Abstract

Limits of Comparativism? Writings from Peru and India through a Postcolonial Lens

Doctor of Philosophy, 2009

Lipi Biswas Sen

Graduate Department of Spanish, University of Toronto

This thesis examines the premises postulated by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin and Homi K. Bhabha within Postcolonial theory. The theorists suggest that these strategies can be applied to the entire literary production emerging from the erstwhile European colonies in Asia and Latin America; hence the aim of this project is to test the validity of their claim. Given the vastness of the theory, the scope of this study has been confined to the analysis of hybridity, Nativism, and mimicry. Critical works by Benita Parry, Walter Mignolo, Neil Lazarus, and others, have been taken into consideration. José María Arguedas (1911-1969), Arundhati Roy (1963-) and Geetanjali Shree (1957-), writing in Spanish, English and Hindi, respectively, were chosen to represent Peru and India. The Hindi novel was included to address the lack of adequate research in the field of vernacular literature within Postcolonial studies, as most of the critics have concentrated on texts written in the former colonizers’ languages.

Language and culture have been the cornerstones of this theory hence they form an important part of my analysis. The dissertation foregrounds the relation between Spanish, English and the vernaculars in the text-nations crafted by Arguedas, and Roy. Their narratives indicate that the vernacular melds with the colonizer’s language to form a hybrid tongue, but the manner in which hybridity is constructed depends on the geo-political character of each society. The role of Hindi, its relation to English and Urdu, as well as the
invention of its Sanskritized version during the colonial period, is examined in Shree’s
narrative and her work is particularly insightful in this regard, as hybridity and Nativism are
portrayed very differently in her novel. In this way my thesis demonstrates the difficulty of
carrying out a comparative analysis of the entire literary corpus emerging from the erstwhile
European colonies based solely on their shared colonial experience.
Acknowledgements

It would have been difficult to write this dissertation without the constant encouragement and support of my Supervisor, Prof. Rosa Sarabia. Her suggestions were always stimulating and challenging. My gratitude goes out to my Co-Supervisor, Prof. Chelva Kanaganayakam, and Reader, Prof. Néstor Rodríguez, for their insightful comments. I am grateful to Prof. Stephen Rupp, Chair of the Department, for his understanding and help at all times. I would also like to thank my Professors in Jawaharlal Nehru University for their academic and administrative assistance over the years.

I thank my parents for their support and, Arindam Sen, my husband, for his companionship and patience. The project has come to an end, and I only wish my father, Alok Biswas, were alive to see it, but his memory is always with me and I dedicate my work to him. There are others whose help I would like to acknowledge, but it would not be possible to do so given the constraints of space, so a big thank you to everyone who helped me get this thesis done.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction-Hybridity and Nativism: Setting</td>
<td>1-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Parameters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Crafting the Language of the Nation: An analysis of the Linguistic</td>
<td>42-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies in the Narrative of José María Arguedas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Hybrid Tongues? Language and Nation in Arundhati Roy’s</td>
<td>92-144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The God of Small Things and Geetanjali Shree’s Hamara Shahar Us Baras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. English and the Vernacular in The God of Small Things</td>
<td>93-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Writing against the grain in Hamara Shahar Us Baras</td>
<td>110-138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Conclusion</td>
<td>138-144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Of Harawís, Huaynos And Turupukllays – Culture And Nation In</td>
<td>145-199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José María Arguedas’ Yawar Fiesta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Weaving the Cultural Fabric of the Nation in Hamara Shahar Us Baras</td>
<td>200-234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion: Limits of Comparativism?</td>
<td>235-250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Works Cited</td>
<td>251-270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction- Hybridity and Nativism: Setting the Parameters for Analysis of Texts from Peru and India

Postcolonial theory was developed in the 80s in order to study the consequences of colonialism, which some critics believed was not being addressed effectively by the existing instruments of analysis. Ania Loomba explains the meaning of the term ‘postcolonial’ succinctly in her book Colonialism/Postcolonialism, “[...] the prefix ‘post’ [...] implies an ‘aftermath’ in two senses --temporal, as in coming after, and ideological, as in supplanting.” (1998, 6). It is the second definition, that of an ideological aftermath, that forms the basis of the work, The Empire Writes Back. Theory and Practice in post-colonial literatures by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin published in 1989. This work marked a watershed in the way this theory could be used to analyze literature in this context.

According to Ashcroft et al, “Post-colonial literatures developed through several stages which can be seen to correspond to stages both of national or regional consciousness and of the project of asserting difference from the imperial center” (4-5). That is they engage with the imperial centers during the colonial experience, and continue to do so even after independence, in an effort to dismantle the cultural and historical hegemony established since the first moment of contact between the colonizers and the colonized. The authors go on to suggest four models which they feel would adequately account for these experiences. The first is a national or regional model which highlights the distinctive features of certain national or regional experiences; the second is the race based model which discovers certain shared features in various national literatures such as ‘Black writing’; the third is the comparative model of varying complexity which seeks to account for particular linguistic, historical, and cultural features across two or more post-colonial literatures; the fourth and
the most comprehensive is based on models which argue for features such as hybridity and syncreticity as fundamental elements of post-colonial literatures (1989, 15). The theorists further suggest certain literary strategies, some of them based on language and place of writing, as techniques used by post-colonial authors to state their point of view. The models of study mentioned above have served as a paradigm particularly in studies related to South Asian authors.

In fact, both Ashcroft and Fernando de Toro, in their articles “Modernity’s first-born: Latin America and post-colonial transformation” and “The postcolonial question” published in *El debate de la postcolonialidad en América Latina* (1999), claim that, though this theoretical framework is concerned primarily with the experiences of people from the erstwhile colonies of Britain and France, it can be extended to include the countries formerly colonized by Spain and Portugal as well. Critics such as Aijaz Ahmad (1994), Arif Dirlik (1994), Anne McClintock (1992), Neil Lazarus (2004a, 2005), Benita Parry (1994, 1995, 2004), Ella Shohat (1992), amongst others, have argued that it is difficult to analyze the experience of all the erstwhile European colonies within a single theoretical framework. This matter has also been debated at length by Walter Mignolo (1993), J. Jorge Klor de Alva (1995), Santiago Colás (1995), Fernando Coronil (2004), Roman de la Campa (2002), Hernán Vidal (1993), and others, in the context of Latin America. One of the reasons for this polemic is the open ended strategies applied to the literary corpus emerging from all the former colonies which presumably reflect these techniques (while leaving a large majority in the margins) that has led to heated discussions. Nevertheless, it is difficult to deny the fissures opened by postcolonial theory within the academic world as scholars still debate the
feasibility of its application, especially given the current neo-colonial economic and socio-political conditions prevailing in the former colonies.

An important critique of the theory proposed by Ashcroft et al and Homi K. Bhabha, is their failure to acknowledge and incorporate the views of scholars and writers who have already commented extensively on the role played by language and culture (two vital elements in the theory postulated by them), much before the advent of Postcolonial theory. I would like to mention here the seminal work done by Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539-1616), the mestizo historiographer from Peru, in his *Comentarios reales* (Royal Commentaries) as also Felipe Guaman Poma (1535-[1616]) in *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615).

The linguistic strategies used by Garcilaso de la Vega and Guaman Poma prove that the historiographers had recognized quite early on the role played by language in the colonial project. Language for them was not a neutral tool to report history but an instrument to justify the conquest and colonization of Latin America. The two cronistas subverted the institutions of power represented by Spanish in the chronicles written by the Spanish historiographers by inserting Quechua and Aymara in their works to mark the presence of the indigenous populace in the colonial discourse (Biswas Sen 2004). Garcilaso’s work is of special interest as he uses the Humanist tradition to challenge the extremely negative image of the Incas and the native populace presented by Viceroy Toledo during that period (Biswas Sen 2004). In fact, some of Garcilaso’s linguistic strategies foreshadow “mimicry”, a technique mentioned by Bhabha to destabilize the colonial discourse. The critic adapts Samuel Weber’s vision of castration to describe colonial mimicry as, “the desire for a

---

1 See *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* (2005) edited by Loomba et al.
reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite* (86). Bhabha further clarifies that, “the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference” (86). Following Benedict Anderson, he locates the figure of mimicry “in ‘the inner compatibility of empire and nation’. It problematizes the signs of racial and cultural priority, so that the ‘national’ is no longer naturalizable. What emerges between mimesis and mimicry is a *writing*, a mode of representation, that marginalizes the monumentality of history, quite simply mocks its power to be a model, that power which supposedly makes it imitable. Mimicry *repeats* rather than *re-presents* […]” (88). By using the Humanist rhetoric strategies like false modesty, the Inca appears to adhere to this most revered of traditions, when actually he employs this particular strategy to subvert the colonial discourse from within as he describes or *re-presents* the Incan history based on their own socio-political organization, their knowledge and even language systems as he inserts Quechua in his work. By dedicating a chapter to the pronunciation of Quechua words (190), he puts his native tongue at the same level as Spanish (Biswas Sen 2004, 487). In this way, he opens the ambiguities inherent in the image of the ‘other’ in the (hi)*story* of the indigenous populace.²

I would like to argue here, that contrary to Bhabha’s position, mimicry for the Inca is not just a *repetition* but also a *re-presentation* of the native’s perspective. Given that the Inca epitomizes hybridity, being the son of a Spanish conquistador, Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega and an Incan princess Chimpu Uqllu, a direct descendant of the second last Inca, we see that he draws upon and identifies himself (especially after he goes to Spain) with the

² I will study this category further when I analyze a particular cultural event as interpreted by the indigenous communities of Puquio in Arguedas’ *Yawar fiesta*. 
indigenous communities. In fact, he changes his name from Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Inca Garcilaso de la Vega when he reaches Spain, leaving little room for ambiguity with regard to his affiliations. Similarly he places himself within the Humanist tradition, by mimicking the strategies enshrined in this school of thought, to subvert the colonial discourse, and consequently the empire, with the help of the native culture, as it used to be before the conquest. This particular strategy, therefore, is not a new phenomenon as suggested by Bhabha. Moreover, it also appears in the work of the colonized and not just in the texts written by the colonial authorities. Mimicry is certainly a subversive technique which cracks the surface of the empire as we have just seen, but it also draws strength from a culture that the writer is familiar with. The binary oppositions are broken in the creation of a new text that emerges from the Inca as he uses his knowledge to construct the ‘other’ version of (hi)story, and the contribution of the native weltanschauung in this endeavor cannot be denigrated.

It is, therefore, possible to argue that scholars from Latin America have debated and written about the role of language and culture in the colonial as well as the postcolonial context; a fact not mentioned either by Ashcroft et al, or by Bhabha. Mignolo, for instance, brings out the contribution of the Mexican historian and philosopher Edmundo O’Gorman (1993) in the role of language and society. According to Mignolo in *La idea del descubrimiento de América* (1952) (*The Idea of the Discovery of America*) and *La invención de América. El universalismo de la cultura del Occidente* (1958) (*The Invention of America. The Universalism of the Western Culture*), O’Gorman dismantles the European colonial discourse (122). Mignolo further contends that O’Gorman portrays language as an instrument
for “constructing history and inventing realities” (1993, 122), in this way the Mexican historian takes apart “five hundred years of Western historiography” (1993, 122).

Ángel Rama in *La ciudad letrada (The Lettered City 1996 [1984])* too brings out incisively the control and domination exercised by the hegemonic centers through alphabetic writing. The imposition of Western alphabetic writing that largely displaced the native oral cultures has played a pivotal role in the construction of the new nation-states. In this work Rama studies the enormous authority exercised by the *criollo* elite as they built and consolidated their power base from urban spaces. Commenting on the relation between writing, and the institutionalization of power exposed by Rama, John Charleston Chasteen says, “Writing, urbanism, and the state have had a special relationship in Latin America. To impose order on vast empires, the Iberian monarchs created precocious urban networks, carefully planned with pen and paper, their geometrical layout standardized by detailed written instructions. New cities housed both the institution of state power and the writers who dealt in edicts, memoranda, reports, and all the official correspondence that held the empire together” (1996, vii). Rama thus reveals the nexus of the “lettered culture”, the State and urban location, bound and promoted by Western alphabetic writing and language.

Ironically, this path breaking study is not mentioned either by Ashcroft et al (in their 1989 publication) or Bhabha when they talk about the role of language in the process of “writing back” to the center.³ By not citing texts from Latin America the critics fail to recognize the struggle of the indigenous populace to preserve their language, culture and tradition in the new nation-state, portrayed so graphically in the works of the Peruvians, José María Arguedas, Manuel Scorza and Óscar Colchado Lucio as they carried out the battle at

---
the literary level (1989). This is an important omission, as postcolonial theorists, such as Bhabha, study hybridity epistemologically while the battle is actually carried out socially and discursively by the native communities and the indigenist and neo-indigenist authors to write back not just to the imperial centre but also to the new Creole elite. This crucial factor is not even mentioned in the articulation of a theory which apparently speaks for all the colonized nations.

One of the most debated strategies is hybridity, which has been seen as the cornerstone of this theory. Its counter is often categorized as Nativism, which Ashcroft et al define as a, “term for the desire to return to indigenous practices and cultural forms as they existed in the pre-colonial society.” (1998, 159). Nativism was first proposed in the Indian context by G. N. Devy in his book After Amnesia. Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism (1992). His argument is built on the critique of the way colonial epistemological had created, “false frameworks of cultural values and stratified knowledge into superior (Western) and inferior (Indian) categories. And attempt has been made in this essay to establish how these false images can create profoundly mistaken modes of literary criticism” (3). Clarifying his stand on the use of Western theory, Devy explains that:

To theorize is to structure the universe of literature, to establish a desirable order, to discipline history, to play the dominating male, the father figure. […] The colonial Indian critic, in the inevitable attempt to play his role of a cultural ‘female’, child, a person deprived of his history, a ‘civilized’, ‘disciplined’ being, tried to ape the Western trend of literary theorizing . His need to do so was an imposed need, a transaction guided by the law of ‘reflected value’. The most crucial factor in this transaction was the attempt to
define the ‘self’ of Indian criticism in terms of the ‘the other’ of Western criticism. (106)

For Devy this attitude was molded during the colonial period since, “Education in English literature lent value to the person who had received it, who himself became a commodity in the job-market created by the colonial government. While the intention of the Indian leaders who sought English education was to gain access to the English mind, the objective of the British in providing it was to win loyalty from their colonial subjects. Neither succeeded fully. But this collaborative effort certainly enhanced the value of English literary education and, thereby, the discipline of literary criticism. Since that education worked as a channel to draw the ‘natives’ into colonial market system, creating a class of culturally displaced Indians, such a displacement came to be valued” (104-105). According to the critic it is this attitude that shaped the native’s attempt to define him/herself and to establish her/his identity. This way of thinking then translated itself into the field of literary criticism which “involved either catching up with the West or vying with it in claims to ultimate answers to problems in literary criticism” (109). One of the ways of resolving this impasse, in his opinion, was to go back to what he sees as tradition which he derives from the Sanskrit word *paramparā*. In this book therefore, he deals with the *bhāsā* literatures or criticism. *Bhāsā* for him refers to literary works written in modern Indian languages, and he deals specifically with Marathi and Gujarati, languages he is familiar with.

---

4 Devy traces the etymology of the word in this way, “*Paramparā*, a compound of *param* and *parā*, means “distant, further, enemy, afterwards, beyond, other, stranger, next, yonder, belonging to the other side, second, far off,” or more specifically, “something that is very conspicuous and very remote, almost on the other shore of the current time, inaccessible”(14-15).
The critic bases his hypothesis on Bhalchandra Nemade’s views of Nativism. Nemade had been inspired by the idea of “Nativism” as postulated by the anthropologist Ralph Linton (Paranjape 160). According to the Marathi critic this is equivalent to the, “Indian term deshi” (133). In his opinion, “In ordinary contexts, both the terms native or deshi refer to something of indigenous origin, although the former emphasizes ‘birth’ while the latter emphasizes ‘locus’ or ‘space’. Both the terms underline what belongs to a person or a thing by nature in contrast with what is acquired. The term native or deshi signifies more passive, static and existential state of a thing; however, when we add ism or –vad to the terms, nativism or deshivad connotes a more assertive form of the native principle” (133). Nemade adds that in, “the Americas, where the white immigrants have exterminated the native Red Indians and Mayan civilizations, the term Nativism means “a prejudice in favour of natives against strangers, the practice or policy of protecting the interests of the natives against those of immigrants” (133). This definition then foregrounds the distance between those who were born in the continent and those who came from other lands. The contact with the outside world need not have been violent, but when it becomes so then Nativism becomes a strategic and symbolic mode of protest adopted by groups which feel inferior or threatened by the onslaught of more powerful or dominant cultures (in Paranjape 160).

In fact, following Nemade one can say that Nativism or deshivad for him is tied up to the particular geographical and historical conditions of each society (134). Thus, one can infer that this concept suggests that language and culture are rooted to the geo-political, social and cultural loci of each country as it evolves over the years. He further posits that, “there is a process of nativization in all potent civilizations which strengthens rootedness of human works. Not only new elements are borrowed but also new environmental conditions
are accommodated to the basic structure of society” (134). One can then assert that for Nemade the location of literary works is of supreme importance as the socio-historical and political events that characterize each country leaves its mark on its fiction.

There are of course many contradictions in the concept of Nativism. Devy, for instance, gives primacy to language (the bhāsās or modern Indian languages) and the crucial role it plays within the cultural context, but, ironically, leaves out the languages of the adivasis. The literal meaning of the term adivasi is “original people” and it refers to the indigenous populace who are believed to be the first inhabitants of India. The critic, however, concentrates solely on modern Indian languages, some of which are closely linked to Sanskrit. This, then, is one of the contradictions that we encounter in Devy, since the term ‘native’ refers to those who are seen as the original inhabitants of the land. Thus, when one talks about Nativism, this is the most basic framework within which it should be perceived. The absence of the native from a discourse that apparently is “writing back to the center” shows a continuation of the very bias that Devy talks about in his book, i.e. the dominance of negative Western attitudes towards all things Indian. The derision with which the adivasis are still treated by the new nation-state, duplicates the attitude of the colonial authorities, if not openly, then covertly.5

---

5 Mahasweta Devi (1926-), one of the foremost Bengali authors and activists working with the adivi communities in West Bengal has been writing extensively about them. In her short story, “Shishu” or “Children” (in Tharu and Lalitha 1995 [1978] ), for instance the writer reveals the attitude of the post-independence administration towards the indigenous populace. The story deals with relief operations being conducted in a place called Lohri situated between Ranchi, Saguja and Palamau. At every step the contempt felt for the tribal comes out in the way the officer, Singh, reacts to their culture and way of life (1995, 237). As the story unfolds Singh, the relief officer, is told by Block Development Officer (BDO) that the Agari tribe was employing children to steal food. In the dénouement Singh is surrounded by these children who turn out to be adults. Deprived of food and supplies the members of the Agaria tribe from Kuva village had shrunk till physically they resembled
In fact, in this work, Devy not only elides the presence of the adivasi, her/his culture, language and worldview in the world that he constructs, but also leaves out questions of caste and gender. As Debjani Ganguli points out, “This dependence on a homogenized, essentialised binary opposition paradigm of the Indian and the Western makes him conceive of a historiography of Indian literature which takes cognisance, for instance, of the fact that a whole body of women’s writing in Indian [sic] has rarely featured in any history of Indian literature, not merely because of “amnesia” brought on by the colonial rule, but because of systematic repression by the patriarchal set-up within the native culture itself” (136).

However, despite the contradictions inherent in the concept of Nativism postulated by Devy and Nemade, their work is noteworthy since the critics draw the attention of scholars to the importance of existing indigenous tradition in the creation of any literary work. As Paranjape explains, “Nativism, then, is not necessarily a new theory or dogma, nor is it a set of clearly spelt out beliefs or principles. It is rather an attitude, movement, or outlook. It is difficult to extract any definite set of evaluative criteria from it, but it helps situate a work of art in such a manner that its cultural affiliations are revealed. Thus, Nativism emphasizes the locus of a work and enables a critic to place it vis a vis a particular society or country” (xii-xiii).6 Given this premise, it is important to examine the role played, if at all, by native traditions and beliefs in the construction of even the societies considered hybrid according to Postcolonial

---

6 I would like to classify this view of Nativism as the positive aspect of the concept that plays a vital role in the crafting of the text-nation, as we will see in chapters which follow.
theory. This matter has not, however, been examined fully by actually applying the respective theoretical assumptions to the writings of authors from Latin America and South Asia, and research in this field is insufficient. The present study, therefore, proposes to fill the gap between theory and practice by analyzing and comparing, within this framework, the works of authors from these continents. I also propose to examine the way the writers, selected for analysis, interpret Nativism in their novels and their position, if any, on this issue.

Before talking about the present scenario, however, it is necessary to go back to the work done by various theorists in the initial phase, since most of the criticism is based on it. The analytical work done so far has been restricted principally to the Anglophone world with Latin America at its margin. Moreover, the Latin American authors chosen to demonstrate the effectiveness of postcolonial theory belonged to a particular category whose works presumably reflected the characteristics of the literary branch of this theory. Gabriel García Márquez, for example, is one such author whose fiction has been promoted, along with Salman Rushdie, as examples of the kind of writing that epitomizes the arguments put forward by critics using postcolonial theory. García Márquez became part of the international scene during the 1960s, also known as the Boom period in Latin American literature. During these years, many authors such as Carlos Fuentes and Mario Vargas Llosa, became famous as their books became accessible to the English speaking public around the world. However, during this period only some male authors were seen to represent the new wave of literary

---

7 The Boom is seen more as an economic and publishing phenomenon which began in the 60s and continued till the 70s. Authors such as Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru) and Julio Cortázar (Argentina) became well known literary figures of this movement, as their works gained a wide readership not only in the Spanish speaking countries but in the Anglophone world as well.
creativity, which no doubt was formidable, but this classification left out many others at the peripheries, such as women writers and those working on indigenous people and their culture. These writers also broke away from the earlier generation and proclaimed that before the Boom there were no works of fiction worth reading, or in Vargas Llosa’s words the earlier “primitive” novels and those produced during the Boom were as different as “skyscrapers and tribes, poverty and opulence” (Colás 10). Colás also comments that, “[…] the Boom writers, self conscious anti-imperialist declaration of achieved revolutionary independence was underwritten by a material dependency facilitated by their recreation of a colonial relation with their own people” (11). The authors of the Boom thus created a distance between themselves and the earlier novelists, who did not appear to fit the mold created by them.9

When postcolonial theory burst on the scene in the eighties, in Latin America scholars had already begun to question radically “the postmodern apparatus constructed around a few boom -- generally all male -- writers from a predictable set of nations whose indigenous past was either minimally regarded or totally repressed” (de la Campa). Ironically, while questioning the “postmodern apparatus”, critics working within the postcolonial framework were creating their own centers and peripheries by promoting only certain authors. Thus an enormous amount of scholarly works on these novelists appeared, but as mentioned earlier, the majority of critical articles, readers, studies and books dealt primarily with the Anglo-

---

8 It is, however, important to mention that García Márquez does include a small but important part of the indigenous world in *Cien años de soledad* (1967) [*Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967 [1978])], but many other indigenist authors were left out of the various “lists” of Boom writers compiled by critics and academics.

9 It is interesting to note that postcolonial theory too appears to share some of the elements of the Boom epoch, as publishers play an equally important role in promoting the works of South Asian authors writing in English.
phone writers from South Asia, Africa and the English speaking Caribbean islands. In recent years there has again been a spate of critical writing on the issue of postcolonial theory and Latin America, but there is still a lot of scope for further discussion on this matter as various aspects of Latin American history and literature vis-à-vis postcolonialism have yet to be explored. Thus, it is of utmost importance to go back to these theories, published in the 80s, and examine them in light of recent discussions.

These debates are relevant not only to history but also to literature, as both are intertwined, especially when we talk about issues pertaining to the construction of nation. In fact, the concept of nation continues to be fraught with contradictions as people now have to carry the twin burdens of a colonial past, which in many cases manipulated or aggravated unresolved conflicts from the pre-colonial period, as well as the new threat posed by the rapid economic and social transformations brought in the wake of globalization. History and literature are, therefore, inexorably linked by the threads of events that weave the very fabric of the societies we live in, which are then reflected in the works of many authors, whether belonging to the postcolonial “canon” of writers or the ones left out of it. As Cecilia Méndez G., a Peruvian historian and critic, points out, literary representations make vivid the experiences of living under these and many other challenging circumstances and adds that:

Literary production not only expresses but also forms a part of the process of constructing personal and collective identities. Furthermore, the assimilation of literary works can have a weight in the formation and reaffirmation of such identities equal to or even greater than the assimilation, of the historiographical discourses themselves. A literary text possesses the capacity to carry the reader's
subjectivity to levels hardly attainable by means of a purely historical text. It renders the most abstract phenomena concrete. (217-218)

In fact, literature plays a crucial role in the construction of nation, as the hegemonic classes try to craft it according to their own vision and values which they impart symbolically through their writings. One can thus assert that literature becomes an effective tool with which to capture and mold the imagination of the people. Anderson reiterates the importance of imagination in the construction of nation as well. In his opinion, the nation is an imagined political community (46; my emphasis). Anderson also suggests that the two most important factors in the diffusion of the image and concept of the nation are newspapers and novels since this makes it easy for the people to imagine themselves as members of the same imagined political community.10

Latin America is an ideal example of this strategy since fiction became a powerful ally of the political leaders in the nation building project. In fact many of the Presidents and founding fathers of Latin American countries were novelists as well, and tried to convey their values, cultural and symbolic, through romances. Doris Sommer confirms this strategy when she points out that, “[…] literature has the capacity to intervene in history, to help construct it. Generations of Latin American writers and readers assumed as much; and they have produced and consumed foundational novels as part of the more general process of nation-

---
10 According to Anderson this transformation in the role of literature vis-à-vis the nation is due to, “the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation” (146).
For critics working within postcolonial theory, history and literature too, are vital factors in the study of societies that have suffered from colonization.

Both history and literature continue to play an important role in the construction of nation as elite classes took over the governance and maintained their hegemony in almost all the earlier colonies after Independence. Despite this phenomenon, in most of the erstwhile colonies, there are many differences based on the socio-historical development of each country, as we can see for instance in the case of Peru and India. This is an important factor since it affects the literary production emerging from these countries. If we take the case of Peru again, we can see that on the one hand are the works of authors like Vargas Llosa who see Peruvian society in the old binary terms of “civilization and barbarism” proposed by the Argentine thinker and politician Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (Sorensen Goodrich 13), and on the other we have the novels and short stories of the neo-indigenist author Arguedas (1911-1969) who dedicated his life to documenting, as anthropologist, ethnographer and writer, the lives of the Aboriginal people. Thus, one can argue that the struggle of the indigenous communities to establish a place for themselves in the Eurocentric nations is not reflected in the theoretical premises postulated by the aforementioned critics. Hence, it is possible to conclude that there appears to be no scope for these vital differences, reflected in the worldview of Vargas Llosa and Arguedas, to be included within the framework of postcolonial theory. The lacuna in the theory then makes us question the validity of analyzing the entire literary corpus emerging from the erstwhile colonies within a totalizing theory as it

---

11 Some of the novels which played an important role in the nation-building process are, *Amalia* (1851) by José Mármol, *Sab* (1841) by Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, *Martín Rivas* (1862) by Alberto Blast Gana, and *Doña Bárbara* (1929) by Rómulo Gallegos, the future President of Venezuela, to name just a few (79-80).
seems incapable of exposing the conflicts that fracture the very idea of nation being constructed by the dominant sections of these countries.

In India too scholars have disputed some of the premises of this theory. The discussion on this front was triggered off by Harish Trivedi’s article in IACLALS Newsletter published in January 1994 that put forth some hard questions regarding Postcolonial theory and India (Mukherjee 11). Amongst the issues raised by Trivedi, were the following, “For us in India, in particular, does “post-colonialism” represent any advance or even difference of formulation which could truly be liberating or enabling, or is it, like pristine colonialism itself, another form of metropolitan imposition? For us sons and daughters of the soil, living our rooted and locally implicated lives in our own unallegorized and prenarrated nations, in homelands more un-magically real than imaginary, can “migrancy” and “hybridity” be such shining values as footloose and free-floating postcolonial theory makes them out to be?” (in Mukherjee 11). Of the concepts mentioned by Trivedi, one is of particular importance as we speak of Peru and India, and this is the idea of hybridity. My work therefore will focus principally on hybridity and its counter, Nativism, since these two notions make up a vital part of Postcolonial theory.

The term hybridity had its origin in the field of biology and botany but has been used for many years to talk about mixed racial heritage in the colonies and the formation of culture as the worlds of the colonizers and colonial subjects collided. Hybridity is also one of the crucial theoretical precepts employed by Ashcroft et al as well as Bhabha. In their aforementioned work Ashcroft et al refute the existence of ‘pure’ pre-colonial cultures and

---

12 The question of hybridity is not a new phenomenon as this has been an intrinsic part of many studies on Latin American countries especially the ones with a large population of indigenous peoples. I will discuss the importance of this question in this context a little later.
following Wilson Harris’ formulation, they posit that, “hybridity in the present is constantly struggling to free itself from a past which stressed ancestry and which valued the ‘pure’ over its threatening opposite ‘composite’ ” (36). Thus the critics do not recognize that this ancestry, whether pristine or not, plays any role in the way hybridity is conceived or shaped in postcolonial societies (and here I use the term chronologically). Bhabha too postulates that, “It is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their [particular] hybridity” (37). It is then possible to infer that both Bhabha and Ashcroft et al agree that pre-colonial culture is not pristine.

Scholars such as Benita Parry have criticized Bhabha and have pointed out that the kind of ambivalent hybridity that he postulates appears to pertain only to the diaspora and not to those who stay behind in the nation-state. Parry further suggests that Bhabha’s hypothesis “is prone to denigrate affiliations to class, ethnicity, and emergent nation-state which continue to fashion the self-understanding and energise the resistances of exploited populations in the hinterlands of late imperialism […]” (1994, 21). However, though I do recognize that Bhabha denies affiliations to class and ethnicity, I do not agree with Parry’s suggestion that nation-states, “energize the resistance of exploited populations in the hinterlands of imperialism” as nation-states are themselves fragmented spaces of conflict. Here one must acknowledge Bhabha’s canny observation on nation as he posits that hybridity brings out the fissures beneath the seemingly smooth surface of nation-states. This observation, nonetheless, is somewhat limited in its scope since he appears to refer only to
the metropolis. I would like to assert, on the other hand, that this hypothesis can be applied to the erstwhile colony (now a new nation-state) as well. The works of neo-indigenist authors like Arguedas provide empirical proof of this premise as his protagonists not only battle the forces of imperialism, complicit with the elite Creole class, but also the nation-state itself as it tries to construct a contrived heterogeneous state.¹³

One of the questions that arises while examining the concept of hybridity, as postulated by Bhabha and applied to Latin America as well, is the fact that he does not take into account the idea of hybridity as seen in this continent where it has played a vital role in the evolution of these societies since the advent of the conquistadores. In fact, it is crucial to recognize that the Spanish American countries are perhaps one of the most representative loci of mestizaje, whether racial or cultural. Critics, historians, and writers have dealt with this question in many different ways as it pertains to the formation of national identity in the newly independent countries. Scholars from different fields, like the Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz, for instance, proposed a new theoretical framework to examine the way Cuba had evolved during the colonial period. The sociologist studied the changes that took place in this society, made up of members of the colonial regime as also slaves brought from Africa. Ortiz suggested that after the process of deculturation, in which communities lost their cultures, came a period of assimilation or acculturation but subsequently there emerged a new culture which includes elements from the earlier culture and the new one, which he termed as “transculturation” (102-103).

¹³ It is a contrived heterogeneous state as the nation-state chooses the elements that it believes should project this image and in this way creates an exclusionist “patrimony” on which to constitute a seemingly “heterogeneous” nation. I will talk about this in detail in chapter three where I analyze the construction of culture in Arguedas’ first novel Yawar fiesta (1941).
This is an important part of Latin American history and culture, and has also been used successfully by Rama to demonstrate how this sociological phenomenon had influenced even literary works. Rama, however, differs in his interpretation of the phenomenon of transculturation, and suggests that intellectuals from the regional centers are capable of using the traditional cultures from this region to resist the process of assimilation undertaken by the urban centers in the name of modernity. Thus, for him the hybridity that emerges from narrative and other literary strategies, such as inclusion of music by Arguedas in his novel Los ríos profundos [Deep Rivers] (1958), resist the assimilatory practices of the urban centers. Juan E. de Castro points out another difference between Ortiz and Rama, according to the critic, “In Ortiz’s definition, transculturation is the inevitable result of prolonged contact among individuals (or groups) belonging to different cultures. While Ortiz vehemently rejects the notion that cultural contact implies the erasure of the “weaker” culture and, therefore, celebrates the adaptive and creative capacities of the Cuban and other populations, there is no room in his formulation for individual or collective will. Rama, on the other hand, emphasizes the possibility of the renewal of cultural inheritance by the selection of the traditional elements that are to be maintained (or rediscovered) and those modern ones that are to be incorporated into the new “transculture” (6). It is, therefore, possible to infer that, as Rama has shown, at least one part of the cultural tapestry woven by the communities, be it within the pages of literary works or sociological studies, is closely linked to the native culture. Ashcroft acknowledges this concept in a later work (2001), in the context of language as suggested by Rama in his study on transculturation and adds that place and history are important too. However, is the process of transculturation only reflected in the use of the master’s tongue? I will examine this issue when I analyze the Arguedean
narrative. Thus it would be my endeavor to study the way Arguedas interprets the concept of hybridity while keeping in mind the manner in which Ashcroft construes this idea. I will, therefore, refer to the different ways in which the idea of hybridity is transposed in the fictional world by taking into account conditions pertinent to the geo-political situation of each country. I also propose to study the role played by those at the peripheries of the national discourse along with the polemical definitions of hybridity that have emerged from postcolonial theory, and to study the ethnographic contribution, if any, particularly in Arguedas’ work.

Before I proceed further, I would also like to summarize here the different ways in which critics look at hybridity following Anjali Prabhu who indicates three broad interpretations of this concept, namely:

1. Hybridity is everywhere. It represents in many instances the triumph of the postcolonial or the subaltern over the hegemonic. The resistant always appropriates the cultural onslaught and modifies its products or processes for its own purposes. This position is most prominently associated with Bhabha, but also held by Hall and Lionnet, for example.

2. Hybridity is not everywhere. It is only the elite who can afford to talk about hybridity. For others, there is no investment in such a concept. It applies more to metropolitan elite emigrés and far less to migrant diasporas and even less to those who have “stayed behind” in the (ex) colony. This position can be associated with critics of Bhabha’s textuality, such as Benita Parry.

3. Hybridity, when carefully considered in its material reality, will reveal itself to actually be a history of slavery, colonialism, and rape, inherited in terms of race. It is
a difficult and painful history of interracial identity. It joins up with issues of choosing one’s affiliations or having one’s affiliations thrust upon one. Today, any account of hybridity must contend with this history. (11-12)

Thus, in my dissertation I intend to test the claims of these premises while examining the hypothesis suggested by Ashcroft et al who appear to imply that hybridity is what holds the nation together as they write back to the centre.

As mentioned earlier, the idea that is used to offset hybridity is Nativism, which too has been interpreted rigidly by various scholars. According to Bhabha the choices that people apparently have are again circumscribed within Manichean gridlines, i.e. they can either be “hybrid” as suggested by him or “Nativists” i.e. those who only look to a “pristine” culture, thereby denying the fact that the walls between nativity and hybridity maybe porous. By not taking into consideration the somewhat complex interface between the two categories he does not recognize the possibility of finding new ways of negotiating the gaps that divide hybridity and Nativism, especially since they play such an important role in the politics of identity.

The uneasy relation between these two hypotheses has occupied an important place in various journals and conferences on postcolonial theory. I will therefore analyze whether these two ideas really occupy two different poles in all the cases, as suggested by Bhabha, Ashcroft et al, Parry, and Devy, or are they conjoined in such a way that it is difficult to tease out the strands that weave the tapestry of cultures in the nation-states that emerged after

---

14 In India, for example, the journal New Quest (1984) brought out a special issue on Nativism with contributions from Nemade amongst others. The debates on the application of postcolonial theory to India continued and these discussions subsequently led to a conference whose proceedings were published as Interrogating Post-Colonialism. Theory, Text and Context (1996). The Sahitya Akademi too organized a seminar on this topic, and the papers were published in Nativism: Essays in Criticism (1997).
independence, i.e. can hybridity and Nativism be seen as two sides of the same coin? Furthermore, can the concept of hybridity be only restricted to enunciation? Do the political and economic conditions influence the way hybridity is constructed? In addition, I will examine the role played by indigenous traditions in the construction of identity of those who stayed back in their counties and did not immigrate to the metropolis. Consequently, my thesis will focus on the different interpretations of hybridity and Nativism within this theoretical premise. As mentioned before, I intend to study these questions within the framework of nation, as most of the research carried out so far focuses principally on the experience of people migrating to the metropolis. Trivedi and Parry too have pointed out that the experience of those who stay back is different and have suggested that the concept of hybridity as postulated by Bhabha be reexamined in this context.

This question is a polemical one as scholars continue to investigate it even now. It is to examine the reflection of these debates in literary works that I have chosen to study the novels of authors from Peru and India. One can in fact see some points of similarity between the two societies (at least on the surface) as both are multilingual, pluralistic and multicultural\(^{15}\) (whether recognized fully or even partially by the nation-states is of course another matter all together). In addition, the texts chosen for comparison reflect the changing face of the two countries and reveal depths not covered by the somewhat superficial resemblance in the construction of their social and cultural systems apart from the experience of colonization that supposedly binds them across time and space. This attribute has been seen as a major factor in the study of these two societies under the theoretical framework of Postcolonial studies, as seen in the literary theory proposed by Ashcroft, et al. The anguish

\[^{15}\) This concept too is contentious as critics have pointed out that the hegemonic classes often use it to justify the assimilatory processes of the nation-state.
caused by colonization, albeit traumatic, cannot be divided into neat compartments vis-à-vis the experience of a society as a whole, since the struggle for independence did not automatically resolve the problems that were such an inherent part of the colonized society as can be seen in the case of India. Hence, it is difficult to draw a line between the pre-colonial and postcolonial periods in every case, since the two merge together to form the new social orders that emerged after the colonies gained their freedom from the metropolis.

The selection of texts has not been easy since the literary works studied by critics has been mostly restricted to a certain kind of writing. In fact, Lazarus commented as recently as 2005 that, “[…] because of the tendentiousness and partiality of the theoretical assumptions that have structured postcolonial studies hitherto literary scholars working in the field have tended to write with reference to a woefully restricted and attenuated corpus of works. […] On the one hand, a great many works that ought […] to have been taken into consideration have been ignored entirely […]” (424). As Lazarus rightly states, literary critics have studied mostly the authors who seem to “fit” within the parameters of this narrow perspective, as can be seen in The Empire Writes Back, wherein Ashcroft et al analyze a few authors writing in English such as Raja Rao for instance. Parry too indicates the lacuna in the selection of novels used to concretize the arguments of critics working within the postcolonial framework, and points out that, “[…] the new scholarships have not been without its own blindspots. Already a canon of “Postcolonial Literature” is being formed, in which the “marvellous” or “magic realisms” of Latin American, Caribbean, African and Asian writing (García Márquez, Chamoiseau, Okri, Rushdie, for instance) are given greater importance
than those closer to “realist” modes. At the same time works written in the local languages of Asia and Africa (some of these with vast readerships and expansive literary histories, of course: Bengali, Chinese, Arabic, Urdu, etc.), that are deemed “uncongenial” to metropolitan taste and are seldom translated and largely overlooked within the academies, as are the traditions of testamentary and resistance literate (Harlow 1987, San Juan 1988, Lazarus forthcoming)” (73, 2004). It is of special interest to examine these issues not only in India but also in Peru as the novels analyzed here reveal the trajectory taken by each of these societies in the wake of the colonial rule. In my thesis, then, I propose to see the extent to which the text-nations constructed by these authors can be incorporated in the all encompassing range of a particular theory as has been suggested by the aforementioned critics. Thus, in my dissertation, I will examine texts written not only in the colonizer’s tongue but those in the vernacular as well, thereby filling a lacuna in the area of postcolonial studies carried out on hybridity which so far appears to concentrate only on the diaspora living in the heart of the erstwhile empire. The authors chosen for analysis here are Arguedas (1911-1969) from Peru, Arundhati Roy (1963-) and Geetanjali Shree (1957-) from India. In the case of India, Roy and Shree represent two of the most incendiary issues troubling the Indian society, namely the caste system and the communal violence which seems to have increased in the last couple of years; while Arguedas portrays the complexities of the Peruvian society and the role of the Aboriginal. For my analysis, therefore, I have chosen Arguedas’ first novel, Yawar fiesta [Bloody Fiesta] (1941), set in the Andean mountain town of Puquio and, his last one, published posthumously, El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo [The Fox from Up Above

Parry makes a distinction between novels classified within the parameters of “magical realism” and those that she categorizes as “realist”, however, she does not explain the characteristics of these terms.
and the Fox from Down Below] (1971) where the plot unfurls in the boom town Chimbote on the coast of Peru. In this way Arguedas depicts the indigenous world in contemporary Peru.

Arguedas was very influenced by the indigenous *weltanschauung* which is then inserted in the text-nation that he crafts for his readers. In his works, the author also uncovers the way the Peruvian nation was being constructed after Independence as also the manner in which the colonial period and the new economic transformation had influenced the lives of the indigenous populace. The stories are written in Spanish but the novelist uses various strategies to incorporate Quechua as also the Andean worldview in the text-nations he constructs. One can then affirm that his narrative brings out the relationship between hybridity and Nativism within the framework of the nation-state which then reveals the conflicts hidden under the surface of the Creole imagination.

Arguedas has also been associated with the indigenist movement. The movement that began as a political one came to be reflected in literature, as well, especially when José Carlos Mariátegui, an intellectual and political thinker who introduced socialism in Peru, urged the young writers to choose indigenous themes for their literary projects. His journal *Amauta*, established in 1926, played a pivotal role in this direction and influenced Arguedas, amongst others. He had already chosen to study the indigenous cultures as anthropologist and ethnologist to foreground the richness and diversity of the indigenous *weltanschauung*. However, before we proceed further it is important to examine the indigenist movement that played such a crucial role in Peru’s literary landscape. Some of the dichotomies that were brought to the forefront in these writings were: Feudalism versus Capitalism, the Coast versus the Sierras or the mountains where most of the Indian populace lived, Quechua versus Spanish and finally the Indian versus the Creole. A few of these factors had come into being
with the advent of the Spanish *conquistadores* and added to the complexities that arose in the wake of the economic transformations taking place in the new Republic.

The Indian had always been part of the narrative that sprang from America since the arrival of the *conquistadores*. Initially authors incorporated the native and parts of her/his culture as exotic elements in the texts written during the “Indianist” phase. Even after Independence, the preoccupation with the role played by the Aboriginal communities in the new nation-state continued and led to the birth of the indigenist movement. Political *indigenismo* came up in answer to the Hispanic trend that dominated the political debates that took place in the new Republic as we will see in the first chapter.

Juan Loveluck describes in this way the novels that were subsequently included in the indigenist period as novels that reflected “the conflict of man with his geographical surroundings, i.e. novels which, in general, dealt with the rural, territorial or regional communal issues” could be included in the first phase or indigenist phase (in Escajadillo 77-78; my translation). Tomás Escajadillo refers to the various categories under which the indigenist novels were classified, following the critic Fernando Alegría. In Alegría’s opinion, the novels which dealt with communal indigene property, development of agrarian capitalism as also the conditions under which the indigenous communities lived, the exploitation of the Indian, not on the basis of his racial identity but as a worker in the fields and mines, the centralist government and its political machinery that was destroying the indigenous populace to take over their property or to sell it to foreign companies, the role of the Church which protected the politician and the *gamonal* (feudal lord), the role of the intellectuals in the political and economic reforms so that the indigenous communities could re-claim their
rights, could be included in the first phase (in Escadillo 77), though Escajadillo prefers to classify this part of the movement as “orthodox indigenism” (78).

During this period, the works of the authors were characterized by their desire to defend the Indian against her/his exploitation by the Administration and the Church. Writers like Clorinda Matto de Türner, known as the first indigenist author, brought the attention of the readers to the plight of the native, repressed by the feudal lords (the gamonales), the Administration, the Judiciary and the Church. The tone of the writings was paternalistic as the young intellectuals, influenced by Manuel González Prada (1844-1918), worked to depict the trials and tribulations suffered by the natives. In addition, the domination of the Peruvian economy, initially by the English and, subsequently, by the US, aggravated the situation substantially (Larco 10). One can then argue that Peru was poised, in the early part of the twentieth century, to construct a nation-state, without having resolved any of the earlier conflicts, and the deep internal divisions continued to fragment the country from within. Larco opines that the first phase of the literary indigenism thus “was not the conscience, but rather the expression of this fragmentation in literature” (10; my translation). In these works Manichean descriptions and stereotypes abounded as the authors wrote from outside the Andean weltanschauung.

Indigenism as a genre was not restricted to Peru but was also a part of Mexico, Ecuador, and Bolivia, where there were large populations of indigenous communities. However even in novels such as Jorge Icaza’s Huasipungo (Ecuador 1934) the culture and beliefs of the indigenous communities were not reflected as these works were written as social protest against the treatment meted out to the natives by those in power. In this novel, the author focuses on the conflicts is between the natives, the mestizos and the criollos. The
conditions are worsened further by the presence of foreign companies who joined the hegemonic class in the exploitation of the Aboriginal. In this work the Aborigines are not portrayed individually but *en masse* and the author gives extremely realistic descriptions of the oppressive living conditions of the indigenous communities.

This particular aspect changed with the advent of the Peruvian novelist Ciro Alegría (1909-1967) whose works renewed the interest for the Indian, seen until then either as exotic elements or “savages” who needed to be civilized. In Alegría’s best known novel, *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* (1941) (*Broad and Alien is the World*), we see the novelist’s desire to portray the native worldview within the pages of the text-nation that he constructs. For the first time we see a more lyrical description of the autochthonous world. Like Arguedas, Alegría too describes the relation between the natives and Nature; he also includes their religious views and myths in the narrative. However, according to Cornejo Polar, unlike the Arguedean narrative, Alegría’s last novel portrays the native’s world slowly collapsing and disintegrating before the challenges that were being thrown their way (1978, 60).

It is in the works of Arguedas that we see the portrayal of the indigenous *weltanschauung* and the autochthonous culture as means of resisting the changing socio-economic and political conditions, and it is in this approach that we see a reflection of the positive aspect of Nativism as explained by Paranjape and cited earlier. Arguedas’ initial works can be included within the ambit of indigenism as they portray the conflicts between the *gamonal* and the aboriginal communities or *ayllus*, but subsequently the author broadens the points of reference from rural areas to small towns and finally big cities like Lima and the fishing port Chimbote, to write an entirely new chapter in this movement. In his narrative, the writer captures the agony of the *mestizo*, caught between two worlds, as also the *mestizaje*
cultural, elements that had not appeared so far in the works of indigenous authors including Alegría.

