

INTRODUCTION

Recurrent redistributions reveal several pasts, several forms of connexions, several hierarchies of importance, several networks of determination, several teleologies, for one and the same science, as its present undergoes change: these historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge, they increase with every transformation and never cease, in turn, to break with themselves. (Foucault 1)



Photo-1 : A Toda Priest in front of the Sacred Dairy Temple at Garden mund Ooty

The present thesis is an attempt at understanding the life of two communities through their songs. The songs of Inuit and Toda unfold not only the finest poetic expression of these people, but reflect their very life. They are the recorded culture of the two peoples. The songs are about their life; about the traditional knowledge, which has passed on generationally punctuated by a wide range of individual experiences. The songs are the sensitive observation of an ever-changing process of life reflecting the truism that the imagination of poet knows no bounds. The bounteous Nature, beautiful and unpredictable, is the dominating imagery in these songs. The plenitude of Nature makes the poet sing in joy, while its force and its starkness compel the singer to humbly submit to that vast power. The tenderness and the warmth of first love, the innocent love of a mother towards new born, both find expression in these songs. Strange events that are beyond human comprehension also find place in these songs.

The rhythm and music of these songs represent the eloquence of oral tradition. Long recitation of prayers, ritual songs sometimes run more than two to three hours. The recital has to be faultless and stringently phonetic. The concentration and the seriousness with which a singer (or singers) recites and learns has kept the tradition alive. The world of these communities is finite, yet their poetic imagery is eternal. The earth, the water, the wind, the sun, the moon, the stars and all the living creatures of this earth find their place in the songs. The origin stories, of creation of earth and its creatures, are interesting as they throw light on the idea of evolution of life.

The pace and speed of modern life have failed to recognize the serene world of these communities. Instead, contemporary life imposes its values on the life style of these people. Increased urbanization coupled with its attendant values has striven to erase

variety in our lives. Recognizing, tolerating and understanding this plurality of cultures are the major tasks of the present world. Increased insensitivity lays a stress on Nationalism and the concomitant project of assimilation, which creates confusion and chaos.

There is no one Indian or one Canadian culture. Canada and India have similar problems and paradoxes. Both these countries represent a complex geographical area that has many religions, many languages, many life styles and values. One is hard put to try to understand these differences permeating a single Nation State, let alone that of many states. The local cultures, languages, make these two Nation States colorful, multicultural.

Bharatha has always been beyond the Heroes of Ramayana and Mahabharata! Indian poetry was never restricted to the Vedas and the Upanishads. India has a rich treasure of parallel poetry with significant heroes and their *heldensaga*. This poetry of Sub alterns”, “Adivasis”, “Girijans”, bring out the values of the soil naturally. This helps in the reconstruction of a non-bourgeois history of India.

It is “parallel poetry” in the sense that, the poetic tradition in India has always been oral. The Rig-Veda is the best example of earliest oral poetic tradition in India. This tradition changed, in the sense that Raymond Williams talks of,(Cf. RW Culture) to be exponentially written and owned by certain sections of the society. This owning created power blocks in the society. People who owned the knowledge occupied power positions.(Marx, Karl. On Social Groups and Social conscience) The power blocks were developed around the urban centers of Maharajas and his sardars. The Modern

world interpolates, in the sense which Althusser uses it (Althusser, Base and Superstructure) this tradition as the history of India. We failed to recognize, identify that there has always existed co-opted groups, communities, which are far removed from the great cities and palaces of Maharajas. Their past is also the history of India. Their poetry in this regard becomes the unwritten history of Adivasis, Girijans and the Subalterns, and therefore is it that we recognize it as folk. It is the sum total of the tradition and individual experience. It is ever changing, while adding fluidity to their poetry.



Photo-2: Toda men singing and dancing during a marriage, Emerald mund.

M.B. Emeneau, the incomparable linguist and ethnologist quotes hymns and songs, referring to singing and singers in his celebrated work *Toda Songs* (1971). He takes hymns from Ecclesiastes, Mahabharata, Nehemiah, and Rig-Veda. The hymns are about songs and songsters. This ancient poetry is considered the greatest expression of human emotions. It is interesting to note that all these are hymns, which have music, rhythm and melody to them. Every community composes songs and poems to express their emotions. In the Indian context the earliest tradition of song

composition is as ancient as the Vedas. While defining Veda and Vedic tradition Sri Aurobindo writes:

The language of Veda itself is śruti, a rhythm not composed by the intellect but heard, a divine Word, that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of the man who had previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge. The words themselves, drsti, and sruti, sight and hearing are Vedic expressions; these and cognate words signify, in the esoteric terminology of the hymns, revelatory knowledge and the contents of inspiration. (11)

This explanation of Veda and Vedic composition holds good for other oral literatures. The poetic tradition and the singing art of the Toda or the philosophical musings of an Inuit hunter are similar to any Vedic composition. The poet- singer acquires the faculty of composing the songs through the constant presence of the self in the culture. “The knowledge itself was a traveling and a reaching or a finding and a winning; the revelation came only at the end, the prize was that of a final victory.” (11)

This light is the song, which a composer achieves. The singing is repetitive and the younger generation of singers acquires and improvises upon it. This repetition impels the art and the culture with dynamism. Emeneau identifies Toda poetic technique with formulaic poetic tradition of Vedas and Homeric epic. Repetition is the key factor in any formulaic poetic technique. Explaining this particular nature Aurobindo writes:

Only, out of the sameness of experience and out of the impersonality of the knowledge received, there arise a fixed body of conceptions constantly repeated and a fixed symbolic language which, perhaps, in that early human speech, was the inevitable form of these conceptions because alone

capable by its combined concreteness and power of mystic suggestion of expressing that which for the ordinary mind of the race was inexpressible. We have, at any rate, the same notions repeated from hymn to hymn with the same constant terms and figures and frequently in the same phrases with an entire indifference to any search for poetical originality or any demand for novelty of thought and freshness of language. (12)

Reading Toda songs gives us the same impression. The structure remains the same, the symbolic language is the same, phrases used are the same in the song, but the novelty lies in the poetical personality of the individual artisan. Each Toda song is spun from the self-observing conscious imagination of the composer. This rigidity of form was not achieved easily. The form, the technique in a way was standardized through constant speculation and singing. The unwritten song, poem, is produced, reproduced and recreated by the Toda.

