Interpellation and Individuation in Ethnic Autobiographies: A Survey

Thesis submitted to the
University of Calicut for the award of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
English Language and Literature

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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2020

Declaration

I, Anita Ann Thomas hereby declare that the dissertation titled

"**Interpellation and Individuation in Ethnic Autobiographies: A Survey"**

submitted to the University of Calicut for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in English, is an original bona fide work of research, carried out by me at the

Department of English under the supervision of Dr. Umer Thasneem and that

it has not formed the basis for the award of any degree or diploma or similar

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University of Calicut

Date: 18/05/2020

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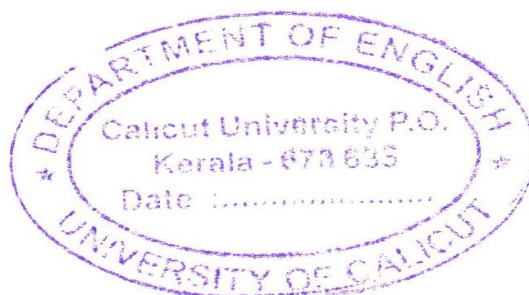
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Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**Interpellation and Individuation in Ethnic Autobiographies: A Survey"** submitted to the University of Calicut for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature**, is an original bona fide work of research carried out by **Anita Ann Thomas,** Department of English, University of Calicut under my supervision and that it has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, or similar title.

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Acknowledgement

"He has made everything beautiful in its time" (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

At the outset, I express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Umer Thasneem, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Calicut for his valuable guidance at all stages of the PhD programme. I am obliged to him for his sincere efforts in imparting insightful learning experience.

I sincerely thank all the teaching and non-teaching staff of the Department of English and also the librarians for their timely help and support. I am grateful to the Head of the Department, Dr. K. M. Sheriff for all his help and support, even during the time of lockdown. I also thank Dr. Janaky Sreedharan, Dr. M. V. Narayanan and Dr. V. Prathiba for their support and guidance.

I specially thank Dr. B Hariharan, Department of English, Kerala University, Trivandrum for granting me permission to use the Department Library and SAP library throughout my research.

I fondly thank my husband, Dr. Liju V. B. for his encouragement, pertinent observations and discussions which helped me to move forward. I am obliged to him for his love and support throughout the journey of my research.

Contents

Abbreviations

Mother Forest	:	*Personal/ Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu*
The Woman Warrior	:	*The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*
Humanist Controversy	:	*The Humanist Controversy and Other Writings, 1966-67*
Philosophy of the Encounter	:	*Philosophy of the Encounter, Later Writings 1978-87*
Lenin and Philosophy	:	*Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*
Basic Writings	:	*The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung*

Chapter I

Introduction

"No one quite knows what ethnicity means: that is why it is so useful a term"

Irwing Howe

The term "ethnicity" derives from the Greek term *ethnos*. It gained prominence in the 20th century; its derivatives like ethnology, ethnography, ethnocentric, ethnic, and ethnicity are now widely used in socio-cultural discourses. "*Ethnos*" means people or crowd. It is said that "*ethnos*" is derived from the Sanskrit word "*sabbah*" which means community. As per Hebrew Biblical semantics, Greek '*ethnos*' is a translation of the Hebrew "'*am*" and "*goy*" and ethnicity is a derivative of these words. *'Am*[1] means people. "'*Am* is used to stress the communal brotherhood of all Israel, their closeness similar to that of family" (Fishman 19). Israelites call themselves "'*am kadosh*" which means 'holy or separate people.' "*Goy*" translated into English is 'nation.' It also means "land, forest, field," as noted by Eitan and Barr. The term '*goy*' refers to a geographical and political entity. The oldest English citations associate the word ethnicity and its derivatives (including its obsolete variants such as ethnish and ethnicize) with "pagan" or "heathen," that is neither Christian, nor Jewish. These unsavory connotations do not prevail with the same intensity in the current semantics. Over the years the

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[1] The Hebrew word *'am* is written with a diacritical mark before the alphabet 'a.'

term has been gravitating from pejorative connotations towards more neutral or even positive ones. Ethnicity has become a ubiquitous phenomenon in almost all multicultural societies. Nevertheless defining the term "ethnicity" is a complex task. J. A. Fishman states that the existing definitions of ethnicity are "contrasting, conflicting and contradictory to such an extent that the disagreements between them are themselves significant objects of study" (16).