It is possible to affirm, therefore, that Arguedas soon broke the limits of indigenism as his stories reflected not only the lives of the native communities in rural areas but also of those who had migrated to the urban centres and now faced the transformations brought about by industrialization and the rush towards modernization (which in majority of the cases was equated with westernization). In fact, the author did not agree with critics who classified his earlier works Agua and Yawar fiesta as “novela indigenista”, and questions the need to categorize his novels as such since they depicted Andean Peru, “in all its elements, in its disturbing and confused human reality. […]” (Yawar fiesta 1985, xiii, xxi). One can then reiterate that the author did not like the critics using these terms to identify his narrative because for him the native weltanschauung was an integral part of the Peruvian ethos and nation, whether so recognized by the hegemonic classes or not. As scholars like Elena Aibar Ray have pointed out, that his narrative can be included in the neo-indigenista category as his works situate the trials and tribulations faced by the native populace in such a way so as to reflect the difficulties faced by other marginalized communities as well (33), especially those facing challenges similar to Peru. However, the cultural text that he draws upon is firmly entrenched in the Peruvian land which adds the distinguishing features to its cultural field. Hence, it is possible to say that though the author universalized the problems (to a certain extent), he did so by emphasizing the linguistic and cultural contexts as they identified his text-nation with Peru and highlighted the contribution made by the native traditions to the new hybrid one that emerged from the contact with the ones brought by the colonizer. Furthermore, the indigenous world is shown as a resilient one, responding creatively to the
rapid changes faced by Peruvian society as it opened its doors to outside capital and foreign multinational companies. In his writings (based on his experience as an anthropologist and ethnologist) we see that the aboriginal communities did not receive the outside influences passively. In fact, according to Arguedas they were an, “adamant people […] who transform everything alien before incorporating it into their world […]” (1985, xv). And in this view we see a reflection of Nemade’s premise as he too suggests that Nativization (as mentioned before), reflects a process, “which strengthens the rootedness of human works. Not only new elements are borrowed into but also new environmental conditions are accommodated to the basic structure of society” (45).

I would, therefore, like to argue that Arguedas’ view of the place of indigenous communities in the nation-state and the role played by their language and culture in the construction of nation, echoes, to a certain extent, the idea inherent in the positive aspect of Nativism, as he writes about the original inhabitants of Peru and traces the way the socio-historical, political and economic transformations have effected them throughout the years. Given this approach, it is possible to infer that both Arguedas and Nemade place the native culture firmly in its geo-political locale. Culture for them is not passive, and native communities work actively on it to transform it and adapt it as the socio-political conditions change. Thus, I intend to study whether this sense of “rootedness” is reflected in any way in his narrative. In fact, one can say that, in this sense, native traditions for Arguedas, Devy and Nemade play a crucial role in giving each literary work its character. However, Arguedas differs from the Indian critics as he incorporates the indigenous weltanschauung which

---

17 To reiterate, for Nemade, as for Devy, the term native refers to the non-Westernized section of the society reading, writing in the vernacular languages of India, and not the adivasis.
represents the world of the *adivasi* of Peru, a lacuna in the idea conceived by Devy and Nemade.

In the history of Indo-Anglian literature, Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* marks the second phase of Indian writing in English. Roy belongs to this second generation, and her first, and so far the only novel, *The God of Small Things* (1997), is set in a small town of Kerala, India’s southern most State. The novel goes back and forth in time and deals not only with a tragic love affair but also depicts the political scenario of the communist state of Kerala from the sixties till the present time. Colonization, and its consequences, and the postcolonial nation building process provide the backdrop for the story of the twins, Estha and Rahel, and their family. The personal lives of the protagonists, Ammu, the mother of the twins, Velutha the carpenter who belongs to the *paravan* or lower caste is entwined in the bigger story of the nation as the author uses many devices, such as mythology, to narrate the larger history of the country. Roy writes in English but also uses Malayalam, Hindi and Urdu in some parts of the text, thus, projecting the relationship between the erstwhile master’s tongue, now India’s official language, and the vernacular. In fact we can categorize Roy’s novel within the framework of realist fiction, as described by Parry (2004, 73) since she portrays the contemporary situation in her novel. Her work is important as she appears to follow in the footsteps of Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004), member of the first generation of Indian novelists writing in English along with Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan, and well known for his portrayal of Dalits in novels such as *Untouchable* (1935). The linguistic strategies used by Roy also trace the way English developed in the Indian society and its current status. In my thesis, therefore, I propose to examine Roy’s work within the compass of Devy’s concept of Nativism. As we have seen earlier, Devy criticizes all the writers and critics he
perceives as Anglicized. Thus, in my dissertation I propose to analyze whether Roy’s novel can be classified within this narrow perception, or whether the author introduces strategies that root the narrative to her native land, be that at the regional or national level. I will also study whether she reveals any of the fissures simmering beneath the surface of the binary opposition postulated by Devy in his book.

The other author chosen for the study is Shree who writes in Hindi. In her novel *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* [Our City that Year] (1998), she depicts the communal tensions prevalent till today in India. The issues dealt by Shree in the novel are especially relevant to those living in North India, where the story takes place, and definitively touches a chord as readers can identify the horrors inflicted by communalism with the ones that have taken place in recent years. The novelist portrays the effects of the Partition that took place in 1947 and the manner in which the Hindu right wing political parties like *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), and non-political organization such as *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS - National Volunteers Union) and *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP - World Hindu Council) try and manipulate historiography and play on the sentiments of the people in such a way so as to show the Muslims as intruders and traitors. Thus, in her novel the author portrays the slow

---

18 The author graduated from Lady Shri Ram College and went on to do a Masters in Modern History at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her doctoral thesis was written on one of the best known figures of Hindi literature, Prem Chand, entitled ‘Between Two worlds: An Intellectual Biography of Premchand’ (Deep Blue Ink). Though proficient in English, she chooses to write in Hindi; one of the reasons for her decision could be the growth in literacy rate in the Hindi belt as also the proliferation of literary journals in the last couple of decades (Zaidi, *Frontline* 1st July 2005). According to Prof. Sudhish Pachauri, Professor of Hindi at Delhi University there are, “anywhere between 700 and 1,000 journals. Each town, even the B centres, has a literary magazine” (Zaidi *Frontline* 1st July 2005). So along with the old journals like Hans, we have new ones like Tadbhav and Rang Prasang; in fact Shree’s first short story “Bal Patra” was first published in Hans in 1987. Thus the burgeoning market for literary works in Hindi cannot be ignored, and her decision to write in Hindi reflects this change in the North Indian readership.
growth of communal sentiments in a north Indian town through the relation between Hanif and Sharad, professors at the local University, in the text-nation that she constructs. In my thesis, then, I will examine her novel to see if she establishes any relation between fundamentalism and certain aspects of Nativism.

It is also possible to argue that Shree’s novel continues in the tradition established by author, poet and screenplay writer, Rahi Masoom Raza whose novel *Topi Shukla* (1969), set in Aligarh during the 1960s, revolves around the friendship between Topi, a Hindu and Iffan, a Muslim, and foregrounds the socio-political and economic conditions leading to communal tensions. In this sense one can argue that Shree follows in Raza’s footsteps, as she too depicts the repercussions of communal violence on the friendship between Hanif and Sharad. Shree also reveals the manner in which the right wing organizations exploit the pain of Partition as it is brought up time and again in the rhetoric of the advocates of *Hindutva*. Surprisingly Ashcroft et al do not mention Partition at all in their national model, nor do they focus on the contradictions inherent in Rao’s novel *Kanthapura*, which while fulfilling the requisites set by the theorists, shows a kind of homogenous Hindu nation (Sethi). Shree’s novel, thus, connects the trauma of inter-community violence prevalent from the colonial period to the post-colonial era. One can therefore assert that both Roy and Shree represent two of the major problems still facing India, and continue the story of the nation-state beyond the romantic euphoria of writing back to the Centre as suggested by Ashcroft et al.

---

19 The lacuna in the literary framework postulated by Ashcroft et al proves Lazarus’ argument when he points out that there is no reference, in postcolonial theory, to the Partition of India which displaced millions of people and is a reminder of the bloody repercussions of colonial rule as also the plight of the new diaspora since the two countries exchanged their human resources across the borders in the North-West and East (2005).

20 There are many opinions about the beginning of communal tensions in India I will examine them in chapter four when I analyze the relation between culture and nation.
Shree’s novel also foregrounds the role played by the bhāsā literature, as Devy calls the literary corpus written in the vernacular (1992), against the backdrop of the Sanskritized Hindi being promoted by the Government. ²¹ In Devy’s opinion the, “new bhāsās expressed regional and heterodox aspirations in protest against the Sanskrit and the culture developed through language, sanskriti” (6). I will analyze, therefore, the problems that emerged in the field of language and culture after India became independent as reflected in Shree’s novel. By dealing with these two questions she throws light on the conditions prevailing during and even before the British colonial period. Thus, it is possible to say that both Shree and Roy reveal the way English and Hindi have developed in India. One can also argue that their narratives complement each other as these texts bring to the forefront the relationship between vernacular languages and English, and the Sanskritized Hindi being promoted by the administration and the hegemonic sectors of Indian society. The selection of the aforementioned novels, from Peru and India, thus, fulfill a lacuna in the trend set by postcolonial theorists as pointed out by Parry who posits that, “[…] the rapt interest of Western academics in migration or exile has led to a neglect of developments and realities in post-independence nation-states […]” (2004, 73). It is then possible to affirm that Arguedas, Roy and Shree, represent the developments and realities of post-independence Peru and India, respectively, in their novels.

²¹ Sevanti Ninan points out that, “When literacy expanded in India’s Hindi heartland in the last decade of the 20th century, Hindi newspapers followed, picking up readers in places where there had been none” (2007, 13). She further posits that, “Two hundred million readers for dailies and magazines meant that the print media was now available to one out of five people in the country. As a result of the increased literacy, improved communications and rising rural incomes, as well as aggressive marketing strategies adopted by publishers, newspaper penetration in the Hindi belt increased” (2007, 15). It is then possible to infer that the Government was successful in promoting the official Hindi through schools and colleges through the Hindi heartland.
The works of these writers also lend themselves for analysis since they can be described as examples of realist fiction, as suggested by Parry. Explaining this concept, Graciela N. Ricci Della Grisa points out that this kind of fiction is characterized by an immediate and direct reproduction of the empirical reality, as perceived by ordinary senses, and hence importance is given to the object as opposed to novels which are created on the basis of the internal experience of the author and depends on the manner in which the writer understands and perceives the world around her/him (1985, 13-15). However, both perspectives can merge in the work of a novelist, so that s/he can present the empirical reality tempered by her/his particular sensibilities. Given this premise, the novels chosen for analysis here are intricate literary representations of certain empirical realities as perceived by the author since each underlines some of the major issues that form an integral part of the Peruvian and Indian society, namely: the continuing struggle of the indigenous communities to establish a place for themselves in the homogenous Creole society, the problem of caste system and the virulent resurgence of communal violence in India. One can even say, like Jean Franco, that, the novels here reveal that the history of the nation, which they narrate through various narrative and linguistic strategies, is not over but rather, like fiction, is fused in the dynamics of the present in which the writer as well as the reader participate (354). This holds true in case of Arguedas as well, since the questions he poses through his narrative are relevant to this day and have influenced authors such as Manuel Scorza (1928-1983), and Óscar Colchado Lucio (1947-), who follow the tradition set by him.

Arguedas’ fiction in fact can also be included as part of resistance literature. According to Franco, “Modernization has introduced in Latin America the horrors of industrialization, […] [and] it is only in the writing (and not just literature), that any resistance can be offered to
this state of affairs as it rescues information that is subjugated or repressed, […] to expose the suppressed information, writing transgresses the limits of discipline and hierarchical structures within which knowledge and experience have been organized and advance the possibility of social cooperation amongst human beings […]” (355-356). I agree with Franco that just writing and exposing the information repressed by the hegemonic side will not repair the damage caused either by the ravages of industrialization and modernization or by the long standing non-resolution of conflicts like the communal violence, but writing will at least make the reader conscious of the knowledge repressed by the hegemony and this in turn will allow her/him to read between the lines of political decisions which impact the daily lives of the people. And as the authors try and achieve this objective in their own particular narrative style, I would like to stress that their novels can be described not only as realist but as part of the literature of resistance as well. To reiterate, Arguedas, Roy and Shree, unveil not only the overt forms of injustice and repression but also disclose the subtle ways in which the hegemonic class try to gain control and maintain their positions of power in the newly independent nations, be they the Creoles or Criollos in Peru, or the upper castes or the Hindu right wing, advocates of their own brand of “Hindutva” or Hinduness.

The authors also reveal the way hybridity and Nativism are viewed in their text-nations and the role played by them in the current scenario. In the context of postcolonial theory, the novelists make us question some of the assumptions made by certain theorists and force us to think about the way literature has been viewed within postcolonial theory. Therefore, given the paucity of research based on an actual analysis of Latin American and South Asian
novels in the categories mentioned above, I have chosen to examine the works of the aforementioned authors. To reiterate, a comparative study of these novelists writing in the language of the colonizer and the vernacular, from two of the geographical areas, often thrown together but rarely studied comparatively, provides a new perspective in the discussion on postcolonial theory. Hence, it is possible to reaffirm that Arguedas, Roy and Shree, represent the developments and realities of post-independence Peru and India respectively. Thus, the novels selected for analysis, provide a fertile ground for examining hybridity and Nativism, as espoused by Bhabha, Ashcroft et al, Devy, Nemade, Parry, as well as Rama.

The works selected here reflect the role played by hybridity in its totality by focusing on the important question of the struggle of the indigenous communities to make a place for themselves in the national mainstream, as also the resurgence of fanatic right wing Hindutva or extreme Hinduism and the place of Dalits in modern day India, along with the ‘other’ subalterns who embody the hybrid character of the Keralite social system. The texts together bring out the crucial part played by hybridity and Nativism in Peru and India, teasing out in this way the controversies associated with Postcolonial theory and its application across the board to all erstwhile colonies. It is possible then to state that both hybridity and Nativism

---

22 A recent critical study has however taken a step in this direction and Dora Sales Salvador’s study on Arguedas and the diasporic Indo-Anglian writer Vikram Chandra, is an important contribution to this field. In her book, *Puentes sobre el mundo. Cultura, traducción y forma literaria en las narrativas de transculturación de José María Arguedas y Vikram Chandra* (2004), Sales analyzes the manner in which both the authors translate their worlds in the language of the colonizer. She uses the concept of transculturation and the Sanskrit theory of rasas (emotions) as an alternative to the Aristotelian orthodoxy to examine Arguedas’ *Los ríos profundos* [*Deep Rivers*] (1958) and Vikram Chandra’s *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995).
stand out in the analysis as they play a crucial role in determining the way the nation is constructed and its effect on the lives of those who stay back in the nation-states.

To reiterate, in this dissertation therefore I propose to discuss not only the application of postcolonial literary theory but also the manner in which hybridity and Nativism are perceived by the authors and woven into their narratives, as I believe this concept is in itself very subtly nuanced and has to be examined within the context of individual texts and the manner in which the writers have used it to construct their text-nations. The intention here is not to follow the theoretical framework suggested by critics such as Ashcroft et al, and Bhabha blindly but rather to negotiate with this theory as it cannot be denied that it has revealed new paradigms of power. Whether the theory can be applied to all the countries across the board is of course another matter. To facilitate the analysis I have chosen to examine the linguistic and cultural fields since these areas have been selected by various postcolonial theorists, as also those advocating Nativism, as factors vital to the study of the erstwhile colonies.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. In the first one I will examine the linguistic strategies used by Arguedas to insert Quechua in the national discourse from which it has been absent since Peru’s independence. In Arguedas’ novels, *Yawar fiesta* (1941) and *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below* (1971) we see a strong presence of Quechua as also a hybrid language, a Quechuaized-Spanish crafted by him to incorporate his vision of the indigenous communities and their place in the nation-building process. The texts bring out the issues facing the indigenous communities as well as the author’s position on hybridity and Nativism, and are therefore ideal for a discussion on this issue.
The second chapter is divided in two parts, the first one deals with Roy’s novel *The God of Small Things*, and in the second one I analyze Shree’s novel *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* [Our City that Year]. English was introduced in India after the administrative reigns were passed on to the Imperial authorities by the East India Company in the nineteenth century. Since its introduction in India this language has been associated with the elite of the society, and its position has been strengthened as it became the official language of the newly independent nation-state, relegating the vernacular again to the peripheries of power. Given this background, the linguistic strategies used by Roy are of special interest as they highlight the problems and conflicts that still thrive in modern day India.

In second part of this chapter, I will examine the way the colonial project influenced the evolution of Hindi in India. In fact, not much work has been done on the way the vernacular was influenced by the colonial regime, and Shree’s novel brings out the tension between the formation/invention of Hindi as we know it today and the language/dialects that were such an integral part of the way Hindustani (as it was known earlier) was spoken and used. The linguistic registers that existed in pre-colonial India were unique as the functions attributed to each language is what decided when a particular one was supposed to be used, for instance, Sanskrit was used for religious purposes and Persian/Urdu for administrative ones. The novel then introduces a different dimension to the debate on the role of hybridity and Nativism in the lives of those who stayed behind in the erstwhile colonies. The author uses subtle nuances to show how the Sanskritized Hindi has built its own stronghold on the basis of the support of the hegemonic class from the heartland of India. Shree’s novel also opens up new ways of interpreting the role played by the *bhāsās* or vernacular.
In the third chapter I will study the concept of *mestizaje cultural* or cultural hybridity as interpreted by Arguedas primarily in *Yawar fiesta* with certain passage from his last two novels *Todas las sangres* (1964) [All the Bloods] and *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below* (1971). For Arguedas culture is reflected not only in the aesthetic arts like music, dance and painting but also in the interpretation of festivals in the everyday lives of the characters who dwell within the pages of his text-nation. Culture in fact becomes a political field where the struggles in the other areas, like the political and economic ones, are played out symbolically.

In the fourth chapter, I will study the way Shree visualizes culture in present day north India. For this author too culture represents not only music, but also literature, religious festivals as well as the quotidian lives of the people. The writer uncovers myriad little strands that make up the cultural fabric of India, through musicians, poets, and the lives of ordinary people. The novelist’s interpretation of hybridity and Nativism, in all its aspects, also engages with the notion postulated not only by Ashcroft et al, but also by Parry, while questioning the way Bhabha describes it.

These texts from Peru and India will thus demonstrate the many ways that hybridity and its relation to Nativism can be construed. The result of the analyses will, in turn, address the need to question the definition of these concepts compartmentalized as they are within rigid gridlines. The works of Arguedas, Roy and Shree will help us to see the *misprisions* and *aporias* concealed in the way various critics have defined these two notions which play such a fundamental role in the construction of identity, be that of the individual or the nation.
Chapter 1

Crafting the Language of the Nation: An Analysis of the Linguistic Strategies in the Narrative of José María Arguedas

The colonization process in Latin America led to a physical and epistemological invasion by the colonizer in almost every aspect of the life of the native. The colonial authorities sought to suppress the indigenous populace by trying to erase the key elements that contributed to their identity. In fact whether the indigenous communities of Latin America could even be recognized as human beings was a debate which continued for long between Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, the Dominican priest and the theologian and philosopher Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. Sepúlveda had translated Aristotle and his texts to Spanish and used the Aristotelian thesis to justify the war against the Indians in this debate (which took place in Valladolid, Spain, circa 1550-51). Apparently one of the means of making them “human” was to convert them to Christianity and teach them the “Christian tongue” since the conquistadores did not grant the same status to the vernacular. Christopher Columbus, for example, did not think the natives could even speak, since they did not know his language, and says, “If it pleases Our Lord, at the moment of my departure I shall take from this place six of them to Your Highnesses, so that they may learn to speak” (Todorov 30; my emphasis). Tzvetan Todorov, analyzing Columbus’ reaction, points out that his, “[...] failure to recognize the diversity of languages permits him, when he confronts a foreign tongue, only two possible, and complementary, forms of behavior: to acknowledge it is a language but to

---

23 Though Las Casas fought in favor of the Indian, he too viewed them as “sheep”, ready to receive the word of God and be saved. There was never any question of appreciating the “other” with his/her religious and cultural beliefs, especially when he started fighting for their cause (Las Casas 77).
refuse to believe it is different; or to acknowledge its difference but refuse to admit it is a language” (30). Language then became a vital instrument in the transformation of the “barbarian” into a “human being”.

The importance given to it as a tool for conquest and colonization is summed up in the prologue of the first book of Spanish grammar written by Antonio de Nebrija in the fifteenth century. During this period Spain had just been through the process of re-conquering the land from the Arabs who had ruled there for eight centuries. Castilian which was initially just another provincial language of Spain became closely linked to the center of power with the rise of Ferdinand and Isabel, the Catholic Kings. As Regina Harrison indicates, “The publication of Nebrija’s Gramática de la lengua castellana [Grammar of the Spanish language] in 1492 legitimised Spanish as an “agent of the empire” and favorably described Spanish as derived from the well-ordered grammatical principles of Latin. Thus, Spanish, a vernacular language, increasingly assumed a place formerly reserved for the prestigious classical languages in the discourse of royal decrees and religious doctrine. In the sixteenth century, Spanish, now grammatically codified in its similarity to Latin, became a model with which Spaniards evaluated the language and thoughts of the indigenous people in the New World” (37). Nebrija in fact suggests that it would be necessary for the barbaric people and nations to learn about the laws that the Conquerors would impose on them, the conquered, and the best way to do so would be by learning the Conqueror’s tongue (100-101; my translation). Hence one can conjecture that these ideas were melded in the zeitgeist of that time.\(^\text{24}\)

\(^\text{24}\) This “tradition” was prevalent even during the Incan rule as the Aymara resisted their assimilation into the Incan empire and fought bloody battles against the Incas (Ayala 789).
One can then assert that language has played a crucial role in the process of colonization and has been used as a symbol of power by the colonial regime to exercise their authority over the indigenous people. A language takes centre stage and is empowered according to the functions it is allotted in a particular society. In the colonial world it becomes a part of the imperial authority as it is employed not only to administer the day to day acts of governance, and judicial proceedings but is also used to dominate the spiritual field. In fact, it takes on a particularly menacing role in the judicial sphere since it is used to communicate the punishment to be meted out to the native imprisoned by the colonial authorities. Hence, the position occupied by language is of supreme importance as it reflects the place of its speakers within a given society.

The field of education becomes a crucial player in this game as it is utilized to “prepare” the colonial subjects to accept the view of the colonizer’s world as the truly “civilized” one and in this way attempts to slowly erase the native languages and culture. Language, thus, assumes a socio-political role profoundly related to the functioning and re-shaping of the colonial society and consequently becomes intricately linked with culture. And indeed the linguist François Grosjean asserts that the latter is acquired, socially transmitted, and communicated in large by language (in Nuessel 116). He further defines culture as the way of life of a people or society, including its rules of behavior; its economic, social, and political systems; its language; its religious beliefs; its laws; and so on (in Nuessel 25).

---

25 Education has been manipulated for centuries by those in power to spread their worldview, a practice that continues even after independence in Peru.
The relation between them becomes especially important when we talk about countries that have suffered from colonization.

When the *conquistadores* came to Peru, the Incas had already established their empire and had made Quechua the general language of the region, which was spoken even in the Argentine provinces of Tucumán and Córdoba (Pottier 21). There were many variations in Quechua itself and Lorenzo Hervás in his *Catálogo de las lenguas de las naciones conocidas*, published in Madrid in 1800, lists these dialects as *chinchasuyo* which was spoken in the dioceses of Truxillo, the *quiteño* spoken in Quito, the *calchaqui* or *tucumano* spoken in the greater part of Tucumán and *cuzqueño* spoken in the city and diocese of Cuzco (Pottier 25).

The other two languages spoken in the Andean region were Aymara and Puquina, the latter being used even on the shores of Lake Titicaca (Pottier 22). According to Ludovico Bertonio, a Jesuit missionary of the early sixteenth century, the Aymara community was made up of different, “nations, who spoke different *aimará* dialects like the *canchis, canas, collas, collaguas, lupacas, pacases, carancas, charchasi* and others […]” (in Pottier 25). 27 Víctor Hugo Cárdenas and Javier Albo indicate that Aymara remained one of the important Amerindian languages after Quechua, and that it survived the Incan and the Spanish

---

26 Though I agree with Grosjean when he suggests that culture is transmitted largely through language, however, both are contested political fields, therefore I will study the relation between culture and nation in chapters 3 and 4 respectively as I analyze Arguedas and Shree’s re-construction of nation through culture.

27 Bertonio wrote extensively on the Aymara language and his book *Arte de la lengua aymara, con vna silva de phrases de la misma lengua y su declaracion en romance*, published in 1612 is well known in the field (Campbell Gibson and Beckham 1976).
colonization especially in those regions of Qullasuyu which had strongly resisted these two incursions (284).²⁸

The indigenous languages, however, did not just disappear from colonial Peru, though it was displaced from the domains of power by Castilian, as the language policies of the Empire were fraught with ambiguities. There was a debate, in fact, on how to communicate with the native and convert him to Christianity. The dilemma that absorbed the colonizers was whether to translate the catechisms to the indigenous languages or to teach them to read the same in Spanish. One of the principle difficulties in conveying the tenets of Christianity was that according to the men of the Church, “the impoverished Indian tongues fell short of *locutio* (reasoned discourse). Many missionaries noted the absence of one word for God and the absence of words to describe abstract and universal notions” (Harrison 36). This also led to a lot of ambiguity and controversy in the colonial language policy. There were clerics like Friar Santo Tomás who not only appreciated, “the richness of the power of expression and precision granted to the speakers of the native languages” (Harrison 37), but also wrote the first Quechua grammar. According to Armas Medina the archbishop of Lima finally resolved the issue by teaching the children in Spanish while instructing the adults in their own language, because the “old ones” would not learn Spanish so readily (in Harrison 37). This, however, was not the end of the controversy as a royal decree issued by Charles V forbade the indoctrination in Quechua or any other native languages as it was not “capable of expressing well and with decorum, the Catholic articles of faith” (Harrison 37).

²⁸ José Luis Ayala in fact contends that despite the bloody nature of the encounters between the Inca and Aymara communities, for the latter the most painful era was the Spanish colonial one (789).
The polemic thus continued throughout the colonial period, as did the scholarly interest in the study of Quechua. The grammar book written by Santo Tomás popularized its use throughout the colony and many young priests used it to learn the native language. It was deemed necessary to learn the vernacular as the focus of the Church of Lima was now not merely on memorizing and reciting the catechisms but rather on understanding well the meaning of the Christian doctrine (Harrison 39). Quechua, therefore, was not erased completely from its native soil but continued to be employed during the colonial period, though Spanish became the language of power.

The elevated status given to the “master’s tongue” did not change even after the supposed ‘de-colonization’ of Peru (Klor de Alva 247), as the new Creole elite chose Spanish as the national language of independent Peru. Consequently, both the Quechua and the Aymara communities remained at the peripheries of the new nation being constructed by the hegemonic class. But despite many efforts to root out the indigenous languages, they survived the onslaught of the Spanish conquest. I would, therefore, like to argue that the vernacular was deeply rooted in the land and could not be wrenched out completely from Peru. And as mentioned earlier, this issue led to many discussions regarding the language policy during the colonial period, but ironically Spanish was still chosen as the national language of post-Independence Peru.

One can in fact distinguish two trends in the Peruvian nation-building process, the Hispanist and the Indigenist. The two sides entered into a debate about the character of the nation, especially during Augusto Leguía’s presidency, called the oncenio (since he ruled for 11 years from 1908-1912 and then again from 1919-1930). The historian José de la Riva Agüero, and the philosopher Victor Andrés Belaúnde, who belonged to the generation of the
nineties (this refers to the nineteenth century), and later Raúl Porras, a student of Riva Agüero, represented the Hispanist trend. They affirmed the superiority of the Hispanic culture and wanted it to be the distinguishing part of the Peruvian heritage; hence it is possible to say that the nation visualized was a Creole one (in Escobar). Ironically, the founding fathers recognized the relation between contemporary Peru and the Incan Empire as part of the cultural heritage of the newly independent nation-state, but they did not accept the indigenous communities of the present (Méndez G.).

The debate on the role played by the natives and their future in the young nation continued amongst intellectuals and politicians. Manuel González Prada (1844-1918), a radical thinker who belonged to Riva-Agüero’s generation, started the initial round of the discussion and was a vociferous advocate for the rights of the indigenous communities. The second round began during the early years of the twentieth century, when José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930) and Haya de la Torre, followers of González Prada (1895-1979), came on the political scene. The two were very influenced by him and participated actively in the intellectual and political fora. Haya de la Torre initiated a movement to reterritorialize and integrate the indigenous community into the political mainstream. In 1924 he established the political party “Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana” or Popular Revolutionary American Alliance, commonly known as APRA. The apristas, as they were called, recommended that the land be returned to the indigenous communities and a new economic program be launched to better their condition and end the abject poverty in which they lived while advocating for subsistence agriculture.

Mariátegui founded the journal Amauta in 1926 which provided many authors and intellectuals the ideological impetus towards socialism. Mariátegui believed that it was
necessary to integrate the indigenous communities economically before constructing a new nation. He also encouraged young intellectuals to choose Peru as the subject of the literary and artistic endeavors in order to combat the Creole image of the nation that was emerging from the political debates as well as in literature, essays and other writings on Peru. According to Mariátegui the indigenist movement, “[…] manifests itself in national art and literature where one observes the increasing revalorization of autochthonous forms and themes, looked down upon earlier because of the predominance of a colonial mentality and spirit”(40; my translation). It is possible to reaffirm, therefore, that both fictional and non-fictional writing played a vital role in the construction of the nation.

The relation between national language and national literature really stands out in the works of the Peruvian essayist and prose writer, Ricardo Palma (1833-1919). His articles were compiled for the first time as *Tradiciones peruanas* [Peruvian Traditions] in 1872 and finally as *Tradiciones peruanas completas* [Complete Peruvian Traditions] in 1953. In his works one can see his attempts to “Creolize” and in this manner to construct a homogeneous nation in his texts. In this book Palma incorporates articles, anecdotes, histories and essays in verse and in prose, which appeared in different newspapers from 1848-1860.

Palma was an important member of the dominant class in the nineteenth century and hence his writings were widely circulated in that period. His work was based on various narratives which came from Creole, Indigenous and Black cultures of Peru. Palma also took some of the stories from the chronicles written during the colonial times by Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, and other Chroniclers like Gómara y Mártil and the Missionary, Father Acosta (Cornejo Polar 1994, 108). Palma’s objective was to collect these stories and the new words and phrases that were created during the course of the years as Spanish came in contact with
Quechua. He wanted to create a Peruvian identity by gathering together these Peruvian “traditions”. Furthermore, Palma’s desire to include words and phrases known as peruanismos [Peruanism], which did not otherwise form part of the colonizer’s language, can in a way be explained by the linguistic strategy outlined by Ashcroft et al in their book The Empire writes back (1989). In this work the theorists define two kinds of English, “The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities. […] In order to focus on the complex ways in which the English language has been used in these societies, and to indicate their own sense of difference, we distinguish in this account between the ‘standard’ British English inherited from the empire, and the English which the language has become in post-colonial countries” (Ashcroft et al. 1989, 7-8). If we keep this in mind we can say that Palma wanted to distinguish between the imperial standard Spanish and the Peruvian Spanish. He wanted the Royal Academy of Spain to recognize these peruanisms officially in its Dictionary (Cornejo Polar 1994, 110). However, the very fact that he looks for approval from the metropolitan centre, diminishes the importance of this strategy. In addition, by erasing the presence of the “other” tongues which have been in Peru since the pre-Colombian times, Palma seeks to follow the example set by the colonial authorities. Ironically, as we shall see later, Arguedas uses many of the linguistic strategies formulated by Ashcroft et al in his narrative to write back to the dominant class in Peru. The irony lies in the fact that the hegemony of the Creoles, who replaced the imperial masters, is not recognized by the aforementioned critics. The theorists only refer to the colonial authorities without acknowledging the presence of the ruling class that took over the reigns of power from the colonizers. One can then argue that it is the position of the ruling class in Peru that is
reflected in Palma’s work; paradoxically Palma can also be identified as a “postcolonial” writer and the Spanish that he uses can be classified as “spanish”, following Ashcroft et al. His attitude also shows that it was the wish of at least a powerful section of the Peruvian society to continue their relationship with the colonial authorities and proves yet again that Peru was indeed a “reluctant Republic” as John Lynch described it (267).29

It is apparent from Palma’s works that the elite Creole class could not imagine a heterogeneous nation where it would be possible to conserve the cultural differences already existing in the Peruvian society. As J. Edward Chamberlin points out, “We are possessed as well as sustained by what belongs to us, and this includes our imaginative traditions and modes of representation”(33). The nation’s imagination was thus molded and controlled by the letrados or the “lettered class” who still looked upon the indigenous populace as naïve and childlike, and therefore not responsible enough to play an active role in the process of constructing the nation.30 Thus in the new society the Quechua and the Aymara communities continued to be treated in the same biased way by the political elite.

As discussed earlier, the conflict between the indigenous world and the Hispanic one was debated in political, social and cultural circles. In literature too there were many attempts to represent the lives of the Aborigines; Matto de Türner (1854-1909), for instance, was very influenced by the ideas of the thinker González Prada. She wrote prolifically and had to her

29 Lynch calls Peru a reluctant republic because the Peruvian Creole class did not want independence from the Spanish imperial authorities; all it wanted was more power. One of the reasons which forced them to join San Martín and fight for independence was the fear that the land and power would be taken over by the indigenous populace, a fear which had kept them from collaborating with the first indigenous uprising that took place in 1781 known as the Tupac Amaru revolution (267).
30 This was certainly not the case as the indigenous communities took part actively in the movement to create an Independent Peru. It is possible to cite again the Tupc Amaru uprising against the colonial authorities.
credit several novels and journalistic articles in many newspapers. She also published a literary weekly from Cuzco called *El Recreo* along with novels and tales from the pre-Hispanic era. Her novel *Aves sin nido* (1968 [1889]) or *Torn from the Nest* (1998 [1889]) is considered to be the first indigenist novel.

In this work, the first half of the story takes place in a small Andean provincial town called Kíllac and the second in Lima. It is through the portrayal of the indigenous protagonists Juan and Marcela Yupanqui, Isidoro Champí and other members of this small society that the author reveals the nexus between the clergy, the administration and the judiciary and the way in which the indigenous communities were exploited. The other characters are Fernando and Lucía Marín who come to the village from Lima. Kíllac is compared constantly with Lima and other societies and found wanting.31 According to the author the reason for this disparity is, “The lack of schools, the lack of good faith on the part of the clergy, and the obvious depravity of those few who exploit the ignorance and consequent docility of the many, drive these towns ever further away from the true civilization, which, were it ever solidly established, would enrich our country with large areas capable of making it great” (1998, 29). There seems to be no doubt in the novelist’s mind that there can be only one kind of education and one faith. There is no appreciation of the Andean cosmovision; rather the beliefs of the indigenous communities are shown as mere superstitions and they are described as “simple minded people” in the novel. Matto de Turner also gives the message that the only way the indigenous people could survive was by educating themselves according to the Creole traditions, and this meant erasing all signs of

31 According to Cornejo Polar, “If in terms of reality Kíllac appears as the concrete representation of the retrograde concept of society, Lima, the Lima evoked by the characters, clearly corresponds to the modernizing concept; it is its emblem” (1998, xxxiii).
“otherness”. However, Matto de Türner’s obvious sympathy for the indigenous community is apparent since she did reveal for the first time their appalling living conditions for which she was persecuted by the then Government. She died in Buenos Aires in 1909.

It was Arguedas who understood the plight of the natives as he had shared his life with some of the Quechua speaking communities who worked in his stepmother’s house and on her farm. Arguedas absorbed their language, cultural beliefs and also shared their pain. He decided to tell the stories of the highland communities he had lived with and knew so well, to challenge the biased portrayal of the natives that emerged from the works of other writers like Enrique López Albújar (1872-1966). It is in this context that Arguedas’ works play a pivotal role in the Peruvian literary and political scene. In his narrative we find that he introduces Quechua and the world that it represents to disturb the seemingly ‘smooth’ surface of the homogenous nation, represented by the acceptance of Spanish as the national language. As Bhabha points out, “The language of national collectivity and cohesiveness is now at stake. Neither can cultural homogeneity or the nation’s horizontal space be authoritatively represented within the familiar territory of the public sphere. [….]”(154). Arguedas in fact advocated the use of Quechua language both within highland communities as well as amongst intellectuals and bureaucrats in Lima (García 73). Comments Juan Carlos Godenzzi, a leading activist working in the field of indigenous rights and bilingual education, “For Arguedas, access to modernity [did not] imply the destruction of what is Quechua; one can be Quechua and modern at the same time” (in García 73).

32 I would like to clarify here that I do not wish to homogenize all the different indigenous people as one but rather to talk about the communities with whom Arguedas was particularly involved and on whom he based some of the stories he wrote, for instance the ayllus of Puquio who become the protagonists of his first novel, Yawar fiesta (1941).

33 We will see a little later how the author tries to bridge the gap between the public and the private spaces in The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below (1971).
In his works, therefore, he wanted to give a glimpse of the weltanschauung shut out by the dominant faction who, in their contempt for all things indigenous, reproduced the derision that the colonizer reserved for its subject. Consequently literature and language became instruments of subversion bringing to the forefront many aspects of the autochthonous culture suppressed by the elite Creole faction. One can in fact argue that Arguedas follows the tradition of subversion established by the indigenous historiographers, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega and Felipe Guaman Poma, as they insert Quechua and Aymara in their text to underline the presence of these communities in the colonial discourse. The presence of indigenous languages in their works written principally in Spanish, reveal how the historiographers used linguistic strategies to re-construct the colonial subject as distinct from the one depicted by the colonizers. It is then possible to affirm that Arguedas continues this tradition by inserting Quechua in his narrative, and his writings as novelist, as anthropologist and as ethnographer, play a crucial role in the construction of Peru as nation.

As mentioned earlier, Arguedas’ objective was to reveal the multifaceted Peruvian society while incorporating the indigenous language and worldview within the national discourse. For instance, his experience as a student and a teacher brought home to him the difficulties which the native communities underwent while learning Spanish, taught to them by monolingual teachers who did not know the vernacular. According to Arguedas, formal education in the national language also implied the imposition of a different set of beliefs and way of being, since Spanish remained an alien language for the native student. As the French sociolinguist Henri Gobard indicates, “The instruction of a foreign language is a social phenomenon (Mauss, Gurvitch), a complex process that isn’t governed simply by linguistics
or by a certain pedagogical technique; [...] It is altogether another conception of the world (Weltanschauung) that is transmitted through language” (40-41).\(^{34}\)

In a paper read on bilingualism in Peru, Arguedas stated that the Peruvian education system did not acknowledge the presence of the vast multitudes of monolingual Quechua and Aymara communities (in Pottier 346-347).\(^{35}\) Their presence in contemporary Peruvian society indicated the continuity of the pre-Hispanic culture, despite the modifications it had suffered. He further adds that during the Republican period, the monolingual communities were instructed in a language with which they were unacquainted (in Pottier 346). According to Arguedas, “[…] The official education [system] […] employed an alien language not only to instruct [them] but to impose unfamiliar beliefs and ways of being” (in Pottier 346). However, since this goal was not achieved due to the lack of communication, it created an atmosphere of contempt for the Aboriginal pupils, whom the teachers thought to be “slow-witted”, following the traditional Creole way of thinking (in Pottier 346). According to Arguedas this derogatory attitude was then passed on to the indigenous people who began to view themselves in the same way. He clarifies this further and says that:

“The Indian does not understand---not because they are taught in a language they do not understand---but because they are dim-witted”, this is what almost all the teachers and those who belonged to their caste or class, thought. […] In this way, the school instead of becoming a means of

---

\(^{34}\) Danielle Thomas has translated some of the chapters from Gobard’s book. The translation has not been published till date.

\(^{35}\) Unlike others who thought that national integration would happen through education in Spanish, for Arguedas and Valcárcel, “education was critical for developing indigenous autonomy, but it had to take identity and culture into account, which is why they worked toward bilingual education. This was a national project. It was about being proudly Peruvian but a Peruvian who embraced national diversity. It was also about redefining indigenous peoples as a critical part of a modern nation” (García 78).
unification, integration and stimulation, [for] the indigenous population, played [a] disintegrating and depressing role […] (in Pottier 346; my translation).

The native thus felt alienated from the national mainstream or natio (Brennan 45)\(^ {36} \).

According to Aibar Ray the sense of alienation felt by the native was very different from the one felt by an individual in a Western (or Westernized) world. She clarifies that in the Andean society a person separated from his community, his group, who does not have any society [community] within which to participate collectively, considers himself to be alienated, […], a “huaccha” (58; my translation). In fact they are alienated sometimes even from members of their own communities as they migrate to the urban spaces in search of jobs and a better life. In this context the survival of the vernacular is crucial if the native cultures and beliefs are to withstand the onslaught of colonial and neo-colonial practices.

In his novels and short stories, Arguedas portrays the indigenous communities as active agents who engage vigorously with those around them, as can be seen in the portrayal of the ayllus or communities in his first novel Yawar fiesta (1941). However, though Arguedas’ books were primarily meant for the non-Quechua speaking reader, he felt that he could not write about the indigenous community and their weltanschauung only in Spanish, having known them intimately through his formative years. And so began his search for a literary style which could adequately portray the Andean landscape and the people living there. But it was not easy for the writer to, “[…] realize oneself, to translate oneself, to transform a seemingly alien language into a legitimate and diaphanous torrent, to communicate to the almost foreign language the stuff of which our spirit is made: that is the

---

\(^ {36} \) In Brennan’s opinion the term nation originates from natio meaning a local community, domicile, family, and condition of belonging (45).
hard, the difficult question” (*Yawar fiesta* 1985, xviii). Besides, as he admitted, it was not easy to imagine the natives speaking in fluent Castilian, especially, “For the bilingual person, for one who first learned to talk in Quechua, it seems impossible to have them suddenly speak Spanish; I solved the problem by creating for them a special Spanish language [...]” (*Yawar fiesta* 1985, xix). Arguedas also incorporated words and phrases in Quechua besides using the new “Quechuaized-Spanish” in his narrative, as we will see later.

His first novel *Yawar fiesta* [Bloody fiesta] (1941) coincided with a more active phase of indigenism, and revealed a proactive indigenous community. According to the anthropologist García, it is possible to see a shift in the *indigenista* movement at this time, “[f]rom the heavy paternalism and even racism of some earlier indigenista projects, indigenismo in the 1940s sought to return to the Mariateguian vision in which indigenista advocacy would pave the way for indígena agency”(71).*³⁷* *Yawar fiesta* thus played a crucial role in his fictional journey, I therefore propose to examine how the author constructs his text-nation linguistically in this work.

The story is narrated in third person and is set in the Peruvian highland town Puquio, where the author spent part of his early childhood and adolescence (*Horning Barraclough 1985, xi*). The narrator reflects the author’s ideology and empathy for the indigenous communities. The main plot revolves around the celebration of the national day of Peru (28th July). One of the principal ways of celebrating this day in the Andean region is by organizing a bullfight in the indigenous fashion. According to this tradition members from different *ayllus* run in front of the bull and destroy it with dynamites. This manner of fighting is very different from the Spanish one which is perceived as more “civilized” and “artistic” by the

³⁷Mariátegui introduced socialism to many young intellectuals of his time, including Arguedas (Escobar 23)
representatives of the government and the “Hispanized” landowners. The novel deals with the reaction of the indigenous communities when the Government decides to ban the indigenous style and impose the Spanish one. The debates and actions of the characters leading to this event clearly reveal the complex social structure of highland Peru.

The author announces in the very title, *Yawar fiesta*, the existence of two distinct worlds, since *yawar* is a Quechua word meaning blood and *fiesta* a Spanish one meaning festival. The title can also be translated as “bloody festival” or following the interpretation of the author, as “bloody fiesta”, highlighting in this way the continuation of a conflict which began during the colonial era. Arguedas indicates in this manner the beginning of a new cultural tradition and captures the image of a heterogeneous and hybrid Peruvian Nation-state. In this novel we also see many of the linguistic strategies postulated by Ashcroft et al in their book. In the following passage for instance we see the use of glossing wherein the author intervenes directly to explain a term or a concept either in parenthesis or with a footnote:

*Igual que en otros tiempos, los varayok’(*) reparten los turnos de riego, cada cual en su ayllu.* (1958, 16)

The Indian staffbearers schedule the irrigation water allotments, each in his own community, the same as in former times. (1985, 7)

---

38 I will study in detail the *corrida* and its significance in the construction of nation when I talk about nation and culture in chapter 3.
The author explains in the footnote that the term varayok means an Indian staffbearer who is also known as the mayor of the Indian communities. This strategy reveals the distance between the indigenous and Westernized Creole world as they collide in the Arguedean text-nation. It is also possible to argue that the presence of Quechua in the text foregrounds the linguistic chasm than still exists in Peru.

“Syntactic fusion” is the other technique that Arguedas employs in his narrative. This is one of his most innovative strategies to depict the way the natives spoke the “master’s tongue”. According to Ashcroft et al syntactic fusion is, “The adaptation of vernacular syntax to standard orthography [which] makes the rhythm and texture of vernacular speech more accessible” (70). To create this new language he infuses Spanish with the grammatical structures of Quechua; to achieve this objective he makes certain orthographic changes in Castilian, for example, he uses ‘i’ instead of ‘e’, ‘o’ instead of ‘u’ in some of the Spanish words. He also omits articles, uses gerunds and diminutives to show how the Indians had transformed the national language. One can observe these modifications in the following dialogue between the varayok’s of the K’ayau community and the landlord Don Julián about the bullfight:

¡Encanto, encanto, diciendo pichk’achuris, taytay! Nu’hay encanto, don Jolián.
Todo año ganando pichk’achuris en plaza. Grande pues puna echadero de pichk’achuris; mucho hay sallk’a (*) en echadero de ayllu de Pichk’achuri. Por eso ganando vintiuchu. (1958, 40)
“Magic, magic, Pichk’achuri’s saying taytay! Isn’t any magic, Don Jolián. Every year Pichk’achuris winning in the bull-ring. Pichk’achuris have lots of grazing land in highlands; plenty of salk’a on Pichk’achuri community’s grazing land/ That’s why winning on twenty-eight.” (1985, 24)

I would, therefore, like to argue that this passage establishes that the language spoken by the natives can be classified as hybrid, but this hybridity is produced in the nursery of native linguistic system and culture. Hence there is little doubt that the native speaker positions her/himself within the autochthonous world. As Vasant Palshikar has pointed out, “Defined in terms of rootedness we may say that the ‘nativity’ of a person is formed by place, people, and culture and that the soul ‘nativity’ is embodied in a distinctive sensibility and world view” (142).

The new language that is born of this fusion is impregnated with the linguistic structures of the native tongue as it molds the language of power to make space for itself within the national discourse. The hybridity that results from this melding is distinctly Quechua, and shows that the Aborigine holds her/his own in the face of the new challenges s/he has to face even after independence. I would also like to suggest that given the fact that the resultant language is rooted to the land Arguedas’ strategy also proves Bhalchand Nemade’s hypothesis that the historical, geographical and sociological contexts of a language exercise invisible control on its stylistic features since there is a “filial” relationship between the linguistic and cultural milieu and the writer’s work (135). The language thus created by Arguedas reveals that the text that emerges could not have been written in any other country but Peru.

\(^{40}\) The author explains in a footnote that salk’a is the name used for wild mountain bulls and that means savage in Quechua (1958, 40).
The position taken by the author vis-à-vis the issue of language also questions Bhabha’s position as the latter detaches language from its geo-political and social context. The tension between the national language and the vernacular, especially in the case of Peru, arises from the very real problems faced by the indigenous populace as they still struggle to find their place within the nation being constructed by the Creole hegemony. Furthermore, I agree with Deepika Bahri when she points out that, “the confinement of the concerns of the theory of hybridity to semiotic terrain is not without cost to our understanding of the material, historical, and racial coordinates of the colonial experience, the specificity of loss and trauma, and the struggle for power and justice” (6). Hence, I would like to assert that it is not possible to read Arguedas’ works in isolation as his narrative foregrounds not only the social conditions prevalent in the post-colonial nation, (here I use the term chronologically) but also highlights the uneasy relation between the way the natives are perceived and the colonial history of Peru. The insertion of the indigenous weltanschauung is a political decision taken by the author to draw the attention of the non-Quechua speaking reader to the plight of the Aboriginal communities and as such it is as much a way of protesting as of resisting assimilation by the new nation-state.

