regression Analysis

It has since been established that productivity and price recovery have impact on the profitability due to their close relationships. The higher is the productivity, the higher will be the profitability. In the same manner the higher is the price recovery, the higher will be the profitability. But the degree of relationships and the extent of impact have not been examined yet. In this section in order to examine the relationship and the impact of productivity and price recovery upon profitability, co-efficient of simple correlation, partial correlation, multiple correlation and regression have been computed. And the results of these coefficients have been tabulated in Table-4 and Table-5 respectively. As per Table-4, coefficient of simple correlation between productivity and profitability was 0.99 and that between profitability and price recovery was -0.39. That means there was a high positive correlation between profitability and productivity and limited negative correlation between profitability and price recovery. In order to test the significance of these correlation coefficients statistically, calculated value of 't' has been compared with table value of 't' at 5% level of significance for (n-2) degree of freedom. Since in case of productivity and profitability the observed value of 't' was higher than the table value, the coefficient of correlation was found significant. But in case of price recovery and profitability since the observed value of 't' was smaller than the table value, the co-efficient of correlation was not significant.

However, in the above analysis of simple correlation, relationship has been computed between the two variables on the assumption that one is dependent upon the other. But in the sample mills under study one dependent variable was dependent upon two independent variables. In such a situation simple correlation is unsatisfactory to explain the relationship. Therefore, partial correlation has been computed further. In partial correlation the impact of one independent variable upon the dependent variable has been computed keeping the other independent variable constant. The result of partial correlation shows that 'r' between productivity and profitability was 0.989 and 'r' between profitability and price recovery was 0.2467. That means, there was high positive correlation between productivity and profitability and limited positive correlation between profitability and price recovery. Test of significance in the first case shows that the value of 'r' was highly significant as the computed value of 't' was much higher than the table values of 't'. In the second case the value of 'r' was found insignificant.

Multiple correlation has been computed to examine the relationship of dependent variable profitability with independent variables productivity & price recovery. The coefficient of multiple correlation was found to be 0.991. For test of significance, 't' test has been applied and it was found that calculated value of 't' was 18.13 against the theoretical value of 't' being 2.447 at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the value of multiple correlation between these two variables was also highly significant.

Further, Table-5 shows that the regression co-efficient for productivity (1.868) was higher than price recovery (0.199). That means, the impact of productivity upon profitability was higher than the impact of price recovery. One unit increase of productivity increased 1.87 units of profitability and one unit increase of price

130

recovery increased 0.20 unit of profitability. The value of R^2 indicates that the variation of profitability was explained up to 0.98 (or 98%) by the productivity and price recovery.

Profitability and Value Productivity

Profitability with value productivity has been linked with profitability in relation to capital's share. Profitability of the industry has been computed by dividing the operating profit by the total assets. It equals to the product of capital productivity and capital share.

Analysis of Relationship through Trend

Increasing capital productivity may not necessarily increase profitability. Capital productivity will arise even when actual profit decreases. Increase of capital share is necessary instead of labour share to increase profitability. On the other hand the increase of capital share alone does not increase profitability, because capital share will rise even when actual profit decreases due to more decrease of labour share. Therefore, profitability depends on capital productivity and capital share simultaneously. Table-6 shows the trends of productivity, profitability and capital share. Profitability of all the sample mills was declining due to decreasing trend of capital share and very slightly increasing trend of capital productivity. The annual decreasing trend of profitability and capital share was 0.001 and 0.009 respectively and the increasing trend of capital productivity was 0.0003. But these figures do not show the comparative trend change. The comparative trend change of these three variables is shown by the calculation of index numbers.

Analysis of Relationship through Index Number

Figure-4

Indices of Capital Productivity, Profitability and Capital Share Trend of the Industry
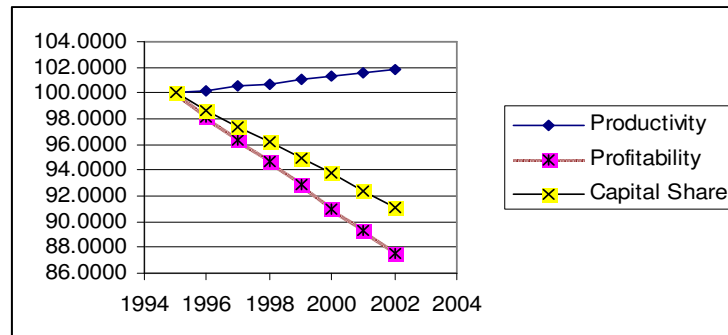
Figure- 4 shows the indices of capital productivity, profitability and capital share of the industry. The figure shows that profitability was adversely affected by the capital share. Both these variables sharply decreased but the capital productivity could not increase much rather it has very slightly increased. Therefore, it had practically no effect on profitability. However, the accurate influence of productivity and capital share on profitability would be known through the calculation of correlation coefficients and regression coefficients which have been discussed below.

Correlation and Regression Analysis:

The relationship of capital productivity and capital share with profitability has been examined through simple correlation, partial correlation and multiple correlations. Table-7 shows that coefficient of simple correlation between capital productivity and profitability was 0.63 and that between profitability and capital share was 0.62. Both the values were not significant as the calculated values of 't' was lower than table values of 't'. On the other hand, coefficient of partial correlation between capital productivity and profitability was 0.97 and that between profitability and capital share was also 0.97. These showed highly positive correlations. Test of significance shows that the coefficient of partial correlation between productivity and profitability and that between profitability and capital share were significant as the table values of 't' were smaller than the observed values. The co-efficient of multiple correlations also showed highly positive correlation (0.98) between the dependent variable profitability and independent variables productivity and capital share taken simultaneously. Test of significance also revealed a significant relationship.

Multiple regression analysis (Table-8) shows that the impact of capital productivity was greater than that of capital share on profitability as the regression coefficient for productivity (0.573) was higher than regression coefficient for capital share (0.232). These were also found significant. The value of R^2 indicates that the variation of profitability was explained up to 0.96 (or 96%) by the capital productivity and capital share.

Conclusion

Productivity ultimately affects profitability of the enterprises. Therefore, these two aspects of the enterprises are interlinked. Low productivity is one of the major causes of high cost of production. In productivity-profitability relationship measurement, profitability with physical productivity and profitability with value productivity have been separately measured.

Profitability showed declining trend (0.023) per annum along with decline in productivity (0.013) per annum. The price recovery showed increasing trend and the annual rate of increase was 0.004. With the combined influence of physical productivity and price recovery profitability of all the sample mills showed a declining trend of 0.023 per annum. The dependent variable- profitability was adversely affected by the independent variable- physical productivity. Productivity and price recovery have impact on the profitability due to their close relationships. The higher is the productivity, the higher will be the profitability. In the same manner the higher is the price recovery, the higher will be the profitability.

132

Coefficient of simple correlation between productivity and profitability was 0.99 and that between profitability and price recovery was -0.39. That means there was a high positive correlation between profitability and productivity and limited negative correlation between profitability and price recovery. In partial correlation the impact of one independent variable upon the dependent variable has been computed keeping the other independent variable constant. The result of partial correlation shows that 'r' between productivity and profitability was 0.989 and 'r' between profitability and price recovery was 0.2467. That means, there was high positive correlation between productivity and profitability and limited positive correlation between profitability and price recovery. The coefficient of multiple correlations was found to be 0.991. The value of multiple correlations between these two variables was also highly significant.

Profitability of all the sample mills was declining due to decreasing trend of capital share and very slightly increasing trend of capital productivity. The annual decreasing trend of profitability and capital share was 0.001 and 0.009 respectively and the increasing trend of capital productivity was 0.0003. In trend analysis profitability was adversely affected by the capital share. Coefficient simple correlation between capital productivity and profitability was 0.63 and that between profitability and capital share was 0.62. Coefficient of partial correlation between capital productivity and profitability was 0.97 and that between profitability and capital share was also 0.97. These showed highly positive correlations. The co-efficient of multiple correlations also showed highly positive correlation (0.98) between the dependent variable profitability and independent variables productivity and capital share taken simultaneously.

Works Cited

Rab, Abdur (1993), Productivity Issues in Small Industries, Paper presented at the Seminar Organized by the Association of Management Development Institutions of Bangladesh, IBA, D.U., held on December 24, 1993.

Joseph Prokopenko (1992), Productivity Management: A Practical Hand Book, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, p.43.

Ayub Islam (2000), 'Productivity and Profitability of the Enterprises Under Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation, A Study of Fertilizer Industry',Unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to Chittagong University, p.319.

Masayoshi Shimizu et.al. (1991), 'Value Added Productivity Measurement and Practical Approach to Management Improvement', Asian Productivity Organisation, Tokyo, p.105.

Appendix

Table-2
Physical Productivity, Profitability and Price Recovery Relationship of all the Sample Enterprises

Year	Physical Productivity			Profitability			Price recovery		
	Ratio	Trend	Index	Ratio	Trend	Index	Ratio	Trend	Index
1994-95	0.70	0.655	100.00	1.24	1.164	100.00	1.775	1.773	100.00
1995-96	0.64	0.642	98.02	1.14	1.141	98.02	1.777	1.777	100.23
1996-97	0.62	0.629	96.03	1.12	1.118	96.05	1.789	1.781	100.45
1997-98	0.58	0.616	94.05	1.02	1.095	94.07	1.766	1.785	100.68
1998-99	0.57	0.603	92.06	1.00	1.072	92.10	1.791	1.789	100.90
1999-00	0.58	0.590	90.08	1.02	1.049	90.12	1.812	1.793	101.13
2000-01	0.60	0.577	88.09	1.07	1.026	88.14	1.785	1.797	101.35
2001-02	0.59	0.564	86.11	1.06	1.003	86.17	1.803	1.801	101.58
Annual Growth	-	(0.013)	-	-	(0.023)	-	-	0.004	-

134

Table-3
Productivity-Profitability Relationship

	IF		THEN	
Case	Profitability	Productivity	What will happen	What should be done
1	HIGH	HIGH	Financial condition will be sound and stable	Maintain or increase productivity further.
2	HIGH	LOW	High productivity may not be sustained on a long term basis. In the long run low productivity will eat up profit.	Improve productivity.
3	LOW	HIGH	The company may soon be operating at a loss and may be on the brink of a shut down.	Improve productivity, strengthen market strategy, market research, market promotion, advertising, and pricing policy.
4	LOW	LOW	Shut down/ bankruptcy.	Improve productivity and strengthen market

Source: E. Avedillo-Cruz, 1984,p 9

Table-4
Correlation Coefficient of all the Sample Mills

Type of Correlation	Coefficient	Theoretical/Table Value *	Observed/ Calculated Value**
Simple Correlation:			
(i) Between physical productivity & Profitability	0.990	2.447	17.19
(ii) Between profitability & price Recovery	-0.392	2.447	-1.04
Partial Correlation:			
(i) Between physical productivity & Profitability	0.989	2.447	16.78
(ii) Between profitability & price Recovery	0.2467	2.447	0.62
Multiple Correlation: Between dependent variable- profitability & independent variables physical productivity & price recovery	0.991	2.447	18.13

*Theoretical value of 't' for (n-2) degree of freedom at 5% level of significance.
**Observed value of 't'.

Table-5
Coefficient of Regression of all the Sample Mills

Multiple Regression Analysis	Coefficient	Theoretical/ Table Value	Observed/ Calculated Value	Standard Error
Regression coefficient for physical productivity	1.868	2.571	15.261	0.122
Regression coefficient for price recovery	0.199	2.571	0.569	0.350
R^2	0.98			

*Theoretical value of 't' for (n-k) degree of freedom at 5% level of significance.
**Observed value of 't'.

Table-6

Capital Productivity, Profitability and Capital Share Relationship of all the Sample Mills

Year	Capital Productivity			Profitability			Capital Share		
	Ratio	Trend	Index	Ratio	Trend	Index	Ratio	Trend	Index
1994-95	0.15	0.1350	100.00	0.106	0.096	100.00	0.706	0.687	100.00
1995-96	0.13	0.1353	100.22	0.092	0.095	98.96	0.685	0.678	98.69
1996-97	0.13	0.1357	100.52	0.089	0.093	96.88	0.663	0.669	97.38
1997-98	0.12	0.1360	100.74	0.085	0.091	94.79	0.667	0.661	96.22
1998-99	0.14	0.1364	101.04	0.093	0.090	93.75	0.657	0.652	94.91
1999-00	0.14	0.1367	101.26	0.087	0.088	91.67	0.634	0.644	93.74
2000-01	0.14	0.1371	101.56	0.085	0.086	89.58	0.630	0.635	92.43
2001-02	0.14	0.1375	101.85	0.090	0.084	87.50	0.635	0.626	91.12
Annual Growth	-	0.0003	-	-	(0.001)	-	-	(0.009)	-

136

Table-7

Correlation Coefficient of all the Sample Mills

Type of Correlation	Coefficient	Theoretical/Table Value *	Observed/ Calculated Value**
Simple Correlation:			
(i) Between capital productivity & Profitability	0.634	2.447	2.01
(ii) Between profitability & capital Share	0.618	2.447	1.93
Partial Correlation: (i) Between capital productivity & Profitability	0.9669	2.447	9.28
(ii) Between profitability & capital Share	0.9657	2.447	9.11
Multiple Correlation: Between dependent variable- profitability & independent variables- capital productivity & capital share	0.980	2.447	12.06

*Theoretical value of 't' for (n-2) degree of freedom at 5% level of significance.
**Observed value of 't'.

Table-8

Coefficient of Regression of all the Sample Mills

Multiple Regression Analysis	Coefficient	Theoretical/ Table Value	Observed/ Calculated Value	Standard Error
Regression coefficient for capital productivity	0.573	2.571	8.467	0.068
Regression coefficient for capital share	0.232	2.571	8.317	0.028
R^2	0.960			

*Theoretical value of 't' for (n-k) degree of freedom at 5% level of significance.
**Observed value of 't'.

Management Functions in the Context of a Family: An Application of Theory to Practice

Musfiq Mannan Choudhury, PhD*
Mst. Irin Hoque**
Md. Shariful Alam Khandakar***

Abstract

The functions of management include planning, organizing, leading, motivation, and controlling. Their application in the contexts of different organizations have been explored by different researchers but no research has been done to see how they operate in an informal organization— the family. This study using observation techniques illustrates how these management functions are being applied in the functioning of the family. The findings of the study conform that the theory relating to management functions is evenly applicable in the context of the family.

Introduction

Management is 'a set of activities (including planning, organizing, leading and controlling) directed at an organization's resources (human, financial, physical and information) with the aim of achieving organizational goal in an efficient and effective manner' (Griffin 2007). From the analysis of this definition, it appears that the functions of management are planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Other researchers (like Weirich and Koontz 2005; Bateman and Snell 2000) have supported theses functions but have suggested an additional function, which is 'motivation'.

Research involving applications of management functions in different organizations and organizational settings is common. But, no research has been conducted to look into how these functions are applicable in the most basic organization that is, the family. This study reviews the existing literature on management functions and therefore explores how these functions are adopted in practice in the context of a family.

Literature Review

Management is a universal process and its skills and understanding are transferable from one company to another as well as from one culture to another. Management is a broad and intrinsic aspect of business. The basic aspects of management that is, directing, organizing, coordinating, staffing, planning and cooperating transcend all cultural and organizational boundaries. The first function of management— planning involves setting the goals of the organization (Bateman and Snell 1996). As a part of the planning process, the manager then develops strategies for achieving the goals of the organization. In order to implement the

*Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh
** Research Assistant, Centre for Entrepreneurship, Development, and Institutional Studies (CEDIS),
    University of Dhaka, Bangladesh
*** Lecturer, Department of Management Studies, Comilla University, Bangladesh

strategies, resources will be needed and must be acquired. The planners must also then determine the standards, or levels of quality, that need to be met in completing the tasks (Bateman and Snell 1996).

Planning can be of three types, viz. long range planning, which covers many years, even decades; intermediate plans, which are meant to be for approximately five years and are of substantial importance to middle and first line managers; and short plans have a time frame of less than one year (Griffin 2007).

The second function of the management is organizing. Management must organize all its resources well before in hand to put into practice the course of action to decide that has been planned in the base function. Through this process, management will now determine the inside directorial configuration; establish and maintain relationships, and also assign required resources (Pakhare 2007).

While organizing, management ought to look at the different divisions or departments. It requires the harmonization of staff, and finding out the best way to handle the important tasks and expenditure of information within the company (Matt 2009). Management determines the division of work according to its need. It also has to decide for suitable departments to hand over authority and responsibility.

Leading, being the third function, is concerned with the act of influencing others to attain the organizational goals (Bateman and Snell 1996). Leadership involves having a vision: an abiliy to move people and organizations in directions they otherwise would not go (Bennis and Nanus 1985). Existing leadership literature looks into the three different approaches to leadership to explain the leadership style adopted by managers in different organizations (Bateman and Snell 1996). These include the trait approach, the behavioral approach, and the situational approach. The trait approach to leadership states that leaders must posses certain characteristics which make them unique from the common person (Kirkpatrick and Locke 1991). These attributes usually include drive (a broad term which includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability), cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business.

On the other hand, the behavioral approach to leadership attempts to identify what good leaders do (Bateman and Snell 1996). As per this approach, leadership styles can be classified on the basis of how leaders use their authority. Leaders are seen as applying three basic styles[1]: (1) authoritarian, (2) democratic and (3) laissez-faire. Authoritarian leadership is characterized by leaders who make decisions alone, demand strict compliance to his orders, and dictate each step taken; future steps were uncertain to a large degree. The leader is not necessarily hostile but is aloof from participation in work and commonly offers personal praise and criticism for the work done. Democratic leadership is characterized by collective decision processes, assisted by the leader. Before accomplishing tasks, perspectives are gained from

---

[1]Source: http://www.scribd.com/doc/23984878/Leadership-is-One-of-the-Most-Salient-Aspects-of-The [Accessed: 29th April 2010].

group discussion and technical advice from a leader. Lastly, the laissez faire leadership is to give freedom to the group for policy determination without any participation from the leader. The leader remains uninvolved in work decisions unless asked, does not participate in the division of labour, and very infrequently gives praise

The situational approach is considered a reaction to the trait theory of leadership. This theory assumes that different situations call for different characteristics; according to this group of theories, no single optimal psychographic profile of a leader exists. According to the theory[2], "what an individual actually does when acting as a leader is in large part dependent upon characteristics of the situation in which he functions."

The fourth function, motivation refers to the forces that energize, direct, and sustain people's efforts (Bateman and Snell 1996). To explore the means for motivation, there exists a good number of theories of motivation. In terms of the family, the simple theory which seems plausible is McGregor's theory X and Y. The theory X assumes that work is inherently distasteful to most people, and they will attempt to avoid work whenever possible. The theory further assumes that most people are not ambitious, have little desire for responsibility, and prefer to be directed. On the other hand, the theory Y states that work can be as natural as play if the conditions are favourable. It further states that people will be self-directed and creative to meet their work and organizational objectives if they are committed to them and most people can handle responsibility because creativity and ingenuity are common in the population.

The last function, control is defined as any process that directs the activities of individuals toward the achievement of the organizational goals (Bateman and Snell 1996). To ensure control, managers must first set standards of performance for workers. The standard that must then be communicated to managers who are supervising workers, and then to the workers so they know what is expected of them. After the standards have been set and communicated, it is the manager's responsibility to monitor performance to see that the standards are being met. If the manager watches that the standards that have been set are not being met, it should be relatively easy for managers to determine where the problems are occurring. Once the problems are analyzed and compared to expectations, then something must be done to correct the results. Normally, the managers would take corrective actions.

The Family as an Organization
Family is the foundation of society— it is the place for people to come into the world, to be nurtured, and to be given the tools to go out into the world being capable and healthy.[3] Nimkoff (n.d.) says that family is a more or less durable association of husband and wife with or without child or of a man or woman alone with children.

---

[2]Source: http://www.docstoc.com/docs/6213994/Leadership/ [Accessed: 29th April 2010].
[3]Please see http://www.edu.pe.ca/southernkings/familydefinition.htm [Accessed: 29th April 2010].

On the basis of different categorization, the family and its types as identified by the Institute of Ice Ages Study is as follows[4]:

On the basis of marriage: Family has been classified into three major types:
- Polygamous family can be defined as a family in which a person has more than one spouse simultaneously.
- Polyandrous family is the practice or condition where one woman have more than one husband.
- Monogamous family is the practice or condition of being married to only one person at a time.

On the basis of the nature of relations among the family members the family can be classified into two main types.
- Conjugal family which consists of adult members among there exists sex relationship.
- Consanguine family which consists of members among whom there exists blood relationship- brother and sister, father and son etc.