Going back to the process of creating Aurobindo says that it is a “means of spiritual progress for himself and for others.” The Inuit poet/singer expresses the very same emotion about the composition and creation of a song. It is a quest towards light. As Tom Lowenstein observes:

A person is moved like an ice-floe which drifts with the current. His thoughts are driven by a flowing force when he feels joy, when he feels fear, when he feels sorrow. Thoughts can surge in on him to gasp for breath, and making his heart beat faster. Something like a softening of the weather will keep him thawed. And then it will happen that we, who always think of ourselves as small, will feel even smaller. And we will

hesitate before using words. Nevertheless, it will happen that the words that we need will come of themselves.

When the words that we need shoot up themselves we have a new song.

(Lowenstein xxiii)

Orpingalik, the most famous poet/singer of Netsilik community is very clear in expressing the process of the creation of a song. For him it is a deep emotional act, a lesson in humility. The incomprehensible Nature urges the mystic in the heart of the poet to compose. The intimate association with the environment, the minuteness of observation makes these Inuit poems great expressions of Romanticism. The poems are about basic situations of life, like hunting, fishing, loneliness, dancing, lovemaking and childbirth. Knud Rasmussen finds the “essential purity of ancient man “ in simple poems of the Inuit. He says:

Can one imagine a more noble pastime than the exercise of verbal skill which to render the language more rich- or this laborious mulling over of expressions to describe joy or sorrow, longing, impotence, mockery or humor? The joy these people feel in the power, the warmth and the hurt of words has never ceased to impress me. (102)

Listening, witnessing, reading of these poems expands our understanding of literature in general and poetry in particular. One should have a prior knowledge of the living culture of these communities to read and appreciate. This gives a wholesome approach to literature as well as life. Simple approach towards life, which these communities adopt, is reflected in the poems. Such simplicity precludes pretension. It is this achievement, which makes such poetry remarkable. Poets/singers have no inhibition in expressing their emotions. Frankness must not be mistaken to arrogance. These songs are composed after deep meditation. Each song is composed to perform

and the singer invariably, instantly receives appreciation or criticism. In the case of Inuit, many personal disputes are solved through these song duels. In addition, one has to agree that it is a more civilized approach towards life.

Objectives

The songs, poems and stories can be read as cultural narratives of these people. As these songs and poems are rooted in a particular way of life practiced by these communities, the narratives have to be understood in that particular context. The shared language pattern, which is used in these songs and poems, integrates an individual's experience with that of the community. Therefore, these songs and poems evolve a form and a design to find a sense of unity and purpose in life. The theme, the style, the setting, episodes and plots and the imagery used to unfold the characters, need to be analyzed using interdisciplinary tools. The thesis attempts to analyze the songs and poems of Toda and Inuit, through literary perspective, bringing in wherever necessary anthropological and sociological dimensions. The lifestyle of both the communities is highly ritualistic, and tools of cultural theories have provided better insight into the myths and legends. Both Inuit and Toda cultures are at the threshold of irreversible cultural change. The thesis attempts to capture those moments of cultural shifts of which time is the witness. The thesis also highlights the importance of ethnography in understanding these oral traditions. Inuit artist Peter Petseolak once commented that his ancestors should have written on the sealskin. The songs and poems of these people are the knowledge banks of these cultures. In an era of rapid change, these documents might give a sense of confidence to the younger generation. Nevertheless, the Inuit have found their new expression in visual medium. The thesis also examines this new expression of the Inuit. Emeneau's intension to study and

collect the Toda songs was to construct the larger Indian Poetic Tradition through the little tradition of the Toda formulaic song units. This idea has revolutionized the analysis of the Indian poetry and music. The thesis attempts to study this little tradition which represents Indian poetic sensibility in miniscule. With available body of primary resources accompanied by fieldwork, the thesis tries to understand what singing and composing meant to the Inuit and to the Toda. Interviews will be conducted to understand the community and songs and dances will also be recorded, which will help the thesis to gain contemporary sensibility. These songs and poems are born out of the life that surrounds these communities and it is because of these songs that they are leading that particular life. Therefore one cannot separate the two. It is an attempt in understanding how a cultural narrative, which is purely a personal act, transforms into a work, which locates these communities in a definite space in this world. Singing and composing has become an engaging act among the two communities. Inuit no doubt have evolved their own writing system and many Inuit are writing in Inuktitut as well as in English. At the same time they have rediscovered the importance of their traditional oral culture. The oral culture is the quintessential expression of knowledge they have gained because of their interaction with Nature for many generations. Reviving and nourishing them is the only way that can make these people face challenges of the changing world. The thesis attempts to record various cultural strategies the communities have taken in this regard.

Methodology

As the primary source of the thesis is, ethnological documents collected by linguists and ethnographers theories of cultural analysis have been extensively studied. Studying evolution and development of ethnography and understanding various

dimensions of culture was essential. Prominent cultural theorist like Clifford Geertz, Mary Douglas, Michael Foucault, Raymond Williams, Richard A. Shweder, Robert A. Levine, have been extensively studied. For the oral formulaic tradition, theories propounded by Parry Milman, Albert Lord, Dell Hymes and John Miles Foley are used. To understand Inuit way of life and their songs, Inuit scholars like Edmund Carpenter, Robin McGrath, Rudy Wiebe and ISUMA, an independent Inuit film production team are referred.