The autochthonous cosmovision permeates the novel and makes its presence felt so forcefully that the outside influences, in the form of the Subprefect who wishes to “civilize” the Indians as also their festivals, are easier to resist as the natives live the metatext of their culture and language at every step, despite the exploitation they have to face and the resultant misery caused by these unequal conditions. To reiterate, such is the vitality of the native tongue woven in the story that it almost appears to overcome the influence of the Spanish language and the culture being imposed on the indigenous communities by the pre-
dominantly Creole nation-state. To show how the author establishes the importance of Quechua in his text-nation, I propose to use the tetraglossic model postulated by Gobard, who categorizes language as vernacular, vehicular, referential and mythical.\textsuperscript{41}

As is clear the story is narrated primarily in Spanish but the names of the places and those of the Aboriginal communities are left in Quechua:

Entre las chacras de trigo, de habas y cebada, sobre una lomada desigual, está el pueblo.

Desde el abra de Sillanayok’ se ven tres riachuelos que corren, acercándose poco a poco, a medida que van llegando a la quebrada del río grande. (1958, 9)

Amid fields of alfalfa and patches of wheat, broad beans and barley, on a rugged hillside lies the town.

From the Sillanayok’ Pass one can see the three stream that flow closer and closer together as the near the valley of the great river. (1985, 1)

By leaving the names of the places in Quechua, the author inverts the process of the epistemic conquest begun in 1492 by Columbus when he started naming the places according to the Western tradition, eliding the existence of the indigenous people living there for centuries. This process of re-naming transforms the vernacular Quechua into a vehicular language, which, according to Gobard is, “A common/vehicular language […] (lingua franca), national or regional, learned out of necessity, is destined for communication on an urban scale” (25). By converting Quechua into a vehicular language, Arguedas positions it in

\textsuperscript{41} Some of these strategies were analyzed in my article “Breaking the Linguistic Alienation in José María Arguedas’ \textit{Yawar fiesta}” (\textit{Politics and Culture} 2006).
such a way within Peru that it becomes a part of the nation from the *sierras* to the *costa*. Gobard also suggests that, “Parallel to the effective component we find that of communication where the vocative functions as a call to attention and symbol of information” (25). In this way Arguedas reclaims symbolically, the land from which the indigenous communities were displaced by the *conquistadores*.

As mentioned earlier, the novelist uses the ‘Quechuaized-Spanish’ in the dialogues between the indigenous characters, the Creole landlords and the *mestizos*. However, in some of the conversations that take place amongst the natives the writer leaves the dialogues in Quechua, without translating or explaining the meaning. Arguedas uses this strategy to communicate the distance between the autochthonous and Hispanic cultures, for instance:

[…] cuando miran el girón Bolívar, brillando como lomo de culebra
entre el tejado de los ayllus, asqueando, dicen:

--- ¡Atatauya Bolívar, calle!

Cuando los indios miran y hablan de ese modo, en sus ojos arde otra esperanza, su verdadera alma brilla. (1958, 18)

[…] when they see Girón Bolívar gleaming like a snake’s back among the tiled roofs of the *ayllus*, they exclaim disgustedly:

“*Atatauya Bolívar, street!*”

When the Indians look down and speak that way, in their eyes another hope is glowing, their real soul is shining forth.(1985, 9)
By leaving the expressions in Quechua within the text-nation, the novelist positions it alongside Spanish to reveal that there is more than one nation within the Peruvian State. One can then affirm that if Spanish is present in Peru then so is Quechua.

Arguedas also uses the vernacular to give the indigenous people a sense of identity. For example, the best known bullfighter amongst the Indian communities or ayllus, “Honrao” Rojas, identifies himself primarily in Quechua:

-¡Yo, Pichk’achuri runakuna, k’alakuna! (1958, 34)

“I Pichk’achuri runakuna, k’alakuna!” (1985, 20)  

This strategy is especially important in a society which does not acknowledge the presence of the large majority of its people. The assertion of identity in Quechua also instills a sense of pride in one’s culture and tradition. Moreover, by leaving this statement intact the author communes with other Indians and bilinguals like him while drawing attention to the continued presence of the indigenous community within the national discourse. Moreover, in this case the vernacular also serves as an instrument of communion, and as Jacques Lacan says, “the pure function of language, […] is to assure us that we are and nothing more” (in Gobard 25). Gobard describes the vernacular language as local, spoken spontaneously, less to communicate than to commune and that can only be considered as a native language (or birth language). According to the sociolinguist, “The condition sine qua non of all human

---

42 My emphasis in both the Spanish and English quotations. It is interesting to note that though the author does not translate the main phrase used to claim identity from Quechua to Spanish, the English translator does so in the footnote. This raises the question of whether the translator should take the liberty of explaining phrases which the author himself has not done. By not translating “Honrao” Rojas’ words Arguedas was probably drawing attention to the fact that he was dealing with a different world, a world not easy to interpret or explain. It is possible that he wanted the reader to make the effort her/himself to find out the meaning of the Quechua phrases. The footnotes made by the author and the translator both occupy the same space in the English version.
development is the affective relationship where language serves to support a *communion* and not a communication. The verbal relationship between two people isn’t at all reducible to an exchange of information” (23-24). He explains it further by giving the example of an interchange about weather between two villagers. In his opinion, “It’s a […] manner of reassurance between neighbors, of confirming peace, always precarious, and to renew a friendship founded upon cosmic solidarity: We are both subject to the same bad weather, to the same threats, we are therefore together on this corner of the earth and we assure each other about it ritualistically, after which we can go about our life without fearing loneliness because we know that, although alone, the villager is never isolated”(34). It is in this sense that I use the verb “commune” in my analysis.

Arguedas uses the same strategy at times to describe the way the natives relate to Nature, since this is an integral part of the polytheist Indigenous religion, as opposed to the monotheist Christian tradition introduced by the Spanish colonizers. He shows for example how the Chief of Staffbearers worships the mountain *K’arwarsu* and commends his community to the mountain spirit. The words spoken to make this offering are left in Quechua:

```
--¡Ay tayta! K’arwarasu tayta!(1958, 129)

“Ay tayta! K’arwarasu tayta!”(1985, 99)
```

The prayers offered by the Indian travelers to worship the mountain spirit as a mark of respect when they cross it, are also left in Quechua, “*Papay! Jatun auki!*” (1958, 129). By leaving the phrases in the native tongue Arguedas converts Quechua into a magical and spiritual language. According to Gobard, in this instance, “the language does not serve to commune, nor to communicate, nor to play, but to elude, that is to say, to dominate fate,
nature. […] From hymns to prayer, passing through magical rituals, magical language is […] expression of magical thought and of the feeling of omnipotence” (26-27). Thus Arguedas turns Quechua into a mythical language, which in Gobard’s opinion is a language that functions as a last resort, “verbal magic that permits comprehension of the incomprehensible as irrefutable proof of the sacred […]” (34). In this way Arguedas reclaims the spiritual domain symbolically. The novelist uses this rhetorical technique right from the beginning of the novel when he describes the Andean landscape and mentions the “saywas” or “magic heaps of stones” (1985, 2). He draws attention, in this way, to the especial relationship that the highland communities share with their land.

The bull or Misitu,43 whom the Indians hope to defeat during the fight in the National day corrida, is also given magical powers:

Los k’oñanis decían que corneaba a su sombra, que rompía los k’eñwales, que araba la tierra con sus cuernos; y que el Negromayo corría turbio cuando el Misitu bajaba a tomar agua. Que de día, rabiaba mirando al Sol; y que en las noches, corría leguas de leguas persiguiendo a la luna; que trepaba a las cumbres más altas, y que habían encontrado sus rastros en las faldas del K’arwarasu, en el sitio donde toda la noche había arañado la nieve, para llegar a la cumbre.

(1958, 101-102)

The K’oñanis said he gored his own shadow, that he broke down the k’eñwales, that he plowed down the earth with his horns, and that the

---

43 The translator explains in the footnote that it sometimes means “little cat” or “great cat” in the Quechua-ized Spanish (1985,19).
Negromayo ran muddy whenever the Misitu came down to drink water. That by day he grew furious looking at the sun, and by night he’d run leagues chasing the moon; that he’d scale the highest peaks, and that they’d found his trail on the slopes of, in the place where he’d been seen pawing on the snow all night to reach the summit. (1985,75-76)

The capture of this being from the slopes of the Andes then becomes a heroic feat in itself, to be accomplished only by the bravest endowed with special magic:

En tropa cerrada llegaron los k’ayaus al riachuelo. Como cien comuneros tocaban wakaw’ras; el Raura era el mando de los corneteros […]

Grueso, como voz de wakaw’ra grande, gritó el Raura. La rabia hervía en su pecho, y aumentó su voz […] Tiró su lazo, bien, midiendo, sobre seguro y lo enganchó en las dos astas, sobre la frente misma del Misitu […]

---Dúnde carago ¡Yu, k’ari! ¡Yu, k’ayau!―pregonaba el Raura.

(1958, 135, 142)

In a dense drove, the K’ayaus reached the creek. About a hundred comuneros were playing wakawak’ras; Raura was in command of the trumpeters. […] Deeply, like the voice of a big wakawak’ra, Raura shouted. Rage was seething in his chest and his voice was amplified by it, […] He threw his lazzo well, judging the distance without exposing himself, and looped it over both horns right over Misitu’s face. […]
“Because, damnit, I k’ari! I K’ayau!”, proclaimed Raura. (1985, 104, 110)

The Misitu is captured by Raura, of the K’ayau community, a deed that transfers the magical powers of the beast to the one who seizes it and places the Indians above everyone else. This is especially true since the landlord don Julián and his herdsmen were not successful in their attempts to catch him. Thus by attributing magical powers to the Indians and by using Quechua to identify the bull, the author transforms the vernacular into a mythical language and puts it above the vehicular Spanish one.

This strategy also allows Arguedas to create a new set of references with which the Aboriginal communities could identify themselves with pride, dispelling in this way the contempt with which they were looked upon by the hegemonic mainstream. As can be seen in this passage, the novelist also switches linguistic codes to depict the speech of the indigenous characters, especially when a member of the community asserts his identity.

According to the socio-linguist Braj Kachru, “Code-switching entails the ability to switch from code A to code B. The alteration of codes is determined by the function, the situation and the participants. In other words, it refers to categorization of one’s verbal repertoire in terms of functions and roles. […] Code-mixing, on the other hand, entails transferring linguistic units from one code into another. Such transfer (mixing) results in developing a new restricted or not so restricted code of linguistic interaction.” (193, 194; author’s emphasis). Therefore, by switching codes to depict the way indigenous character asserts his identity, Arguedas not only empowers him but all those who speak the language and are a part of the Quechua world. Code mixing by the writer is yet another way to show the existence of the many “tongues” which make the nation heterogeneous. Moreover, it allows
Arguedas to place the vernacular within the national discourse that he re-writes in his novel, as both the languages occupy the same position in the text-nation.

The constant tension between the more European and “developed” coastal cities and the relatively poor Andean villages and towns is reflected in the way the Creoles and other city dwellers react to the presence of highlanders working or studying in their midst:

---¡Miren! Un serrano.

Los muchachos los descubrían, y les echaban cáscaras de plátanos, les jalaban del sombrero, les insultaban. (1958, 81)

“Look! A highlander”

The boys would discover them and toss banana skins at them; they’d snatch off their hats, insulting them. (1985, 59)

This attitude creates a sense of alienation among those who have migrated to cities like Lima; therefore by leaving intact some of the words and phrases in Quechua in the text Arguedas establishes a bond that makes the migrants feel that they are not alone and isolated in the urban areas but rather are members of a community. The presence of both Spanish and Quechua, along with the cultures they represent, in the narrative also demonstrates that they can coexist in contemporary Peru. In this way the author makes the indigenous communities coeval with the dominant class. One can then conclude that by utilizing the vernacular and creating a referential language the novelist re-territorializes the subject deterritorialized from the colonial and national discourse, respectively. As Gilles Deleuze points out, the functions of language are “inseparable from the movements of material and spiritual deterritorialization
and […] reterritorialization” (13), and this is what the author achieves in his fictional reconstruction of the nation.

I believe that Arguedas uses various linguistic strategies to create a network of references which shows the presence of a culture and people suppressed by both the colonial and national hegemonies. By transforming Quechua into a referential and mythical language entwined in the vehicular one, the author subtly alters the mechanisms of power that had relegated Quechua and its speakers to the margins of the society. It also proves that indigenous beliefs and practices were an integral part of the nation along with the dominant Hispanic ones. I am convinced that by drawing attention to the presence of the indigenous people and their language Arguedas gives vibrant proof of the fact that both the Spanish colonial project and the subsequent process of assimilation of the Indians into the Hispanic nation-state have not been successful so far; in fact, his works demonstrate that it is an ongoing struggle. Therefore, I affirm that by unraveling and reweaving the imposed language with the vernacular the author creates a dispersed and heterogeneous code which cuts across the forced tyranny of homogeneity inflicted by the new nation-state. Moreover, by transferring the grammatical constructions from Quechua to Spanish, Arguedas creates a new kind of hybrid tongue which is firmly entrenched in the native linguistic system. Though it is also possible to say that this new “Quechua-ized Spanish” occupies a space in between Quechua and Spanish, i.e. it is neither one nor the other, but still there is no doubt that it is the native language that colors the hybrid tongue and gives it a distinct identity. In this way, the author acknowledges the positive role played by Nativism in the creation of the hybrid language.
In the next part I will analyze his last inconclusive novel published posthumously in 1971, El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo [The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down below]. Like in Yawar fiesta here too the narrator agrees with the author’s views and sympathizes with the members of the indigenist communities struggling to survive in the urban spaces. In this work we see the culmination of a difficult literary journey which began in the early years of the twentieth century. This is also Arguedas’ most ambitious novel as he constructs his text-nation on the basis of two mythical characters from the Huarochirí manuscript first brought to light during the colonial period by Father Francisco de Avila in the sixteenth century. The Manuscript was finally translated from Quechua to Spanish by Arguedas. I would then like to affirm that his last novel is a testimony of the fact that the men and gods of Huarochirí still live in Peru.

Arguedas selects two of the animal characters, the foxes, from this Manuscript and reworks them into his last and most complex novel.\(^{44}\) The Foxes are introduced in the First Diary as they comment on the consequences of the author’s encounter with the prostitute Fidela when he was a boy. They reappear in the middle of the first chapter as the one from Down Below asks the one from Up Above whether he had understood his story so far. During the course of their conversation the author relates their story from the original Manuscript and makes a note of the fact that they meet again after two thousand and five hundred years. In their dialogue the Foxes acknowledge the division within the land and the Fox from down below says:

\(^{44}\) The Foxes make their appearance in chapter five of the manuscript, entitled, “How in the Ancient Times Pari Caca Appeared on a Mountain names Condor Coto in the Form of Five Eggs, and What Followed. Here will begin the Account of Pari Caca’s emergence” (Salomon 54).
Nuestro mundo estaba dividido entonces, como ahora, en dos partes: la tierra en que no llueve y es cálida, el mundo de abajo, cerca del mar, donde los valles yungas encajonados entre cerros escarpados, secos, de color ocre […] Este mundo de abajo es el mío y comienza en el tuyo, abismos y llanos pequeños o desiguales que el hombre hace producir a fuerza de golpes y canciones […] (1990, 50)

Our world was then divided, as it is now, into two parts: the land where it does not rain and is hot, the world down below, near the ocean, where the yungas [warm coastal valleys], boxed in by steep, dry, ochre-colored mountains […] This world down below is mine and it begins in yours, abysses and small level or uneven places that man makes produce by dint of blows and songs; […] (2000, 53)⁴⁵

The dialogue between these two parts has now been re-established and as the Fox from Down Below says, “Let us talk to one another; let us reach out to one another whenever possible however possible” (2000, 55). With these words the author begins building a bridge across the chasm that has divided Peru for centuries. The two also speak in Quechua which the author then translates to Spanish. In this way he underlines the presence of Quechua in the urban space, establishing firmly the continuance of the “other” tongue in the new nation being constructed.

The last novel brings out many of the unresolved issues still present in the contemporary scenario, such as the status of the indigenous communities in the wake of liberalization process that started in the 1960s by the then President, Belaúnde Terry. The

⁴⁵All quotes in English are taken from the English version of the novel, The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down below, translated by Frances Horning Barraclough, 2000.
story depicts these problems against the backdrop of a city going through the early stages of industrialization. The novelist narrates the problems faced by Andean migrants in the urban spaces and the conflicts that arise from the clash of cultures and worldviews, which in some ways is harsher here than in the *sierras*. With this work the author also steps into the “cosmopolitan world” from the “regional” or “provincial” space, an issue that he takes up in the dairies that accompany the story (2000, 21). In these diaries the author records his fight with depression and death, as well as the *angst* of living in two worlds.

Furthermore, if one reads the Diaries closely one can see that the author explains the meaning of some Quechua words and ideas using techniques similar to the ones he employs in the novel, such as footnotes, etc. For instance, in the following passage Arguedas talks about Cortázar’s view of how an author is better able to understand the nation from a distance. The main text has been written in italics while the Quechua word stands out in normal font:

> Perdónenme los amigos de Fuentes, entre ellos Mario (Vargas Llosa) y este Cortázar que aguijonea con su “genialidad”, con sus solemnes convicciones de mejor se entiende la esencia de lo nacional desde las altas esferas de la supernacional. Como si yo criado entre la gente de don Felipe Maywa, metido en el *oqllo* mismo de los indios durante algunos años de infancia para luego volver a la esfera “supraindia” de donde había “descendido” entre los quechuas, dijera

---

46 Arguedas further adds in his Second Dairy dated February 13\(^{th}\), 1969 that, “I have always lived happily while feeling very much like an outsider and being frightened in cities. […] Yes, I believe I don’t know cities well, and I am writing about one of them. […] But what about all the things I’ve gone through in the cities in a period of more than thirty years? I’ve spent a year in the city prison---spiders, rainbows, semen---of a Third World country and I wrote a novel about jail. There all I was doing was watching, growing, and suffering from my old-fashioned childhood” (2000, 84, 85-86).
que mejor, mucho más esencialmente interpreto el espíritu, el apetito de don Felipe, que el propio don Felipe. (1990, 13-14)

[...] Please pardon me, friends of Carlos Fuentes, among them Mario (Vargas Llosa) as well as this Cortázar who goads people with his “strokes of genius”, with his solemn convictions that the national essence is better understood from the high spheres of the supranational. As if I, who was brought up among Felipe Maywa’s people, placed in the very oqlllo* of the Indians for several years during the childhood to then return to the “supra-Indian” sphere from which I had “descended” into the midst of the Quechus----as if I were to interpret the essential nature of Don Felipe’s spirit and appetite much better than Don Felipe himself does! (2000, 16)

The author marks the Quechua word with a star and explains that it means “bosom” in a footnote.

The novelist also embeds the translation of some Quechua words within the text of the Diary, while describing in detail some of the flowers and insects that live in the sierras. For instance, in the following entry dated May 17th, Arguedas talks about some of the insects and birds, and explains their significance according to the Quechua way of thinking. In the following passages, for example, he talks about the insect huayronqo:

Por algo este huayronqo empolvado del germen de la flor amarilla, es tenido por los campesinos quechuas como un ánima que goza en el fondo de la bolsita afelpada que es flor de los cadáveres. (1990, 19)
For some reason the huayronqo, powdered with the yellow flower’s pollen, is considered by the Quechua country folk to be a ghost who enjoys being at the bottom of the little velvety pouch that is the corpse flower (2000, 22).

In both the passages we see that the author explains the terms in Quechua. These strategies establish clearly that he wished to share his dairies with the reader along with the story of the many characters who live in the boom town Chimbote where the action takes place. In fact the First Diary was actually published during the author’s lifetime in issue number 6 (April-June 1968) in the journal *Amaru* (Fernández 302). In this way Arguedas tries to re-shape the text-nation in a ‘novel’ way by integrating his personal dairies in the narrative. As Jorge Larrain points out, “The distinction between public and private versions of identity does not mean that they constitute entirely separate worlds. Public versions of identity are constructed by selecting features from the modes of life of the common people, and in turn, they influence the way the people see themselves. But this influence is not mechanical or automatic: many ethnic groups, regions or sections of society do not feel well represented by the dominant versions and do not share that sense of identity” (35-36). Larrain uses Richard Johnson’s model to explain this phenomenon; according to Johnson public versions are related to readings, and then to ways of life and subsequently to cultural production (36).

I have mentioned earlier that the administration controlled the field of education, and schools became the training ground for future citizens who would not only speak Spanish but would also subscribe to the views of the dominant Creole faction. As Larrain further

---

47 It was the publication of this Diary that started the well known polemic between Arguedas and Julio Cortázar about the role of the author. The latter retaliated in an interview he gave to *Life* magazine on April 7th 1969 (Christian Fernández 302). In his reply to Cortázar published in the Peruvian newspaper *El Comercio* on 1st June of the same year, Arguedas refers to the First Diary as a “chapter sui generis of the novel that I am currently writing” (Fernández 302).
observes, “Public versions are constructed from ways of life but also constitute sites of struggle, shaping the plurality of life” (36). By integrating his dairy to the novel Arguedas introduces Quechua into the public text and demonstrates that the nation is a contested site, as those in power were trying to construct a homogeneous nation with “selected” diversity. To reiterate, the melding of public and the private spaces also questions the process of selection by which the nation-state chooses its “heritage”, opting for some cultural products (which go with the “face” of the nation under construction) to represent its “indigenous legacy” while leaving others out of the nation.48 Hence by inserting Quechua in this private/public world Arguedas demonstrates that it will be difficult to erase the vernacular completely at least from the text-nation that he constructs. However, the dairies inserted between the chapters, also rupture the narration and make the reader conscious of the fact that The Foxes is a fictional representation of the nation that emerges from the imagination of the author.

In the novel, Chimbote reveals the darkest side of the socio-economic transformation taking place in Peru. Arguedas had already anticipated the advent of this new system in his second last novel Todas las sangres [All the Bloods] published in 1964. In this novel he foreshadowed the economic changes which would further dehumanize the Peruvian society as the erstwhile exploiters, the feudal lords of the sierras, are replaced by the faceless foreign multinational companies and their Peruvian counterparts. In The Foxes one can observe the consequences of these changes as the imaginary boundaries between the sierras (mountains) and the costa (coast) are broken by the flood of migrants from the mountains in search of employment and a better life. The chaotic and degrading circumstances depicted in the novel

48 I will discuss the role played by this process in the fabrication of a national culture in chapter 3.
reveal the initial phase of industrialization. The Indian is caught between the worlds that s/he leaves behind, which though exploited him/her but was at least familiar, and the new one that s/he has to get used to, a world which is unknown and sometimes frightening. However, the contempt with which they were treated before seems to be embedded in the *zeitgeist* of the coastal region as well, and they are still looked down upon by their *Costeño* counterparts.\(^{49}\)

It is possible in fact to compare the difficulties faced by the indigenous communities in urban spaces to those of any diasporic communities living far away from their native land. Moreover, in this urban space where the new socio-economic system was turning the Aboriginals into workers, fishermen, prostitutes and consumers, they constantly faced the dilemma that any immigrant faces in a new country: whether to conserve his/her identity or to renounce it completely? This dilemma in *The Foxes* is more agonizing than the situation depicted in *Yawar fiesta* as Chimbote was far removed from the known Andean space; hence the sense of alienation was much more without even the reassuring presence of Nature from which to draw sustenance from. In this way the Indian becomes a “huaccha” once again (Aibar Ray 58). As Bahri points out postcolonial theory, for instance, does not appear to acknowledge the invisible boundaries that divide a society from within. Bahri adds that, “The deeply class (and sometimes racially) segregated nature of most global cities, […]], also alerts us to the intransigent borders within, rather than the more glamorous cultural borders that metropolitan postcolonial celebrities invoke” (7-8).

---

\(^{49}\) *Costeño* comes from the word *costa* or coast and is a term used to describe the people who live on the coast which was seen typically as more progressive and “modern”. *Serrano* (or highlander) comes from the word *sierra* or mountain and is associated with the sizeable population of indigenous communities who have lived there since the Pre-Columbian times. They are usually seen as “backward” and “slow-witted” (García 28).
migrants, the arguedian text-nation questions the rigid definitions of certain concepts, like diaspora, given by Ashcroft et al in their book *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998).

The language of the *The Foxes* is not as lyrical or mellifluous as the one used in *Yawar fiesta* (1941). Rather, it is visceral and chaotic with many swear words and obscenities, along with the Quechua which is inserted now and then in the dialogues and the text. According to Martin Lienhard, Arguedas reproduces the violence of the surroundings in the verbal violence that appears in the text and this makes the violent lives of the characters tangible for the readers (1981, 73). One can thus say that the author crafts the language with which to capture the aggression and brutality engendered in a fast changing society.

Into this complex social network new conflicts emerge while the earlier ones remain unresolved as those from “up above” come crashing “down below” to Chimbote. The fishermen, the laborers in the factories and the sex-workers in the brothel are exploited mercilessly. Nothing is left untouched, be it the people who crowd the shores of the Bay or Nature as the waters are trawled relentlessly in search of the silver haul which would feed the factories and fill the pockets of the “masters”, old and new.

As in the earlier works, where Arguedas felt the need to create a special language in order to convey the indigenous *weltanschaung*, in this novel too he invents a special language based on his study of the actual fishermen of Chimbote. In addition, one observes how the linguistic order established by the hegemonic class is subverted from within, in the little slips and ellipses, in the way words are strung together in a sentence. For instance, in this fragment don Estebán, an ex-coal miner, is talking about his brother who not only refuses to speak Quechua but also denies his indigenous roots:
Me’hermano menor, ahistá, lindo habla castellano, mochachito escapó Chimbote, ahora no quiere hablar quichua. Buen cocinero es, restaurante “Puerto Nuevo”, grandazo. Lindo castellano habla; a so hermano, enjuermo, ambolante de mercado, desprecia. ¡Caracho! Cocinero esclavo, mugriente en cocina. Lunes anda fuerte en barriada Aciro. ¿Quién será me’hermano?

(1999, 137).

Now take me little brother, beautiful Spanish he talks; when he was little kid he escaped to Chimbote; now he doesn’t want to talk Quechua. Good cook’s what he is, in Puerto Nuevo Restaurant---a great big one. Beautiful Spanish he talks; looks down on his sick market-pedlar brother nowadays. Goddammit! Slave, cook, filthy in the kitchen. Mondays he goes round Aciro shantytown like a dandy; I wonder who my brother really is? […]

(2000, 144).

Like in Yawar fiesta, here too the author uses syntactic fusion to subvert the ‘standard’ national language from within by altering the vowels subtly to convey the rhythm and cadence of Quechua in the Spanish spoken by Esteban, (‘i’ is substituted by “e” – he says ‘me’, instead of ‘mi’), and demonstrates yet again that the indigenous communities were an integral part of Peru. As Josefina Ludmer points out, “There exists in literature and culture a zone that often transcends enunciation: it’s the intonation of the voice, certain enunciative postures, a way of creating rhythms and making the language resonate and of suturing these rhythms, postures, and gestures with a series of relations between subjects and themselves
and between subjects and Others” (182). In this way the voice of the indigenous people resonates in the language of the nation. One can also argue that this is one of the strategies, amongst others (such as the use of music in the text) which the author employs to emphasize the oral character of Quechua within Spanish. I believe that this alteration forms an alliance between the oral Quechua and the alphabetic Spanish as the latter becomes a vehicle used by the author to transmit the presence of the natives in the nation. I would, therefore, like to argue that he “hybridizes” Spanish by introducing a “discordant” note in the national language to mark the presence of the Quechua and Aymara speaking communities.

As is evident Quechua continues to play a crucial role in the life of the migrants, and we can see it in the use of words such as “aukillu” which refers to a priest in charge of mountain cult celebrations (Lienhard 2000, 272). According to Lienhard “aukillu” is, “a hybrid variant (with a Spanish suffix illo) of the Quechua aukilla, itself a diminutive of auki, meaning “lord”, “elder”, or mountain as a sacred place” (Ibid 272). The author transforms the Spanish suffix “illo” further by changing the ‘o’ to ‘u’:

---¡Salvaste, Esteban, carajo!---dijo el primo---. Mismo en Liriobamba un “cocalonero” ha quedado tosiendo ha estado [...] El brujo qui’habla con espíritu del montaña, aukillu, ha sentenciado: si el cuerpo retruca el carbón en el esputo, el cuerpo libre queda [...]. (1990, 157)

“You saved Esteban, goddamit!”, said the cousin. “Right in Liriobamba a Cocalonero kept coughing up coal. [...] The sorcerer who talks with mountain spirit, the aukillu, gave his verdict: if the body returns the coal dust in spit, the body gets rid of it [...]”. (2000, 167)
It is here that we see the skill of the author as he creates a new word to reconcile the indigenous and criollo worlds that he lived in. The term “aukillu” captures within itself the transformation that is taking place as the sierras and the costa meet in the urban spaces and creates new references and a unique language. This strategy also shows that languages are fluid and mobile, like the speakers who travel from the mountains to coast. Quechua, however, is not the only language that undergoes this process of hybridization in the novel as we have seen Spanish too is influenced by Quechua. In the word “aguay”, for instance, one can see the combination of the Castilian word “agua” with the Quechua suffix “y” (Lienhard 2000, 272). This word is then used by the Quechua speaking women in the markets of Chimbote, as we will see a little later. In this way Arguedas hybridizes the language of the center once more by introducing the grammatical structures of the native tongue and disturbing the seemingly calm waters of the homogenous nation. In fact according to Bhabha hybridization of language provokes anxiety [in the hegemonic classes], as this in turn is associated with “vacillating boundaries ---psychic, cultural, territorial […]” (Bhabha’s emphasis, 59). I would then like to affirm that once the invisible boundaries start to break it would be a matter of time before those on the ‘other’ side begin to participate more actively in the process of nation building. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that language continues to be a vital element in the formation of identity. One can then reiterate that in Arguedas’ last novel as well language occupies an important position and reflects the violent conditions in which all workers and fishermen live in, be they indigenous or mestizos.

The indigenous language is used again to construct a subtle network of references, which is then identified by the speakers of the vernacular within the text-nation. For example:
El pecho del hombrecito roncaba como la cuerda de un *wankarcaja* reseco y destemplado, es decir, del gran tambor que tocan los indios de Ancash, su región nativa. (1990, 132)

The little man’s chest rasped like the slack lacing on a very dry, untuned *wankarcaja*, that is to say, on one of those big drums the Indians native to the Ancash region play. (2000, 139)

The use of the expression “that is to say” then embeds the meaning of the Quechua word in the text and the author does not need to resort to the use of footnotes or endnotes to explain the vernacular term. The presence of Quechua and the allusion to the musical instrument in the text create a network of references that any migrant from the sierra could recognize easily. In this way Arguedas converts Quechua into a referential language as he had done earlier in *Yawar fiesta* (1941). Explains Gobard that a referential language is, “linked to cultural traditions, oral or written, assuring the continuity of values by a systematic reference to works of the perennial past […]” (34). Thus, Arguedas instills a sense of continuity and relation with the past and roots Quechua and its speakers firmly within the Peruvian society and the text-nation that he constructs. In addition, by inserting an object that reminds the migrants of their cultural traditions, the author also establishes a sense of order in the otherwise disordered and chaotic world of Chimbote, while communicating or rather “communing” with other bilinguals who live in similar urban spaces. Gobard suggests that the use of referential language is especially important in societies going through transition, as this provides an alternative ethnic or national bond which brings some order in the chaos caused as a result of this transition that Deleuze identifies as “dislocation” (13). Arguedas
thus uses the vernacular once more to break the alienation felt by the Indian living far from her/his land.

However, to survive in this climate s/he has no option but to learn the dominant national language to communicate with the non-Quechua speaking members of the society. And we see the importance of knowing Spanish when the Aymara fisherman Hilario Caullama protests and refuses to fulfill certain unfair demands made by the companies. In an incident narrated in the novel, the company representatives ask the workers and fishermen to pay for the installation of their patron saint St. Peter. Hilario could speak out against this unjust demand because he could communicate with the representatives in Spanish, and hence, could safeguard the interest of the fishermen. This act of defiance restores the dignity of the indigenous community especially in the markets of Chimbote, and mitigates, to some extent, the shame of speaking their mother tongue, which no longer seems like the “other tongue”:

Entonces se vio algo que hemos apuntado en el libro: las placeras de todos los mercados, los comerciantes del Modelo, empezaron a fiar a los pescadores con matrícula […] “De ellos vivimos, ellos son la sangre de Chimbote”, decían las placeras. “El aguay uno*, el yawar mayu”, llegaron a proclamar algunas verduleras serranas, olvidando su vergüenza por el quechua. (1990, 103)

Then something was seen that was one for the book: the women stallkeepers from all markets and the shopkeepers from El Modelo began to give credit to the registered fishermen. […] ‘Offa them we live; they’re Chimbote’s
lifeblood’, said the market women. ‘The aguay uno, the yawar mayu’, some highland women who sold vegetables came to proclaim, forgetting to be ashamed of their Quechua. (2000, 109)

We can infer from this passage that incidents like these restore the dignity of the language. Moreover, the way the “master’s tongue” is used, makes language an instrument to be manipulated by the speaker, as did Inca Garcilaso de la Vega during the Spanish colonial rule. An example of this strategy is his Comentarios Reales, or Royal Commentaries based on the Incas and their politics and culture (Biswas Sen 2004).

It is, however, not possible to deny that the vernacular is slowly being relegated to the private sphere in a more dehumanized “globalized” socio-economic system. But the fact that the “other” tongues cannot be erased is shown symbolically by the author as he introduces the little Andean insect, Onquray onquray, in the narrative to represent the Indians who come down to chimbote (2000, 92). The insect is killed subsequently by don Diego, the Fox from Down Below, in don Angel’s office, and as it dies, “a high whining noise issued from his body, which Don Angel could feel entering his ear and settling down into the most private of his private parts. […]” (2000, 93). I would, therefore, like to assert that the voice of the indigenous community does not fade away even after their death, just like the way the sound that emanates from the insect’s body settles into the innermost recesses of Don Angel’s body, so does the sound of Quechua penetrate into the body of the nation. And even though history seems to have repeated itself since Spanish is firmly established as the language of power in the public domain, the indigenous languages continue to thrive under the surface of the Peruvian nation. The voice of Onquray onquray thus remains, piercing the blanket of silence.

50 “Reales” in Spanish means royal but it also means real, this is an example of the subtle way the Inca challenged the colonial hegemony.
in which the dominant part of the society wished to shroud the indigenous people and their language.

The example of the fisherman Asto also suggests a way of preserving one’s culture and language and reclaim one’s identity. Asto is a relative newcomer to Chimbote and like the other fishermen and workers he too visits the brothel after work. When he is alone he does not hide his origin, as he whistles a huayno on his way out, but when he sees the taxi driver he tries to hide his identity and behaves very aggressively while talking in Spanish:

“Yu…criollo, carajo; argentino. ¿Quién serrano, ahura?, hablando se acercó a uno de los automóviles de plaza. (1990, 39)

“Me criollo51….from the coast, goddamit; me from Argentina, goddamit. Who highlander now?” still talking [with a high Andes accent] he went up to one of the cars in the lot. (2000,42)

One observes the transformation in Asto when the taxi-driver insults him, which makes him take out his knife. After this incident the driver tries to hit him and forces him out of his taxi with these words:

-¡Fuer de ahí, cholo serrano desgraciado, chivetero, contramadre! Sac el cuchillo, indio gallina, patrón de la puta e’ tu madre! (1990, 40)

“Get outa there, ya highland cholo son of a bitch, ya knifin’ motherfucker. Take out your knife, ya chicken Indian, boss of the whore who’s your mother.” (2000, 43)

---

51 The translator clarifies here that in this context criollo refers to a person who is born in the coast of Peru and grows up there (2000, 42)
After this experience Asto goes back to the brothel to rescue his sister from there and when they return in the taxi they start speaking in Quechua:

A poco de arrancar el automóvil, el chofer oyó que el pasajero hablaba en quechua, fuerte, casi gritando ya. La mujer le contestaba igual. Hablaron después, juntos, al mismo tiempo. Parecía un dúo alegre y desesperado. (1990, 42).

Soon after the car pulled out the driver heard the passenger speaking Quechua loudly, then almost shouting. The woman answered him the same way. Then they both spoke at the same time. They seemed to be a happy twosome, but a desperate one. (2000, 46)

In these passages one observes the role played by the concept of “recognition”. For Paul Ricoeur one of the crucial elements in the process of “recognition” is the relation between “distinguishing and identifying”, according to him:

To distinguish this “thing”, be it an idea, a thing or a person, is to identify it. […] Philosophical reflection makes sense of this: to identify and to distinguish constitute an inseparable verbal pair. In order to identify it is necessary to distinguish, and it is in distinguishing that we identify. This requirement does not govern only a theory of recognition limited to theoretical plane; it governs, with the same insistence, all the uses stemming from the reversal from the act of recognition to being recognized --- being distinguished and identified is what the humiliated person aspires to. (24-25)
The moment in which the taxi-driver distinguishes Asto from the other criollo patrons, though in a derogatory manner, separates him from the crowd. As a result it makes Asto identify himself as an Indian and puts an end to the aforementioned dilemma suffered by almost all immigrants, i.e. whether to accept one’s origin or to erase it altogether. Thus when Asto returns to the brothel he embodies the active form of the verb “to recognize”. One can therefore affirm that by becoming an active agent of his own identity without waiting for anyone to “recognize” him officially or otherwise, Asto takes a significant step forward.

This is an important development in the construction of the hybrid character as the protagonist is forced to choose his affiliation and acknowledge his roots. The subject is then obliged to, at least, acknowledge the native part of his origin which is what finally distinguishes him from the other members of the society he lives in. In this case Asto not only retains his roots but also “recognizes” them publicly, hence we can conclude that hybridity cannot be restricted only to enunciation but is governed by the position of the subject in the society and sooner or later s/he has to come to terms with this side of one’s character. This also establishes Prabhu’s view of hybridity and proves indeed that the question of hybridity joins up with issues of, “choosing one’s affiliations or having one’s affiliations thrust upon one. Today, any account of hybridity must contend with this history” (11-12). Arguedas’ position also contends that hybridity is tied up with the history of, “slavery, colonialism, and rape, inherited in terms of race. It is a difficult and painful history of interracial identity” (Prabhu 11-12). As we can see here the taxi driver’s reaction to Asto is based on the latter being a “highland cholo” and “chicken Indian” (2000, 43), thus the slur cast on him is racial. Asto’s empowerment is therefore based not on just enunciation but on
his own acknowledgement that he was a runa from the sierras. Hence, I would like to re-assert that, as portrayed in this novel, hybridity does not exist in ether but is grounded in social realities, historical experiences as well as the economic and political conditions of a particular community at the micro level and the nation-state at the macro level. Asto’s story also proves that people are forced to reconcile the private world with the public one and choose their affiliations in a bid to construct their identity. This phenomenon is reflected in the way Arguedas decided to position himself within two very different worlds, and chooses to identify with the Quechua weltanschauung rather than the westernized Hispanic one. Straddling worlds is not an easy task given the complexities that emerge as the two weltanschauungs clash with each other, but even within the battles that Arguedas had to fight he chose the indigenous world as his own. In this way he proves that no matter how divided the self there is a part that is grounded in one of the segments that make up the hybrid character/world.

It is also possible to conjecture that, though the public sphere continues to be controlled by the hegemonic side, the private space will not be dominated them, as is shown by the melding of the personal dairies with the fictional account of the people who live within the pages of the text-nation. In fact by “fusing” his personal diary with the story of Chimbote, Arguedas shows that it is possible to meld the private with the public. By using this strategy the author suggests, that perhaps in the future there might emerge new ways of combining the public and the private spaces in such a way that the vernacular makes a place for itself within

---

the national discourse. Arguedas’ last novel thus leaves us at a crucial juncture of the transformations taking place within the Peruvian society. In this transitional phase the vernacular and the indigenous world appear to be threatened by the new developments. I would therefore like to state that the writer does not offer any solutions given the complex nature of these changes but rather puts forward some strategies that can be used to resist being assimilated by the hegemonic side, while acknowledging the problems that the natives have to face given the rapid economic changes taking place in Peru.53

53 García points out that General Juan Velasco’s government passed a law in 1975 making Quechua a national language, co-equal with Spanish. The law stated that after April 1976 the teaching of Quechua would be obligatory at all educational levels. Further, all legal proceedings involving monolingual Quechua speakers would have to be conducted in Quechua (75). According to the anthropologist, it highlighted the two areas where language had been previously used as a mechanism of domination over indigenous speakers: the courts and the schools (Escobar et al., Turino in García 75-76). García further indicates that this law evoked the strongest reaction by middle-and upper-class society in Lima against Velasco and his government. Says García that by, “Placing the Quechua language on an equal footing with Spanish was understood by these groups as symbolically placing Quechua and other indigenous people next to those of European background, and as representative of the limits the Velasco regime posed to development and “progress”’. By legislating Quechua as a national language next to Spanish, Peru became the first Latin American country to officialize an indigenous language. […] With the change of presidents (1975) and in constitutions (1979), the law making Quechua an official language was changed to include Quechua not as an official national language but rather as “a language of official use in the areas and in the way that Law mandates”. However, the law that would mandate where and how Quechua could be considered an official language was never developed (Pozzi-Escot Rojas in García 76). The fact that Quechua has almost disappeared from the public sphere is shown in a short story set in Chimbote by a contemporary writer Oscar Colchado Lucio (1947-). In “Isla Blanca”, published in the anthology Del mar a la ciudad (1981 [1997]), the story is narrated in first person and is about the narrator’s friend, Maguiñita who studies with him in the Polytechnique of Chimbote. Maguiñita comes from the Andes and has adapted himself to the ways of the city where he studies in college while working with the fishermen. Though we see that the pulse of the Andean beliefs still beats as strongly as ever as the struggle to defeat the forces of capitalism and liberalization continues, there has been, however, a loss in terms of language, where Quechua, and its influence on Spanish, so visible in Arguedas’ texts, is absent in Colchado Lucio’s depiction of Chimbote. In Lucio’s urban world the native tongue ceases to make its presence felt, even as the indigenous communities carry on their fight for survival in an increasingly commercialized Creole/gringo world that threatens to overtake them. In fact, unlike the fisherman Asto of The Foxes who had adapted
After examining the works of Arguedas I would like to conclude that Quechua also becomes an instrument of subversion as it appears in the text as a *whole* to challenge the hegemony of Spanish, which in turn is portrayed as a homogeneous linguistic entity. The reason for this strategy can be attributed to the fact that it is not always possible to bring out the subtle nuances and inherent divisions and fusions of the native tongue in texts written in the erstwhile colonizer’s tongue. This linguistic technique also reveals that during times of crisis and conflict, the native falls back on his own language and uses it as a symbol of his identity, unmitigated by hybridity, to counter the assimilatory practices of the hegemonic class.

Arguedas’ works prove that hybridity and Nativism are two sides of the same coin and it is difficult to have one without the other. I also affirm that the survival of a language is closely linked to the position of its speakers in the economic and political arena, as also the history of the country; hence, it is not easy to isolate it from these fields. In addition, I would like to posit that linguistic hybridity, which depends on the vernacular, reveals the fissures that lie underneath the seemingly smooth surface of the nation being imagined and constructed by the hegemonic side, and in this instance I agree with Bhabha who points out this aspect in his work. This finding questions Parry’s observation that nation-states, “energize the resistance of exploited populations in the hinterlands of imperialism” (1994,
21), since Arguedean narrative reveals the deep divisions within Peru. One can also say that the novels examined here make us question the premises of critics ranged on the opposing sides of postcolonial theory as well, especially with respect to the concept of hybridity. Therefore, I conclude that it is not possible to apply the same theoretical framework, as also the hypothesis opposing it, to all the works emerging from the erstwhile colonies since they deny the role played by the historical, socio-political and economic conditions that give each former colony its particular character.

In the next chapter I will examine the way Arundhati Roy and Geetanjali Shree deal with the concept of hybridity and Nativism in their novels *The God of Small Things* and *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* (Our City that year) respectively. I propose to study the manner in which the colonial project influenced the growth of Hindi and the role played by English today, as they appear in the text-nation that the writers construct.
Chapter 2

Hybrid tongues? Language and nation in Arundhati Roy’s

*The God of Small Things* and Geetanjali Shree’s *Hamara Shahar Us Baras*

In India regional languages continued to grow and flourish even during colonial rule. English was imposed in the Subcontinent in the nineteenth century. It was, however, not just the language but also the colonizer’s *weltanschauung* that added yet another dimension to the complexities of the multilayered society. Thus along with the language, the colonizer’s world view played an important role in influencing the way people, especially the leading sections of the colonial society, started perceiving the relation between community, religion and identity. It is possible to see the influence of the Eurocentric perception of language, community and religion even in the development of the vernacular language, especially Hindi, as we will discuss later. It is also during the colonial rule that we see the emergence of violence especially between Hindus and Muslims fuelled by the changing socio-political and economic conditions amongst others. These were conflicts in which language became an important issue.

Along with the outpouring of fratricidal violence one also saw the new divisions that evolved on the basis of those who spoke the vernacular and those who could speak the new “elite” language, English. One of the reasons why English maintained its importance and

---

There are many differences between communities that are grouped together even now as Hindus as also those who follow Islam, but for the purpose of our work I will refer to these communities as Hindu and Muslim. In addition, since the author writes specifically about the Hindus and Muslims of Northern India, that is what I will follow as well, hence any reference to these two groups would signify those who live in this particular area. It would be incorrect to say that there was no prior record of violence between the two communities but according to historians like Gyanendra Pandey the nature of these conflicts was different (1990).
elite status was because it was retained as the “official” language by the new government. The divisions caused by language and the way of life associated with it are still visible in contemporary India enmeshed as they are in the very fabric of the nation-state that emerged after gaining independence on 15th August 1947. One can then say that the relation between English and the vernacular in postcolonial India continues to be unequal in terms of prestige and power. In this chapter I therefore propose to study the role played by languages in the creation of India as a nation. As established earlier, literature plays a significant part in the construction of nation and to examine the relation between languages and nation-building I have chosen Roy’s *The God of Small Things* (1997) and Shree’s *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* or *Our City that Year* published in 1998. Shree’s novel is significant because she reveals the contemporary state of affairs in North India, principally in the wake of the communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims precipitated by the right wing Hindutva parties and organizations. Roy’s work is also crucial because the author illustrates the relation between English and the vernacular in the text-nation that she constructs. The author also brings out clearly the caste based segregations that still divide the country.

**A. English and the Vernacular in *The God of Small Things*.**

English was introduced in the Subcontinent in 1813 after the renewal of the East Indian Company’s charter for commercial operations here. This event produced two major changes in Britain’s role with respect to its Indian subjects: one was the assumption of a new responsibility towards native education, and the other was a relaxation of controls over missionary work in India (Viswanathan 431). The objective of the colonial authorities was

---

55 The Rebellion of 1857 was led by the Indian soldiers of the British army. The plight of the Indian peasantry, the annexation of native states, harsh revenue policies, had already created an atmosphere of unrest and all this contributed to the Rebellion of 1857, referred to as the
to ‘elevate the Hindus and Muslims whose “ignorance and degradation required a remedy not adequately supplied by their respective faiths” ’ (Viswanathan 434). As the British Administrator Thomas Macaulay observes in his well known “Minute on Indian Education”, “[…] We have to educate the people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate” (428). He then outlines the strategy for this project and says that, “It is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country […]” (430).