On the basis of ancestry or descent family can be classified into two main types.
- Matrilineal family is a system in which lineage is traced through the mother and maternal ancestors. It is a societal system in which one belongs to one's mother's lineage, which can involve the matrilineal inheritance of property and/or titles.
- Patrilineal family is a system in which lineage is traced through the father or paternal ancestors.

On the basis of size or structure and the depth of generations family can be classified into four main types.
- Nuclear or the single unit family is a family unit consisting of the biologic parents and their offspring. In other words nuclear family is used to distinguish a family group consisting of most commonly, a father and mother and their children.
- Joint family or Extended family is a type of family in which relatives in addition to parents and children (such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins) live in a single household.
- Single parent (also lone parent and sole parent) family is a family where a parent cares for one or more children without the assistance of another parent in the home. Single parenthood may occur for a variety of reasons. It could be opted for by the parent as in divorce or adoption or be the result of an unforeseeable occurrence such as death or abandonment by one parent.
- Stepfamily is the family one acquires when a parent enters a new marriage, whether the parent was widowed or divorced. For example, if one's father dies and one's mother marries another man, the new man is one's stepfather and vice versa.

Based on residence practices family can be of following four types:

---

[4]Source: http://www.insticeagestudies.com/library/family-an-institution-of-culture-and-part-of-human~print.shtml

- Patrilocal family: Patrilocal residence is structured by a rule that a man remains in his father's house after reaching maturity and brings his wife to live with his family after marriage. Daughters, conversely, move out of their natal household when they marry.
- Matrilocal family: Matrilocal residence is instituted by a rule that a woman remains in her mother's household after reaching maturity and brings her husband to live with her family after marriage. Sons, conversely, move out of their natal household after marriage to join their wife's household.
- Biolocal family: The residence rule which gives choice to the newly -weds to live with the parents of either the groom or the bride is known as biolocal.
- Neolocal family: The custom of a newly married couple setting up a new residence independent of the households of either partner's parents. 'Neolocal residence' is the residence pattern in which a married couple establishes a new residence independent of both their relatives.

Now, oorganization is the intentional structure of roles and positions (Weirich and Koontz 2005). Therefore, organization can be either formal or informal. Formal organization is the structure of roles in a formally organized enterprise. Informal organization on the other hand, is a network of interpersonal relationship that arises when people associate with each other. The salient features[5] of informal organization are as follows:

- Informal relations are unplanned. They arise spontaneously.
- Formation of informal organization is a natural process.
- Informal organization reflects human relationships.
- Informal organizations are based on common taste, problems, language, religion, culture, etc.
- It evolves constantly because there's no structure.
- Informal organizations are pivoted on trust and reciprocity.

Hence, the family is an informal organization. The family in general is a group based on marriage and marriage contact including recognitions of the rights and duties of parenthood, common residence for husband and wife and children as well as reciprocal, economic obligation between husband and wife. It constitutes a fundamental unit in the organization of society and family members are social unit who live together. Like any formal organization, a family has also some basic goals to achieve. The main goal of a family is the successful raising of the children into independent adults.

Objective and Rationale for the Study
The family is the most basic form of organization and since there is no research which has explored the application of management functions in the context of the family. This research aims in understanding how management functions are made applicable to the day-to-day activities of the family.

---

[5]Source:
http://www.openlearningworld.com/olw/courses/books/Group%20Dynamics/Group%20Dynamics/Characteristics%20of%20Informal%20Organization.html [Accessed: 29th April 2010].

Methodology of the Study

In studies which involve relating theory to practice, the researcher can never assume a value-neutral stance, and is always implicated in the phenomena being studied (Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991). Therefore, based on the nature of this study involving application of theory to practice, this study adopts an interpretive approach. Walsham (1993) states that 'interpretive methods of research start from the position that human knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors and that this applies equally to researchers. Thus there is no objective reality which can be discovered by researchers and replicated by others'.

An observation technique and informal interviews of at least ten families is done of which five belong to urban areas and the five have both roots in the rural and urban region. A total of 57 respondents were observed and interviewed.

The researchers could not approach rural participants exclusively due to limitations of resources in terms of money and time. However, this limitation is offset by including participants who have village grooming.

The observation of the respondents led the researchers to several interpretations. These deductions are now elaborated in the next section. The illustrations are made in line with how the management functions explained in theory are made applicable in the effective functioning of the family.

Analysis and Discussion

From the study of the participants, it is observed that the long range plans involve plans for retirement of the earning members of the family and undertaking insurance policies for rainy days. The participants of the study indicate that retirement plans are necessary when the earning members reach middle age. The respondents revealed that the insurance plans obtained by them include policies in life, health and travel insurance. Some insurance policies also serve in assuring the savings for the future.

The interviews with the respondents also specify that intermediate plans for early couples involve buying a house or a plot for the dwelling purposes. It also involves plans to choose where to educate the children as they grow up. And, discussion with the participants reveal that short range plans include those from meeting daily chores such as shopping, making breakfast to attending family occasions as well as planning for vacations in the year.

The family, being an informal organization, requires organizing function to adjust specialized parts harmoniously. It includes providing order in the arrangement of things and activities. The respondents stated that the prime activity in organizing focuses on bringing in order to the belongings at home which involves assortment of the furniture, setting of the kitchen, piling of the paperwork, and putting the clothing in right order. Besides the setting of the household bits and pieces, the participants stated that organizing also takes place in setting up for events and activities within

143

the family. Weekly vocational parties, setting up discussions on issues in families, and dealing with contingencies also require adequate organizing.

The findings also reveal that the family has its own informal structure, which enables to decide whose authority and responsibility as well as hierarchical level within the organization. The cultural norm in most Asian countries requires women to be in charge of the kitchen and household activities. Therefore, it is observed that the wife is the one who has more specialization in task that involve household duties. However, the man of the house is often delegated with the responsibility of taking part in the household chores, but the overall responsibility lies with the wife, who directs the activities.

In terms of work specialization, in rural Bangladesh, the study finds that work of each member of the household is clearly defined. In cities, however, the respondents indicated that work specialization is more a joint effort as both the husband and wife may be earning members. Hence, all members may have the necessary skills in all activities required for effective functioning of the family. The growth of the single unit family in the cities is the major reason for such diversification in job specializations.

Now, where there is the question of a group, there should be leadership. Family consists of group of people. Family is no different to organizations or businesses, with long-term goals, short-term aims, complex relationships, different personalities, needs and different communication styles between its members. So leader and leadership are necessary for proper direction of the members of the family.

A close observation into the participants of the study shows that all families look forward to having good leader who is to ensure a balanced fulfilment of all needs as well as make all family members work together to proper functioning of the family. Here, the respondents also reported that the children's needs should be given priority over those of the adults. The participants agreed that leadership in families also helps to set a perfect aim by which family members can lead a happier life. Just like organizations where leaders need to have a vision for the future or a goal for the business; a family must have an objective to which all the members must have consent. This objective is used in raising children successfully into independent adults.

Family leadership and organizational leadership have the same features. The participants reveal that a family leader's achievement of success, respect and authority depends on the implementation of the rules for leadership and on the development of leadership skills that are common in organizational leadership.

On the contrary, it is observed that it is not necessary for a family planner to be a leader. Planner and leader may be separate persons within the family. But the participants indicate that the person who leads the family should posses the leadership skills. These include things like good communication skills, open-mindedness, fairness, commitment, integrity courage, ability and power, intelligence patience, justice, power to encourage and generosity of spirit etc.

144

In a family, it is observed from the respondents that they consider the father or the mother as the leaders. Regardless of who acts as a leader, the participants state that the father or the mother's main pursuit is to mobilize the family members to achieve the objective of the family following the implemented rules. The respondents further indicated that the leader of the family is in charge of creating the culture of the family. In conclusion, the study reveals that the respondents find the main challenge in managing the family is to maintain its dynamics and relationship amongst members.

The respondents also reveal that having an optimistic attitude of team collaboration with the spouse is a must quality of the family leader. The findings show that they work together to teach the children about the unity among the family members. They show respect to each other's view on any decision which has a positive effect on the family. They do all the works by sharing and caring.

In terms of motivation, the findings indicate that the leader of the family should remember that he/she is not leading a workforce where he/she can fire anyone from job as one cannot follow the direction rather he/she is leading his/her blood related members where he/she has to maintain a cordial relationship. The respondents suggested that family leaders should continuously motivate the other family members for reaching their personal as well as family objective. The participants agree that motivation is needed in family to persuade the family members in doing household chores willingly, the children in reading, obeying the direction of the leader. Family leaders should not apply only theory X or only theory Y of motivation in motivating the family members. They should use them both with due balance. Side by side motivational techniques such as rewards, punishment, participation, team building activities are a common practice for harnessing motivation amongst family members.

Finally, the observations reveal that controlling is applied in a family for proper implementation of the plans. It is observed that any type of controlling (viz. pre-control, post action control, and the steering control) can be applied successfully to a family. Pre-control can be applied to establish rules and regulations, disciplines, specifying the allowable and unallowable things for the members of the family. It could be, for instance, not allowing the children to stay outside the house after dusk. Specifying time limits can be also a means to establish pre-control in implementing of different task of this organization.

On the other hand, steering control is applicable in a family to see whether the things are going in the way it is desired to be so. Such control can be the periodic check on whether the bills are paid or not, whether the nutritional status of the members are maintained or not, whether the cleaning schedule is obeyed or not, whether learning progress is at rise of the children etc. Steering control puts psychological pressure on the family members. Everybody knows that his performance is regularly evaluated and he/she will try to improve upon their work. The rewards and punishments can also be linked with performance. Since performance measurement is one of the important tools of this type control. This

145

ensures that every person maximizes his/her contribution in household chores and other affairs.

Another form of steering control which is very common is budgetary control. The findings reveal that every family has a budget which is never formally written down. But such budget is in the minds of the leader and the prime members in the effective functioning of the family. Such form of control is mainly applicable for maintaining the noose on expenses of the family. It is also used to anticipate future expenses as well as long term investments. The families are capable of comparing the actual expense with the expected expenses and determine the deviations. Over expenses are usually considered as a problem and requires digging out the reason for surfacing of the problem. Here all the steps of controlling (such as establishing standard, measuring performance, comparing performance against standard, finding out the reasons of deviation and taking corrective action) are applied in the family.

Family facing problems in any aspect of its operations may be minimized through application of post-control as have been observed amongst the participants. Post control involves identification of problems after the occurrence of an event. In families, it is observed that all members are subject to variety of activities; implementation of such activities leads to errors which may affect the members as wells as the family as a whole. Post control enables to ensure that such problems are not repeated in future and provides measures for tackling problematic situations.

Conclusion and Directions for Future Research

This study provides insights into how management functions are made applicable in the operation of a family. Family, being an informal and the most basic organization, adheres to most of the theory stated in explaining the functions of management.

However, in this study the functions that have been discussed are the common ones. There are other functions which different authors have noted. Future studies could look into application of these functions in the context of families. This study also used observation and informal interview techniques. Further studies could be conducted using surveys and structured interviews.

The study uses a small sample size and therefore poses some problems of generalizability. Therefore, to overcome such limitations, future research may look into employing larger samples and more families.

Works Cited

Bateman, T. S. and Snell, S.A. (1996). *Management: Building Competitive Advantage*, USA: McGraw Hill.

Bennis, W. and Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders*. New York: Harper & Row.

Griffin R. W. (2007), Management, 7th edition, Boston, New York, Hough Mifflin Company.

Kirkpatrick, S. and Locke, E. (1991). "Leadership: Do Traits Matter?" *The Executive*, p. 48-60 (May).

Orlikowski, W.J. & Baroudi, J.J. (1991) "Studying Information Technology in Organizations: Research Approaches and Assumptions", *Information Systems Research* (2), pp. 1-28.

Pakhare, J. (2007), Management Concepts – The Four Functions of Management in http://www.sayeconomy.com/four-basic-functions-of-management/ [Accessed 25 September 2009].

Nimkoff (n.d.), Sociological Guide. In http://www.sociologyguide.com/marriage-family-kinship/Family.php [Accessed Accessed 25 September 2009].

Stenson, J.B. (n.d.). A Father's Unity of Life. Available from http://www.parentleadership.com/unity.html [Accessed: 25th September 2009].

Walsham, G. (1993) Interpreting Information Systems in Organizations, Wiley, Chichester.

Weihrich H. and Koontz H. (2005), Management, A Global Perspective, 11th edition, India, McGraw Hill.

Global Financial Crisis: Lessons for Portfolio Managers

Muhammad Fazlur Rabb Tanvir *
Tafsir Ahmed Chowdhury**

Abstract

The recent global financial crisis was embedded in successive decades of cumulating global imbalances' originating from spill over's of lax macroeconomic policies all around the world. The world economy has experienced a number of financial turmoils in recent decades, but the Global Financial Crisis was unique to the previous ones in terms of its breadth and consequences. Though the crisis had its roots in the USA but it had such a global dimension that it deeply penetrated both the developing countries and the developed ones forcing them to go into recession. This paper tries to identify the origins of the world financial crisis and its impact and also tries to provide some lessons for portfolio risk management.

Keywords: Global Financial Crisis, Economic Policies

1. Introduction

The Global Financial Crisis has been one of the largest and the most substantial economic crisis the world has experienced since the great depression of the 1920's and 1930's. This crisis had its roots in the USA and had such a global dimension that it deeply penetrated both the developing countries and the developed ones with forcing most of the developed countries to go into recession. The global financial crisis was rooted in successive decades of cumulating global imbalances which originated from the spill over's of lax macroeconomic policies in large economies. In majority of these economies the international reserve role of their domestic currencies permitted them to run prolonged spells of external account deficits, causing global liquidity expansion well in excess of growth in real global output of goods and services.

In 2008-2010, the USA experienced the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. The core of the crisis was in the fact that 44 percent of all home mortgages were default prone. In numbers it is about 25 million mortgages. (Tarr, 2010, p. 164). What make the crisis more unique is that it is not only restricted to the financial sector, rather it has a wide spread reach in the economic sphere. The IMF reported a decline of world economic activity of 1.3% in 2009. With those numbers, the global financial crisis has caused by far the deepest post-World War II recession. (IMF 2009b, p. xvi).

The impediment of the crisis spread all over the world. The EU's output shrank by about4% in 2009, demonstrating the worst output contractions in several leading EU economies since the beginning of quarterly records in 1970 and 1980. As a consequence, unemployment rates are on a rise in many countries. Various factors carved the path to the crisis. Mortgage lending crisis, troubles in the activities of

---

*Assistant Professor, School of Business, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

** Graduate Student, Graduate School of Business, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

state-governed mortgage companies and investment banks, over-expansive monetary policy along with the dominant position of the USA, as well as its currency, on the international financial market, and the huge imbalance in the world economy etc. are supposed to be the driving forces of the world financial crisis. This paper attempts to identify the origins of the financial crisis and the subsequent consequences of the crisis.

1.2 Objective of the study

This paper has explored different factors that contributed to the economic downturn. So, the specific objectives of the study are:
- To identify and explain the reasons leading to the Global Financial Crisis.
- To explain the consequences of the Global Financial Crisis
- To provide a springboard for portfolio managers

1.3 Research Design

A qualitative research approach was selected as the purpose was to identify the events and the subsequent consequences. Hence, this research is based on secondary data.

The report has three distinct parts. The first part describes the reasons behind the global financial crisis and its consequences, followed by a chapter that briefly describes some important concepts that portfolio managers should remember. The final part provides some recommendations based on the research findings.

2. The Global Financial Crisis

In late 2007, the USA experienced the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. It is generally accepted that problems in the United States housing market are at the root of the current global financial crisis. The core of the crisis is that 44 percent of all home mortgages are default prone. In absolute numbers that is about 25 million mortgages - a unique figure in the history of the United States. (Tarr, 2010, p. 164)

2.1 Origins of the Global Financial Crisis

Subprime Mortgages

The equity bubble and the subsequent collapse of the equity markets at the end of the last century built the foundation of the global financial crisis. With the collapse of the dotcom bubble in 2000 and 2001, there was an increasing capital flow going towards the real estate sectors in the US. The housing prices were pushed upwards by using much of the wealth accumulated from the equity markets during that period. The US banking sector found mortgage lending a very profitable and rapidly expanding market. In the following years investment and speculation in the real estate sector increased rapidly. As prices and speculation rose, an increasing number of borrowers availed the loan, though they were of lower credit quality. These borrowers and their mortgage agreements are known as subprime debts. They had higher debt obligations with less income. The market became more competitive due

to deregulation. Customers were offered more creative types of mortgages for decreasing interest rates. At the end of the century, the rising demand for mortgages by these borrowers made an increasing number of lenders provide the loans at above market rates. The subprime mortgages were a growing segment by 2003.

One characteristic of this increasing debt was, the value of the houses was used as collateral for the mortgages. The housing assets grew in market value as the demand pushed up prices. Thereafter, these increased values were used as collateral in refinancing. Jordan and Jain (2008, pp.21) state that refinancing on the back of rising house prices gave borrowers considerable financial flexibility. They could refinance and avoid any increase in interest rates that had been built into their mortgage contract. Borrowers were also able to roll credit card debt into their home mortgage and lower monthly payments on consumer credit. As a result, debt was reaching mammoth proportions."

As a consequence, many stable mortgage holders became more indebted and were part in loan agreements that were more aggressively constructed. Mortgage broker and loan originators themselves also worsened the situation as the ongoing prospects for refinancing generated extra fee income. The industry provided itself the source for its own growth. Debt obligations were rising rapidly. At the same time, the U.S. Federal Reserve supported the growth of the debt mechanism. In fact, it originally it intended to help the U.S. economy in its recovery from 2000-2001 recession by lowering the interest rates. However that caused extra incentive and assisted borrowers to raise new and even cheaper debt. (Eitemann, et. al, pp. 106)

Deregulation of the Finance Industry

Most people recognize the US subprime mortgage market as the catalyst of the global financial crisis. However it could also find its root deep on the financial side attributed to the faulty practices of the current financial regime. During the 1980s strong deregulations caused rapid financial innovations that provoked powerful financial booms. The de-regulation of the financial markets continuously increased within the last decades which helped the housing bubble developing through extensive risk taking and speculation behavior. Many government policies were implemented to promote home ownership. The policies include establishing government-sponsored entities, providing tax deductions and allowing non-recourse mortgages. These policies provided early momentum for the global financial crisis.

Furthermore, their loan limit was extended as well as tax incentives were given. The purpose to support low income households did not turn out first hand but encouraged financial institutions to give more risky and insecure mortgage loans to less creditworthy people. Furthermore, an important change in regulation was the replacement of the Glass-Steagall Act (GSA) from 1933 by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act in 1999 (GLB). Created after the great depression, the GSA prohibited banks to act as insurance companies and so legally separated commercial and investment banking actions. This act however was replaced by the GLB, which in contrary allowed such activities under a financial service holding. Thereby, it was created an enormous and complex financial supermarket. However, if there is trouble in one

part of the company, it quickly spreads to all other entities to which the firm is linked to through credits, insurance deals, deposits and other financial arrangements. A further effect of the GLB was the reduction on the Fed's control on investment banks, and also allowed those to undertake additional risks. (Mazumder and Ahmad, 2010, pp. 115)

The recent collapse has its roots in the inadequate understanding of the new financial instruments, especially subprime mortgages and securitized mortgage instruments. The flaws in these instruments magnified into a credit crisis and a global financial market meltdown:

> Over time, financial markets grew ever larger relative to the nonfinancial economy, important financial products became more complex, opaque and illiquid, and system-wide leverage exploded. As a result, financial crises became more threatening." (Crotty, 2009, p. 564)

Unlike financial products of the past, the new financial instruments linked retail banking directly to supercharged capital markets. The new hybrid financial products loosely correlated markets and became circulators of systemic risk.

Perverse Incentives in Financial Markets

The current financial system is distorted through perverse incentives. Dr David Gruen (2009), in his address to a conference described the situation "there was a range of perverse incentives in financial markets in too much pay for short-term returns, and not enough downside for losses. Many individuals faced strong financial incentives to take risks with other people's money — risks that generated good returns most of the time, but with a small probability of disaster." These exorbitant stimulations affected important personnel in nearly all important financial institutions like commercial and investment banks, hedge and private equity funds, insurance companies and mutual and pension funds. The incentives resulted in an excessive risk taking behavior when financial markets were optimistic.

