



International Journal of English Literature and Culture

Volume 5 (2017)

<http://www.academicresearchjournals.org/IJELC/Index.htm>

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Help Desk: support@academicresearchjournals.org

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Research Paper

Oscar Wilde and the Politics of Irish Aestheticism: A Genealogical Study into *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Hengameh Kharrazi and Dr. Fazel Asadiamjad

Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Accepted 11 March 2017

This research explored the life of beauty a person can own and it is on the subject of the amount of human agency in one's life amidst all power relations. Oscar Wilde's politics of Irish aestheticism is the instigator of an aesthetic possibility of life in the historical booklet of one's lived experience. But *The Picture of Dorian Gray* does not remain simply beautiful and the protagonist's life has been ruined to nothingness; therefore, the aim of this research was to problematise the aesthetic life being sought for by the characters. This was done to show to what extent art suffices for life fulfillment. Besides, genealogical curiosity considers Wilde's aesthetics amidst all other power relations to discover how a person can push his/her individualistic demands forward.

Keywords: Foucauldian Archaeology, Foucauldian Genealogy, Foucauldian Discipline, Problematism, Wildean Aesthetics, The Sublime, The Beautiful, Social Individualism.

Cite This Article As: Kharrazi H, Asadiamjad F (2017). Oscar Wilde and the Politics of Irish Aestheticism: A Genealogical Study into *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. *Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult.* 5(2): 15-25

INTRODUCTION

Oscar Wilde is a prominent figure not just in his contemporary period but in the history of literature from his literary rise onwards. This prominence is due to his relevance to socio-political issues as well as his literary success looking back at the new movement he had belonged to. As a result, what is to be presented here is exactly the way politics of that time had been bound up with the literary movement he was trying to propagate. The political atmosphere of an era in which he lived had been an object of thinkers' critical reaction, so Wilde's reaction must be seen in the historical framework giving rise to other counter-thoughts and in it is where Foucauldian criticality lays its main concerns.

Foucault believes that a particular knowledge is formed in accordance with other knowledges in a given time in history. He insists on disclosing the fundamental structure of their formation with regard to all systems of power relations: this is where he introduced the concept of *discursive formation* to reinforce the idea of

interconnected relationships amongst all existing discourses whether they agree with each other or not. The discourse which is examined in this research is Wilde's inference about art for art's sake as against the Victorian episteme which formulated its own aesthetic experience. Wildean aesthetics is expected to offer a *counter-discourse* which is not opposed to other statements of knowledge but it lived in co-existence with all other discourses.

In Foucauldian manner, aesthetics is a way to escape from any disciplinary means; efforts will be made to illuminate how human beings such as Dorian or Wilde wanted to care about their existence in discursive or non-discursive formations. How their identities are formed and to what extent a person in society can self-discipline oneself. Hence, individualistic self-practice leads to the examination of three trajectories running through the novel; consequently, it grows fairly important to deal with different grids of individualism in *The Picture of Dorian*

Gray, for instance, both Lord Henry and Dorian desire to wipe any trace of docility off their feeling of pleasure. First things first, as far as the Foucauldian perspective is concerned, it is better to initiate with responding to the question: how did Dorian go through the process of self-transformation in his life (Bios) regarding his aesthetic ideology (Logos) amidst all power relations in life, art, and society? The entrance to Foucauldian ethics can be reckoned as a psychoanalytic procedure but its treatment of psyche is not surrendered to a doctor, but the Gaze of that person must be the master of his existence as a discursive construct. With knowing the Victorian's particular attention to human subjectivity, the aesthetics of existence can be expounded with a more critical outlook. This criticality should not be vanished to a sheer complacency, therefore, this study is a self-practice, the nature of which will become clear in the next parts.

In the second place, the afore-mentioned self-practice is to be discussed in relation to Wildean belief in individualism, that is, when Dorian is continuously seeking for the feeling of pleasure embodied in the idea of the beautiful, it is critical to figure out to what extent Dorian can freely perform his desired impulses. Conversely, there was a revolutionary turn of mind in Utilitarianism which advocated a different conception of freedom. Utilitarianism talks about the happiness of all. In this way, there is a moral code which obeys the will of the others as 'do-as-you-would-be-done-by' and another one i.e. the propensity to take an action with regard to your own interests i.e. 'do the best for yourself'; the prosociality of the former and the self-assertiveness of the latter are the main topics in a Utilitarian discourse (Hinde 15). Prosociality is an abstraction that generates an abstract happiness for all. Maybe it would be said that there is no universalistic rule to encompass the happiness of all members of society. But if there remains some sacrifices on the road to happiness of the majority, then what is that happiness that utilitarianism wants to lead us? It seems that the majority of people are to accept 'the expected utility'. This expected utility follows one's self-interest to adopt a putative moral disposition, a disposition which is self-interested and it normalizes every speech, action, usefulness, and happiness to its own advantage and that is called 'Constrained Maximization' (Superson 23) which calls out people in society to its acceptance. Foucault believes that anyone who does not meet the expectation of utility will be considered as a *moral offender* because he/she breaks the normative ethical rubrics of bourgeois culture industry. This fact causes that person to feel guilt and consequently Normativity rolls up its sleeves to correct and reform the person's attitudes and behaviour (Gutting, *Introduction* 73). But some theoreticians believe that if the happiness of the majority is secured, then society will be in perfect accord. The researcher tries to posit the readers in this forum in order to unravel the issue of

individualism against utilitarianism at a given time in history.

Lastly, First and foremost amongst all questions is: How does Wilde's Aestheticism become an object of his resistance to power? Albeit this is just one question but so many questions are inherent in it. The relationship between human subjectivity and material existence has been sparking off a debate which still not yet quenched. In *Fearless Speech*, how to connect Logos (the theoretical knowledge) and Bios (life) is a worry to Foucault; his ethics requires human individuals to problematise their existence. Within the system of power relations, a person needs to re-invent his self. *Master morality* thinks that its formulating an aesthetic experience will be the only truthful Logos, however, for *slave morality*, freedom from a one-way knowledge is the highest ambition (Nietzsche 87) and it should be mediated by their imaginative strength. But keeping balance between these two realms is proved to be challenging since it is the political life of people which is to be aestheticized.

THE AESTHETIC PROBLEM

It is important to know how art manages to civilize people's lives. Teaching to live aesthetically creates people with cultivated expectations of their lives. But they may get stuck in the sheer abstraction of the idea of beauty or an idea of civilization; then the aesthetic quality of life cannot be enhanced since it is devoid of any application of those ideas in actuality. Any person might want to escape from life to get resided in the higher realms without knowing that for human beings to appreciate art, the idea of beauty should be concretized in their real life. Also, in reverse, life can downgrade human existence to vulgarity since life's raw materiality does not enhance the quality of life. As a result, the question of an aesthetic life will remain insoluble. The question grows problematic since both art and life can captivate human subjectivity and it is of importance to find out to what extent Dorian Gray is successful in keeping due equilibrium between art and the way he wants to live that art. Therefore, the significance of this study refers to the evaluation of the relationship between these two areas and this inquiry has been inspired from Foucauldian desire for getting Logos closer to Bios and vice versa. The other question is: in what ways we can be a free work of art although our very existence is influenced continuously by power and its accessories. This research depicts that power relations can not be divorced from other discourses in society; for instance, if we consider, Wilde's Irishness, then the official identity of the British is shaped not with the elimination of the Irish, but with combination of both together: 'Official identity = A= not- B but A= A/B' (Stallybrass 193)

Hence, the second major concern of this study is to know how an individual like Dorian Gray can prevent from dissolving into power relations. The dissolution of the self brings about the disappearance of individuality and this is the most hazardous incident that can occur to members of a society.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, as an archaeologist of knowledge, the researcher endeavours to find out the structure of art for art's sake discourse. This process consists of showing firstly Wildean aestheticism's formation of objects as they appear on different surfaces like literary genres (aesthetic biography) or social movements (socialism) and so on. Then the authorities of delimitation have to be discussed: There are discourses and counter-discourses propagated by certain formulators of knowledge like that of moral aesthetes as against Romantic aesthetes.

As a genealogist, the researcher with the help of the structural formation of the aesthetic discourse problematizes the contemporary period of Oscar Wilde. In this way the transformation of Dorian Gray will be shown in reaction to those power relations forming his identity. In order not to be disciplined by authoritarian discourses, one should problematise both the contemporary time in which he/she lives, and then their existence. If your existence is undermined then how can a person extricate oneself from the disciplinary systems?

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the archaeological and genealogical approaches are used to realize how Dorian's life is defined by the existent discourses of his time. The other concern is about making sure whether he was able to make a success of his life based on Foucauldian ethics and Wilde's technique of imagination or not, whether his individualism is endangered and if not to what extent he is able to freely bring about change in his life.

From Urban Vulgarity to Aesthetic Autobiography

Dorian's house in Grosvenor was a palace located in the rich West End of London. In actuality, in London of Dorian's time, there had been a deep fissure between the East End poor and the rich. The 18th c. thinkers cautioned us of the existence of "the grotesque body" living in the poor areas of the city. Aristocratic circles of acquaintances around Dorian distance themselves from the streets of London. 'One felt that he had kept himself unspotted from the world' (Wilde, Dorian 18), but willy-nilly, Dorian's moral identity was affected by his environmental filthiness, though kept invisible from the rich, it popped up to the surface and there it seems that 'London obscures, annuls, or maims the identity of

characters in search of their true self' (Kohl 149). Lord Henry knew himself as he really is but when it comes to the vulgarity of people he declares that 'death and vulgarity are the only facts in the 19th century that can not explain away' (Mason 107). Anne H. Wharton sees the artistic delight comes to rescue the writers of this age from the morbidity of vulgar and deprecated souls:

In this novel "The Picture of Dorian Gray," written for the July Lippincott's, Mr. Wilde, like Balzac and the authors of "Faust" and "John Inglesant," presents to us the drama of a human soul, while, like Gautier and About, he surrounds his utterly impossible story with a richness and depth of coloring and a grace and airiness of expression that make the perusal of its pages an artistic delight. (Mason 102)

Victorian authors like Wilde were forever feeling an urgent necessity to sublimate their human souls from the material existence into celestial, transformative strengths and ultimately they got that touch of sublimation from art. Each concept of life was to be made fruitful with the soil and water of aesthetic politics. In *The Decay of Lying*, Wilde scorns those modern novelists who cannot enhance the quality of life by dint of their imagination and beauty and 'the only thing that can be said about them is that they find life, crude, and leave it raw' (Wilde, Decay 17). Aestheticism strode to the fore to colour every aspect of life with the help of its tropes. It revolted against those authors like Charles Dickens who preached about the hard times of the Victorian arena based on the detailed accumulation of facts in order to louden their voice above the voice of art. In *Hard Times*, Dickens highlighted the sheer social situations of his time and life issues seem to predominate: 'Now, what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else' (3). Another aesthetic trope for Wilde was autobiography. You may think that this genre should talk merely about facts of a person's life but for Wilde it is not so. He, together with his life, is fictionalised into a work of art. Oscar Wilde goes beyond himself just the way Dorian goes beyond the realistic appearance of his portrait; it is not sufficient for him to be complacently at the level of appearance. Although autobiography has facts at its disposal, aesthetic biography is an art. Through Leslie Stephen this genre became an 'art of forgetting' and the biographer was a 'forgetter' because he forgets all about facts and turns information into an art _ what Stephen calls 'forgetting' (Broughton 44). The biographer was acting like a *mediator*, precisely interpreted as a 'conducting wire' by Stephen himself in order to convey the truth of the 'gentleman's anonymity' (ibid 50):

For Foucault, the author is a projection of the text, independent of the actual, physical writer: "it would be just as wrong to equate the author with

the real writer as to equate him with the fictitious speaker; the author-function is carried out and operates in the scission itself, in this division and this distance". (Gomel 7)

It is reminiscent of Kant's notion of *disinterestedness* which builds a genuine aesthetic judgment by excluding all charms and interests considered as irrelevant because of their mere empiricity (Bohls 16). Wilde tries to judge the pursuit of beauty in his life disinterestedly; he asserts: 'Lying and poetry are arts_arts, as Plato saw, not unconnected with each other and they require the most careful study, the most disinterested devotion' (Wilde, *Decay* 13). The transcendental inaccessibility of the author in literature of Wilde, like his counter-part in painting, Rossetti, is a struggle to be an art form which is divine, far away from the dirt of empirical experience of reality. Wilde's perception of nature differs from Victorian women who like Barrett Browning 'inscribes the Wordsworthian myth of nature as "mother nature" a moral teacher, protector of the child's psyche, and maternal substitute' [...] (Peterson 127); he shows in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* the character's desire for self-development in art that is 'a veil, rather than a mirror' (Wilde, *Decay* 37). Wilde is a forgetter because he forgets about rigid facts and what he offers in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is an autobiographical sketch of his ambitions and whims in his artistic life; 'Wilde insists that Dorian Gray was directed "against the crude brutality of plain realism" governed by scientific naturalism' (Killeen 83). Hence, the facts he reveals are perhaps not precisely a blow-by-blow history of his life, but the history of his aesthetic imagination for a transcendental move into an ideal type he has been envisaging so long. He thinks a life without "Art will become sterile, and Beauty will pass away from the land (Wilde, *Decay* 15).

However, according to Foucault, biography might be a disciplinary gaze_ the gaze of the subject-writer_ which enforces biographical discipline through being disinterested for conveying the message that it is not contaminated with prejudices. When a writer is deemed as a transcendental anonymity then what he prescribes anonymously can be given as the only truth at hand (Rabinow 104). Wilde's avoidance from being involved in the sheer raw materiality of life leads him not to be an actual autobiographer who is writing about facts. Also, he is not a transcendental autonomy managing Dorian's formation. In fact, he is a *mediator* who turns information, desires, and life into art as kind of spirituality. In Foucauldian analysis, 'every aspect of life is subject to a whole series of procedures designed to enforce normality' (Sullivan 29) and Wilde endeavours to rescue us from this normalizing judgment into culture by Criticism (Wilde, *Critic* 229). Wilde redefines the concept of criticism; *his autobiography is a criticism* in which the self is fictionalised:

That is what the highest criticism really is, the record of one's own soul. It is more fascinating than history, as it is concerned simply with oneself. It is more delightful than philosophy, as its subject is concrete and not abstract, real and not vogue. It is the only civilized form of autobiography as it deals not with the events, but with the thoughts of one's life; not with life's physical accidents of death and circumstance, but with the spiritual moods and imaginative passions of the mind. (Bloom x)

Oscar Wilde amongst other missionary aesthetes tried to roll his sleeves up and rescue the poor urban vulgarity from falling into misery. 'Missionary aestheticism' is socially-oriented for it was a medium through which the aesthetes could reform the reality of poor non-aesthetic qualities by exposing the working people to beauty (Maltz 3). So, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* appears to be a trial for each person to make sure how his subjective impressions of Nature will be related to the power relations of art in an episteme.

The Rise of the Religio-Romantic Aesthetics

Human agency in *Dorian Gray* grows more individualistic when he finds out that he can take pleasure in the hedonic happiness of life from within that is he derives his greatest satisfaction not from the recognition of static physical attributes but from a realization of his kinetic power to change the rendition of his nature that appears in Basil Hallward's painting. (Gillespie 68)

Dorian was trying to get rid of those 'wearisome round of stereotyped habits' and he was in hope of his eyes being opened one morning to 'a world that had been refashioned anew in the darkness for our pleasure' (Wilde, *Dorian* 125). In line with Foucauldian resistance to be objectified in generalization, Dorian aspires to be capable of making decisions for his life without being fallen into a universal homogenisation (Johnson 90). Ruskin in his book *The Pleasures of England* specified one of the pleasures as the pleasure of learning 'in the sense of receiving instruction; _ a pleasure totally separate from that of finding out things for yourself, _ and an extremely sweet and sacred pleasure , when you know how to seek it, and receive' (4). Here through counteracting such learning, a person like Oscar Wilde accepts no such disciplinary instruction but he takes the pain of learning with reference to himself 'because through that he realizes his personality' and he introduces such a person as a real Christian, as an artifact of religious perfection (Wilde, *Soul* 17). On the larger scale if a nation wants to realize its personality, his resolution should be aimed at a life for perfection. However, for Ruskin each person should do his good work i.e. the

same moral norms. In the end, Dorian Gray reiterates the fact that he wants to be good. Maybe conformity to moralism was his intention because he had been experiencing a trauma of being himself.