According to Viswanathan, British administrators introduced English in the Indian subcontinent to maintain their hold over the native population by training young Indians who would carry out the project of sustaining the colonial administration and also act as a link between the colonial authorities and the people (431). The critic further adds that English literature provided a way out of the problem of allowing the study of the Bible and proselytizing to improve the morals of the colonized populace (435). Steps were taken to incorporate English literary texts into the Indian curriculum, “on the claim that these works were supposed in their morality by a body of evidence that also upheld the Christian faith. […] The process of curriculum selection was marked by weighty pronouncements of the ‘sound Protestant Bible principles’, in Shakespeare, […] the ‘scriptural morality’ of Bacon

Sepoy Mutiny by the colonial authorities but taken as the first battle for Independence by most Indian historians. In 1858 the East India Company was dissolved, and India was placed under the direct rule of the British Crown (Viswanathan 431).
and Locke, […]” (Viswanathan 435). In this way literature was employed as a means of consolidating the conquest of the colonies. Literature along with language then became an indelible part of the colonial project. Surprisingly Indian reformers like Rajunath Hari Navalkar (1770) and Raja Ramohun Roy (1772-1833) of Bengal actually welcomed English education. In a letter addressed to the East India Company officials dated 11 December 1823, Roy says that he wanted his students to be instructed in English rather than in Sanskrit or Persian and Arabic (Kachru 67). In this letter Roy also expresses his disappointment at the establishment of a Sanskrit School in Calcutta and opines that the funds available should have been used for:

[…] employing European gentlemen of talent to instruct the natives of India in mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, and other useful sciences, which the natives of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of the other parts of the world. (in Kachru 68)

In this way, English was introduced in India wherein it created its own power hierarchy which in turn added a new dimension to the already complex socio-political and economic set-up. Universities and colleges established by the colonial authorities in the metropolitan cities since 1857, and subsequently in other cities, played a crucial role in the dissemination of English as it became part of the curriculum and in this way gained in importance (Kachru 22-23). By the early twentieth century, with the spread of colleges,

---

56 Aijaz Ahmad points out yet another reason for introducing English; in his opinion the colonial authorities saw India, “as internally fragmented and so heterogeneous with such a mosaic of languages and ethnicities, that it needed a centralizing language to sustain its national identity” (74). Thus notions of “national identity” based on the Eurocentric model were introduced in the subcontinent even before the idea of India as a nation (seen in terms of the Western concept) emerged from within the freedom struggle.
English was formally established as the official and academic language of India (22-23).

Kachru further adds that,

> English thus became the ‘prestige’ language, completely replacing Persian and the Indian languages (or what were then called the vernaculars). In the second decade of the twentieth century, as the nationalist movement gained strength, an anti-English feeling emerged; but strangely enough, the medium of the movement itself was English. By 1928 a reasonably influential English press and a taste for English publications had been created. After World War I, there was a significant increase in educational institutions and schools, and colleges spread to the interior of India. This naturally helped spreading bilingualism in English further among the middle and lower classes of Indian society” (23)

Vernacular languages and literature, however, did not just fade away, they remained alongside the colonizer’s tongue but without the attendant prestige and power that surrounded the latter.⁵⁷ We see the evolution of English and its relation with the vernaculars in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*. Roy also brings out the complex social structures still existing in Kerala in the text-nation that she constructs.

The story is narrated from the perspective of one of the child protagonists Rahel, and it revolves around her brother Estha and Ammu, her mother who comes back to her parents’ house after her divorce. The narrator also tells the story of Ammu’s relationship with Velutha, a carpenter belonging to the Paravan or lower caste. In the end Velutha is killed by the police as Rahel’s family falsely accuses him of kidnapping and killing her Uncle

⁵⁷ As mentioned earlier, English was retained even after Independence to serve as one of the official languages of the new nation-state.
Chacko’s daughter Sophie Mol, to punish him for transgressing the strict norms of conduct which determine the place of each person in society. When Ammu goes to protest against the false case filed against Velutha, she is insulted by the Inspector and finally dies of a broken heart. The tragedy leaves Estha, who is brought in to identify Velutha (beaten and tortured by the police), scarred for life as he retreats into silence. The novel, however, ends on a hopelessly romantic note with an almost lyrical description of a night of passion between Ammu and Velutha.

The colonial project as outlined by Macaulay is shown in the relationship that Benaan John Ipe or Pappachi Rahel and Estha’s grandfather, has with English. As Chacko, their Uncle, points out:

[...] the correct word for people like Pappachi was *Anglophile*. He then made Rahel and Estha look up *Anglophile* in the Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopaedic Dictionary. It said *Person well disposed to the English*. Then Estha and Rahel had to look up *disposed*. It said:

(1) Place suitably in particular order.

(2) Bring mind into certain state.

(3) Do what one will with, get off one’s hands, stow away, demolish, finish, settle, consume (food), kill, sell.

Chacko said that in Pappachi’s case it meant (2) *Bring mind into certain state*. Which, Chacko said, meant that Pappachi’s mind had been *brought into a state* which made him like the English. (52)

In fact, one can conjecture that though it was the second definition of the word dispose that was applied to Pappachi, however, it would not be wrong to say that in this case the colonial
authorities had managed to, “(1) place suitably in order” a colonial subject, while “(3) […] demolish[ing], […] finish[ing]” any vestige of his indigenous identity. And as Chacko surmises, the tragedy of this project is that they were, “[p]ointed in the wrong direction, trapped outside their own history, and unable to retrace their steps because their footprints had been swept away” (52). This statement also sums up succinctly the status of those who are educated in private English medium schools and are caught in a world where speaking English properly and becoming an Anglophile is the undeclared objective. However, Ammu’s reaction to Pappachi was irreverent and reveals the contempt felt for those who collaborated with the colonial authorities:

Ammu said Pappachi was an incurable British CCP which was short for chhi-chhi poach and in Hindi meant shit-wiper. (51)

Here we see that the objective of the character is to subvert the status of superiority generally given to those who know English extremely well. The use of a Hindi term to diffuse the importance conferred on an Anglophile shows that the indigenous tongue can become a crucial instrument of subversion. In the passage quoted above there is no way of incorporating the hybrid character of Hindi, as the vernacular and the erstwhile colonizer’s tongue collide as homogenous entities within the text-nation constructed by Roy. I would like to argue, therefore, that, as depicted in the novel, those fighting against the assimilatory process imposed by a colonial, neo-colonial or post-colonial hegemonic class, sometimes takes recourse to the vernacular, as a whole, to resist these processes. And as we had seen in the case of Arguedas too, Quechua appears as a homogenous entity to challenge the hegemonic national language.
After Pappachi perhaps it was his sister Navomi Ipe, better known as Baby Kochamma, who seemed to have absorbed this particular family tradition. For instance, while waiting for the arrival of Margaret and Sophie Mol, Chacko’s ex-wife and daughter from England, she tutored the twins on how to behave in front of their English Aunt and cousin, “The whole week Baby Kochamma eavesdropped relentlessly on the twins’ private conversations, and whenever she caught them speaking Malayalam, she levied a small fine which was deducted at source. […] She made them write lines—‘impositions’ she called them—*I will always speak in English, I will always speak in English.* A hundred times each” (36). As mentioned earlier, some well known reformers looked upon English and British education as superior to the indigenous one and actually advocated the its imposition on the native population. The case of Pappachi and Baby Kochamma illustrates this point. Baby Kochamma’s extreme reaction to the twins speaking in Malayalam, the vernacular shows the desire to leave behind the ‘otherness’ and to become a part of the Westernized hegemonic class. The following passage demonstrates further her obsession with speaking the master’s tongue, “She made them practice an English car song for the way back. They had to form the words properly, and be particularly careful about their pronunciation”(36). Roy subverts the ominous presence of the colonizer and the dominant class by parodying the word “pronunciation” in the text, “Prer NUN sea ayshun” (36). The pun here is on the word “Nun” since Baby Kochamma used to be one, and now she wields her power over them and controls the way they speak English. This strategy also reveals the role played by missionaries in spreading English in the Subcontinent. Thus, humor too plays an important part in subverting the dominant discourse.
Rahel and Estha rebel in other ways against this strict imposition of English by reading it backwards to their Grand Aunt Baby Kochamma’s missionary friend from Australia, Miss Mitten:

They showed Miss Mitten how it was possible to read both Malayalam and Madam I am Adam backwards as well as forwards. She wasn’t amused and it turned out that she didn’t even know what Malayalam was. They told her it was a language everyone spoke in Kerala. She said she had been under the impression that it was Kerales. […] Miss Mitten complained to Baby Kochamma about Estha’s rudeness, and about their reading backwards. She told Baby Kochamma that she had seen Satan in their eyes. nataS in their seye. (60)

Miss Mitten’s ignorance of the language spoken in Kerala also reveals the indifference of the dominant side towards the language and traditions of the State, wherein all that matters is the fact that everybody speaks English. Furthermore, by comparing Estha and Rahel’s eyes to that of Satan, Miss Mitten considers them to be the opposite of all that is ‘good’, and ‘pure’, and reaffirms her “superior” status on the basis of this scopic and fixed gaze, which in Bhabian terms can be explained as, “the ideological construction of otherness” (66). According to Bhabha, “Fixity as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition” (66). However, by writing nataS instead of ‘Satan’, the twins produce a mirror image of the word, which inverts the spelling and all that it implies, subverting, in this way, the negative
connotations associated with this term. Roy thus challenges the legacy of the colonial era, which classified anyone who behaved differently, as either savage or evil.

It is interesting to note that while Roy inserts Malayalam in the novel, she also uses Urdu and Hindi occasionally. The author transliterates the vernacular within the text and does not use footnotes or other devices to explain the meaning of the words and phrases she inserts in the text, but rather embeds the translation along with the original, for example:

Long after he grew up and became a priest, Reverend Ipe continued to be known as *Punnyan Kunju*—Little Blessed One—[…]. (23)

‘*Aïyo, Rahel Mol!*’, Comrade K.N.M. Pillai said, recognizing her instantly. ‘*Orkunilley? Comrade Uncle?’*

‘*Oower,*’ Rahel said.

Did she remember him? She did indeed. (128).

‘*Big Man the Laltain sahib, Small Man the Mombatti*,’ an old Bihari coolie, who met Estha’s school excursion party at the railway station (unfailingly, year after year) used to say of dreams.

Big Man the Lantern. Small man the Tallow-stick. (89)

In the first two examples we can see that Roy uses Malayalam and in the third she inserts Hindi when the speaker is a coolie from Bihar. Here we see how the vernacular languages make their presence felt while entering into a dialogue with English. The presence of the regional languages in the novel also proves that it is difficult to create a linguistically “pure”
text-nation, be that in the erstwhile colonizer’s tongue or in the vernacular as we will see later.

Like Arguedas, Roy too leaves some phrases without translation. In the following passage for example, she uses Malayalam to talk about food, “And there they were, the Foreign Returnees, in wash’n’wear suits and rainbow sunglasses. With an end to grinding poverty in their Aristocrat suitcases. […] With a hunger for kappa and meen vevichathu that they hadn’t eaten for so long” (140). Food in many cases also symbolizes kinship, in this instance, by mentioning the “hunger for kappa and meen vevichathu” Roy implies that the foreign returnees want to renew their ties with their kinsmen and all that the community stands for. It is noteworthy that the author does not use italics to set the dishes apart but weaves them in as part of the everyday language, depicting in this manner, the way two worlds overlap and form hybrid varieties of speech, and indeed of life itself. Thus, she proves that both Malayalam and English are an integral part of quotidian life in Kerala and not something that stands outside the text-nation, which is shown as hybrid and heterogeneous.

Hybridity may not be acceptable to Baby Kochamma (Roy 45) and others advocating “purity”, but as the author makes it clear, India is hybrid, and has been so even before colonization. Ironically, Baby Kochamma is herself a part of a hybrid religious belief system which combines the tenets of the Brahmanical caste system with those of Christianity, which in turn transforms the latter. In fact it is possible to say that a part of these hybrid beliefs are rooted in the Subcontinent. However, this is seen as such a taboo that those who stand for hybridity either die like Ammu, or are silenced like Estha, who stops talking after seeing Velutha in police custody, or they are sent away like Rahel who gets married to a foreigner and goes away, though her subsequent return can be seen as an act of defiance.
Roy also crafts the narrative to depict a society not burdened just by the colonial legacy but by some of the most oppressive ancient tenets of Hinduism as well which, for example, still determine who can love whom. These precepts are so rigid that those who transgress these “love laws” are never forgiven (Roy 33). The rigid norms remain entrenched firmly in the social fabric even now, thousands of years after they were conceived. In the prejudices that surface when Ammu and Velutha’s relationship is revealed, we see the negative side of Nativism, since even the pre-dominantly Christian family follows the ancient Hindu laws in a bid to defend their “purity”.

The difference between Arguedas and Roy is that the former was fighting to incorporate a language and people that still remained at the margins of the new nation-state, and hence, the danger of forgetting the traditions and beliefs was greater;\footnote{Please see chapter 1 footnote 53.} while the vernacular languages that Roy weaves in the text, Malayalam (the majority of the time), Hindi and Urdu (sometimes), are officially recognized by the Indian government.\footnote{The inclusion of Hindi in a text written by an author from South India also shows that Hindi, which was greatly resented by the people of the South Indian States especially after independence is now present in the South as well. However, as we will see later, the Hindi recognized as the official language has undergone a major transformation vis-à-vis its relation with Urdu and other dialects which made up the older version also known as Hindustani. We will study this issue when we analyze Shree’s novel.} Roy’s text also illustrates the ease with which speakers of one or more languages mix or switch linguistic codes. In Arguedas, for instance, we have seen examples of code switching when his protagonists use Quechua to assert their identity in the novel *Yawar fiesta*. But unlike Arguedas, Roy does not assign any particular function to the vernacular, be it Malayalam or Hindi, but rather seems to use it randomly. There is, for instance, no special linguistic register for Velutha or the other marginalized characters in the novel. In fact, the use of
English and the vernacular together also reveals that this is a common phenomenon now, especially in urban spaces as speakers switch from one language to another sometimes in the same sentence. Roy also creates new words and adjectives to describe certain scenes, for example:

Heaven opened and the water hammered down reviving the reluctant old well, greenmossing the pigless pigsty, carpet bombing still, [...] The grass looked wetgreen and pleased. [...] Further away, in the wind and rain, on the banks of the river, in the sudden thunderdarkness of the day, Estha walking. (10)

As one can observe Roy joins together ‘green’ and ‘moss’, to describe the way it grows verdant and vibrant in the wet climate, she also joins ‘wet’ and ‘green’ to describe the grass as it glistens after the rain. These new adjectives capture, to some extent, the fury of the monsoons and the way it affects everything, in fact one can say that the author chooses to create these new words since the adjectives in their original form are not able to express adequately the way the rains change the landscape. Moreover, the monsoons have always had a special meaning for those living in the Indian Subcontinent as it brings the much needed relief from the harsh summer. Well known poets of Malayalam literature, like Ayappa Paniker (1930-2006), too have written on the “culturally resonant monsoon rains” (Satchidanandan). In North India as well there are stories, poems and songs woven around the romantic meeting of Krishna and the gopis during the rainy season. One can then argue that the need to invent new adjectives to describe the effect of the torrential rains, shows the inadequacy of a language that belonged to a different country, society, and culture. As Ngugi has pointed out:
Language as communication and as culture are then products of each other.
Communication creates culture: culture is a means of communication. Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world. How people perceive themselves effects how they look in their culture, at their politics and at the social production of wealth, at their entire relationship to nature and to other beings. Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world. (290)

It is, therefore, possible to say that the indigenous perspective does mold the vision of the author even when s/he writes in English, though we accept the latter as part of our ethos.

The author also regionalizes English by using suffixes and other markers which demonstrate very clearly that the story is set in Kerala. For instance, she uses the words ‘Mol’ and ‘Mon’ which means girl and boy respectively, hence, Sophie, Chacko’s daughter with Margaret, becomes ‘Sophie Mol’, just as Estha becomes Estha Mon (Brians). Mol and Mon can also mean ‘son’ and ‘daughter’ and are used when the speaker is close to the persons concerned or tries to imply an intimacy as Comrade Pillai attempts to do when he addresses Rahel as ‘Rahel Mol’ (Roy 128). Similarly the twins’ Grand Aunt Navomi Ipe is referred to as Baby ‘Kochamma’ as is Chacko’s wife Margaret; ‘Kochamma’ is not a name but rather an honorific title given to women (Brians). In the same way Shoshamma Ipe, the children’s grandmother, is addressed as ‘Mammachi’, or Grandmother and their Grandfather Benaan John Ipe is known as Pappachi (Brians). By using these distinctive suffixes and names, the author places the narrative in Kerala and in this way she regionalizes the
language, thereby breaking the notion of “universality” associated with the colonizer’s
tongue, while subverting the status of English as the de facto “national” language of India. It
is possible to argue that in this manner she converts English into a regional language and
levels the playing field to some extent. By using Malayalam, Roy also establishes kinship
with readers from Kerala who can place the narrative within the metatext of culture and
society they are familiar with (Tymoczko 21). She also keeps alive the subtle nuances hidden
within terms of address and endearment rooted to Kerala, which can only be expressed by
using the vernacular. In this way, Roy makes the vernacular languages co-present with
English in the national scene and constructs a multilingual and linguistically hybrid text-
nation. This strategy helps situate the work within the socio-cultural milieu. As mentioned in
an earlier chapter, Nativism in this context, “is not necessarily a new theory or dogma, nor is
it a set of clearly spelt out beliefs or principles. It is rather an attitude, movement, or outlook.
It is difficult to extract any definite set of evaluative criteria from it, but it helps situate a
work of art in such a manner that its cultural affiliations are revealed. Thus, Nativism
emphasizes the locus of a work and enables a critic to place it vis a vis a particular society or
country” (Paranjape xii-xiii). One can then say, that Roy’s work brings out this positive
aspect of Nativism which gives a particular literary opus its identity, a novel written in
English but firmly entrenched in Kerala, India.

Critics have compared Roy’s techniques with Salman Rushdie’s linguistic strategies
and have indicated the differences and similarities between them. Ahmad, for instance, points
out the following differences between the way the two authors use English:

The formal originality of Midnight’s Children was that it was the first novel written
by an Indian writer which was in its sensibility, it linguistic competence, its formal
construction, distant enough from other Indian languages to have been possible only in English...In this line of evolution, Arundhati is an original. She knows about language and form what Rushdie knows. But with English she has even a greater inwardness and naturalness; the novel is actually felt in English. If Rushdie’s prose signifies the ironical fact that cosmopolitan intellectuals among *Midnight’s Children* were to be located in English far more briskly than was the case during the colonial period, Arundhati Roy’s prose signifies that the culture that the public school create is now, some years later, more widespread, more confident of itself, […] She is the first Indian writer in English where a marvelous stylistic resource becomes available for provincial, vernacular culture without any effect of exoticism or estrangement [...]. (in Prasad 115)

However, according to Latha Ganesh there is a distinct similarity between Rushdie and Roy, such as, “Playfulness and roguishness in literary allusions, word play, use of capitals, non-stop sentences running into paragraphs, chapter titles, colours, nicknames for siblings and friends, overt sexuality are common to both novels” (111). In the following passage for example we see the manner in which Roy uses capital letters:

> The Loss of Sophie Mol stepped softly around the Ayemenem House like a quiet thing in socks. (15)

The use of the capital ‘L’, for instance, highlights the event which had such tragic consequences for Rahel’s family. By not conforming to the rules of English grammar, Roy subtly disorders the ‘order’ inherent in the language thereby subverting not only the colonizer’s tongue but also the standard Indian English which is still associated with power
and prestige in post-Independence India. In fact this has created a fissure within postcolonial India and divided it into two parts; one which brings out the colonial attitude of disdain toward the vernacular which lives in a world removed from the one inhabited by those who do not have the requisite public school educational background.

According to Krishna Kumar this rift creates two kinds of readership, since, “The two groups live in two different cultural worlds, with their own specific zones of knowledge and ignorance. Children attending the elite English-medium schools of Bangalore, for instance, express disdainful unfamiliarity if asked about the literature written in Kannada. Living in the same city, they stay aloof from the symbolic world of the culture in which the majority of the children live. This kind of isolation from the world of the vernacular is neither a coincidence nor simply an act of omission on the school’s part; it is an integral aspect of these children’s socialisation. The academic and other components of the culture of the English-medium schools makes English a conduit which links the child with the West, and especially with America, and with the global economy in which America has a dominant position” (in Dalmia 2003, 1383). Vasudha Dalmia too affirms that, “Reading habits are set early and the separation of those we read English and those who read in the vernacular now tends to begin early” (2003, 1382). Hence, the use of the vernacular in the text-nation by Roy, shows an attempt by the author to bridge the gap between these two worlds. As mentioned earlier, the

---

60 In an incident reported recently in Delhi papers, a promising young student from one of the villages near Delhi was not given admission to a well known English medium private school, despite securing the highest marks in the All India Secondary School Exam. The reason for this was attributed by the Principal to the fact that she did not speak English with the correct accent (Barkha Dutt, 25th July 2006). The student came from an extremely poor background, and presumably did not have access to the privileged education systems that would have trained her to speak English “properly”. This event clearly shows the importance which is still attributed to speaking “the master’s tongue correctly”, and given this background Roy’s linguistic strategies are vital to undermine the power of the language that still divides India.

61 Public schools in India follow the British educational system of private schools.
vernacular is inserted smoothly and naturally within the text and symbolizes the new language of Indians, a hybrid one where different tongues flow into each other. Roy’s linguistic strategies also indicate that to subvert the hegemonic discourse, be it the colonial one or the standardized indigenous one, it is important to know the dominant language well.

When compared to India we see that the relationship between Quechua and Spanish in the Peruvian society is very different from the one shared by English and the vernaculars in the Indian society. In Peru, the survival of Quechua means not only the continuation of a language but also a way of life, and cultural traditions. In Arguedas’ novels we see that the conflict between Quechua and Spanish in the Sierras and finally in the coast where it has taken a new turn with the advent of the forces of globalization. One can therefore reiterate that Roy, like Arguedas, engages with the hegemonic centre of the new nation-state, since English continues to maintain its prestige and power, now more so than ever before, as the spate of outsourcing has introduced a new dimension to the issues of language and identity. Chetan Bhagat, an upcoming writer, describes, for instance, the events that take place one night in a Call Centre where the employees have to adopt new Western names and accents to speak to clients in America (2005). Thus, in the new economic environment where English is becoming even more important, Roy’s novel, though set in a small town, underscores the fact that, not only are the vernaculars still present in the Indian society, but that they commingle amongst themselves and with English to form new variations. This work then proves that hybridity and Nativism (the positive aspect) are inextricably linked together. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that in the Indian context, as shown in the novel, Nativism and hybridity are but two sides of the same coin, as it is difficult to have one without the other.
In the next part of the chapter I will analyze the role played by Shree’s novel and its importance against the backdrop of the Sanskritized official Hindi being promoted by the Indian government. This will reveal the manner in which the author interprets hybridity and its significance in connection with the definition of Nativism within postcolonial theory.

B. Writing against the grain in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras*

The Eurocentric vision of the British administrators and missionaries influenced the way language began to be perceived by members of the Indian society especially in relation to identity and religion. This transformation in perception led to the invention of a new Sanskritized avatar of Hindi, the second official language to be promoted by the government after India became independent in 1947.

During the struggle for independence it became increasingly important to construct an “Indian” identity to unite the diverse people of this multiethnic and pluricultural land to fight against the colonial authorities. M. K. Gandhi for instance turned to legends and stories from India’s popular religious traditions in order to construct a common Indian identity (Khilnani 164-165). Sunil Khilnani further observes that, “The fact that so many recognized their predicaments and symbols, itself testified to a shared civilizational bond” (165). Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), another prominent figure of the nationalist movement from Maharashtra, for example, invented popular festivals to propagate a kind of Hindu nationalism (Khilnani, 262). Tilak also revived the legend of Chhatrapati Shivaji as the fiery warrior who fought against the Islamic hegemony, thereby projecting the image of a Hindu hero battling the age old oppressors, the Muslims. The image was then used to inspire the people to fight the new tyrants, the British. This strategy was to play a crucial role in the establishment of the Hindu right wing which still saw the Muslim as the “outsider”. Tales of
Rani Lakshmi Bai, the Queen of Jhansi, Tantia Tope et al who fought against the British in the nineteenth century too became important tropes of the nationalist struggle, and in this way the leaders tried to involve the masses in the Independence movement.

The vernacular too became a part of the fight for independence during Gandhi’s time as he pointed out, “Our national awakening is not confined to politics alone… We are giving…their proper place to the vernaculars in our national life” (in Brock 9). However, along with Gandhi’s advocacy for the use of the vernacular the matter of Hindi vs. Urdu continued since many of the intellectuals and leaders still wanted to classify these as two different languages and not as Hindustani as it was formerly known. In this way the Hindi that is now used for administrative purposes and taught in schools and colleges came into being.

This was a new phenomenon and Alok Rai in his book *Hindi Nationalism* posits that in the pre-colonial era a kind of *ur*-language combining diverse cultural influences had emerged in the Indian Subcontinent sometime in the first millennium (12), i.e. before the creation of Hindi as we know it today. According to Rai in fact there was one common language of North India, a conglomerate of dialects and sub-dialects, originally going by the denomination Hindi and its variant---Hindui, Hindugi, Hinduhi, Hinduki, Hindavi---to mean the language of the people of Hind as against that of Turkistan (Dalmia 2003, 1377). In Rahul Sankritayana’s opinion, this *ur*-language or Hindi, “incorporates all the languages which emerged after the eighteenth century A.D., in ‘Suba Hindustan’---the region that is bounded by the Himalayas, and by all the regions associated with the Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Marathi, Telegu, Oriya and Bangla languages. Its older form is called Magahi, Maithili, Braj Bhasha, etc. Its modern form may be considered under two aspects, a widely
disseminated form called Khari Boli (which when written in Persian characters and with an excess of Arabic and Persian words in called Urdu), and the various local languages which are spoken in different places: Magahi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Banarasi, Avadhi, Kannauji, Brajmandali, etc…” (in Rai 12). This Hindi was a heteroglot, hybrid language that had absorbed the semantic resources of many traditions (Rai 21). It was the language of everyday life that had evolved in North India by the nineteenth century, a language variously and synonymously called Hindi, Urdu, Hindustani (Rai vii). In fact Neeladri Bhattacharya has pointed out that the ‘Hindi’ that evolved in the twentieth century along with its opposite, ‘Urdu’, was “a distinct version of Hindustani burdened by an excess of Persianised words” (in Rai viii).

However, the issue that had its origin in linguistics soon became enmeshed in politics of culture and identity, in which the colonial authorities and certain sections of the native society took part actively. As Bhattacharya says, “When we constitute ourselves through language, we also constitute the language, marking it with the politics of the time. No language comes to us pre-formed” (viii). Hence, one can reiterate that the process of colonization had far reaching effects even on the formation of the vernacular. In this way the new nations became inextricably linked with language and power, factors that have become crucial in determining the identity of self and subsequently of the nation.

These developments had profound repercussions in the formation of modern print Hindi that evolved during the nineteenth century. According to Dalmia, “[…] even in the mid-nineteenth century, it was still in flux and there was little awareness of its existence as the common spoken and written language of the Hindus alone. The awareness of its Hinduness could be said to have been almost imposed upon the populace by colonial
intervention a good few decades before the Hindu elite themselves took up the cause of Hindu-Hindu’ (2003, 1377). Though Sanskrit was used to write texts in the Nagari script on Hinduism and various versions of the Koran were in the Arabic script (King 9), authors writing in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, like Lallu Lal (c.1763-c.1824), Munshi Sadasukhlal (c.1746-c.1824), Sadalal Mishra, did not reject the Muslim cultural heritage in their works (King 29). In fact, as Christopher King points out, various linguistic experiments were carried out at this time by the abovementioned Hindu authors and others like their contemporary Inshallah Khan. In his opinion, “[t]he three Hindu authors wrote in languages associated with Muslims, while the Muslim author had the greatest success in excluding Persian and Arabic words. Works in Hindustani (Urdu) appeared in both the Urdu and Nagari scripts, and in several cases both the Hindi and Urdu texts included vocabulary from several languages” (29); their differentiation then lay in the future.

The tension between modern day Hindi and Urdu, mediated by the colonial authorities, soon encompassed questions of identity and sowed the seeds of Partition which would leave a permanent scar in the psyche of the people of the Subcontinent. As Rai explains, “[…] the disastrous (and no doubt glorious) uprising of 1857—and the brutal reprisals that followed its suppression—had brought the Muslim feudal nobility that had played such an important part in it, under suspicion […] the Hindu savarna---Brahmins, Bania and Khattris---who formed the bulk of the early Nagari/Hindi agitations, sought energetically, on their part, to distinguish themselves from the Muslims who had been so unforgivably disloyal in 1857” (35-36; author’s emphasis). It was this attitude that set the stage to look upon the Muslims as the external ‘other’, as can be seen in this petition written

---

62 These writers were closely related to the College of Fort William since they were appointed by the British Government as translators and writers, as we will see later.
by Raja Shiva Prasad in favor of the Nagari script in 1868, “I am not one of those alarmists who think that day is not far distant, when the hordes of the tartars may be brought again, as in the days of yore, to the banks of Indus […]” (Rai 36). He further adds, “[…] Cursed be the day which saw the Muhammedans cross the Indus; all the evils which we find amongst us we are indebted to for our ‘beloved brethren’ the Muhammedans” (Rai 40).

One can, therefore, state that the failed uprising of 1857 led to the division of the society along the lines of religion with many Hindus casting aspersions on the character of Muslims, while trying to ingratiate themselves with the colonial authorities to gain access to power in the shape of administrative jobs etc. By the end of nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, it was no longer a matter of jobs or access to administration, it had become by then a question of reclaiming a cultural identity and, if required, to invent an imaginative space for this identity. This process began when the advocates of “Hindi” chose Khari Boli as the basis of the modern Sanskritized Hindi, while promulgating the difference with Urdu seen now as a “foreign language”, a legacy of the “foreign” Mughal rule. The contribution of the colonial rule to this process cannot be ignored as its repercussions were felt during the struggle for Independence and even after India became free.

The Constituent Assembly (CA) was set up in 1946 to draft India’s Constitution and deal with other issues of governance which would ensure a smooth transfer of power from the colonial authorities to the first Government of independent India. The CA was divided into various sub-committees to debate on different questions, but it was the question of national language which weighed down upon its members as a certain section of the CA,

---

King however also points out the ambiguity of Shiva Prasad’s stand as he made strong statements on behalf of both Hindi and Urdu at different times (31). This ambivalence in the attitude of the spokespersons also demonstrates the difficulty of separating these two languages since they had been a part of the common ‘tongue’ for many years.
those whom Rai calls the “Hindiwallahs”, proposed that the Sanskritized and de-Persianized language invented by the upper caste Brahmins become the national language.

This official “Hindi” was very different from the more heterogeneous Hindi which Rai calls, the “people’s Hindi” (103). The script used to write this “Hindi”, following Rai’s classification, is called “Devanagari”. According to Walter H. Maurer the script initially known as “Nāgarī” was probably more prevalent in India than the longer name Devnāgarī (102). In Maurer’s opinion, “[i]t is not difficult to account for the expansion of Nāgarī into Devnāgarī: from the beginning writing in India has been looked upon as divine in origin, as shown by the name Brāhmī “[script] of Brāhmā”, applied to the oldest of India’s scripts, and accordingly “Deva” was prefixed to the name “Nāgarī” to invest the script with a divine provenance” (103). Thus, it is possible to conjecture that since writing was seen as divine it was associated chiefly with the Brahmans as the keepers of the sacred and it is this that symbolizes the script’s implicit association with the upper caste, and since any public activity was dominated by men one can infer that this script was both upper caste and male.

The “Hindiwallahs” insisted on using the Devanagari script as opposed to the popular Kaithi script. According to Rai, “Kaithi is of course, the tadbhava form of Kayasthi, the script of the Kayasthas. The antagonism between the Kayasthas and the Brahmins has been one of the great organising (and disorganising) principles of public life in the Hindi heartland.

---

64 Members of the Kayastha castes, constituted mostly the clerical staff of the colonial administration along with the Muslims, and were “wedded to Persian/Urdu” (47). The propagators of the Nagari script had protested against these very communities in a bid to corner the colonial government jobs which had been dominated either by the Kayasthas or by the traditional Avadhi Muslim elites in the Hindi heartland (known today as the northern state of Uttar Pradesh). One can say that the beginning of the conflict between “Hindi” and “Urdu”, which subsequently grew to encompass culture and identity, emerged out of the lack of jobs and opportunities within the colonial administration which employed a large number of natives to carry out the day to day business of the Empire.
Thus the conflict that arose at that time was not just restricted to the use of the Persian script but also encompassed questions of caste as well as religion and the many dialects that made up Hindustani. The Kaithi script for instance was actually widely known and used by both Hindus and Muslims and was closer to Hindustani than to Sanskrit (52).

The advocates of a “Hindu Hindi” opted subsequently for a more Sanskritized Khari Boli as the dialect on which to base modern Hindi, even though they had rejected it earlier since it was found to be too close to Urdu. King opines that this change in perspective took place, “[...] in the 1860s when some Hindus began to assert that one could no longer be a good Hindu and an advocate of Urdu at the same time. This movement made deliberate changes in Khari Boli which eventually resulted in a highly Sanskritized Hindi” (177). This phase can be seen as the first step towards the formation of the Nativist view advocated by the Orientalist. The desire to construct the “shuddha” or pure Hindi from which all “external” influences had been erased then became the underlying objective of the advocates of this project.

In the construction of this language even the erstwhile Braj Bhasa, made famous in the erotic Krishna poetry, was considered too soft and pliable to espouse aggressively the cause of the new “Hindi”. According to Rai, “Khari Boli was contrasted with the mellifluousness and soft fluency of Braj Bhasha: khari was understood to refer to the rustic and stiff uncouthness of Khari Boli. […] To yet another ideologue, pushing a different agenda, khari meant “pure and unadulterated” [...] as distinguished from those common tongues that had formed through the promiscuity of social intercourse” (93). Rai further

65 Tadbhava refers to words of Sanskrit origin which had undergone phonetic changes with time, while tatsama is used to identify words that have retained their original Sanskrit form and orthography (Dalmia 1997, 159).
mentions that Urdu had been associated with the public sphere while Hindi was restricted to the private domain and was a language used by Hindu women, and “it was against this legacy of feminine association that Khari Boli Hindi was also glossed in overtly phallic terms, as manly, aggressive and erect” (95). Thus, one can infer that the Hindi language being promoted had masculine overtones. In this way, language became linked with identity, and gender as the process of ‘othering’ continued.

As mentioned earlier, the people of India had not linked language to religion and subsequently to culture and identity in this manner before the advent of the British, and even after they came, the writers in the eighteenth and nineteenth century accepted the Muslim culture as part of their heritage. The following incident narrated by Rai demonstrates how the first seeds of differentiation were sown by the colonial authorities, whether deliberately or out of ignorance for the land they had colonised is difficult to say, but nonetheless this was an important step towards communalising the vernacular. It is reported that in the 1840s, Dr. J. R. Ballantyne, Principal of the Benares College made several attempts to “improve” the Hindi style of his students (Rai, 65). The students did not understand what Dr. Ballantyne was driving at and one of them spoke up on behalf of his group:

We do not clearly understand what you Europeans mean by the term Hindi, for there are hundreds of dialects, all in our opinion equally entitled to the name, and there is here no standard as there is in Sanskrit….if the

---

66 This is in sharp contrast to Bharatendu Hariścandra (1850-1885), who emphasized the importance of the private/domestic sphere and the role of women within this space (Dalmia 1997).

67 “Communal” has a different meaning in the context of India; it has very negative connotations since it refers to the inter-community tensions that create the violent flash-points of riots in contemporary India.
purity of Hindi is to consist in its exclusion of Mussulman words, we shall require to study Persian and Arabic in order to ascertain which of the words we are in the habit of issuing every day is Arabic or Persian, and which is Hindi. With our present knowledge we can tell that a word is Sanscrit, or not Sanscrit but if not Sanscrit, it maybe English or Portuguese instead of Hindi for anything that we can tell. English words are becoming as completely naturalized in the villages as Arabic and Persian words, and what you call Hindi will eventually merge in some future modification of the Oordoo, nor do we see any great cause of regret in the prospect.

(in Rai 65-66)

Thus one can say that in this period language had still not been linked to religion and identity by the people of India. In fact King indicates that during this time the students had accepted the equation of Urdu=Hindu+Muslim (90). King also points out that, “[…] British perceptions of ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ as the two fundamental divisions of Indian society, despite the manifest diversity of these ‘objective characteristics’ intensified communal rivalries” (17).

The establishment of the college at Fort William also played an important role in carving out the boundaries between Hindi and Urdu. Gilchrist supervised here a staff of Indian scholars and translators who were then asked to compile a corpus of works from which the officers of the “Company Bahadur could learn Hindustani before

---

68 Gilchrist, “surgeon and itinerant linguist […] in late eighteenth century North India” (Rai 21), had set up a seminary to teach Hindustani to the newly appointed officers of the East India Company. But it was soon taken over by the establishment under the official aegis of College of Fort William in 1800 with Gilchrist as the Professor of Hindustani (Rai 21).
setting forth on the uncharted linguistic seas of North India” (Rai 21). According to Rai, “[…] the important thing that emerged from Fort William is the idea of two-ness, of linguistic duality. Fort William College gave institutional recognition to the notion that there were in fact two ways of doing Hindustani—one which used the available and mixed language, and another from which the Arabic-Persian words (i.e. words of ‘Muslim’ origin) had been removed in order to produce a language […] more suitable to Hindus” (22).

The missionaries who came to Serampore, near Calcutta, too contributed to this project as they set up institutions known as the School Book Societies all over east and north India---Calcutta, Agra, Allahabad---and embarked on an ambitious publishing programme (Rai 23). They needed to set up texts in type and so they required books on grammar and orthography, as Rai indicates, “After all, standardising grammar, orthography etc., were ‘natural’ imperatives built into the new printing technologies. Historians of Hindi grammar unambiguously trace the earliest attempts to codify Hindi---and other “native” languages---to this time” (23). Rai further clarifies this stance and indicates that, “missionaries faced with the need to order manifest disorder, must be considered particularly prone to privileging the significance of religious categories. Thus, once that first step is taken, it must appear obvious

---

69 These writers were Lallu Lal (c.1763-c.1824), Munshi Sadasukhlal (c.1746-c.1824), and Sadalal Mishra amongst others .

70 The language issue appears to be a nebulous one as many critics opine that Fort William merely recognized an already exiting difference (Amrit Rai 17), while others felt it was the most visible sign of the “imperial policy of divide-and-rule” (Alok Rai 23). Dalmia too opines that there was no stringent Hindu-Muslim divide before the colonial rule and the one that existed, if at all, was more a division between rural and urban areas and had little to do with the religion of the people who used it (1997,159). Ironically, the British claimed to have constructed a standard language for the people where none existed (Dalmia 1997,148), a fact which the later nationalists rejected though they were themselves busy constructing the modern day ‘standard’ Hindi. Nonetheless, whatever maybe the position, it is important to keep in mind that it was the Fort William College that differentiated between languages for the first time by setting up different departments, thus institutionalizing this separation officially.
that different religious groups---persons, not yet communities---which depend upon different classical languages for their theological-spiritual heritage, must be linguistically differentiated. [...] The missionaries of Serampore, eager to convert the godless heathen [...]---to the one true path, chose to appeal to the people of north India in two distinct variants of the infinitely varied common tongue. One of these, aimed at Hindus, was divested of Perso-Arabic borrowings and endowed with Sanskritic substitutes; and another aimed at Muslims, as laced with Perso-Arabic borrowings” (24). This made the people aware of the relation between religion and language.

In this way, the educationists and the missionaries tried to impose their view of language as unitary on the heteroglot Indian society. According to Mikhail Bakhtin this world view emerged from:

Aristotelian poetics, the poetics of Augustine, the poetics of the medieval church, of “the one language of truth,” the Cartesian poetics of neoclassicism, the abstract grammatical universalism of Leibniz (the idea of a “universal grammar”), Humboldt’s insistence on the concrete---all these, whatever their differences in nuance, give expression to the same centripetal forces in socio-linguistic and ideological life; [...]. The victory of one reigning language (dialect) over the others, the supplanting of languages, their enslavement, the process of illuminating them with the True Word, the incorporation of barbarians and lower social strata into a unitary language of culture and truth, the canonization of ideological systems, philology with its methods of studying and teaching dead languages, languages that were by that very fact “unities”, Indo-European
This vision of language was very different from the one prevalent in the pre-colonial era in the Subcontinent, where multilingualism and diglossia were a norm as David Lelyveld indicates, “Languages were not so much associated with place as with function, and in many cases the naming of a language---for the directors of British census operations and more elaborately for the Linguistic Survey of India---was problematic. People didn’t have languages; they had linguistic repertoires that varied even within a single household, let alone the marketplace, school, temple, court or devotional circle. These codes of linguistic behaviour took on the same characteristics of hierarchy that other sorts of human interaction did…” (in Orsini 21).

I would like to argue that it was during the colonial period that this consciousness of language as a “unitary” factor, as representative of one religion and one community was put forward by the colonial administrators in a bid to understand the multilingual and multicultural Indian society. Hence, it is possible to affirm that language as a direct expression of community identity was absent in the pre-colonial period and that it was the colonial authorities who, in their attempt to categorize and map the multilingual and heterogeneous native population, introduced the radically new notion of one language, one name, and one identity (Montaut 81). This unitary vision, however, was extremely appealing to the Indian reformers at that time, as Francesca Orsini clarifies, “The idea that a nation ‘has’ one language---[…]---which belongs simultaneously to the individual and to the community, covers all spoken and written practices and, finally, acquires the seal of recognition by becoming the language of the state (r̕ajbh̕aš̕a) and of the nation (r̕a
śtrabhāśa), was itself new. This idea, engrained as it was in European assumptions about national unity, was problematic when applied to the Indian context, and to the Hindi context in particular, as colonial officials were quick to realize in their taxonomic zeal. And yet it was to have a powerful appeal for Indian reformers: although proficient in and regularly using more than one language, they still looked up to ‘one country, one language’ as to an ideal and goal” (19).

The two cities that were to play an active role in the language debate since the 1860s of the nineteenth century were Allahabad and Banaras. The former gained in importance as it became the administrative seat of the provincial government in 1858, and the latter, already an important religious centre, was symbolically ruled by a Hindu King supported by the colonial authorities. Banaras was also the hub of commercial activities and, with the help of the Hindu merchant class vernacular literature received the kind of patronage it required to grow in stature. Therefore, it is not surprising that this city became one of the significant players in the language war (Dalmia 1997, 199, 191-192).

There were well known figures, such as Madan Mohan Malviya and others, who were involved in the movement to get Hindi recognized as a separate language. One such person, amongst others, was the doyen of Hindi literature, Bharatendu Hariścandra (1850-1885), who played a vital role in the battle for Hindi through his speeches and his journals, and was also associated with the phenomenon

---

71 The struggle to homogenize the language also coincided with the construction of modern Hinduism which involved, “the absorption of ‘sects’ (corresponding to the position of ‘dialects’), regarded not as autonomous in their religious authority and tradition, but deviation from one central strand, the sanātana dharma (corresponding to the notion of ārya bhāsā), which had apparently always remained constant, though the principles which made for cohesiveness at the core were themselves in the process of being negotiated” (Dalmia 1997, 151). Thus one can argue that the society and culture of India were undergoing an enormous change in the wake of colonization as the imperial authority tried to understand and mold their new possessions according to the Eurocentric weltanschauung.
seen as the renaissance of Hindi literature. He is also known as the Father of Modern Hindi literature, hence his contribution to the field is crucial as he was well respected by all and used his status to promote the cause of Hindi. Hariścandra’s position in the beginning was moderate but gradually his stance hardened as he proposed that Hindi, the language of the Hindus, be recognized by the British government and given the “national” status it deserved. Dalmia points out that by this time for the nationalists, “the religio-cultural divide had become well nigh absolute, Hindi, with its ancestor Sanskrit was to be supported on its own breeding grounds, India” (1997, 200). Dalmia further clarifies that, the model that Hariścandra proposed for the nationalization process was English, which though “flawed” was still used by the British since it was their national language (1997, 201-202).

In a speech given as a guest of the Hindi Vardhinī Sabhā in Allahabad in June 1877, Hariścandra composed a poem made up 98 dohas or verses in which he made his position clear (Dalmia 1997, 201). According to Dalmia it was a call to his countrymen, “whom he addressed as his Aryan brothers—-an act of solidarity in the face of Muslim intrusion—-to rise and take action even as dawn broke into a new epoch in the life of the nation”(1997, 201).

The critic explains that, “The Aryan concept, which had become a part of the intellectual and emotional consciousness of the elite from the mid-sixties, could as an overarching principle, subsume much heterogeneity while providing convenient ground for the exclusion of the Muslim and/or aboriginal, as the occasion required” (1997, 201). This event can also be seen as the rise of Nativism as the advocates supported the cause of an exclusionist kind of Hindi. The stage was, thus, set for further discussion and advocacy that led to the birth of modern Print Hindi.

72 The Nāgārī Prachārini Sabha established in 1893 was to play a pivotal role in the construction of the new standard Hindi.
The other important figure closely associated with this movement was Mahâvīr Prasad Dvivedî (1864-1938), who is said to have given modern print Hindi its form. According to Orsini, “The redefinition of Hindi from the perspective of the ‘public’ began in the second half of the nineteenth century and was formalized in the early twentieth century by Mahâvīr Prasad Dvivedî (1864-1938). [...] By purging print-language of colloquialisms, regional usage, and ‘Urdu’ words, by privileging abstract over concrete words and making Sanskrit loanwords the rule, and by fixing syntax along regular subject-object-verb lines, Dvivedî ‘standardized’ Hindi into a sober written language. Only such a standard language was fit for discussing ‘public’ matters, for creating literature, and for representing the jâti: in short, for serving the many purposes of a modern nation” (5-6).

Thus, emerged standard print Hindi and it is in this context that Geetanjali Shree’s novel plays a crucial role in engaging with the notion of “language” of the nation as proposed by the “Hindiwallahs”.

In fact, the writer addresses the language debate that took place during the colonial period but which seems to have reappeared in postcolonial India as the advocates of Hindu fundamentalists re-open these and other questions. In this part of the chapter I therefore propose to analyze the linguistic techniques used by the author in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras*

---

73 The colonial authorities too claimed a hand in giving its “native subjects” the language they lacked and needed. As Sir George Grierson wrote in his *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan* (1889), that the nineteenth century saw, “the birth of that wonderful hybrid language known to Europeans as Hindi, and invented by them. In 1803, under Gilchrist’s tuition Lallū Jī Lāl wrote the Prem Sāgar in the mixed Urdū language of Akbar’s camp-followers and of the market where all men of all nations congregated, with this peculiarity, that he used only nouns and particles of Indian, instead of those of Arabic or Persian origin. The result was practically a newly invented speech; for though the grammar was the same as that of the prototype, the vocabulary was almost entirely changed. This new language, called by the Europeans Hindi, has been adopted all over Hindustān as the lingua franca of the Hindūs, for a want that existed which it fulfilled [...].” (Dalmia 1997, 149; author’s emphasis). This claim also neatly justified the reason why they, the British, were in India and suffused the colonial project in an altruistic light.
[Our City that Year], published in 1998. The strategies used by the author are of particular interest since the novel deals with Hindu-Muslim riots which have become such a regrettable part of postcolonial India. Episodes of conflict, juxtaposed by periods of peaceful coexistence have marked the history of the Subcontinent. The contact between the two communities has led to shared cultural, literary and even religious traditions and the author reveals these instances throughout the novel. This work is of particular importance for postcolonial theory, which till date had been Anglocentric since the critics mostly examined works written in English and did not appear to take into account the literary corpus written in the vernacular. Shree’s work also opens the rift between hybridity and Nativism, as proposed by Bhabha, Ashcroft et al and other advocates of the nativist point of view. As I had mentioned earlier, the seeds of the exclusionist version of Nativism, that had begun to grow in the nineteenth century and have reappeared in India after independence.

The tension between the two communities, as depicted in the story, is shown in the postcolonial scenario and reveals the role played by the right wing philosophy of Hindutva propounded by the political party Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP, along with other organizations such as Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Rashtriya Swam Sevak Sansthan (RSS), in the lives of ordinary people. Initially the protagonists are not affected by the riots directly, but then they experience its tragic consequences in their own lives. The plot deals with the outcome of the communal conflict on members of the intellectual community of the University. It reveals the role played (or not played), by the intelligentsia when faced by the fratricidal violence. The discourse of the religious leaders in the temples and the constant looking at the “glorious past” lost from the moment the Muslims crossed the Indus invents

---

This political party is introduced in the novel as Akhil Bharatiya Vir Dal in the novel (222).
the them once more as the homogenous external “other”. This view reflects the one expressed by Raja Shiva Prasad in the nineteenth century mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. This position proves the point I had made earlier as it portrays the growth of the negative version of Nativism now propagated by the advocates of the Hindu right wing.