The growth of mortgage securitization generated fee income. Thereby, all of the managers made their deal. The chain started with banks and mortgage brokers who sold the loans to the investment bankers. Those in turn packaged the loans into securities, and banks and specialist institutions who serviced the securities received incentives as well. Finally, the rating agencies earned their margin by confirming an inadequate high rating. Incentives got even more attractive since there was no law saying that fees had to be returned if the securities later suffer large losses. As a consequence, any participant had strong motivation to increase the flow of loans through the system, no matter if they were faultless. (Crotty, 2009, p. 565).

A further reason was explained by Crotty, (2009) was surely the bias of the credit rating agencies (CRA). Those were affected by perverse incentives. Basle I rules obliged banks to hold 8% of tier-one capital against their total risk-weighted assets. There was a strong influence from the rating agencies on the bank requirements since they grant most of the banks' assets. With the introduction of Basle II, banks only needed a minimal amount of capital to support triple-A securities. Overall, high

ratings resulted in less required capital. That caused higher leverage and consequently higher profit and higher bonuses for the banks.
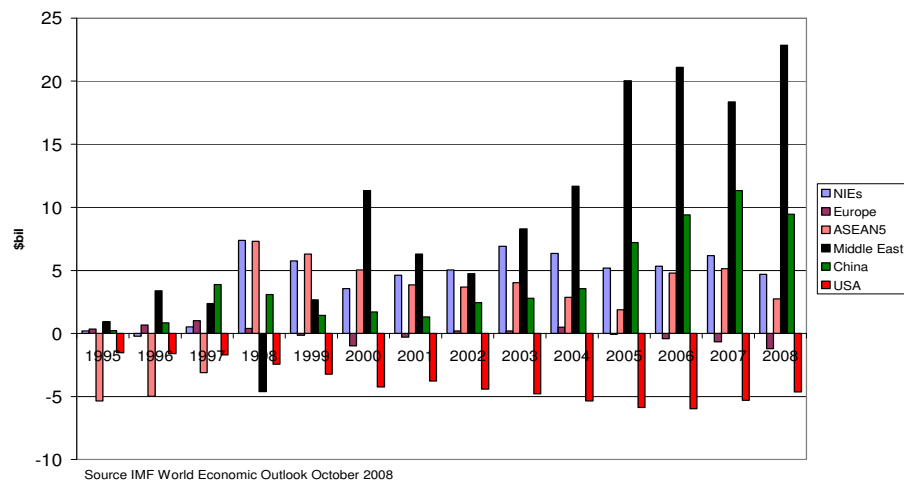
As a result, the financial institutions gradually became more highly leveraged and made the global financial system much more fragile.
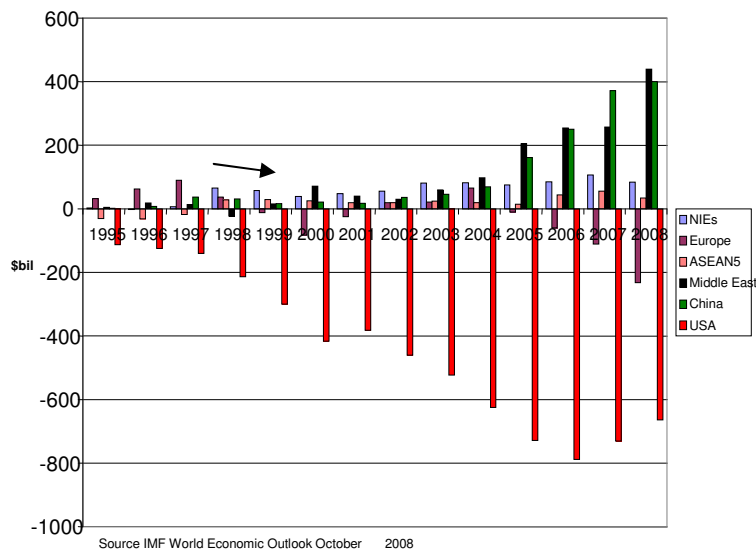
Rising Global Imbalances

For almost more than a decade the world was characterised by global imbalance due to the economic condition of countries. There were countries which had high GDP's while other had relatively low. Countries with national savings greater than national investment run current account surpluses while countries with national investment greater than national savings run current account deficits. As a matter of fact the countries with current account surpluses were mainly from Asia, i.e. China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan; Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand who represented ASEAN and the oil rich Gulf States had a large amount of export earnings. The countries with higher funds had huge flow of funds into the developed countries particularly USA.

The excess saving played its role in the Global financial Crisis as the surplus groups were in search for yield which encouraged them to take risk by investing in riskier investments. The current account scenario provided below helps to understand the global imbalance.

Current Accounts 1995-2008
(%GDP)

Source IMF World Economic Outlook October 2008

152

Current Accounts 1995-2008
($US)

Source IMF World Economic Outlook October 2008

2.2 Consequences of the Global Financial Crisis

The breadth of the crisis was not only restricted to the financial sector rather it had a farther reach. Since the crisis began in late 2007, more than 6 million Americans have lost their jobs, large and important financial institutions have failed, and trillions of dollars in savings and retirement accounts have been lost.

The IMF predicted a decline of world economic activity of 1.3% in 2009. With those numbers, the global financial crisis would cause by far the deepest post-World War II recession. (IMF 2009b, pp. xvi). As a consequence, unemployment rates are expected to explode. It is forecasted that about 200 million people will be pushed into poverty. (UN recommendations, 2009, p. 2).

3. The Global Financial Crisis and Australia

The world economy was affected as a whole, especially for the economic power houses, but the Global Financial Crisis could not brutally penetrate the Australian economy as it had done to other strong economies. Australia has been maintaining a solid track record of growth even in this time of financial distress and is surely not experiencing a recession. The major reasons for the Australian success are identified as follows:

Strong Regulations in the Financial Sector

Australia has a different framework in the matter of regulating the financial sector, where the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA), works as the sole body responsible for the regulations.

The role of APRA and its contribution to hold the Australian economy can be understood as Jordan and Jain (2008, pp.31), state, "APRA prides itself on its vigilance and 'hands-on' approach, in particular, its ability to identify the most vulnerable and troubled entities before they run aground. Many of the entities that would have been most seriously exposed to the consequences of the recent market turmoil were removed from harm's way before the trouble started due to such proactive supervision."

Strong Economic Policy

Australia had always maintained a disciplined macroeconomic policy. The Government recorded budget surpluses during growth periods and the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) managed monetary policy effectively. A well organised monetary policy and the consistency of the fiscal policy has helped Australia to deal with the global financial crisis with minimal casualties.

Australia had an expansionary monetary policy, and it aimed to provide economic stimulus during the financial turmoil. The constant policy of adjustment in interest rates and a relatively stable rate on Government issued bonds ensured the interest of investors rather than investing in volatile products.

The Australian government reduced the government debt over the last decade and recorded fiscal surpluses during periods of economic growth. Hence they had greater flexibility during the financial turmoil, such as the current crisis. As the financial industries were not affected by the crisis the government did have to provide any direct financial support to the banking system.

The Government provided a stimulus package which would involve spending on goods, services and infrastructure. The total value of the stimulus package was about $52 billion and it provided an opportunity for economic growth.

Australia has a taxation policy where interest payments are not tax deductible and as such there was no rebate on interest on mortgages. This had influenced borrowers to pay off mortgages rather than extending them and they had much lower credit crisis.

Nature of Business

The Australian banking system is characterized by lending to domestic customers and as such their investment is focused on domestic lending rather than investments in diverse and complex financial instruments. They had been maintaining the intermediary services as their main source of income with a substantially lower investment in off balance sheet activities and high risk financial instruments.

The Four Pillars Policy

The 'four pillars policy', which prevents the four large banks from merging, has also helped the Australian financial system to deal strongly with the global financial crisis. Ian Macfarlane, former Reserve Bank governor argued that the four pillars policy reduced takeover pressures between Australian banks. This has certainly eased the pressure of the crisis and helped to maintain economic stability.

Economic Relations

Due to geographical proximity Australia has maintained most of international trade with Asian nations. Australia had most of its exports to the emerging Asian economies and as discussed earlier these nations had maintained surpluses and were less prone to the financial crisis as the USA or European nations.

Research (Jordan and Jain 2008) has demonstrated that while Australian exports to both the European region and the United States fell in March 2009, exports to China continued to grow strongly at 23.3%. This led to Australia's second-biggest trade surplus, adding 2.2% to GDP growth, and keeping the nation from sliding into a recession.

Thus, we can conclude that strong economic ties with the emerging Asian nations have contributed to Australia's successful response to the crisis.

4 Lessons for Portfolio Risk Management

4.1 Remembering the Risk-return Characteristics

After the financial crisis occurred, the true underlying risks of subprime derivatives appeared. In the financial sector there are two dominant variables - risk and return. This is actually one of the major problems that investors have with subprime derivatives. They are not really aware of the real risks and returns. Even experienced investors and bankers did not appreciate the very essence of the risk and return for this relative new financial product. Investment guides tended to treat sub-prime derivatives as ABS. The fallbacks to the mortgages were granted on the underlying properties as securities. Specialists could have seen the signs. At least for the future, some indicators seem too obvious, such as how the sub-prime industry within the USA had ballooned. In less than two decades, it shot up 30 times from only about US$20 billion in 1993 to about US$600 billion in 2007. Federal Reserve Chief, Ben Bernanke, believed that banks could reach better risk-return trade-offs by applying advanced methods. However, this could not be true for those banks that were strongly involved in sub-prime derivatives. The major outcome is that demand grew rapidly and exceeded supply extremely thanks to the higher returns which were made possible through the innovative use of the triple-A sub-prime derivatives. Professional investors have just failed to consider this narrow nature of the risk-return context. Distracted by exceeding demand, the agents kept on searching for mortgages. But they only did so as long as housing prices were going upwards. Consequently as the prices began to go downwards the housing market collapsed. (Foo, pp. 295 f.)
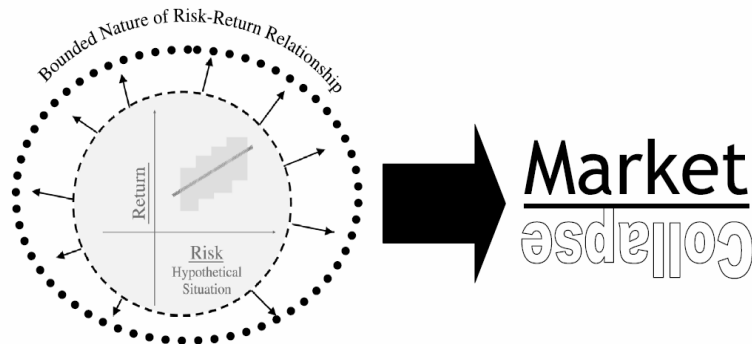
Figure 1: "Impact of excessive demand for high yields of subprime derivatives"
(Foo, 2008, p.297)

The main basic in risk management lies in the traditional concept of having a well-diversified portfolio - or as it is said "Do not put all your eggs in one basket." Not the good eggs, nor the bad ones. However that was exactly the opposite of what the "inventors" of the sub-prime mortgages had done: By bundling different mortgages and subsequent slicing. Theses tranches received different ratings. "The innovative breakthrough lay in converting what were still baskets of bad eggs into triple-A (AAA), investment-grade, mortgage-backed securities." Credit rating agencies (CRA) contributed to the build up and also to the bring out of recent happenings. Specifically these agencies gave very good ratings to complex products based on insufficient historical data. In some cases faulty models were used. Investors lost confidence in ratings and securitized products more generally as soon as they realized about the methods. After that experience, the very wise saying should sound differently: "Do not let others put all the bad eggs into one basket." (Foo, pp. 294 f.)

In 2008, the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) released a report which was deeply concerned about the methods of CRAs during the recent periods. The SEC proposed a set of reforms in order to regulate conflicts of interest and disclosures as well as internal policies and business practices of the agencies. It was also stated that those banks, that solely relied on the CRAs practices without installing an own risk analysis, suffered most. Obviously, regulation on risk management of banks must be reconsidered as well as those of bond insurers and the reporting activities of CRAs. (Mollah, S., 2010)

4.2 Corporate Governance

Corporate governance has a wide variety of definitions. So it is meant to be ''the institutions that influence how business corporations allocate resources and returns'' and ''the organizations and rules that affect expectations about the exercise of control of resources in firms". Besides the formal rules and institutions of corporate

156

governance, those definitions also include the informal practices that develop if there are no formal rules (World Bank, 2002, p. 68). Next to the internal structure, the definitions consider also its external settings like capital markets and government competition policies. (O'Sullivan, 2000).

Corporate governance guidelines vary from country to country and have therefore also different effects on companies. Recently, it is found that weaker focus of corporate governance guidelines on risk management and internal control is associated with less formalized risk management and internal control systems. So, corporate governance guidelines with a stronger focus on those subjects motivate companies to specify and communicate the responsibilities related to risk management and internal control. Moreover it makes the company to formally assess risks on a regular basis. Furthermore, it helps to install a formal risk management system and to formalize their policies and procedures. A weaker focus on risk management and internal control apparently has less such effects. (Sarens and Christoph, 2010, p. 303)

Thus, the very problem of corporate governance remains in the separation of ownership and control. Public companies are not controlled by their owners but by managers, supposedly the agents of the shareholders. This fact demands for a compensation structure that rewards good and long-term performance and discourages the contrary like "greed" and excessive risk takings (Mazumder and Ahmad, 2010, pp. 125 f.). In recent years the increase in CEO compensation rose in no relation to company performance. In 1991, CEOs of large companies earned about 140 times the salary of an average worker. This figure increased dramatically by 2003 to 500:1 (Revell, Money, 2003, p. 34). The continued rise of CEO compensation has come to be seen as a potentially serious problem in the U.S. Despite it is still a moderate number in the income statement of most large public firms, there is increased concern that those excessive compensation may finally harm shareholders (Bebchuk and Fried, 2004, p. 304). President Barack Obama imposed strict regulations on executive compensations and bonuses of firms that received federal bailout and stimulus money in February 2009 as a first sign (Mazumder and Ahmad, 2010, p. 125). Definitely, it is important that companies find a good approach of setting right incentives in their specific corporate governance policies.

5. Concluding Remarks

5.1 Recommendations

Mortgage lending crisis, over-expansive monetary policy along with the dominant position of the USA, and the huge misbalance in the world economy etc. are the main reasons of the world financial crisis.

It can be affirmed that the global financial crisis is actually a consequence of wrong and irresponsible management, which could well have been predicted beforehand. The success of countries like Australia in dealing with the financial crisis can serve as a learning point for other economies. Based on the research some recommendations have been designed.

Remembering the Risk-Return Characteristics

The research shows the ignorance of the risk associated with the subprime derivatives accelerated the financial downturn. The two variables risk and return are as dominant as the variables demand and supply for any economy. Investments should be made with accurate study of the risk and return behavior.

Strengthening Financial Regulations and Macro-economic Policy

The success of Australia in these days of turmoil reflects the benefits of having a prudent macroeconomic management system. Thus, the regulations should ensure stability of the economy in both the long term and short term. The economic policies should be flexible enough to accommodate the economic conditions and the policy should be designed to meet the need of the economy.

Maintain Global Balance

The report has revealed the contribution of the global imbalance in the recent financial crisis. A reformed world monetary order should be planned to maintain global balance and stability to ensure global liquidity expansion with growth rate of real global output.

Ensuring Corporate Governance

Corporate governance guidelines vary from country to country and have therefore also different effects on companies. Recently, it is found that weaker focus of corporate governance guidelines on risk management and internal control is associated with less formalized risk management and internal control systems. So, corporate governance guidelines with a stronger focus on those subjects motivate companies to specify and communicate the responsibilities related to risk management and internal control. Moreover it makes the company to formally assess risks on a regular basis.

Ensuring Sound Evaluations of Assets

The main basic in risk management lies in the traditional concept of having a well-diversified portfolio - or as it is said "Do not put all your eggs in one basket." Not the good eggs, nor the bad ones. However that was exactly the opposite of what the "inventors" of the sub-prime mortgages had done, by bundling different mortgages and subsequent slicing. Proper evaluation of assets can ensure efficient portfolio management which can minimize risk while generating reasonable profits.

5.2 Conclusion

Revisions and refinements in macro prudential regulations and related policy tools can lead to stronger, more resilient financial institutions and markets. A strong and efficient financial market will be able to anticipate and resist shocks from occasional destabilizing events in the real or financial economy.

Works Cited

Allen, R. and Snyder, D. (2009), "New thinking on the financial crisis", critical perspectives on international business, 5, 1/2, 36-55.

Bebchuk, L. and Fried, J. (2004), "Pay without Performance: The Unfulfilled Promise of Executive Compensation", Harvard University Press, Cambridge, p. 304.

Crotty, J. (2009), "Structural causes of the global financial crisis: a critical assessment of the 'new financial architecture'", Cambridge Journal of Economics, 33, 563–580.

Dujuan, Y. (2009), "Inefficient American corporate governance under the financial crisis and China's reflections", International Journal of Law and Management, 51, 3, 139-152.

Eitemann, D. K. et al. (2010), „Multinational Business Finance", 12th edition, Pearson Education Inc.

Financial Times (1 October 2008), "The fatal banker's fall".

Foo, C.-T. (2008), "Conceptual lessons on financial strategy following the US sub-prime crisis", The Journal of Risk Finance, 9, 3, 292-302.

Gruen, D. (2009), "Reflections on the Global Financial Crisis", *Economic Round up*, Issue 2, P.55-65.

IMF (2009b), "World Economic Outlook. Crisis and Recovery, World Economic and Financial Surveys", Washington DC, April.

Jordan, K. And Jain, A. (2008), "Diversity and Resilience: Lessons from the Financial Crisis".

Mazumder, M. and Ahmad, N. (2010), "Greed, financial innovation or laxity of regulation? A close look into the 2007-2009 financial crisis and stock market volatility", Studies in Economics and Finance, 27, 2, 110-134.

Mollah, S. (2010), "Financial crisis: is there a need for paradigm shift?", Studies in Economics and Finance, 27, 2, Guest Editorial.

O'Sullivan, M. (2000), ''Corporate governance and globalization'', Annals, American Academy of Political Science, 570, pp. 153-4.

Revell, J. and Money, M. (2003), ''Fewer problems: is it a good idea to get rid of the $1 million CEO pay ceiling?'' Fortune, 31 March, p. 34.

Roubini, N. (2008), "How will financial institutions make money now that the securitization food chain is broken?", http://www.rgemonitor.com/blog/roubini/, 19 May.

Sarens, G. and Christoph, J. (2010), "The association between corporate governance guidelines and risk management and internal control practices: Evidence from a comparative study", Managerial Auditing Journal, 25, 4, 288-308.

SIFMA, http://archives1.sifma.org/assets/files/SIFMA_CDOIssuanceData2007q1.pdf

Tarr. D. (2010), "The political, regulatory, and market failures that caused the US financial crisis - What are the lessons?", Journal of Financial Economic Policy, 2, 2, 163-186.

UN recommendations (19 march 2009), 1-18. http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/letters/recommendationExperts200309.pdf

World Bank (2002), "Building Institutions for Markets", World Bank Development Report, p. 68.

Welcome to the Talent Economy: Reviewing through a Case of Agro-Enterprise in Bangladesh

Mohammad A. Ashraf*
Muhammad Saad Imran Noor**

Abstract

In many businesses today economies of scale do not exist; rather there are economies of ideas and human capital or talents. Against this new reality, the present study proposes an interesting and inevitable phase of the economy of managing talents surpassing the economy of staging experience that is traversed ---from extracting commodities to making goods to delivering services. Managing talents facilitate innovations that induce added value and productivity in both demand and supply sides of the economy. It also introduces a new way of calculating economic profit incorporating a compact of talent management intertwined the elements of brand, purpose, opportunity and culture. In the end, the study reviews a case of agro-enterprise in Bangladesh that suggests that the firms which are more human capital-oriented they are more productive or more profitable in compare to other firms which are simply financial or economic capital-oriented. Hence, the paper concludes that managing talents are the latest phase of economy of the 21st century's management science which nurtures economies of talent or human capital rather than economies of scale in calculating and maximizing profit.

Introduction

In many businesses economies of scale don't exist; rather there are economies of ideas which come into being through research and development every year (Ashraf and Joarder, 2009). For a growing number of companies, competitive advantage lies in the ability to create an economy driven not by cost efficiencies but by ideas and intellectual know-how. In practice this means that leaders have to create an environment in which what we call "clever people" (Goffee and Jones, 2007a) can thrive. These people are the handful of employees whose ideas, knowledge, and skills give them the potential to be productive and to produce disproportionate value from the resources their organizations make available to them.