This glimmer of a hoped-for human's perfection indicates the rise of religio-romantic aesthetics. Gradually, the obsession with objectivity reshaped itself into the excess of subjectivity and what remains is the artist that is consummately submerged into his work of art. What strikes one's mind, indeed, from the word submergence is Basil's oneness with Dorian. The aesthetic hedonism of which Dorian is the proponent was derived its existence as a reaction to the objectifying morality in vogue in back of him. Pater and Wilde were on this side of the story. Both of them created what was named aesthetic hedonism. They attached themselves to the religion of art in which each human being with his mental impressions can alter the way the objects are, as Wilde insists that: one should see things as they are not.

What changes the religion of art from other religions is that it is not compatible with the revelatory reason of an a priori knower conveyed to people, but it is just human reason that constructs its authenticity. Back to the theologians, it is maintained that 'because the exercise of reason may be inadequate or deferred, it was necessary for God to supplement human reason with divine revelation' (Schimmel 21), and that is where Wilde objects. His religion for the realm of creation is not objectified at all into an irrefutable Truth, but art's reason is culturally conditioned and prone to being judged by a person's perception. Basil is the creator who gives life to Dorian through his own lived experience and artistic perception. This can be seen in a way that he sees the picture as his own life being mingled in Dorian's. The reader can take in how Basil epitomizes his own life inside his creation, and from then on, what are seen are Basil's impressions of art managing the scene of aestheticism. Dorian can be interpreted as a dream for aesthetic way of life. He might be a subjective impression of Wilde or Basil. But why did he fall into an abyss of corruption despite the fact that aesthetic-conceived way of life casts high status for art, and Dorian as an embodiment of its existence? In other words, his art for art's sake degenerates.

Dorian's Aesthetic Error

Kant sees humans 'both as objects, bound by natural laws; and as subjects, who can lay down laws for themselves' (Scruton 123). The desire for transcendence, which Dorian sums up into 'everything whose beauty does not die' (Wilde, *Dorian* 28), is based on an aesthetic perspective that subjective impressions should be considered for the realization of the surroundings (Kirwan 151). Kantianism wants to order the subjective

impressions one can have in relation to their judgments; but to see this act of ordering in Foucauldian eye as a discipline, Kantian perception of aesthetic judgment will become a philosophy which is in hope of subjugating human beings to his order. I want to analyze if it is true to talk about Kant's aesthetic judgment as such or it is Dorian's misperception of these doctrines of art. The question is: how to make connection between noumena and phenomena? I hope that by asking this question, one can appreciate the truth about Dorian's pursuit of the Beautiful i.e. the feeling of pleasure.

Based on Kant's *the analytic of the Beautiful*, imagination is the main criterion for human transcendental progress. Thus, the harmony of imagination with understanding shows that subjective impressions are parts of Kant's beliefs (Kant 20). Dorian Gray fails to abide by the stipulations which Kant had determined. Dorian's imaginative comprehension of the Beautiful was to be disinterested, but he was overwhelmed by his private interests. So his life of beauty was lacking in aesthetic quality. Furthermore, with regard to what quantity criterion stipulates, Dorian's judgment of life was expected to be universally valid, i.e. all people must have accepted his actions. Based on the analytic of the Sublime, his aesthetic experience was a failure, either. The Idea of beauty did not appear in Dorian's way of life, that is, he fails to harmonise noumena with the phenomena; on that account, he did not attain that "repose and harmony" (Etter 61) which Hegel depicts at the time when the Idea is represented in the world of appearance.

The point is that Dorian was thrown into a quagmire of absolutism, objectification, and incomprehensible ideas of noumenal world where human understanding is conceived as a weak recipient of all magnitude in there. Speaking in Kantian-Lacanian terminology, Dorian wanted to elevate his Reality of existence to that noumenal Real in which the Idea of beauty and vital youth is a priori, i.e. it is not poisoned by the empirical experience of life. It had been said about Wilde that his ideas were for the sake of ideas, and that was Dorian's aesthetic problem, too. It seems he was disillusioned since the road to transcendent beauty and imperishable youth is not one-way and ideas cannot be kept frozen in the noumenal world. He could not mediate between the two worlds, he could not harmonise his body and soul, and he was not conscious of his 'self' in order to reach a point where he could have been capable of saying I am conscious (Carr 65), conscious of my empirical existence in relation to a more cultivated realm. Since Dorian just wanted to reside in the eternity given by the Idea of beauty, this realm with its regulative common sense aesthetics can discipline human subjects in search of the sublime. We can see Kantian regulative influence of the Sublime as a way to moderate fervent individuality in fear of its chaotic aftereffects. Furthermore, imagination's

common sense is constitutive. Dorian can be harmonised with the concepts of beauty which his understanding gives him, but again the criteria of universality can bind his subjective impressions to a universal consensus and this is against the religio-romantic aesthetics of Oscar Wilde. Although universalistic points of view are negated with regard to Wilde and Foucault, Dorian could have remained disinterested; then to Oscar Wilde it seems that human beings can keep themselves farther from despotic moral values. Dorian was disinterested in his life of beauty in such a manner that moralism has no place in his life, but conversely, he observed everything to his benefit and his thirst for the beautiful did not remain useless/disinterested.

Throughout all Dorian's life, Lord Henry was advertising a scientific language which prioritises the biological imperatives over the human soul; and he utters his doctrine of life as such: 'life is not governed by will or intention. Life is a question of nerves, and fibres, and slowly built-up cells in which thought hides itself and passion has its dreams' (Killeen 93). Dorian who had been influenced by Lord Henry followed his natural instincts all the time since Nature at last determines the beauty, youth, and death of human beings. However, when this naturalistic perspective annihilates the beauty of his life, Dorian comes to understand another aspect to human life. His conclusion is an expression of respect to the senses while they are being complemented by some purifying sources. Dorian, at first, undermines the senses' stance in the aesthetics of existence for the practice of self-cultivation, but later on, what he deems to be of high value is 'the spiritualisation of the senses'. He happens to realize this truth about human senses late in the final stages of his lifespan, when he tries to understand his doomed failure.

The true nature of the senses had never been understood, and that they had remained savage and animal merely because the world had sought to starve them to submission or to kill them by pain, instead of aiming at making them elements of a new spirituality, of which a fine instinct for beauty was to be the dominant characteristic. (Wilde, *Dorian* 123-124)

At last, he seems to tell the truth about himself; Parrhesia made it possible for him to admit the importance of the senses because while he was solitarily examining himself, he saw his errors before his eyes. His error was his indifference to his soul as a medium for enhancing the aesthetic quality of the senses. Through the process of self-diagnosis he concluded that for the sake of the stability of the mind, senses would have been elevated into the spirituality of the soul by art's synthetic imagination to create a life of beauty. For Hegel, 'the task of art was the sensuous representation of Ideal' (Etter 57); it is important to notice that the spiritualisation of senses are not for the sake of separating them from empirical experience but human senses can be 'far more

concrete, far more material' to maintain its relevance to an empirical i.e. historical experience and at the same time, to keep his contact with a priori spirituality of an artistic soul (Marcuse 259). Dorian's life does not establish a relationship between the a priori spirituality which art can bestow upon the sensuous life and his senses do not bring their data of experience to the a priori realm of artistic soul. His hedonism can be realised as Dorian's failure to spiritualise his sensuous experience of pleasure. Kierkegaard who is influenced by Kantian-Hegelian discourse believes that one should live poetically for reviving the ethics of life with the help of the beauty and glory of the aesthetic existence. In *The Critic as Artist*, Gilbert said to Ernest: 'in the actual life of man, sorrow... is a passage to a lesser perfection. But the sorrow with which Art fill us both purifies and initiates... it is through Art, and through Art only, that we can realize our perfection' (Wilde, *Critic* 185). The compound of ethical-aesthetical growth in the life of human beings is a religious practice, not that it makes man reconcile only with the grim actuality of his life but the very life of man becomes infinitised; Dorian Gray could not infinitise his life; his life was filled to the brim with raw animality and his material existence remained unspiritualised.

Aesthetic Imagination in Society

In *Dorian Gray*, while Dorian was engaging in the solitary self-examination of himself, he reached the conclusion that 'Actual life was chaos, but there was something terribly logical in the imagination' (188). These words are reminiscent of Oscar Wilde's separation of life and imagination through sanctifying Dorian in the portrait far away from the encroachment of bitter reality. Near the end of his life, Dorian who was destroyed by the way he had been living for the individualistic grasp of pleasure in the beautiful, he found out that 'he had been the victim of a terror-stricken imagination [...]' (189); the question is: why does imagination which reveals individual freedom, for Dorian become enchainment?

Lord Henry's invitation to see the divinity of beauty in visible things may be against what Wilde sees in an aesthetic freedom; Wilde says that life can be manipulated, censored, and silenced but human imagination is free to soar, to go beyond its material existence and it is where art can nest his dreams of free expression. But Lord Henry tries to set free Dorian's material existence from the clutch of those worldviews making a body desensuous. It can be said that what the authoritarian bodies want is some docile bodies and in order to let your body speak out its own needs, you have to answer the needs of your sensations. Lord Henry said to Dorian 'it is only shallow people who do not judge by appearance. The true mystery of the world is the visible,

not the invisible [...] (24); at this point we get near the scientific approach in nineteenth century by which they want to eliminate doubt and replace it with certainty for the sake of 'social harmony' (Ferguson 468), but the scientific certainty was doomed to failure since the very usefulness of science which seeks to form socially useful subjects leads to decadent consequences. The life which Dorian led was resulted in a sensuous life which the sense of beauty is polluted with the private interests of the body.

In Wilde, docile bodies can fly into individuality through socialism. His socialism has the reverberation of attending to each individual's personal pleasure. In science, authorities cannot interfere with the result of an experiment in a way to change the final results; scientific formulations cannot be summed up into an authoritarian normativity; it can be inferred that Wilde says in *The Soul of Man under Socialism*: so, why do you change philosophy's beauty into what the norms require (9)? Back to Dorian Gray, the pure product of naturalistic aesthetics of Lord Henry changes the innocence of Dorian into an object of desires, those natural properties of human beings which are to decay. No intervention from the authority can change the natural process of body. The mistake of Lord Henry is his disillusion that by gaining the right of expression for bodily ambitions, one can live beautifully to his advantage. Lord Henry wants the human body to express everything. Wilde wants imagination, the seat of art to express everything even the morbid things. Though maybe Lord Henry's whim is to take body out of docility but in the end Dorian gets involved in bodily deprecation first through the materiality inherent in the real life which can embitter the soul which for Wilde its epistemological ideas are revived through art. Secondly body's docility is not only eliminated but also it will be made more submissive by those disciplinary proponents of moralism that see dehumanization in excessive consumption of body. So then in this situation what will Wilde do to settle the soul in its right place? His individualism is preaching human beings to be useless in society.

What Lord Henry finds in the materiality of existence is its utility; but his version of utilitarian way of looking at the feeling of pleasure seems to be against the abstract power of capitalism in which the surplus value of labour cannot be seen by the labourer; however, though he wants such work that is not stolen from human beings, such work that human beings must have a share of its value, his own conceptualization of human labour in life is commodified human beings into another form of utilitarian definition of pleasure which longs for the possession of use-value of labour; that is taking pleasure in objects to your own benefits in a way that a subject is immersed in the objects themselves. The former tries to immerse people in a consensual competition since man's labour should be in the service of the institutions of the abstract

power, and the latter wants immersion in the mere private interests which leads to human's identification with the objects. Dorian's failure is his inability to make distinct his own self from the objects of pleasure so in the end what remains of him is the subject represented in objects. His immersion is explained by Mahaffey psychologically as the influence of mother over the child leaves no separate existence for him and he is repressed by the mother's shadow compared to the perversion of the child by his father's insistence on transcending above the reality (Mahaffey 190).

But Wilde's pleasure is the application of beautiful in things common to all. Wilde's benefit means that I don't want to be disciplined by your influence, by being commodified into an object so that my labour's value becomes concealed from me, but I want to do beautiful work for my own pleasure of free expression. Dorian must have not been confused with the possessions he has since Wilde believes that what you are, what is within you, is the most important feature in self-realization. He rebukes English Government for treating people's property exactly as if these properties were the same human beings (Wilde, *Soul* 13).

So to sum up, Wilde's individualism is not egocentric, but it is a collective hope for freedom. Be individual! First, it means that a person should not be identified with any authoritarian influence; one should interact, exchange discourses and counter-discourses: 'Wherever there is a man who exercises authority, there is a man who resists authority' (Wilde, *Soul* 15). Second, be individual! Do not attach yourself to the objects, since there would be no 'I' anymore if you are one with them; even worse than this, it is when one immerses himself in the objects, their meanings may be given by institutions and then this fact accelerates the approach of human collapse. You will become those meanings that are institutional. The objects are models for contemplation not for construction; M.H. Abrams believes that art for art's sake_ art-as-such_ escapes from the 18th century institutional construction of art works towards placing the whole institutions inside the objects themselves, *the objects of connoisseurship*. Connoisseurship is the polished taste of the elite a century ago according to Abrams which later on was moved into non-disciplinary objects of contemplation (Abrams 24). The Non-disciplinary objects, free from all institutional meanings, become touchstones for specification of a polished taste without being subordinated to any authority other than their own existence. The right of connoisseurship in *Dorian Gray* is delegated to the authorities while the portrait, the work of art, has nothing to say. The free beauty of art becomes dependent on the way institutions inscribe their influence upon the aesthetic existence of the Portrait and art becomes speechless. Empathy is a technique for Burke to attract people's attention to one another. It goes beyond a simple attention into feeling each other's

pleasure or placing oneself in another's stead. In this way the British and the Irish get intermingled in their identities so that no trace of the Irish will be left. So, a nationalist should know on what he should base his existence; rather than being formed under the Gaze of the Other, an Irish man should say Yes to himself. Dorian-Lord Henry relationship can be seen as the symbol of the Irish-British one, therefore, as a person who is susceptible to his master's commands, Dorian should not be identified with him but he has to comprehend the discourse of his master not as an infra-law but as a counter-law. Foucault's enunciating subjects are the events themselves within power relations, hence, subject-events do not immerse in any system of power but they just occur.

Against Abstract Aesthetics

The sublime in Kantian epistemology is unknown; the idea of beauty for Dorian is unknown, either. The beauty's sublime presence is always hovering above his life but unattainable. In his life of sheer materiality which is prescribed by Lord Henry, no aestheticisation is possible in actuality. But Wilde wants human imagination to sublimate the chaotic life. It can be understood that through sublimation, art wants to dominate nature and human beings in an authoritarian fashion (Kaiser 120). Sybil's art was to 'spiritualise the age' (Wilde, *Dorian* 79), the age which was without any soul, Basil conjectured, but since her performance had not been above ugly life, Dorian Gray dismissed her cruelly. The regulative common sense of the Sublime can not make a room for those incapable of transcendence.

What Dorian did to Sybil is not just about the sublimation or spiritualisation of life, but it is about aesthetic regulation:

In tracing the sublime we have discovered that the sublimely other is the autonomous other, and that the scene of the sublime, its narrative, is of the life and death battle between two autonomous selves. (Bernstein 177)

Dorian's twofold self is reigned both by bodily pleasure and by the pleasure in reaching the idea of beauty; but the beauty he searched for is kept at the level of the phenomena; although, Lord Henry's naturalist aesthetics is a resistance to power relations in terms of its recuperation of body from docility, Dorian fell into the abysmal discourse of moralists as a proof for moral decay. But another aspect that fails Dorian is his imagination, being horror-stricken by the sublime. The sublime may be the Other, i.e. other discourses or it can be the very aestheticism which Wilde endorses. It may

seem that Dorian could not use aesthetics of life to mediate between ethics and art since he adopted the Paterian doctrines of Lord Henry which assumes no ethics for the life of beauty but sooner or later, Dorian 'recognises its limitations' (Manganiello 29); the sublime devours Dorian's aptitude for an artistic imagination, with that his individualism is splintered to nothing; it means that his sins should be committed through imagination for raising a mature resistance to the sublime. The raw narcissistic care of the self does lead to nowhere, but for sins to be imbued with freedom of expression, one should use imagination to moderate ethics. Imagination is capable of that vital force to be creative and one can present the sublime which is unrepresentable with its assistance. But power relations construe the ability of imaginative talent for free self-expression as sins. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the conception of sin is a discursive construct which is made significant by the abstract sublimity of power relations. Imaginative sins are not unethical crimes, but they are called so due to their disruption of institutional meanings.