Shruti and her husband Hanif, Sharad and Daddu, Sharad’s Father, are the principal protagonists of the novel. Both Hanif and Sharad are lecturers at the local University and Shruti is a writer. In fact, it is significant that one of the protagonists, Shruti, a Hindu, is married to Hanif, a Muslim which, when studied against the backdrop of the communal violence that grips the society, is an indication that it may be possible to live together. In the novel one sees how the communalization of the city and subsequently of the academia vitiates Hanif and Sharad’s friendship as they slowly get caught up in the undercurrent of violence and hatred.

The change begins when the Department Head Prof. Nandan announces that the University had decided that his post would now be rotated among the professors, i.e. everyone would have the opportunity to become the Head of the Department according to their seniority. The next in line for this position is Hanif who is the senior most after Nandan. Hanif, however, does not wish to take the post as he feels that Nandan, who had set up the department, would interfere constantly, while the members of the department are extremely keen that he accepts the post, since this would show that the University is not biased against Muslims. Hanif also refuses the offer because he does not wish to become a pawn in the politics of religion. Hanif’s refusal leads to a conflict with Sharad who feels that Hanif should have accepted the post not because of his religious affiliation but because of his competence. Hanif begins to avoid Sharad and his other colleagues, as he tries to cope with
his life now being threatened by Hindu fundamentalists who leave notes and telephonic messages for him. The relation between him and Sharad worsen as the latter’s friend Inspector Kapdia is posted to the city. Kapdia represents the police force which has been criticized for its implicit collaboration with the majority community during the riots. Though he shows his bias against the minority community (98), but, he still does his duty and also reassures Hanif of his support especially when the latter starts receiving death threats (310). But Hanif resents this attitude which leads to more animosity with Sharad, finally Sharad becomes the Head of the Department and Hanif takes a sabbatical to write, and leaves town with Shruti. This move is looked upon as a betrayal by the rest of Faculty.

The story is narrated in retrospect and begins when Shruti comes back to her town and goes back to her old house with Sharad. The reader does not realize this twist in the tale until the end of the novel as Shree very skillfully weaves the plot around the events that lead to the attack on Daddu by some young volunteers of the Hindu fundamentalist party. The novel is not divided into chapters but is a long narration of events. The narrator is not omnipresent but rather presents herself as a shadow of the three trying to write and record the events that took place in their city. The narrator says that she would “copy” whatever Shruti and the others write:

१७४ से ही में नकलकर्ता रही हूँ ।
१७५ से कि नहीं, पता नहीं; क्योंकि यह किसी की नहीं पता कि शूरू कहें हे । पर वहीं से जहाँ बे उनकी प्रवासी से डरकर भें जटपट कागज लीखा, कलम लीखा और शूरू भी के मैत्रे में जुट गई कि तुम नहीं तो मैं ही लिखूँ।

75 The narrator tells the story of an innocent Muslim who was beaten by the police, an incident which leaves the man and his daughter traumatized (78).
76 Ironically these volunteers used to be Hanif’s students in the University.
The language of the novel is colloquial and the author not only uses Hindi but also weaves in words in English. In fact, she also creates new English words which are then transliterated in Hindi, for example:

"[..] तुम्हारा दोस्त है एकदम हयूरसलेंग बेटा, वह भी एकदम दूसर महययूरसलेंग बाप का।" (11)

[..] Your friend is a totally humorless son, that too of a too much humorful Father.79

The author invents the word “humorful”, and in this manner contrasts “less” with “full”, to show that Daddu, Sharad’s father was brimming over with good humor. This strategy reveals Shree’s command over both Hindi and English as she plays with both the languages. It also demonstrates that languages are living and dynamic entities that percolate

77 Shree transliterates the English word “copy” which I have left in italics, along with all the English words that appear in the other quotations from the text.  
78 This novel has not been translated to English and hence I have translated the passages quoted in the chapter.  
79 Shree transliterates the last line in English. I have left the sentence as it is written by her and have also marked the said sentence in italics both in Hindi and in English.
into each other and create new hybrid tongues. The novelist also uses the Urdu word for friend, “दोस्त”, instead of the Hind one, “फ़िर”. In fact during the many discussions that take place between Hanif, Sharad and their students, the issue of language is also raised as references are made to the debate that arose in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but as Hanif points out:

"ये तो भाषा पनपती है।" (103)

“Why don’t they see the development of language? When words from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and the everyday speech together were making the language?”

“That is the way a language grows.”

In this manner, Shree brings to the forefront the conflict between the two languages and their shared and mixed roots. The author stresses time and again the hybrid character of languages, and the syncretic nature of Indian society throughout the novel as Hanif and Sharad attempt to make their students aware of the common heritage. They emphasize the areas of literature, music, and language which are shared by the communities.\(^8\) In this way, the author stresses once again, that languages were hybrid but this characteristic emerged from the Subcontinent and, therefore, cannot be seen as a floating signifier.

The author also inserts English in the dialogues, for instance, when the professors of Hanif’s department speak about the deteriorating condition in the city affected by the Hindu-Muslim riots. In the following scene Prof. Nandan, the Head of the Department, is holding forth on the current situation:

\(^8\) I will discuss these issues in chapter 4.
“We intellectuals have to do something […] We intellectuals feel very upset. We should write, we should speak up. Did you see today’s newspaper? They tell us that there used to be a temple there! […] So what? There was a Buddhist Monastery before, there was something else before it. […] So what? We intellectuals are guilty for remaining quiet…”

As we can observe from the passage above, Prof. Nandan frequently uses English to identify himself and his colleagues as intellectuals and in this manner asserts his membership with a particular class in the society. Nandan also implies that intellectuals are somehow above the rest of the society and are supposed to be conscience of the people, and act for the greater good by speaking out against any injustice. Furthermore, by using English for his speech, Shree unveils the relation between English and the academia, where it still maintains a prestigious position. We also observe the appearance of English and Hindi in the same sentence, for instance, Nandan mentions that “‘वी इंटेलिजेंसि अल फ़ॉन वेरी पंजान’” (We intellectuals feel very upset), where the word “upset” (पंजान) is said in Hindi and the rest in English. In this passage it is clear that Prof. Nandan identifies himself with the elite English speaking members of the academic world but he is still not able to emote in English and, hence, resorts

81 My emphasis. The word in Hindi means both disturbed and upset, however, I had to choose between these two adjectives to show how Nandan felt, and it was a difficult choice.
82 The phrase in English has been left as it was used by the author.
to Hindi. This part brings out the conflict inherent in the use of English. In the passage analyzed earlier, we see that by using English neologisms in the dialogue, Shree indicates the extent to which this language has become a part of India. However, it would appear that it still has not sunk deep enough for the speakers to express their emotion. This section coincides with Ngugi’s view that, “Language was not a mere string of words. It had a suggestive power well beyond the immediate and lexical meaning” (287). It is then possible to argue that for even a person well versed in English it is at times difficult to articulate one’s feelings as they are governed by emotions and not by the intellect that can be taught and schooled. Thus, while trying to convey these sentiments, Nandan seems to automatically opt for Hindi. As Bakhtin clarifies, “Consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of having to choose a language. With each literary-verbal performance, consciousness must actively orient itself amidst heteroglossia, it must move in and occupy a position for itself, within it, it chooses, in other words, a “language” ” (295). In this case we can see that despite identifying himself with the academic elite, Nandan still chooses a word in Hindi to talk about his emotions. The author proves in this way that sometimes it is difficult to express one’s sentiments in a language that has not evolved from the native land, even though it has become a part of the social ethos now.

The presence of English and Hindi in the same sentence also creates a new language known as “Hinglish”. Its use demonstrates the speaker’s facility with both the languages. This hybridization is a new phenomenon and describes the postcolonial scenario, as “Hinglish” is used not only in India but also in Britain. In fact, a dictionary containing “Hinglish” words and phrases compiled by Baljinder Mahal, a teacher from Derby, England, has just been published; ironically it is called “The Queen’s Hinglish”! (BBC News,
November 8, 2006). The use of this strategy proves Bakhtin’s position as well, since he postulates that at, “any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also----and for us this is the essential point----into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, “professional” and “generic” languages, languages of generations and so forth. […] Therefore languages do not exclude each other but rather intersect with each other in many different ways” (271-272, 291). By making the character speak in both English and Hindi, the author also reveals that the pre-colonial notion of languages, mentioned earlier, is still alive in India. Thus, it is not surprising that Nandan chooses to speak in English as well as in Hindi at the same time. In this way, the two languages enter into a dialogue with each other in the text-nation that Shree constructs. I use the term “dialogue” following the Bakhtinian notion which according to him “is the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia” (426).

The novelist also uses English within the text to mention commonly used objects like, telephone, letter box, train etc. Ironically, she does not employ the very pedantic and artificially created Hindi words to name these things, like for instance, “lauh-path-gamini” for train (Rai 115). As we can observe, these terms refer to articles of use, i.e., actual commodities and not emotions, in fact some of these things were introduced by the British in India, for instance the railways. In fact, one can see in the novel, that just as Malayalam is interspersed by Roy in The God of Small Things, so is English woven into the text by Shree, for example, she uses Urdu and English together, such as “अखादे निप्पर्ट”, for “newspaper

83 The first passenger train ran in India on April 16th, 1853, when a train with 14 railway carriages and 400 guests left Bombay’s Bori Bunder for Thane, though railways had been operational since 1851. (IRFCA: The Indian Railways fan Club).
report”, as well as fusion words such as “गारंटीवाली” (guarantee-wali). In this word the Hindi suffix “wali” is added to denote ownership ----it is used here to refer to the status of an object, that is to say, an object with guarantee. This shows a synthesis of tongues as words from different languages are melded together and utilized in daily life and become a part of the day to day speech. The use in the novel, however, seems to be restricted, to a large extent, to the unemotional part of quotidian life.

As mentioned earlier, the author also entwines many Urdu words in the narrative. Not only do Urdu words and expressions slip into the text but one also notices the use of words derived from Arabic. Ironically, one can see this phenomenon even in the speech of those who espouse the Hindu right wing cause in the very act of constructing the Hindus as homogenous community and posting the Muslim as its homogenous ‘other’, for instance:

शृंगार तथा अन्य उद्योग दरबार में वर्गीय में निकलते हुए सट्टवाले को देख रहे हैं और उनके साथ आई भीड़ को। वे लोग मना रहे हैं कि हिंदू जागो, देश बचाओ। कि नहीं तो हम पर अन्याय बढ़ता जाएगा। इ...उ हमारी हिंसा और समर्पित लूटी जाएगी [...] (22; my emphasis)

Shruti, Sharad and Hanif went out to the verandah from the same door and stood with the mathwallahs\(^4\) and the crowd which had come with them. Those people were trying to convince the crowd that it was time for the Hindu to wake up and save the nation. Otherwise the injustice we are suffering will increase. […] Our honor and our possessions would be looted. (My translation and emphasis)

---
\(^4\) Math in Hindi means an ashram, a place where the ascetics and their disciples live (Brhata HindiKosa, 1963) [Colossal Hindi Dictionary]. I have deliberately used “wallah” as it is prevalent in Indian English and indicates belonging, hence “mathwallah” would mean those belonging to the Hindu ashram. I have not put the word in italics either as it is a word used by people in everyday life.
The word used for respect इज़त (izzat), for example, is an Urdu word actually derived from Arabic and Persian (Brhata HindiKosa, 169; Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary, 104). The presence of the Urdu word izzat or honor at this juncture also indicates the presence of the very ‘other’ who is considered a threat to the construction of a “pure” or shuddh community. Bakhtin too points out that, “As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes one’s own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention” (293). In this case one can say that though the mathwallahs have appropriated the word izzat, its connotation remains the same. I believe that the Urdu word breaks the homogenous Hindu community the speaker was trying to construct. In fact, the following question posed by Bhabha, though enunciated for the immigrant, is relevant in this situation as well, for, “Where do you draw the line between languages? between cultures? between disciplines? between peoples?” (59). Hence, by accepting this word as part of their vocabulary and giving it the same semantic meaning, not only do the advocates of Hindutva make the word their own but also encompass the very ‘other’ that they reject, in their midst, as the etymological roots of the word stand out clearly. Shree uses this strategy to indicate that it is difficult to separate languages in compartments, intertwined as they are in the space they share within communities living in the nation-state, even though the politics practiced by various parties may try and depict otherwise. I would like to stress that conflicts between communities are as much a part of the society as are the many shared traditions which make up the composite culture of India, whether accepted or rejected by religious fundamentalists be they Hindu or Islamic.
This technique also brings out the irony of the discourse of the ‘other’ being built by the propagandists of the Hindutva movement since it reveals very subtly that ‘they’ are actually a part of ‘us’.\(^{85}\) In this way the writer breaks the myth of purity advocated by those propagating the exclusionist version of Nativism. This negative version of Nativism is being increasingly used by the fundamentalists to promote their exclusionary agenda. By inserting the Urdu word in this speech, the novelist also engages with Devy’s concept of bhāsā literatures vs. English by showing that this particular bhāsā is not homogenous entity which can be pitted against English. Moreover, Shree not only brings out the hybridity inherent in the language but also the aporias present in the concept of bhasa literatures by Devy, as she reveals the conflicts within two modern Indian languages, Hindi and Urdu, whose evolution is closely linked.

Shree also inserts certain phrases in Bengali and Punjabi, as can be seen in the following anecdote narrated by one of the protagonists:

\[
[...]
\text{हनीफ़ मुखर्जी रहा} [...]
\text{बन चुका हूँ वह किसा?} \text{एक बंगाली और एक पंजाबी}
\text{एक फ़िल्म देखने? बाहर निकलते ही बंगाली से रहा था।}[...]
\text{भारतीय मलया फ़िल्म, रंगे जाए}
\text{बाबू सोसाय। इंगर्ल पंजाबी जट ने पुट्टे पर जोर में हाथ मारा और ठहराके,} [...],
\text{सोंडी एक तम सोंडी फ़िल्म।} (34)
\]

[...] Hanif keeps smiling, “[...] Did I tell you that story? A Bengali and a Punjabi went to see a film? When they came out the Bengali was crying

[...] A very good film, and Babu moshai keeps crying. While the Punjabi

\(^{85}\) The Hindi word at this juncture would be “adar” but certain Urdu words are so engrained in the way of life, that it is difficult to use the shudh or “pure” Hindi words in their stead. A fact not denied even by one of the staunch advocates of the Hindi movement, Hariścandra, who pointed out that it would be difficult to weed out such words and admitted that, “[...] I do not mean to say that all Persian words should be banished from our vernacular. This is beyond our power [...]” (in Dalmia 1997, 209).
Babu moshai has been taken from Bengali. Moshai can be translated as “mister”, as it is used while addressing a man, it is used as a term of endearment as well (S. Biswas, 743). The word “Babu” also refers to a government servant as clerks are known as babus (S. Biswas, 743), and since Bengalis have been associated with government service, this particular term is used to address a Bengali gentleman in general. In this section we can also see the image associated with persons from Bengal who are supposed to be sensitive and those from Punjab who are supposed to be more down to earth. In this way Shree brings out these differences in popular perception in the anecdote that Hanif narrates.

The writer also retains the word film (फ़िल्म) in the text as both the Bengali and the Punjabi gentleman use it. In addition, she inserts Bengali (ভাবেন্দ্র ভালেন), and Punjabi (ਬੰਦੀ) along with the Urdu word for story (किस्मा) in the narration. This example proves yet again that languages cannot be segregated as they are vibrant and fluid and flow into each other. In addition, Shree’s novel achieves another objective, by bringing the three languages together in the narrative she opens the door to a dialogue between the different vernaculars. As D.L. Seth points out, “Hindi must get beyond the unnecessarily antagonistic relationship with the “other Indian languages […] into which it was cast by the perverted nationalism of the “Hindi” ideologues. To them, it appeared as if their “Hindi” could be simply a successor to English and its associated regime” (in Rai 120). Seth further recommends that Hindi should ally with these other languages, which is what Shree suggests when she inserts all the three languages within the text-nation that she constructs. The presence of the regional idioms as well as Hinglish then illustrates that even the concept of Nativism (as interpreted by the

---

86The term babu moshai was popularized by one of the principle protagonists of the seventies Hindi film Anand.
fundamentalists), is multilayered and cannot be seen as a homogenous whole. These strategies also prove that language is not an abstract concept as proposed by Bhabha but is woven inextricably in the socio-cultural and historical fabric of a particular country. The presence of these regional languages in a Hindi novel demonstrated that the question of national language is a complex one as each country perceives it differently. As opposed to Peru, for example, where Spanish was automatically chosen as the national language, in India the multilingual system made it difficult to choose any one language as representative of the nation. As mentioned before, this is the reason why perhaps India has always used different linguistic repertoires to communicate (Lelyvand in Orsini 21). Moreover, Shree’s strategies demonstrate, time and again, the drawbacks of postulating one theory for all the erstwhile colonies, as each country has varied problems and different ways of resolving them.

This passage also reveals the manner in which the regional languages flow into each other, reiterating in a way the findings of Devy, who suggests that the decline of the Sanskrit domination saw the strengthening of the dialogue between the various bhāsās. Therefore, Shree’s text proves that despite the dominance of English as an elite language and the promotion of the Sanskritized Hindi officially, the other bhāsās still make their presence felt strongly in the text-nation that she creates. Thus, her work establishes that it is not possible to separate and/or divide individuals or groups on the basis of languages just as the vibrant experiences of everyday, shared by members of all the communities, cannot be erased based on principles of “purity” nor can languages be separated following this precept. However, the advocates of Hindutva denigrate emphatically the hybrid character of the nation and those

87 Hindi was initially perceived by a section of the North Indian society as the language which would finally become the national language; however, this did not happen, as mentioned earlier.
who represent it are silenced in one way or another, Hanif and Shruti have to leave town and Daddu is beaten up and condemned to a living silent death, and Sharad is left all alone.

After examining the linguistic strategies employed by Shree, I would like to contend that the hybridity that emerges is rooted in the native tradition and could only have emerged in this particular geo-political location. Therefore, I conclude that language is not an abstract and disembodied concept but narrates the history of a particular society. And indeed, the strategies employed by Shree reveal that linguistic hybridity was an intrinsic part of the Subcontinent much before the arrival of the British, and it is this characteristic that also allowed the vernacular to meld with the colonizer’s tongue to form new variants of English, like ‘Hinglish’, as we have seen repeatedly in Shree and Roy.

I would also like to argue that Shree’s novel encompasses plurality of regions and communities within the standardized “Hindi”, subverting, in this way, the Sanskritized Hindi as proposed by the “Hindiwallahs”, proving that multilingualism is a “natural condition of the Indian mind” (Devy 92), and that it cuts across the monolingual tradition that the colonial power had transplanted to India and the Hindu nationalists had adopted. I would then like to assert that, given the strategies used by Shree to challenge the standard Sanskritized Hindi, it can no longer be caste Hindu and male as the advocates of the Hindi-Hindu movement wanted it to be.

C. Conclusion

In view of the linguistic strategies used by Roy and Shree in their texts I would like to argue that the two narratives rebel against the hegemony of the dominant sectors, be it the imposition of English or the invention and subsequent promotion of a Sanskritized Hindi, as Devy observes, “A study of the bhāsā literatures may show that literature in the Indian
languages has been a matter of revolt and heresy rather than that of imposition and authority” (123). However, despite this stand, the critic does not bring out the tension that exists between the bhāsās which Shree underlines so clearly in her novel. The author sketches the conflict not only between, the official Sanscritized Hindi and its subversive and hybrid version but also underlines the friction between Hindi and Urdu. I would like to argue that this polemic reflects the destructive side of Nativism as propounded by the Hindu right wing. In their endeavor to construct a “pure” Hindu nation they disregard the composite linguistic tradition and reject the hybridity of tongues. Thus Shree’s text brings out the contradictions inherent in both Nativism and hybridity, and proves that it is difficult to accept definitions of terms without taking into consideration the socio-political and historical context in which languages and cultures evolve.

Nativism plays a very different role in the text written in the erstwhile colonizer’s language and the one written in the vernacular. This idea appears to be a powerful instrument in subverting the hegemony of English and all that it implies in Roy’s novel, just as it did in the Arguedean text-nation wherein Quechua is employed to resist the assimilatory process of the neo-colonial nation-state; while in Shree’s work we see that the conflict vis-à-vis language and identity is finally nuanced and stretched taut across the linguistic gridlines within which both the Hindu right wing and the postcolonial advocates of ambivalent hybridity define these two concepts. The Indian context, thus, differs considerably from the Peruvian one as some regional languages have been recognized by the Constitution and they are used to a large extent for all purposes, especially in the states to which these languages correspond. This is not the case in Peru where Quechua, along with the Aymara languages,

88 As mentioned earlier, by inserting phrases primarily in Malayalam, Roy regionalizes English and embeds it firmly in Kerala.
have been relegated to the margins of the new nation-state. The struggle for survival of these indigenous languages is greater in Peru as the former colonial language, Spanish has established itself firmly in the national ethos and, as I pointed out in the last chapter, some members of the indigenous communities now perceive it as the only means to achieve citizenship in contemporary Peru, in this situation, the native language plays a crucial role when inserted in a text written in Spanish.

As mentioned in the last chapter, Arguedas began writing about the indigenous weltanschauung to dispel the negative images prevalent in the Creole (criollo) society about the indigenous populace; hence by inserting Quechua in his narrative, he underlines the presence of the indigene in the homogenous nation being constructed by the Creoles. In Roy’s case the use of the vernacular attempts to break the stranglehold of English, and all that its use implies in India, and is a way of showing the multilayered linguistic society. By using Quechua in the texts written in Spanish, and Malayalam, Hindi and Urdu, in the English novel, Arguedas and Roy, challenge the hegemonic status given to the colonizers’ languages in the new nation-states. The internal hybridization and conflicts are not shown in the narrative, and the vernacular is taken as a whole to oppose these European languages that continue to exercise so much power in the former colonies. Thus, it is possible to infer that the intralingual divisions and fusions are more apparent in the novels written in the vernacular, as we have seen in the case of Shree, and not in the literary corpus written in Spanish and English. Hence, I would like to argue that the indigenous populace subverts the structures of power that work through the aforementioned languages, by using the vernacular as an undivided entity. Though scholars have criticized binary divisions, in this case, it assumes great importance, since it helps to unite those who are fighting against the linguistic
hegemony and assimilatory practices associated with the former colonizers’ tongue. I would like to clarify here, that this strategy does not mean that the vernacular languages are pristine reproductions of a pure pre-colonial culture, but rather that, they simply project a thought process and a world marginalized even within the postcolonial context. I therefore agree with Benita Parry when she points that, “[i]t is the appeal to the equal aspects of native traditions which furnishes the colonized with an alternative representation a combatant subjectivity or self” (in Ganguli 150). One can also assert that Arguedas and Roy represent Nativism as a subversive tool that does not reflect the negative characteristics associated with it, such as the desire to invent a particular language by excluding all the influences that have seeped into it, as we have just seen in the case of Hindi.

The use of the vernacular in the texts written by Arguedas and Roy also add another dimension to Ngugi’s position, as we see the presence of English even in the Hindi novel studied here. This can be interpreted in two ways, the presence of English in the text demonstrates that, try as one might, the languages received from the colonizers, whether modified or not, have become such an intrinsic part of the colonation that it is difficult to

---

89 I call the new nation-states “colonations” (to coin a term) because they follow, in many ways, the norms and standards set in the erstwhile colonies by the imperial authorities, as we have just seen in the three texts analyzed in the dissertation. I also use this term since it shows that for certain sections of the post-colonial nation (used chronologically in this context), there has been little change in the socio-political and economic conditions. The critic from Latin America, Klor de Alva too has indicated the indigenous people in Latin America are still fighting the age old battles, while facing new challenges, in the new Republics even centuries after Independence. We also observe this phenomenon in the case of the Dalits, as portrayed in Roy’s novel, where we see that despite access to education etc., they are still left at the margins since Kerala remains divided along caste lines; while Shree in her novel represents the increase in communal violence where we perceive a deepening of the fault lines drawn during the colonial period. This rift is also caused by the rapid commercial transformations that have left a large part of the population at the peripheries of the economic boom. It is possible to argue that globalization has unleashed certain socio-cultural changes which in turn have led to social turmoil. Thus, along with the new problems
erase them from the fabric of the nation-state, though apparently it is still difficult to express one’s emotions in this tongue, as we have just seen in Shree’s novel.

The three novels analyzed so far bring out the misprisions in the definition of the concepts of Nativism and hybridity. Insofar as hybridity is concerned, we have seen that, whether the hybrid language is formed by either fusing the European language with the vernacular, or by melding the different vernaculars together, as in the case of Hindi and Urdu, this hybridity is rooted to the land from where the vernaculars have evolved. One can also say that the term ‘hybrid’ and hybridity refer to the linguistic identity that emerges within contact zones amongst people. These contact zones have been present in the South Asian Subcontinent, for instance, since much before the advent of the European colonizers, thus it is not possible to deny the role played by the indigenous weltanschauung in shaping hybridity. The critic Susan Bassnett sums up the relation between an author and the socio-historical milieu that surround her/him, in this way:

A writer does not just write in a vacuum: he or she is the product of a particular culture, of a particular moment in time, and the writing does reflect those factors such as, race, gender, age, class and birthplace, as well as the stylistic, idiosyncratic features of an individual (in Sales 123).

And indeed this is what is reflected in the narratives analyzed here, as Arguedas, Roy and Shree take on the language hegemonies in their novels. This proves yet again that it is difficult to conceive of hybridity as an ambivalent notion, as suggested by Bhabha, since each text identifies itself with a particular society, history and culture. It is then possible to

we see the persistence of the old conflicts, still without resolution decades after gaining independence from the former European colonial power. I believe that the new nation-states, to some extent, are a part of the neo-colonial regimes that have replaced the old colonial powers; hence, it is not out place to call them “colonations” in this context.
assert that the kind of hybridity produced in the narratives proves that hybridity and Nativism are woven together in the fabric of the society and it is the native element that imparts its features to the hybrid character that evolves when two or more languages meet/collide. One can then infer that the novels written by Arguedas could only have been written in Peru and the works of Roy and Shree could only have been produced in India and nowhere else. As Nemade points out, there is a “filial relationship between the linguistic and cultural milieu and a writer’s work. This would explain why a Mahabharata is possible only in ancient India while an Iliad is possible only in ancient Greece” (135). It is, thus, vital not to lose sight of the native elements that play such a crucial role in the making of the hybrid character.

In the case of India, for example, one can also argue that the hybrid languages that appear in the English and Hindi novels, are embedded not only in the South Asian macrosocm, but are also entrenched in the regional microcosms from where they emerge. In this way Roy and Shree also answer Nemade’s question on the extent to which the native principle plays a role in the constitution of literature (134), as both have shown how difficult it is to erase the indigenous characteristics that permeate a particular literary work. They prove Nemade’s conjecture when he admits that on his part he would, “like to stick to the belief that there is a process of nativization in all portent civilizations which strengthens rootedness of human works. Not only new elements are borrowed into but also new environmental conditions are accommodated to the basic structure of the society” (134). Furthermore, the hybrid character of languages depicted in the text-nations brings out the fissures beneath the surface of the nation-state as the hegemonic classes try and construct a homogeneous nation within a seemingly “pluralistic” vision. This point is proved in both The God of Small Things and Hamara Shahar Us Baras [Our City that Year] as the characters
representing hybridity are silenced one way or another. However, it is here that the narratives of these two authors differ from Nemade’s position, since the latter believes that Nativism, “is the entire community’s response, past and present; a life-style of the whole race, a collective thinking and feeling. In this respect Nativism becomes a principle harmonious with the conservative principle and acts in unison with it against the corrosion of native systems” (136), but as Roy and Shree have demonstrated, the indigenous community itself is fragmented, a phenomenon clearly perceptible despite the many shared traditions.

In this context then one can only stress the futility of applying a single, rigid definition of the narrative strategies, like hybridity and Nativism, seen as an intrinsic part of Postcolonial theory, to all the countries just because they have been colonized at some point of time by European countries. As the novels analyzed so far have shown, each author interprets these concepts in a different way. These variations are visible even in the works that emerge from the same country. I would, therefore, like to conclude that given their particular socio-political system and culture and the problems that emerged after independence, as we have seen in the case of Peru and India, these countries cannot be homogenized and restricted within a totalitarian theoretical framework such as the one proposed in Postcolonial theory.

In the next chapter I will examine the relationship between culture and nation in José María Arguedas’ novel *Yawar fiesta* (1941).

---

90 To recapitulate, in Roy’s novel, Ammu, seen as the root from where hybridity springs, dies. Her son Estha is silenced and her daughter Rahel leaves Ayemenem (though she does come back and her return can be seen as an act of defiance against a seemingly homogenous and castist society); in Shree’s novel too, characters representing hybridity are silenced, and the protagonists Hanif and Shruti have to leave town while Daddu is badly beaten up after which he withdraws completely from the outside world.
Chapter 3

Of Harawís, Huaynos and Turupukllays - Culture and Nation in

José María Arguedas’ Yawar Fiesta

As different worlds collided in Peru the resultant clash influenced every aspect of life of the natives, such as language, religious beliefs, and education amongst others. Culture too played an important role in the colonial period as the colonizers tried to impose their way of life, their beliefs, and their cultural expressions, such as music, dance and festivals (religious and secular ones) in their colonies. In this chapter I will examine primarily the role played by culture in Arguedas’ first novel Yawar fiesta (1941).

The author, himself an anthropologist and ethnographer, wrote extensively on all aspects of indigenous life based on his field work. It is possible to surmise from these non-fictional writings that culture for him meant not only music, dance, art and literature, but also social and religious organization of the communities that he observed in the towns of Puquio, Huamanga, and Mantaro in the sierras, amongst others. In his studies, for instance, Arguedas has shown the presence of huaynos and harawís, ancient songs that date back to pre-Columbian days, not only in the sierras but also in the cities where there are large conglomerations of Indians along with mestizos from the villages. In these communities he found that the indigenous cultures were not static but dynamic, as they combined with various elements of Western culture brought to Peru by the conquistadores, and produced what he termed mestizaje cultural (1975, 2). As he further clarified, mestizaje for him meant a mixing of cultures and not of races (1975, 2). Arguedas also uses the term

91 His essays were posthumously compiled in various books like Formación de la cultura indoamericana (1975), and Señores e indios. Acerca de la cultura quechua (1976).
“transculturation” to describe the changes that had taken place especially in the communities that were economically strong, such as the ones from Mantaro. Thus we can say that transculturation for him was not just discursive but a trend that evolved in the material world.

This term then can be used, as did Arguedas in his ethnographic studies, to talk about some of the cultural phenomena depicted in the Arguedean text-nation, as we will see later in the chapter. The concept of “transculturation” further proves that culture is a socio-political phenomenon and as such an area of conflict. One can therefore argue that for the author too culture was a site of struggle, where the battle between the Western and the autochthonous worlds had been taking place since the conquest of Peru. Moreover, for him culture was an integral part of life and hence could not be taken as a separate entity, removed from the struggles of day to day life. It was reflected in the many ways that the hegemonic side expressed its perception of the nation and the indigenous communities within it. In Arguedas’ first novel *Yawar fiesta* (1941), for instance, we see the clash of views in the way the dominant class wanted to commemorate the national day of Peru and the manner in which it had been celebrated by the *ayllus* for many years. It is possible to conclude that the cultural field is transformed into a political one where we can see reflected the challenges faced by the indigenous communities in the nation-state on all fronts. Therefore, one can assert that Arguedas writes against the grain of the dominant vision of the nation and his novels depict the polemic that is still present, in some form or the other, in the Peruvian society. This novel also breaks away from the mold of indigenist novels as the central theme is a fiesta, a cultural event, and not a direct representation of social conflict (Portugal 153). For Cornejo Polar this innovative feature liberates Arguedas’ novel from the genre of indigenist and regional novels, which had been looked upon in such a negative way (in Portugal 153-154).
The importance of culture cannot be stressed enough as it plays a crucial role in the construction of identity of the individual and the nation. To rephrase Pierre Bourdieu’s observation of the field of cultural production in terms of the nation-building process, it is possible to argue that this field becomes a site of struggle. In this scenario what is at stake is the power to impose the dominant values while delimiting the population of those entitled to take part in this project (1993,42). Consequently the manner in which a particular fiesta is to be celebrated, the music and the dances that should or should not be included as part of the celebrations, becomes a way of exercising control, as we will see later in *Yawar fiesta* (1941). This brings into open the undercurrents of power struggle being carried out in the formation of the nation. According to Randal Johnson, for Bourdieu, “The cultural (literary, artistic, etc.) field exists in a subordinate or dominated position within the field of power because of its possession of a high degree of symbolic forms of capital (e.g. academic capital, cultural capital), but in a dominated position because of its relatively low degree of economic capital (when compared with the dominant fractions of the dominant classes)” (1993,15).

The importance of this symbolic form of capital, however, cannot be underestimated in the construction of nation, because as Tomás Pérez Vejo indicates, “Nations are invented not on the basis of political decrees and norms, but on symbolic and cultural values” (17; my translation). Anderson too has pointed out that nations are imagined communities (6). One can then argue that the imagination of the communities is molded not only by literary works but also by music, dance and religious fiestas. The importance of culture in the formation of nation is reflected in the fact that a nation-state also has a cultural policy along with others such as foreign policy etc. Néstor García Canclini too suggests the importance of culture in this project, as he points out, Latin American nation-states adopted modernization and
national culture as their project (xiii). Therefore, it is possible to reiterate that culture is related to the political and the social fields and is a crucial player in the imaginary creation of the nation.

In fact we find that in his novels and short stories, Arguedas inserts various instruments along with music and dance which reinforce the link between the past and the present. Embedded thus in the story, the songs, the dances and the musical instruments relate the history of the communities. In his anthropological and ethnographic studies, for instance, Arguedas has shown the presence of *huaynos* and *harawís*, ancient songs that date back to pre-Columbian days, not only in the *sierras* but also in the cities where there are large conglomerations of Indians along with *mestizos* from the villages.\(^{92}\) Hence I would like to argue that music is not inserted by the author just to represent the aesthetic facet of the indigenous world but to orchestrate the action in the text-nation, as it is always present in some form or the other while the plot unfolds --- to reiterate, it is an active participant in the drama that takes place in the fictional world. To demonstrate the important role played by the *harawís* and *huaynos* in the Arguedean text-nation, I will analyze two passages, one taken from Arguedas’ second last novel, *Todas las sangres* [*All the Bloods*] published in 1964 and the other from *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* [*The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Below*] published posthumously in 1971.

The critic Gladys Marín comments that *Todas las sangres* encompasses “all the possible dimensions of the multiple and polifacetic Peruvian land. All the groups, in their intensity and their distinctive manner are present […]” (184; my translation). The events that make up *Todas las sangres* take place during the first Presidency of Fernando Belaúnde\(^{92}\) The term *mestizo* refers to a person of mixed blood (*Yawar fiesta* 1985, 197)
The objective of his ministerial team was to homogenize the social body by integrating the Indians into the capitalist system (Giménez Mico 250). The story unfolds principally in the small town of Abancay, built by the Grandfather of the two protagonists Fermín and Bruno Aragón de Peralta, as well as the Apark’ora mines, Paraybamba, San Pedro de Lahuaymarca, Lima and the Federal District, though the latter are shown to have a negative influence on the sierras.

The Peralta family is an aristocratic Creole one, settled in the region for generations. Don Bruno represents the old feudal order and is shown as a cruel and hard taskmaster, whereas Fermín can be said to represent the new entrepreneurial class who wants to modernize his operations and his town. Bruno’s dispute with Fermín arises because the former does not believe in “modernization”, linked as it is to technology. The other players are an American multinational Wisther and Bozart, as well as two engineers, representing two different faces of the new generations of professionals who come to work for Fermín, Hernán Cabrejos Seminario and Jorge Hidalgo Larrabure, amongst others. The indigenous protagonist is Demetrio Rendón Wilka, who plays a pivotal role in the plot.

Music becomes an integral part of the novel, be it the songs of the birds or the sound of the rivers; here, however, I will examine the role played by a particular harawí in the novel. The harawí being analyzed here was written by Demetrio’s father and sung by the members of his community. The incident that leads to the composition of this song is as follows: Rendón goes to the provincial school to study with the children of the aristocratic class, a right given to him by the government, but he is thrown out of the school by the local aristocracy. The members of the indigenous communities do not protest this openly, but do

93 Belaúnde Terry became the President again and was in power from 1980-85.
so indirectly by making Rendón’s father the Mayor and collecting and saving enough money to send Demetrio to study in Lima. Arguedas selects the *harawí* as the most appropriate instrument to express the feelings of the community. As he clarifies, the *harawí* is generally sung by women whose voices reach an extremely high pitch and, “[t]he vibration of the final note pierces the heart and demonstrates that there is no element of the celestial or earthly world that has not been reached, compromised, by this final cry” (1976, 178; my translation).

Thus the women sing the *harawí* written by Rendón’s father when he leaves Abancay:

Ama k’onk’ ankichu No has de olvidar, hijo mío
amapuni k’onk’anichu Jamás has de olvidarte:
yawarpa’mi ripukunki Vas en busca de la sangre,
yawarpak’mi kutimunki has de volver para la sangre,
allpachask’a fortalecido;
anka hina manchay k’auak como el gavilán que todo lo
[mira
mana pipa aypanan rapra y cuyo vuelo nadie alcanza (63)
[You must not forget, my son,
You must never forget:
You are going in search of blood,
fortified;
like the hawk who sees everything
and whose flight can never be overtaken by anyone.]

(My translation.)

Here the lyrics of the harawí transmits not only the sentiments of the indigenous community but also demonstrate their resilient stance against the unfair treatment meted out to Demetrio. It is this cry that resonates in the air and reaches everyone, turning the harawí into a political statement. As William Rowe suggests, “[…] new possibilities emerge when the music is converted into a space where some experiences are made visible, […], narratable. What was previously beyond narration in Peruvian literature, because it did not form a part of the story of the nation, is now drawn in the ear prepared by Andean music. This is no longer folklore--expressive voice of ethnic groups---but a field of vibrations in which everything can be heard” (45; my translation). One can then argue that by introducing the harawí Arguedas not only integrates the pre-Colombian world in the new nation-state but also demonstrates the inherent malleability of the indigenous culture which is capable of preserving its traditions while adapting itself to meet the challenges of the new scenario. In this way the author constructs a nation where the Creole vision is tempered by the voice of the indigenous populace breaking the homogenous nation that the dominant side was trying to build.

The Arguedean narrative also questions Bhabha’s discursive strategy which does not go beyond the text to the socio-political and economic reality that necessitates the formulation of such strategies. The use of harawí then establishes that at the time of struggle the indigene reverts to her/his roots and traditions and uses them to re-write the counter-narrative of the neo-colonial nation-state. The author does not go into details of the way the harawí may have transformed over the years but rather identifies it time and again as a pre-
colonial tradition, indicating in this way that not all cultural traditions are hybrid and “ambivalent” as suggested by Bhabha. In fact this proves Parry’s argument that by concentrating only on hybridity, the critic does not acknowledge the importance of native traditions while resisting colonial (and neo-colonial) practices. Thus by inserting the harawí as a symbol of resistance, Arguedas establishes Parry’s premise that the native is “a historical subject and a combatant processor of another knowledge and producer of alternative traditions” (in Ganguli 150). However, that is not to say that Arguedas denies the fact that cultures can be hybrid, nor does he refute the fact that hybridity is a canny instrument of subversion as we had seen in the first chapter where we analyzed his linguistic strategies.

I will now examine very briefly the role played by hybridity in the representation of music in his last novel The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below (1971 [2000]). The story takes place in the fishing port Chimbote, and the author brings out the manner in which the transformation of the socio-economic system leads to further exploitation of human beings and Nature in this urban space. For example, Zavala, one of the characters, describes the bay in these words, “That’s the big ‘pussy’ nowadays, the sea of Chimbote. It used to be a mirror; now it’s the most generous, foul-smelling whore ‘pussy’ there is […]” (2000, 45). In this scenario the brothel occupies an important place in Chimbote. It is in fact divided in three parts, the White Wing, the Pink Wing and the Corrals, to suit the economic condition of the clients, for instance, the narrator describes the latter in this manner:

Negros, zambos, injertos, borrachos, cholos insolentes o asustados, chinos flacos, […]; pequeñas tropas de jóvenes, españoles e italianos curiosos, caminaban en el “corral”. […] Guardias armados vigilaban las dos filas de cuartos del corral y formaban el retén de todo el prostíbulo. (1990, 40)
Black men, *zambos*, Chinese Indians, drunks, insolent or frightened *cholos*, skinny Chinese [...] curious Spaniards and Italians were strolling about in the Corral. [...] Armed *guardias civiles* kept watch over the two rows of the cribs in the Corral and acted as the [national] police detachment for the whole brothel.

(2000, 43-44)

It is then possible to say that the brothel is representative of the nation where everything is up for sale. Coincidently at this time there were many foreign companies in Peru who had come to trade and in the process had forced the fishermen, the mafia and entrepreneurs to exploit the bay. The consequences of this early stage of industrialization were felt by all the workers, especially the migrants in the factories or the fishermen going out to the sea.

Along with the entrepreneurs came cultural products: in the parlor of the brothel for example, rock and roll is very popular, as Maxwell, the American with the Peace Corp, shows the sex-workers how to dance to its rhythm, “Maxwell was dancing rock and roll with a thin Chinese-Indian girl [...]. The American’s dancing kept all the regulars entranced in the pink hall of the brothel” (2000, 33). In this informal stage of the nation-state where music from distant lands is making a place for itself, Arguedas inserts the *huayno* brought down to the *costa* from the very heart of the *sierras*, as Asto the fisherman leaves the sex-worker Argentina’s room he goes off, “whistling a *huayno*, crossing the other lines of clients” (2000,

---

94 As Moncada the *zambo* preacher says in one of his speeches while protesting against the foreign companies and their relation with the government, “Belaúnde, president of the Republic, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, father mother of presidents, dead Senator Kennedy; [...] Do you remember the bubonic plague that came out of Talara-Tumbes? [...] I am that plague, and here I am sweating out the bubonic plague of Talara-Tumbes International Petroleum Company, Esso, Lobitos, pound sterling, dollar” (2000, 57). In addition, the analogy between the multinational companies and their counterparts “strolling” the shores of Peru is unmistakable in the passage quoted above (2000, 43-44).
42). In this manner the author introduces the voice of the *Serrano*, making a place for himself in the urban spaces, and demonstrates that the indigenous cultural influences are still retained despite the enormous socio-economic transformations taking place in the country. It is possible to assert, therefore, that despite a certain dilution of the cultural metatext here, these musical traditions have not been erased completely.

Arguedas also introduces the guitar, a twelve stringed European musical instrument, which the blind musician Antolín Crispín adapts to play another kind of music, “[t]wo firsts, two seconds made of wire and one more steel one for each wire-covered string. […] It took a long time; Antolín plucked each plain and each wire-wound string; one by one he made them sob. Then he played the introduction to the *huayno*, improvising melodies and chords that described for Florinda and the *cholo* pimp the warm Andean foothills and the little waterfalls, the spiders that hang down from thorny bushes toward the pools of the big rivers” (2000, 78). Music in the narrative thus has a direct relation to Nature and the musical notes from birds, trees, rivers, mountains, rocks, are all part of the tale, a strategy used by Arguedas not only in this novel but in his other fictional works as well. And we see again that the music that emerges from the European instrument is embedded in the *sierras* as its voice echoes through the markets of Chimbote. Antolín’s guitar also reverberates with the sounds of Chimbote, since he can hear “the light of the island, the humming of the human trachea where each person’s speech comes out, hearing life exactly the way it was […]”(2000, 82). Here the narrator, whose ideology and vision reflect the author’s position, proves once again that the voice of the *Serrano* can never be drowned out, and that s/he is capable of adapting her/himself to the sounds of any milieu in which s/he finds her/himself, as s/he alters the instruments at hand to communicate her/his voice and her/his vision, entrenched as it is in the
land of its origin. Thus does Crispín bring some peace to the people of the shanty towns who listened to him for hours some even, “[…] waiting near the guitar hour after hour, in sunshine or in cloud shadow” (2000, 82). It is, therefore, possible to affirm that music plays a vital role in the Andean highlands as well as the urban spaces where the Serrano is separated from his world and thrown into a fast paced chaotic one where it is musicians like Crispín who bring a sense of order. Thus, by weaving in the harawís and huaynos in the text-nation, the author brings to light its depth and asserts that it is a vibrant and multilayered entity. He also proves that the indigenous communities are not constrained in any way and construct the nation according to their beliefs and cultural practices even though they are not included in the formal nation-building project.

One can then reiterate that the cultural field plays as important a role as the political and economic ones in the task of constructing the nation. The many fiestas, along with music, dance, and art, recognized by the State as national “patrimony”, are transformed into factors fundamental in the celebration of the “rites of nation-building”. The term is used here to suggest that, “every rite leads to the consecration or legitimization of an arbitrary boundary, that is to say that, it attempts to misrepresent the arbitrariness and present the boundary as legitimate and natural; or […] it effects a solemn, that is to say a licensed and extraordinary, transgression of the boundaries which constitute the social and ideanational order which it is concerned at all costs to protect […]” (Bourdieu 1992, 81). I contend that it is this idea of

95 In the Compact Oxford Dictionary “rite” is described as a religious or other solemn ceremony or act, and the phrase “rite of passage” refers to a ceremony or event which marks an important stage in someone’s life. It is in this sense that I use the term rite, as we will see later in the chapter.
sanctifying the Creole vision of nation which leads to the dispute that arises over the manner in which the Peruvian national day is to be celebrated in the novel *Yawar fiesta* (1941).

Celebration of the national day creates an ambience in which one’s allegiance to the nation is brought out in the open and is instituted in the nation-state by various ceremonies. It is also seen as a way of validating one’s “loyalty” to the nation/nation-state, entering in this way in the volatile and nebulous area of “patriotism”. Thus the manner of celebration becomes a crucial instrument in the process of sanctifying the nation in the imagination of the populace.

In so far as patrimony is concerned, following García Canclini, I would like to affirm that the concept of patrimony too is highly political and the struggle for domination within the Nation-state is reflected in the cultural artifacts (as well as music and dance) that it perceives as patrimony, and those that it places outside this domain. These, when incorporated as part of the national heritage, become active participants in the consecration of the nation as conceived by the dominant side. According to García Canclini, the attempt of the Latin American nations, “to be both modern and culturally pure led to metaphysical versions of the nation’s historical patrimony that did more to justify present domination than they did to describe the past” (xiii). *Yawar fiesta* then illustrates clearly the use of culture in the construction of the nation with its emphasis on the celebration of the national day and the bullfight or *corrida de toro*, which is still seen more as a cultural event than a sport (Douglass 1997, 81).  

---

96 Carrie B. Douglass, in her study on bullfighting and identity in contemporary Spain, contends that even now in the largest national newspaper *El País*, for instance, the bullfighting news is located in the section with theater, film, and book reviews, and not near the sports section, elevating it in this way to culture (1997, 81). I have used anthropological sources to discuss the importance of bullfight as Arguedas drew from his own anthropological and ethnographic studies to depict the indigenous culture. Moreover, the *corrida de toro* reflects to a large extent the social structure of Spain as pointed out by
considered in artistic terms, the *mistis* talk about how they had seen the artistry of the Spanish *torero* Belmonte in Lima (1985, 37).

As mentioned in chapter one, the story of *Yawar fiesta* is set in the Andean town Puquio, in the Lucanas district, where a bullfight is held every year to celebrate the national day of Peru on 28th July. In this novel the omniscient narrator, as sympathetic to the indigenous communities as the author, recounts the history of their subordination that began during the Conquest in the third person. He also relates the way the natives were dispossessed of their lands by the *mistis* who conspired with the judiciary and the Church in this matter about three hundred years ago. They came to Puquio after the loss of their mines. Before they came, this was known as an Indian town where members of the four *ayllus* lived. In the years that followed the *mistis* kept coming down and taking over the land that belonged to the indigenous communities, a practice which became institutionalized and continued even after the establishment of the Republic. In the following passage the author describes how the indigenous communities were “legally” dispossessed of their land, and the operation was then given the blessings of the Church:

> Año tras año, los principales fueron sacando papeles, documentos de toda clase, diciendo que eran dueños de este manantial, de ese echadero, de las pampas buenas de pasto y más próximas al pueblo. De repente aparecían en la puna, por

Douglass, and it is for this reason that I have consulted various anthropological studies to examine why it was introduced in Latin America and its significance in this context. Its importance for the author can be gauged by the fact that he chooses this particular socio-cultural event as the centre of the plot.