Ethnological documentation is a discourse on human communities. Communities that are documented and thereby pushed to silence reveal in that silence new dimensions of history. Reading Ethnography is not merely a glimpse of a life style, which is variously indented as “unique”, “exotic”, “interesting”, etc..., by the knowledgeable. More than anything else, it offers an investigative insight into the evolution of a lifestyle, a language, a culture and there by an ideology. Ethnology becomes a discourse of the rationale of human life.

Ethnologists borrow varied tools from different disciplines to carry out their analysis. Sociological tools such as the study of kinship pattern of particular groups, examination of sociological hierarchies, analysis of specific political behavior of select groups, and modes of economics have to be taken in to account. The geographical locales in which the community is settled, their adaptability to the environment as well as the modes of subsistence become essential in describing a group. However, only a proper understanding of the religion of the community, its rituals and the festivities will help comprehend their cosmogony. Further, an ethnologist has to be a good linguist too as understanding language means gleaning

the experience of the group. The literature, whether written or oral, plays a major role in this regard. Thus, ethnology is a holistic understanding of a community.

To substantiate the earlier claim made here that reading ethnological documents is an ideology in itself the thesis refers to Clifford Geertz:

Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of construct a reading of) a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior. (*The Interpretation of Cultures 10*)

Reading the songs of the Toda in English, or the poems of an Inuit hunter- shaman in English, or the ritual recitations devoid of their context collected by ethnographers is indeed a tricky job. The ethnological documents were collected in early part of 20th century, and the present work is done in 2005 - 2006, construction of meaning out of these works needed special concentration and understanding. In the Toda section many of the questions were sorted out through field work, and in the Inuit context many recent studies were referred. In both the cases, reading ethnological documents and doing field work, many of the earlier learnt tools of analysis had to be deconstructed and build a new model of understanding.

The theoretical framework of a researcher is completed not just by the fieldwork he or she does or by field facts. It is not merely cross-examining the field facts and drawing contrasts that one learns; it is keeping the pastness of the facts and reexamining them in new situations which alters ones present knowledge. These have to be examined within the larger framework of ethnological documents. As Foucault clearly points

out the ideology of the pastness as the altered past becomes the ideological. Discoursing on the “history of ideas”, “history of science”, “history of philosophy”, “history of thought”, “history of literature”, Foucault points out:

Beneath the great continuities of thought, beneath the solid, homogeneous manifestations of a single mind or of a collective mentality, beneath the stubborn development of a science striving to exist and to reach completion at the very outset, beneath the persistence of a particular genre, form, discipline, or theoretical activity, one is now trying to detect the incidence of interruptions. (4)

Explaining these processes of “interruptions”, cleansing off, displacements, “transformations”, of ideas, thought and concepts Foucault concludes, “Lastly, the most radical discontinuities are the breaks effected by a work of theoretical transformation which establishes a science by detaching it from the ideology of its past and by revealing this past as ideological.” (5)

Although ethnography is regarded as an impressionistic form of scientific description, it is nevertheless a valuable body of knowledge, which serves as the backbone to all systemic studies in culture. Ethnology makes this particular ambiguous concept crucial. If language, which is a social contract, is used through the consensus of a community, culture expressions like songs, legends, poems, rituals undertaken at a particular time achieves a consensus on a wide variety of meanings among members of an interacting community.

Language gets altered with every idiolect, the capacity for mutual understanding rests on common agreement about rules of grammar and pronunciation. However, analysis of culture becomes problematic as it deals with the analysis of meanings of symbols

both verbal and nonverbal. The varied categories of culture, which are expressive and at the same time contextual, differ from individual to individual. Identifying these categories, which are egoistic and contextual, is the task of an ethnographer.

Rituals, customs, language, religion, drama, law that are considered as metaphors of culture have their own limitation. The ethnographer faces the problem of understanding implicit meanings from that of explicit. At the time of fieldwork, the informant might expound on these demonstratives. Ethnographers conclude that many basic concepts and general ideas are beyond verbal expression. Culture cannot be reduced to those dimensions. The complexity of culture also lies in its assimilation of rational and non-rational elements. The ethnographic records of non-industrial peoples are all descriptions of their lives, which are subject to their ecology, nourishment, adaptive technology, as well as concepts of hygiene. The remarkable survival skills and adaptability to the habitat has made them the survivors of the very same conditions that had eliminated others. Extensive knowledge of the habitat among the people include a unique understanding of its plants and animals, the art of hunting, cultivating, food processing and preserving, constructing, navigation, and trade. Their religion is their way of life; it is not a value addition. An Inuit prays to the spirit of a whale or a caribou, before he hunts it. He offers his gratitude to the animal for the food it provides. The Toda worship their sacred buffaloes during the funeral before sacrificing them. The Inuit believe that it is the greatness of these animals that get them food for their survival and the Toda believe that their living-dead (the complex notion of the Todas that the dead who still traverse the distance from the land of the living to the land of the *amondar* the dead) require buffaloes in the after world. Thus, conventional distinctions of science versus religion and nature versus culture do not help while reading ethnography.

Cultural approach for investigation and analysis of plants, animals, and land use provide rich areas for ethnographic description. Advancement in navigation led to exploration of newer landscape and communities. The desire to comprehend the complex environment and its inhabitants resulted in the opulence of ethnographic records. Earlier ethnographic descriptions are from colonial officers and voyagers. These descriptions are attempts at perceiving and interpreting a new world. It was an act of capturing a different world in a language, which did not belong to the colonizers. In the course of interpreting, the perceiver, many a times supplements his/her earlier experiences. Many assumptions are also made to fit in the “missing events” which are necessary to make a meaningful unit. In this way learning to organize new experience became valuable ethnographic records. “Empire” expansion in a way led to studies in anthropology and ethnology. Colonial officers had to study communities for administrative purpose. This was also accompanied by curiosity about the “other”, which was not familiar therefore exotic. However, in later years these colonial narratives helped us to recreate a cultural space which could define the essence of human nature.