There are moments, psychologists tell us, when the passion for sin, or for sin, or for what the world calls sin, so dominates a nature, that every fibre of the body, as every cell of the brain, seems to be instinct with fearful impulses. Men and women at such moments lose the freedom of their will. They move to their terrible end as autonomous move... for all sins, as theologians weary not of reminding us, are sins of disobedience. When that high spirit, that morning star of evil, fell from heaven, it was as a rebel that he fell. (Wilde, *Dorian* 179)

But there are some other theories which find in aestheticism a type of indifference to life. It is the very epitome of a disciplinary Gaze, namely, a disinterested gaze; this form of sublimity observes human life from above as the sole judge capable of measuring pure rationalities from the degraded empirical ones. Dorian as the victim of "horror-stricken imagination" fails to apprehend the horror of this transcendent realm. It is a terrifying magnitude for Dorian, since he puts off the imaginative impulse in his life. Kantian sublimity coined as Capitalist Aesthetics consumes Dorian's individuality and lets out a general abstract idea of beauty. Dorian's life is subjugated to the realm of invisible abstraction which cannot be made presentable in the realm of phenomena. But Wilde's high-esteemed role of aesthetics is not achieved through the medium of sublimity; it is spirituality which is not abstract but his is the concrete one, since the missionary role of human freedom is bestowed upon particular human beings. Aesthetics made tangible by human imagination. Indeed, Wilde's concrete aesthetics validates the individualism of each person in society as against the universalistic Utilitarianism guiding the masses to a happiness common to all, though it is abstract and inconceivable and essential. Dorian understands this fact late in his life

when he says 'punish us not for purification, but 'smite us for inequities' (Wilde, *Dorian* 207); if universalistic doctrines invite one to accept equity as justice which can be administered to all, and each person is independent, the rationale behind this perception is the social harmony which the capitalist Victorian states had formulated (Host 181). Any digression from that equity will be interpreted as evil inequities. Dorian's sense of beauty is juxtaposed; he is overwhelmed with empirical reality of life but at the other moment he seeks for an a priori Ideal of the idea of beauty. Because of that he could not live beautifully. It is said that through the abstract administration of the politics of aesthetics, different aesthetic images which all of them can represent a person with a name, a representation of certain properties which the sublime tries to show as naturally as possible. For example, if the judgment of the beautiful is not transcendental, it will be empirical and not pure. Purity is a label which sublimity tried to attach to an artwork which is detached from the vulgar life. Wilde's Individualism in this sense is a retreat to a life, an everyday life, which can escape from 'external authority and responsibility and therefore to dissociate experience from the world of reified representations' (Roberts, p.76-77). His separation from life is an escape from that life leading people into accepting authoritarian representations; and Wilde's separation from those arts which are rationalized by the sublime is a distance from an ontologically a priori aesthetics which can not conceive concrete aesthetics of human imagination. In *Salome*, the protagonist with the same name uses the art of dancing to protect herself from the gaze of Herod as the authority; hence, the truth of the veil, the human imagination 'marks boundaries involving aesthetic relations and those of power' (Riquelme 579). In general, abstract power and abstract art are alienated from Wilde's aesthetics. Wilde's approach is much like Foucault, when the origin of power is not of importance, but what is important is to find out the technologies in politics which enable these power relations as they are, as they function in society (Host 3).

CONCLUSION

Oscar Wilde adopts aestheticism to test human autonomy and perceive to what extent one can employ aesthetic techniques for self-growth, both in personal and public life. But this event has been located in the archive in which warring or allying views have an impact on one another. On that account, aestheticism was not born in a vacuum. Different discourses exist that distributes their own theories or set up institutional sites for the enforcement of their theoretical knowledge. The great variety of discursive and non-discursive formations or the sayable mediums and non-sayable means of interaction are accountable for the creation of the aesthetic

discourse. What is desired is to know how mature individualism can be attained in society. Kantian idealism proves not to be the haven for Wilde's aesthetics of existence. Aesthetic spirituality starts with human beings and not with any disciplinary education transferred from above. This fact helps us to understand the critical stance the human imagination can have in relation to the power relations. Lord Henry is considered as a person who revives in Dorian the sense of self-problematization; it is a matter of an aesthetic self with regard to the vulgar life which authority creates for his human beings subjected to their unilateral whims. The disciplined life is the life which all Wilde's characters deny. The point in this research is whether Dorian can attain that much criticality to work on himself or not.

To be critical, one needs to genealogically look at his life and on the other side, at another realm in which the Beautiful is accessible. Nonetheless, the universality of Kantian aesthetic creates much doubt about human autonomy. If universality conditions the aesthetic judgment of people, then everyone should search for validity in the eyes of the other and this is where Foucault warns us not to be disciplined by a normative purpose of power relations and their deceit is through their humanitarian concern for a rule which can be common to all. Furthermore, the Idea of beauty in the Sublime is inaccessible to human understanding and this seems to be authoritarian but a thinker like Hegel finds harmony and repose in the representation the Idea of beauty in the realm of appearance. In my view, Dorian gets stuck in the abstraction and unintelligibility of the sublime and because of that his life remains indeterminate and chaotic.

Utility for Oscar Wilde has no value in art; he said in *The Soul of Man under Socialism* that human beings should not be identified with their possessions by the government. Art is the creator of a useless man since one should be individual in two ways: 1. estrangement from the influence of any power relations and 2. Prevention from being immersed in their belongings, objects, and surroundings; if your art becomes socially useful, its creativity will be diminished and the artist will just seek to satisfy the needs of power; moreover, if you are so much attached to the objects of desire then you will lose all your individualism since you will be one with the things. The institutional meanings of those objects can be interchangeable with you and you will gradually get liquidated into the objects around. Foucault believes in the co-existence of these discourses although one of them may have delimited the other one because it is more powerful but the weaker one should speak to make its principles, desires, and sorrow be heard. It is not in vain that Wilde introduces the Irish as good talkers but not good listeners. Dorian Gray fails to offer a counter-discourse until when he realised that his life and soul are ruined and there should be a metaphorical death to

compensate for the life which had been led astray.

My aim in this research is to show that Foucault's notion of universal contingency gives to each person in society free prospects to test his/her creativity, regardless of those systems of thought annihilating human individuality. Self-reinvention is to be procured by telling truth to oneself. The purification of your life is evasion from being disciplined; that means genealogy of self is the first step to be attended to, but most of the time human beings surrender to submergence into abstract aesthetics or universalistic theories which level any diversity. Each human individual should participate in educating the discipline of culture to oneself amidst all other discourses. Hence, the point is that human beings, contrary to Dorian's ignorance of self-mastery, take steps in the direction of criticality about themselves, their life, and their present-ness.

After experiencing self-growth through art by which human's ethical transformation is warranted, society will be more mature to cultivate itself without being regulated by any institutional subjectivity. Social change is possible when each person is free to express oneself in his imagination. In general, consensus does not, in actuality, exist as a social repose since the right of difference is undermined and a member of that so-called accordant community stands up to recite his/her account of freedom. The last word is that freedom must be found within the same governmental diagram and it is not something to be sought outside the power relations. Individualistic socialism of Oscar Wilde is a scream for human emancipation from discipline and punishment, label and representation, commodification, and objectification.

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Research Paper

Inequality, Inequity and Contemporary Education in Hindi Dalit Stories

Anu

Research Scholar, Department of English Literature, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad

Accepted 13 March 2017

Constructs such as nation and nationalism emerge as a result of numerous historical processes and operate at various levels. However, they are generally realized by the masses when there is conflict between two states, or when cultural and social boundaries are changed. The selected Hindi dalit stories “Ghuspaithiye” [“Infiltrator”] and “Aarakshan” [“Reservation”] help in understanding the idea of nation and nationalism through the lens of caste. Om Prakash Valmiki’s story “Ghuspaithiye” within the framework of nationalism reveals that the treatment meted out to dalit students is hostile to the effort being made at the policy level, which can supposedly transform them from the dominated subject, to ‘respectable citizens’ of the nation. Thus the story is a grim reminder of the fact that nationalism as a positive lived reality is outside the bounds of dalits. Ajmer Singh Kajal’s story “Aarakshan” critically looks at the underlying politics behind anti-reservation movements. The ‘political goondas’ disguised as student leaders leading the students, represented these anti-reservation movements as nationalist activities, and labeled the Others or Dalits as anti-nationalists and thus served their own interests. Therefore this paper makes an attempt, by critically evaluating these stories, to see how the policy of reservation and its impact on dalits sustains or vitiates an integrative concept of nationalism.

Keywords: Reservation, caste, nation, nationalism, Dalit.

Cite This Article As: Anu B (2017). Inequality, Inequity and Contemporary Education in Hindi Dalit Stories. Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult. 5(2): 26-29

INTRODUCTION

Construct such as nation and nationalism, are a result of historical processes which try to involve and include all natives of a particular territory as a single union. For Benedict Anderson, the term nation does not have any ‘scientific definition’; it is more an imagined community which is created through conscious efforts. To further explain, he quotes Ernest Gellner, who claims that “nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist” (quoted in Anderson 1983:49). What is noteworthy here is that a nation is invented, and does not pre-exist as an entity. Moreover, it is invented at several levels: the discursive level, policy level, legislative level etc.

In the Indian context, nationalism is a harbinger of the

colonial rule. And dominant Hinduism has been a mainstay in constituting the concept of nationalism (Aloysius 1997, Jaffrelot, 2007, R. Swamy 2003). Scholarship in the area of nationalism suggests that Hinduism being a dominant religion, enforced its ethnic ideology on the conception of nationalism which “. . . instead of giving birth to one national society, seems to have delivered a whole litter of communities divided from one another in terms of language, religion, region or caste” (1997:1) as Aloysius observes. To be more precise, he calls Indian nationalism as ‘upper caste Brahminic nationalism’ (1997:2).

Gopal Guru, while explaining the workings of nationalism, elucidates that the hagiographic construction

of a nation, particularly in the Indian context has failed to resolve the conflict that exists between *Purushkrut Bharat* and *Bahishkrut Bharat*. Dr. Ambedkar pointed out the existence of two nations within the nation of India: a *Purushkrut Bharat* (ideal, pure India) and a *Bahishkrut Bharat* (actual, polluted India), and the upper castes fall in the former category, while the dalits fall in the latter category of the conceptualization of the Indian nation. And this division ensures a strict segregation based on caste. This division of purity and pollution marks the boundaries which dalits are not allowed to cross. Using these concepts, Gopal Guru demonstrates how they still exist in newer and subtler forms.

Gopal Guru further also argues that mainstream historians and dalit writers did not raise this issue in their writing. He is critical of the hagiographic construction of nations, explaining that “. . . the hagiography of nations subordinates the normative question of self-respect to self-rule” (2016:39).

A Critical Analysis of the Story “Ghuspaitiye”

In the story “Ghuspaitiye” the word ‘Ghuspaitiye’ evokes the feeling of being secretive and unwanted in a territory. Here the territory refers to the institutes which have actually been marked for the so called meritorious students, and entry of dalit students in such spaces is being projected as a matter of concern to the prevailing order of merit as they are not on a par with the students from the general category. The title of the story, as well as its content reveals that the title ‘ghuspaitiye’ (infiltrators) functions both literally and metaphorically. Institutional spaces traditionally have been the marked territory of upper caste Hindus, and entry of dalit students by way of the reservation policies is seen as an encroachment in the territory. This begs the question whether a nation is indeed an imagined community in which people of different colors / caste / religion/ cultures truly share a relationship. At the level of a shared identity, the relationship between upper castes and dalits fails to develop this bond of community-hood.

A closer look at the story reflects that certain methods are used to lessen the effect and scope of reservation policies in the story. These methods resemble primitive social methods employed by caste Hindus to relegate the dalits to the lowest position in the social order. The regulatory mechanism to keep the dalits at the margins subtly creates boundaries between caste Hindus, and the dalits. This mechanism involves spatial untouchability as one of its primary methods. What it means is that there are marked places for dalits, and they are not allowed to visit or live in the areas marked for upper caste Hindus. In the story, hostel number - 2 has been marked for dalit students. And when they enter hostel number -1 which is wittingly allotted to caste

Hindus, the dalit students are beaten and abused. The administration lends unsaid support to the students of the upper castes by adopting an indifferent attitude towards Dalit students. This is reflective of the social attitudes people have, towards reservation policies. It is generally not seen as a means to the end of ensuring social justice, but rather a transgression into their territory. In the story, when Rakesh and Ramesh Chaudhari meet the Dean of the college regarding the problems of Dalit students, he expresses his loathing for reservation policies. Valmiki writes:

Without listening to them, the Dean complains against the damage being done in the name of reservation. His belief was that if ineligible people infiltrate medical institutions through state intervention, then the conditions will get worse day by day. What about those students who pass with good marks?(18)

Therefore it is the intentional attempt of the administration to stigmatize dalit students to sustain their intellectual and social ascendancy.

Dalits historically have been seen as morally polluted. They are still perceived in the same way. Morally devaluing dalits is a method to belittle their self-respect. Gopal Guru in this regard observes that “the upper caste, in their desire to remain ritually pure and socially superior, seek to insulate themselves from public institutions that are exclusively created for dalits. In the upper caste perception, Dalit presence in these institutions becomes at the symbolic level a source of repulsion and therefore sociologically/ ritually dangerous” (2016:105).

Upon critical examination, it emerges that repeatedly calling dalit students ‘ghuspaitiye’ creates a feeling of stigma which is being made to work in the same way as the stigma of untouchables or pollutants for the upper castes to perpetuate their domination and exercise their social power on the dalits. It has merely changed its name. Stigma is a social tool that society uses as its internal mechanism. According to Goffman (1963: 3), stigma is an attribute that extensively discredits an individual, reducing him or her “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one.” This definition shares the assumption that people who are stigmatized, have (or are believed to have) an attribute that marks them as different and leads them to be devalued in the eyes of others. The means and methods deployed, apparently seem to launch a counter attack on the effects of reservation policies, however a critical analysis reveals that there are numerous sociological and political issues at play which are symptomatic of the social attitudes of the society towards the dalits in general. Many textual evidences indicate that there exists a tension between caste Hindu students and dalit students which cannot

simply be understood in terms of the debate: able versus unable, deserving versus undeserving, etc. Underneath this tension lie bigger problems which have historical reasons. Another story directly tries to provide a socio-political snapshot of the implementation of the reservation policy.

Critical Analysis of “Aarakshan”

Ajmer Singh Kajal's story “Aarakshan” [“Reservation”] is situated in the period of the anti-reservation movement against the Mandal Commission report for the extension of 27% reservation for the OBC category. The story places the idea of nationalism in the contemporary scenario. Though on the one side there is rage among the people against the reserved category castes and the State, on the other side, the politicians are shown as taking advantage of the socio-economic condition of the public by projecting the anti-reservation movement as a fight for the nation and social justice.

The story opens with the commotion in the society against the Mandal Commission report extending reservation to the OBC category. News of self-immolation by upper caste students is splashed in the newspapers and educational institutions are closed for one month to lessen the rage among the public. But still the situation remains the same. The State government and law support the anti-reservation movement with their silence. The political goons in the guise of university students are shown participating in the movement for their self-interest. There are two groups: one which supports the reservation and the other is against the reservation. The leader of the supporters of the reservation in this story is Shilpriya, and the other group is led by the political goon named Gundan Singh.

The problem arises when the anti-reservation group attacks Shilpriya and his supporters in the university hostel. The police play the non-cooperative role and see the entire scene silently. After beating Shilpriya and others, the anti-reservation group is projected as nationalist. The projection of the anti-reservationists as nationalist can be seen critically. The reservationist group relates to the Dalits, and the anti-reservationist group belongs to the upper castes. The provision of reservation has been provided to the Dalits because they are marginalized for a long time. On the other side, following the four Varna System in the Hindu scriptures, the upper castes have enjoyed all the privileges and dominated the Dalits by practicing endogamy. Though Dalits are the members of the same country/ nation, they are excluded from the society. They have been labeled as untouchables and have been confined only to the occupations of lower status. This division between the upper castes and the lower castes does not reveal any shared identity among them, instead, it complicates the

whole idea of nation. Steven Grosby defines nation as “a social relation of collective self-consciousness”. He suggests that this shared consciousness is constructed among the people by their everyday contact (10). Gopal Guru also says, “A sense of belonging to the nation emerges from the thick socially interactive and democratically associational life of the different classes that inhabit the nation” (36). But the historical understanding of the caste based society of India informs that the dalits have not been just untouchable physically; they are rather kept away metaphorically. This untouchability is regulated by methods such as spatial, linguistic, and sartorial regulation. Spatial regulation means that they are denied the right to cross the territory where upper castes live; instead they are forced to live on the margins of the villages and cities. Linguistic regulation implies that there is no linguistic uniformity between the dalits and the caste Hindus. A strict linguistic distinctness is observed to maintain caste distinctions. Sartorial differences refer to differences made on the grounds of clothes. This regulatory mechanism derives its legitimacy from the text- Manusmriti. In the contemporary scenario, it is difficult for caste Hindus to continue this mechanism. It is being dismantled. However, newer forms and methods are being put in place to maintain caste hierarchy. For instance, caste based reservation is seen by the upper caste people as a potential harm to the nation. For example, attack on Shilpriya and his supporters in the University hostel by the anti-reservation group is tacitly supported by the law enforcing body i.e. the police, and when the anti-reservationists set fire to the rooms of Shilpriya's supporters and stalk out shouting slogans, it is as if, the narrative tells us, they have conducted a ‘great act of patriotism’. It is as though, the text goes on, they have planted ‘flags of victory’ like some ‘great fighters’ from the nation's history and added to its luster and glory. The textual evidence at the hospital further suggests that the state machinery holds the same attitude against reserved category students and its sense of duty is heavily influenced by caste.