97 *Misti* is a term used by the Indians to designate persons of the aristocratic class, of Western or near Western culture, who have traditionally dominated the region since colonial times (*Yawar fiesta* 1985, 197). According to the translator, “[a]lthough misti means “white” in Quechua, by now naturally, none of them is of the pure white race or of pure Western culture” (Barraclough 1985, 197).
cualquier camino, en gran cabalgata. Llegaban con arpa, violín y clarinete, entre
mujeres y hombres, cantando, tomando vino […] Con los mistis venía el Juez de
Primera Instancia, el Subprefecto, el capitán Jefe Provincial y algunos gendarmes.
(1958, 23-24)

Year after year, the important people would draw up papers, all kinds of
documents, swearing that they were the owners of this spring, of that grazing
land, of the fields with the best pastures nearest to the town. They would appear
suddenly on the puna, by any road, in a great cavalcade.98 They would come with
harp, violin, and clarinet, men and women, singing, drinking wine. […] With the
_mistis_ came the Judge of the Court of First Instance, the Subprefect, the Provincial
Chief of Police, and some local policemen. (1985, 12)

In this segment one can observe that even the _mistis_ use music to celebrate the act of
dispossessing the Indians. Music turns this act into a fiesta on the puna as the Judge
ceremoniously reads out from an “official” paper which makes it clear that the land does not
belong to the Indians any more (1985, 12). In fact, this passage also seems to be an ironic re-
enactment of the “Requerimiento”, a document drafted by the Spanish authorities in 1513,
and used to give political legitimacy to one of the biggest acts of dispossession ever, the
Conquest of America.

The “Requerimiento” (or Requirement) was the document read to the natives by the
_conquistadores_ urging them to accept the Catholic faith and the rule of the Spanish king,

98 Barraclough explains in a footnote that the word cavalcade can be traced to the Spanish
word  _cabalgada_ used in the sixteenth century for the _conquistadores’_ expeditions to capture
Indian slaves and find gold and other booty (1985, 12)
non-compliance was seen as an act of war. The “Requirement” then became a ritual to be performed before the slaughter of the natives who did not “comply” with these orders read in Spanish, an unknown language, by strangers. This ritual was also an important political step towards establishing the rule of the Imperial authorities. According to Patricia Seed, “To establish the right to rule by virtue of conquest means that all the soldiers, captains and leaders in battle must follow the political steps they have been commanded to undertake. For what is at stake is not simply their personal control over a region, but the legitimate government of an entire state. To omit the rituals would be to jeopardize the establishment of legitimate dominion” (70). In the same way the misís follow the rituals ceremoniously to establish their claim over the land, literally and figuratively, as the Judge reads out the official document to the Indians and re-enacts in this manner the ceremonies of conquest and colonization.

The formal announcement, the process of sanctification of the authority of the misís and the institutions that they control, can be seen as a kind of an investiture ceremony in which the rule of the dominant class is instituted, as the possessors of the land and everything within it, which then becomes a symbolic representation of the nation. In this manner the difference between the misís and the ayllus is institutionalized (those who have land and have influence and control over all the domains of power, and those who don’t), as the details are noted and written on paper, the ultimate act of sanctification for the hegemony. According to Bourdieu, “[…] to institute is to consecrate, that is to say to sanction and to sanctify, a state of affairs, an established order---which is precisely what, in the juridico-political sense of the word, a constitution does. Investiture […] consists in sanctioning and sanctifying, in making known and recognized, a difference […]"; in making it exist as a social
difference known and recognized by the agent thereby invested, and by others” (1992, 82). One can even suggest that in this manner a shadowy Constitution of the Republic comes to life. It is this version that demonstrates the state of affairs of the nation-state better than the official political one wherein everyone ostensibly has equal rights, when in practice, as shown in the Arguedean text-nation, this is not the case.

As in the celebration of any investiture ceremony there is music and dance and food, which turns this occasion into a fiesta for the *mistis*. In this scenario the musical instruments also become symbols of power since they are seen as part of the administration, the judiciary and the religious domains. The sound of the dispossession reverberates in the voice of the clarinet, the harp and the violin, musical instruments brought from the West, thereby adding another dimension to the written word seen by the eye. The reader familiar with these musical instruments can then visualize the scene as the author tries to meld all the senses and does not restrict it only to the eye.

    Ahí está pues papel, ahí está pues werak’ocha Juez, ahí está gendarmes, ahí está niñas; principales con su arpista, con su clarinetero, con sus botellas de “sirwuisa”. ¡Ahí está pues taita cura! (1958, 24)

    “Well yonder is paper; well, yonder is *werak’ocha* Judge; yonder is policemen, yonder is girls; important people with their harp players, with their clarinet player, with their bottles of beer. Well yonder is *tayta* Priest!” (1985, 13)

In contrast to these “sounds” of conquest, is that of the *wakawak’ra*, a trumpet made of the horns of the bull by the Indians. The voice of the *wakawak’ra*, “sounds deep and slow, like the voice of a man, like the voice of the high puna with its cold wind whistling through the
mountain passes over the lake” (1985, 20). The author establishes, in this manner, the
relationship between the Indians, the wakawak’ra and their land as they appear to grow from
each other. While the mistis bring their musical instruments to celebrate the acquisition of
their “new” property, the natives use the wakawak’ra as a catalyst to rally the members of
their communities to fight against this forced taking over of their livestock, for instance:

Sólo cuando los mistis subían a las punas en busca de carne, y juntaban a las
ovejas a golpe de zurriago y bala para escoger a los mejores padrillos; entonces no
más había alboroto. Porque a veces los punarunas se molestaban y se reunían,
llamándose de casa en casa, de estancia a estancia, con silbidos y wakawak’ras; se
juntaban rabiando, rodeaban a los principales y a los chalos abusivos. (1958, 22)

Only when the mistis went up onto the punas in search of meat and fired their
guns and cracked their bullwhips to herd the sheep together so that they could
pick out the best stud rams, only then was there any commotion. Because
sometimes then the punarunas would get angry and get together. Signaling to one
another from house to house from farm to farm, with the whistling and
wakawak’ras they’d come together in anger, surrounding the important people
and the bullying chalos […] (1985, 11)

The voice of the wakawak’ras then plays an important role in the defiant act of the Indians
as they struggle against the prominent citizens to protest against the forcible annexation of
their property. Though the Indians are subsequently beaten up by the police brought in
retaliation by the mistis, the voice of the wakawak’ra remains a symbol of the voice of the
native raised in defiance.
In the cultural context, this instrument represents the coming together of two cultures, the Hispanic and the indigenous one. One can even say that it is in this instrument that we see inscribed the history of pre-colonial and postcolonial Peru. According to Arguedas wakawak’ra was in part an adaptation of an instrument called “huauco”, mentioned by the indigenous historiographer Felipe Guaman Poma (1976, 172). It subsequently began to be made by the natives from the horns of the bull, introduced to the American continent by the conquistadores. I would like to argue that the wakawak’ra was created when two cultures collided, but the new instrument born in this way maintained its connection to the indigenous traditions. It is then possible to reaffirm that a vital ingredient of the new hybrid culture that emerges from this fusion was entrenched in the native one. This is yet another example of the way a particular colonized community negotiates with the hegemonic colonial authority and reinvents the colonizer’s cultural instruments to accommodate the voice of the native.

The importance of music in the authochthonous culture is emphasized when the author dedicates a chapter to the special music played during the bullfight by the indigenous communities. The preparations for the bullfight, which entail capturing one of the fiercest bulls from the mountains, begin with the playing of the wakawak’ras:

En la puna y en los cerros que rodean al pueblo tocaban ya wakawak’ras. Cuando se oían el turupukllay (*) en los caminos que van a los distritos y en las charcas de trigo, indios y vecinos hablaban de la corrida ese año. (1958, 33)

On the puna and on the mountains surrounding the town they were now sounding the wakawak’ras. When they heard the turupukllay on the country roads and in the wheatfields, Indians and townspeople spoke of that year’s bullfight. (1985, 19)
The author explains the meaning of the word *turupukllay* in the footnote. According to Arguedas this term refers to the bullfight as well as to the special bullfight music played on the *wakawak’ras* (1985, 19). The use of this form of native music to announce a festival with Spanish antecedents, and one that still forms a part of the new Republic, demonstrates that though there is a continuation of the Hispanic tradition, it has now been appropriated by the natives. This act then establishes that the indigenous communities are not passive receptors of outside influences but can adapt themselves to forces of change. In fact, it also demonstrates that transculturation is a process that is vital to the re-construction of the subaltern culture. I believe that this creative act proves Rama’s interpretation of the concept which differs from the one postulated by Ortiz. And indeed it proves Arguedas’ premise that transculturation is not just epistemological but actually takes place in the material world.

The *wakawak’ra* is mentioned in the title of the third chapter, “Wakawak’ras, Trumpets of the Earth” (1985, 19). This strategy announces, rather abruptly, the end of the historical part of the novel and the beginning of the action in the text. The author establishes, like this, the importance of the trumpet not just as an aesthetic part of the plot, as mentioned earlier, but almost as if it were one of the participants in the action. The reaction to the music by the various sectors of the Andean village sums up the attitude of the hegemonic class towards the indigenous communities and their cultural expression:

De los cuatro ayllus, comenzando la noche, el turupukllay, subía al girón Bolívar.

Desde la plaza de Chaupi, derecho, por el girón Bolívar, subía con el viento el pukllay de don Maywa. En las tiendas, en el billar, en las casas de los principales, oían las niñas y los vecinos.

---

99 As mentioned in the introductory chapter, for Rama communities and individuals play a crucial role in the process of transculturation, a fact denied by Ortiz (in Castro 6).
---Por la noche, esa música parece de panteón----decían.

---Sí, hombre, friega el ánimo. […]

---[…] Debiera prohibirse que a la hora de comer nos molesten de esa manera.

[…]

Las niñas y las señoras también se lamentaban.

---¡Qué música tan penetrante! Es odioso oír esa tonada a esta hora. Se debiera pedir a la Guardia Civil que prohíba tocar esa tonada en las noches.

[…][…]---¡Música del diablo!---decía el Vicario. (1958, 35-36)

From the four quarters, as the night began, the bullfight music would rise up to Girón Bolívar. From the Chaupi square, straight up to Girón Bolívar, the turupukllay rose in the wind. In the shops, in the pool hall, in the notables’ houses, the girls and the townsmen would hear it.

“At night that music sounds like it’s coming from the graveyard”, they’d say.

“Yeah, man. It troubles your mind.”

“[…] They shouldn’t be allowed to bother us that way at dinnertime.”

[…] The girls and the ladies complained too.

“Such penetrating music! It’s hateful to hear that tune at this hour. The Civil Guard should be asked to forbid them to play that tune at night.

[…] “Devil’s music!, the Vicar would say. (1985, 21, 22)

In the reaction of the ladies from the notables’ families and the Vicar, one can discern how those with power could and did use the state machinery to suppress the people whom they
did not consider as part of their community. However, not everyone reacted so negatively; some people appreciated the music too, or rather claimed to understand it:

---¡Nada de eso! No es la música.--- explicaba algún señor ilustrado---es que asociamos esa tonada con las corridas en que los indios se hacen destrozar con el toro, al compás de esta musiquita. (1958, 35)

“That’s not it! It’s not the music,” explained one learned gentleman. “Its that we associate that melody with the bullfights in which the Indians have the bulls destroy them, to the beat of that little tune.” (1985, 21)

The voice of the wakawak’ra then penetrates into the very fabric of the community and announces its continued presence in the new nation. As the turupukllay engulfs the Andean town and enters the very soul of the society through the ears, it reveals, more than any dialogue could, the existence of another world underneath the surface seen only by the eye. The manner of playing the wakawak’ra is distinctive too, and the listeners can immediately recognize the musician’s style. As a member of the notable class points out, “That cholo Maywa is the worst of all. His music goes right down to the depths of my soul” (1985, 22). Don Maywa of the Chaupi ayllu then becomes the representative of the indigenous communities and the voice of the wakawak’ra becomes their voice. Its plaintive call in fact conveys their agony more eloquently than words and reaches out even to the mistis, “You hear?” they’d say in the mistis houses. “Like deep sobbing it is, like people’s voices” (1985, 22). The reader too becomes aware of the complex Peruvian social structure and the power struggle going on therein when s/he reads these words.
The bullfight or *corrida* is the central point of the novel. In what way should the *corrida* be fought becomes a bone of contention and arouses the passions of those who appreciate the indigenous style and those who are in favor of the Spanish one. For the *mistis* the *corrida* is a fiesta in which the *ayllus* compete with each other to kill the bull, and apparently the more violent the fight the more the *mistis* enjoyed it; so much so that they compare the indigenous fighters to the well known Spanish toreros, Joselito and Belmonte (1985, 33). The *mistis* also equate the natives to savage wild beasts, as one of the leading citizens points out, “The Indians are wilder than the bulls, and they come in taunting them […] They sew the saddlecloths onto the wild bull’s back[…] The Indians go crazy over the saddlecloth ; they enter in droves to tear off the saddlecloth. And that’s something to see Señor Subprefect! Because the Indians are also like wild beasts….” (1985, 32). The natives and the bulls are placed in the same category as wild animals captured from the pastures; and in this categorization we see the repetition of the old colonial paradigms, “savage” natives vis-à-vis the “civilized” colonial masters as this view is renewed in the postcolonial Nation-state. The bullfight then is not just a fiesta but also a mirror that reflects the contemporary state of affairs.

The social structure in the town is multilayered with the *mistis* at the top, right below the administration/central government embodied in the person of the Subprefect, the Judge and the Provincial Chief of Police, followed by the Mayor and the prominent citizens. The leading citizens are also divided according to their possessions which fix their status within the Puquian society. Don Julián Arangüena, for example, is one of the landowners at a higher level than Don Pancho Jiménez who owns a store. This social hierarchy is reflected in the way in which the *mistis* interact with the representative of the Central Government or
“national government” as it is called by them and the administration (1985, 43). As mentioned earlier, the conflict between the ayllus and the nation-state arises over the manner in which the corrida is to be fought on the national day. The administrators in Lima want to stop the indigenous style bullfight, and the Subprefect, their representative announces this to the mistis.

El Suprefecto, de espaldas a la mesa, se cuadró con un papel en la mano, y empezó a hablar:

---Señor Alcalde y señores vecinos: tengo que darles una mala noticia. He recibido una circular de la Dirección de Gobierno, prohibiendo las corridas sin diestros. Para ustedes que han hablado tanto de las corridas de este pueblo, es una fatalidad. Pero yo creo que esta prohibición es en bien del país, porque da fin a una costumbre que era un salvajismo, según ustedes mismos me han informado, porque los toros ocasionaban muertos y heridos. Como ustedes se dan cuenta, yo tengo que hacer cumplir esta orden. Y les aviso con tiempo para que contraten a un torero en Lima, si quieren tener corrida en fiestas patrias. La circular será pegada en sus esquinas del girón principal. (1958, 53)

The Subprefect stood stiffly with his back to the table, a paper in hand, and began to speak.

“Your honor and worthy citizens, I have some bad news for you. I have received an edict from the Ministry prohibiting bullfights without trained bullfighters. To those of you who have talked so much about the bullfights in this town, this is a fatal blow. But I think this is good for the country, because it puts an end to a
custom that was a savage survival, as you yourself have informed me, because the bulls cause deaths and injuries. As you must realize, I have to enforce this order. And I am letting you know in good time, so you can hire a professional Spanish-style bullfighter from Lima if you want to hold a bullfight for the national holidays. The edict will be posted on the main street corners.” (1985, 36)

The announcement makes Don Pancho Jiménez and his friends protest, but to no avail, as “the group of citizens who were most prominent and were friends of the official raised their voices loudly, when they saw the Subprefect looking at Don Pancho Jiménez angrily” (1985, 37). The most influential leading citizens then express their views:

---¡No señor Subprefecto! ¡Los vecinos conscientes estamos con la autoridad! La corrida de Puquio es deshonrosa para nuestro pueblo. Parecemos salvajes de Africa y nos gozamos con estos cholos que se meten entre las astas de los toros, sin saber torear y borrachos todavía---don Demetrio Cáceres avanzó hasta la mesa del Subprefecto. Se hacía el rabioso---Yo he estado en las corridas de Belmonte en Lima y he gozado con su arte. Aquí hay que enseñar a la gente que sepan ver toros y corridas civilizadas. Todos estos vecinos que me rodean son los que van a Lima, son los más instruidos. Y apoyamos al Gobierno. Sí señor. (1958, 54-55)

“No, Señor Subprefect! We citizens who are really aware of the situation are on the side of the authorities. The Puquio bullfight is a disgrace to our town. It makes us look like African savages, and we enjoy seeing these cholos put themselves between the bull’s horns, without knowing how to fight and drunken to boot,” said Don Demetrio Cáceres, going up to the Subprefect’s table. He pretended he
was furious. “I have seen Belmonte’s bullfights in Lima and I’ve enjoyed his artistry. Here the people must be taught how to watch bulls and civilized bullfights. All these gentlemen around me are the ones who go to Lima; they’re the ones with the most education. And we support the national government”.

(1985, 37)

Don Cáceres also introduces the stereotypical image of the savage associated with Africa and reproduces in this way the prejudices and biases of the Western colonial powers. Cáceres’ view can be interpreted as a reflection of the neo-colonial character of the nation-state wherein the leading members perceive society in the Manichean divisions mentioned in the nineteenth century essay by the Argentine man of letters, and politician Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), in his work *Facundo: civilization and barbarism* (2003[1845]).

This work has left a lasting impression on the founding fathers of the new Latin American nations, and still continues to influence *letrados* and Presidential aspirants like Mario Vargas Llosa, (Sorensen Goodrich 13). Diana Sorensen Goodrich opines that, “The resilience of the polarity has allowed it to outlive the self-reflexive turn of our times, sometimes by turning up in a very contemporary debates without shedding its nineteenth-century trappings” (13). To illustrate this point, she mentions a discussion held in the spring of 1993 between Mario Vargas Llosa, Arcadio Díaz Quiñones and Tomás Eloy Martínez on the sale of state-owned enterprises, and the decentralization of the national economies, conducted in the terms set by Sarmiento, who is invoked in the conversation. After Vargas Llosa had expounded his political views, Díaz Quiñones summed them up as follows, “At

---

100 This essay was written about a gaucho called Facundo Quiroga. In this essay, the author tries to depict the “barbarism” institutionalized by Rosas who ruled Argentina from 1835 to 1852; during his rule Sarmiento was exiled to Chile. He later became the President of Argentina.
this point in the conversation I notice that Mario Vargas Llosa’s true model for the public space is Sarmiento, with his civilizing and modernizing discourse, and his ideas of civilization and barbarism” (in Sorensen Goodrich 13-14). This perspective is shared by the prominent citizens who equate Lima to Spain, and view it as the cradle of “civilization” as opposed to the savage Puquio of the sierras.

Being educated is also associated with knowing how to appreciate the “civilized bullfights”, i.e. to say the “artistry” of the Spanish style as opposed to the savagery of the natives. According to Bourdieu, education plays an important role in molding the elite to continue the traditions established by the ruling class, and that is what is reflected in Don Cáceres’ statement (1992, 79). The relation between nation and culture is further asserted in the following exchange that takes place between Don Cáceres’ group and the Subprefect:

---Con veinte Subprefectos como usted se podría civilizar al Perú rápidamente. Necesitamos de autoridades que vengan a enseñarnos y que estén resueltos a imponer la cultura del extranjero. En estos pueblos, señor Subprefecto, vivimos todavía en la oscuridad. ¡Ni qué hablar de nuestro retraso! Y toda buena costumbre lo echan a perder aquí, el medio, los cholas y algunos vecinos que tienen el indio, adentro. ¿No ve la corrida? Aquí se hace con wakawa’ras, con dinamita, con lanza, en una plaza que es un pampón […] No hay paso doble, ni marcha, ni capas de colores, ni banderillas. ¡Puro indio! Huaynos, ayarachi[…]. (1958, 57)

---

101 Roberto Fernando Retamar has pointed out that the dichotomy civilization-barbarism cannot be detached from the ascendancy of capitalism (in Sorensen Goodrich 9).
“With twenty Subprefects like you, Peru could be civilized in a hurry. We need officials who’ll come and teach us, and who are determined to impose the culture of the foreign countries. No use even talking about our backwardness! And every good custom is ruined by the environment, by the *cholos*, and some citizens who are Indians on the inside. Don’t you see how the bullfight is? Here they hold it with *wakawak’ras*, with dynamites and lances, in a bull ring that is a big field. […] There aren’t any two-steps, or marches, or crimson capes, or *banderillas*. It’s pure Indian! *Huaynos, ayarachi*[^102] […]” (1985, 39)

Ironically Don Cáceres and his friends did enjoy watching the *turupukllay*, but they change their stance to follow the central government’s diktat and show their support for the Spanish style bullfighting. By encouraging this stand, the government, and its representatives also work towards forming a new kind of audience, a new consumer of artistic products, approved and selected by the dominant side. The creation of new consumers would not only lead to the demand for these cultural products but would also construct a new Peruvian society more attuned to the culture being promoted by the hegemony. I am convinced, therefore, that “culture” is interpreted according to the practices perceived as the ones befitting the image of the Creole nation. In addition, because these traditions are identified and selected by the

[^102]: Horning Barraclough, the translator, explains in the footnote that *banderillas* are “rounded dowels two feet long, covered with colored paper and with a steel harpoon point, that are placed in pairs into the bulls withers” while *ayarachi* means “corpse-making” in Quechua and that it is a lugubrious funeral march (1985, 39). It is difficult to escape the symbolism contained in the playing of the *ayarachi* during the *turupukllay* as the indigenous communities are destroyed by the bull representing not only the *Conquistadores* but the new hegemonic classes as well. This can only lead to a deep mourning on the part of the indigenous communities as they struggle to preserve their *weltanschauung* against the colonial and neo-colonial practices. Hence it is not surprising that the *turupukllay* is accompanied by a lugubrious funeral march, which can be said to represent the end of the pre-colonial era, as well as the sorrow caused by the invasion and continuous oppression that the natives have to face.
nation-state, the hegemonic versions of the same are viewed as “legitimate”. I would, thus, like to argue that the cultural field is extremely politicized as different sections of the society stage their conflicts symbolically. According to Bourdieu, “[…] Just as in the case of the system of reproduction, in particular the educational system, so the field of production and diffusion can only be fully understood if one treats it as a field of competition for the monopoly of the legitimate exercise of symbolic violence. Such a construction allows us to define the field of restricted production as the scene of competition for the power to grant cultural consecration, but also as a system of reproducing producers of a determinate type of cultural goods, and the consumer capable of consuming them” (1993, 121).

The need for a Spanish torero, therefore, creates a demand for this particular “cultural production” thereby consecrating the Spanish style corrida as opposed to the Indian one. In this demand the Spanish style is sanctified as the only way to celebrate an event which ostensibly should unite all the members on their national day. And as mentioned earlier, consecration also functions as a creative process, by forming a “consumer” capable of consuming a particular product and defining in this way the character of the nation, which would be Creole and Hispanic, i.e. a transplanted version of the metropolis. In this manner the ruling elite incorporate the cultural field within the fields of economic and political dominance.

It should be clear, however, that mistis like Julián Arangüena (who donates the bull for the fight to the ayllus) and Don Pancho who support the autochthonous style are not doing so because they are empathetic to the indigenous culture. Their support for the Indian style in fact reaffirms, in a way, their superior position in the social hierarchy. The administration and some of the prominent citizens perceive this support as a threat to the
edict and the Subprefect even imprisons Don Jiménez for his opposition to the diktat of the nation-state. However, this transgression also endorses Don Jiménez and Don Arangüena’s standing within the society. The ancestors of the *mistis* who had come and taken over the land from the *ayllus* had established the social order on the basis of their possessions: land, livestock, and control over the economic and political systems. For instance, Don Arangüena’s status in the community is founded on these possessions, institutionalized by his ancestors with the help of the administration. As Bourdieu points out, “[…] the condescending member of the elite chooses to go over the limits. He possesses that privilege of privileges, which consists in taking liberties with his privilege. […] In short, one of the privileges of consecration lies in the fact that by conferring on the person it consecrates an indisputable and permanent essence, it authorizes him to make transgressions which would be otherwise forbidden. He who is sure of his cultural identity can play with the rules of the cultural game” (1992, 87). *Mistis* like Don Arangüena can thus afford to show their taste for the “savage” turupukllay because they are sure of their cultural identity.

The indigenous style of bullfighting and even the ritual dance performance by the same group is looked upon as savage. Initially the Subprefect expresses a desire to see the dance after hearing its description, but his colleagues from the coast, the Judge and the Provincial Chief of Police, dismiss it as unworthy of their attention, “[t]hat Tankayllu is a filthy Indian like the rest of them, but he does some pirouettes and calls attention to himself […]” (1985, 35). The dominant side, however, chooses the cultural artifacts that they think should be a part of the nation’s culture. Thus a painting made by an indigenous artist Don Narciso Cueva, depicting the war with Chile, hangs in the town’s meeting hall where the Mayor and other office bearers take decisions regarding the town. The author does not
describe it but simply mentions that it has been painted by an indigenous artist. It is ironic that the picture commemorating the Chilean war, painted by an Indian artist, is displayed in the seat of power, since the defeat in this war suffered by Peru is attributed principally to the “Indians cowardice” (1985, 43). The Mayor’s office and that of the Subprefect’s are not only provincial seats of power, but also represent the central government. The picture, moreover, hangs next to the portrait of the President of the Republic, a gesture that can be interpreted as an extension of State patronage. In this way the government recognizes tacitly some artists, and uses them to build its cultural capital selectively.

The painting while representing the “indigenous part” symbolically is also passive, whereas the dance and the bullfight are events in which the natives participate actively, and that is what the dominant class does not want the Aboriginal to do. In this manner the hegemonic side constructs its nation accepting some works by indigenous artists while rejecting other manifestations like the turupukllay and the ritual dance. This act also puts the latter clearly outside the culture of the nation being built by those in power. Furthermore, by choosing to accept the indigenous painter the dominant side ostensibly “accepts” its “autochthonous” heritage and constructs its patrimony. Patrimony implies a continuation and unchanged tradition and is used by nation-states to reinforce a sense of tradition, as García Canclini points out, “What is defined as patrimony and identity claims to be the faithful reflections of the national essence” (110). By accepting the painting, the hegemonic side then implicitly accepts what it sees as “civilized” culture while rejecting the barbaric and savage aspects reflected in the turupukllay for instance.

The indigenous communities, however, do not accept these negative images painted by the dominant side, and celebrate with great enthusiasm the dansak Tankayllu, as he dances
through the streets dressed in, “pants and vest, mirror and golden sash, varicolored beads […]", on his large felt hat he’d wear a hawk’s body, beak forward” (1985, 30), and the sounds of his shears could be “heard three blocks away” (1985, 30). The translator explains that the, “mirror-bespangled ritual dancer carries large steel scissors that he clicks. His name, Tankayllu, is the Quechua word for a large, heavy-bodied, buzzing insect that flies through the fields sipping honey from flowers” (1985, 30). Ironically the dance with the scissors was introduced by the Spanish colonizers and was adopted by the natives. The term dansak’ is actually a hybrid word that combines the Quechua root with a Spanish suffix meaning “dancer” (Arguedas 1976, 151). He further points out that the indigenous communities had to invent new names to designate the objects and customs brought to their shores by the Spanish (1976, 151). It is ironic that the new nation-state in a way rejects one of the old forms of dance introduced by the Spanish colonial authorities because it perceives the native version as a savage one. This attitude demonstrates once again that it is the indigenous part that gives the hybrid cultural product its identity. In this way they also reject the act of resistance contained in the performance of the dance, introduced by the colonial masters. The autochthonous version of the dance of the scissors actually reflected the new way the dansaks revered their old deities (Huamán 283). Thus I am convinced that the process of transculturation contained in this dance reveals that this particular colonized community found new ways of resisting the assimilatory advances of the colonial authorities, as also the nation-state that too rejected the indigenous spiritual world.

The dansak’s presence filled the community with pride and united them, “[…] when the Tankayllu came out onto Girón Bolívar clicking his shears, the girls and the mistis closed together on the balconies to get to see him. Then there was no K’ayau, nor Chaupi, nor
K’ollana; the whole populace, the Indians from all neighborhoods rejoiced, filling the mistis’ streets; their eyes sparkled as they watched the townspeople’s faces” (1985, 30). The dansak’s performance also wins the grudging admiration of the mistis “He’s an artist. They ought to take him to Lima!” they’d say on the balconies. “He might be an Indian…but how well he dances!” (1985, 30). In this way the indigenous communities construct the counter narrative of the Creole nation and join in the nation-building process. In fact, throughout the novel the narrator mentions the courage and determination of the ayllus, and gives examples of the grit and bravery with which they construct the highway to Lima in twenty eight days (1985, 63-64). I would thus like to affirm that the narrator, in tandem with the author, depicts a very positive image of the indigenous communities in the novel, a strategy which is repeated when he describes the many cultural interventions made by the members of the ayllus within the discourse of the nation.

The discussions about the government’s edict regarding the turupukllay are carried out almost till the end. Ironically the ayllus who actually organize and participate in the event are not involved in any of these debates and are not even given an opportunity to express their opinion. This debate not only takes place between the Subprefect and the other notables, but also between students and migrant workers from Puquio who now live in Lima. As is clear the decisions regarding the indigenous communities are taken in Lima and not in Puquio, reinforcing in this way the power of the centre over the periphery. Furthermore, these deliberations reveal symbolically how a nation is constructed. The arguments also divulge the objective of those governing the nation-state vis-à-vis the kind of nation they wish to construct. I therefore infer that the bullfight becomes a symbol of the nation-building project, and the bull ring represents the stage where the nation is being crafted.
The *corrida* has been associated with Spain for many centuries. Many scholars have written extensively on the bull, and about its cultural expression and symbolic meaning. It has also made an appearance in the works of some Spanish poets like Federico García Lorca, and Antonio Machado, and was made famous in the North American continent in the works of Ernest Hemmingway (Douglass 1997, 9). It is believed that the *corrida* was taken to the Americas by the *conquistadores*, and it has been suggested that Francisco Pizarro introduced it in Peru in the sixteenth century. According to the anthropologist Domingo Fournier, one of the reasons for introducing bullfighting in America, especially in Mesoamerica and the Andean region, was to “civilize” the indigenous communities so that they would stop the ritual sacrifices, both human and animal (232).  

Given the reaction of the national government and the eminent citizens it would seem as though this mission still needs to be carried out as the colonial project does not appear to have borne fruit and the problem of “barbarism” still exists in the new nation-state.

In the *turupukllay* the bull symbolizes many aspects of the society, and the *corrida* in a way depicts visually the nation-building process. In the novel the bull named Misitu is imbued with magical powers as shown in the story about its birth and life in the novel:

> El Misitu vivía en los k’eñwales de las alturas, en las grandes punas de K’oñañi.

> Los k’oñañis decía que había salido de Torkok’ocha, que no tenía padre ni madre. (1958, 101)

---

103 As mentioned earlier, the *corrida* is deeply entrenched in the way a society views itself and this perception colors the way the colonizers viewed the inhabitants of the colonies. Therefore, to understand the full significance of the bull fight and the reason why Arguedas builds the plot around this event it is important to place this event anthropologically not only within Latin America but also Spain.
Misitu lived in the *k’eñwa* woods, high up on the great K’oñani punas. The K’oñanis said he had come out of Tork’ocha\(^{104}\), that he had neither father nor mother. (1985, 75)

*Misitu* or the bull is supposed to have magical powers. In fact, one can even argue that this “magical being” bears a direct relation to the *conquistadores* who pretended to be divine beings in the initial phase of the war. Thus the bull can also be seen as a symbol of the colonial authorities (Fournier 251). Paradoxically it is also depicted as savage, just like the Indians who are called “wild beasts” (1985, 32), and “savages” by the *mistis* and the representatives of the national government. Time and again the *turupuklla* is described as a “savage custom” (1985, 32). The need to subdue the bull can also be construed to mean that it is the indigenous communities who need to be “subdued” and “civilized” in this manner (1985, 32).

The sense of collectivity and community shared by the Indians is equated to that of animals, to cattle, by the Subprefect as he sees them gathering in the Plaza, “They’re nothing but cattle!” (1985, 49). By referring to them as livestock, the Subprefect suppresses their human characteristics and turns them into objects seen as the property of the nation to be manipulated and controlled by the State. In this way he follows the colonial “tradition” of depicting the “other” (Mills 101). His view also demonstrates the existence of neo-colonial conditions in the new Republic. One can affirm therefore that Arguedas is not just addressing the erstwhile colonial authorities but is engaging directly with the hegemonic class that took over from Spain after Peru gained its independence. Furthermore, the use of the term “cattle”

---

\(^{104}\) *Tork’ocha* stands for Muddy Lake (Translator’s note 1985, 75)
implies that the Indians are somehow savage yet “tame”, i.e. they are seen as docile in relation to the hegemonic side. The Indians thus personify both savagery and docility, a paradox shared by the bull in the corrida in relation to the torero. According to Douglass’ interpretation of the corrida, the bull embodies both these characteristics, and it is the torero’s task to subdue and control it.

Julian Pitt-Rivers was the first anthropologist to see bullfighting as a revindication of masculinity, since it is the male who leaves the ring dominant or should (Douglass 1984, 243). Pitt-Rivers also feminizes the toro and connects the blood shed in the ring to the relationship of blood and women, beginning with the menstrual cycle and going on to the blood spilt during intercourse and subsequently during childbirth (182). Douglass, however, differs from Pitt-Rivers in this analysis and postulates that, “[…] the “should” of the male victory is not simply a victory over females. The relationship between sexes is an instance of the social hierarchy, and the outcome of the bullfight thus becomes more generally a victory of all formal hierarchical structures” (1984, 243). She further suggests that, “In the bullfight, the relationship between the torero and the bull is homologous to that between man and woman in Spain. Since the sexual hierarchy often represents the social hierarchy, the bullfight is a metaphor that makes a statement about the social order, “[honor, male/female, hierarchy/equality, bullfights]”, and it is this “honor” that is won in the ring” (Douglass 1984, 242). It is possible to say that in the Arguedean text-nation too it becomes a matter of establishing hierarchy, and domination, and reflects the conflict between those perceived as “civilized” and those seen as “barbaric”, but we do not find any overt evidence to suggest that the indigenous communities are feminized, (though their style is described at a later stage as “unmanly” (1985, 91) ). However, I concur with Douglass in her interpretation of the
*corrida* as a reflection of social structure and a fight to establish social hierarchy. Douglass’ hypothesis forms the basis of my analysis, as the struggle to construct the nation is based on hierarchy, even though there is supposed to be equality amongst all those who are considered its citizens. For instance, the author only refers to the *mistis* as the “leading citizens”, the “prominent citizens” (1985, 37), but never alludes to the Indians as citizens which implies that the latter maybe citizens on paper, but existentially they have still not been accepted as such. The *corrida* thus becomes an event where these issues such as the right to participate in the nation-building project, are dealt with. It is also about honor as the competition between the *ayllus* is to see who can stand before the bull and destroy it:

> En los cuatro ayllus hablaban de la corrida. Pichk’achuri ganaba año tras año; los capeadores de Pichk’achuri regaban con sangre la plaza. ¿Dónde había hombres para los capeadores del ayllu grande? “Honrao” Rojas arañó su chaleco, su camisa, el año pasado no más. El “callejón” de don Nicolás lo peloteó en el aire. Mientras las niñas temblaban en los balcones y los comuneros y las mujeres del ayllu gritoneaban en las barreras, en los cercos y en los techos de las casas, “Honrao” Rojas se paró firme, de haber estado ya enterrado en el polvo, he haber sido pisoteado en la barriga; arañando, arañando en el suelo, “Honrao” Rojas se enderezó […]. (1958, 33-34)

In all four communities, people were talking about the bullfight. Pichk’achuri won year after year; the Pichk’achuri bullfighters watered the ring with their blood. Where were there men to equal the *capeadores* from the largest *ayllu*? Honrao Rojas had torn off his shirt and vest only the year before. Don Nicolás’
brindled bull had tossed him into the air like a ball. While the girls were trembling on the balconies, and the Indian community men and women were shrieking on the barriers, on the walls, and on the housetops, Honrao Rojas got right up again; after having been buried in the dirt, after having had his belly trampled, and clawing, clawing the ground, Honrao Rojas stood up […]. (1985, 20).

Honrao Rojas then claims his honor in the bull ring, which as mentioned earlier represents the nation symbolically, while standing out as an individual within the collectivity as also the misti society. The nickname “Honrao” in fact comes from the Spanish term “Honrado” which means a person with honor and in this way he participates actively in the construction of the nation, if only for a day. The order is inverted on the national day as the indigenous communities act as “citizens”; however, their status reverts to the subaltern one as soon as the corrida ends.

Thus I would like to state that the process of transformation undergone by the bullfight is a mark of protest and a way of resistance but it does not lead to any major change in the living conditions of the ayllus. In Ashcroft’s opinion transformation is the way colonized people react to the “discourses that have inscribed them and regulated their global reality” (2001, 1). He further argues that, “It is transformation that gives these societies control over their future. Transformation describes the ways in which colonized societies have taken the dominant discourses, transformed them and used them in the service of their own self-empowerment. More fascinating perhaps, post-colonial transformation describes the ways in which dominated and colonized societies have transformed the very nature of the cultural power that has dominated them” (2001, 1). If we follow this premise then it is possible to say that the runas transform the national language as also the most important
cultural event symbolizing the Creole nation-state, and they empower themselves through these transformations. However, this does not give them control over their future as suggested by Ashcroft since their subversive act challenges the Creole nation only for a day. And now with the new edict the hegemonic side wanted to prevent even the emblematic participation of the Aboriginals in the nation-building project.

By using the state machinery, the prominent citizens and the administration enforce the edict of the government. In this way the nation-state turns the corrida into an issue of supreme importance, almost as if the bull ring were an arena in which to settle publicly once and for all, the identity of the nation under construction. As Larrain suggests, “[…] national identities exist at two different poles of culture. At one end, they exist in the public sphere as articulated discourses, highly selective and constructed from above by a variety of cultural agents and institutions […]. At the other end, they exist in the social base as a form of personal and group subjectivity which expresses a variety of practices, modes of life and feelings which become representative of a nation’s identity and which sometimes are not well represented in the public versions of identity” (2000, 34). Larrain further posits that, “The idea of a national identity is normally constructed around the interests and worldview of dominant classes or groups in society through a variety of cultural institutions such as the media, educational, religious and military institutions, state apparatuses, etc. […] In the public versions of national identity diversity gets carefully concealed behind a supposed uniformity” (2000, 35). A process seen clearly in Yawar fiesta, as the Church and the state apparatus combine forces to stop the turupukllay. Thus the importance of the ring is reinforced in the conflict between the administration and the Indians.
One can also affirm that in this process the bull symbolizes the Indians, as established before, and the Spanish torero, the administration struggling to create the nation. The corrida and the ring where it is fought, then become the platform to stage the construction of the nation. As the Subprefect, followed by the mistis who support him, declares at various points of time that the edict banning the Indian style bullfight, “is for the good of the country, because it puts an end to a custom that was a savage survival, as you yourselves have informed me […]” (1985, 36). Don Cáceres further suggests that, “[…] Here the people have to be taught to watch bulls and civilized bullfights […]” (1985, 37).

To teach the people how to appreciate the “civilized bullfight” it has to be staged publicly. As García Canclini suggests, “In order for traditions today to serve to legitimize those who constructed or appropriated them, they must be staged. […] The world is a stage, but what must be performed is already prescribed. […] To be cultured implies knowing that repertory of symbolic goods and intervening correctly in the rituals to deconstructing the links between culture and power” (110). Therefore those who know how to interpret correctly, for instance, the passes made by well known Spanish torero like Belmonte, and others who follow in their footsteps, then become conversant with the rituals of the Creole nation-building project and by showing their support for the same they participate as members of the kind of nation being promoted by the hegemonic side. In addition, by choosing this “artistic mode” the nation-state proclaims symbolically its cultural capital and chooses to commemorate what it perceives to be the tradition of the nation.

It is also possible to say that the corrida is converted into a rite of nation-building, and that the manner is which the bull is to be fought becomes a kind of a ritual to consecrate

105 As mentioned earlier, one of the mistis claims to have seen Belmonte perform in Lima (1985, 37).
a particular concept of nation. Rituals have been used to sanctify the authority of certain institutions such as that of royalty in monarchical societies, but in a democratic and secular world, cultural practices sometimes take over these acts covertly to legitimize the rule of the dominant class. The Church, for instance, has played a very important role in the rites associated with the crowning of the monarch, which also confirms that the clergy approved of him/her. In this way the throne had the support of all the domains from where power is exercised. In Yawar fiesta for example, the Vicar describes the indigenous style of corrida as “Satanic”, while approving of the Spanish style (1985, 45). In this way, the Vicar (and by extension the Church), shows his support for the hegemonic class’ model of nation and consecrates it. His open approval also helps to institutionalize the idea of a nation based on the Spanish one.

I would like to argue that the ring becomes a platform where the rite of passage that would lead to the nation being constituted culturally by those in power could be staged. It is a rite of passage, in which only certain members of the society can participate. This ceremony then consecrates the act by separating those who can take part in this rite and those who are left out of it. This act can also be interpreted as a rite to establish and institutionalize a boundary as legitimate (i.e. to support what is seen as the natural “dominance” of the mistis, and the central administration over the indigenous populace) which cannot be transgressed. According to Bourdieu, “[…] every rite leads to the consecration or legitimization of an arbitrary boundary, that is to say […] it attempts to misrepresent the arbitrariness and present

---

106 It is not possible to talk about a Spanish nation at this moment since this model is undergoing many changes as different regions claim an autonomous status within Spain. According to Douglass, this development shows that there are many nations in one nation (1997, 48-50). However, for Arguedas and the characters in the novel, this division was not relevant since the mistis and the administration refer constantly to Spain as a homogenous entity.
the boundary as legitimate and natural” (1992, 81). The ring therefore acts as a boundary to keep out the sections of the society that the hegemonic powers want to exclude from the nation-building project since they are seen as “savages”, and therefore not capable of contributing to such an important task. The crossing of this boundary by the Spanish torero (as he enters the arena) then legitimizes the Westernized concept of the nation as visualized by the dominant side. One can thus affirm that the corrida is converted into a rite or a “ritual” to construct the nation culturally.107

There are many variations of the corrida, but here I am going to talk about the one fought in the ring where the fight is between man and bull as it pertains to the kind of corrida Arguedas depicts in the novel. Bullfighting in Spain has been documented since the 11th century and was an aristocratic privilege carried out on horseback by nobles in the company of nobles and the aristocratic bullfight reached its height in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Douglass 1984, 245).108 Douglass refers to the corrida fought in the South of Spain and contends that the structure of the bullfight was established there by the mid-18th century and has survived until the present, essentially unchanged (1984, 244).109 It is believed that the corrida was brought to Latin America during this period. The fiesta was

107 The OED also clarifies that ritual refers to a religious or solemn ceremony involving a series of actions performed to a set order. In addition, following OED, it is possible to argue that the corrida is a solemn, almost religious, ceremony to commemorate an important day in the historic and political calendar of the nation-state, as depicted in the novel.
108 The anthropologist also informs us about poor Christian and Moorish bullfighters who fought for money on foot, but they were said to be without honor according to the 13th-century law code drawn up by Alfonso X (Douglass 1984, 245).
109 Douglass further cautions that the corrida does not necessarily reflect current social structure; rather it is a fast disappearing product which is preserved in language and lingering attitudes (1984, 244). However, I would like to clarify that it was an important part of the Spanish society in the 40s and 50s, as also in Peru, where Arguedas’ story is set.
seen as an “elite” event since it had been introduced by the colonizers, and it is this image that still persists in *Yawar fiesta* (1941).

We now come to the manner in which the ring is constructed. I argue that the shape of the stage relates directly to the *weltanschauung* of those who participate in the event. The typical ring in the Spanish context, as explained by Douglass, is constructed to reflect right from the beginning the hierarchy inherent in the *corrida* which is supposed to be a reflection of the Spanish society. According to Douglass in the Spanish *corrida*, hierarchy is emphasized in every part of the ring, beginning with the seating arrangements divided between shade and sun, the latter being more expensive (1997, 80). The primary objective of the torero is to “control” and “dominate” the bull, the *corrida* therefore is not a contest (1997, 80). As mentioned earlier, in the novel the Indians are compared indirectly to the bull that needs to be subdued, and this view seems implicit in the goal of the national government vis-à-vis the indigenous populace as well.

Order appears to be almost an obsession in the bullfight (Douglass 1997, 80). According to the anthropologist the two principal characters in the *corrida de toros*, “are the torero (the bullfighter) and the toro (the bull). […] In the corrida, three professional toreros each kill two bulls, one at a time. […] the torero dresses in a silk suit, embroidered in gold or silver threads, called a “suit of lights” (*traje de luces*). The torero directs a team of men (*picadors* and *bandarilleros*) whose job is to help him dominate and kill the bull. Well-known behavior etiquette governs the relations between torero and his team (*cuadrilla*) and between one torero and another […]” (Douglass 1997, 33-34). Thus some of the key elements of the *corrida* are hierarchy, control and domination. One can then infer, that since the main protagonist in the Spanish style bullfight is the torero, the event transmits an
individualistic vision of the world, as opposed to the sense of community present in the indigenous version (despite the competition between the ayllus).

The Spanish style of bullfighting, introduced in Peru by the conquistadores, is taken by the Serranos and modified according to their beliefs and traditions (Arguedas 1976, 175-177). In the novel, Arguedas describes how the ayllus have transformed it --- for instance they construct the ring together with logs made from eucalyptus tree, and a, “gang of Indians from each community closes off one corner with a barrier of eucalyptus logs” (1985, 32). The fact that the members of the ayllus make the plaza together shows a sense of community, even though they compete with each other. The use of the eucalyptus logs is symbolic as Carlos Huamán indicates, the tree thus sacrificed, “participates with its pieces, with its bones in the festival of the people. Its participation is linked to that “little death” […] to the continuation and existence of death-life” (219; my translation). According to Huamán, the eucalyptus tree represents unity and collective identity related to the place of origin and the members who inhabit it (218). I, therefore, believe that the flora and fauna, an integral part of the indigenous belief system, participate in all the festivities and events celebrated by the ayllus. It is also possible to argue that the corrida becomes an event in which almost everyone participates from the men to the trees. In addition, the ring is constructed in such a way that the Aukis or the great mountain gods venerated by the Indians can look into the

---

110 Arguedas had in fact heard the wakawak’ras and witnessed such a bullfight in the sierras as a young boy (1976, 175-177). In the anthropological article Canciones quechusas (1976), he describes the old style of the corrida in which two condores with colorful ribbons were made to attack the bull (1976, 175-177). In the novel the mistis too talk about it and according to them this kind of corrida used to take place twenty years ago (Yawar fiesta 1985, 34). The author finally depicts the modified version in the novel which pits only the members of the ayllu against the bull (Yawar fiesta 1985, 40).