According to Alan Bernard, renowned British Anthropologist and Cultural theorist, ethnographic theory contains four basic elements: questions, assumptions, methods and evidence. The most vital of questions in the mind of any ethnographer would be one about the aims and goals of research, like “what are we trying to find out?” Or “how does it alter our perception of human society?” Or “Will studies about other society help in understanding our own society and us?” or “how do social hierarchies operate?” (Barnard). Assumptions, according to Bernard include notions of common humanity, of cultural difference, of value in all cultures, or of differences in cultural values.

Methods and evidence have developed through each fieldwork and each research. Fieldwork and comparison are two common methods. Comparison might be used as a method of building a picture of particular cultural area. Others see it as a method for explaining their own discoveries in the light of a universal pattern. Still others regard comparison itself as an illusory objective, except insofar as one always understands the exotic through its differences from the familiar.

Fieldwork is a process of learning and unlearning. The question, which leads to research, will bring in new experiences. The researcher tries to assimilate new experiences into the set assumptions, which are formulated from the earlier experience. There is a continual displacement and transformation of ideas and concepts. This “recurrent redistribution” creates several truths. This is the merit as well as the demerit of ethnography.

In the act of describing communities, an ethnographer becomes both a cultural interpreter and a cultural analyst. Commenting on the complex interminable process of cultural analysis Geertz points out, “Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the Continent of meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape.” (20)

The cultural analyst has to repeatedly take into account the changing events and variables. All literary, anthropological acts are thus cultural encounters, with interpretations and explanations. No cultural description can ever be complete without seeking its fullness from the palimpsest that culture always is. The economy of

selection and the inevitability to pass over, both instruct culture formation. The field observation coupled with the analysis of observation as well as the critique of it and the narration in the other language makes ethnography a story telling. To quote Clifford Geertz:

Understanding a form of life, or anyway some aspects of it to some degree, and convincing others that you have indeed done so, involves more than the assembly of telling particulars or the imposition of general narratives. It involves bringing figure and ground, the passing occasion and the long story, into coincident view. (*After the Fact* 51)

Geertz explains ethnography as a particular way of “inscribing” culture. He names it as “thick” writing. An anthropologist’s analysis of this “thick” writing is “thick description.” The main objective of ethnography then is to describe stratification of layers of significance. To dig up the piled up layers of significations and hierarchical structures of meaning which can be observed not just in songs, poems, religious incantations and rituals but also in emotional expressions like twitches, winks, rumors, which are produced to generate various perceptions and interpretations. In the recent pasts Environmentalists, find the narratives of Adivasis and the Aborigines fine lessons in environment. Ethno-botany, is a developing discipline which extensively uses these “cultural texts.”

For Geertz “culture” is “accumulated totality of symbol systems.” The symbol-systems include religion, ideology, commonsense, economics, sports, law, drama, performance, etc... These symbol-systems constitute the language the members of a community use to interpret and to derive meaning. Therefore Geertz aptly says:

Anthropological writings are themselves interpretations, second and third order ones to boot. (By definition, only a “native makes first order ones: it’s his culture.) They are thus, fictions; fictions in the sense that they are “something made”, “something fashioned” – the original meaning of fictio – not that they are false, unfactual, or merely “as if” thought experiments. (*The Interpretation of Cultures* 15)

All these definitions, explanations, reflections on anthropology, ethnography and culture are incomplete without an understanding of the political agenda of the discipline. Empire expansion and conquest of the west have inscribed in history a relationship between a powerful “centre” and a “periphery.” The notion of the periphery included concepts such as “exoticism”, “primitivism” and “tribalism.” Eurocentric understanding of development explained tribalism as, “pre-literate”, “pre-state”, “pre-technological”, “pre-industrial that is weak, un-evolved and underdeveloped in culture, politics and technology.

Through this alterity, (a term propounded by Emmanuel Levinas to mean the Philosophical principle of exchanging one’s own perspective for that of the “other” extensively used in Anthropology to refer to above mentioned dualism) the West attained its own definition of being, high-tech, agronomy, philosophy, ontology, epistemology and fine art. In an intelligent remark on anthropology and ethnography, Nigel Rapport and Joanna Overing say:

Western policy in its assimilation of external others has always been to consume only what could be most easily digestible. It was anthropology, the science of alterity that provided both the technical vocabulary and the objectified imagery through which those peoples who were conquered and

colonized by the Western state could be digestibly incorporated into a European mental framework. (365)

Anthropology as an academic discipline took shape in late 19th and early 20th century. This period was marked by western imperialist, evolutionist and modernist thought. Its agenda was to express the objectified imagery of the “other.” The intellectual and the political climate of the period has serious implications on development of anthropology as a discipline. But anthropologists like Malinowski and Franz Boas gave the discipline a new look through their “naturalist” or the “realist” approach. Malinowski stresses the importance of the “native point of view.” This understanding accommodates the perspective of the other and helps to avoid fantasies or exoticism. Malinowski and Franz Boas objected to armchair evolutionism and invented a fieldwork tradition based on the use of the native language in “participant observation”. (121)

Malinowski is remembered for his famous monograph on *Trobriand Islanders Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922 (Malinowski). This monumental work led to a tradition of fieldwork method in ethnography. In America, Franz Boas strongly argued about the richness and plurality of culture. Though criticized for his cultural relativism as opposed to evolutionism he discarded the idea of “racial and cultural superiority implicit in evolutionist writings.” Important works of Boas include *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911), *Race Language and Culture* (1940). It is important to note that the two anthropologists were not just remembered for their great work, but for the influence they wielded on many students. Malinowski’s well-known students include Raymond Firth, Phyllis Kaberry, Monica Wilson and Hilda Kuper. Boas’ students include Benjamin Lee Whorf, and Clifford Geertz.