CONCLUSION

A close analysis of the stories evidently reveals that dalit students and reservation policies are not welcomed by upper caste Hindus. The policy is dubbed as anti-nationalist by upper castes. Besides, a number of means and methods are used to vitiate the effect of these policies, and the enforcing machinery of these policies is impaired by caste based attitudes. Moreover, when forced to implement the policy, it designs subtle strategies to counter it. This is suggestive of the fact that there is steady opposition from caste Hindus to socially assimilate the dalits. Caste Hindus wish to maintain social hierarchy for various reasons. However, inclusive

policies and the changing social and democratic scenario is challenging and compelling them to maintain status quo. Looking from the perspective of nationalism suggests that this opposition coming from upper castes is inimical to nation and nationalism. It is noteworthy that nationalism mainly incorporates dominant ideological values of Hinduism which is strictly founded on the Varna system, and the Varna system assigns the dalits, the lowest position in the social hierarchy. Historically, the dalits have never been part of mainstream Hinduism. They have been systematically socially and politically boycotted, and now when political provisions are trying to upgrade them socially and politically, resistance is being offered from the caste Hindus. Therefore, in this changing scenario, the constructs of nation and nationalism now need to be reconfigured in order to accommodate the historically boycotted dalit society, and confer them respectable citizenship.

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Research Paper

The Role of Achitophel in Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*: A Representation of the Unscrupulous and Ambitious Politicians with Extraordinary Intellect

*¹Md. Nawsher Oan, ²A.S.M. Mahbubur Rahman, ³Dipak Kumar Sarkar and ⁴Md. Faisal Haque

¹Associate Profesor, Dept. of Language, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur Dinajpur-5200, Banladesh.

²Lecturer, Dept. of Language, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur Dinajpur-5200, Banladesh.

³Assistant Profesor, Dept. of Language, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur-5200, Banladesh.

⁴Assistant Profesor, Dept. of Language, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur Dinajpur-5200, Banladesh.

Accepted 23 March 2017

It was indisputable to infer the role of Achitophel in Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* as the portray of a certain political practice that emerged from a sort of political thought of the Restoration England. This poem was written in a particular political situation which struck the people of the age. In this poem the relationship between father and son attracted our attention. Achitophel here acted as a catalyst to instigate the rebellion of son against the father. Actually this paper was going to explore the role of Achitophel, the Earl of Shaftesbury, as a cunning politician who represents the politicians of the age of Restoration. A. B. Chambers opines, "the story of *Absalom and Achitophel* found seventeenth-century political application with sufficient frequency to establish a tradition in which Achitophel was a type for the rebellious and wily politician" (592). His cunningness and unscrupulousness regarding the anti-royal movement against King David on the one hand evoked the rebelliousness of some other rebels towards the King and on the other hand prepared Absalom's state of mind to revolt against his God like father. However, in this poem we observed a conflict between Whig and Tory, Catholicism and Protestantism, son and father, royal power and Shaftesbury, Absalom and Achitophel. It reminded us the great theory of Hobbes where everybody is against everybody means war against all. Along with Dryden's own view of politics, one of the most prominent political theorists of his time had been consulted to expose its influence on the political history of the Restoration England.

Keywords: *Absalom and Achitophel*, Hobbes, Cunningness, Unscrupulousness

Cite This Article As: Md. Nawsher Oan, Mahbubur Rahman ASM, Sarkar DK, Md. Faisal Haque (2017). The Role of Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni in politics of All India Sunni Conference under the platform of All India Muslim League (1937 to 1947). Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult. 5(2): 30-35

INTRODUCTION

Dryden writes *Absalom and Achitophel* by the request of Charles II in order to defend the King and his followers

against the Whigs led by the Earl of Shaftesbury. From the history, we know that Charles had no legitimate son

who could ascend the throne after his death. Therefore, the King was in a problem and nominated his brother James, the Duke of York, as the legal heir of the throne. But in general the people of England were not in favour of James because he was a Catholic. The Catholics wanted James as their King but the Whigs did not want James. The Whigs were vigorously against the Duke of the York. They now want to succeed the throne the Duke of Monmouth an illegitimate son of Charles. Though the king loved his illegitimate son, he opposes this. At this time, Dryden was Poet Laureate and so he was asked to write a poem in support of the King attacking king's opponents. Dryden did this ridiculing the opponents depicting a mirror like poem *Absalom and Achitophel*.

According to Hobbes, in every society there is an absolute monarch and this monarch governs the society. Its power must be neither divided nor limited. And at the same time he imagines a state of nature in which each person is free to decide for himself/herself what s/he needs and where all the members of the community essentially depend on each other. In this poem, Achitophel is a treacherous conspirator whose name was cursed not only by the people of his contemporary age but also by the succeeding generations. Dryden says "Sagacious, Bold, Turbulent of wit;/ Restless, unfixt in Principles and place;/ In Power unpleas'd, impatient of Disgrace./ A fiery Soul, which working out its way, Fretted the Pigmy Body to decay"(153-157). Achitophel here is represented as sagacious, bold, a fiery soul, a great wit blessed with wealth and honour. As every man is free in his will, his mind was always busy for making secret plans and for wicked advice. At the same time he was restless and had a lust for power but when he was in power he wasted of it. Outwardly, he appeared to be prudent and courageous, noted for taking risk, but he was mischievous by nature. Dryden argued that Shaftesbury had a weak and sickly body but he never cared it and he was always busy in planning intrigues against the King and the Crowd and against Absalom for his personal gain.

According to Hobbes, "The Power of man, to take it Universally, is his present means to obtain some future apparent Good" (X, 48). We can connect this with the nature of Shaftesbury. Dryden explains in this passage that why Achitophel wanted to use Absalom in the struggle against the King. "Achitophel still wants a chief, and none/ Was found so fit as Warlike Absalom/ Not that he wished his Greatness to create,/ For Politicians neither love nor hate:/ But, for he knew, his Title not allow'd,/ Would keep him still depending on the Crowd:"(220-225). Achitophel knows that he is unpopular and as such he could not be able to lead the revolt against the King. Moreover, his loyalty was suspected and he was to face the treason. He therefore wanted a suitable person to become the leader and to use him. Here, Dryden also added that politicians neither love nor

hate any one and they are only interested in their own good. Achitophel knew that Absalom had no legal claims to the throne and would have to depend on the support of the people. Regarding this, Achitophel actually would like to use Absalom as a weapon. So, Achitophel thinks in this way, the authority of the king would be undermined and it may pave the way for the rule of the mob.

Hobbes says, "So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, Competition; Secondly, Diffidence; Thirdly, Glory. The first maketh men invade for Gain, the second for Safety; and the third for Reputation"(XIII, 70). And then in these lines "He stood at bold Defiance with his Prince/ .../ Against the Crown: and skulk'd behind the Laws" (205-207) we get an impression that the crimes which Achitophel had planned now became obvious and he openly defied the authority of the King. He further tried to protect himself by supporting the rights of the people against the King and tried to take shelter behind the laws of England. He found some evidence in support of the plot of the Catholics against the King but added to it, evidence fabricated by him to strengthen the case. In this case, he used agents who went round whispering into the ears of the common people. And additionally he is trying to convince the common people that how the King is becoming arbitrary. In such a way Achitophel is trying to prove the King as a Jebusite or Roman Catholic. He says, "Of listening Crowds, with jealousies and Fears/ Of Arbitrary Counsels brought to light,/ And proves the King himself a Jebusite"(A&A, 212-214). So, according to Hobbes the desire for power happened between Absalom and King David created in the mind of Absalom by Achitophel is a kind of competition which exists all the time and in all the society among all.

According to Hobbes, "And therefore, any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their End, ..., endeavour to destroy or subdue one another" (XIII, 69). So, here Dryden reveals the cunning and intriguing nature of Achitophel through some expression in this poem from lines "If not when the King are negligent or Weak?/ Let him give on till he can give no more,/ The Thrifty Sanhendrin shall keep him poor:/ And every sheckle which he can receive,/ Shall cost a limb of his Prerogative./ To ply him with new Plots, shall be my care,/ Or plunge him deep in some Expensive War;/ Which when his Treasure can no more Supply,/ He must, with the Remains of Kingship, buy./ His faithful Friends, our Jealousies and Fears Call Jebusites; and Pharaoh's Pentioners:/ Whom when our Fury from his Aid has torn,/ He shall be Naked left to publick Scorn"(388-400). One of the arguments stated by Absalom is that the King is becoming generous to his subjects and is in turn loved by them. Achitophel meets this argument very cleverly in his second speech. He thinks that he will devise some ways by which the King will become unpopular and will lose the

affection of his subject. Achitophel assures Absalom that it will be his business to create trouble for the King by starting conspiracies against him. Such plots will involve the King in some expensive war for which he will not be able to pay for long. If he wants money for the war from the public treasury he will have to come to Parliament for it and naturally he will have to bargain with his authority for a grant of money from Parliament and from the public fund. On account of the jealousies and fear of the king, the anti-royalist group will call his supporters as Roman Catholics and as the agents of the will of France. This will create a conflict between the King and his supporters because he will not be able to give his patronage to them for want of money. So, in such a position his followers will leave him and he will be left alone to face the hatred of the people. So, we can here points out that Achitophel has an inventive brain and he is being able to create a gulf between the King and his supporters. Thereby, the king will become unpopular and his supporters will join to revolt against him. This will ultimately lead to his own unpopularity which will indirectly help the struggle of Absalom against the King. So, Achitophel is instigating the crowd against the King because of taking Absalom's side and to make conflict between the King and Absalom for desiring the same thing, "power".

However, Achitophel actually tried to manipulate the crowd and, at the same time, Absalom also. Hobbes says, "Also Riches joined with liberty, is Power: because it procureth friends and servants: Without liberality, not so; because in this case they defend not; but expose men to Envy, as a Prey. Reputation of power is power; because it draweth with it the adherence of those that need protection" (X, 48). In the following lines Achitophel addresses Absalom, "Auspicious Prince! At whose Nativity/ Some Royal planet rul'd the Southern sky;/ Thy longing Countries Darling and Desire:/ Their cloudy Pillar, and their guardian Fire:/ Their second Moses, whose extended Wand/ Divides the Seas and shews the promis'd Land:" (230-235) as a lucky prince, a star in the southern sky, and a Saviour in such a way so that he might turn him into his prey. He then further added, the people look upon you as a second Moses and you are result of the prayers of the general people. By saying this he is evoking the embodiment and the hidden ambition of the young Prince. Then Achitophel says, "Believe me, Royal Youth Thy Fruit must be/ Or gathered Ripe or rot upon the Tree"(250-251). Here actually Achitophel is precipitating or forcing the will of Absalom by persuading his thought for taking arms against the King.

Moreover, Dryden portrays the struggle in the mind of Absalom after he had heard the speech of Achitophel in these lines, "Th' Ambitious Youth, too Covetous of Fame,/ Too full of Angels Metal in his Frame;/ Unwarily was led from Vertues ways;/ Made Drunk with Honour, and Debauch'd with Praise./ Half loath, and half

consenting to the Ill, For Loyal Blood within him struggled still/He thus reply'd – And what Pretence have I/To take up Arms for Publick Liberty?"(309-316) . Achitophel has given solid arguments for advising the prince to revolt against the father though sometimes he feels that his arguments are weak. The seeds of ambition struck root in the fertile brain of Absalom and he began to think seriously about the proposal made by Achitophel. Actually Absalom was undoubtedly an ambitious young man who had a great desire for winning fame. He had an angelic temperament also. But he was led astray unknowingly just as the angels in heaven were led astray by Satan. There is an implied comparison between Satan's temptation and the sweet words of Achitophel. Unknowingly, Monmouth drifted from the right path on account of his being intoxicated with the prospect of winning, and the corruption of excessive words of praise used by Achitophel. There was a great hesitation in his mind. So, here we can compare the mental state of Absalom as a pendulum half unwilling and half willing to respond to the proposal of Achitophel. His feeling of loyalty rose uppermost within him. So, in the sense of Hobbes this is a conflict in the state of mind of Absalom against his father and against his own will and we can consider this as desires the same thing the son and the father. Dryden shows here Achitophel's power as a psychologist.

In addition, in these lines, "In Friendship False, Implacable in Hate:/ Resolv'd to Ruine or to Rule the State./ To Compass this the Triple Bond he broke"(A&A,173-175) Dryden portrays Achitophel as a false friend and a revengeful enemy and he thinks in a way that either to rule a state or to ruin the country. To achieve his end, he broke the Triple Alliance between England, Sweden and Holland by instigating war against Holland. Therefore, he dealt a blow to the security of peace and paved the way for bringing England under the rule of a foreign power. Overcoming the fear of the consequence of his action, he assumed the name of a patriot and posed as a champion of the people's cause. In the time of political trouble, it is easy to hide one's wicked action by pretending a concern for public welfare. Crimes against the state and evil deeds can be excused if they are done under the cover of fulfilling the wishes of the public. In such a period people shut their eyes to treason and wickedness because they themselves are wicked, corrupt and vicious. So, Achitophel's showing goodness to Absalom is actually a kind of false friendship. It's not from the core of his mind. He can do anything for his own sake. This is a kind of pretension also for achieving his goal.

And in the same manner, Achitophel was portrayed as a bold leader in the time of danger in these lines, "Pleas'd with the Danger, when the Waves went high/ He sought the Storm but for a Calm unfit" (A&A, 160-161). In fact, he welcomed crisis when the political atmosphere

became stormy. Undoubtedly it can be argued that he liked to catch fish in troubled water and was unfit for the time of peace because then his actions were too reckless in his attempt to show his wisdom. He thinks his mind was confused and was born as an unnatural, shapeless lump of flesh like an embodiment of anarchy. Achitophel actually would like to take advantage when the situation is bad. Hobbes says regarding this, "For that were to erect two Sovereigns, and every man have his person represented by two actors, that by opposing one another, must need divide that power, which... is indivisible; and thereby reduce the Multitude into the condition of War,... instituted" (XIX, 103).

Thus Achitophel plans to rebel against the royal power with multitude. "To farther this Achitophel Unites/ The malecontents of all the Israelites;/ Whose differing Parties he could wisely Joyn,/ For several ends, to serve the same design"(491-494)in these lines we see to achieve this object, Achitophel united the discontented people of Israel (England) into a single party which had been working separately, now began to work together to achieve one and the same goal. The best people among them included persons of royal blood who were of the view that the king was exercising too much power. Some of the men were really patriotic but they were misguided. They were not evil minded but they were won over by unholy tricks and intrigues. These people made extraordinary claims on the basis of their property and the result was that the government could not stand this pressure and broke down. According to Hobbes, "A Multitude of men, are made one Person, when they are by one man, or one Person, Represented ; so that it be done with the consent of everyone of that Multitude in particular. For it is the Unity of the Representer, not the Unity of the Represented, that maketh the Person One. And it is the Representer that beareth the Person, and but one Person: And Unity, cannot otherwise be understood in Multitude"(XVI, 90).