There's no hotter topic in recent year's review and portfolio, for the obvious, overwhelming reason that in the knowledge economy of the twenty-first century, talents who are ornate with the latest and upstream human capital will always be the scarcest of scarce resources. Above all others, it is what companies compete for, depend on, and succeed because of (Goffee and Jones, 2007b; Ready, Hill and Conger, 2008). Emerging markets are by compounded rates of as much as 40 percent and winning the race for the people with superior human capital to keep up with

*A Doctoral Research Scholar in the College of Business at the University Utara Malaysia and Assistant Professor (on study leave), School of Business, United International University, Bangladesh
** Lecturer, School of Business, United International University, Bangladesh,

growth is appearing extraordinarily daunting and challenging, because presently businesses based all over the globe are feverishly competing for people but not for capital in the mounting meritocratic culture (Ready et al., 2008). This fact is particularly important for the current economies of talent or human capital rather than economies of scale which is completely obsolete nowadays. Despite all that is known about the importance of developing human capital oriented employee and despite the great sums of money dedicated to systems and processes that support talented human capital management, an astonishing number of companies still struggle to fill key positions – which put a considerable constraint on their potential to grow (Purcell, Kinnie and Hutchinson, 2003). Thus, failures in talented human capital management are an ongoing source of pain for executives in modern organizations. Over the past generation, human capital management practices, especially in the United States, have by and large been dysfunctional, leading corporations to lurch from surpluses of talented people to shortfalls to surpluses and back again (Cappelli, 2008).

At its heart, human capital or talent management is simply a matter of anticipating the need for knowledge and skill and then setting out a plan to meet it. Current responses to this challenge largely fall into two distinct—and equally ineffective—camps. The first, and by far the most common, is to do nothing: anticipate no needs at all; make no plans for addressing them (rendering the term "talent or human capital management" meaningless). This reactive approach relies overwhelmingly on outside hiring and has faltered now that the surplus of human capital management has eroded. The second, common only among large, older companies, relies on complex and bureaucratic models from the 1950s for forecasting and succession planning—legacy systems that grew up in an era when business was highly predictable and that fail now because they are inaccurate and costly in a more volatile environment (Cappelli, 1999).

It's time for a fundamentally new approach to human capital management that takes into account the great uncertainty businesses face today. Fortunately, companies already have such a model, one that has been well honed over decades to anticipate and meet demand in uncertain environments—supply chain management in order to ensure maximization of profit. By and large, employees with enriched human capital of an organization are its core employees who contribute in achieving the organizational goals or success. Thus, employee equipped with talents is an individual who is a key player to achieve the goals of the organization. S/he could be the manager or the Chef of a restaurant or the waiter or the waitress whose contribution helps to raise the sales revenues that maximize the profit (Ashraf and Joarder, 2009). By ensuring human capital-profit chain, firms can forge a new model of human capital or talent management better suited to today's realities (Cappelli, 2008). In so doing, the present paper aims to show how the progression of economic value inevitably necessitate to transit -- from commodities to goods to service to experience to mange-talent phase and how a new way of calculating economic profit help the new model to focus on the productivity of people (higher human capital oriented) rather than capital (financial). In the end, the research also delves into a case study that shows how economies of knowledge ensure higher profitability

(productivity or efficiency) rather than economies of scale which is now obsolete. Before getting into the details, the next section highlights the context in which higher human capital management has evolved over the past few decades along with its current state.

Manage Talent: Evolutionary Dynamics

Internal development was the objective norm back in the 1950s, and every managerial practice that gives the impression novel today was usual in those years— from mentor coaching to 360-degree feedback to job rotation to high-potential programs. Except at a few very large firms, internal talent development collapsed in the 1970s because it could not address the increasing uncertainties of the marketplace. Business forecasting had failed to predict the economic downturn in that decade, and talent pipelines continued to churn under outdated postulations of growth. The excess supply of managers, combined with no-layoff policies for white-collar workers, fed corporate bloat. The steep recession of the early 1980s then led to white-collar layoffs and the demise of lifetime employment, as restructuring cut layers of hierarchy and eliminated many practices and staffs that developed talent. After all, if the priority was to cut positions, particularly in middle management, why maintain the programs designed to fill the ranks (Cappelli, 2000).

The alternative to traditional development, outside hiring, worked like a charm through the early 1990s, in large measure because organizations were drawing on the big pool of laid-off talent. As the economy continued to grow, however, companies increasingly recruited talent away from their competitors, creating retention problems. Watching the fruits of their labors walk out the door, employers backed even further away from investments in development. By the mid-1990s, virtually every major corporation asserted the goal of getting better at recruiting talent away from competitors while also getting better at retaining its own talent—a hopeful dream at the individual level, an impossibility in the aggregate (Cappelli, 2008).

How do economies change? The entire history of economic progress can be recapitulated in the four-stage evolution of the birthday cake (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Coping with the demand of new emerging age, these stages are now to be surpassed, as the market is entering in emerging economies of talent (Barber and Strack, 2005). Having faced with this new reality, economy of experience must undergo another new phase of economic progression that is termed here as manage talents which induces added values and can influence both supply and demand side of the economy in order to ensure market efficiency (see Figure 1).
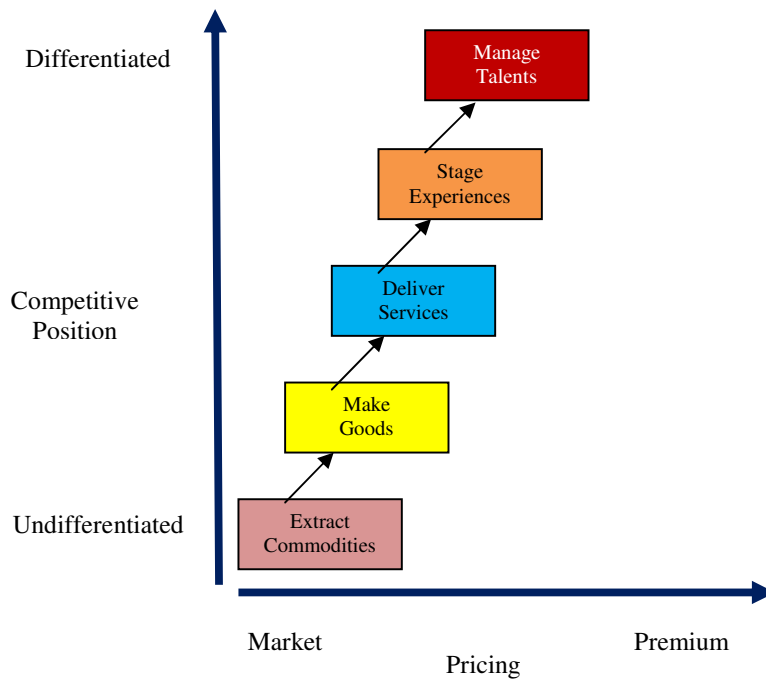
162

Figure 1: The Progression of Economic Value (Adapted from Pine and Gilmore, 1998)

Manage talents encompass attracting and retaining talents that can improve productivity or efficiency of the labor as a whole which can increase revenue in supply side and at the same time can reduce cost in demand side. Talented employees facilitate creativities or innovations that push up the productivity in both supply and demand sides (see figure 2). Throughout this process, where marginal revenue (MR) equates marginal Cost (MC), profit gets maximization. This reality is intuitively caught the insights of Cappelli (2008) which advances emphatically that the most innovative approaches to managing talent use four particular principles drawn from operations and supply chain management. Two of them address uncertainty on the demand side: how to balance make-versus-buy decisions and how to reduce the risks in forecasting the demand for talented employees. The other two address uncertainty on the supply side: how to improve the return on investment in development efforts and how to protect that investment by generating internal opportunities that encourage newly trained managers to stick with the firm.
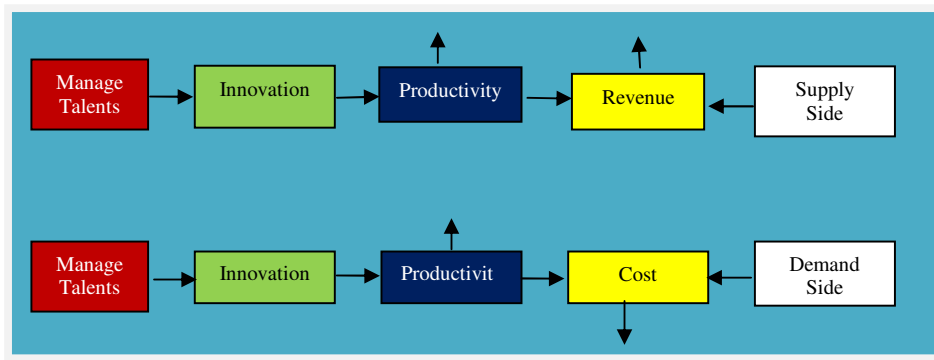
163

Figure 2: Profit Maximizing Dynamics through Manage Talents

Theoretical Background: A New Way to Calculate Economic Profit

This study drew the conceptual framework from Barber and Strack, (2005). According to Barber and Strack (2005), the standard calculation for economic profit can be reformulated - by substituting some basic components and by using standard algebra - to focus on the productivity of people rather than capital. This equation yields the same result but highlights the employee-related performance drivers of a people-intensive business.

Start with the calculation of economic profit from a capital oriented- perspective:

$$\text{ECONOMIC PROFIT} = [\ \text{ROI} \ - \ \text{COC}\ ]\ .\ \text{IC}$$

% of Return on Investment   Cost of Capital   Invested Capital

Replace "return on investment" with its equivalent, "earnings divided by invested capital":

$$= [\ \text{E/IC} \ - \ \text{COC}\ ]\ .\ \text{IC}$$

Earnings/Invested Capital

Use algebra to arrive at:

$$= \ \text{E} \ - \ [\ \text{COC x IC}\ ]$$

Earnings

Replace "earnings" with its equivalent, "revenue minus personnel costs minus supplier costs minus depreciation";

164

$$\text{= } \underbrace{R}_{\text{Revenue}} - \overbrace{PC}^{\text{Personnel Costs}} - \underbrace{SC}_{\text{Supplier Costs}} - \overbrace{D}^{\text{Depreciation}} - [COC \times IC]$$

Use algebra to factor in a key people-oriented element, the number of people employed, and introduce two metrics, namely, employee productivity and average personnel cost per person employed:

$$= \left[\underbrace{\frac{R - SC - D - [COC \times IC]}{P}}_{\text{Employee Productivity}} - \underbrace{\frac{PC}{P}}_{\text{Avg. Cost/ Person}} \right] \cdot \underset{\text{People Employed}}{P}$$

The result is a calculation of economic profit that is meaningful to people-intensive businesses:

$$\text{ECONOMIC PROFIT } = [\underset{\text{Employee Productivity}}{EPR} - \underset{\text{Avg. Cost/Person}}{ACP}] \cdot \underset{\text{People Employed}}{P}$$

The new, people-oriented equation mirrors the capital-oriented one. Employee productivity corresponds to capital productivity - that is, return on investment. The average personnel cost per person employed corresponds to the cost of capital. The number of people employed corresponds to the amount of invested capital (Barber and Strack, 2005). This new reality is embedded into the spurred productivity of the human capital rather than financial capital. In the next section, the study employs a case study of agro-enterprises in Bangladesh which proves the new reality of knowledge-profit chain.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Base

The main source of data used in this case study was a farm level cross-sectional survey, conducted in the five selected villages namely, Malauri, Tengri, Akashi, Pandura and Boali of Tangail District towards north-east of Dhaka in Bangladesh. In all 98 farmers producing rice on a commercial or profit-oriented basis were interviewed of which all farmers who have on average 5 acres of land and have average amounts of capital investment of Taka 0.5 million (5 lakhs of Taka). Among the 98 farmers, only 18 farms have at least one agricultural graduate who are expert in producing rice. The remaining 80 farmers have no such employees of agricultural graduate working in the farms. Among 18 farms, 11 owners of the farms are agricultural graduates themselves. These agricultural graduates are specialized in rice farming and they are taken as the talented employees who are paid much more than

usual amount of salary as their compensation. Out of the sample of 18 farms, 11 farms have one agricultural graduate, 4 farms have 3 agricultural graduates and 3 farms have 2 graduates. The farms are classified into two groups: 18 farms belong to the Group A and the rest of 80 farms belong to the group B. The farmers are selected through a stratified random sampling procedure. The sample represents about 15 percent of the total farm families of the study areas.

The Empirical Models

A normalized restricted profit function (Cobb-Douglas form) and a set of factor demand equations developed by Lau and Yotopoulos in 1971 were used to test for economic efficiency or productivity. The profit function was of the form:

$$Ln\pi = Ln\alpha + \beta_1 LnWF + \beta_2 LnWL + \beta_3 LnRA + \beta_4 LnK + U \tag{1}$$

Where,

π = Profit (current revenue minus current variable costs) per farm normalized by output price;

WF = The price of fertilizer, normalized by output price (per Kilogram);

WL = The money wage rate of human capital (labor), normalized by output price (per eight hours per day);

RA = Cultivated rice areas in acre (2.471 acres = 1 hectare);

K = Capital Service Flow;

U = Disturbance term;

$\alpha, \beta_1 .... \beta_4$ = Parameters to be estimated.

The price of variable inputs other than labors and fertilizer are assumed to be constant since the profit function is restricted in the short-run. For getting the real price of the input all the variables were normalized by the farm-specific output price. Hence, the levels of the variable inputs which maximize short-run profit cannot be estimated directly from the profit function. However, the variable input demand functions can be derived by partially differentiating the profit function (1) with respect to the normalized price of the inputs (Lau and Yotopoulas, 1979; Flinn et al., 1982 and Jabber, 1980). This result is sometimes referred to as the Hotelling-Shephard Lemma.

For the present study, the variable input demand functions were:

$$-\frac{QF.WF}{\pi} = \gamma_1 + V_1 \tag{2}$$

$$-\frac{QL.WL}{\pi} = \gamma_2 + V_2 \qquad (3)$$

Where,

QF and QL = Quantities of fertilizer and labor respectively;

WF and WL = Normalized prices of fertilizer and labor respectively;

γ_1 and γ_2 = Parameters to be estimated;

V_1 and V_2 = Error terms which are uncorrelated with the profit function.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profitability as a Measure of Farm Efficiency

The regression results are presented in Table 1. The chi-squared statistic is used to test the validity of the restrictions implied by the hypothesis of profit maximization. The level of significance chosen is 0.01. Operationally, the test of profitability implies testing the null-hypothesis that the coefficient of each variable in the profit function is the same as the coefficient of that variable in the factor demand function. That is:

$$H_0 : \beta_1 = \gamma_1 \text{ and } \beta_2 = \gamma_2$$
$$H_a : \beta_1 \neq \gamma_1 \text{ and } \beta_2 \neq \gamma_2$$

where,

β_1 and γ_1 = the coefficients of fertilizer in the profit and factor demand functions ; and

β_2 and γ_2 = the coefficients of labor in the profit and factor demand functions respectively.

Table 1: Joint Estimates of Restricted Profit Function, Factor Demand Function and Supply Elasticity

Variable	Parameter	All Farms n= 98	Group B Farms n= 80	Group A Farms n = 18
Profit Function:				
Constant (Lnα)	β_0	6.70 (46.65)**	6.76 (36.87)**	7.45 (25.03)**
Fertilizer (LnWF)	β_1	-0.07 (4.84)**	-0.07 (4.30)**	-0.05 (5.03)**
Human Capital (LnWL)	β_2	-0.87 (9.41)**	-0.92 (8.29)**	-0.69 (7.11)**
Rice Area(LnRA)	β_3	0.86 (17.06)**	0.80 (10.46)**	0.45 (3.63)**
Capital (LnK)	β_4	0.06 (2.39)**	0.07 (2.28)**	0.006 (0.15)**
Factor Demand				
Function:				
Fertilizer (LnWF)	γ_1	-0.06 (4.84)**	-0.07 (4.30)**	-0.05 (5.03)**
Human Capital (LnWL)	γ_2	-0.87 (8.41)**	-0.92 (8.2)**	-0.69 (7.11)**
Supply Elasticities	$\sum[|\beta_1|+|\beta_2|]$	0.94	0.99	0.74

Notes:
1. **** indicate significance at 1 percent level.**
2. **Figures in parenthesis are asymptotic 't' value.**
3. **Two restrictions for each case: $\beta_1 = \gamma_1$ and $\beta_2 = \gamma_2$**
4. **Supply ealsticities computed as the sum of the absolute values of the coefficients associated with fertilizers and labors.**

Results in Table 1 fundamentally provide the restricted estimates of profit and factor demand elasticities for all categories of farmers groups. The output supply elasticities for different groups (0.97 for n=98, 0.99 for farmers of B group and 0.74 for A group farms) indicate that group-B farmers are more responsive to changes in the price of rice than are group- A farmers. Similar outcomes are evident in the case of fertilizer and human capital or labor demand as well. That is B farmers are more responsive to changes in fertilizer price and wage rate than are A farmers.

Results in Table 2 suggest that farmers as a whole are not maximizing short run profit, since equally restrictions on the β_2 and γ_2 are rejected at the 1 percent level of significance. This is because of the calculated chi-squared value is far greater than the critical value. In the case of group-B farmers the equality restrictions are also rejected. Only in the case of group-A farmers the general restrictions are accepted.

Table 2: Test Results of Restricted Profit and Factor Demand Functions

Farm Size Groups	Calculated Chi-squared Value	Critical Chi-sq. Value at 1 % Sig.
All farms (n = 98)	22.27	
Group B farms (n = 80)	14.70	9.21
Group A farms (n = 18)	7.30	

It may be concluded that the farmers as a whole are not using the resources in the most economically efficient manner. When the data are disaggregated into sub-sets corresponding to group-A and group-B farmers, it is found that group-A farmers are relatively more efficient than group-B farmers. This poor performance is attributed to the lack of integrated scientific technical know-how which is applied by the expert of agricultural graduates who are not employed by the group-B farmers. These experts of talented employees are the main factors for getting the improved result in rice production profitability or productivity or efficiency.

In the present study, farms are classified as the group-A and the group-B on the basis of the number of talented agricultural graduates employed in the farm. This is done on the basis of prior information about the number of more knowledgeable agricultural experts. It is found that in the study area group-B farmers are less economically efficient than group-A farmers. These results intuitively imply that the higher productivity is due to the innovative and productive role of the talented or more knowledgeable labor forces in the whole production activates of rice in this area of Bangladesh. Hence, the knowledge or talent- profit chain is important for the emerging economies of talent in the 21st century's global village.

Conclusion

It is no secret that business success today revolves largely around people, not capital. Many traditional producers even are now essentially accustomed to be people-oriented businesses. In most industries, people costs are much higher than capital costs. Even when a company isn't people intensive overall, a people-based business embedded in the company often drives company performance. Hence for the most part, today's business performance measures and management practices don't reflect the particular economics of scale but economics of people. Thus, the company's operational performance will be driven mainly by the things it has in common with seemingly dissimilar people-oriented businesses. Indeed, when people are the most important resource, some standard performance measures and management practices become ill suited to their tasks (Barber and Strack, 2005).

Consider, for instance, the concept of economic profit, whose widespread adoption as a performance metric represented a major breakthrough in measuring business performance. Economic profit, measured using such methods as Economic Value Added and Cash Value Added, takes into account something ignored by the traditional profit-and-loss statement. However, the metrics, at least as conventionally calculated, offer little information about the real drivers of business performance. This is done in order to identify where and how value is being created-or squandered – human capital oriented businesses need performance metrics that are as financially rigorous as economic profit but that highlight the productivity of people rather than of capital. The case study of agro-oriented businesses in Bangladesh also exhibits similar evidence of added significance of scarce human capital in maximizing economic profit.

Works Cited

Ashraf, M. and Joarder, H. R. (2009). "Talent Management and Retention Practices from The Faculty's Point of View: A Case study," *Journal of Human Capital* 1(2): 151 -163.

Barber, F. and Strack, R. (2005). "The Surprising Economics of a "People Business'," *Harvard Business Review* 83(6): 80-90.

Cappelli, P. (2008). "Talent Management for the Twenty-First Century," *Harvard Business Review* 86(3): 74- 81.

Cappelli, P. (2000). "A Market-Driven Approach to Retaining Talent," *Harvard Business Review* 78(1): 103-11.

Cappelli, P. (1999). The New Deal at Work: Managing the Market-Driven Workforce, Boston: Harvard Business press.

Flinn et al. (1982). "Supply Responsiveness of Rice Farmers in Laguna, Philippines." *The Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 26(1): 39 – 48

Goffee, R. and Jones, G. (2007a). "Leading Clever People," *Harvard Business Review* 85(3): 72-79.

Goffee, R. and Jones, G. (2007a). "How to Manage the Most Talented," *Harvard Business Review* 85(3): 70-71.