Post-colonial criticism questioned Malinowski's "realistic rhetorical genre", that "naturalized" the Trobrianders who remained in that uncivilized part of nature, which existed as opposition to modernity and to be dominated and tamed by the western modern spirit. "To objectify is to naturalize, and therefore to create distance between self and the object, whether it be animate or inanimate, human or stone." (12)

The concept of alterity becomes important at this point. This has made anthropology enter into a new phase of "self-reflection." Joined with post-colonial voices, the concept of alterity has seriously engaged in a critique of all those "isms" of modernist thought (evolutionalism, functionalism, structuralism and so forth) that are implicated in Western civilizations imperialist and capitalist past. (16)

Anthropology's strength lies in its tradition of fieldwork which provides the knowledge of the "local" and the "particular." In the recent decades, the importance has been stressed on the context in which the ethnographic writings were produced. Today many sensitive questions are asked about an anthropological project; the very important being its political prudence. How an anthropological project decides its "geo-physical settings"? why does only certain races and ethnic groups are constantly anthropologically gazed? Does anthropological studies in any respect help in constructing a methodology in analyzing social life and relations?

These questions, which were unspoken earlier, have taken prominence in the anthropological discussions in the recent years. This "reflexive awareness" compelled anthropology to acknowledge the epistemological and political forces of the altering universe. Rapport and Overing identify two important works, which were published in

1986 in two volumes, *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (edited by George Marcus and James Clifford) and *Cultural Critique An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Marcus and Fischer). This intellectual activity was known as “The Writing Culture Debate.” This debate yielded three central resolutions.

(1) the scientific epistemology on which anthropology had been hitherto based –that anthropology would one day evolve the perfect language for describing “real human nature” or “real cultural essences” –was in fact a provincial and politically unsavory, Western specificity; (2) all writing was rhetorical, so any claims made by anthropologists about the others they studied spoke less of incontestable givens and more of the hegemonies of political and professional scriptural practice; (3) all so called grand or meta narratives of knowledge and progress might be called into question and, by juxtaposing them against the equally specific narratives of diverse other cultures, deconstructed. (20)

This post-colonial critique has not just changed the anthropological stance; it has also raised questions regarding the “geo-physical” of the anthropological fieldwork. The trend in recent decades has been that anthropologists concentrate on their own cultures and societies. The reasons for this situation are innumerable. Decreasing funds to undertake research in distant countries, suspicion regarding the agenda of Western interest coupled with the emergence of indigenous researcher (in spite of their Western training) might be few a reasons. Anthropologist “at home” will have the opportunity of deciphering many issues like “cultural ambiguity”, “hybridity” and “heterogeneity.”

But one has to acknowledge, that it was anthropology which, according to Rapport and Overing,

has taken as its central plank the de-centering of the West, and the appreciating of other “literatures”, “cultures” and “sciences.” At a time of Western retrenchment,(sic) in terms of the financing of research and of charitable aid overseas, and of a certain smugness concerning “the end of history” and the domination of a Western model of national-democratic polity, it is all the more important that anthropology remain as flag bearer of non-Western interests, in all possible senses. (23)

Many ideological, theoretical changes have occurred in ethnography and anthropology, but the focus of study remains culture. Anthropology as a discipline has evolved a defining of and an understanding of culture. Evolutionism, apart from Marxism, had its profound influence on human intellect. Social evolutionary approach coupled with Western imperialism linked culture with rationality.

In contrast to social evolutionism, relativist approach always tried to understand culture in its plurality. Franz Boas stressed the plurality of cultures as early as in 1911. He discarded the notion of technological progress and defined cultural superiority of a society. This is evident when he gives this example of Chinese culture being different from and equal to that of African Nuer, or the Amazonian Yanomami. Because each culture corresponds to a specific, historical contingent, and a definite life style, which takes distinct profile in songs, poems, stories, legends and many other manifestations.

Culture during the early part of 20th century acquired political dimension. From the very inception of Anthropology as a discipline there has been a virulent debate about the exact meaning of culture. This will certainly raise many controversies like the very existence of culture or the reality of culture. “If there is a reality to culture, where does this culture reside? does it dwell in the mind or is it a matter of practice? To what extent is culture shared? Through which approach (cognitivist? phenomenological? Materialistic?) can “it” best be understood and translated?” (93)

Anthropology probably will never come to an agreement over a particular method to analyze culture and the debate will continue to be controversial. Boas insisted that culture is an ongoing creative process through which people continually incorporate and transform new and foreign elements. But the structural functionalists take the position of “ontological realism” as what “is assumed with respect to culture which understand tradition as something real, to be found outside the minds of individuals, and objectified in the form of a collection of objects, symbols, techniques, values, beliefs, practices and institutions that the individuals of a culture share.” (94)

In the 1960's we can identify a shift from phenomenological approach of analyzing “culture as customary behavior” to cognitivist approach of culture as “idea systems, or structures of symbolic meaning.” According to cognitivist approach, “Culture, as a conceptual structure made up of representations of reality, was understood to orient, direct, organize action in systems by providing each with its own logic. Culture gave purpose to the social system, and ensured its equilibrium.” (94)

In recent decades however, anthropology has again gone back to concepts of Franz Boas. Quoting the example of contemporary anthropologist Roy Wagner's position of understanding culture, Overing and Rapport say:

The world of meaning, cannot articulate with a natural science format, which must by the very nature of its task (of objectification) ignore, mystify, disdain, doubt personal invention and concrete imagination... cultural meanings are not constituted of signs of conventional reference, but instead “live a constant flux of continual re-creation.... The core of culture is ... a coherent flow of images and analogies, that cannot be communicated directly form mind to mind, but only elicited, adumbrated depicted . (96)

This approach to culture will provide the field worker with the wisdom to analyze a performance of ritual, a myth or a story considering the “poetics, creativity, individuality, inconsistencies, and contradictions of such cultural processes.”(96). In this way understanding cultural process becomes understanding particular modes of living. Shedding the “objective” of abstract structures a cultural analyst has to live, experience, think and engage oneself completely in the process of analysis.