According to Hobbes, "Competition of Riches, Honour, Command, or other power, enclineth to Contention, Enmity, and War: Because the way of one Competitor, to the attaining of his desire, is to kill, subdue, supplant, or repel the other (XI, 56). In these lines we see that competition leads men to do something worse. The group of people was motivated by self interest and sometimes by Achitophel and it wanted to involve the country in a civil war. In these lines we see, "To sell their Duty at a dearer rate;/And make their Jewish Markets to the throne,/ Pretending publick Good, to serve their own"(503-505), these persons desire to sell their services at a price and they wanted to have profit by exploiting the difficulties of the King. Outwardly they posed as well wishers of the public but in fact they wanted to serve their own ends. There was another section of people which firmly believed that kings were useless and heavy burden on the state because they cost too much and did

practically nothing. In these lines, "These were for laying Honest David by,/ On principles of pure good Husbandry"(507-508) these people intended to remove David (Charles) from Kingship on the ground of healthy economy. They were joined by the mob orators who thought that they could gain some position through their speeches. Next to them were those who were even more dangerous because they not only hated King David but the very institution of Monarchy according to Hobbes. The London crowd was well acquainted with religious strife and disaffection for the King. They had trembled and shuddered with fear at the sword of a Conqueror like Cromwell, but they were contemptuous of David who had been legally brought to the throne.

According to Hobbes, "And Covenants without the Sword, are but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all. Therefore notwithstanding the Laws of Nature ... if there be no Power erected, or not great enough for our security; every man will, and may lawfully rely on his own strength and art, for caution against all other men(XVII, 85). So in these lines we see that the covenant can do something against the monarchy without sword. In connection of this argument it can be said that the general people treated the Popish plot with contempt and hated to be out done by the Jebusites. These people were lead by hot headed priests. These priests were deprived of their positions by the Act of Uniformity passed in 1662 during the Commonwealth and now they reasserted their false notions with great enthusiasm in order to reestablish the theocratic State established by Cromwell. They wanted to regain the power of the Commonwealth under which the parliament and the priests governed the people and justified their misrule by claiming that their actions were inspired by God. Who could be better qualified to rule the country than the race of priests, if spiritual grace was regarded as a basis of political authority. The Presbyterian priests led the crowd. They were not sure of their goal; they spoke vehemently against the government. They used all their strength to destroy discipline and peace. They did not wish to build anything, but they were out of destroying everything.

In these lines, "But far more numerous was the herd of such,/ Who think too little, and who talked too much./ These out of meer instinct, they knew not why, ador'd their father's God and Property;/And by the same blind benefit of Fate,/ The Devil and the Jebusite did hate:"(533-538) the largest crowd consisted of those who talked too much and thought too little. They, out of sheer instinct, worshipped the God of their ancestors and they respected property. On account of the blind instinct, they equally hated the Devil and the Jebusites means Roman Catholics. They believed that they were born to be saved though they did nothing to save themselves. They opined that their instinct led to right belief. These were the types of people which played into the hands of Achitophel (Earl of Shaftesbury). Besides, there were numerous others

beyond any count who seemed to appear from nowhere, like Hydra, the monster with innumerable heads.

Some of the rebel leaders belonged to the aristocracy. The most important among them was Zimri who is the Duke of Buckingham. In these lines, "In the first Rank of these did Zimri stand:/ A man so various, that he seemed to be/ Not one, but all Mankinds Epitome./ Stiff in Opinions, always in the wrong;/ Was everything by starts, and nothing long:/ But in the course of one revolving Moon,/ Was Chymist, Fidler, States- Man, and Buffon:"(544-550) Zimri is depicted. He had so many qualities that he seemed to be a symbol of all mankind. He was rigid and inflexible in his opinions but unfortunately he held the wrong opinions. He tried his hand at everything but did not stick to any activity for any length of time. Within a month, he would perform the duties of a chemist, fiddler, statesman and a verses and drinking. Besides this, he had numerous other fancies and ideas which he had never put into practice. He was indeed a happy madman who, every hour, was either wishing or enjoying something new. He was either praising people or condemning them. In expressing judgments he always held extreme opinions. He was either over critical or over polite. In his opinion every man was either God or the Devil. According to Hobbes, " whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth Good: And the object of his Hate, and aversion, Evil; And of his Contempt, ...nor any common Rule of Good and Evil, to be taken from the nature of the objects of themselves(VI, 32). So, he possesses the two qualities good and evil. His great skill lay in wasting money. He rewarded all, excepting those who were meritorious. He was looted by foolish persons or flatterers but he found this out too late. He ridiculed the people and had his fun while they cheated him of his money and property. He was expelled from the Royal Court on account of his folly. He tried to form parties but could not be the leader of any one of them. Despite this effort to gain leadership the burden of the plot fell on wise Achitophel and Absalom. He was wicked only in his intensions, because he had no resources to put his ideas into practice. He did not leave the party but it was the party that ignored him and chose other leaders. Dryden wishes to show that the anti-royalist party contained people of such characteristics that their success in the revolt would really be doubtful.

There were many other leaders of small status, and it will be very boring to give their names and titles. It would be below the dignity of the poet to take notice of such people. The best of them would fall under the categories of wits, warriors, and champions of the commonwealth. The rest could be described as kind husband and members of the nobility. In the lines 372 to 382 Dryden talks about the following persons. In order to avoid boring the reader, the poet omits the wicked Balaam, Earl of Huntingdon, and cold Caleb, Lord Grey, and hypocritical

Nadab (Lord Howard). Such persons may be remembered as a group of anti-royalist feelings. Some of them will be remembered for their worthlessness while others for their hatred. There is no place in this verse for the rascally crowd who had neither royal title nor the grace of God. So, ill tempered Jonas or Sir William Jones prepared statutes or Acts in favour of the revolt against the King and to make treason lawful.

Although Sir William Jones was bad enough, there was one worse than he namely Shimei (Singsby Bethel), a rascal who had the courage to curse the divinely ordained King David. Dryden gives us an ironical portrait of Shimei or Slingsby Bethel who was the Republican Sheriff of London. In these lines, "Shimei, whose youth did early Promise bring/ Of Zeal to God, and Hatred to his King;/ Did wisely from Expensive Sins refrain,/ And never broke the Sabbath, but for gain:/ Nor ever was he known an Oath to vent,/ Of Curse unless against the Government." (585-590). Dryden says in his youth, he showed signs of devotion to God and great hatred against monarchy. He was wise enough to keep away from sins which cost money. He would only indulge in those sins which cost nothing. On Sunday, he would not do any secular act unless it brought him some money. However, during the tenure of his office, crimes against the state and the King were left unnoticed by him because he himself was against the King. Whenever some persons gathered together to shout against King Charles, Shimei was always seen in their midst. Hobbes says regarding this, "Contempt, or little sense of the calamity of others, is that which men call Cruelty; proceeding from Security of their own fortune. For, that any man should take pleasure in other men's great harms, without other end of his own (VI, 35). Though it was his duty to arrest the persons denouncing the King, he would not do. So he is doing wrong and it is a kind of cruelty according to Hobbes. He was quite mild with his tongue, but he would use up his entire strength if he had to utter any oath or curse against the government. Shimei is one of the contemptible members of the anti-royalist party.

However a mention of the remaining enemies of the King would be boring even for a person who had been an eye witness to the conspiracy against the King. It is better to forget the other conspirators. However there is one, namely Corah (Titus Oates) who will not be forgotten. In these lines, "Yet, Corah, thou shalt from Oblivion pass;/ Erect thy self thou Monumental Brass;/ High as the Serpent of thy mettall made,/ While Nations stand secure beneath thy shade./ What tho his Birth were base, yet Comet's rise/ From Earthly Vapoursere they shine in Skies"(632-637) Corah is described. Dryden has drawn a dark portrait of Corah who belonged to the anti-royalist group. Moses had saved his followers from snake-bite by asking them to stand under the brass serpent. Similarly Corah had tried to show that he would save the Jews or

the Protestants from the evil designs of Jebusites or the Roman Catholics. Corah was obviously a man of low birth from a weaver's family and yet the appearance of comets is due to earthly vapours which go up to the sky and then take the form of comets. There is an irony in his being compared to a comet. Important deeds may be done by the son of a weaver as by the son of a prince. This man witnessed the Popish Plot, declaring that he had done so for the good of the people, ennobled himself by this one great action. Whoever bothered about the high or noble blood of a witness on the strength of which St, Stephen was sentenced to death. Titus Oates was a priest and as such his profession was respected and he, like other priests, was regarded as a respectable child of God. He had sunken eyes and his voice was rough and loud and surely these things indicate ironically that he was neither ill-tempered nor arrogant. His long chin indicated that he was a man of wit; his shining red complexion like that of a parson was like the face of Moses, symbolic of his piety and grace. He had a very strong and great memory; he could relate the details of anti-royalist plots which could hardly be believed by his listeners. These could not be called false plots because they could not have been invented by him on intelligence. His saying included some forecast of the future. When he could not prove such predictions, he claimed that he was speaking as a Prophet. According to Hobbes, "And seeing every man is presumed to do all things in order to his own benefit, no man is a fit Arbitrator in his own cause : and if he were never so fit; yet Equity allowing to each party equal benefit, if one be admitted to be Judge, the other is to be admitted also; & so the controversies, that is, the cause of War, remains, against the Law of Nature(XV,86). Some of his speeches seem to be flights of imagination and it appeared that he spoke like one divinely inspired. His judgment was even more remarkable than his memory because it enabled him to link evidence in a persuasive manner.

In fine, we can say that the combination of exceptional intellectual caliber and stupendous moral bankruptcy is too rare which we see in Achitophel. It is true that it is not to be found in the character of every politician. Such men as Achitophel, pursuing their ambitious and selfish political goal with extraordinary brilliance through devious means, do exist. There may be few persons of such brilliant intellect who put their intelligence to such devious schemes, but they certainly linger in all lands and in all times. It is true to some extent that, the Earl of Shaftesbury cannot be removed from the context in which Dryden puts him, for we cannot have the same political situation as existed in England at that time. But most of the features presented in Achitophel are to be found universally among politicians – hypocrisy, lack of integrity, ambition, etc. When an acutely intelligent man turns his mind to a lust for power, he makes use of his intellectual ability to gain his ends unscrupulously. Such men are to be found in increasing numbers in the modern world of power politics. It proves the universality of Dryden's portraiture of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

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Research Paper

The Role of Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni in politics of All India Sunni Conference under the platform of All India Muslim League (1937 to 1947)

¹Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti and ²Dr. Shahid Hassan Rizvi

¹Lecturer in History Government. P/G College Bahawal Nagar, Punjab, Pakistan.

²Chairman Department of History, Islamia University, Bahawal Pur, Punjab, Pakistan.

Accepted 29 March 2017

Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni was a great politician and sincere worker of All India Muslim League. He was also an exuberant member of Anjuman Khudamey Ka'bba, Anjuman Khudamul Hermain, Jamiyyat Ulemaye Hind, Khilafat Movement, All India Muslim Conference and All India Sunni Conference. He played a pivotal role in politics of sub-continent. He was member of All India Muslim League Central Council and confidant of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He played his responsible role against the Shudhi Movement and Congress conspiracies. During the Pakistan Movement his services in provincial politics are remarkable. He not only participated in Annual Session of All India Muslim League at Lahore in 1940 but also made an elegant speech in support of Lahore Resolution. All India Sunni Conference provided religious and political support to All India Muslim League. All members of this religious party supported Two Nations Theory and played their significant role in Pakistan Movement. It was not easy for Quaid-e-Azam to counter the religious arguments of Nationalist Ulema. In that situation, Molana Badayuni along with other Ulema played his positive role and confronted with the propaganda of Nationalist Ulema argumentatively. From the platform of this Conference he devoted his services for Muslim Nationalism. He participated in historic Session of All India Sunni Conference held at Banaras and made sincere efforts for the unity of Indian Muslims.

Key Words: Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni, Pakistan Movement, All India Muslim League, Indian National Congress, All India Sunni Conference, Muslim Nationalism, Banaras Conference, Ulema and Mashaikh

Cite This Article As: Bhatti MA, Rizvi SH (2017). The Role of Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni in politics of All India Sunni Conference under the platform of All India Muslim League (1937 to 1947). *Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult.* 5(2): 36-43

INTRODUCTION

The Ulema played a vital role in the politics of sub-continent. To understand the politics of the British India in true sense, it is necessary to discover the role of Ulema in the independence movement. The supporting Ulema of All India Muslim League countered the activities of the Nationalist Ulema, and they persuaded the Muslim masses towards Pakistan Movement. Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni is one of those supporting Ulema of Muslim League who provided their services for Muslim

Nationalism.

Molana Badayuni belonged to the well-known Usmani family of Badayun; this family was famous for its religious, political and educational activities in United Province (UP). Many Ulema of this family had performed their duties in all over the India and earned a great esteem and honor for their family.

Molana Badayuni's father Hakim Abd-ul-Qayyum was a very generous, kind and pious person and was admired

for his educational, literary and religious services not only by the people of Badayun but all over the India. His tragic death was a great loss for his family.

Molana Badayuni was brought up by his mother and his education was completed under the great Ulema of that time. He worked as a teacher and Mufti at Shams-ul-Uloom at Badayun for the period of ten years. He was an excellent, blunt and bold orator. His motive was to ignite the flame of political wisdom among the Muslims of India.

He began his political career under the umbrella of his elder brother; Molana Abd-ul-Majid, who was closely connected with the Anjuman-e-Khuddam-e-Kaba. He also started to take active part in the political activities under the flag of this Anjuman. Then he joined different organizations and played very active role in the politics of sub-continent. He put all his abilities into action after being elected as a member of All India Muslim League Council. At that time, Nationalist Ulema were using their religious status against the objectives of All India Muslim League. They used to criticize the policies of Muslim League and declared the demands of Muslim League as Un-Islamic. In that situation, the supporting Ulema of All India Muslim League decided to establish All India Sunni Conference to counter the political and religious activities of Congress and Nationalist Ulema.

All India Sunni Conference provided political strength to Muslim League. From this platform Ulema threw light on the significance of the Muslim Nationalism. They paved the way for the establishment of Pakistan. Molana Badayuni worked as the secretary information of this organization.

The Role of Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni in politics of All India Sunni Conference:

In the British India, the Hindu leaders intended to keep the Indian Muslims as their subject on the basis of their population. Hindus were united on the platform of Indian National Congress (INC), but the Muslims were divided into different political and religious parties. The Ulema, whose duty was to keep the Indian Muslims united, not only were contradicted in their religious thoughts but also in politics their differences were very clear. In Hindustan, the number of Sunni sect Muslims was greater than any other Muslim sect, but they had no political platform. In these circumstances, a grand conference was conducted in Murad Abad on 16-19 March, 1925. In this conference an organization "Jami'yyat-ul-Aalia-tul-Markazia" was formed.¹ It was known as All India Sunni Conference (AISC). AISC provided religious and political support to All India Muslim League (AIML). The Ulema associated with AISC threw light on the importance of the Muslim Nationalism in their addresses and speeches. They paved the way for the establishment of Pakistan. Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni was the secretary information for

AISC. In October, 1945, when AISC was established in district Badayun, he was selected as the key member of the party. Addressing the procession of Sunni conference Delhi on 6th November, 1945, he described his views in these words:

"The Ulema-e-Ahl-e-Sunnah are united on one platform, and if they determine to form an Islamic state in India, Pakistan will be established very soon. Insha'Allah, Sunni conference will draw a sketch of Islamic state very soon and will present it to the Indian Muslims".²

After the formation of AISC, Molana Badayuni took active part in its programs and sessions. He threw light on the importance and significance of the Muslim Nationalism and Pakistan Movement in their addresses and speeches. From this platform he paved the way for the establishment of separate homeland. He always supported the candidates of AIML in elections with political and religious passion.

He urged to vote for the AIML representative Muhammad Usman for the seat of Delhi. Furthermore, he said never to vote for INC candidate.³ On 5th December, 1945, in Paaca building Mumbai, a congregation by the leaders of AISC was conducted in order to frame Sunni conference. The following Ulema specifically participated:

1. Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni
2. Molana Syed Ahmad Ashraf khichochoavi
3. Molana Mufti Muhammad Ibrahim

These Ulema threw light on the significance and need of AISC in a very clear manner, and the structure of provincial Sunni conference came into being.⁴ Molana Badayuni wanted to form the branches of AISC throughout India. Mashaikh and Ulema were very active in Badayun city. Molana held a procession at his home in Badayun in January 1946. He described the reformatory and preaching aims and objectives of AISC. At the end of the procession, the working body of Sunni conference district Badayun was established and he was elected the president of this body.⁵

His political and religious activities in Badayun were very significant in nature. His home became the central headquarter of all these activities. Great processions were held at his home and great leaders were invited in these sessions.