Jabber, M. A. (1980). "Supply, Delivery System and Utilization of Chemical Fertilizers in Bangladesh: Review of Some Available Information," A Report Prepared for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Dhaka: Government of Bangladesh.

Lau, L. J. and Yotopoulos, P. A. (1971). "A Test of Relative Efficiency and Applications to Indian Agriculture," *American Economic Review* 61: 94 109.

Pine, B. J. and Gilmore, J. H. (1998). "Welcome to the Experience Economy." *Harvard Business Review,* 78(4): 97 – 105.

Purcell, J., Kinnie, N. and Hutchinson, S. (2003). Understanding the People and Performance Link: Unlocking the Black Box. Research Report, London: Chartered Accountant Institute of Personnel and Development.

Ready, D. A., Hill, L. A. and Conger, J. A. (2008). "Winning the Race for Talent in Emerging Markets," *Harvard Business Review* 86(11): 62-70.

Determinants of Growth in Bangladesh: An Economic Analysis.

Shah Mohammad Hamza Anwar*

Abstract

Economic growth is a foremost factor in determining the well-being of the people in a country. The present study is concerned with the determinants of GDP growth rate and its recent performance in the Bangladesh economy. As the most densely populated country in the world, Bangladesh is facing the problems of illiteracy, malnutrition, unavailability of medical facilities etc. Analyzing the determinants and macro – performance related growth, the study reveals that - Bangladesh is doing much better in some sectors, but the proper balance between sectors is required for achieving positive goals. Bangladesh has recently achieved success in a significant growth rate of GDP. But, the problem also remains that the growth rate of GDP is dominated by agriculture while production is weak. Among the influential factors of GDP, Inflation, exchange rate, population growth, savings ratio, investment ratio, corruption, political instability, labour force, unemployment, productivity growth, labour utilization etc. are found as dominant. The analysis suggests that inflation and budget deficit seemed to have a negative relation to real GDP growth rate and GDP per capita growth rate whereas GDP growth is significantly and positively related to investment (% of GDP). Besides the variables, there are also some quantitative and qualitative factors those affect the growth prospects of Bangladesh. When it comes to measure the sources of growth and draw economic policy conclusions, the present study will be helpful in getting an overall view of current problems and prospects of growth performance in Bangladesh.

Introduction

The economic development of Bangladesh has been hindered by the addition of newer problems to existing ones since the independence. The country has failed to achieve the cherished goals of development due to a dearth of resources, political unrest, and lack of good governance as well as widespread corruption in all levels of society. Bangladesh has been struggling with low growth rate along with poor production, high population growth rate, less competitiveness in the trade market etc. Agriculture has been the main economic sector with an employment of currently 75% of the populations' professions but contribution towards GDP is only 22% (Alam 2009). They have examined the probable underpinning reasons causing agriculture as a less productive industry. Between 1991 and 2000, as much as US$10 billion of GDP was added, with GDP growing by 60 percent in real terms. The growth rate averaged about 5 percent per year, and with the reduction in the population growth rate, this translated into average GDP growth of 3 percent per capita (Temple, 2002). Again, poverty declined by an average of 1.1 percentage points a year between 1991-92 and 2000, while average per capita GDP grew by 3 percent a year. 2015 is the target year for the Millennium Development Goal for cutting the 1990 poverty rate in half. Various analyses suggest that if Bangladesh is to meet this target, it will need to raise its GDP growth rate to over 7 percent per annum on a sustained basis (Bangladesh Development Series, 1999). The broad objectives of the present study are – to find the determinants of GDP growth rate and

*Senior Lecture, Department of Business Administration, Metropolitan University, Bangladesh

to suggest policy to improve the growth performance of the country.

Human capital is one of the most effective means of reducing poverty and encouraging sustainable development. Yet, women in developing countries usually receive less education than men mainly for poverty. Gender inequality in education has a direct impact on economic growth through lowering the average quality of human capital. Using a panel regression methodology, it was found that human capital has a significant and positive impact on GDP, confirming the results of earlier studies. In addition, economic growth is indirectly affected through the impact of gender inequality on investment and population growth (Klasen, 1999, Andreosso-O'Callaghan 2002). Most economic models explaining growth rates use labour supply, physical capital investment, and increases in technology as explanatory variables. However, these models are not complete in predicting the actual growth rates of individual countries (Nicholas, 2002). Various obstacles were found such as conflict, corruption and high fiscal deficits in some countries of South Asia which has achieved impressive economic growth and poverty reduction in the past decade, mainly for economic reforms in the 1990s. If this growth accelerates to 10 percent a year, the region could see single-digit poverty rates by 2015 (Devarajan and Nabi, 2006; Vijayaraghavan and Ward, 2002, Lim, 2002). Productivity growth is the most important determinant of long-run potential output growth in Europe. Another determinant of growth, which can play an important role in fostering growth in Europe, is labour utilization, which is the hours, work per head of total population (Papademos, 2004). Bangladesh's economic growth rate will have to be raised by an average of at least two percent a year if the country is to achieve its poverty reduction objectives. If the pattern of growth can be made more pro-poor, Bangladesh will get a greater poverty reduction impact from the growth that it achieves (Temple 2002). A strong domestic sector with more jobs and a larger market and an improved overall investment environment will provide a more stable source of income and will sustain Bangladesh's economic growth (Mahmud, 2003). Patterns of growth, especially in terms of developments in employment and labour markets that take place as a result of growth, play an important role in producing varying results regarding poverty reduction and growth (Islam, 2004). Information on the dynamics of major macroeconomic variables during July-December 2005 were analysed to trace and track the movements of key macro economic performance indicators. The report makes a number of suggestions to address the policy challenges emanating from rising inflation, high interest rate, dwindling reserves and deteriorating balance of payment (Bhattacharya, 2006).

Methodology

To collect data on the determinants of growth rate of Bangladesh, the growth-influencing factors are identified from reviewing literature, based on the past performance and changes in the global economy. Various websites, articles, working papers and related journals are used for collecting data. Papers of the CPD, IMF, World Bank, ADB, BBS, Bangladesh Economic Review and other available related sources and literature are reviewed and followed in this study. The collected data are analysed and condensed systematically by using various statistical and economic tools. Simple statistical techniques and multivariate analysis is discussed to arrange

the quantitative data. The qualitative factors influencing growth has also been discussed to identify the problems and prospects of growth situation. In this study, the aim is to assess the impact on economic growth of Bangladesh. First, real GDP per capita in current prices and in national currency and then, log of GDP growth rate (%) is taken as dependent variables. To know the effect of other quantitative determinants on the growth rate, the following regressions are run:

$$GDP\_C = X_1 + X_2 \text{ I-GDP} + X_3 \text{ I-CPI} + X_4 \text{B-D GDP} \qquad \text{(i)}$$

$$Log\_GDP = X_5 + X_6 \text{ I-GDP} + X_7 \text{ I-CPI} + X_8 \text{B-D GDP} \qquad \text{(ii)}$$

Here, the independent variables are:
I-GDP= Investment (% of GDP)
I-CPI= Inflation, consumer prices (annual %)
B-D GDP= Budget deficit (% of GDP)
Then, individual regressions are run to observe the impact more clearly:

$$Log\_GDP = X_9 + X_{10}\text{I-GDP} \qquad \text{(iii)}$$
$$Log\_GDP = X_{11} + X_{12}\text{I-CPI} \qquad \text{(iv)}$$
$$Log\_GDP = X_{13} + X_{14}\text{IB-D GDP} \qquad \text{(v)}$$
$$GGDP\_C = X_{15} + X_{16}\text{I-GDP} \qquad \text{(vi)}$$
$$GGDP\_C = X_{17} + X_{18}\text{I-CPI} \qquad \text{(vii)}$$
$$GGDP\_C = X_{19} + X_{20}\text{B-D GDP} \qquad \text{(viii)}$$

Discussion and Findings

During the nineties, the country has completed a major stabilization program which has reduced inflation as well as fiscal and current account deficits and established a healthy foreign exchange reserve position with low and sustainable debt-service liabilities. In the second half of the 1990s annual economic growth level was maintained at an average of 5.1% (below the originally targeted 7%), and inflation at a single-digit rate. Per capita income levels still remain distressingly low at around US$1 per day (ADB, 2005). According to a World Bank estimate, Bangladesh has the 47th largest economy in the world in terms of GNP based on the purchasing power parity method of valuation, and the 55th largest in terms of nominal GNP in U.S. Dollars (BILS, 2003). Bangladesh ranked as the 47th largest economy in the world in 2010, among the Next Eleven or N-11 of Goldman Sachs and D-8 economies, with a gross domestic product of US$269.3 billion (IMF, 2010).

Major Sectors Influencing Growth in Bangladesh Economy
Agriculture

Bangladesh is an agricultural country. The total cultivable area is around 24 million acres and there are a little more than 14.5 million cultivators. Around 21% of GDP comes from the Agriculture Sector (BBS, 2009). Narrow crop base, traditional technology, low productivity, low land-labour ratio, inequitable distribution of income and mass poverty are the characteristics of her agriculture. Jute, Tea, frozen shrimp, fish, leather goods and handicrafts are also major exportable commodities. Agriculture, to a large degree based on subsistence farming, is still the most

important sector with a share in the GDP of 20.60% and around 63% of the total labour force (BBS 2009).

Industry

The relatively small manufacturing industries are largely tied up to the processing of domestic raw materials and are dependent on imported raw materials and intermediate goods. The small and cottage industries are also characterized by traditional technology, low labour productivity and work-sharing practices among family members. In the first 4 months of FY2006, output of medium and large scale manufacturing expanded by a strong 13.3% while the output of small scale manufacturing during the first quarter of FY2006 increased by 9.5% over the same periods of the preceding year (BBS, 2006). Gas and electricity production also showed steady uptrend. The number of garment industry has grown from about 300 in 1978 to 4000 in 2008. The garments industry now employs 2 million people, 80% of them are women. Though the spectacular growth, the garment industry today is Bangladesh's top earner that covers 76% of total exports. Export earnings rose from $31 million in 1983 to $6.40 billion in 2008 (Finance Ministry, Bangladesh, 2005, The Financial Express January, 2008). Bangladesh has wide coastlines offering opportunity for rapid development and contribution to international shipbuilding industry. If Bangladesh can secure at least 4% of the surplus order by 2015, she can have yearly turnover of $2 billion which is 2-3% increase in her national GDP (Asia-Pacific Weeks, 2009).

Services

The service sector accounts for more than 50 per cent of GDP which is the combination of petty services, retail trading, personal, social and community services and several informal, activities. Such services have grown both in urban as well as in rural areas. Rapid growth in cell phone usage, the emergence of new private TV channel networks and expanding health care services will also contribute to the strong growth in services sector. The trend of structural transformation has been continuing. The positive trend of structural transformation of broad sectoral share in GDP has been shown in the table -1 and figure 1 and 2.

Table 1 Trend of structural transformation of broad sectoral share in GDP and growth rate at constant prices (Base year: 1995-96)

Share (in %)									
Sector	79-80	84-85	89-90	94-95	99-00	04-05	05-06	07-08	08-09
Agriculture	33.21	31.46	29.52	26.02	25.58	21.91	21.8	20.83	20.60
Industry	17.08	18.70	20.78	24.28	25.70	28.44	29.03	29.70	29.73
Service	49.72	49.84	49.70	48.70	48.72	49.65	49.14	49.47	49.67
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

174

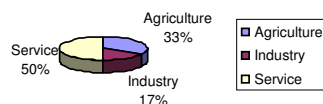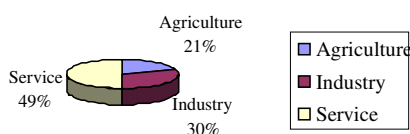Figure 1: Contribution of Broad Sectors in
GDP of

Figure 2: Contribution of Broad Sectors in
GDP of 2008-09

Though there is a trend of transformation of the share of agriculture and industry sector, at the same time the share of service sector remained stagnant for several years except minor variation year to year. So, the structural transformation of GDP of Bangladesh reflects the positive trend of industrialization.

Influencing Factors of Economic Growth

In the past decade, Bangladesh enjoyed a positive growth rate in GDP and other macro economic indicators. GDP growth is estimated at 6% in FY2010, which was 5.88% in the preceding year shown in table-2 and reflecting a steady increase in domestic and external demand. Growth in FY2006 will be underpinned by steady expansion in industry and services, aided by a strong recovery in agriculture. The table (2) also shows that, inflation never exceeded double digits except during 1984 and 1985. But the trends in budget deficit seem to have been substantially higher during the 1990s which may affect the containment of the price stability. The figure 3 shows GDP growth rate has been moderate. After a slight decline in during the early 1990s, the growth rate has mildly risen thereafter. The significant observation with respect to the economic performance of Bangladesh is the relatively fast growth in per capita GDP shown in the figure. Relative to overall GDP growth, per capita GDP has grown faster. The population growth, often neglected in growth analysis may have played a significant role. The population growth is declining from around 2.30 in 1980s to around1.40 in 2000s. There are several externalities of such a demographic transition. One dimension has been that while overall GDP growth has

175

been modest, the per capita GDP growth rate has risen from 0.88 per cent in 1982s to nearly 4 per cent during 2000s and exceeded 5% after 2005(Table 2). To put a stable, liberalized macroeconomic environment with export-oriented growth, free from policy induced biases, various economic reforms were taken in the country specifically focused on lowering the inflation rates and on restraining fiscal and current account deficits.

Table 2 Growth and Stability

Years	GDP growth rate (%)	Inflation rate	Budget deficit	GDP per capita growth rate	Population growth rate(%)
1982	3.48	7.47	0.89	0.88	2.26
1983	4.68	7.67	2.26	2.03	2.27
1984	4.85	14.58	0.6	2.19	2.25
1985	3.93	11.07	-1.07	1.29	2.26
1986	4.34	9.81	-0.41	1.69	2.25
1987	4.18	9.87	-0.9	1.56	2.18
1988	2.89	7.41	-0.72	0.33	2.19
1989	2.52	6.05	-0.32	0.02	2.17
1990	6.63	6.13	-5.9	4.1	2.14
1991	3.34	6.36	-5.5	1.47	2.04
1992	5.04	3.63	-4.5	3.2	1.98
1993	4.57	3.01	-4.3	2.78	1.88
1994	4.08	5.31	-4.6	2.3	1.8
1995	4.93	8.52	-5.3	3.12	1.81
1996	4.62	4.06	-4.4	2.82	1.75
1997	5.39	5.21	-3.7	3.57	1.55
1998	5.23	8.29	-4.2	3.41	1.51
1999	4.87	6.23	-5.4	3.6	1.41
2000	5.94	2.38	-6.2	4.6	1.41
2001	5.3	1.94	-5	5.2	1.41
2002	4.4	2.79	-4.6	3.1	1.50
2003	5.3	4.38	-3.4	3.8	1.50
2004	6.3	5.83	-3.2	4.9	1.50
2005	5.6	6.5	-3.5	4.2	1.49
2006	6.63	7.5	-3.3	4.6	1.49
2007	6.43	7.22	-3.2	5.33	1.47
2008	6.19	9.93	-5.4	5.24	1.45
2009	5.88	6.66	-3.3	5.07	1.45

Source: World Development Indicators (WDI) CD-ROM 2002,
World Bank, (2002) and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

Figure 2: Real and Per Capita GDP Growth Rate
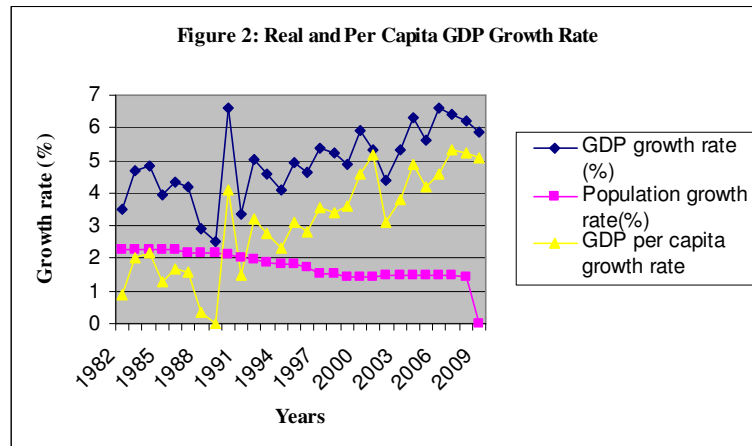
Regression Analysis

GDP growth rate and per capita GDP are influenced by investment ratio because of output growth. So, it may be a determinant of growth prospects in Bangladesh. Growth is also influenced by inflation and budget deficit as these are the major macroeconomic variables.

Table 3 OLS Estimators for GDP_C and Log_GD Determination (Period, 1982-2006)

Independent variables	Dependent variable, Real per capita GDP (GDP_C)	Dependent variable Real GDP growth (of logarithms)(Log_GDP)
Constant	-12160.161*** (2.450)	0.337 (-2.903)
I-GDP	1302.586*** (1.916)	1.133E-02 (7.226)
I-CPI	171.353 (1.333)	1.134E-02 (0.661)
B-D GDP	-14.277 (-1.315)	-1.404E-02 (-0.044)
No. of observations	25	25
R2	0.837	0.353
Adjusted R2	0.812	0.256
F	34.212	3.641

*Coefficients are statistically significant at 5% level, ** at 1% level and *** at 0% level. 't' ratios are in the parentheses.

Here, I-GDP = Investment (% of GDP)   B-D GDP = Budget deficit (% of GDP)
I-CPI = Inflation, consumer prices
 (annual %)

177

Linear form may be assumed among these variables and for easier application Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method can be applied to analyze the influencing factors of economic growth in Bangladesh. The dependent variable GDP per capita (GDP_C) is defined by adjusting population and Log_GDP is the logarithmic form of real GDP growth rate. First, the impact of investment, inflation and budget deficit is estimated together in a regression equation for each of the dependent variables. The regression results presented in the table 3, where real GDP growth (of logarithms) (Log_GDP) is dependent variable; the model is called the Log-Lin model or semi-log model because the regressand here appears in the logarithmic form. The slope coefficient measures the constant proportional or relative change in the dependent variable for a given absolute change in the value of regressors (here, I-GDP, I-CPI and B-D GDP). In the above regression, in case of GDP_C, the model is well explained by the explanatory variables. The R^2 is 0.837 and adjusted R^2 is 0.812. The constant term and the investment coefficients are highly significant and the coefficient of B-D GDP is negatively related to the dependent variable. On the other hand, no explanatory variables are significant to Log_GDP. Both the explanatory power, as well as the statistical significance of each of these individual variables, is extremely low in Log_GDP. The R^2 values are found to be staying at a lower level because of the omission of some relevant determinants like unemployment, balance of payment, exchange rate etc. The continuous data of unemployment is not calculated and not found. The F ratio always shows that the included determinants are significant.

To assess the cause-effects of the macro fundamentals on growth, the following regressions are estimated (Table 4). Both GDP growth rate in logarithmic form as well as per capita GDP is taken as dependent variables, while the same set (as table 3) of independent variables are taken in separate regressions. What is remarkably observed from both of the tables is that, GDP growth is strongly related to investment-GDP ratio with a high R^2 and highly significant constant terms. Budget deficit and inflation coefficients are negatively related to GDP growth though not significantly in all cases. The analysis thus suggests that inflation and budget deficit seemed to have a negative relation to real GDP growth rate and

Table 4 OLS Estimators for EPW Determination for GDP_C and Log_GDP Determination by Individual Regression (Period, 1982-2006)

Independent variables	Dependent variable, Real GDP growth (of logarithms) (Log_GDP)			Dependent variable, Real per capita GDP (GDP_C)		
Constant	0.435[***] (5.884)	0.706[***] (13.726)	0.600 (19.803)	-11135.01[***] (-4.598)	20221.92[***] (6.654)	8189.21[***] (4.912)
I-GDP	1.247E-02[***] (3.227)			1323.73[***] (10.449)		
I-CPI		-6.218E-03 (-0.856)			-1045.72[*] (-2.439)	

178

B-D GDP			-1.961E-02* (-2.509)			-1517.12*** (-3.527)
Observation	25	25	25	25	25	25
R2	0.312	0.031	0.222	0.826	0.205	0.361
Adj R2	0.282	-0.011	0.187	0.818	0.171	0.332
F	10.411	0.733	6.294	109.188	5.948	12.442

* Coefficients are statistically significant at 5% level, ** at 1% level and *** at 0% level. 't' ratios are in the parentheses

GDP per capita growth rate whereas GDP growth is significantly and positively related to investment (% of GDP). Besides the variables, there are also some quantitative and qualitative factors those affect the growth prospects of Bangladesh.