Evolution of humanity gives meaning to our experience. The reflecting human mind started finding meaning in writing. Writing is not just inscription of words on a page, writing in anthropology acquires a far more significance in musical notes of a song, the colors used to depict the incomprehensible nature, the dancing steps of a ritual, the rules of a game, sculptures, buildings, institutions and hierarchies. Writing makes our experience orderly. “Writing is an experiencing of experience, a meta-experience; it is

the considered ordering of experience in symbolic form, and the conscious production of meaning from it. Understood in its fullest form, writing is the practice of symbolically reflecting on, and making sense of, experience.” (406)

However, most of the times our closed understanding equates literacy with writing. This has created two distinct cultures, written and oral. So it became the duty of the “written cultures” to write about, to document cultures which were/are oral. This writing of cultures writes Overing and Rapport, “...is a technique for the fixing of discourse, processing it as a possible archive of later analysis and translation, and the creating of a quasi –separate world of texts which comes to eclipse the circumstantial world of orality.” (405)

Though writing has reduced the performing ability of speech it is a technology which in a way captures the passing moments thus allowing us to reconstruct as well as re-consult it. In a sense it becomes a very personal act of introspection.

After the establishment of the departments of Commonwealth Studies the focus shifted from European and American continents to the colonized countries like India, Canada, the Caribbean, Australia and others. A literature of these countries written in English was the subject for research and academic activities. The tools to analyze these literatures had to be different, as they opened a new world. Literary criticism had to borrow tools from different disciplines of humanities, like anthropology, history, sociology, psychology and folklore. Commonwealth studies also opened its doors to more sensitive issues like the feminist studies, subaltern studies. In a way the focal point shifted from the individualistic approach to community consciousness.

The earlier celebration of the ultimate individual, which had gripped the academic and the literary circles had given way to the importance of the community. The definitions of discourses and the literary genres were deconstructed. Earlier literary “texts” became the contexts in which the histories were rewritten. The songs and poems of the Toda and the Inuit, which were oral took the shape of letters and even were translated to English. These songs and poems in English have become the meta-narratives of the living cultures of these communities. The life of these communities is a lesson in ecology and environment. The Toda and the Inuit take responsibility of the environment and the ecology of which they are part. It is their part of psychology. Therefore the songs, poems, and legends are great lessons in Environmentalism.

The primary source of the thesis is the ethnological record of the eminent linguist M.B.Emeneau. His acclaimed work *Toda Songs*, is a huge collection of the Songs of the Toda people. Knud Rasmussen is a prominent name in ethnological studies of North Canada. His *Across Arctic America Narrative of the Fifth Thule Expedition* is the primary source. Another important is Diamond Jenness’ *The Report of Canadian Arctic Expedition volume XIV* (Helen H. Roberts and Jenness Diamond 1925). With these seminal works as the primary source the thesis frequently draws help from valuable books by many prominent anthropologists like, *The Todas* by W.H.R. Rivers and *Eskimo Poems from Canada and Greenland*, by Tom Lowenstein.

W.H.R. Rivers was a neurologist, a psychiatrist as well as a proficient anthropologist. Referring to his proficiency in anthropology, Richard Slobodin writes that Rivers was a pivotal figure in making anthropology “an academic discipline grounded in research on non-western cultures and conceived as a science or as moving toward the status of

science. Rivers makes clear in his introduction to his 2 volumes on the Todas that “the object of this work is not merely a record of the customs and beliefs of a people, but also a demonstration of anthropological method.” His meticulous, detailed observation and unbiased way of narration is a lesson in ethnography. W.H.R. Rivers did his field work in 1901-02. The Gunning Fund of Royal Society and the British Association jointly funded his fieldwork. This fieldwork resulted in 30 chapters, which discussed at length the Toda way of life. Rivers’ major concern was about the Kinship pattern and the social organization. He also provides detailed Glossary and Appendix of the Toda villages and the plants which are used in Toda rituals. Rivers provides 72 genealogical tables of the 18 patrilineal clans of the Toda. Emeneau, in his *Toda Songs*, refers to these genealogical tables, while introducing the composers of the songs. Commenting on his meticulous observation Richard Slobodin, Professor of Anthropology writes:

The psychologist in him made him to meticulously record the minute detail of the Toda life. When this has been said, however, the phenomena studied those of Toda culture and society, remain as among the most remarkable examples of internal cohesiveness in all ethnographic literature. With a few others, they are outstanding examples of the sacred society or, in Redfieldian terms, of the little Community par excellence. (Slobodin 101-102)

Anthony Walker, the social anthropologist, has studied the Todas extensively after W.H.R. Rivers and M.B.Emeneau. *The Toda Of South India: A New Look, (1986)*(A. Walker) is a detailed sociological interpretation of the Toda community. It throws light on the changing social, economic and ritualistic practices of the Todas. The

highlight of the book is the essay about the Toda and their land problems. His more recent work *Between Tradition and Modernity and other essays on the Todas of South India*(1998)(A. R. Walker 1986), a collection of papers put together from various sources, helps in understanding the transition which has occurred over the period. M.B. Emeneau, Professor of Sanskrit and General Linguistics University of California (Berkeley) is a giant name in Toda studies. He started working among the Toda during 1935-1938. He took the advice of his teacher Edward Sapir and took up his study of the Toda language. Yale University, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Philosophical Society jointly sponsored his study. Emeneau expresses gratitude in the introduction not only to institutions which sponsored him but also to his Toda friends, Kanfisody, Daniel Kodan, and Kenoz. These Toda friends have helped Emeneau in his field work, collecting, interpreting and helping in translation. The result was Emeneau's monumental ethnographic work *Toda Songs*. The Clarendon Press agreed to publish this huge corpus of *Toda Songs* in 1971.