Molana was very clear in his thoughts and his speeches were also full of arguments. He enjoyed the very prominent status of "All India Sunni Conference". He was well aware of his abilities, tasks and responsibilities. So, he issued many important statements in the newspapers in that period. On 16th January 1946, the newspaper "Dabdab-e-Sikandri" released the following statement on which there were signatures of the various

Ulema including Molana Badayuni:

“The demand of formation of Islamic state in the light of the Holy Quran in the Muslim majority territories on specific level and in the other areas on general level is such a demand which has been preached for centuries by the Mashaikh and Ulema. Their theory of life always remained that there must be development of Islamic obligations in the Indian Muslims so that they may be able to form Islamic state which should be free from interference and slavery of the other nations. In this case Muslim League has been initiating endeavors for several years, for Islamic state of Pakistan. These endeavors have been practically supported by the president of All India Sunni Conference, Peer Jamat Ali Shah and thousands of Ulema and Mashaikh. The Ulema, Mashaikheen and other leaders are forcefully favoring Pakistan, and they never bear to be incorporated into the polytheist and non-Muslims as an Islamic stand. It is a fact that INC does not accept the existence of Muslims even as a different entity. That party freely ill-treated and interfered in the religious affairs of the Muslims. Furthermore, it consumed all its authority and influence to devastate and demolish the lives of the Muslims. In this situation, it is not possible for the Indian Muslims to work together with it (INC) categorically; even the very work that dismantles and eliminates the power and unity of the Indian Muslims. Indeed, the present election campaign and its results will prove whether the Muslims of India demand Islamic state or not. It's the responsibility of every Indian Muslim to support AIML in the current provincial elections and make it successful, as they have supported Muslim League in the elections of central assembly. The Muslim parties like Khaksar, Muslim Board and Ahrar are, in fact, the product of INC and leaders of these parties want to end the self-respect of the Muslims at the beck and call of unbelievers. We request the Indian Muslims to support AIML and vote for its representatives in such a critical situation”.⁶

On 11th February, 1946, a very significant procession of AISC was conducted in Phaphoond under the presidency of Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi (1894-1961). Molana Naeem-ul-Din Murad Abadi (1883-1948) described his views openly regarding INC in this procession. The public was anxiously waiting the speech of Molana Badayuni and there was a continuous demand for his speech. Molana Badayuni, presenting the resolution on the release of Abd-ul-Rasheed, Said:

“The threatening behavior, that British government has adopted pertaining to the conviction of Captain Abd-ul-Rasheed, is creating restlessness among the Indian Muslims and all are ready to take any step for their serving brother. I appeal the Muslims to wait for the instructions of the Quaid-e-Azam, since the election campaign is approaching fast over our heads. The important thing is to make it successful”.⁷

The leadership of AISC believed that Congress did not accept the existence of Muslims and interfered in their religious affairs. Hindu leaders consumed all their influence to demolish the lives of the Muslims. Molana Badayuni knew that it is not possible for the Indian Muslims to work with them. He requested Ulema and Mashaikh that it is our religious and moral responsibility to support AIML in the current political situation of India. He was clear in his view that Muslim parties like Khaksar, JUH, Muslim Unity Board and Ahrar are, in fact, the product of Congress, so he requested the Indian Muslims to support AIML.

From Behrach, the news of visit of Molana Badayuni was sent to the newspaper. The journalist wrote in that news:

“Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni secretary AISC left for Nanpara after participating the general session of Mehmood Nagar Lucknow on 25 February, 1946. He reached there on 26th February. On the same day at afternoon, a huge congregation was conducted by Muslim League at Nanpara. After the addresses of members of Punjab deputation Molana Badayuni addressed in an inspiring way. The whole crowd promised to support and favor Raja Sahib of Kanpur. At night, at Madarsa Misbah-ul-Uloom, the preparations were made for the address of Molana Badayuni. Raja sahib Nanpara also listen the address of Molana Badayuni with full attention. Molana made a brilliant speech on seerat-ul-Nabi SAW. He will deliver address in the constituency of Zaheer-ul-Islam sahib Farooqi; he will deliver addresses on many places, returning Nanpara on 28th February, in favor of Raja sahib Nanpara. After reaching Braili, on 2nd March, he will complete his political work in the constituency of Aziz Ahmad Khan advocate”.⁸

Molana left for Ajeen, after addressing in Nanparah, Lucknow and Behrach constituencies in the favor of AIML. There, he made an address on the topic of Pakistan Movement. He stayed in Maho Chavni on 3rd

March, 1946. From Javrah, he left for Ajmer Shareef and Jay pur on 8th March.⁹

Leadership of AISC wanted to conduct a huge congregation to show political power of Sunni sect Muslims. So, a deputation of Muslim scholars led by Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi met the president of All India Sunni Conference, Peer Syed Jama'at Ali Shah Ali Puri (1841-1951) on 10th May, 1945. It was decided to conduct the next annual congregation of AISC in Banaras. After some days, the dates 27-30 April 1946 were finalized for that splendid conference. Complete preparations were made to make that congregation successful. Weekly Newspaper Dabdaba-e-Sikandri wrote in its editorial about this congregation in these words:

“The next day is 27th April. On that day, you will watch the very splendid and great conference of Mashaikh and Ulema-e-Ahle-sunnah on the land of Banaras; for that conference this insipid and barren land has been waiting for. This heart motivating conference will be conducted in the guise of AISC. The servants of Muhammad (SAW) will think on the plans of everlasting achievement under the convincing, faithful and sincere leadership of their real leaders in this inconstant life, in order to free themselves from any kind of subservience, to get complete emancipation from any type of penalty in the actual life of hereafter, and to get the real Pakistan's sacred aim. I expect that the Sunni Muslims can get everlasting and absolute independence, which are allied with the leadership of this congregation. I warmly welcome the main leadership of AISC. Allah Almighty may grant upon me that I may get the happiness of the participation in Sunni Conference Banaras that has purely religious aims, and also the spiritual pleasure having glimpse of the enlightened and poise personalities”.¹⁰

On 27th to 30th April the processions by AISC were conducted in Banaras. Every session was presided over by Syed Jama'at Ali Shah despite his weakness. Great efforts were made to make these sessions successful by Molana Naeem-ul-Din Murad Abadi and Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi. Molana Badayuni along with other leaders performed the arrangement of the congregation actively. Different proposals were accepted unanimously in this congregation in the presence of thousands of Mashaikh, Ulema and participants. Molana Badayuni was included in various committees that were framed in the congregation.

It was decided in the congregation that a curriculum committee should be formed that had the responsibility to

design the curriculum; and this committee should be given sufficient time for consideration. One committee was formed in which Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni was included as a senior member.

The congregation of Sunni Conference strongly supported the demand of Pakistan and declared that Mashaikh and Ulema were ready for any sacrifice for the success of Pakistan Movement; they considered it their responsibility to form such a state that would be according to Quran and Sunnah's principles of jurisprudence.

A committee of thirteen persons was suggested by this session in order to finalize a whole strategy for Islamic state. Molana Badayuni was also one of the members of this committee. The congregation of AISC proposed the set up of Dar-ul-Muballighen, according to the needs and requirements of the Indian Muslims. It was announced that in Dar-ul-Muballighen sincere preachers and orators would be produced who would do work for preaching and publication in a better way. In that institution learned or average, Persian and Arabic knowing Ulema could be admitted, who had a taste for oration and column writing. Further, such scholars could also be admitted who had taught the western education, so that they might preach the western classes after completing the curriculum. The committee of the following persons was formed to edit the curriculum:

1. Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni
2. Molana Abd-ul-Aleem Saddiqui Meerthi
3. Molana Sibghatullah Shaheed Farangi Mahalli

It was also decided that a council should be formed to widen its rules and laws. This council was consist of 07 members. The copies of this legislation were sent to all members. The names of the members are following:

Members:

1. Molana Naeem-ul-Din Murad Abadi
2. Molana Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochvi
3. Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni
4. Molana Zafar-ul-Din Behari
5. Muhammad Mustafa Raza Berailvi
6. Molana Amjad Ali Aazmi
7. Molana Abd-ul-Aleem Saddiqui Meerathi

This historic congregation has a great significance in the history of India. It supported Pakistan Movement with full political and religious power. Ulema and Mashaikh said that they were ready for this cause. They accepted different suggestion unanimously. Molana Badayuni showed his political and religious wisdom in this session.

This session of AISC felicitated tributary on the sincere services and activities of Molana Muhammad Naeem-ul-

Din Murad Abadi Nazim-e-Aala AISC, Molana Abd-ul-Hamid Badayuni secretary information AISC and Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi which they made for AISC. This session admitted that it was due to their sincere efforts that Sunni conference touched that high standard.

The following proposal was passed at Banaras on 30th April, 1946. This proposal was presented by Molana Abd-ul-Aleem Saddiqui.

“This session announces that the next president of Sunni Conference will be Molana Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi, and nazim-e-aala Syed Muhammad Naeem-ul-Din Muradabadi as usual, and nazim information will be Molana Badayuni”.¹¹

A unanimous decision of AISC leading Ulema and Mashaikh was that:

“Sunni Conference may advocate the mechanism of AIML that is not anti-Islamic e.g. the efforts of defeating INC in election case. The members of AISC may support every Sunni Muslim nominated by AIML. The Pakistan issue i.e. formation of government under the Islamic Law, on the principal of Jurisprudence is applaud able and favorable”.¹²

This decision was signed by fifty five Mashaikh and Ulema and Molana Badayuni was also one of them. On 3rd May, 1946, the 60th congregation of Markazi Anjuman-e-Numania Hind Lahore was held in Badshahi Mosque. This congregation was chaired by Khawaja Kamar-ul-Din Sialvi (1906-1981). Molana Badayuni addressed the congregation in the following words:

“The only key to handle all the difficulties of the Indian Muslims lies in the establishment of Pakistan. Our own homeland Pakistan has become the question of the life and death of millions of Muslims of the sub-continent. To lead a free life, we will have to establish our own country or will vanish ourselves. It’s the time of final decision. We have made a decision to remove any barrier in the way of our Pakistan”.¹³

He sent his message to the cabinet mission in such words:

“The result of ignoring the AIML, only representative party of hundreds of millions of Muslims of India, will be very massive”.¹⁴

On 4th May the procession of of Anjuman-e-Numania was conducted in the ground of Islamia College Lahore. The procession was presided over by Peer Sahib Manki Sharif. Molana Badayuni and Arifullah Meerthi addressed this procession.¹⁵

Molana appealed that the preaching efforts should be started in the different areas of the city by the district Sunni conference, based on the recommendation of Banaras session. Before the visit to Ajmer Shareef, he immediately started this movement in a few areas of the city along with Molana Yaqoob Hussain Zia-ul-Qadri, information secretary for the Sunni conference Badayun and Molana Mufti Muhammad Ibrahim Simti, secretary general of Sunni conference district Badayun.¹⁶

To support the Banaras decision of Muslim League, a very significant congregation of district Badayun was held in Jamiye Mosque Shamsi. It was announced in this congregation:

“Every Sunni congregation has to contribute according to Banaras decision, it must be necessary to make every sacrifice for achievement of Pakistan”.¹⁷

In this procession the address of Molana Badayuni created a strange situation in the sentiments of the Muslims.¹⁸ On 20th May 1946, addressing in Sunni conference procession of Phaphoond, he said about the constitution of Pakistan:

“Our Banaras Conference has determined that the very government may be termed the Islamic state, in the majority provinces, that may be formed under the light of the Quran and the Sunnah according to the rules of Jurisprudence, and for the establishment of such a state, our every Alim and Shaikh-e-Tareekat is ready to give any type of sacrifice”.¹⁹

He wanted to convey his message in different areas of his native city Badayun. He was very interested in local level politics so he visited villages and towns to motive Muslim masses for the support of AIML. Molana Yaqoob Hussain Zia-ul-Qadri and Molana Mufti Muhammad Ibrahim Simti were very active members of AISC, so they helped Molana Badayuni in this effort.

On 7th and 8th June, 1946, a grand congregation of Sunni Conference was held in Ajmer on the eve of the Urs of Khawaja Mueen-ul-Din Chishti Ajmeri (1142-1229). Thousands of Mashaikh and Muslim scholars participated in which Molana Badayuni was notable. The religious sentiments which Molana propounded regarding Pakistan, created peculiar atmosphere.²⁰

Sunni conference Badayun held significant procession on 21, 22, 23, June, 1946, in which Molana Naeem-ul-Din Murad Abadi, Molana Badayuni, Molana Sibghatullah Farangi Mahalli (d. 1964) and the other prominent Ulema addressed.²¹

Markazi Anjuman-e-Numania was an important forum for the activities of AISC. Grand sessions were held under this forum. In one of these processions Molana

Badayuni clearly said that Pakistan had become the question of the lives and death of hundred million Muslims. He obviously said that we had made a firm determination to remove any barrier and hurdle on the way of Pakistan.

On 30th June, 1946, a Meeting of AISC was conducted in Kanpur under the presidentship of Hazrat Misbah-ul-Hassan of Phaphoond. A large number of Mashaikh and Ulema participated in it. The sermon was read by Molana Saqib Kanpuri. Besides other Ulema, Molana Badayuni made a speech and said:

“Hundreds of Mashaikh and Ulema related to AISC have made Pakistan the aim and part of their lives. They will not accept anything other than that”²²

On 5-6-7 July, 1946, the grand processions were conducted in Madrassa Ajmal-ul-Oloom, Sanbhal district Murad Abad. Molana Badayuni and Syed Muhammad Muhaddis Khichochavi also participated in it.²³

AISC conducted huge processions in different cities, in which Molana Badayuni and other prominent leader made speeches. Badayun, his native city had become the cradle of movement. A lot of congregations were conducted in Jamiye Mosque Shamsi. AISC conducted a procession at jamiye Mosque shamsi, Badayun on 16th August, 1946, in which Molana made a revolutionary and forceful speech with arguments before sermon and prayer.²⁴

In the same month, more than twenty thousand Muslims were gathered in Jamiye Mosque Shamsi, Badayun, on the occasion of Juma-tul-Wida. At this occasion, the Ulema highlighted the significance of Dar-ul-Muballigheen of Ahl-e-Sunnah and the creation of Pakistan in clear-cut and obvious words. Molana Badayuni said in his speech:

“Every scholar of Ahl-e-Sunnah has promised to offer any sacrifice for the movement of Islamic state. Describing the significance, objectives, goals and procedure of Dar-ul-Muballigheen, he told that their scholars would preach as accomplished debaters and orators throughout Hindustan. The students of different languages will be trained in Dar-ul-Muballigheen.”²⁵

The participants of the congregation were informed that Molana Badayuni along with other scholars was arranging the curriculum. In this situation, the local learners will be admitted. As soon as possible, the foreign scholars will be admitted and provided with scholarships.

On 29th September, 1946, Molana delivered an animated address on the topic of Pakistan Movement, in a grand congregation of AIML in the city of Jay Pur.²⁶

A Sunni Conference was conducted in Karachi under

the presidentship of Shah Ghulam Rasool Qadri, on 12-13 October, 1946. Molana Badayuni addressed in both sessions of this conference. He highlighted the religious and political services of the old representatives of Sunni Conference.

During his address, he stated the anti-Muslim policy of the INC. He said in these words.

“The Indian Muslims should remember the Hindus’ slogan ‘Quit India’ that is encouraging the demanders of independence; the very difficult pronunciation of Hindi is being imposed instead of the very simple Urdu pronunciation, to demolish Urdu. Why is the INC scary of Pakistan”.²⁷

On 16th February, 1947, a great session was held under Bazm-e-Pakistan Rampur, in which Molana participated along with other Ulema. He delivered an exciting address on the Ideology of Pakistan, its importance, need, objectives and significance.²⁸

On 8th to 10th April, 1947, the grand congregations of AISC Behar were conducted in Serbella Thana, Bakhtiarpur district Moonger. These processions were attended by Molana Badayuni on special basis. He said in his address:

“Despite that we acknowledge AIML the only representative political party, yet we require the AISC”.²⁹

A lot of processions of Sunni Conference were being conducted in different towns and cities, in which thousands of Ulema and Mashaikh participated enthusiastically. They expressed their religious sentiments regarding Pakistan. One of these orators the name of Molana Badayuni was foremost who described the political and religious importance of creation of Pakistan.³⁰

His relations with Ulema and Mashaikh were very strong; he used these relations in positive way and motivated them for common cause. He appealed them to make Pakistan the part and parcel of their lives. When the fifth session of AIML was conducted in Shamooga on 20th April, 1947, he described the political activities of delegate of AIML that visited the Middle East, in these words:

“We met the Saudi king and told him about the ideology of Pakistan. Ibn-e- Saood, the king of Hijaz supported it and kept on admitting the political leadership of Quaid-e-Azam. The Egyptian leadership and many other Muslim leaders are of the same point of view and they all are stating that Quaid-e-Azam will be great leader of Muslim world. INC was appealed

through a resolution to accept the demand for Pakistan and to cooperate with us regarding the prevention of confusion".³¹

He highlighted the plan of Cabinet mission in these words:

"The Indian Muslims are angry at whatever the Cabinet mission has changed its own statements, so there is no other option except to boycott the recommendations of this mission and interim government".³²

To discuss some important issues, he met with Quaid-e-Azam on 3rd May, 1947. Very essential matters were exchanged during this meeting. Molana made conversation with Mr. Jinnah on the constitution and law of Islamic state.