Inflation and Exchange Rates

Inflation is on an upward trend which has been caused by the depreciation of the domestic currency (Taka), an increase in food prices, public utilities, rise in international commodity prices and an increase in the domestic administered price of oil. So, the reason for such inflation is "cost push" rather than "demand pull". Taka continues to depreciate due to rising demands for foreign exchange to pay for oil and other essential imports. Bangladesh should carefully analyze the trade off between growth and inflation, and the government should strive to keep the inflation at low levels to achieve stability. Over a period of more than a decade Bangladesh pursued a flexible exchange rate policy. Introducing the free floating exchange rate did not bring any significant instability in the economy so far. Rapid development of private sector with concomitant increased credit flow; much higher growth in import of capital machinery and primary goods due to devastating flood and oil price hike in international market were mainly responsible for the main reason of the adverse situation of exchange rate. Due to continued monitor and supervision by the central bank, the exchange rate remained quite stable.

Table 5 Average rates of Foreign Exchange with US Dollar.

FY	Ex. rate
1980-81	16.259
1981-82	20.065
1982-83	23.795
1983-84	24.944
1984-85	25.963
1985-86	29.886
1986-87	30.629
1987-88	31.242
1988-89	32.140
1989-90	32.921
1990-91	35.675
1991-92	38.145
1992-93	39.140
1993-94	40.001
1994-95	40.205
1995-96	40.837
1996-97	42.701
1997-98	45.456
1998-99	48.064
1999-00	50.311
2000-01	53.959
2001-02	57.435
2002-03	57.900
2003-04	58.935
2004-05	61.394
2005-06	67.07
2006-07	69.03
2007-08	68.60
2008-09	68.80

Source: Statistics department, Bangladesh Bank.

Population growth and problems

According to the census 2001, density of population per square kilometer is 839, and the number is 901 by the 'Vital Registration Survey, 2002'. The growth rate of population is 1.45 percent in 2009 compared to 2.06 percent back in 1991(Table 2).

179

Though the growth rate is relatively on the declining trend but total population is continuously increasing. It has produced enormous pressure on this small size of landscape. The most serious implication of population growth will be observed in the social sector. For instance, in 1995 teacher-student ratio was nearly 1:70. The government is committed to ensure universal primary education and improve teacher-student ratio to 1:50, it will require almost double the present level of resources to provide more teachers, class room facilities, equipment and institutions. In the health sector a serious demand for services exists for doctors, nurses, medicine, hospital care, and so on. At present, doctor - population ratio is 1:5506; hospital bed-population ratio is 1:3231 and per capita health expenditure is Tk.135 per annum. Increase in population will adversely affect both GDP and GNP growth per capita. Due to population growth momentum, number of working age population (15-59 years) is increasing rapidly (BBS 2003); Hence, the economy will have to create more job opportunities to employ its working age population to generate income. Population increase will have an obvious adverse impact on per capita food production and food availability for the growing population.

Investment Ratio as a Percentage of GDP

Due to the creation of investment friendly environment generated through appropriate measures including the reduction of investment expenditure local and foreign investments have been rising and private sector investment is gradually increasing. The share of public sector in total investment is gradually decreasing and the contribution of private sector investment is increasing day by day (figure 4) during 1982 to 2009(Source: Ministry of Finance). Telecommunication is a promising sector and a key source of rising country's investment over the last decade. The role of investment in public goods such as transport, infrastructure and basic health in bringing growth to rural areas is important for the country's development. Besides, the government offers a variety of incentives for attracting foreign investments which include provision for setting up Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in the private sector, establishment of new EPZs, expansion of Dhaka EPZ, various facilities like tax holiday, rationalization of tariff structure, scope for 100% foreign equity and repatriation of profits etc.

Figure 4: Investment as percentage of GDP
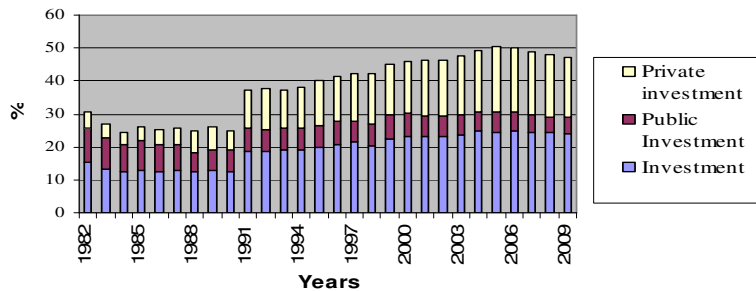
Domestic and National Savings

In fiscal year 1993-94, the domestic and national savings as percentage of GDP were 13.1 and 18.79 percent respectively and gradually increased to 20.16 and 26.49 percent respectively in fiscal year 2004-05 and goes up to 28.8 in 2010 (Finance ministry, Bangladesh). From the example of East Asian high performing economies, it is found that they had to rise the domestic saving dramatically to attain rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s and have sustained them through the 1990s. On the whole, the gross domestic savings of these countries remained close to 30 percent of GDP (World Bank, 1997). Bangladesh needs to mobilize saving to reach the goal of 25-30 percent savings ratio within the next decade or two. GDP growth rate may help to accelerate the savings rate by enabling households to acquire additional resources faster than additional consumption. Predictable real interest rate and taxation policy may also be successful to mobilize public savings.

Corruption and Political Instability

Corruption keeps Bangladesh from taking the next step when other countries in similar positions have been able to do so. Corruption, especially of large business owners and the government, is hampering the nation's efforts both at economic growth and at functional democracy. Absence of good governance encourages corruption, yet political and administrative corruption spreads on a massive scale if the administrative systems are not properly developed. Nepotism is the granting of public office on the basis of family ties is also identified as a type of corruption. Corruption exists in high magnitude in various sectors like - Food for Education Program, Education sector, Health sector etc. Lack of accountability, discretionary power, lack of transparency, monopoly power, influence of powerful people and the menace of red tape etc. are the principal causes of corruption. Political instability and failure to establish a stable democratic political system is one of the major obstacles in achieving targeted growth rate. Electricity blackouts are running at record levels. Diesel prices are rising. Gasoline pumps are struggling to cope with demand. A report of the World Bank predicts that increasing political instability and flooding could slow down Bangladesh's GDP growth this year.

181

Labour Force Employment, Labour Productivity growth and Labour Utilization

According to Bangladesh Labour Force Survey 2002-03 conducted by BBS, a

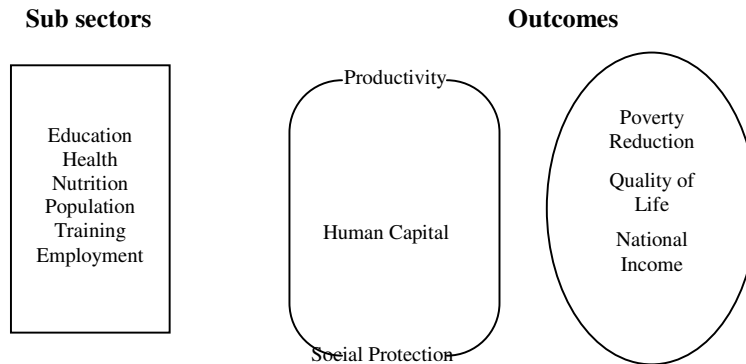**The Virtuous Circle of Human Development and Growth**

labour force (above 15 years) of 4.43 crore (male 3.45 crore and female 0.98 crore) is engaged in a variety of professions, the highest (51.69%) still being in agriculture. Inequality is a serious problem for the country which tends to persist over time. About half of the population lives on less than one dollar a day. Persisting gap between the required and the actual rates of employment creation is a vital problem in a labor-surplus economy like Bangladesh. The direct employment creation through public works and other labor-based infrastructure development programs are pro-poor and provide rural growth. In case of labour productivity innovation, education, and technological diffusion have an important role to play. Labour utilization can be expressed in terms of different components like, hours worked per person employed, the share of employment in the labour force, the labour force participation rate (that is, the labour force as a share of the working age population), the share of the working age population in the total population etc. The share of employment in the labour force is related to the unemployment rate of a country.

Figure 5 Share of Employed Labour Force
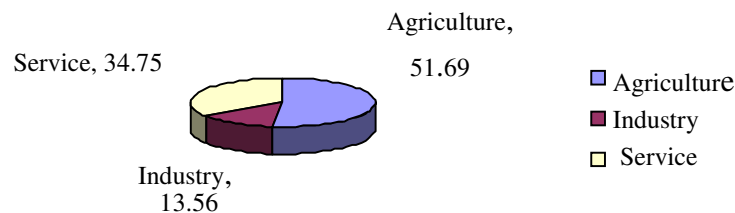
By Broad Sector in Bangladesh, LFS, 2002-03

Figure 6 Relations Between Human Development and Growth.

Sub sectors   **Outcomes**

Productivity

| Education |
| Health |
| Nutrition |
| Population |
| Training |
| Employment |

Human Capital

Poverty Reduction

Quality of Life

National Income

Social Protection

Source: Bangladesh Development Series, 1999.

Bangladesh's performance has been unsatisfactory in human development activities. Without substantially greater and more effective investments in raising the nation's level of human development, the vicious circle of widespread poverty, excessive population growth, illiteracy, poor health and discrimination against women will become a social maelstrom.

Unemployment

The impact of unemployment on growth structure is alarming. The unemployment situation in Bangladesh is in deplorable state. 38 per cent of the 68.3 million strong labour forces in the country are either unemployed or underemployed (The New Nation, 2006). Unemployed persons are like parasites for their families and society. They do not engage in economic activities and do not make a contribution to its growth. So, they are the burden of an economy. The labour force in Bangladesh grew faster than the population and almost doubled between the year of independence and mid 1990s (Fifth Five Year Plan 97 – 02). A large-scale disguised unemployment exists in agriculture, large industries, offices and organizations, particularly in the public sector. Involuntary unemployment is predominant in Bangladesh. The main causes are - seasonal variations, industrial and technological change, labour market imbalance, business cycles, lack of resources etc.

Some Policy Choices in Achieving Economic Growth

To face the emerging challenges, Bangladesh should broaden tax base and tap non-tax sources. To meet the challenges in the area of revenue expenditure she should freeze it in real terms, take no expenditure-enhancing populist decision, reduce government borrowing and constitute a public expenditure review committee. To overcome unemployment problems, government should create more job opportunities and should take initiative to run industries. Within the policy of

183

privatization, the government may take different steps towards creating jobs. To meet the challenges in the area of BOP, the GOB may design a short term management of external payments; enhance export and monitor import; take the benefit of foreign aid; encourage FDI and take fruitful steps to increase the flow of worker's remittances to the country. Higher incentives and a sound banking system are important for increasing the inward flow of remittance from abroad. To meet the challenges of Fiscal Deficit, Bangladesh needs to keep public expenditure growth rate lower than the revenue receipt growth rate. There may be a fiscal deficit target which would be valid for a certain period. The system loss in the power system is mainly due to massive theft. Achieving Bangladesh's economic potential will not be possible without a substantial improvement in how the nation is governed. Macroeconomic uncertainty clouds the investment horizon. To attract investment, the government should readjust the rate of interest and should create political atmosphere that will be favourable for domestic as well as foreign investment. In addition to macroeconomic stability, the investment climate includes factors such as adequate infrastructure, a sound financial system, a trade protection regime that encourages efficiency and export competitiveness, an effective regulatory framework, an environment free of bureaucratic harassment and corruption, and the rule of law. The quality of infrastructure is critical for competitiveness and productivity growth. Bangladesh needs to look beyond the RMG sector to diversify exports and create new growth vent. In Bangladesh, the considerable export potential in frozen food, pharmaceutical and ceramics needs to be exploited. Substantial growth impetus will also come from developing new urban areas for economic activity to overcome the growth retarding congestion of Dhaka. Deepening human capital, improving the quality of labour and increasing productivity growth is necessary. Literacy, years of education, increasing gender-neutral enrolment in and completion of primary schooling is a welcome development. Long-term plans should be lunched for reducing inequality. Improved delivery of public services (health, education, water, sanitation) will help moderate the impact of personal and regional inequality on growth and will contribute to the sustainability of economic growth. Proper dredging system, embankments etc. should be arranged properly for ensuring economic growth via rising farm productivity. Good governance to diminish terrorism and local government oriented development policy is an urgent requirement for the country. Government's investment in skills training makes sense. Besides, the government should persuade financial institutions to extend loans on easy terms and conditions to overseas job seekers which they would be able to pay back after taking up employment abroad.

Conclusion

Bangladesh has recently achieved success in a significant growth rate of GDP. But, the problem also remains in the sectoral shares of GDP growth rate. The growth of the manufacturing sector is not satisfactory. If the government is not successful in creating a favourable investment climate and investment does not match the savings rate, then the ability to achieve the targeted level of GDP growth will remain in doubt. The generation of more rural off-farm economic activities, whether aimed at domestic or foreign markets must also be a part of growth strategy. According to

World Bank '02, to achieve a substantial reduction in unemployment & underemployment, Bangladesh needs to create over 50 million jobs in the next 25 years. Relatively high rates of inflation combined with high levels of unemployment may lower real wages. Investment climate issues, export competitiveness, the post MFA situation, infrastructure, financial sector, trade, governance, and tax administration and strategy for long-term growth and employment issues should be focused for achieving growth target. The huge population has to be converted into resource and valuable natural resources should be extracted and utilized wisely. While the challenges are enormous, the dynamism and potentiality that characterize Bangladesh today make the optimistic view that Bangladesh will achieve sustainable economic growth as well as be substantially free of poverty in near future. Since the world economy is under rapid changes, Bangladesh faces both risks and opportunities. Unless far-sighted strategies are adopted, sustainable economic growth with desired target rate is not possible.

Works Cited

Andreosso-O'Callaghan Bernadette (2002) *Human Capital Accumulation and Economic Growth in Asia,* Asia-Pacific Studies in Australia and Europe: A Research Agenda for the Future, National Europe Centre Paper No. 30*, Australian National University, 5-6 July.

Asia-Pacific Weeks Berlin (2009) Shipbuilding as a Boosting Industrial Sector in Bangladesh, 11 February.

BBS (2003, '06,'09) Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Yearly book of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Development Series (1999) *Bangladesh 2020, A Long-run Perspective Study*, The World Bank and Bangladesh Center for Advanced Studies.

Bangladesh Economic Review (2005) Economic Advisor's Wing, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, June.

Bhattacharya Debapriya (2006) *State of the Bangladesh Economy in FY06 - Early Signals and Immediate Outlook,* Centre for Policy Dialogue, Paper 55, January.

BILS (2003) Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies, *Overview of current economic conditions in Bangladesh*, A biannual report on the economic conditions of Bangladesh, January-June, 2003.

Frederick T. Temple (2002) *Growth and Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh*, World Bank Country Director Bangladesh, Lecture at National Defense College, May 27.

IMF (2010) International Monetary Fund- an International organization, Data and Statistics.

Islam Rizwanul (2004) *The Nexus of Economic Growth, Employment and Poverty Reduction: An Empirical Analysis Issues in Employment and Poverty*, Discussion Paper, 14, Recovery and Reconstruction Department, International Labour Office, Geneva, January.

Klasen Stephan (1999) *Does Gender Inequality Reduce Growth and Development?*

Evidence from Cross-Country Regressions, Policy Research Report On Gender And Development, Working Paper Series, No. 7, November, The World Bank.

Linda Lim (1998). Corruption, Southeast Asia Style: Its Puzzling Connections with Economic Growth and Democracy Gender, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, October 25.

Lucas Papademos (2004) Determinants of growth and the role of structural reforms and macroeconomic policies in Europe, The Ludwig Erhard Lecture on the State of the European Economy at the Lisbon Council's Board of Economists Brussels, 9 December.

Maya Vijayaraghavan and William A.Ward (2002) Institutions and Economic Growth: Empirical Evidence from a Cross-National Analysis, Clemson University.

Nichols (2002) Comparative Economic Growth: Relating non-traditional economic variables to growth rate. Introduction to Econometrics.

The Financial Express (2008), an Independent Daily Newspaper of Bangladesh, Addressing Is RMG Sector Under Threat? Thursday, 17 January.

The New Nation (2006), an independent news source of Bangladesh, Addressing Unemployment, Thu, 22 June.

Wahiduddin Mahmud (2003), Bangladesh Faces the Challenge of Globalization Reliance on exports and remittances exposes vulnerability, Yale Global, 22 October.

World Bank (2002): World Development Indicators, CD-Rom. World Bank, Washington,

D.C.World Bank (1997): World Development Report 1997: *The State in a Changing World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

www.adb.org.

Right to Adequate Housing of the Slum Dwellers in Chittagong: A Paradox between Dream and Reality

M. Jashim Ali Chowdhury*
Muntasir Ahmed**

Abstract

Housing as a right has already passed the test of opinio juris, the ambition of the new century being this right to be seen fully implemented in practice. Housing is both a human right and a vital means of promoting peace and respect for human rights – 'Home of human rights' in fact. This two track importance make the right to housing something more than a 'mere right'. In spite of its recognition in 'Fundamental Principle of State Policy', many a people are now inclined to call it the 'Fundamental Right' to Housing. This paper aims to provide some reflections on the glaring reality prevailing in Bangladesh in this regard. Extensive field work in Chittagong Metropolitan Area as well as academic inroad into the existing literature on housing rights finds out that the dream of 'Housing for All' is not so lofty a dream as it is usually professed in the policy making level. Recommendations follow the arguments addressing the issue on short, mid and long-term basis.

1. Introduction

From human rights perspective housing right is an essential fundamental right because insecure and inadequate shelter threatens human dignity itself. The right to human dignity, in its essential structure, constitutes a bundle of rights. These rights encompass the human right to living conditions that enable existence in which a person can exercise his or her liberty as a human being.

In Bangladesh we have got a significant environment covering both hopes and depressions in this respect. Bangladesh is a low-income (per capita GDP around US$ 500) and mainly agrarian country. Nearly 80% people live in the rural areas. An overwhelming percent of the population (around 65-70%) live in abject poverty. Agricultural Landlessness is high. Around 55 to 65% of the rural household are functionally landless owning less than 0.50 acre of land. The income distribution is unequal—the top 5% own 46% of the total income and the lowest 5% owns only 7% of the total income (Alam Mahbubul, 136). The rich and middle class society in Bangladesh somehow manages the necessities of habitation but the life style of the average people is miserable. The slum dwellers are the most unfortunate part of the citizens of Bangladesh. There are about 500 slums in 30 cities all over Bangladesh. Inhabitants of the slum are the misfortunes of the society - homeless and provision less, may be due to river erosion, flood, draught, natural calamity etc. They became floating rural population having no profession, no provision for food, shelter and being poverty stricken, migrated to the urban area in quest of those necessities for their living on the earth for breathing its fresh air (Billah and Sarker, 80).

People experiencing homelessness are subject or susceptible to a range of person,

---

*Lecturer, Department of Law, University of Chittagong, Bangladesh

** Senior Judicial Magistrate, Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Chittagong, Bangladesh

the right to privacy, the right to vote, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to education, and perhaps most importantly, their right to life (McRae and Nicholson, 3). Again it is the poor, those living in shanty dwellings and squatter settlements who contribute to the national economy in general and to the urban economy in particular. They provide cheap transport, fruits, vegetables and construction labour. The two million or so garment factory workers, most of who live in squatter and slum settlements, bring in millions of much needed foreign exchange.

Above this foggy reality we have so many sunny promises. Bangladesh had its birth through 'a glorious struggle for national independence aimed at economic and social justice'. The Preamble of the Bangladesh Constitution pledges to 'realize a socialist society free from exploitation and ensuring justice political, economic and social for all citizens.' But Bangladesh walked through the traditional way of compartmentalization of Civil Political and Economic Social rights (ESC rights hereinafter). The dichotomy between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural right has been maintained by making the former enforceable by court and the latter non-enforceable. Part III of the Constitution embodies the Fundamental Rights giving the citizens a right to move the High Court Division to redress any infringement of those rights. Part II of the Constitution enumerates the Fundamental Principles of State Policy, which mainly deals with ESC rights. These are constitutional mandate which oblige the State to implement these mandates (Hossain, Sara and Ors, 45).

This glittering distinction between the promise and reality instigated us to undertake a field study on the distressed slum dwellers of Chittagong. How lofty is the dream of a house for these ill-fated people? Our efforts will circle round this question. This paper is the result of qualitative research conducted from August to October 2009 and is based on primary and secondary data collection. Literature has been identified through 'snowballing' techniques (following one link that leads to another) and use of the internet as much as through systematic searches of databases. In addition a qualitative case-study approach is used in this research. Both primary and secondary sources are used to address the issues outlined above. Fieldwork was carried out for one week in Chittagong in September 2009. Twenty five to thirty people were interviewed in each of the four slums. Because of the nature of the research questions, the analysis is primarily qualitative and it tells a story from an informed perspective.