Before Emeneau started his work many prominent anthropologists had studied the Toda. W.H.R.Rivers' *The Todas*(Rivers 1986) in two volumes had already been published. Though very small among the South Indian communities, the Toda were of, very remarkable interest because of their ethnological aberrancies and the linguistic aberrancy of their Dravidian language.

Emeneau felt that the songs of the Toda would add to the general understanding of oral poetry. After his fieldwork in 1935-38, he has published many articles about Toda singing art. Another important ethnographic work is *Toda Grammar and Texts*.(Emeneau 1984) Apart from linguistic analysis of the Toda language, the book is a fine collection of Toda Mythology, folktales, origin, riddles etc.

Thirty years after his fieldwork, the *Toda Songs* was published. Emeneau feels that his work covers the Todas at a historical moment, which could be defined as, a period of culminating cultural bloom. While it is thirty years late, will probably be of interest, since the culture that it represents has since been pushed off centre and is probably undergoing much change.

Thirty more years, the Toda socio economic life is much changed. Still the singing art flourishes. Pasturage is not the way of life for Toda, but the cosmic world of the community seems to revolve round the buffaloes.

For the general understanding of the Nilgiris, the thesis refers to two important works, both collections of essays edited by the eminent anthropologist Paul Hockings.

Blue Mountains The Ethnography and Biogeography of a South Indian Region(1989)
(Hockings,)

Blue Mountains Revisited Cultural Studies on the Nilgiri Hills (1997)(Hockings,)

Both the editions comprise essays from various aspects of the Nilgiris. Many prominent scholars who have worked on these hills have contributed on many issues. Botanists, Hans J. von. Lengerke and Francois Blasco have contributed an essay on the Nilgiri environment, which discusses in length the climate, the seasons, the wind pattern, the rain, humidity, flora and fauna of the region, and the changes that has occurred over the period. There are individual essays on different tribes, which inhabit the hills like the Kota, the Kurumba, the Irula, the Paniya, and the Badaga by anthropologists like David G. Mandelbaum, Anthony Walker, Paul Hockings and Nurit Bird-David. While M.B.Emeneau writes about the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the region, Frank Heidemann writes about the immigrant labourers and their problems. These books help to understand the Nilgiris as a region.

Across Arctic America Narrative of the Fifth Thule Expedition(Rasmussen 1927) is the primary source in the case of the Inuit. Many editions of Inuit poetry have been based on this Narrative. *Eskimo Poems from Canada and Greenland*, by Tom Lowenstein is one of the prominent collections of Inuit poetry based on the Narrative of the Fifth Thule Expedition.

Ancient Land : Sacred Whale The Inuit Hunt and its Rituals,(Lowenstein, 1994) is by the popular Inuit scholar Tom Lowenstein. Continuing the legacy of Knud Rasmussen, Tom Lowenstein elaborately discusses the ancient whale hunting practice of the Inuit. The whale hunting is a high ritual drama, which gives us a detailed account of animism of Inuit cosmology.

Native Peoples in Canadian Literature, (Mowat and Mowat 1974)edited by William and Christine Mowat, the book is a useful anthology of essays that provide critical insight into the Native Peoples creative endeavor. The place of creative mind of these Native People in larger White Canada is the focus of discussion. It also provides a fine comparison of other marginalized communities and the Inuit imagination.

Beyond the high hills – A book of Eskimo Poems (Père and Rasmussen 1976) is an anthology of popular Inuit Poems with amazing photographs that aptly describes the mood of these poems.

Apart from these collections, the thesis refers to two important works, which help to understand the present situation of the Inuit. *The last Imaginary Place, a Human History of the Arctic World* by Robert McGhee (McGhee 2007) . Robert McGhee is

Curator of Arctic archaeology at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa and a renowned Arctic scholar. The book a powerful narration of the frozen north which intimidates as well as attracts people from south. It is an enthralling book about the ancient people who inhabit the land, the landscape with huge icebergs and endless winter nights, animals which have learnt to survive. The book also discusses the early fur trade and great expeditions undertaken in this part of the world. This book provides the history and anthropology of the Arctic region in a capsule. Yet another important book that gives a clear picture of contemporary Inuit life and vision is *Critical Inuit Studies An Anthology of Contemporary Arctic Ethnography*(Stern and Stevenson 2006) edited by Pamela Stern and Lisa Stevenson. It is a very well researched book that is divided into three parts; the first part deals with the importance of memory and listening to the elders in shaping the new state Nunavut. The second part deals with Land Claims, development and political identity of Inuit in Canada, traditional trade that the Inuit have made their cultural identity. The third part is about the land and its cosmological importance in the Inuit world. These two important works have provided an authentic understanding of the people and the land.