Quaid-e-Azam told about this:

"I definitely agree on the fact that Pakistan's constitution will be according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Western laws and socialism are not the solution of our malady. Very soon the entire world will recognize the comprehension of the Islamic principles."³³

Mr. Jinnah congratulated Molana Badayuni for his sincere services which he performed during his tour of Hijaz and the Arab countries. The political issues were also discussed as well in detail. After this meeting with Quaid-e-Azam, a statement for the newspaper was issued by Molana Badayuni. He said in this statement:

"By the will of God, the time is near when the Muslims of India will see the best outcomes of the sincere services and successful politics of their leader. Thanks Allah that the Quaid of Indian Muslims Muhammad Ali Jinnah is consuming his time and energy on the issues with good judgment. The very important thing is that it has been entered in his heart that the recently being determined constitution should be under the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore, I successfully exchanged my views on this essential part in my one hour meeting on 3rd May; and the feelings which I brought from this meeting can never be ignored. Supporting my thoughts great leader Jinnah said, "It is a fact that Islam is the name of such a complete code of life, in which there is the whole system of religion and mundane world. There is no need to follow Bolshevism or the other Western laws. Our reign and future will be successful if it will be according to the Quran and Sunnah. A new

fevor is being created in the hearts of the masses of the world regarding Islam and following of its laws." I have judged that Mr. Jinnah is spending his time on this direction, and dedicating his time on research of the Islamic and Quranic politics; by the grace of Allah, importance of Islamic laws are dominant in his passions and feelings. The day is very near when we will establish Islamic state. Be ready for any sacrifice for this success under the system of AIML, and keep on strengthening your reorganization".³⁴

CONCLUSION

Hindu leaders were using the Nationalist Ulema for their objectives. They were trying to make all the Indian Muslims as their supporters. They launched a vigorous campaign against the 'Two Nations Theory' and Muslim Nationalism. In those days, Muslim League was in the quest of Ulema who could counter the activities and version of the Nationalist Ulema.

At that time, AISC provided religious and political support to Muslim League. The member Ulema and Mashaikh of this organization threw light on two nation theory and emphasized the need and importance of the Muslim Nationalism. Molana Badayuni's contributions for Muslim Nationalism can't be ignored. He rejected the arguments of the Nationalist Ulema and created a general perception, which was in support of Pakistan.

Through his speeches he requested Ulema to work for the great cause of Indian Muslims. He believed that if Ulema would join AIML and work for Muslim Nationalism, Pakistan would be established. He took active part in the programs and sessions of AISC and highlighted the aims and objectives of AIML from this platform. He used this platform for a great cause. He ignored the entire temporary benefits for national interest. Through his services he paved the way for the establishment of separate homeland.

To counter the activities of Nationalist Ulema AISC held a very important gathering at Banaras. This congregation strongly supported the demand of Pakistan and declared that all Sunni Ulema and Mashaikh were ready for any sacrifice for the success of Pakistan Movement.

Molana Badayuni played his significant role to make this congregation successful. He made work for this organization according to the requirements and needs of the Indian Muslims. He often met with Quaid-e-Azam at different occasions and exchanged his views on variety of important issues concerning Indian Muslims. All this clarify that his inexhaustive religious and political efforts contributed a lot in paving the way of success for AIML.

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Research Paper

Literary and Cultural Aspects of Ogun Deity: A Study of Ogun Festival in Ondoland

Dr. Olu-Osayomi Olusegun

Department of Languages & Literary Studies, School of Education and Humanities, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State. Email: segunoosa@gmail.com

Accepted 31 March 2017

Ogun festival among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria and among Africans generally, has been the subject of many learned discourses. This is largely illustrative of the popularity of the deity as an integral aspect of cultural heritage and as a vehicle for social cohesion. However, the cultural aspect of how Ogun deity is worshipped during Ogun festival by the Yoruba particularly the Ondo people, demands a deeper religious appreciation on which researchers of comparative mythology and religion have not done enough. This, thus, constituted the subject of this paper. The paper, therefore, focused on the exploration of the literary and cultural aspects of Ogun deity in relation to Ogun festival in Ondoland. It further examined the origin and role of Ogun deity in Yorubaland, Ogun in Ondo, the cultural basis of Ogun in Ondo, cardinal attributes of Ogun deity, role of worshippers in Ogun festival, mode of worship and its importance, Ogun and social harmony in Ondo; in order to appraise the immense significance of the various exploits and life – style that were recorded about Ogun deity in Ondoland. The aesthetic value or merit of this cultural form, however, is to the Ondo secondary to its religious significance. This was discussed from mythological and spiritual perspectives. The paper established that the worship of Ogun deity is an oral tradition deeply rooted in the culture of the people and that it is essential to preserve its indigenous nature. It revealed that Ogun deity plays pivotal roles in the social, religious and political milieu of the Ondo people. The paper demonstrated that the worship of Ogun deity in Ondoland is not only a way of life but it has also transcended traditional, christian and muslim beliefs. It concluded that in Ondo, Ogun deity worship with its rich literary and cultural features is a source of unity in the society, and in a position to derive economic gains relating to tourist activities. However, it is imperative that African countries implement credible cultural policies to index, protect and promote the still existing deitist festivals and a somewhat delicate cultural heritage.

Keywords; Ogun deity, Yoruba, Ondoland, Festival, Literary and Cultural aspects, Cardinal attributes, Mythological, Cultural heritage

Cite This Article As: Olusegun O-O (2017). Literary and Cultural Aspects of Ogun Deity: A Study of Ogun Festival in Ondoland. *Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult.* 5(2): 44-51

INTRODUCTION

An abundance of oral literature in Africa is fully preserved in poetic and cultural forms many of which are more developed in some countries than the others. There is, in Nigeria, a very important festival that most people look forward to both in the urban areas and in the villages.

This festival gives the people concerned (both directly and indirectly) an opportunity for displaying unrestricted pomp, joy and extravagance. This festival is the Ogun festival in the traditional Yoruba fashion, with particular reference to the Ondo people.

The Yoruba can be found along the western coast of Africa. Yorubaland (Yoruba: Ile – Yoruba), the cultural region of the Yoruba people, south – western Nigeria, comprises today's Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Kwara, Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos as well as part of Kogi bound together by language, traditions and religious beliefs and practices.

Yoruba is the second largest language group in Africa, consisting over 20 million people. The term "Yoruba" according to Salamone (2010:319), encompasses about twenty-five separate groups, each one culturally different from the other. Islam, Christianity, and the "traditional". Yoruba pantheon, the *Orisa*, are all embraced in Yorubaland. The bond shared by all Yoruba people is the centrality of ritual to specific occasions, as well as to everyday life.

Ondo, the second Largest City in Ondo State (created on 3 February 1976 from the former Western State), Nigeria, is strategically sited at the intersection of roads from Ile-Ife, Akure, Okitipupa and other major towns in that axis. In the years of yore, the present Ondo was no great town; just a sparsely populated settlement with scattered huts where a primitive race engaged in farming and blacksmithing" (Adeboye, 2010:31).

As a result of its location, Ondo was a major transit town from Lagos and Ibadan to other towns in the north – eastern axis of Yorubaland, especially during the many wars that ravaged the Yoruba nation in the 19th century. It steadily emerged as a major conduit for goods from Lagos and to other parts of Yorubaland. From then, Ondo started asserting itself as an important community in the Yoruba nation.

Ogun festival is 'premodial' among the Ondo people because the festival is timeless for it is centuries old, while the beliefs and worships associated with it constitute traditional ideologies and taproots of ethnic culture. It is with this theme of Ogun festival that this paper is concerned. The emphasis is only on the exploration of the literary and cultural aspects of Ogun deity in relation to Ogun festival in Ondoland that connect the community as a whole. With few exceptions, much of what is classified here as Ogun festival in Ondoland could also be found in other Yoruba communities. However, specific variations caused by local peculiarities make an interesting study.

The foregoing and many other preliminary and major critical assumptions have conspired to create the template for my topic in this discourse "Literary and Cultural Aspects of Ogun Deity: A Study of Ogun Festival in Ondoland". The paper is divided into six sections. The first examines the origin and role of Ogun deity in Yorubaland. The second section deals with the origin of Ogun deity in Ondo. The third section discusses the issue of the cultural basis of Ogun deity in Ondo. The fourth part looks at the role of worshippers in Ogun festival. The fifth section deals with the appreciation of Ogun in Ondo-cultural context. The final part is the

conclusion.

METHODOLOGY

The present paper has benefited from earlier writing on Yoruba Oral Poetry in that they have pointed the way to further analysis which is attempted here. The paper is based on the fieldwork which I carried out on the literary and cultural aspects of Ogun Deity, the recorded samples are used in this paper. All the recorded samples came mostly from the blacksmiths of Ogbonkowo area in Ondo, Ondo State. All unacknowledged quotations are from my personal collections. The recordings were done on magnetic and visual tapes, and the sounds transcribed as recorded.

To translate *Ogun* songs, prayers and incantations, into English and yet preserve their exact meaning is not an easy task. I have, however, tried to meet the difficulty by being rather literal and keeping very close to the original form in my translation.

Origin and Role of Ogun Deity in Yorubaland

Ogun is one of the earliest Yoruba deities that are said to derive their power directly from 'Olodumare' or 'Olorun' (the Supreme Being, or God; the sustainer and upholder of the universe). Ogun is an important and highly regarded Yoruba deity. He is described as a 'a pan-Yoruba deity of fairly uniform character and significance', the 'deity of iron and war' (J.D.Y Peel, 1994:1).

According to Yoruba mythology, Ogun was a hunter who usually came down from heaven by a 'spider's thread upon the primordial masy waste' (Idowu, 1962:85) for his hunting expedition. This was before the earth was founded. " There was a critical lacuna, in the finishing of the universe as a unified cohesive form, especially in terms of linkages between physical and metaphysical beings and between those beings and the forces of nature" (Yakubu, 2010: 43).

However, 'when the earth was founded and its furniture arranged' (Idowu, 1962: 85), Ogun and other deities decided to come down from heaven in order to take over the affairs of the world. But they were unable to get through the bush 'at a place of "no road", and came 'to a halt' (Idowu, 1962:85) and resigned by submitting to fate. Orisanla 'tried to cut a way through, but his machete bent because it was lead. Of all the divinities, it was only Ogun who possessed the implement which was adequate for the task' (Idowu, 1962:86). So, 'he cleared a part with his magical tool. As a result of this, Ogun was invited to be their chief or head' (Simpson, 1980:25). By virtue of his power and status, Ogun received the title of *Osir-Imale* which means Chief among the divinities' (Idowu, 1962:86) when they arrived at Ile – Ife, the

“headquarters”.

Therefore, Ogun was unable to adjust himself to live a settled – community life because of his prowess in hunting and carnage. So, he decided to dwell on “Top of the hill” – *Ori-Oke*, as ‘the lone One’.

After a short time, Ogun ‘became tired of his seclusion and sought the settled life which he once rejected. At first, his fierce and forbidding appearance made it impossible for him to find a home in any community (Mbiti, 1969:53). The elders of *Ire* would achieve what other gods fail to achieve. They begged and persuaded Ogun into accepting to become their king. Ogun is crowned the king of *Ire* “Ogun, On’ire” - “Ogun, the lord of *Ire*”, and that became the beginning of a major travail of the people of the town. Thence, ‘Ogun – the great warrior, exhibitionist stud, annihilator and imbiber extra ordinaire – was leading his men in battle, doing what he did best – slaughtering the enemies of his people’ (Udu Yakubu, 2010: 43). His relationship with man is one of perpetual hazard. The traditional bard at *Ire* – Ekiti, according to Oyin Ogunba (2005:14) captured this ghoulish nature of Ogun in their chant when they sing (Table 1):

Table 1

<i>Ojilelegbeje oniyan</i>	One thousand four hundred and forty
people <i>Kee suse ninu oko Ogun</i>	Working in Ogun’s farm
<i>Ororo ebibu ni</i>	They are all in bits and pieces,
<i>Se li ei lorun,</i>	Have no necks
<i>Eyi koo ba loren</i>	Those who have necks
<i>Seli ei lori</i>	Have no heads.

The people of *Ire* mourn the day they invited a god to be their king. As an annihilator, neither Ogun nor his sword understands the word “retreat” in war. His “superfluity of naughtiness” and “sadistic pleasure in wickedness” is made clear in the saying (Table 2):

Table 2

<i>Nibo l’ati pade re?</i>	Where does one meet him?
<i>A pade re n’ibi ija;</i>	One meets him in the place of battle;
<i>A pade re n’ibi ita;</i>	One meets him in the place of wrangling;
<i>A pde re n’ibi agbara eje</i>	One meets him in the place where torrents of blood,
<i>Gbe nda ni l’orun bi omi ago</i>	Fill with longing as a cup of water does the thirsty (Idowu, 1962: 80).

According to Omolafe (1988:36), Ogun’s devotees fondly address him as ‘Ogun Alada meji; o nfi kan sako, o nfi kan yena’ (‘Ogun, the owner of two cutlasses; with one, he cultivates the farm, and with the other he clears the road’). Ogun is greatly honoured as the great master artist; and as the god of iron and steel; he is accorded great respect among the other deities. ‘He is universally acknowledged; according to (Idowu 1962:85), in the indigenous belief of the Yoruba as a most indispensable divinity, in as much as all iron and steel belong to him.

Among the Yoruba pantheon (*Orisanla*; sometimes called *Obatala*, *Orunmila*, *Esu*, *Sango*, *Saponna*, *Ela* etc), Ogun occupies an important place and wields great power. He is held to be in control of everything that is made of iron. In order not to incur Ogun’s wrath, his devotees handle with every care metal tools or things made of iron, such as knives, cutlasses and automobiles. As a matter of fact (Abiodun, 2003:208), in the use of metal implements, devotees of Ogun are careful to follow the rules and regulations spelt out by Ogun. This explains why drivers, farmers and blacksmiths offer regular sacrifices to Ogun, so as to win his favor in whatever they do.

In the words of Oladipo (1988:89), Ogun is believed to have put finishing touches to the creation of man; he made human bones and assembled them. He completed *Orisanla*’s job of moulding the physical body of man by the cutting or craving of hands and legs to the shapes. In traditional Yoruba society, ‘such things as circumcision, tribal marking, tattooing, or any surgical operations that may be necessary to keep man in good health’ (Idowu, 1962:87) are associated with Ogun.

So great and famous was his prowess all over Yorubaland then that it was commonly acknowledged that he never lost any battle to an opponent. Indeed, Ogun could have been described as a prodigy of war. The secrets of his successes laid not only in his gallantry at war but also in the skills with which he was able to manipulate his implements of war which were believed to have been charged with fire. These implements were derived from steel and they included guns, cutlasses and matchets. So, the basis of his military successes rested on the effectiveness of steel. These achievements were renowned all over Yorubaland, including places like *Ile* – *Ife*, *Ire*, *Oyo*, *Ekiti* and *Ondo*. So, in these places, it was a common practice to chant incantations and songs in praise of Ogun.

Origin of Ogun Deity in Ondo

Those who founded Ondo, at the beginning of the 16th century, according to Rev. Samuel Johnson (1957) were no common place wayfarers with prosaic, pedestrian pedigree. They were men and women enveloped in royal garments straight from the place of the *Alaafin* of *Oyo*,

the then powerful leader of the Yoruba race. Among the cities, towns and villages that make-up Yoruba nation, Ondo is blessed with unique history; it is perhaps the only major Yoruba town that its founding King was a woman.

Early in the history of Ondo, wars played a very prominent role in her relationship with her neighboring towns. Intermittent wars came successively and Ondo was not able to ward off her enemies easily. Also, it was about this time that the military fame of Ogun spread all over Yorubaland. So, Ondo then decided to seek Ogun's assistance. This was what led him to depart Ile – Ife, his premodial home. This ceremonious departure was to create a "land – mark" in the history of the Ondo people. This is because with the subsequent warfares, Ogun was able to solve the problems of external invasion for a very long time, and even afterwards. Moreover, Ogun's prowess was so great and vivid in the minds of the people that until this day, Ondos have vowed never to be defeated again. This bears some elements of truth because the people always strove to fight with same zeal as their fore-fathers acquired from Ogun. This is a lasting impact because Ogun remains a source of psychological inspiration during war.