2. The Concept of Adequate Housing

Adequate housing encompasses more than just the four walls of a room and a roof over one's head. Housing is essential for normal healthy living. It fulfils deep seated psychological needs for privacy and personal space, physical needs for security and protection from inclement weather, and social needs for basic gathering points where important relationship are forged and nurtured (Morka Felix, 1). In international agreements on human rights and fundamental rights, the right to housing is seen in wider perspective: as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity. Adequate housing is defined in the Global Strategy to Shelter for the year 2000

(G.A. res. 48/178) as meaning 'adequate privacy, adequate space, adequate security, adequate lighting and ventilation with basic infrastructures and suitable location with regard to work and basic facilities-all at a reasonable and affordable cost.' This entails that the right to housing must be secured for everyone, regardless of financial resources, property, gender, ethnicity, or national or social origin (Fredriksson and Pätäri, 45-48).

3. The legal status of housing rights

Although still relatively unknown to most people in developing countries, many conventions, covenants, charters, declarations, resolutions and judicial decisions comprising the normative foundations of human rights law contain abundant sources of the right to adequate housing.

With the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) 1948, the right to adequate housing has emerged as an issue of universal concern. Many international legal experts now believe the UDHR to be part of customary international law, and thus despite of its being a declaration; it is binding on all countries. The Declaration in Article 25 affirms in clear terms that 'every one has a right to a standard living, adequate for the health and well being of himself and his family including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social service and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.'

The International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is ratified by more than 108 states. This text contains perhaps the most significant foundation of the right to housing. Article 2 of the covenant declares that the state parties to the Covenant have recognized the rights of everyone to an adequate standard of living and to the continuous improvement of living condition. The state parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right.

The United Nations Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has elaborated on the rights contained in the International Covenant in documents known as General Comments. In general, the content of the general comments reflects a movement toward an interpretation of the right to housing with a broader and deeper reach (General Comments 4, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 15). Article 14 (2) (h) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979 (CEDAW) obligates the State parties to ensure for women adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications. Apart from these there is a wide range of international conventions, resolutions, regional instruments and domestic constitutions that enshrine the right to adequate housing.

Additional housing rights norms 'equality of treatment as regards housing for refugees' and 'the rights of migrant workers to equality of treatment in relation to access to housing, including social housing schemes and protection against exploitation in respect of rents' are protected by international conventions like *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) (Article 21, Article 43) and *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and*

189

Members of Their Families (GA Res 45/158, Annex, 45 UNGAOR Suppl No. 49A) etc.

Several articles of the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994) as agreed upon by members of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, at its Eleventh Session, 30 July 1993 directly enshrine housing rights concerns. (Articles 22, 23 and 31)

Article 14 (2) (h) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979 (CEDAW) states:
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women …shall ensure to such women the right … (h) to enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

Apart from these there is a wide range of international conventions, resolutions, regional instruments and domestic constitutions that enshrine the right to adequate housing. The work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing also provides a useful resource.

This concise survey of the legal foundations of housing rights within international, regional and domestic legal systems plainly reveals the widespread global support for this right. Though few rights are infringed as frequently or to the degree as housing rights experience, the principle that such a legally binding right exists is an indisputable fact.

3.1. Status of Housing Rights in Bangladesh

The status of right to housing in Bangladesh may be traced out from her international treaty obligation, constitutional provisions and judicial decisions. As a party to ICCPR, ICESCR and CEDAW the principle of *pacta sunt servanda* imposes a legal obligation on Bangladesh to perform her treaty obligations in good faith. This means that Bangladesh must adjust her domestic legal structure to comply with the international standards to which she committed herself.

Unfortunately, the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the *surpema lex,* imposes a half hearted burden of protecting housing rights. Provision regarding Housing rights is placed in Article 15(a) under the Fundamental Principles of State Policy, which is not at least directly enforceable by court. But the due process mandate of the Constitution in Article 31 has a direct implication on the right to adequate housing. Any sort of misbehaviour, disdain, contempt, disrespect or ill treatment towards the homeless and any disregard of the public opinion is contrary to Article 21(2) of the Constitution which states that 'every person in the service of the Republic has a duty to strive at all times to serve the people.' Article 27 with its equality arms tends to protect the vulnerable groups by saying that 'all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of the law.' The National Housing Policy of 1993 has accepted the principle of 'No forced eviction'. Paragraphs 5.7.1 and 5.7.2 of the Policy promises in situ upgrading, slum renovation and progressive housing developments in lieu of forcible relocation or displacement of slum dwellers (COHRE and ACHR, 28 -29)

The Supreme Court also has played a vital role in protecting the rights of slum dwellers. In a number of precious decisions the High Court Division of the Supreme Court has now established that slum eviction cannot be carried out without prior written notice as mandatory requirement by the law. It was done according to Section 5 of the Governments Land and Buildings (Recovery of Position) Ordinance, 1970. In the *Modhumala* v. *Housing and Building Research Institute* the High Court Division defended the right of the slum dwellers to a livelihood through lawful professions. The Court agreed to the concerns of the slum dwellers that if they lose their address they will lose their job or shelter, that means they will lose their source of earning and that affects their right to life guaranteed by Article 32 of the Constitution (Para 12). The court made it profusely clear that if people need to be moved it had to be done in phases according to the financial means of government so as to provide rehabilitation schemes for the dwellers (Para 14). In *Ain O Shalish Kendra and others* v. *Government of Bangladesh* the High Court Division emphasized on the social justice mandate of the liberation war to press the dreams of the millions of *Bangalis* that social Justice shall be established and the people shall be provided with the bare minimum necessities of life. In *Kalam and others v Bangladesh and others* the court considered the slum more to be a place of earning livelihood than to be a place of living. In *Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) v Government of Bangladesh* the means of earning livelihood was extended even to the profession of sex workers. The attempts of High Court sometimes go in vain, but usually it shakes the authority to stop the illegal eviction.

4. The Paradox between Dream and Reality: A Survey over Slum Dwellers of Chittagong

Chittagong, with an area of 5282.98 sq km, is surrounded by *Feni* and *Tripura* (Indian state) on the north, *Cox's Bazar* district on the south, *Bandarban*, *Rangamati* and *Khagrachari* districts on the east and *Noakali* district and the Bay of Bengal on the west. Chittagong is quite different from other districts for its unique natural beauty characterized by hills, rivers, sea, forests and valleys. Chittagong is the second largest city and major Port city of Bangladesh and also a Healthy City under the direct auspices of World Health Organisation. The Chittagong Metropolitan Area consists of twelve thanas, 68 wards and 236 mahallas (local unit). It has an area of 209.66 sq km. The town has a population of 3202710 with 54.36% male and 45.64% female having the population density of 15276 per sq km. Chittagong is basically commerce oriented while the rest of the Country is mainly agro-based. Commerce and service sector contribute upto 52% of Chittagong economy. Wage labourer and agricultural labourer account for another 16%. Among the peasants 25% are landless, 27% small land owners, 15% intermediate, 3% rich and 30% marginal (BPS, 2000). Surprisingly our study reveals that there are almost no *Chittagonian* living in slums. Slum dwelling people have migrated from other parts of the country mainly North Bengal. Our field study covered five slums. These include – Cosmopolitan, Nalapara, Dewan Hat and Amin Jute Mills. While meeting people we emphasised on receiving information about their living conditions, basic infrastructural facilities

available to them, income source, child's education, vaccination and health awareness, food intake, sanitation and social environment.

4.1 Cosmopolitan Slum

It is located in *Cosmopolitan Road* near *Nasirabad Boot Hill*, one of the posh residential areas in Chittagong as a living witness to the glaring disparity and social exclusion prevailing in Bangladesh. It is actually a privately settled colony. The basic necessaries of life are scarcely available here. The residents use water from road supply of WASA. Electricity is available but no gas facility. Sanitation is insufficient. Drainage is not good. Most importantly they are vulnerable to land slide from the Boot Hill. Very often there are incidents of land slides and loss of life and property. The August 2007 rainfall in Chittagong caused devastating landslide here. It took away around ten lives and injured many others. Dwellers are mainly CNG drivers and garments workers. Most of the houses are semi *pacca* (tin shed building). Room size is eight to ten square feet on average. On average four to five people live in a single room. Privacy and conjugal secrecy is something unknown. Health service, neither public nor NGO based. They didn't ever see a health worker coming to their *Bosti*. There is no graveyard within three miles of the slum. The dead body has to be buried at *Chatannogoli Kabarsthan*, which is four kilometres away from this area and which is a government owned graveyard and generally used to burry anonymous dead bodies. Though there are at least three Primary Schools, two High Schools and two Colleges which include *Omar Gani MES College* and *Nasirabad Women's College* those are meant only for the well-offs and not for them. Socio economic exclusion has made them mere silent spectators of other's progress and advancement. Most interestingly they are the neighbours of the renowned three times elected City Mayor! In the tiny colony of *Alhaj Fakir Badiul Alam Ajmiri*, a 70 years old *khadem* of a shrine, 16 families were living in a very pathetic situation with only four toilets and no water, electricity and gas supply. Coal, wood or kerosene the ancient cooking utilities still serve their purpose.

4.2 Nalapara Slum

Nalapara is the largest slum in Chittagong. Almost 8000 people live in this slum. It is behind Chittagong Railway Station. The true owner of this land is Bangladesh Railway but local godfather illegally occupied this to let it out to the homeless people. The slum is considered as a dreadful crime zone. Drug business and prostitution is the main source of livelihood for some drug dealers and floating sex workers. Apart from them bulk of the inhabitants are rickshaw pullers, housemaids, day labourer, station loader, etc. Though not guilty very often they have to face the police harassments while the criminals remain in safe-haven under the shelter of political and business elites. Though the slum is situated almost at the heart of the city, they live in dark. Inhabitants live in tin, plastic and bamboo made huts. They use illegal electricity supply. Sometimes PDB (Power Distribution Board) disconnects the supply. Then they have to depend on firewood until the illegal connection is taken again. There are no gas and water supply. Some NGOs have limited reach there. Being situated in the heart of the city, there is no shortage of

schools. Shortage is in the capability of these poor people. We talked to one Dolly Begum (25) who settled there two years ago after the mighty *Jamuna* took away all her happiness by flood erosion. Now she works in a garments factory. Her husband pulls rickshaw. They have three children. Two of them study in the nearest *Nalapara* Primary School. *Dolly* does not dream a colourful life. What she expects is the guarantee of a bare minimum existence with basic amenities of life. She is not sure whether she will get it very soon.

4.3 Amin Jute Mill Slum

It is situated at Hamjerbag, near Amin Jute Mills with around 2500 inhabitants. Basically the terminated workers of Amin Jute Mills live here. Side by side there are some rickshaw pullers, day labourers and CNG Taxi drivers. The literacy rate of this slum is quiet good. Almost every child goes to school. This is because there is a government primary school within the area of Amin Jute Mills Ltd. But the health services are worse as the health workers hardly visit this slum. Some NGOs provide them limited vaccination or other health services. There is no play ground for the children. Children use to play over the rail line and sometimes accidents occur. With no gas connection, no sanitation facility, no grave yard and only one dustbin which again is cleaned up rarely, the life here is a misery. Here we talked to Abdul Ahad (35). Abdul Ahad was a labourer of Amin Jute Mill. In 2005 Amin Jute Mills Authority terminated 2000 workers including Abdul Ahad without giving them sufficient notice and compensation. To feed his four children, now he works as a day laborer and his wife as a garments worker. They live in a small room for which they count Tk 1500 per month. With the joint monthly income of Tk 6000, their agony simply lacks words to explain.

4.4 Dewanhat Slum

This is situated under the *Dewanhat* Over Bridge. This is not a slum in its usual sense. Neither the huts nor the inhabitants are permanent. Some huts are made with plastic tents. Beggars, vagabonds, floating sex workers use it like a residential hotel with daily rent which ranges between Tk 20 to 30. Rents are paid to the local *mastans*. There is no question of gas, electricity and water supply. There is no toilet. The slum dwellers use the footpath and railway line as open toilet. River erosion affected people from North Bengal (Kurigram, Shirajgonj, Bogra district) take refuge here.

4.5. The Overall Situation

The City Corporation community services always consider the poor and low income group people as a secondary or tertiary issue. Those living in these settlements have migrated to the city for a variety of reasons, including lack of economic opportunities in the rural areas and natural disasters such as floods and cyclones, failure to repay NGO loan, deprivation from hereditary rights, search of work, oppressed or deceived by evil people or escaped convict, loss or death of guardian, urge of livelihood (extreme poverty), loss of income sources, homelessness, etc. In the absence of government sponsored schemes to settle these

migrants, they have developed innovative processes that enable them to survive. They live in the slum by making a tent with plastic or bamboo fence that cannot protect them from rain and cold. The living conditions of these poor families have deteriorated further. By and large, the slum dwellers don't have any civic facilities including water, electricity, gas, sewerage etc. The inhabitants of these settlements are vendors, drivers of cycle and motor rickshaws, factory workers, garment factory workers, daily wage labourers, domestic servants, etc. They make a major contribution to the economy and welfare of the country in general and the city in particular. 87% of the household in slum are dependant on the manual labour as the main source of income. A household survey conducted in 1996 by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics revealed that measles immunization and Vitamin A coverage is substantially lower in the slums of Chittagong (26%). Similarly, antenatal care coverage is substantially lower in the slum areas (18%) compared to the non-slum areas (55%).

However, we found almost 96% child aged 12 -14 years to receive Vitamin A Capsule. Vitamin A and Polio Vaccination Campaign covers around 98% of the total slum dwelling people. What is alarming is that 55% children aged 2-5 years are underweight. Household consumption of non-cereal food is only 8%. Non cereal food for the purpose of our study means orange, mango or green vegetable. Only 33% households afford fish regularly. Slum settlements are often found on land which is in most cases unsuitable for proper housing. About 52.7% and 37.0% slums are poorly or moderately drained, respectively, while only 10.3% are well drained. The major source of drinking water in slum areas is the municipal tap and tube wells. One tap is shared by 11 to 20 families. We have found the same picture in case of using tube wells. And the tap and tube well are not available in all cases. Only 16% households had closed latrine. Latrines linked to sewers and septic tank and water sealed latrines are considered safe from a hygienic stand point. Only 28.8% of slum dwellers have access to one of these three types of latrines. Pit latrines, a variety widely regarded as unsafe, and the same types are common in slum areas. In almost all slums latrines are usually shared by two or more households. In 13.4% of slums, one latrine was shared by 11 or more families. Basic facilities like electricity and water supply is available to some extent. The slum dwellers pay for the electricity and water to the local *mastans* and godfathers and not to the Government. Cooking by gas is really a dream for the slum dwellers in most cases. Wholesale evictions of slums on government land are a common event. Of around 5000 slum dwellers of these five slums, 6.5% experienced one or more evictions in their present location. The majority of slums did not have any fixed place for garbage bins. Graveyard problem is inconceivable. They even don't know whether they have any graveyard or not. Interestingly the world famous Micro credit loan emanating from Chittagong under the valiant leadership of Novel Lauriat Dr. Mohammad Yunus does not reach these people, probably because the Micro credit NGOs basically work in rural areas not in urban slum.

194

5. Recommendations

Fulfilment of a dream comprises both the question of approach and action. The importance of taking the right approach was emphasised in *Modhumala* by Shah Abu Naim Muhammad Mominur Rahman J., 'The efforts for implementation appears to be not upto mark, may be because the concerned functionaries do not realise the problem in the manner they should do' (Para 12). It is the question of approach that determines the way that people including courts and policymakers, think, talk, debate, and make decisions about housing. And then it is the action that brings the dreams in the lofty sky to the ground (AKM Ahsan Ullah *et el*, 1999).

5.1 The Question of Approach

There is an immediate need of making a deviation from the traditional need based approach. Housing must be seen as a human right distinct from a mere charity. It is often jokingly said that International Monetary Fund's (IMF) list of 'recommendations' is virtually identical to Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' (CESCR) list of 'concerns'. Right based approach will deter the adoption of wholly market based approach in addressing housing rights concerns. A discriminatory approach wherein the labour of the poor is acceptable but their residence in the city is not must be eliminated.

Along with the human rights approach the 'Small 'c' citizenship' approach may also be adopted. It is used as a counter part of the 'big C' Citizenship. Big C citizenship denotes a legal status by dint of which citizens are guaranteed very few rights, most of which are constitutional, and therefore they all are capable of being overridden. The 'small c' citizenship approach as proposed by T H Marshall looks upon citizenship as 'a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community'. Marshall understood citizenship as a social status that furnishes its members with substantive individual entitlements. For Marshall, citizenship rights serve to equalize individuals with regard to status, thereby enabling citizens to participate in the community, and establishing a sense of common possession of and loyalty to the community (Walsh and Klease, Homelessness and Citizenship). Ensuring right to adequate housing is in fact including the excluded into the main stream of the community life.

5.2 Concrete Things to Be Done

- Government must not evict the slum dwellers without prior notice. Eviction must take place as a last resort only on compelling situations and that also after arranging the alternative habitat for the to-be-evicted people. The parties benefiting from the development causing the relocation must pay the full costs of the relocation process, including the socio-economic rehabilitation of those affected to at least their former level.

- Analysis of legislation relating to housing and homelessness should be done to ensure consistency with international human rights standards. This should include laws relating to tenancy, to security of tenure and housing affordability and to forced eviction.

195

- The level of expenditure required to implement the right to adequate housing should be identified, with long-term commitments from all levels of government and other possible sources of funds. Direct allocation of unutilized or underutilized *khas lands* for the low-income families must be started at the first opportunity.

- The right to housing may be looked upon as the right to aid for housing, which is an appeal to the governments to adopt programs that would help the needy households so that a minimum decent housing becomes affordable for them.

- The concept of slum upgrading needs special attention. Slum upgrading scheme shall comprise the following priorities:

- Legalization of tenure status for sites and houses, including regularization of rental agreements to ensure improved tenure.

– Provision or improvement of technical services e.g., water, waste and waste
– water management, sanitation, electricity, road pavement, street lighting, etc.
– Provision or improvement of social infrastructure such as schools, clinics,
– community centres, playgrounds, green areas, etc.
– Physical improvement of the built environment, including rehabilitation or improvement of existing housing stock.
– Construction of new housing units where necessary. Encourage existing micro finance institutions to finance Low Income Group (LIG) housing. Collaboration with private sector developers to build low cost housing should be another priority.
– Design of urban development plans including, for example, the rearrangement of sites and street patterns according to infrastructure needs, although working within existing settlement patterns is generally less disruptive to community networks. This measure might entail resettlement of some residents.
– Changes in regulatory framework to better suit the needs and opportunities available to the poor, as far as possible keeping to existing settlement patterns.
– Densification measures *e.g.*, multiple-story houses for example in order to protect fertile land from being occupied for settlement.

6. Concluding Remarks:

The above discussion confirms our inevitable assertion that implementation of Right to Housing is attributable more to the lack of attention than to the lack of resources. Poor realisation of the Right to Housing of these misfortunate slum dwellers only explains the wide spread and deep rooted fatalism treating economic prosperity as a heavenly 'gift' and poverty a 'curse'. The state policies, plans, measures - either legislative or administrative are indirectly but persuasively influenced by 'fatalism' and run counter to 'equality' to maintain *status quo* in social

settings (Sangroula, 62). This may be a result of the 'political culture of contentment' based on the conviction that spending on the deprived is in any case both ineffective and undeserved, since the deprived are largely responsible for their own condition' (Beetham, 32). When the slum dwellers demand a place to live, policy makers want them to prove that they have no weak points. For them, burden of proof is always reverse (Pettiti and Meyer-Bisch, 46).

To allow this would be a continuing offence of violating the Constitution for which our heroic people dedicated themselves to, and our brave martyrs sacrificed their lives in the war for national independence. Such consistent violation would disqualify us as an independent and self-serving nation, since the protection of human rights is the final end of government and the degree to which human rights are safeguarded is the final test by which any polity should be judged.