111 Arguedas does not mention whether women participate in the corrida directly or not. In this case one can say that the turupukllay remains a male dominated fiesta.
arena and see the *corrida* (1985, 97) which reinforces the relationship between Man and Nature since according to the autochthonous worldview they are all connected together.¹¹²

The importance of the *Auki* cannot be emphasized enough as the author dedicates an entire chapter to the role played by it (1985, 99). The *Auki* K’arawarasu, for instance, is adored by all as “he keeps watch over and takes care of all the Lucanas land. For K’arawarasu is the sign of the province of Lucanas” (1985, 99). Huamán explains the relationship shared with the mountain deity in this way, “The antiquity and permanence of the all powerful *Apu* gives it the right over the land and the destiny of the Quechua people who are claimed [in turn] by the landowners. These men as children of the *Auki*-protector then have the right over the land they work” (200; my translation).¹¹³ Thus both the land and the mountains are seen as protective spirits who save their children from harm. In this case the *comuneros* want the *Aukis* to overlook the fight and shield them from the *Misitu*, representing the *conquistadores* and the new hegemonic class that has taken over from them.¹¹⁴

The square where the bull is fought is large and can accommodate almost ten or twelve bulls at once. There are no special barricades where the indigenous fighters take shelter, instead there is a pit dug in the middle of the square from where they launch themselves at the bull (1985, 32). Hence, it is possible to surmise that this strategy also emphasizes the relation between the *runa* and the land. The indigenous communities have an intimate relationship with Mother Earth or *Pachamama*, and they believe that they come

¹¹² *Auki* also refers to a priest who is considered to be community’s representative and messenger to the *Wamanis*, yet another term used to refer to the mountain deities (*Yawar fiesta*, 1985, 194, 200).

¹¹³ The mountain god is also called by this name (Huamán, 2004, 319).

¹¹⁴ *Comuneros* are members of an *ayllu*, or Indian community. (*Yawar fiesta*, 1985,195)
from her core, and it is she who protects them (Sperandeo 31). In the context of the corrida, the fact that the Indian fighters take shelter in a pit dug into the earth also signifies their close ties with their land which not only sustains them but also gives them refuge from bulls with mythical and magical power. Thus, the whole stage set for the bullfight embodies the autochthonous weltanschauung. And as mentioned before, since the ring comes to stand for the nation, it is possible to conjecture that the natives imagine their nation to be a part of the land and constructed jointly as an ayllu as opposed to the westernized and individualistic concept visualized by the dominant side. One can also affirm that the indigenous version of the bullfight emerges as a result of the process of transculturation.

Towards the end of the novel, passions run high as the students and migrant workers of Puquio now come back to their hometown to express their solidarity with the national government. In the city the migrants from this region had organized themselves as a club, called the “Lucanas Union Center” (1985, 69). The formation of the club attracts a lot of attention as they organize lectures, receptions and build libraries and more and more migrant laborers join this organization. However, it is looked down upon by the leading citizens from the same region who now reside in Lima.

The members of the Centre become aware of the conflict when the Mayor sends them a telegram asking them to hire a professional bullfighter (which means Spanish style torero). The members of the Centre though initially question this move but subsequently support the government’s edict especially when they discover that the eminent citizens too supported this stand. They vociferously protest the injustices meted out to the comuneros in Puquio by the prominent citizens. They take the stand of the national government as a sign that the State was finally on their side, and engage the Spanish torero, Ibarito II, “to go and initiate
Spanish-style bullfighting in Puquio” (1985, 95). Before the celebration of the national day then, Puquio receives yet another faction in the already volatile scene as students and other migrants return to their hometown convinced that they were saving their brethren from the exploitative landowners.

In the meantime the prominent citizens devise a plan with the Vicar’s help to trick the *cumunkunás* into believing that the bullfight would take place as usual despite the edict. The notables then take the Subprefect into confidence even as Don Julián Arangüena continues to support the indigenous *corrida*. The plan devised by the Vicar, who knows his authority will not be refused, is described by Don Antenor as follows:

---Mandaremos hacer una plaza chica de eucaliptos dentro de la de Pichk’achuri. Los ayllus lo harán, K’ayau y Pichk’achuri. El Vicario les dirá que la competencia, para que sea más legal y para que se vea mejor, necesita una plaza chica, con asientos buenos, donde se acomodaría toda la gente, para ver de cerca. Y para que no pongan pretextos, les dirá que con dinamita no es gracia entrar contra el toro. Que solo a solo con el toro, es hombría capear.

----[…] Sólo el cura puede hacer tragar esa píldora a los indios. Yo no tengo inconveniente en admitir esa treta. (1958, 120)

---

The author explains that, “Ibarito was a *banderillero* from the Cho bull ring. He had come from Spain almost ten years before, with a famous bull fighter and stayed on in Lima because he was no longer good for the Spanish arenas. When the season with the matador who had brought him in his team had ended, Ibarito signed a contract to fight in Ica, Chincha, and Pisco” (1985, 94). This implies that even a not so skilled toreador is preferable to the Indian fighters, thus there is a condemnation for all practices which are different from the ones approved by the dominant side.

115 The term “cumunkunás” is a hybrid word created from Spanish and Quechua and refers to the Indian community members (*Yawar fiesta* 1985, 195).
“We’ll have a little bull ring built of eucalyptus logs in the square at Pichk’achuri. The *ayllus* will do it---K’ayau and Pichka’churi. The Vicar will tell them that for the contest to be legal and easier to see, there must be a little ring, with good seats, where everybody would be accommodated to watch up from close. And so that they won’t make excuses, he’ll tell them there’s nothing graceful about going against the bull with dynamite. That the only manly way to fight the bull is one-to-one, with a cape”.

“[… ] Only the Priest can make the Indians swallow that pill. And I have no objection to that trick.” (1985, 91)

In this manner the authorities play with the sensibilities of the *ayllus* and manipulate them into building a Spanish style bull ring.

On the day before the *turupukllay*, however, the students and other immigrants to the city are touched by the *comuneros’* strength and courage as the *K’ayau ayllu* capture the Misitu, given the status of a demi-god or *Auki*. They take pride in pulling the bull down the slope along with the other members of the *ayllus* and share a sense of camaraderie with them, and one of *chalos*, Martínez even joins his Indian friends in bringing the Misitu into town, “[… ] there shoulder to shoulder with the K’aayaus, he felt prouder than before […]” (1985, 125). On the day of the *yawar fiesta*, people come from all the neighboring districts to see the competition between the K’ayaus and the Pichk’achuris to see who destroys the bull (1985, 128). The *comuneros* are not the only ones who come to see the fight, the prominent citizens of other towns too join them. However, when the *cumunkunas* discover that they would not be participating in the *corrida*, they become agitated and even the members of the Lucanas Centre cannot calm them down. The Subprefect orders the lieutenants to frighten the Indians
by threatening to shoot them. The desire to see the comuneros from the different ayllus fight the bull had united all the cumunkunas as they crowd around the bull ring where six policemen blocked their way to the arena (1985, 137). But the turupukyllay to commemorate this bloody day or yawar punchao began to be played (1985, 139).

The corrida begins with Ibarito the torero going through his paces, but the bull is ferocious and he soon retires behind the barrier. It is at this moment that the Indian fighters Raura, Honrao Rojas, Tobias, Wallpa, K’encho and others jump into the ring and face the bull, surprisingly even those eminent citizens who had opposed the Indian style corrida begin to cheer them on. The Spanish style fight which was to have taken place in silence, now resounds with the sound of the wakaw’akras as they play the turupukllay. While the bull chases the fighters and gores Wallpa, the K’ayau’s Chief Staffbearer hands Raura a stick of dynamite:

A dynamite blast went off at that moment, near the bull. The dust that swirled up in a whirlwind in the ring darkened the arena. The wak’rapukus played an attack melody and the women stood up to sing divining where the ground of the arena...
was. The dust cleared as if dissipated by the song. Wallpa still stood there, clasp ng the poles. Misitu was walking, step by step, with his chest destroyed; he looked blind. Honrao Rojas ran towards him.

“Well, die, sallk’a, die!” he yelled at him, opening wide his outstretched arms.

(1985, 146-147)

In this way the comuneros enter the arena and reclaim their right to fight the bull in their own way. As I had established earlier, the bull ring could be seen as the symbolic representation of the nation-state, and when the Indian fighters from the four ayllus enter the stage they break the boundaries made by the Spanish style bullring, boundaries that can no longer keep them from joining the nation-building project.

The comuneros also exercise their democratic right to be part of the nation and to construct it according to their beliefs. As mentioned before, García Canclini had pointed out that the whole world was a stage, “but what must be performed is already prescribed. […]” (110). By entering the arena and fighting the Misitu, the comuneros take control of the stage/nation symbolically, and leave their mark on the cultural capital, manipulated till then by the nation-state to include what the hegemonic side saw as “culture”. One can also argue that by portraying the manner in which the members of the ayllu take the initiative and launch themselves into the ring, the narrator, who shares the author’s ideology and sympathizes with the comuneros, demonstrates how the indigenous fighters/people break the hierarchy inherent in the bullfight/nation-building project and take their place along with the Spanish torero in the ring which puts them symbolically at par with the mistis and the administration. Thus, do the cumunkunas exercise their agency to present what they see as culture, and select the manner in which it is presented during the national day fiesta. In this
way the *ayllus* and by extension, all the indigenous communities, construct their own patrimony and write the counter-narrative of the nation. By defying the edict of the government based in Lima, the *cumunkunas* take away the authority that Lima has over them, and empower themselves in this way from the peripheries of the nation-state. The action of the *comuneros* also reverses the flow of power between the urban centers and the regional provinces. They show in this manner that Peru was culturally heterogeneous and hybrid at the same time. This initiative taken by the *runas* also establishes that the indigenous communities participate *actively* in the process of transculturation as posited by Rama.

The hybrid *turupukllay* is in fact more than just a cultural expression of the *cumunkunas*. Encrypted in this fiesta, and all the events leading to its celebration, is the history of the indigenous people from the Conquest to the new Republic. Thus, I agree with Prabhu who points out that hybridity, “when carefully considered in its material reality, will reveal itself to actually be a history of slavery, colonialism [...]. It joins up with issues of choosing one’s affiliations or having one’s affiliations thrust upon one. Today, any account of hybridity must contend with this history” (11-12). And indeed the selection of the “national patrimony”, the attitude of the dominant class, the disdain with which the administration treats the indigenous populace, comparing them to livestock, reducing them to objects, are signs that bring out the contempt felt for the native communities. This derisive attitude was based not just on culture but had emerged during the bloody history of conquest and colonization.\(^{117}\) However, the *runas* do not accept the negative image propagated by the national hegemony. I would like to argue that by fighting the bull in their way they *choose* their affiliations, and assert their relationship with their own traditions and beliefs. Hence, I

\(^{117}\) It has been said that the Conquest of Peru was one of the bloodiest in the history of pillage and dispossession of America.
would like to reiterate that for the comuneros the bull is not merely a part of cultural festivities but rather symbolized the hegemonic classes, past and present. The killing of the bull, therefore, reveals their defiance in the face of the oppressive practices of the new Republic.

I would also like to suggest that the corrida reflects mimicry, one of the strategies suggested by Bhabha. According to the critic, mimicry is “the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around ambivalence: in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference” (1994, 86). It is clear right from the beginning that, this is the objective of the national government when it decides to stop the “savage” turupukalla, but the ayllus defeat this purpose when they re-interpret the bullfight in their own way. The event can be classified as corrida, but it is different, and it is here that the turupukally subverts the hegemonic national discourse by revealing the fragmented underbelly of the nation. As Bhabha says, “The figure of mimicry is locatable within what Anderson describes as ‘the inner compatibility of empire and nation’. It problematizes the signs of racial and cultural priority, so that the ‘national’ is no longer naturalizable” (88). And this is what the comuneros prove when they turn the bullfight around to defy the authorities. However, this defiance is not always expressed epistemologically as Bhabha suggests when he says, “What emerges between mimesis and mimicry is a writing, a mode of representation, that marginalizes the monumentality of history, quite simply mocks its power to be a model, that power which supposedly makes it imitable” (88). In fact, in the novel analyzed here, we see that mimicry is present not only in the text but also seen in actual life, as Arguedas transfers the turupuklly he had observed as
a young boy (1976, 175-177), to the fictional world that he creates. I would, therefore, like to contend that, in this case, the epistemological mimicry draws its strength from the subversive act of mimesis carried out by the *cumunkunas*. Hence, it is possible to assert that even in the text-nation it is the *action* performed on the stage, chosen by the central government to validate the Creole nation of their making, which converts mimicry into a subversive act. Despite the slippages that question the “naturalizability” of the nation, the event is colored with the elements of the autochthonous cosmovision which infuses every part of the *turupukllay*. I believe that the subversive nature of this strategy depends on the native elements which take the hegemonic culture and molds it to present again (or re-present) the *corrida* in its new avatar. Thus, I would like to reaffirm that this hybrid form of the *corrida* is entrenched in the indigenous world of Peru and there is no ambivalence visible in this variance of the *corrida*, as suggested by Bhabha, because the Indians clearly choose their affiliations and all their activities and point of view are influenced by the beliefs of their own *weltanschauung*. In this case it is possible to state that the hybridity that characterizes the *turupukllay* depicted in the novel, is not just a cultural product that is “neither the one nor the other”(33), nor does it inhabit the “rim of an ‘in-between’ reality”. In fact, the indigenous fighters who spring forth in the arena do so with their feet firmly entrenched in the native traditions and beliefs, leaving no doubt that they see themselves as representatives of the Andean culture. Besides, by adapting some of the Spanish traditions imposed on them by the Creole authorities they give further proof that their traditions are not static and inflexible but are elastic and can be modified to meet the exigencies of the changing socio-political conditions while maintaining their particular character. This also reveals clearly that hybridity, shaped by the fusion of native traditions and the ones imposed by the erstwhile
colonial authorities, is not restricted only to elite émigrés as suggested by Parry but is an
integral part of the indigenous communities who stay back or travel internally. I would,
therefore, like to assert that Nativism in this case emerges as a positive factor since it resists
the assimilation of the autochthonous world within the hegemonic Creole one.

I would like to state that Arguedas’ interpretation of hybridity makes us question the
rigid definitions of the concepts of hybridity and Nativism. As we have seen both Bhabha
and Parry make certain assumptions about the character of hybridity, the people who
experience it and its geo-political location. Parry criticizes the undue emphasis, put by critics
like Bhabha, on the immigrant who leaves his/her country to go to the metropolis (2004), but
she does not see the multilayered and complex socio-political set-up within the country as the
dominant elite take the place of the erstwhile colonial master. Hybridity then becomes one of
the means of resisting the hegemonic national discourse along with the reassertion of their
indigenous heritage as we have just seen in this chapter.118 This strategy also proves Parry’s
suggestion that the native communities use their own traditions to resist the attempt of the
Creole classes to dominate and assimilate them. Arguedas, in fact, demonstrates that they do
so not only to resist the colonial rule but also the hegemonic classes that have taken over the
reigns of power in Peru. I would, therefore, like to argue that the Arguedean narrative brings
out the aporias present in the conception Bhabha’s hybridity, Parry’s critique of the same
and the manner in which Nativism is perceived by critics on both sides of the theoretical
divide.

It is also possible to assert that Arguedas not only constructs a pluralistic and
heterogeneous nation but also crafts a hybrid one which remains firmly entrenched in the

118 Please refer to the harawi from Todas las Sangres [All the Bloods] analyzed earlier in the
chapter.
indigenous world. In this way the author clarifies that hybridity is an important instrument of subversion but not the only one with which to fight back, since the native communities also resort at times to their own traditions to decry, in no uncertain terms, the repressive practices of the hegemonic classes.

We also see the way they use mimicry to subvert the national culture being constructed by the dominant Creole class. I would then like to conclude that it is not possible to apply any concept or theoretical premise broadly to all the erstwhile colonies as each country lives its own complex historical and socio-political experiences. In fact, I would like to suggest that the concept of hybridity suggested by Bhabha is too narrow since the native part of the hybrid character influences the way it is perceived and lived locally. As Bahri points out, “In successfully and rightfully casting doubts on the discourse of purity, these discussions can flatten the very notion of difference into something that makes no difference. Indeed, hybridity might then be seen as entirely complicit with globalization” (8). One can then say that along with the global notion of textual hybridity, as postulated by Bhabha, one should also look at the way Arguedas regionalizes this idea, thereby, wresting importance away from the unitary Western/Hispanic culture as the two worlds clash in the aftermath of conquest, colonization and independence, in the nation-state. It is also possible to conclude that the hybrid culture depicted in the novel cannot be confused with ideas of hybridity constructed in other erstwhile colonies, since the native traditions inserted by the author in this concept pertains to the geo-political location know as Peru and could have only been constructed in this country and nowhere else. Thus it is time to look beyond the collection of strategies that are collated under Postcolonial theory to describe the way all the subalterns
resist the bid to conquer the native *weltanschauung*, be it during the colonial period or the postcolonial one (used here in the chronological sense).

In the next chapter I will study the manner in which Geetanjali Shree constructs culture in post-Independence India in her novel *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* (1998) [Our City that year]. Culture plays an extremely important role in this novel as well since it portrays the growing violence between Hindus and Muslims in postcolonial India.
Chapter 4

Weaving the cultural fabric of the nation in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras*

Colonization affects each country differently; in some societies the influence is palpable in the manner in which the new nation-state sees itself, celebrates its festivals and defines culture, like in Peru. In others, it shapes the way indigenous communities interact with each other, adding a new dimension to the already complex and diverse social tapestry. In the case of India, for instance, the colonial view affected, to a large extent, the relation between Hindus and Muslims. The circumstances that have led to conflicts between these communities have been the subject of many debates and discussions since the colonial period and remain relevant till this day. The specter of Partition, moreover, is brought up time and again as the fratricidal violence continues, especially due to the active role played by the Hindu right wing political and non-political organizations in contemporary India.

Matters have worsened with the destruction of Babri Mosque in 1992. This site was under dispute as Hindu organizations claimed that it was the birth place of Rama, a Hindu God (Dalmia and Von Stietencron 7). It had been under lock and key for several years as political parties shied away from resolving the issues for fear of losing the support of potential voters. The situation changed on 6th December ‘92 when volunteers of the *Hindutva* based political party and other organizations clambered atop the mosque and razed it to the ground as the law enforcement agencies looked on. Since then violence between the two communities has escalated especially under the aegis of the right wing political party *Bharatiya Janta Party* or *BJP* and other organizations such as *Viswa Hindu Parishad* (VHP) and *Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh* (RSS). Commenting on the current state of affairs, Asim Roy, points out that, “The chauvinistic claims made on behalf of a pan-Indian Hindu cultural
monolith embodied in \textit{Hindutva} assume a greater importance in the light of the political power that has recently been vested in the Hindu-orientated political parties. Doubts have already been expressed in those extreme Hindu quarters concerning the historical legitimacy of the syncretistic process in the making of India’s ‘composite culture’, with corresponding claims made for a reconstructed exclusivist \textit{Hindutva}. […]”(8). The new versions of history are reflected in the novel as well, as the protagonists Hanif and Sharad point out how the data is being misinterpreted by the \textit{Hindutva} parties: 

“[…] Hindu temples were broken and mosques were built and in this way the seed of secularism was sown” […] Akbar is considered to be the messiah of unity in India, […] but when he attacked Chittor 8000 Rajput women threw themselves in the flames of \textit{jauhar}” (My translation).

Thus, as events unfold in contemporary times, ancient history is often evoked to give authority to the versions being narrated by different groups. It is, therefore, possible to assert that history is deeply entwined in every aspect of society and plays a significant role in the novel in present day India. As Partha Chatterjee explains, “History is today, not implicitly but in the most explicit way possible, the pretext for violent political conflict in India, a conflict which threatens to tear apart what has for several decades taken to be the consensus about the fundamental character of the nation state which the Constitution calls India, that is ‘Bhārat’ ”(103). The relationship between the two communities, grounded in history and
culture, then forms the backdrop for Geetanjali Shree’s novel *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* (1998) [Our City that Year].

By constructing her novel as a stage wherein all these issues are discussed and debated, Shree also follows the tradition of argument set up in the pre-colonial period. According to Amartya Sen, this tradition, “shapes our social world and the natural state of affairs in India […]: persistent arguments are an important part of our public life”(12). The text thus becomes a kind of a platform for airing the matters vis-à-vis the Muslim populace by the right wing political and religious organizations. *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* plays an important role as the history of India is re-written. Shree presents this issue in contemporary India more than fifty years after its Independence, and her novel becomes a critique of the way culture is reworked by the right wing political parties and organizations fighting for a Hindu *rashtra*. She challenges these views in many ways, sometimes it comes in the guise of discussions that take place in Hanif’s house and at other times it shows up as Daddu reminisces about his life in the village or when Shruti recalls her childhood in the city. The novelist also reveals the way the Hindu fundamentalists interpret Nativism. I would like

---

119 As mentioned earlier Shree did her Masters in Modern Indian History from Jawaharlal Nehru University, hence it is not surprising that she would build the plot of the novel around history.

120 Other authors such as Rahi Masoom Raza (1927-92), the well known Urdu novelist and Hindi film scriptwriter, have also written about these issues. Raza, for instance, portrays the way Partition had influenced the lives of people in both rural areas in Uttar Pradesh and cities in his well known novels *Adha Gaon* (1966) or *A Village Divided* (Gillian Wright, translator, 2003) and *Topi Shukla* (1969 [2004]) (Meenakshi Shivaram translator), set in 60s. In *Adha Gaon* for example, Raza depicts the reaction of the villagers of Ganguali as events leading to the Partition begin to unfold, while in *Topi Shukla*, he shows the tension still prevalent in post-Partition India, where the principal protagonists Narayan aka “Topi” Shukla and Iffan are Hindu and Muslim respectively. In this novel Raza reveals the prejudices that have colored the relation between these two communities; ironically these biases seem to have resurfaced as can be seen in Shree’s novel.
to argue here that their perception of nation and culture is the reflection of the exclusionist version of Nativism.

However, unlike *Yawar fiesta* (1941) where, for instance, the protagonists paint the culture of Peru by participating and creating their own version of the *turupukllay*, in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras*, cultural activities become the backdrop against which the protagonists discuss the arguments put forth by the *Mathwalas* to justify their demands for violence against the Muslim communities and the formation of a “Hindu nation”. In the novel Hanif stresses the importance of knowing one’s history so that one is not misled by the versions that are spread on “poison tipped arrows” (28). The author appears to do just that and her protagonists talk about Indian culture by mentioning medieval and contemporary figures to revive the memory of their students and remind them that India’s cultural tapestry has been woven by many different communities. Thus, in Shree the interpretation of culture centers on debates drawn from history as seen by both the fundamentalists and secularists. To repeat, rather than crafting the manner in which certain festivals are celebrated, the author takes recourse to history to narrate the cultural and racial heritage of India, as the *Hindutva* proponents substantiate their claims by citing that their versions are part of a “Hindu indigenous tradition” proceeding from the Vedic age.\(^{121}\)

In this way the author tries to counter the manner in which the fundamentalists were interpreting events that had taken place in the past. Like Arguedas, for Shree too, quotidian life, along with music, literature, films, and religion constitute the social fabric of India, and she weaves in all these components in the cultural field that she constructs in the novel. In

\(^{121}\) The critic Amrita Basu points out the irony inherent in the position as they profess to fight for all things “indigenous”, but “never concede that the nation-state itself might be of Western inspiration, though they often level this charge at both secularism and democracy” (1996,60).
accordance with this perception of culture one can say that religion forms only a part, albeit an important one, of a cultural whole. In fact according to a series entitled People of India published by the Anthropological Survey of India, more than four thousand communities inhabit this country and their cultural profile is “rooted and primarily shaped by their relationship with their environment, their occupational status, their language and so on, and that religion comes way down in their construction of their identity” (Roy, 9), but in spite of this view there has been an increase in the violence between Hindu and Muslim communities.

A part of this problem, however, can be traced to the colonial period and the nationalist movement even though the killings have been recurring at regular intervals and have become a very painful part of contemporary India. One of the reasons for the proliferation of this view is attributed to the general perception of Islam as a hostile and aggressive force. This point of view can be traced further back to the colonial era, when Muslim societies were caricatured as rigid, authoritarian and uncreative. It was this perspective that was transposed on “Victorian India” by travelers, missionaries,

---

122 This again is an extremely polemic issue as scholars like Sanjay Subrahmanyam do not think that colonial rule influenced the attitude of these two communities (Aziz Ahmad Lecture given at University of Toronto on 16th March 2007 on “Interfaith relations in mid-eighteenth century”). However, others like Gyanendra Pandey attribute many of the ways that the internecine conflict was shaped, to the colonial authorities. It is crucial therefore to recognize that India is known as a land of contradictions, and in the Hindu-Muslim relation too there are many variations depending on such extraneous elements like socio-economic and political factors. I would also like to clarify here that I am referring only to Muslims in North India, given that Shree’s novel is based on this community in this Indian region (though she does not specify the name of the town but rather uses “Shahar” or “City” as a generic form for all the cities in North India, especially those in which communal riots have taken place).
administrators and ethnographers (Hasan 1996, 186, 187). In fact one can see the reflection of the Orientalist position in a treatise written on Hindustani classical music by the well known scholar of this field, Sir William Jones, who clearly distinguished between the “Hindu” and “Muslim” ages:

The Hindus, although idolatrous, were never so luxurious and vicious a nation as their conquerors the Muhammadans; most of the vices existing in this country having been introduced after the conquest. […] The conquest of India by the Muhammadan princes forms a most important epoch in the history of its music. From this time we may date the decline of all arts and sciences purely Hindu, for the Muhammadans were no great patrons to learning, and the more bigotted of them are not only great iconoclast, but discouragers of the learning of the country.

(1793 [1962] 78-79)

Thus, one can argue that the way the colonial authorities perceived Hindus and Muslims and the role played by them also influenced the manner the former viewed the latter. It is possible to establish a link between the way the Orientalists viewed culture and the way the fundamentalists or Nativists perceive the same. One can then infer that the precedent set by the Orientalists to interpret societies, identities and culture through a narrow and unitary lens, is followed by the Hindu fundamentalists. Their position is clearly shown in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* as the *Mathwalas* pay obeisance to the Vedas and Puranas in the same breath as Ram and Sita and the Hindu freedom fighters (79), drawing in this way the

---

123 I use this term to denote those who follow a narrow and exclusionist definition of Nativism.
historical lineage of their “Hindu rashtra” from the Vedic times. One can then say that in the Hindu right wing movement in contemporary India we see a reflection of the Orientalist perception of India’s ‘ancient heritage’, as also their view of “Hindus” and “Muslims”.

It is therefore possible to say that some of the colonial policies did influence certain powerful sections of the Indian society involved in the freedom movement, which in turn shaped the struggle for independence to a large extent. In Maharashtra for instance, leader and writer Bal Gangadhar Tilak tried to construct the Maratha identity as Hindu, “through a conscious choice of historical figures and symbols that evoked memories of Muslim oppression and exploitation. His essentialist endeavors to define Muslims through constant references to Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali created a major divide in Maharashtra society […]” (Hasan1996, 200). This led to a sharp division in Maharashtra and according to Hasan also laid the ideological basis for the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS, two of the most militant organization of the 1930s and 1940s (1996, 200). The influence of the colonial authorities can thus be seen clearly in the way the Muslim community came to be perceived antagonistically by certain sections in India. The connection established in the nineteenth century between language

---

124 I would like to point out here, that certain sections of the Muslim community also got influenced by this position, and a, “ massive agitation among Muslims of many different classes arose across the subcontinent on the specifically ‘Muslim’ political issue of the fate of the Khilafat, the Mapila uprising in Malabar, the Hindu and Muslim movements that followed […]” (Pandey 234). The role of Muslim League and M. A. Jinnah in the division of the country can also not be ignored, however, since the novel deals primarily with Hindu fundamentalism hence I have concentrated only on this aspect.
125 These organizations are still present in India and have played an increasingly violent role in the communalization of the Indian society.
126 However, it is important to remember that this view could not have been propagated as it was, without the assent of certain sections of the colonized society. Furthermore, scholars agree that the rise of a communal identity was at times necessary to fight the one being constructed by the colonial authorities. According to Pandey, “[…] ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’
and identity, i.e., Hindi-Hindu and Urdu-Muslim, also cemented this hostility. As mentioned in chapter two, during this period emphasis was laid on the differences between the two communities, rather than the characteristics shared by them.

This communalization was reflected in literature as well, for instance, in the novels of Marathi authors like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar (1856-95), and Gopal Hari Deshmukh (1823-92) the reader can observe the impact of Tilak’s vision in the manner in which Muslim characters were portrayed (Hasan1996, 200). In Bengal too the works of Bankim Chandra Chattapadhyay portrayed the Muslim as the “other”; as Tanika Sarkar points out, “being “Indian” and being “Hindu” came together---amorphously and uncertainly---in the 1890s: the oppositional identity that defined an Indian became the British, as the Other that defined the Hindu became Muslim” (in Ludden 21 ). One can also assert that the struggle for independence brought out the inner turmoil of the colonial subject as her/his world was turned upside down. The anguish brought about by the socio-political churning made the people react almost frenetically to re-invent their identities as the variables determining the same were transformed in the wake of colonization. It was almost as if a certain section of freedom fighters, promoting the unitary concept of society, were anticipating what Nemade would say years later on Nativism. According to the Marathi writer and critic Nativism, “is the entire community’s response, past and present; a life-style of the whole race, a collective thinking political mobilization had been seen in the past as necessary, even inevitable, at least in the early stages of the building of an Indian nationalism” (235). Thus nationalism and communalism became inextricably bound together. Pandey also suggests that these two discourses are related to each other, and argues that, “[s]ince communalism had come to be seen by the 1920s as the politics of the religious community, one might well argue the opposite, that nationalism was nothing but communalism driven into secular channels […]. More adequately, one would have to say that communalism and nationalism, as we understand them today, arose together; they were part of the same discourse” (236).

127 The literature that came up after the Partition counters these negative images as authors like Sadat Hasan Manto (1912-1955) depict the trauma of the forced dislocation.
and feeling. In this respective Nativism becomes a principle harmonious with the conservative principle and acts in unison with it against the corrosion of native systems” (136), and that is the way the Nativists were interpreting the concept of culture without taking into account the fact that Indian society has always been heterogeneous and hybrid.

As mentioned before, it is to counter the image of a homogenous nation-state based solely on religion, that Shree recounts the cultural history of India. The novelist engages with the reader at different levels from within the confines of class rooms, staff room and the protagonists’ domestic space to the public one of fairs, the Math and other public areas. The Math actually becomes the nerve centre of all the fundamentalist activities. In fact one can even argue that it becomes a heterotopic space as described by Michel Foucault. According to the French critic, “we do not occupy a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light”, these spaces are in turn influenced by a set of relations (1967[1984]). However, as Foucault points out, there are spaces “that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect” (1967 [1984]). He delineates these two spaces as utopic, i.e. sites with no real place, and heterotopic which he contrasts with the utopic space as, “real places - places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society - which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites […]” (1967[1984]).

Heterotopic spaces play an important role in Shree’s novel as the author draws the attention of the reader to the ones that slowly become representative of the kind of nation each party visualizes. One can also say that the element that delineates one heterotopia from another is the function that this place carries out in the society being constructed.
Commenting on the importance of functions, Foucault further clarifies that “[…] a society, as its history unfolds, can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another” (1967[1984]). I would then argue that this change is reflected in the function of the Math. The ashram had always remained in the background, and was seen as a quiet place for meditation:

We remember the Devi’s Math like the way it used to be […] quiet […] absorbed in meditation.

The function of the Math changes as the right wing activities increase and instead of a place for spiritual contemplation it becomes the keystone in the process of institutionalizing and spreading violence against other religious communities publicly. They also destroy, in this manner, the myth of the non-violent Hindu, a line of argument that has been used time and again to justify the brutal acts committed in the name of religion. The melas (fairs) and religious processions, organized by the Mathwalas help to institutionalize the views of the Hindu right wing organizations and political parties. The participation in these events, which can also be interpreted as public declarations of the formation of a monocultural and homogenous nation, then become almost a rite of passage for the establishment of a Hindu rashtra. The Math, thus, represents the exclusive nation that the advocates of Hindutva or the Nativists, want to construct, as the narrator observes:

We remember the Devi’s Math like the way it used to be [...] quiet [...] absorbed in meditation.
The Devi Math is here and its branches are bursting out in other towns. Going around this place is like touring India. However, the author, through Hanif and Sharad’s classes and discussions with students and Shruti’s stream of thoughts, tries to capture the areas of life and culture shared by both the communities. One can then argue that Hanif’s home, in contrast to the Math, represents a liberal and secular nation where debates and discussions are advocated as the way to resolve all differences to challenge the fundamentalists’ version of history (102).

In fact, the names of those who participate in the discussions in Hanif’s house are not mentioned and the narrator does not clarify who is speaking. This appears to be a deliberate strategy to avoid identifying speakers by their religion, a dangerous trend started by the fundamentalists. In this way the author draws the attention of the reader to the matters being discussed rather than to the speakers; as the narrator clarifies, she, “does not want the ink of her pen to dry up in noting the names of those who participate in the discussion”, since she “wants to write down the really important things” (103). One can also argue that it is a significant ploy on the part of the author, to resist the tendency of those encouraging and indulging in riots to target members of a particular community identified by their names and attire.\footnote{This concern is reflected even in the world of advertisements these days. In a short commercial made recently for an Indian company providing telecom services, the advertisement opens with scenes of violence and mayhem caused by caste and/or religious conflicts; when the villagers ask the sarpanch or village headman for justice and a solution to this problem he decides that no-one will be known by their names but rather by numbers. This commercial, apart from promoting a product, also brings out the contradictions in the changing scenario wherein it is the anonymity of numbers which provides security and assertion of identity based on names that reveal one’s caste and religion, endangers lives. (Aditya Birla Group, “An !dea can change your life”, commercial released on television, October 2007).} In fact Sharad too fears that his house will be attacked by the rioters since Hanif’s
name is written on the gate. To avoid this calamity he takes down Hanif’s nameplate from his gate as the incidents of rioting increase and spill across the bridge (310-311).

Throughout the novel we see that the narrator aligns herself with the secular tradition\textsuperscript{129} and opposes, through the principal protagonists, the narrow parameters being used by the fundamentalists to construct their nation. Moreover, by narrating and reminding their students (seen as representative of the people) of India’s shared cultural heritage, Hanif, Sharad and Shruti’s persistent arguments keep alive these aspects of culture even though the novel ends tragically.

As mentioned earlier, the Math has been converted into the centre from where the right wing religious and political organizations reach out to the man on the street by using calendars and cassettes for example. The calendar then becomes a text in which the history of India is depicted pictorially along with images of the Goddess Jagdamba, or Mother of the Universe. In this manner the Hindutva parties appropriate an art form used during the anti-colonial struggle to propagate their fundamentalist stance. As Patricia Uberoi clarifies, “[t]he chief focus of patriotic fervour has been the figure of Mother India, sometimes queen […] ,

\textsuperscript{129} Secularism as interpreted in India ensures that the state is equidistant from all religions, as Sen explains, “In the broader interpretation […], there is no demand that the state must stay clear of any association with any religious matter whatsoever. Rather, what is needed is to make sure that, in so far as the state has to deal with different religions and members of different religious communities, these must be basic symmetry of treatment. In this view, there would be no violation of secularism for a state to protect everyone’s right to worship as he or she chooses, even though in doing this the state has to work with---and for---religious communities” (296). Secularism as interpreted in the Indian Constitution is very different from Western definition of this concept, which in France for instance means eschewing any article of attire that would identify a person according to his/her religious beliefs, as happened recently when the French government prohibited school girls from wearing headscarves. Under the Freedom of conscience and free profession, guaranteed in Indian Constitution, for example, a person of Sikh faith can wear and carry kirpans (small knives) since it “shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion” (Part III, Article 25, Explanation I). (Accessed on 30th Oct 2007 from: http://lawmin.nic.in/coi.htm).
sometimes Goddess […], sometimes Mother (nurturing/protective) […]” (197). In the
calendar distributed by the Mathwalas, for example, we see all these elements except that
these are now used to construct an exclusive nation where anybody who is not a “Hindu” is
shown in a subordinate position. Surprisingly in this interpretation of history even the
British are shown as worshipping at the feet of the Mother:

ジョー カレンダー その中には 女神が 有り 情報等に 一束 残酷な 虫の ハートの 外側に flies を 描き 点てて 有り。（71）

[…] The calendar he bought showed an Englishman, hat in hand, offering a
bouquet of flowers at the feet of the Devi. (My translation)

One can also argue that the author deliberately builds up the story around this form of
the goddess (who is seen as another manifestation of Kali and Durga), instead of Ram, the
deity associated primarily with the Hindutva movement, because the image of the goddess
conveys many things subtly, for instance she is worshipped as the benign nurturer but is also
seen as a divine entity who like Durga and Kali is capable of rising against injustice. Given
this power of the goddess, the Mahant or head of the Math prays to her for strength and says:

देवी औरक्षित दो कि हम अपने […] मूर्धन्य का अनादर न मानना कर जाएं。（40）

Devi give us strength […] so that we do not tolerate any disrespect shown to the
Motherland.

130 In fact Dalmia and Heinrich Von Stietencron point out that, “More than 1,000 years have
passed since a ‘foreign’ religion like Zoroastrianism has taken root on the Indian soil, more
than 1,200 years in the case of Islam, and almost 2,000 years in the case of Judaism and
Christianity, yet these religions remain forever ‘foreign’ […]” (21). Ironically the
Constitution itself embodies this distinction between ‘indigenous” and “foreign” religions,
and it is this legacy of the colonial rule that seems to be reflected in the propaganda of the
right wing religious and political organizations.
In this way the followers of *Hindutva*, as depicted in the novel, too connect religion to patriotism, and portray India as mother, following the tradition set during the nationalist struggle. In fact in the religious meetings organized by the *Math*, people not only pay obeisance to *Jagdamba* in all her forms (also seen as Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth), along with Sita, the consort of Ram, but also show their reverence for “Bharat Mata” or Mother India (39). Shree thus reveals how the right wing organizations try and construct a sense of kinship with these figures and establish a bond with them, which in turn would encourage the devotees to follow certain principles laid down by them, trying to create in this way an exclusivist culture of in text-nation. This strategy follows the one described by Romila Thapar, who observes that one of the functions of nationalist depictions is to locate cultures, usually by defining a national culture that selects some aspects of history and symbolism, but sidelines others (in Farmer 107).

The nexus between religion and politics is brought out in the novel when many politicians, including the Prime Minister, visit the Math and indirectly show their solidarity with this community and their “philosophy” (124). It is common knowledge that politicians in contemporary India bow down to pressure from religious organizations as they command the vote banks that the leaders need to win the elections. This in turn emphasizes the political role played by religious entities in the political life of the nation despite the fact that India is a secular country. Therefore it is possible to reaffirm that by evoking those who have contributed to the construction of India’s plural culture, Hanif and his group, write the counter-narrative of the Hindu *rashtra* being promoted by the ultra right organizations in the

---

131 Here we see an oblique reflection of the suggestion made by Pandey that communalism and nationalism are part of the same discourse, as the *Mathwalas* continuously refer to the Hindu freedom fighters to show that they are still struggling to establish the “Hindu” *rashtra* or nation.
text-nation. The two versions of culture portrayed in the novel also reveal that both hybridity and Nativism share the same space and that it is difficult to construct one without the other in the same geo-political locus.

The mahant or the religious head of the Math and the advocates of Hindutva as well as the crowds gathered in the Math also evoke Buddha, Mahavir and Guru Govind Singh of the Sikh faith, thereby expanding the compass of Hinduism (39). Ironically, these religions belong to a different religious system called Sramanism which, according to Thapar, covered a variety of Buddhist, Jaina, Ajivika, and other sects. Thapar clarifies that Sramanism “denied the fundamentals of Bramhanism such as Vedic śruti and smruti. It was also opposed to the sacrificial ritual both on account of the beliefs incorporated in the ritual as well as the violence involved in the killing of animals. It was characterized by a doctrine open to all castes and although social hierarchy was accepted it did not emphasize separate social observances but, rather, cut across caste” (2000, 968). It is important to keep these facts in mind as the followers of the Hindutva consistently use history to prove the myth of a monolithic Hindu community tracing its roots to the pristine Hindu Vedic Age following

---

132 As mentioned earlier the new interpretation of Hinduism was influenced to a great extent by the colonial power and Orientalist scholarship, as well as by the missionaries (Thapar 2000, 974), who could view India only in terms of two monolithic communities, Hindus and Muslims, religions which according to them have remained static and unchanged (Thapar 1996, 3). In addition, the efforts made by some Indian reformers to “cleanse Indian religion of what they regarded as negative encrustations and trying find parallels with the Semitic model” (Thapar 2000, 974), also attributed to the crystallization of the new view of Hinduism. Surprisingly, in the Indian Constitution too, Buddhists, Jainas and Sikhs are seen as part of the Hindu community and the differences outlined above are not taken into consideration. “In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly” (Constitution of India, Part III, Article 25, Explanation II). In this interpretation we see the resonance of the colonial view.
Vināyak Dāmodar Sāvarkar who laid the foundation of the Hindutva philosophy being espoused by various right wing parties.

The Hindu fundamentalists in the novel also refer continually to the Vedic Age as a kind of benchmark of “pure” Hinduism. There is also a constant desire on their part to construct again an “undivided” Hindu nation (64). It is therefore possible to argue that in the “new” version of history propagated by the nativists, and as portrayed in the novel, we see the veiled influence of the erstwhile colonial power. One can then reiterate that the effect of colonialism is felt in many subtle ways, not recognizable easily since its presence is felt covertly. As mentioned earlier, Shree’s novel becomes a platform where all the prejudices and biases as well as the burning issue of communalism are brought out and dealt with historically.

It is possible to see how hybrid the culture is in the progression of day to day living as well. In fact this hybridity is such an intrinsic part of quotidian life that everyone takes it for granted and no-one seems to notice it, not even the Hindu fundamentalists, and it is this characteristic that the author paints as a subterranean river flowing for centuries. Thus along with the history lessons propounded by the Hindutva parties and people of the Math, and those given by the principal protagonists, are the evidences of daily life where one sees the two communities living together and sharing cultural spaces without even realizing it. No one embodies this hybrid culture more than Daddu, Sharad’s father.

---

133 In Thapar’s opinion the tendency to divide India’s history according to James Mill’s, “periodization in the nineteenth century […] assumes the existence of Hindu and Muslim communities and takes the history of the former back to the centuries BC” (Thapar 2000,981). This view is reflected in the propaganda of the right wing parties depicted in the novel as they try and prove, time and again, the existence of a “Hindu community” interpreted to a large extent according to the Orientalist philosophy (Thapar 2000,984).
Daddu never steps out of the house, but keeps himself informed about everything that is going on in the city by listening to the news on the television and radio. He sits on his divan from morning till evening looking out on the street through the glass doors that face the front garden and gate (60). The divan reflects all his moods and appears to float up as he laughs with joy (12). He is full of laughter and the sounds reverberates throughout the house and even reaches up to Shruti and Hanif’s home on the first floor:

निजे से ददू की हंगाम आ रही है।
कोई आया होगा। फिर हैंग। (20)

Daddu’s laughter came from downstairs.

Some one must have come. He laughed again.

His cheerful and playful nature fills their lives as he revels in his humor and includes them all in its warm glow. As Hanif and Sharad try and bring the (hi)story of the communities to their students and ask them to look at the local histories instead of the grand narratives of the Mughals and other royal dynasty, Daddu, who still thinks of himself as a villager (24), reminisces about his life in the village and tells the three protagonist about the relation shared by the two communities. For instance, when Shruti expresses a desire to learn Urdu, Daddu brings a book written in the language and starts reading it and tells her that:

ददू भी हैंग, "वहीं और कोई उर्दू नहीं जानता। हम लोग तो मदरगिये में पढ़कर आगे निकल।
उर्दू पहले हिंदी बाद में आई। प्रायः भी जानता है।" (49)

134 The author, however, does not specify the year in which Daddu came to the city. She does not give any information vis-à-vis that would help the reader to situate Daddu’s childhood within the historical events unfolding in India at that time. However, from whatever little indication the author gives the reader, one can infer that Daddu is talking about the early years of twentieth century.
Daddu laughed as well, “Nobody knows Urdu here. We went ahead after studying in a Madarassa. First Urdu, then Hindi. I know Persian as well”.

From Daddu’s reminiscences we can infer that Madarassas or Muslim religious schools were open to all the children in his village, where education does not appear to have been divided along communal lines.\textsuperscript{135} The school is a public place as well, where apparently children of the villagers from both the religious communities studied together. It also represents a cultural space where many tangible and intangible things are taught and imbibed by the students. The fact that children from both the religious communities come to learn at the Madarassa also shows to some extent the traditions of their families. Shree inserts this information dexterously in the text to make the reader aware of the attitude of the villagers. In this way the private and particularized space (Mayol 1998, 9) of the homes insinuates itself and makes its presence felt in public, in the interaction between students of different backgrounds. By contrasting Daddu’s reminiscences with the contemporary scenario the author reveals how the Hindus and Muslims shared their lives. She also proves that it would be very difficult to separate the contribution made by the two communities in creating the hybrid culture that they shared with each other.

Daddu’s childhood and his life in the village are in stark contrast to the contemporary scenario where even the language controversy seems to have raised its head once more, as languages are communalized yet again by the supporters of Hindutva. The fact that this fundamentalist view has corrupted even the public servants is revealed in the way Kapdia the police officer reacts to Sharad using an Urdu word in his conversation (154), as every aspect

\textsuperscript{135} According to the advocates of Hindutva, Urdu is spoken by all the members of the Muslim community, by showing that it is Daddu who speaks this language and not Hanif, the author breaks the stereotype being projected by the Hindu fundamentalists.
of one’s life begins to be seen through glasses tinted with communalism. For instance, religious festivals mostly celebrated within communities, too seem to have become more exclusive and aggressive sowing seeds of dissidence amongst the people. A fact clearly shown by the author as the *Mathwalas* take out their religious procession:

This is not a festival. It is noise. [...] Did you see how aggressive he looked? This is the beginning, whether you agree or not the country belongs to us and you will support us, with money, with whatever we demand [from you].

But as Daddu points out this was not the way things used to be in his village:

There were many Muslim families in our village too. Come let me tell you something today. You people eat in restaurants and *dhabas*, [...] you eat food touched and cooked by them, [...] this was not the case in our village. [...] We used to take part in all the festivals and celebrations, together, but the food was
served separately. I am talking of the whole village. However, I soon distanced myself from this question of distinction, but even then whenever I would visit the house of a Muslim, a Hindu boy would go to a Hindu sweet shop and get food for my Father and me in a plate made of leaves. My father and all the villagers used to live like this. […] And nobody felt bad about it. You folks don’t distinguish between people, we used to do so, but there was also a greater sense of kinship amongst us Hindus and Muslims.

Shruti too recalls the time spent with her mother’s class fellow Sugra *bi* who used to live close to them:

> मम्मी की क्लासफेलो थी गुगग बी। कहते याद करती गई उनके ढाकाई परांठे, […] कबाब और अंडे का हलवा और इंद पर उनके घर में माल दर माल सेवन की आती थी।
> गुगग बी का बेटा जमाल भाई का दोग्य था। इंद […] , होली-दिवाली आना-जाना होता ही था। (56)

Sugra *bi* was Mummy’s class fellow. Shruti kept remembering her *dhakai paranthas* […] kababs and egg *halwa* and the vermicelli sent to their house by her on the occasion of Id, year after year. And they of course visited each other during Id […], Holi and Diwali.

Thus from Shruti too we learn that there were even instances in which not only did the members of the two communities celebrate their festivals together but also shared food. Thus it is possible to conclude that in the novel the relation between the two communities is shown to be harmonious despite the distance they sometimes maintained.137 I would therefore, like

136 *Bi* is the short form of the term *bibi* which in Urdu means a lady (Platts 201). It is used as a mark of respect.

137 In fact Hanif points out that it is possible to distinguish three main trends in their relation, “atrocities have been carried out by members of both the communities, there have been
to argue that this joint (but sometimes separate) celebration of festive occasions led to the establishment of what Mayol calls the “communal kitty” (8). In his opinion this system is, “at the level of behaviors, a compromise in which each person, by renouncing the anarchy of individual impulses, makes a down payment to the collectivity with the goal of withdrawing from it symbolic benefits necessarily deferred in time. Through this “price to pay” (knowing how to “behave,” to be “proper”), the storyteller becomes a partner in a social contract that he or she consents to respect so that everyday life is possible” (8). One can then infer that the experiences narrated by Daddu and Shruti also show the many different ways the two communities interacted while maintaining peaceful relationship. Thus the two characters reveal that their beliefs and traditions were based on the hybrid cultural traditions of India.