Ogun Diety in Ondo

In appreciation of Ogun's achievements, the Ondos then started to worship him and they were known as "children of Ogun". Ogun worship later on turned out to be a source of unity in the society. This will be discussed later in this paper.

One thing that must be appreciated is the relationship of Ogun with the Supreme God. All Ogun worshippers believe firmly in the existence of a Supreme Being (Eledumare) or God. Ogun, they believe, is one of the several deities chosen by Eledumare to represent Him here on earth. In other words, "Ogun is to act as a go – between for God and man by occupying that vacuum which is created by man's yearnings for direct contact with God" (Olu-Osayomi, 2013:65).

The role of Ogun amongst the other gods is a very important one because steel or iron plays a very prominent part in the daily life of the individual. This is why apart from Sango the god of thunder, Ogun is the most significant deity in Yorubaland. For the Ondos, Ogun is even more important by virtue of his military achievements in Ondo history.

This is a vague analysis of the foundation and development of Ogun worship in Yorubaland and Ondo especially. It should be realized that Ogun worship is not restricted to only these areas because it includes those places where the power of Ogun as god of iron is acknowledged. This is why we discover that it takes place in certain parts of Iboland and Benin. However, that of the Ondo is unique, because it has developed into a cult in

which most members of the community in Ondo participate.

The Cultural Basis of Ogun Deity in Ondo

Like other human communities, Ondo had its moments of joy and ecstasy as reflected in Ogun festival. The worship of Ogun culminates in an annual festival which is called the 'Ogun festival'. This festival is of such importance that it happens to be the most significant local festival in Ondo town. It is a festival held not only in commemoration of the achievements and power of Ogun but it is also used as a means of appeasing Ogun for the short – comings of the people over the past year. Above all, this festival serves as the only opportunity of bringing all the worshippers together in the year. Through it, they are all unified physically and spiritually under the common acknowledgment of Ogun's power. This is why everyone looks forward every year to the festival.

The worship of Ogun is an oral tradition inherent in the culture of the people and handed down from one generation to the other. This is why it is not easy to date back its origin. A child born into a house where Ogun is worshipped is not necessarily formally taught the norms of the cult. Rather, he picks it up gradually from those around him. This is because Ogun plays a very prominent role in the daily affairs of the life of the people. Ogun affects the basic societal institutions like naming ceremonies, marriages, burials and initiations, to mention but a few. This will also be discussed later.

The historical settlement of Ogun in Ondo has highly influenced distribution of worshippers around the town. For instance, today, the base of Ogun worshippers is *Ogbomkwo* area which is mostly inhabited by the majority of the blacksmiths in the town. This can be explained by the fact that this was the area where Ogun was said to have first settled on arrival at Ondo. So Ogun's impact was felt directly here. On the morning of the festival, you would see the excitement on the face of everybody. The people would be happy. From early in the morning, you would be hearing the heavy sound of pestles in the mortars as each household prepared pounded yam, known as *iyana-Ogun*. During the festival proper, there would be so many spectacular acrobatic displays and lot of choreographed dances by the celebrators.

By virtue of the fact that steel or iron is the basis of their occupation, the blacksmiths see themselves as serving Ogun directly. In other words, they esteem their work in a spiritual manner, because relative to all other worshippers (as shall be seen later), they have the greatest contact with iron (the basis of Ogun's power). This is also the reason why the blacksmiths form the bulk of the worshippers.

It is therefore not surprising that the growth of Ogun worship started from this area. With time, other places

like Ododibo, Odojomu, Yaba and Okelisa sprang up as centers of worship. The factor binding all the worshippers in these areas is the predominance of iron in their occupations. Invariably this predominance of iron manifests power and greatness in their lives.

Role of Worshippers in Ogun Festival

Ogun festival is one of the festivals in Ondo that attracts people from far and near. Others are *Odun Oba*, *Oramfe*, *Ekimogun day celebration* etc. However, it will be worthwhile to discuss the role of the various groups of worshippers in relation to Ogun festival. Ondo people have a great respect for the office of the Osemawe, the paramount ruler of Ondo Kingdom. Like the other Obas in other Yoruba Kingdoms, the Osamawe of Ondo is hailed as Kabiyesi, Alase, Ekeji Orisa, the commander who cannot be questioned, second only to the gods. Western civilization has no doubt eroded into the stature of the Oba in the modern set up. Yet, the king remains very powerful personally within and outside his domain. The Osemawe of Ondo with other members of the royal family constitutes the head of all the worshippers. This is of great cultural and traditional significance because it is a pre-requisite for any heir to the kingship to be a staunch believer and worshipper of Ogun. It is commonly believed that the reign of an Oba who worships Ogun is likely to be more successful than that of an Oba who does not. This means that Ogun enhances the popularity of the reign of the Oba, and it also enables the whole community to be bound together under a "representative" of Ogun. This is advantageous to the Oba; he stands to gain the confidence of his subjects. The present king is, however, bringing some colour back to the carnival. He is said to be attracting some patronage to the Ogun festival, especially from corporate organizations.

As the head of all worshippers therefore, it is the duty of the Oba to declare Ogun festival officially open. This is usually done a day before the general ceremony. It is marked by several rituals which he has to perform at his palace on behalf of his people. These rituals are performed to propitiate Ogun and ask for a life more abundant for the future. These rituals are accompanied by incantations and chants in praise of Ogun's past achievements. On the following day, which is the day when the real festival actually takes place, other members of the royal family join the worshippers in the day's festivities.

The Appreciation of Ogun in Ondo – Cultural Context

In order to be able to appreciate fully the cultural context of Ogun, it is important to realize that African festivals and rituals constitute dramatic performances. Although it

cannot be described according to our perception of modern drama where the spectators and actors are separated, aspects of drama can still be perceived through dancing, miming, songs and drumming all of which entertain the people. All these characteristics are also present during Ogun festivals or sacrifices.

Ogun worship has become a tradition handed down from one generation to the other. This is manifested in the celebration of Ogun festival annually. Consequently, it is obvious that the norms of the cult have become embedded in the culture over the years. This is why it has become essential to preserve its indigenous touch. It can also explain why western culture has not been able to infiltrate too much into its ideals, because if that happens, it means "adulterating" the roots of the culture. One can conclude that Ogun cult is now a means of strengthening the culture. This is enhanced by the fact that it promotes unity in the social, religious and psychological sense. Several Ondos identify themselves with one another by virtue of the fact that they all share common beliefs in Ogun as god of Iron and war. These beliefs are usually introduced during societal functions like burials, naming ceremonies, marriages, initiation ceremonies etc. These are all aspects of the culture which are performed according to the rites of Ogun by his believers. Non-believers differ from them in this respect. These functions bring worshippers and non-believers together and they are all bound together at least during the respective ceremony.

At this point, this paper discusses briefly the role of Ogun in these ceremonies. During naming ceremonies homage must first be paid to Ogun by invoking his presence through the chanting of incantations. This will be succeeded by rituals. To perform the ritual, Ogun must be present and this can take the form of any iron implement. This is accompanied by the other articles which are used for the normal or ordinary worship. The Ogun priest then prays for the child (Table 3):

Table 3

Prayer	Translation
Oo ni shi Ogun lo o	<i>You will not misuse Ogun</i>
Ooni ri ija Ogun o	<i>You will not see the wrath of Ogun</i>
Ooni fi Ogun se enikeni lese o	<i>You will not harm anyone with Ogun</i>

These are prayers dedicated to Ogun for guidance and assistance for the child. The child will then be named by the chief priest.

Children born into the "house of Ogun" (a house where Ogun is worshipped) are easily recognised by their names. They usually bear names like Ogunsakin, Oguntulire, Ogumade or Oguntade. All these names have Ogun in them because Ogun is a source or title from which the names are derived. In Yorubaland, names of

people are derived from their historical background or the circumstances of their birth. A family or individual that bears "Akin" (Akintade, Akinbola) is renowned for its military prowess and virility. While those whose names include 'Ade' (Adegbite, Adejomu) are known for their royal background because 'Ade' in Yoruba means crown. In this case too, those in whose name "Ogun" exists have connections with the god of Iron. This is why in Ondo, the children of most hunters, farmers and blacksmiths especially bear 'Ogun'.

During burials, the ceremony takes a different pattern for Ogun worshippers. Before the corpse is buried, seven gunshots are released into the air for twenty-one days. During the burial, rituals are performed to Ogun as a means of distinguishing the dead as a child of Ogun. These rituals are accompanied by incantations. Prayers are also said and are meant for the salvation of the soul of the dead person. Here, Ogun is invoked to act as a mediator between God Almighty and the dead person so that his soul is acceptable to God.

The institution of marriage is also influenced by Ogun worship. If a female child of Ogun decides to get married, she departs her house with prayers for goodluck in her marital home. As usual, this involves certain rituals and incantations to Ogun. Also, she takes her own 'Ogun' along with her to continue her worship. It is believed that the marital bond is strengthened where two Ogun worshippers get married. So, even in aspects of marriage, unity is an important factor which Ogun worship effects between individuals and families.

The entire belief in the spiritual power of Ogun as god of Iron is psychological. It relies on the ability of the individual to have complete faith in Ogun as the "force" behind his life. This is why before a person can start to worship, he must acknowledge Ogun's power and swear an oath of allegiance to it. Above all, he must accept that his power is one that is capable of protection, preservation and destruction as well. The individual must also regard Ogun as a god of justice which means that the deity acts on principles of justice even against its followers when they err. Swearing by Ogun, for instance, is regarded as a severe form of punishment. In fact, in the colonial days, the British government recognized the validity of this form of swearing in the judicial courts by non – Christian witnesses. The oath is administered by handing a piece of iron to the witness to kiss. Some people prefer to swear by the ground. This is based on the belief that the ground which contains deposits of iron ore will hurl the person to early death if he gives a false witness. This is as effective as swearing by the god himself or a piece of iron.

With all these beliefs about Ogun therefore, a very profound consequence on the mind, is that of instilling self – discipline. For anyone to successfully carry out the worship he must be disciplined, in other words, he must have a control over his emotional, psychological and

spiritual being. Also he/she must have the ability to discern between good and evil and behave accordingly. Worshippers regard perjury as an offence punishable in the olden days by death. These considerations are very important because Ogun's power is so great that if it strikes, it must do so justly. Therefore, the consequences must not be underestimated, where Ogun is invoked to fight for an unjust course. For these reasons therefore, a worshipper is required to be properly disciplined so as not to misuse Ogun's power because it is like a boomerang which can back-fire.

In certain cases where an individual or the community offends Ogun, he is required to placate the god through sacrifices or face its wrath. All these beliefs are commonly held and respected among members of the cult so much that they strive to avoid evil deeds against one another.

Another psychological influence which Ogun has on people can be seen in his role as a "consultant". Since Ogun is a patron of hunters and soldiers, no hunter or soldier dares proceed on a hunting or military expedition (respectively) without first consulting the deity as regards his prospects. He may have to make some sacrifices. Blacksmiths, and other artisans who make use of iron implements look-up to Ogun for protection and to help them achieve success in their work. Success can only be achieved if their implements (iron) are blessed by Ogun. This is why the soldier for example regards his iron sword or spear as sacred. The blacksmith also regards his anvil and forge as sacred.

Ogun can also help develop the psychological instincts of a person. For instance, Ogun warns "his child" of impending dangers by making him discern or foresee a danger intuitively. People believe that this is one means through which Ogun communicates with his people. When danger or evil lurks around the corner, the person starts feeling uneasy. This uneasiness can take the form of the person developing a sort of "heat" inside the body. This is why Ogun's children are very sensitive. So, Ogun guards his followers by giving them a foresight into future events. It is also believed that Ogun can also communicate through dreams and visions. Several things are said to be revealed through these media. For example, if one is to be a prospective worshipper, you can easily know if you find yourself eating in your dreams. Also, solutions to pressing problems can be revealed in dreams or visions where *Ogun* demands certain sacrifices from the individual. After such sacrifices, the problems are solved. This is usually applicable to various maladies which are believed to be curable only after consultation with Ogun.

In Ondo society, *Ogun* has influenced certain norms and values of the people, especially as regards the life of his followers. These norms are concerned with certain moral and social aspects of the people's environment. Ogun has had the effect of influencing these aspects of

the culture so much that it has brought about an increased standard of morals and discipline. As earlier mentioned before a person can profess to be true worshipper of Ogun, he must attain a certain standard of moral upliftment. This can only be achieved through self – denial as regards certain habits. It is this self-denial that this paper is now going to discuss.

The moral aspect of the cult can be summarized in the words “exemplary behaviour”. At all times, a child of Ogun is expected to show remarkable character. This is centered on the idea that Ogun is a just god which inspires people to do good always and where a person falls below expectations, he should equally expect Ogun to fall short in his assistance towards him. Thus, a person who is not morally strong can never expect Ogun to help him against his enemies for example. So, far from being a wicked and destructive god as people say, Ogun is a god that helps to develop the sense of good or righteousness. Therefore, this can explain why all followers of Ogun are morally bound not to steal, for example, it is believed that if this happens, Ogun will not fail to disgrace the culprit publicly because the person would be punished and may even die through the power of Ogun. It is likely that punishment will be brought about by an iron implement.

The other rules binding Ogun worshippers can be regarded as social norms. Usually, these norms vary within the society, depending on the requirements of one’s Ogun. However, there are certain universally binding ones. For example, no child of Ogun is allowed to have any dealings with a slave or someone of slave decent. This includes marital or social relations. This practice has a historical origin in Ondo. In the olden days, during any great crisis especially wars, slaves were used for human sacrifices to propitiate the god. As a result, they were looked down upon. Moreover, since the sacrifices they were used for were usually those which involved the purification and cleansing of the society, they were equally regarded as unclean being. This is one of the reasons why even uptill today, slaves are still regarded with contempt.

Some Ogun worshippers (with special reference to the blacksmiths) are forbidden to pick yam from fire with an iron cooking utensil. Also, they must not eat any black vegetables or black snakes. Other people are forbidden to take late night meals, they must not eat after the light have come on in the evening. Some say they are not to buy cooked food like ‘akara’ (bean cake) on the street. Usually, most Ogun followers are obliged not to pick things (especially iron implements, money and gold) on the roadside.

These are all different forms of tradition which have changed with time into norms. One regards them as oral traditions because they are not formally written or taught, in other words, they cannot be learnt from books. They gradually acquired as a person becomes of age. Despite

the fact that there is no “formal legal body” to enact them, the worshippers are still profoundly faithful and loyal to them, because they are spiritually binding. Once a person takes the oath to become a child of Ogun, he automatically pledges to all its requirements. Little wonder then when people who violate these norms have to make costly sacrifices to appease Ogun. Despite the fact that these norms have passed down from one generation to another in Ondo, they have not lost their original moral force.

CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, it is evident that Ogun deity plays a prominent role in the lives of the Yorubas and their community. In fact, in Ondoland, Ogun cult is a way of thinking and behaving. It is therefore, a way of life. It has transcended traditional, Christian and Muslim beliefs. Since it is deeply rooted in the culture of the people, it is essential to preserve its indigenous nature. This is why Ogun festival is celebrated annually in Ondo. It helps to reenact the norms and values which constitute an important part of the culture. Moreover, the culture of a society is its source of uniqueness and self-realization. Considering the way of lives of Ogun worshippers in Ondo state, obedience to injunction of Ogun deity leads to prosperity and peaceful co-existence, while disobedience brings doom. "This is a testimony to the major role that the transcendent, the mysterious and the metaphysical play and continue to play in the lives of the people despite the presence of the trappings of modernization" (Faniran, 2010: 497).

Importantly also, this paper has examined the complex and rich cultural aspect of Ogun deity in relation to Ogun festival in Ondo which is still very much in existence in today’s literature. Also, Ogun festival with its rich cultural features is not only a source of unity but also a form of dramatic expression of these cultural qualities. The opinion of this paper is that its use should be encouraged and not condemned because it is a tradition that the Ondos have identified with. It is an index of the cultural experience of the Ondos; a symbol of their social and cultural identity. It is, therefore, anticipated that its adherence will assist in resolving some of the socio-political difficulties of Nigeria in the drive towards engendering a collective form of human advancement.

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