Works Cited

Alam Mahmudul, 'Priorities for Educational Research in Bangladesh in the Nineties' in Hoque, Mohammad Shamsul (ed), *Educational Research In A Policy Perspective (A Collection of Papers with Comments)* (NAEM, Dhaka.1995)

AKM Ahsan Ullah, Abdar Rahman and Munira Morshed, *Poverty and Migration Slums of Dhaka City: The Realities,* Association for Rural Development and Studies (ARDS), Dhaka, 1999

Beetham David., 'Democracy and Human Rights: Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural' in Rahman, Dr. Mizanur (ed) Human Rights And Empowerment, ELCOP, 2002

Billah, S.M. Masum and Sarker, Nittyanando., 'Non-state Actors being the Prism. Need for Judicial Activism in Bangladesh to Nurture Human Rights' in Rahman Dr. Mizanur (ed), Human Rights and Non-state Actors ELCOP, 2004.

BPS, Bangladesh Population Survey 2000.

COHRE and ACHR, Forced Evictions in Bangladesh We Didn't Stand a Chance, See: www.cohre.org/store/attachments/COHRE%20Report%20Violations%20Bangladesh%202001.pdf (Accessed on 20 March 2010)

Fredriksson, Peter and Pätäri, Juho (eds), Right to Housing in Europe – Need for a Comprehensive Strategy, (Published on the occasion of HOUSING RIGHTS IN EUROPE CONFERENCE Helsinki 18 – 19 September 2006.

Hossain, Sara and Ors (eds), Public Interest Litigation In South Asia: Rights In Search of Remedies, BLAST, Dhaka, 1994.

McRae, Rowan and Nicholson, Dan, 'No Place like Home: Homelessness in Australia and the Right to Adequate Housing', [2003] Australian Journal of Human Rights 3. Available at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/3.html (Accessed on 22 April, 2010).

Morka, Felix, The Right to Adequate Housing (Module 13), in Circle of Rights: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights activism: A training resource, (Institute of International Education. International Human Rights Internship Program, United States of America, 2000). See: http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/IHRIP/circle/modules/module13.htm (Accessed on 20 December 2009)

Pettiti, Louis - Edmond and Meyer- Bisch, Patrice, 'Human Rights and Extreme Poverty' in Rahman, Dr. Mizanur (ed) Human Rights And Empowerment, ELCOP, 2002.

Sangroula, Yubaraj. 'Right to Adequate Standard of Living, Development and Social Respect and Dignity' in Social Responsive Human Rights Legal Education, SALS Forum, 2004.

Walsh, Tamara and Klease, Carla, 'Down and Out? Homelessness and Citizenship,' [2003] Australian Journal of Human Rights 5, Available online: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/2003/5.html (Accessed on 20 March 2010)

List of Cases

Ain O Shalish Kendra and others v. *Government of Bangladesh* 1999 BLD 488

BSEHR v *Government of Bangladesh*, 53 DLR (HCD) (2001) 1

Kalam and others v *Bangladesh and others* 21 BLD (HCD) (2001) 446

Modhumala v. *Housing and Building research Institute* 53 DLR (HCD) 540

Sufferings of Persons with Disability:
Proposal for Suitable Regulation for Bangladesh

Zelina Sultana*

Abstract

In Bangladesh the persons with disability are many but they are not treated as like as other normal human being. They can not enjoy a dignified life because they face neglect from all part of society. The existing legal system of our country is not favourable to them also. For the welfare of disabled persons legal system of our country should be modified. This paper mainly discuses on the sufferings of person with disability and also their present situations. It also provides some guidelines for a suitable regulation for Bangladesh regarding the persons with disability.

Keywords: Amendment, Disabled, Regulation, Sufferings

1. Introduction

Bangladesh is a poor and developing country. In all developing and poor countries persons with disability (PWD) are subjected to discrimination and treated negatively. They are deprived of basic needs like health care, housing, education, employment, transport facilities and other opportunities. The same situation is prevailed in our country too. After 39 years of independence, our country can not passed any complete Act for their betterment and to protect their rights, though lots of people became disabled to make our country independent at the time of liberation war. The existing law relating to person with disability in our country is Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act 2001 but it is not sufficient to provide a good standard of rights for them. This paper mainly focuses on the Act relating to persons with disability (PWD) in Bangladesh and provides some suggestions to improve their condition and a better regulation for the protection and preservation of their rights.

2. Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to discuss the sufferings of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh. The specific objectives of this paper are:
- ➢ To discuss the meaning of disability and also designate the present situation of them,
- ➢ To discuss existing laws and policies in Bangladesh,
- ➢ To find out the loopholes of existing law in Bangladesh,
- ➢ To give some recommendations for improving the condition in Bangladesh.

3. Definitions and Present Situation

The term disability is used to refer individual functioning including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment

*Lecturer, Department of Law, Jagannath University, Bangladesh

mental illness and various types of chronic diseases. Any person who is suffered any of this impairment is called persons with disability. In Bangladesh the Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act 2001 also gives the definition of disability. According to section 3 of this Act,

- A person with disability means those persons who is physically crippled either congenitally or as result of disease or being a victim of accident or due to improper or maltreatment or for any other reasons became physically incapacitated or mentally imbalanced and as a result of such crippled-ness or mental impaired-ness has incapacitated become either partially or fully and is unable to lead a normal life.
- According to this Act 'visual impaired' means any person who has no vision in any single eye or in both the eyes, or visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellen) in the better eye even with correcting lenses or limitation of the 'field of vision' subtending an angle of 20 (degree) or worse.
- Physically handicapped refers to person who has lost either one or both the hands or lost sensation partly or wholly of either hand or it is so weaker in normal condition or lost either one or both the feet or lost sensation partly or wholly of either or both the feet or it is so weaker in normal condition that the situations stated under subsection I (a) and (b) are applicable to his case has physical deformity and abnormality or has permanently lost physical equilibrium owing to neuro-disequilibrium or has 'hearing impairment' meaning one's loss of hearing capacity in better ear in the conversation range of frequencies at 40 decibels (hearing unit) or more or damaged or ineffective otherwise or has speech impairment meaning loss of one's capacity to utter/ pronounce meaningful vocabulary sounds or damaged partly or wholly or dysfunctional.
- Mental disability means one whose mental development is not at par with his chronological age or whose IQ (Intelligent Quotient) is far below the normal range or has lost mental balance or is damaged partly or wholly or has multiple disabilities that is one who suffers.

So according to this section the persons with disability means those persons who are impaired physically by crippled-ness, visually impaired, mentally disabled or physically handicapped. The present situation of persons with disability in Bangladesh is quite different. The reasons for disability are many. The incidence of disability is high for the reasons of overpopulation, extreme poverty, illiteracy, lack of awareness, and above all lack of medical care and services. According to Population Census 1991 the types of persons with disability are mainly five (Table - 1). Table 1 shows that the numbers of physical disabled are very high and it is 45.5% and second highest is hearing impairment (19.6%).

Table 1: Percentage of Disability by Sex & Types (1991 Census)

Type of Disability	Male	Female
Visual Impairment	16.7	18.4
Hearing Impairment	19.6	22.5
Intellectually Disabled	15.5	15.1
Leper	2.7	2.4
Physically disabled	45.5	41.6
Total	100	100
% of Total Population	0.55%	0.39%
Est. Number of Population	309,817	208,832
Gender Mix	59.70%	40.30%

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 1991.

Disability is a major social and economic phenomenon in Bangladesh. There is very little reliable data available on this issue especially in the absence of a comprehensive national survey on persons with disabilities. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) surveyed in 1982, 1986 and 1998 estimated a national prevalence rate of disability at 0.64%, 0.5% and 1.60% respectively. Besides, Government survey many NGO's are also conducted survey to estimate the real number of persons with disability. Action Aid-Bangladesh and Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV) put the disabled population at 8.8% out of the total population. Bangladesh Protibandi Kalayan Samiti records 7.8% of persons with disability. Most of the estimates generally appear to be under rated with the comparison of the estimation made by WHO. Bangladesh has adopted the WHO's definitions of disability which are relevant and consistent with the country situation. The WHO's global estimate predicts approximately 10% of all people have a disability of one kind or another (WHO, 2004).

Figure: 1-Types of Impairment
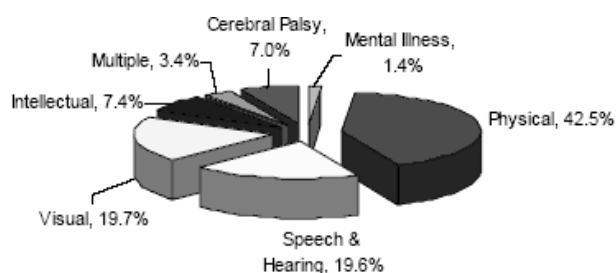
Source: Action Aid Survey, 2000

The available data and information of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics based on health and medical perspective, proportional prevalence of disability/impairment of

202

different categories at all ages are visual 31.3%, physical (including leprosy and goiter) 35.8%, hearing and speech 28% and mental retardation 4.9% (BBS, 1998). The largest type of impairment amongst the survey group was physical at 42.5%, followed by visual and speech and hearing impairments at 19.7% and 19.6% respectively (Fig.- 1). However, based on a sample survey conducted in 1991 indicated the number of Persons with disability was placed at just over 500,000 (BBS, 1991).

Whatever the number may be, the less number of persons with disability in Bangladesh get rehabilitation and other facilities. Action Aid made a survey among the persons with disability who get some facilities. And it shows out of the total 1,339 participants in the survey, over 95% (1,283) of them received some form of rehabilitation service. Out of the total that received rehabilitation services, 18.7% were included in the educational system, 31.4% were in governmental schools while 39.4% were enrolled in non-formal primary educational schools. None of the participants in the survey were enrolled in university (Action Aid Survey, 2000). It was concluded from the research survey that only 11% of the total group was receiving education. Table 2 highlights the types of schooling they were enrolled in. Though they receive some benefit from the state, the legal instrument for their benefit is less in number and not adequate for the protection of their rights.

Table -2 Survey Percentages of disabilities & education by type 2002

Type of Disability	Formal	Non- Formal	Inclusive	Integrated	Special	Total
Physical	68	5	5	18	5	101
Multiple	20	20	20	40	0	100
Intellectual	33	17	0	17	33	100
Visual	0	0	0	25	75	100
Hearing & Speech	50	0	0	50	0	100
Other*	0	100	0	0	0	100
Total	48	10	5			

Source: CSID, ESTEEM II Survey, *Other includes children with cerebral palsy

Note: Source data does not equal 100% due to rounding

The initiatives of establishing schools for mentally retarded children, Center for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) and some other institutes show that there had been some practical steps though with specific kinds of disabilities, i.e. mental retardation, blind, hearing impaired etc. Haqq reported that educational provision for disabled children is limited. The Government runs 13 institutions in which 820 students (410 hearing impaired, 360 visually impaired and 50 mentally handicapped) are studying. It shows that these are all residential schools, each with a further 20-day student (Haqq, 1994). The facilities of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh are very low in term of their ratio. So the condition of persons with disability is very miserable in Bangladesh.

4. Existing Laws and Policy in Bangladesh

Law can confer some advantages. Firstly, law can afford greater level of protection for the disabled persons. Secondly, law can offer a better understanding of structural issue underpinning the problem of disability. Thirdly, law can offer implementation of Human rights instruments regarding the rights of disable. As such law is very important for understanding their problem and for protection of disabled persons. The Constitution of Bangladesh has numerous provisions that obligate the government to protect the rights and dignity of all citizens of the country equally and without any bias (Articles. 10, 11, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, and 36). This has given the government ample power to adopt legislative and policy frameworks for the development of the full potentials of persons with disabilities in the country.

Though there have been Five-Year and Yearly National Plans through which Government of Bangladesh adopted the national poverty reduction instrument clarity and short down, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Planning Commission for PRSP through there efforts NFOWD, Handicap International, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children UK, Action Aid and a few other organizations established the reality that the inclusion of disability is an issue that is not only important for the PRSP, but for the development in general. The number of Law and policy of the disabled persons in National level is not adequate for the betterment of the disabled persons. Table 3 shows the number of law and policy of Bangladesh regarding disabilities issues.

Table 3: Policy and Developments in Bangladesh

1993, National Coordination Committee on Disability established under the Ministry of Social Welfare
1995, National Policy on Disability approved outlining guidelines for prevention, identification, education, rehabilitation, research and management of the national program
1996, Action Plan on Disability approved outlining the plan for the implementation of the National Policy - this plan has not yet been fully implemented
2000, National Foundation for the Development of Disabled Persons (NFDDP) established under the Ministry of Social Welfare
2001, Disability Welfare Act passed by Bangladesh Parliament

Source: Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity,

There exists an important international legal instruments and reports that can be used to call on the Government of Bangladesh to account for its lack of attention to make law for the persons with disability. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol were adopted by the United Nation's General Assembly on 13 December 2006, and opened for signature on 30 March 2007. Bangladesh is one of the 118 signatories to the convention as She signed and ratified it in 2007. In May 2008 the Government signed the CRPD's Optional Protocol.

In Bangladesh whoever is in power, whatever the financial conditions may be but the matter of great sorrow is that our disabled persons are deprived of minimum facilities of life. Policy makers are hardly concern about that. Government gives some facilities only for disable in government job, which is insufficient. One Act, which is applicable in our country that is Bangladesh Person with Disability Act, 2001 is not focus on disability rights. It suggested that the 10 years old Act has various limitations and should be amended to meet the present demand of the disabled persons.

5. Sufferings of Persons with Disability and Loopholes in Present Legal System

The persons with disability are most neglected in all part of our country. The most of them are isolated from the mainstream of the society, stigmatized, mistreated and marginalized. They are often deprived of basic needs including access to health services, housing, education, employment and transportation. Widespread discrimination against them and their exclusion from mainstream society leads to considerable economic hardship and loss of their productive capacity (Faruque, 2010). Discrimination against them also exists in voting and other aspects for participation in politics. In fact, many of them are the poorest of the poor.

It is to be noted that though they are disabled, yet they have courage and confidence. They have dreams like sky high. They have got very strong mentality to struggle and they do not want sympathy from us but want cooperation. As a human being they want equal rights from the country, from every sector of society and institution. They do not have the opportunity of education, health and employment. They want their full recognition as a human being not only from their near relative but from this country too.

Disabled people cannot participate in the current development stream in spite of the constitutional guarantee. Due to exclusion of huge number of disabled people from the development, an enormous quantity of national production is being hampered. Family has to bear directly or indirectly the cost to bring up their disabled children to make them efficient (Faruque, 2010). Besides, no one cares about the opinions of disabled people. They do not get the same things or rights where disabled and non-disabled people do the same work. As for example, disabled persons who do the tailoring do not get their actual wages with normal person (voice of our own, ourvoice.com-09districts2009, accessed on 8 March, 2010). Though there are Government policies for them in education and treatment but they do not get it properly. Besides, they have two seats reserved in transport but they cannot sit there properly. The vehicles are supposed to stop and lift them but they do not always do it. Disabled persons find much difficulty to get in a bus. It would have been much easier for them if the stairs or footsteps of the buses had been made a little lower from the surface of the street.

In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act, 2001 acknowledges the concerns of people with disabilities and it is made for the welfare of the disabled persons. However this Act has various limitations and shortcomings. The most important area of concern is that the present statute does not contain

elaborate provisions on offences and punishment for discriminatory practices towards disabled persons. For better result there should be clear provision on how the government employees and private actors can be made more responsible for non-compliance with the law. On the one hand, giving them total immunity as in the present Act, results in negation of the very rights for which the Act was designed. On the other hand, due caution should be taken into so that the government departments are not flooded with new types of vexatious cases. The Act does not provide for action against those violating or abusing the rights of persons with disabilities. The Act should more clearly be set how and to what extent the violators of the rights of the disabled, whether private citizens or government employees be made accountable. It provides three Committee but these Committees are absent from the representation of the disabled persons. Moreover, the present statute is rendered almost inoperative for the simple reason that the government has not yet framed the rules. In absence of detailed rules, different committees formed have become ineffective. This Act does not discuss about the rights of the persons with disability and duties towards them. The Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act is not actually right based one.

The above analysis of Act reveals that the Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act, 2001 is not consistent with standards set out by the Convention and other International Instruments on Disability Rights. A new enactment with a set of bill of rights and new organizational structure is imperative for building a comprehensive right-based legal framework. It should be mentioned that Bangladesh ratified the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 30 November 2007. Therefore, Bangladesh is under international legal obligation to enact new legislation to give effect to the Convention and bringing disability law in conformity with international standards set out in the Convention.

To ensure well-being and protect of rights of persons with disabilities, the duties should not be vested only to the Government but also private sector and NGOs and every person has to perform their duties to protect their rights. In the era of economic liberalization and privatization, the private sector has emerged as biggest employer and service provider so they should think about the employment of the disable persons. Unfortunately, the present statute does not address the issue of obligations of private sectors in clear terms. To make them bound the obligations of the private sectors in terms of rights and well-being of disabled persons should be made much more clear and specific.

6. Recommendations

Through enjoying constitution government promises that all citizens are equal in the eye of law but reality is different. Most of the people mainly disable are deprived from their rights in every sector of country. It is true that no one can remove the sorrows of the disabled persons easily at a time but can reduce their sorrows by giving them different opportunities. Bangladesh is far from these types of opportunities. As such following recommendations are suggested for the Government of Bangladesh for effective reductions of their sufferings, Such as:

- Making necessary laws and policies in pursuance of international policy. And proper enforcement of all of the international charter relating to rights of disable is necessary.
- Different ministry and division should concentrate on the rights of disable.
- Giving them opportunity to participate in different national activities.
- In election manifesto, declarations should highlight the rights of disable such as education, health, and rehabilitation sectors etc.
- Ensure the political rights for disable people such as separate voter list, taking vote in ground flore, entrance to the election room with an assistant etc.
- Forming standing committee regarding disable in parliament and every local area.
- Ensure necessary equipment for disable, such as wheal chair, hearing machine etc.
- Increase the reserve sit system for disable in government and non-government jobs.
- Impose grievous punishment to the offender who commits any crime against disable.
- Making public awareness about disability through media and publications.
- Establishing different governmental and non-governmental rehabilitation center for disable people.
- Existing law should be amended properly.
- Making of separate budget for persons with disability and for making necessary infrastructure is essential.
- Reserve seats shall be allocated for the disabled in the Parliament.
- Different vehicles should be made for their use.
- They should be involved in policymaking body for alleviation of poverty and development of the poor.
- The employment law for disabled people should be implemented.
- The disabled day should be observed by all from local to national level.
- Special steps should be taken to prevent disable girls from exploiting physically and mentally.
- Both the government and society should take separate and special initiatives to empower the poor disabled people.

7. Conclusion

As a matter of fact disability would always remain in all societies including Bangladesh. But in the backdrop of all the problems involved, the silver lining is that the government is showing an increasing interest on persons with disabilities, and a keen interest to work hand-in-hand with the non- governmental sector. To make real progress in this field in a developing country like Bangladesh, an all-out effort from all quarters is mandatory. The persons with disabilities themselves, their organizations, other organizations working in this field, and all the advocacy platforms need to increase their awareness campaigns for the prevention of disability and for the recognition of the rights and privileges of persons with disabilities as equal citizens of this country.

However, it is recognized that the legislation does not cover all the required demands of persons with disabilities. The present Government has sought out experts with an intention of revising the legislation to work with a review committee that was formed to redraft the entire legislations with necessary amendments involving expertise from different disable organizations, lawyers and other professionals. It is to be mentioned that suitable mechanisms should be established to examine and identify the inconsistent provisions from all substantive and procedural laws, such as, those covering inheritance, marriage and property as well as criminal and civil procedure codes and policy provisions on various subjects. And after finding the inconsistent provisions of these laws Government should amend the provisions which are inconsistent with the rights of the persons with disabilities. Moreover, Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act should be amended as rights based Act and with the consideration of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Works Cited

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. BBS. (1991).

Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act, 2001.

Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity, (2010), [Online] Available: http://www.bpksbd.org/pwd_bdpolicy.html (March 12, 2010).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006

Disability, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, (2010), [Online] Available: C:\Documents \Disableperson doc\Disability - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.mht. (March 2, 2010).

Faruque, Al Abdullah. "Plight of Persons with Disabilities: Towards Effective Legal Framework". *The Daily Star.* [Online] Available: Disable person doc\Law and Our Rights mhtwww.thedailystar.net (10 March 2010).

Haqq, M.S., (1994), *Policies and programmes concerning disabilities and people with disabilities in Bangladesh*, Paper presented at Regional Seminar on Childhood Disability, Dhaka, (December 3-5, 1994)

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), (2002), *Country Profile on Disability People's Republic of Bangladesh, Planning and Evaluation Department*, JICA

Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS), (2000), Country Profile Study on Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh.

World Health Organization. (2004) [Online] Available: http://www.who.int/healthinfo/globalburden_disease /GBD_report_2004update_part3.pdf (February 12, 2010).