In fact, Daddu is sure of his identity as Hindu, and unlike the advocates of Hindutva, he is able to recognize the contribution made by all the communities in the creation of India’s culture, language and literature. During one of his tête-à-têtes with Shruti, he explains his position in life when he is accused of being a cynic by her:

“I am not cynical”, Daddu is laughing, “You are the ones who lack faith. […] We worship everyone. The whole creation is a miracle. Everybody is divine. […] Wherever we talk about holy men, […] we fold our hands and bow our heads. At the tomb of the Pir….”

incidents of mutual understanding as well and the communities have also maintained their distance from each other but lived in peace […]” (29).
In this way, Daddu proves himself to be a man who believes in all things divine irrespective of which religion they belong to, and reveals the spiritual tradition of India unfettered by rituals and rites. However, these beliefs and traditions are disturbed when riots erupt and shatter the rhythm of life, as demonstrated in the following passage:

Everything, every color, every salam-namaskar had become Hindu Muslim […]

The Muslim owner of a bookshop called Saraswati cut Saraswati out of the name. The seth of a hotel named Mughal Mahal started looking for another name in the shrunken Hindu vocabulary.138

The internecine violence then empties the “communal kitty” built over the years by the Hindu and the Muslim communities, as we can see in the choice of names for the shops by the traders. For instance, by naming the bookshop after the Hindu goddess of learning, “Saraswati”, and the restaurant “Mughal Mahal” serving a kind of cuisine that emerged during the Mughal rule, the two shopkeepers demonstrate the depth to which certain beliefs had sunk in the fabric of the society. They also acknowledge in this way a historical encounter which contributed so positively to the formation of the culture of the Subcontinent.

In fact, such is the extent to which both the communities have participated even in the most popular entertainment sector, the Hindi film industry, that the Mathwalas themselves fail to distinguish between the two communities. For instance an old Hindi film, “Jogan”

138 “Seth” is a title of respect given to a merchant or banker (Platts 709).
(1950) (which in Hindi means “female ascetic”) is shown at the Math, presumably for its religious content, but the organizers don’t even realize that the actors playing the lead roles of Surabhi and Vijay are Muslims\textsuperscript{139}:

\textcolor{red}{अखबार में मंथ में होनेवाले प्रोग्राम का पन्ना देखना तो बहुत से लोग खुश हो गए। आज आम पुरानी फिल्म “जोगन” दिखा रहे हैं।}

\textcolor{red}{नर्गिस हैं और दिलीप कुमार उसमें […] (130)}

Many people were happy when they saw the program that was to take place in the Math. They were going to show an old film “Jogan” today evening.

Nargis and Dilip Kumar are in it […]

The importance of Hindi films in the life of the people of India cannot be underestimated, as Rashmi Doraiswamy observes, “Popular cultural texts, in their narratives, more often than not express their imaginings of the nation. This is true of what is probably the most popular and mass of popular cultural texts in India, the Bollywood film” (212, author’s emphasis). Moreover, Muslims form an important part of the Hindi film industry and have contributed to it as musicians, actors, composers and directors; hence it is not possible to distinguish artists on the basis of religion. I would therefore like to affirm that it would be very difficult to construct the kind of homogenous nation that the Hindutva fundamentalists are trying to make since both the communities share many spaces and contribute to the making of the

\textsuperscript{139} Dilip Kumar is the stage name of Yusuf Khan (www.bollywoodgate.com). Not only Muslim actors but many Hindu actors also changed their names when they came to the film industry, for example the very well known actor Sanjeev Kumar’s real name was Haribhai Zariwala (www.imdb.com/name). What is also ironical is that Nargis is generally seen as an iconic figure, Mother India symbolizing the “Indian woman”, from the role that she played in a classic Hindi film of the same name directed by Mehboob Khan and released in 1957.
cultural subtext of a plural nation. The following question in fact comes up during a heated discussion that takes place at Hanif’s house between the protagonists and their students:

“ […] और कहाँ मे है वह मिली-जुली मंगळति, […] जो हर बैठन मे है
संगीत, माहित्य, आकिन्तक्वर, फ़लमफ़ा, नाच, खान-पान, पहनावा, […] ?” (29)

[…] And from where has that diverse culture developed, […] in every field--- music, literature, architecture, philosophy, dance, food, clothing, […]?

The professors then talk about poets like Mir Taqi Mir (1722-1808), Wali Mohammed Wali (1667-1707) as examples of the composite vernacular linguistic and literary heritage of India (103). However, as the professors and students discuss the poets didactically, Daddu quotes verses from their works as he shares a drink with the protagonists and laments the lack of poetic temper amongst the members of the younger generation (136). In fact he often recites couplets to Shruti and asks her to identify the writers:

“नहीं पता न?” […] “जाहिल, मौदा की आयरी है |”

“ह?” श्रुति अरच्छे मे देखती है।

“हां!” ददु फिर हाथ मचकाये हैं, “इस तरह कया कहाँ लिखती? कुछ नहीं लिख गकती। […]” (230)

“You don’t know?” […] “Ignoramus, this is Sauda’s poetry.”

“What?” Shruti looks at him in surprise.

“Yes!” Daddu shakes his hands again, “How will you write stories like this? You wouldn’t be able to write anything […]”

In this dialogue Daddu indicates very clearly that it is difficult to write without knowing one’s literary heritage, as Shruti is unable to identify Sauda’s verses when he quotes them to her. By making Daddu quote Mir, Wali and Sauda, Shree reveals yet again that Daddu
personifies the hybrid culture that the professors and students discuss academically, because unlike the intellectuals, he actually lives the history!

In addition, Hanif and Sharad continually question the tendency of the fundamentalists, or Nativists, to support every point they raise by looking at the remote past, as somebody in the gathering asks:

हमारी नज़र बीते युग पर ही क्यों अझी हैं? क्यों हम आज और आनेवाले कल के पति इसने ना-उमीद हैं कि पीछे ही देखे जा रहे हैं और उसमें भी केवल अल्पाव के प्रतीकों को हूँड़ रहे हैं ? अरे क्यों नहीं करने [ …] अमीर खुसरो की बात?

(103)

Why do we always look at the bygone era? Why are we so disheartened by the present and the future that we always keep looking back and that too at those who have symbolized separation? Why don’t we speak of […] Amir Khusro?

The well known poet, musician, and writer, Amir Khusro (1253-1325), whose name comes up in the discussion, plays an important role in the cultural history of India. By mentioning Khusro, the protagonists and their students provide an alternative history to the one being drawn by the Mathwalas when they talk only of Vinayak Damodar Sāvarkar, Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai, i.e. political figures who advocated the policy of Hindutva (39).

By drawing attention of the reader to music, the author emphasizes the importance of this art form in India. According to Najma Perveen Ahmad, Indian music seems to have brought in its fold, “Hindus, and Muslims, Sufis and Ulema, saints and sultan, rich and poor, in fact men and women from different castes and social statuses. Music, therefore, functioned not only as an esoteric art, or as a source of entertainment, but also as a powerful instrument of cultural integration and social harmony. Side by side with the popularity and development of Hindustani music in the courts and dargahs, the devotional music was flourishing in the
temples” (10). To reiterate, by referring to classical music in her novel, Shree reaffirms the significance of this cultural field and showcases one of the aspects of Hindu-Muslim relationship in the construction of culture in the Indian subcontinent. In fact, Peter Manuel attributes the credit of sustaining this art form during the colonial period to the Muslim potentates recognized by the British (120). According to the critic, after the large temple establishments with their retinue of devadasis (temple courtesans), were disbanded it was the Muslim princely states that sustained and patronized this art form, becoming in this manner important centers of musical activity (120). It is significant that despite the censure imposed on music by orthodox Islam, it had been accepted by the Sufi orders which regard “song as a means of expressing devotion, and ideally, attaining musical ecstasy. […] In the absence of orthodox Islamic institutional music patronage, the Sufi orientation of performers and patrons further served to predispose music toward notions of syncretism and tolerance rather than toward notions of sectarian or aesthetic purity ”(Manuel 120-121).

One can then state that North Indian classical or Hindustani classical music is a tangible example of the synthesis between the two cultures and as Ahmad points out, it is extremely difficult to distinguish which part is Hindu and which is Muslim in the music that emerged from this fusion (1-2). Manuel too agrees that Hindustani music has been, “a site for the confluence of distinct, yet in many ways compatible streams of Hindu and Muslim aesthetics, ideologies and social practices. Hindustani music has thus evolved as an inherently syncretic and collaborative product of Hindu and Muslim artists and patrons. As such, while music has in some respects been a site of contention, it has often been praised as a symbol of the fundamental pluralism of north Indian culture” (1996, 120).
As mentioned before, in the discussions that take place between Hanif, Sharad, and their students, names of those who have made vital contributions to music since the medieval times are brought up time and again by them to strengthen their arguments. Thus the contribution of Adarang and Sadarang to north Indian classical music is also referred to along with that of Khusro. Niyamat Khan “Sadarang” and his nephew Firoze Khan “Adarang” were musicians in the court of Mughal emperor Mohammed Shah Rangeele (1719-48). Niyamat Khan was a singer, instrumentalist as well as lyricist, and to him are attributed many compositions or bandish under the penname “Sadarang” (one who is always colorful) sung even now. In fact, Ahmad indicates that Niyamat Khan’s compositions acquired such popularity that musicians recite them, and use them as a model for new compositions till today (123). And even today one can see a blending of mystical ideas in the bandishes sung by contemporary musicians and this point comes up even in the novel:

"अदारांग सदारांग की गंगीत की बंदिसें गृंजों, जिनमें पीर, काजी, करीम, कृष्ण, सभी की बंदना हैं।" (103)

“Listen to the musical bandish by Adarang, Sadarang, in these you will find prayers to all, Pir, Kazi, Karim, Krishna.”

In this way Shree brings out this fusion in her novel and demonstrates the blending of mystical ideas. To show that old compositions are still sung today by artists, irrespective of their religion, the speaker draws attention to a bandish sung by the renowned classical singer Pandit Bhimsen Joshi (1922-), in which the singer evokes not only Kazi and Karim but also

---

140 Bandish denotes a regular music composition in vocal music pre-set to tal and meter which forms the mainstay of the literary text of a khayal or a dhrupad (Sen Chib, 27).
Ibrahim (103-104). Thus it is possible to assert that the voices of the exponents of Hindustani classical music, captured by the author in the text-nation that she crafts, encompass the composite history of the place called Hindustan. In this way these singers construct the counter-narrative of the new nativist national discourse being propagated by the Hindutva advocates. However, while Hanif and Sharad talk about the history of Hindustani classical music, we hear Daddu moving about downstairs and soon the sonorous voice of Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1901-1968), the doyen of Patiala gharana, floats up as he sings the sacred Hindu mantra “Hari Om Tatsat” with great devotion (112). This strategy demonstrates that North Indian classical music continues to be a vibrant proof of the syncretic cultural tradition of India. We also see that the author again succeeds in portraying Daddu as an embodiment of the hybrid tradition that the two professors discuss intellectually. Thus Shree establishes once more that the culture of India is composite and that the hybridity is lived and experienced profoundly in quotidian life.  

141 The compositions, however, are not just mystical but also refer to romantic love, which are sometimes dedicated to Krishna or Kanhiya, as can be seen in the various bandishes sung by well known musicians even now (ITC Sangeet Research Academy).  
142 The gharana concept gained currency only in the nineteenth century when the royal patronage enjoyed by performers weakened. Performers were then compelled to move to urban centres. To retain their respective identities, they fell back on the names of the regions they hailed from. Therefore, even today, the names of many gharanas refer to places. Some of the gharanas well known for singing khayals are: Agra, Gwalior, Patiala, Kirana, Indore, Mewat, Sahaswan, Bhendibazar and Jaipur. A gharana also indicates a comprehensive musicological ideology. This ideology sometimes changes substantially from one gharana to another. It directly affects the thinking, teaching, performance and appreciation of music. […] The key factor is the style of a musician, which should follow at least one authentic gharana. On the other hand, there may be brilliant musicians with a distinctive style of their own, which need not represent any one gharana. In other words, a musician may form a distinctive style by assimilating a variety of styles. When his sons or disciples continue this style for three or more generations, a new gharana is born (ITC Sangeet Research Academy).  
143 Both the Sufi tradition and the Bhakti movement contributed greatly to Hindustani classical music and brought it to the common man. The term bhakti means devotion and this movement laid emphasis on the intense love between the devotee and her/his personal god.
I would then like to argue that syncretism and hybridity are rooted in the Subcontinent since the musicians mentioned here, had adapted the existing musical forms and styles. It is therefore, possible to assert that the hybridity evident in the Hindustani Classical Music is embedded in the South Asian Subcontinent, since the Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Persians, who came to this part of the subcontinent, “were familiar to northern and western India, since they had not only been contiguous people but had been linked by trade settlement and conquest, links which went back, virtually unbroken, to many centuries. […] Trading links were tied to political alliances. Close maritime contacts between the sub-continent and the Arabian peninsula go back in time to Indus civilization and have continued in the present” (Thapar 1996, 5). Thus the Islamic contribution to Hindustani classical music cannot be seen as a foreign one, but is rather a vital part of the palimpsest that is India. In fact, as Rai points out, this society and culture evolved as, “[t]he caravans rested, then settled down; And thus became --- Hindustan” (12). In this way, the author also demonstrates the positive side of Nativism, one which is porous and open to receiving influences from other places and cultures as well. However, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, the “unitary” vision brought by the colonial authorities, still remains submerged in the vision of the fundamentalists, or Nativists, and is a crisis faced by contemporary India.\textsuperscript{144} Sen too confirms this when he observes, “Even the composite conception of Hinduism as one religion includes the impact of the outsiders’ view of the classificatory unity of the religious beliefs and practices in the country” (2005, 301).

\textsuperscript{144} As mentioned earlier it was during the nineteenth century with the beginning of the language wars that this vision took root among the Indian intellectuals, freedom fighters and reformers of that time.
The novel does not end on a happy note, despite these instances of cultural hybridity, nor do we see any of the euphoria generally associated with postcolonial writings by some theorists. There is instead a profound sense of sadness and loss, as no argument can stop the spread of the Hindu fundamentalist sentiments even among Hanif and Sharad’s students. In fact, Hanif is threatened by his own students and during one of their visits to his house they beat up Daddu who protests against them:

“निकालो उसे बाहर, हमारा शिक्षक कहलाने वाला।” [...] 

“जेट आउट।” दद्दू बगमटे में नीचे उतर आए हैं, “जेट आउट।” [...]145

[...] एक लड़के ने दद्दू का बातू नाकड़ लिया है, “कहों छिपा रखा है उसे?

[...] दद्दू की ओरों में धुन [...] , “पहले मुझे मारो ...।”

दालड़ के साथ भीड़ उन पर टूट पड़ी है। [...] गुलाबी मूड़ों पर बैठे की कलार अलग छिटकी पड़ी है...। [...] दद्दू बुड़ हो गए थे। [...] दद्दू ने मूंह बंद कर लिया। (349-350)

“Bring him out, the one who calls himself our teacher”. [...] 

“Get out!” Daddu came down from the veranda, “Get out!” [...] 

[...] One of the boys caught Daddu’s arm tightly, “Where have you hidden him?” 

[...] Daddu was filled with rage [...], “Kill me first...”

The crowd fell on him with a roar. A row of white teeth on pink gums lay scattered, away from him. [...].

Daddu had become silent [...]. Daddu shut his mouth.

The loss of Daddu’s denture is a metaphor for the loss of the right to speak and defend one’s views, as teeth and gum symbolize a person’s ability to attack and to defend (Dictionary of

145 These phrases are in English and have been transliterated as such in Hindi; hence I have used italics to highlight them in both the original and the translation.
Symbolism 2001). In this way the young men, as representatives of the Hindu right wing organizations, stifle the voices of the people who embody the hybrid and composite culture of India. I, therefore, argue that by silencing Daddu the new Hindu fundamentalists not only deny the other side their right to live according to their beliefs but also take away their right to defend the pluralistic traditions of the Indian society.

The novel, thus, ends on a somber note as the author does not propose any solution to the internecine violence which seems to have influenced even members of the academic community. In fact, if at all, there is a sense of disconsolation as Shruti returns to her hometown and finds that Daddu has taken to his bed and all is dark and desolate. The thoughts and acts of the Hindu fundamentalists and those who have come under their influence then are not and cannot be forgiven or reconciled by the protagonists in the novel; and this hopelessness then produces a sense of disconsolation not only in the characters but also in the readers. Lazarus was one of the first critics to point out that this emotion was “a particular kind of writing, particular mode of literary practice” common to works like “Toba Tek Singh” a short story written by Saadat Hasan Manto (431).146 Manto projects the madness inherent in the division of India through this work published some years after the Partition.147

146 Manto did not get the recognition he deserved during his lifetime. He was himself a victim of Partition, and was forced to migrate to Pakistan after his wife and her family went to Lahore after 1947, though he stayed back in Mumbai for a couple of months but he eventually had to join them. Lonely and separated from his friends of the Progressive Writers Movement in Mumbai, and facing a disquieting and uncertain future, he died in Lahore of cirrhosis of liver brought on by acute alcoholism at the age of 43 (Alter 92).
147 The opening lines of the story lay the ground for the plot, “A couple of years after the Partition of the country, it occurred to the respective governments of India and Pakistan that inmates of lunatic asylums, like prisoners, should also be exchanged. Muslim lunatics in India should be transferred to Pakistan and Hindu and Sikh lunatics in Pakistani asylums should be sent to India” (Khuswant Singh, translator). In this way the author critiques what he sees as “a kind of mass schizophrenia brought on by the Partition” (Alter 97). Thus for Manto the violence which accompanied the Partition was an act of collective madness. The
His works are relevant till today as they were earlier since the communal conflicts have become a part of the new nation-state as well. Stephen Alter too reiterates that, “No writer has been able to convey the violent ambiguities of communal conflicts with as much force as Saadat Hasan Manto” (91). This writing then is in stark contrast to the “euphoric” ones taken as sole examples of postcolonial writings. There is only agony and trauma as Manto’s characters, “confront the ruthless inhumanity of the Hindu-Muslim violence—murder, rape and mutilation—their only conceivable response is madness (Alter 91). It is, therefore, possible to state that the author depicts a dismal picture of post-Partition India where the forced dislocation of people produces acute despair and sense of dislocation. In Shree’s narrative we see that this sense of despair has been strengthened as her protagonists continue to face the trauma of internecine conflicts. Unlike Manto, Shree’s characters are either silenced, like Daddu, or are forced to leave the city like Hanif and Shruti.

Insofar as hybridity is concerned, Shree has shown clearly that even the new musical genre that emerged from the melding of the two traditions, Islamic and Vedic, is rooted in the Indian Subcontinent. Hence, one can affirm that in her novel the cultural hybridity depicted through the musical tradition destroys the argument of a “pure pre-colonial cultural past”, advocated by the Hindu right wing organizations, and indicates that indigenous cultures are syncretic, composite and hybrid, not static, but changing constantly. In this way, Shree’s trauma of dislocation brought on by the division is narrated through the experience of Bishan Singh of Toba Tek Singh (Singh being a common surname in Punjab). The author constantly mixes up the name of the protagonist with that of his village, implying in this way the author emphasizes the relationship of a person’s home and his identity (Alter 97). As the inmates are exchanged at the Wagah Border, Bishan Singh refuses to cross the border as he discovers that his village is still in Pakistan. He finally dies in the no man’s land between the two new nation-states. Manto uses this story to attack the religious dogmatism manifested by both the communities at that time.
narrative proves the point made by Bahri when she posits that, “cultures are complex and hybrid because they are diverse internally and not only for the purposes of oppositional figuration in a dialogue with western discourse” (7).

This point is not taken into account by Bhabha for whom hybridity denotes an ambivalence as it inhabits the “rim of an ‘in-between’ reality” (Bhabha 13). This maybe true in some of the novels he analyzes in The Location of Culture (1994), but cannot be applied across the board to all literary works emerging from the erstwhile colonies. One can then argue that the critics are looking exclusively at the hybrid character of cultures when produced by the collision between indigenous societies and colonial regimes, while ignoring the way these cultures have evolved over the years, since the pre-colonial period, as it plays an important role in the construction of the postcolonial cultural fabric.

Thus, by bringing out the hybrid character of culture, produced due to the intricate exchanges between various communities since the pre-colonial times, Shree proves that this hybridity has a distinct character based entirely on its geo-political location. The author also establishes clearly that this culture is not unstable but rather draws its strength from the native traditions that have evolved over the years in the land of its birth. I would like to assert that Shree’s novel also establishes the difficulty of applying one definition to explain certain cultural phenomena such as hybridity and Nativism, as these concepts are multifaceted and cannot be captured within the narrow lens of Anglo-centric postcolonial theory.

I would, therefore, like to affirm that Shree’s novel reveals not only the dangers of communalism but also addresses the question of Nativism versus hybridity as postulated by postcolonial critics like Bhabha and Ashcroft et al. In this way she brings out the paradoxes inherent in postcolonial theory vis-à-vis these questions. As mentioned earlier, the concept of
hybridity posited by Bhabha refers only to the contact between the indigenous culture and the Western one without acknowledging that the indigenous society itself is hybrid and composite, as we have just seen in Shree’s novel. Bahri too confirms this important lacuna when she points out that, “The association of the concept of hybridity with figures such as Bhabha and Salman Rushdie also tends to privilege transnational hybridity arising from an encounter with western culture […]. The confusions of transnationalism and globalization, moreover, predispose us to attribute a diachronic flux and dynamism to cultures being produced by global movements of the present and toward the West --and to relegate the culture of the former colony and the “stationary” local to a state of synchronic stasis” (Author’s emphasis, 7), and as mentioned before, Shree’s novel proves this point. In this way the writer opens a rift in the two concepts indicating that it is difficult to understand hybridity and Nativism when these are seen only in the context of colonization. One can then argue that the somewhat narrow interpretation of these concepts actually denigrates the flexibility of the indigenous cultures which, far from being static, are fluid and dynamic and capable of imbibing non-Western influences as well.

If Yawar fiesta proves that the hybrid culture is infused with the autochthonous worldview, then Hamara Shahar Us Baras establishes emphatically that the indigenous cultures are inherently hybrid, fluid and dynamic, and that this characteristic does not appear only when they collide with the Western world. I would like to contend that both Arguedas and Shree show the misprisions and aporias inherent in the interpretation of the concepts of hybridity and Nativism seen through a narrow lens. The analysis of these two novels also shows that it is difficult to generalize the strategies that authors use to subvert colonial and postcolonial hegemonies, as they interpret these techniques according to the problems faced
by each country. We see the difference even in the novels set in the same country, for instance, both Shree and Roy depict contemporary India, but we see that the effect of the colonial attitude towards issues of identity are embedded more deeply in the Hindi novel than in the one written in English. Though all the writers, analyzed here, use hybridity and Nativism in their text-nations the worlds they portray are diverse (even within the same nation-state); if in Arguedas and Roy, Nativism becomes a subversive tool to resist the postcolonial hegemonies, in Shree, Nativism is a powerful instrument of assimilation as also a crucial element in making the society and culture hybrid and plural, which reveals the paradox inherent in the standardized definition given to these categories by Ashcroft et al.

I would, therefore, like to argue that that given the position of the authors, as reflected in their novels, it is not possible to apply the literary strategies, as suggested by Ashcroft et al and Bhabha, to all the works emerging from the erstwhile colonies. In fact, if the critics advocating these restrictive precepts were to keep ignoring the literary corpus being produced in the vernacular, then they would be replicating, to a large extent, an Orientalist view of postcolonial theory. Hence, I would like to conclude that to understand the consequences of colonization fully it is crucial to review not only the works written in the erstwhile colonizer’s language but also those being written in the vernacular.
Conclusion

Limits of Comparativism?

My thesis has attempted a critical analysis of the universal application of Postcolonial theory in the context of hybridity, Nativism and mimicry postulated in the writings of Ashcroft et al and Bhabha, and applied to all erstwhile European colonies. The reason for selecting these concepts is because of their immense popularity as they are employed at random to numerous works stretching across countries primarily based on their supposedly shared colonial experience. I have argued here that each country evolves according to its unique historical and cultural background which in turn depends on its geo-political location. After weighing both ends of the argument offered by Ashcroft et al, Bhabha and other scholars such as Parry, Shohat, Colás et al, I decided to compare writings from Peru and India, in order to test whether the works from these regions could really be compared on the basis of the discursive strategies postulated by the aforementioned theorists. Thus my critique of postcolonial theory is based on the definition and interpretation by the authors, Arguedas, Roy and Shree, in their novels written in Spanish, English and Hindi, respectively.

I have added the Hindi novel because all too often critics, from both sides of the theoretical divide, simply mention the importance of including works written in the vernacular without actually analyzing any of these texts. I think it is particularly important to study the texts written in the vernacular since their analysis will bring out the way these languages and literatures have developed through the ages. I strongly believe that to understand the evolution of a society, especially one which is as multilingual and multifaceted as India, it is crucial to examine the effect of colonization on the vernacular linguistic and literary scenarios, along with the questions raised by Indian writings in
English. As my discussion on the role played by the colonial authorities in the invention of the Sanskritized Hindi has revealed, many problems emerged as a result of this intervention. Following the unitary vision of the British, these conflicts were based on language and identity and related to religion. The turmoil caused by the colonial process led to a revalorization of these issues by various communities in India, as depicted in Shree’s work. Hence, I am convinced that it is vital to include the vernacular literature to grasp the effect of colonization fully. In the other two novels I have studied the relation between the former colonizer’s languages, Spanish and English, and the vernaculars.

To facilitate my research I selected the national model suggested by Ashcroft et al as the basis of comparison (1989), but as my work progressed I realized that it was difficult to limit the exegesis of the narratives only to the nation, since it involved the notion of hybridity, which the critics suggested as one of the key elements in the comparative model. Thus I can say that my dissertation has proved that it is not always possible to draw a strict line between the said modules. Sales too has pointed this out in her work on Arguedas and Vikram Chandra (169, 2004).

As mentioned in the Introduction, hybridity and Nativism were seen as key concepts in the formation of postcolonial theory, but new issues have taken their place in the firmament of critical analysis, such as neo-liberalism, underpaid labor (often female), etc. However, I still chose to work on these two ideas because there appears to be a resurgence of Nativism as shown in Shree’s novel. Despite the fact that her work is set in the late nineties it continues to be relevant in the contemporary scenario as fundamentalism/Nativism is

---

148 They use Wilson Harris’ formulation to suggest that, “hybridity in the present is struggling to free itself from a past which stressed ancestry, and which valued the ‘pure’ over its threatening opposite, the ‘composite’” (36). However, as my work has proved hybridity is related to the past and its contribution to the construction of this idea cannot be ignored.
increasingly becoming the ideological base of operation for the Hindu right wing political and non-political organization. Their fundamentalist views are being garbed under a narrow definition of Nativism, which in turn is colored by the old Orientalist perception of Islam and the contribution of Muslims to the language and culture of this country. In fact, fundamentalism and the violence associated with it are gradually becoming an ever familiar face in the Indian Subcontinent. The advocates of Hindutva are slowly trying to unravel the composite and hybrid linguistic and cultural tradition of India. Bomb blasts and murderous attacks on innocent people appear to have become common place occurrences in India;\textsuperscript{149} therefore, given these circumstances it is of vital importance to re-open the discussion of the concepts of hybridity and Nativism. I believe that the time is right once again to talk about these issues as the current political scenario has changed drastically since a series of violent attacks have taken place in various countries. Hence, even though these questions are old, they should not be shelved as any discussion of these notions would at least help us to see the many different ways they can be interpreted. However, before I proceed further, I would like to briefly recapitulate the findings of my research to aid further debate on postcolonial theory.

In the first chapter I considered the circumstances that led to the epistemological conquest of America and the imposition of Spanish in all spheres of power, as well as the place of Quechua within the administrative, judicial and religious systems. The former colonial language continued to play a vital role in the construction of the new nation where the colonizer’s language retained its power and elite status. Quechua was relegated to the peripheries of the nation along with those who spoke it and identified with it. There was,\textsuperscript{149} An investigation on the Malegaon blasts allegedly engineered by some Hindu right wing organizations is currently underway (\textit{The Times of India} 31st Oct 2008).
however, a contradiction inherent in the manner in which the criollos incorporated the indigenous legacy in their concept of nation, by accepting the Incan legacy but leaving the Aborigines at the margins of the nation-state (Méndez G.). Thus I would like to argue that there is a disjunction between the real and discursive worlds, as material oppression and exclusion are still prevalent in Peru despite the discourse of inclusion as reflected, for example, in the Constitution. This phenomenon also proves that it is difficult to capture the multi-layered and stratified reality when the analysis is conducted only at epistemological level, as suggested by Ashcroft et al and Bhabha.

Arguedas had always fought to insert the indigenous languages in the national discourse, especially Quechua which he had learnt from the ayllus with whom he spent his initial years. One of the problems he faced was selecting the language in which to capture the speech of the Indian characters whom he could not imagine speaking in fluent Castilian. He resolved the problem by crafting a new language which would transmit the grammatical structures of Quechua to Spanish. This new hybrid language makes its presence felt strongly in his earlier works, especially Yawar fiesta (Bloody fiesta) published in 1941.

In this novel the vernacular appears as a whole, i.e. as a homogenous entity in the text-nation and it is in this form that it resists the hegemonic language which also appears as a whole, challenged only by the hybridism that arises from its contact with the native tongue. This linguistic strategy proves that the new hybrid language is embedded in the Peruvian society and relates the historical and social processes that led to the emergence of the nation-state. In this way, the author questions one of the premises of hybridity, as postulated by Bhabha, in which ambivalence is seen as a characteristic feature of this phenomenon.

150 He had decided to write in Spanish because his readers were non-Quechua speaking members of Peru.
Arguedas has shown that despite the fact that the new language was neither Spanish nor Quechua, its inherent character remained indigenous, and there was no room for ambivalence. It is, therefore, possible to say that he demonstrates that it is the native world that gives the new language its particular resonance and character. One can thus say that the hybrid tongue draws its power from the autochthonous world to challenge the assimilatory practices of the new nation-state.

We see the same strategy in Arguedas’ last novel *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (*The Fox from Above and the Fox from Down Below*, 1971), set in the coastal town Chimbote. Despite the fact that the Quechua-ized Spanish does not appear as much as it did in his earlier novels, but it still makes its presence felt in the speech of the migrants from the Sierra, thereby revealing that it is the native language that continues to provide a means for resisting the hegemonic classes, while underlining the presence of the indigenous populace in the national discourse. In this way the author emphasizes the role played by the positive aspects of Nativism (Paranjape 1997) in the construction of the hybrid tongue. We also see the use of some of the linguistic techniques suggested by Ashcroft et al in this novel, such as glossing, and syntactic fusion. The tetraglossic model postulated by Gobard can also be applied to the functions attributed to the vernacular by Arguedas in his text-nation.

The author inserts Quechua in both the narratives but he sometimes leaves the phrases and words untranslated, especially when he refers to questions of identity or means of worship. He draws attention, in this way, to the chasm between the Hispanized Creole world and the indigenous one. This particular literary device also proves that the tension between the erstwhile colonizer’s tongue and the indigenous one is based on the bloody history of the conquest of Peru, since the former was imposed in the country after this violent event. The
novelist, therefore, proves that hybridity cannot be studied in isolation as it is inextricably bound with the history of the country.

The second chapter, which deals with the issue of language in India, is divided into two parts. In this first, I study the role of English in India and its relation with the vernacular idioms since the imposition of the former by the British. I then examine the way Roy challenges the elitist status of English by inserting Malayalam (principally), and some Hindi and Urdu in the narrative. She also employs various other strategies, such as neologisms to subvert the official language of independent India. Unlike Arguedas, Roy does not use either glossing or syntactic fusion to combine English and the vernacular, but rather inserts both in the same sentence to give birth to a new version of the language, one which is bound to the Indian Subcontinent. She thus proves that even the manner in which the hybrid languages are constructed differ from country to country. Both English and the vernacular, however, appear in the novel as homogenous entities and do not reveal any of the layers inherent in them, as there is no room to show the internal hybridizations of the languages. Like Arguedas she leaves certain expressions and phrases in Malayalam untranslated as well. This technique grounds the novel in Kerala and regionalizes English. By using these strategies Roy also demonstrates that the indigenous languages play an important role in deciding the character of the hybrid language. In this way she too confirms that Nativism, in its positive aspect, is crucial when talking about hybridity.

In the second part of this chapter I analyze how modern Hindi came into being or rather was invented during the nineteenth century. According to Rai there existed a kind of ur-language combining the influences of diverse languages (2001, 12). The manner in which

---

151 See, for example, the relation between these two languages as portrayed in the Hindi novel.
language and identity were perceived was very different from the way they were seen after colonization. India was a multilingual society where languages were used on the basis of the functions they carried out (Lelyvand in Orsini 21). However, when the colonial authorities and the missionaries came to India they imposed their unitary vision of language which was based on the poetics of Aristotles, Augustine and the medieval church (Bakhtin 271). The division thus introduced by the British then appealed to some of the nationalists who tried to construct Hindi as the national language following these principals. The question of identity became linked to the vernacular and it became a contentious issue. The change in perception became visible especially after 1857 as Islam and Muslims began to be seen as outsiders. The propagators of this new khari boli started advocating, and inventing a vocabulary based on Sanskrit. Bharatendu Hariścandra (1850-1885), seen as the Father of modern Hindi literature and Mah¯avir Pras¯ad Dvived¯i (1864-1938), known as the inventor of contemporary Print Hindi, were two important figures who, along with others like Madan Mohan Malviya, promoted this Sanskiritized Hindi.

Shree’s novel, set in North India, brings to the forefront the language polemic, revived by the Hindu fundamentalists/Nativists. They embody the negative aspect of Nativism as they try and construct a linguistically “pure” and exclusionist nation. However, Persian, Arabic and Urdu have fused in the language in such a way that even they find it difficult to distinguish words of these origins in their speech. The author also mixes regional languages, like Bengali and Punjabi, in the text-nation which shows that they are co-present in the Indian society and are constantly in dialogue with each other. The writer uses English as well, though most of the time she uses the vocabulary to denote physical objects. Like Roy she too uses neologisms to convey certain messages. Hybridity makes its presence felt in many different ways in the novel, as Shree inserts words like “guaranteewali” (guaranteewali), as
well as “अखबारी रिपोर्ट” for “newspaper report”, to show that both Hindi and Urdu meld with English to create a hybrid tongue.

Thus it is possible to say that by using colloquial Hindi, and inserting various regional languages as also neologisms in the text-nation, the writer subverts the Sanskritized Hindi being promoted by the government as well as the Hindi hegemony. Shree’s strategies also prove Devy’s position that the bhasa literatures represent a revolt against the imposition of authority, be that the colonial one or the neo-colonial one. One can therefore infer that Roy and Shree use language in their novels to rebel against the hegemony of the dominant sectors. However, while Roy represents the positive facet of Nativism, Shree portrays both the negative view as well as the positive one, thus revealing that these features can co-exist within a single nation. Shree’s novel also establishes that hybridity is not a factor that emerges only when the indigenous cultures meld with the Western ones, but has been present in the Subcontinent since much before the advent of the British.

In chapter three I have dealt with the strategies used by Arguedas to construct the culture of the nation in his novels. The focus is primarily on Yawar fiesta (1941), though I have drawn from his second last and last novel, Todas las sangres (All the Bloods, 1964), and El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo (The Fox from Above and the Fox from Down Below, 1971), to illustrate the way interprets Nativism and hybridity in these works In his second last novel, Todas las sangres (All the Bloods, 1964), for instance, he inserts a harawí, to demonstrate the way the ayllus protested the unjust treatment meted out to the indigenous protagonist Demetrio Rendón Wilka. The author, thus, demonstrates that during times of crisis, the ayllus fall back on their own traditions to protest against the injustices that they have to face at the hands of the dominant faction. In this way, Arguedas also proves Parry’s
argument when she points out that the native is “a historical subject and a combatant processor of another knowledge and producer of alternative traditions” (in Ganguli 150).

The novelist depicts this tendency to draw upon one’s own tradition in his last novel *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below* (1971 [2000]) as well. It is still possible to hear the *huayno* resonating through the slums and marketplace of Chimbote as Antolín Crispín, the blind musician, modifies the European guitar to bring the sounds of the *Sierras* to the coast. One can see here not only an example of the resilience of the native culture but also the way the *serranos* adapted the musical instruments to play their own music in the urban spaces.

Arguedas also represents instances of cultural hybridity, which follow Rama’s interpretation of transculturation, in his first novel *Yawar fiesta* (1941). However, this process is not just epistemological but demonstrates that it is used to modify certain cultural events as well. As mentioned earlier, the diktat banning the indigenous style of bullfighting leads to heated discussions amongst the prominent citizens of Puquio, the migrants living in Lima, and members of the national government, the *ayllus*, who are the ones directly affected by the edict, are, however, left out of this arena. The concern showed over the style of bullfighting then convert it, symbolically, into an act that would construct the nation and give it its character. The *corrida* then become a symbol of the nation as being constructed. The comuneros, kept out of the discursive act, participate by jumping into the bullring and fighting it according to their own traditions. In the new version that emerges from the fusion of the two styles of bullfighting, we see that it is the autochthonous side that gives the new hybrid *turupukllay* its character, leaving no room for ambivalence. This strategy can also be called mimicry, following Bhabha’s definition of the term. However, the mimicry shown
here is not just discursive but is a *re-presentation* of an actual event that the author had witnessed in his childhood. Thus, we see that the hybridity shown in this novel portrays the historical and socio-political events leading to the creation of Peru as a nation, from the pre-colonial to postcolonial period. I would also like to reiterate that the indigenous worldview plays an important role in crafting cultural hybridity, and hence, Nativism appears as a positive element in the construction of the hybrid Peruvian culture.

In the last chapter I analyze Shree’s portrayal of the North Indian culture in *Hamara Shahar Us Baras* or *Our City that Year* (1998). The author brings out the way the Orientalist interpretation of the Indian society colored the manner in which Muslims and Islam began to be perceived in India. The author reveals the composite culture of the Indian society against the backdrop of growing Hindu fanaticism; and in fact, the fundamentalists are shown to portray the exclusionist face of Nativism. She also demonstrates the manner in which some of the principal characters shared common spaces in villages and cities, as members of both the communities celebrated their festivals jointly. The author depicts hybrid traditions of Hindustani classical music as also the literature written in the vernacular. In this way, Shree proves yet again that indigenous societies were hybrid as well, and it was not a phenomenon which took place only when they came in contact with the Western world. Moreover, she confirms that the hybridity that arises in India is rooted to the land, as the influences that came from the other areas of the Subcontinent were an intrinsic part of the Indian society since they shared many common traits. Thus, she asserts that this feature is an integral component of the nation-state as well, and is not restricted only to the émigré who lives in the metropolis.
What do the results of our analysis then imply for postcolonial theory? As is clear I have examined this theoretical framework primarily on the basis of the definitions of hybridity and Nativism given by Ashcroft et al and Bhabha. I would like to begin with hybridity. Following my study it is possible to infer that hybridity is not ambivalent, but narrates the socio-historical processes that have led to the construction of the new nation-state; hence it cannot be seen only as an *epistemological reaction* to the *actions* that took place during the colonial period.

Insofar as the relation between hybridity and Nativism is concerned, one can say that they are bound together in such a way that it is difficult to separate them. I would also like to stress that it is the Native tradition that gives the resultant, linguistic and cultural hybridity its character which in turn anchors it to the land of its birth. It is also important to acknowledge the difficulty of showing the multiple facets of the vernacular language and culture when they appear in texts written in the erstwhile colonizer’s tongue. Hence, I deduce that the divisions and fusions, inherent in the language and culture of the former colonial societies, are more apparent in the novels written in the vernacular and not in the works written in Spanish and English. Therefore, I affirm that the indigenous populace subverts the structures of power that work through the aforementioned languages and cultures, by using the vernacular as an undivided entity. Though scholars have criticized Manichean divisions, in the case of the novels written in Spanish and English, it assumes great importance, since it helps to unite those who are fighting against the linguistic and cultural hegemonic practices still prevalent in the nation-states. I would like to clarify here, that this strategy does not mean that the vernacular languages and cultures are a pristine reproduction of pure pre-colonial cultures, but rather that they simply project a worldview
marginalized even within the postcolonial context. Thus the vernacular epitomizes Nativism as an instrument of subversion within the socio-historical and political reality of Peru and India, as shown in the narratives of Arguedas and Roy.

The work is this field, however, is far from over as there are still many questions that have to be answered. Some of the issues that need to be examined are as follows: is there a resurgence of Nativism in Peru as well? If yes, then is it the negative version or the positive interpretation of this concept? Moreover, we also have to see why this idea is being revised at this point of time. Is it because of the ambivalent way in which hybridity has been interpreted? Is it possible to say that the revival of Nativism, whether negative or positive, is actually due to a loss of identity as perceived by the groups who are advocating it?

In the works of the Peruvian author Oscar Colchado Lucio (1947-), for instance, we see that the linguistic hybridity has disappeared from the short stories based in Chimbote. As I had mentioned briefly in the first chapter, the indigenous protagonist Manguiñita holds on to his beliefs but has lost his tongue as it is silenced by the education system which has taught him to speak Spanish fluently. In Manguiñita’s case we see that the education policy of the nation-state has succeeded in suppressing the indigenous voice. This development illustrates the negative aspect of this vital aspect of the society controlled by the Creole elite since it appears to have erased the native language.

In his novel *Rosa Cuchillo (Rosa the Knife*, 1997) Colchado Lucio portrays the anguish of the Aboriginals caught in the cross fire between the *guerrilleros* of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and the government counter insurgency forces known as the *sinchis*, created with the funds and advisers from the US military and the CIA (García 2005, 42). The protagonist Rosa’s son, Liborio, now forced to fight for this insurgent group, is not
deceived by the promises of a revolution. In the story the omniscient narrator shows that even the members of the Shining Path do not wish to incorporate the indigenous communities in the new nation in case of victory. The protagonist in fact longs for a time when, “we the natives would have the power once and for all, without being the support of the others. Ah yes, caracho, you are enthused, we would dance again without shame our own dances, instead of these foreign dances, we would speak the runa simi again, our own language; we would adore again the gods in whom we believe still without fear of the priests […]” (1997, 83; my translation). In this sentiment expressed by Liborio we see a negation of what he terms as “foreign dances” and it is this perception of culture that differs from the one articulated by Arguedas in his works. In fact the novel illustrates poignantly the anguish and anger of the indigenous populace simmering beneath the surface of the nation-state as also against the revolutionary groups. The issues of hybridity and Nativism raised in this novel need to be studied in detail to see why there is a change from the optimistic view of hybridity ingrained in the Arguedean text-nation. It would also be interesting to investigate the songs and dances that Liborio calls his “own”. Is it possible to say that the music and dances he refers to have retained their original form? Or have they been influenced by the music introduced in the country from other lands? Is it really possible to maintain a pristine culture untouched by socio-historical developments even now? Furthermore, has the runa simi been transformed at all or does it retain its original linguistic structure? I would thus like to reiterate that the discussion on these concepts is far from over as there are many works that fall well within the scope of this analytical framework.

Some Hindi novels too lend themselves to the debate about the definition and scope of hybridity and Nativism. One of the contemporary writers whose works can be of interest is
Maitreyi Pushpa (1944-). In her novel कहीं इन्दुरी फाग (So says Isuri Phaag, 2004), the protagonist is a young graduate student Ritu, whose thesis deals with the role played by the feminine consciousness in the works of one of the best known poets of Budelkhand, Isuri Phaag. The love shared by Isuri and his wife Rajao are well known and one can say that it is this relation that gives Ritu her thesis topic. She then follows the story of the poet, whose compositions are still popular in Madhya Pradesh (Madhya Pradesh Arts). During her investigation she immerses herself in the folk tradition of the region and her views on the way to conduct research, and the role of the guide in it as well as her perception of folk culture are transformed. This change however, is not accepted by her Supervisor, Pramod Kumar Pandey, who refuses to acknowledge her work because in his opinion it did not conform to the standards set not only for investigative methodology but also for interpreting culture. In his letter declining his support he clearly relegates Isuri’s craft to the margins. Ritu’s situation then throws up many questions vis-à-vis the education system as also the biased way in which the contribution of folk artists to the construction of the cultural tapestry of India is swept aside. The text is written in Hindi but the dialogues resonate with the subtle nuances of the language spoken in the villages of Bundelkhand. The narrator contrasts in this way the hegemonic Snaskritized Hindi spoken by Pandey and the one used by the villagers. She also transliterates English in the dialogues between Ritu and her professors, demonstrating in this manner the very elitist framework of the education system. Pushpa’s

---

152 Phaag represents the oral tradition of folk literature as also its musical compositions. In an initiative launched by Adivasi Lok Kala Parishad evam Tulsi Sahitya Academy, a book entitled Isuri Ka Phaag Sahitya (The Phaag literature of Isuuri), centering on the songs of Isuri, the famous poet was published recently by them (Adivasi Lok Kala Parishad evam Tulsi Sahitya Academy).
work then opens up further possibilities of studying the concepts of hybridity and Nativism in
the context of language and culture as do those of Colchado Lucio.

I would now like to talk about the comparative methodology. I believe that
comparison between two cultures based solely on the experience of colonization is somewhat
restrictive, as we have just seen in my thesis. For instance, despite certain similarities
between the strategies employed by writers like Arguedas and Roy, there are limits too
within which this technique can operate and the analysis of Shree’s novel reveals this
misprision in postcolonial theory. Thus it is possible to say that a critic would require more
than a collation of strategies based only on the common colonial past to compare texts from
different parts of the world. In my opinion the field of comparative studies should not depend
only on the colonial experience to justify the comparison. During the course of my research I
found that instead of concentrating on this historical event it would be more helpful to
delineate themes as the basis of comparison. In this way the comparatist could take into
account not just the period of colonization but also the one before the advent of the
colonizers, since it is difficult to compartmentalize clinically the different historical periods
during the evolution of the society. As the results of my analysis, especially of Shree’s novel,
have shown, many issues pertaining to the pre-colonial era still exist in the contemporary
period, and do so in such a manner so as to influence the developments as also the resolution
of many problems that have persisted since much before the British came to India. I would
then like to reiterate that the theoretical framework suggested by Ashcroft et al (1989) and
Bhabha, limits the scope of comparative studies. I thus conclude that the study by themes, not
bound within the gridlines of only the colonial period will allow us to enrich our knowledge
of the way in which many different communities deal with the socio-political problems that
prove to be so challenging in this rapidly changing world, while respecting their specific historical, political and cultural development.
Works Cited


Bhagat, Chetan, One Night @ the Call Centre. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2005.


Biswas Sen, Lipi. “Sí, el subalterno puede hablar: un análisis breve de la Nueva Corónica y buen gobierno de Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala y los Comentarios reales del Inca


http://aspen.conncoll.edu/politicsandculture/page.cfm?key=511


---. La formación de la tradición literaria en Perú. Lima: Centro de estudios y publicaciones (CEP), 1989.


Dutt, Barkha “The English Divide” in NDTV 24x7.


Music of Madhya Pradesh.


Online Etymological Dictionary.


Palshikar, Vasant. “The Concept of Nativism” in New Quest, Jan-Feb 1984, no.43. 139-144.


---. “Signs of Our Times. Discussion of Homi Bhabha’s The Location of Culture”. Third Text, 28/29 Autumn/Winter 1994. 5-23.


Platts, John T. A dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English
http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/platts.


Prabhu, Anjali. *Hybridity. Limitations, Transformations, Prospects*  

Prasad, Kalika. *Brhata HindiKosa [Colossal Hindi Dictionary]*.  


http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/  


Ricci della Grisa, Gabriela N. *Realismo mágico y conciencia mítica en América Latina*.


Rowe, William. “El nuevo lenguaje de Arguedas en “El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo”.