Chapterization

The thesis is divided into 4 chapters. The first chapter introduces the physical world of the Toda and the Inuit. It is important to understand the geographical uniqueness, as it translates into their cultural life. Inuit are found in Canada, Alaska, and northern Europe as well as in northern part of Asia. They are considered the most scattered tribe. Inuit spread across three continents have formed Inuit Circumpolar Council, a multi-national non-government organization that works to “strengthen the unity of the Inuit, promote the interest of the people, safeguarding the Artic Circle, and

importantly ensure the development of Inuit culture.” The Council first held a Conference in 1977, which adopted the name Inuit for all the people of the region, for the exonym Eskimo. The Inuit have consolidated their political identity in the Nunavut State. The “intimidating” Arctic has to be understood to value the Inuit mysticism. The chapter deals also with the political struggle the Inuit underwent to consolidate and firmly express their identity in the Nunavut State.

The Todas are located in the southern state of Tamilnadu in India. Nilgiri District is recognized as the ecological hotspot and referred as the tribal enclave. This place is remarkable for its flora and fauna. The cultural milieu of the area is also rich with varied tribal groups sharing the green hills of Nilgiris. Understanding the symbiotic relationship that exists between the Toda and their environment helps to appreciate their songs and poems. The present political situation of the Toda is also discussed briefly, as it helps to understand the changing circumstances of the Tribe. The last part of the chapter tries to bring about a comparison between these two cultures and the way in which it is understood by the European researchers.

The second chapter focuses completely on the *Toda Songs* by Emeneau. The singing art, which has flourished over the ages, the poetic technique, the selection of the theme, the context in which the song has been created will all be discussed at length. Emeneau has given a short introduction to all the songs which mentions the name of the composer, the context in which the song has been composed and the relationship which the song shares with the previous song. This provides an organic relation with the songs and songsters in this collection. The first part of the chapter discusses the reason for the selection of the Toda tribe by M.B.Emeneau. Toda were already much

studied tribe of India. Emeneau's teacher Edward Sapir, advised him to do research on the linguistic aspect of the tribe. The result was the *Toda Songs*. The University of California, at Berkeley where Emeneau studied, worked had giant scholars working on singers and singing. Milman Parry, his student Albert Lord had developed the grand theory on the Homeric epics. This theory on formulaic oral tradition influenced Emeneau. This theoretical background forms the basis of Emeneau's work on the Toda. This is also the framework based on which the songs of the Toda have been analyzed in the thesis. This analysis becomes the second part of this chapter.

The third chapter is about the Inuit songs and poems. *The Reports of the Fifth Thule Expeditions* by the celebrated ethnologist Knud Rasmussen and Diamond Jenness' *Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition* the focus of discussion. Many distinguished editors like Tom Lowenstein, Richard Lewis and Edward Field, have collected Inuit songs recorded in the Fifth Thule expedition. These editions have also been considered.

The first part of the chapter focuses on the works of Knud Rasmussen, and Diamond Jenness as they are considered to be a complete records of Inuit way of life. Knud Rasmussen's mother was an Inuk woman, and therefore Knud Rasmussen could understand as well as speak the language of Inuit. This worked to his advantage. The saga of this expedition is itself very interesting. Knud Rasmussen and his team were the witness to a period of transition; a transition from an ancient religion to Christianity, a transition from a nomadic life to that of an alien, settled way of life. This "Report" is a fine record of all these changes in a community. It also records a cultural life which was full of songs, throat singing, drum dancing, ritual recitation, shamans, and shamanism.

The last chapter will be conclusive in nature and tries to draw significant lessons from the study of these two oral traditions. Changing trends in the production of culture in the two communities will be discussed. The challenges these communities have faced during the past, and the strategies that evolved while facing them would be a rewarding lesson in cultural studies. In the Inuit context, the Nunavut government has adopted IQ, Inuit qaujimajatuqangit, (Inuit traditional knowledge) as its foundation. The young generation of Inuit have developed their distinct expression, both in Inuktitut and English and have made their impression in Canadian literary world. The chapter throws light on the emerging trends in the present Inuit literary world. In the Toda context, as the language has no syllabic structure, the community retains its identity in its own way. It is expressed in their rituals, songs and in the embroidery the Toda women are known for. Their numbers are small, as was in the history, however with growing awareness in healthcare and hygiene, and greater exposure to education, the community has conquered the threat of extinction. Many individuals, organizations are working to improve and reinstitute traditional Toda way of life, which is the Nilgiri way of life. The second part of the chapter brings these issues into focus.

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â€œThe Inuit are really trying our best to promote our culture and show our way of life and how our ancestors lived.â€ Inuit huntersâ€™ plea to the EU: lift ban seal cull or our lifestyle will be doomed. Read more.â€ Poverty became the new normal in Nunavut, sending the already high suicide rates soaring and leaving about seven out of 10 Inuit children going hungry to school. The campaigns proved lucrative for animal rights activists, often raising tremendous amounts of money for the organisations.â€ The designer Nicole Camphaug began experimenting with layering sealskin on high heels and dress shoes several years ago, envisioning the combination as another way of showcasing Inuit culture. â€œI always think itâ€™s so important to get sealskin out there,â€ she said. The Inuits new land is Nunavut. It means our land in their language. VOCABULARY: Write the correct words in the blanks shared control chewed raw wood pulled custom hard skin.â€ They began to write songs and sing together. Soon, George joined them. The group started to play in England and make money.â€ We still hear Beatles songs on the radio today. Their music and songs will never die. VOCABULARY: Write the correct words in the blanks group hit fans screamed concerts copied together joined. 1. John and Paul wrote songs with each other. They wrote songs __. 2. People wanted to look like the Beatles. / This topic will be an exclusive one for the answers of CodyCross Inuit sealskin boot, this game was developed by Fanatee Games a famous one known in puzzle games for ios and android devices. From Now on, you will have all the hints, cheats and needed answers to complete this puzzle. You will have in this game to find the words from the hint in order to fulfill the board and find a final word of the puzzle group . The game is old and we decided to cover it because it is a unique kind of crossword puzzle games. CodyCross Inuit sealskin boot Answers: PS: if you are looking for another level ans