Ethnicity is the condition of belonging to an ethnic group. According to Max Weber, ethnic groups are "human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of migration or colonization" (389). An ethnic group provides a sense of identity and belongingness to its members. "Ethnicity is a sense of ethnic identity" (Brass 19). Isajiw defines ethnic identity as a "social-psychological phenomenon that derives from membership in an ethnic group" (35). Ethnicity according to him is:

> a phenomenon that gives rise to (1) social organization, an objective phenomenon that provides the structure for the ethnic community, and (2) identity, a subjective phenomenon that gives to individuals a sense of belonging and to the community a sense of oneness and historical meaning." (Isajiw 35)

The sense of kinship, relatedness and alliance provides a quasi-solid sense of identity to the members of the ethnic group. Ethnic identity is thus a

psychology of belongingness. Ethnicity, ethnic group, and ethnic identity cannot be described without other referents like language, cuisine, religion etc. Certain factors that loop the members of a community together as an ethnic group include: common speech, similar language, customs, feelings of marginalization, common economic plight, subjugation from the higher strata of society, common ancestry, shared beliefs, rituals and practices, similar religious notions and so forth. Urmila Phandis defines ethnic group as "a historically formed aggregate of people having a real or imaginary association with a specified territory, a shared cluster of beliefs and values, connoting its distinctiveness in relation to similar groups and recognized as such by others"(20). Taking cue from this definition, an ethnic group can be called as a self defined group with distinct cultural consciousness and unique cultural symbols. An ethnic group includes and excludes individuals depending upon their socio-psychological characteristics.

As stated by Michael Ryan, "An ethnicity comes into being when a group of people intermarry and form a larger extended family that lasts usually for centuries, if not millennia" (71). Thus ethnicity can also be called as a physical or biological attribute and a genetic inheritance.

An analysis of ethnic identity naturally entails a discussion of the concept of ethnic personality. Ethnic personality can be understood with reference to subjective markers of individuals which include their behavior,

and habits. Ethnic identity, on the other hand, can be understood based on the basic objective attributes such as language, dialect, religious practices, rituals, skin color, hairdo, dress, diet etc. According to George Devereux, "ethnic identity is operationally a sorting device for oneself and for others" (49). The notions of ethnic identity and ethnic personality are intimately intertwined. Ethnic personality evolves out of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity helps in determining the ethnic category. That is an ethnic category is recognized by its ethnic identity. John Earl Joseph discusses the dynamics of individual and group identity in his work *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious*. According to him, there exists a reciprocal tension between the two and it is this power that "gives the overall concept of identity much of its power" (5). Ethnic personality derives power and prestige from the ethnic identity of the group. A cluster of ethnic groups together forms an ethnic community. Markers such as descent, birth, and sense of kinship decide the inclusion of the individual members in a community.

Ethnicity is a relational concept; a concept that has a relationship between self identification and social ascription. "Ethnicity is the way we speak about group identities and identify with the signs and symbols that constitute ethnicity" (Barker 249). Chris Barker further states that "What we think of as our identity is dependent on what we think we are not" (249).

The concept of ethnicity is strongly linked to race, culture and nation. The term ethnicity is euphemistically used instead of the terms race, tribes and tribalism in common parlance. As noted in *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity and Culture*, "there is a tendency to abandon concepts such as 'tribe' or 'tribalism' as they are considered to be derogatory" (Bolaffi 95). However, ethnicity has become a contentious topic in all multicultural societies.

Cultural forms that include oral narratives, mythical stories, music, and other variants of art are universal. Though the langue or structure of art remains same its parole or performance varies from culture to culture. Shared cultural forms help people to forge solidarities and form communities. Cultural differences, on the other hand, segregate people and draw boundaries. Infact, cultural differences result in ethnic differences. "When cultural differences are removed from consideration, ethnic differences become negligible" (71). Nevertheless, R. Dyer who posits the concept of stereotyping explains how the ethnic groups are excluded as other, attributing negative traits (51). Ethnic groups are often hierarchized in the society in relation to the mainstream dominant group.

This study makes use of select ethnic women's autobiographies from different geographical locations and cultural trajectories to explore the ways in which they navigate life in dominant cultures. It analyses how they evolve as individuated and re-individuated women resisting the forces of

interpellation by the ruling class. The texts taken for the study are *Personal/ Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu* by Bhaskaran, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston, and *In Search of April Raintree* by Beatrice Culleton Mosionier.

Autobiography

Autobiography is one of the most revealing modes of personal expression. Every autobiography, as James Olney says "is the life of an unrepeated and unrepeatable being" (148). Autobiography is a genre that helps one to write about the self and its relation to the social. Hence it is a useful medium to study about cultural representations. Karl Weintraub in his work, *The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography*, mentions the link between self and autobiography. According to him, "We are captivated by an uncanny sense that each one of us constitutes one irreplaceable human form, and we perceive a noble life task in the cultivation of our individuality, our ineffable self" (xiii). Linda Anderson and Weintraub gesture towards a shared truth about autobiography. According to Anderson, "man's task is, like autobiography's to arrive at some form of self-realization" (4). Autobiography acts as a channel for realization of the self and representation of the self. It focuses on an individual and the development of his/her personality. The widely quoted definition of Philippe Lejeune substantiates it. According to him, autobiography is "a retrospective prose

narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality" (193). This definition indicates how appropriate the genre of autobiography is to study the process of individuation that deals with the development of the self and personality.

However, Lejeune himself was not satisfied with this definition of the term autobiography as he could not readily distinguish the genre of autobiography through his definition. Autobiography is not a categorized genre. Though the autobiographical voice gestures towards the singular view of the subject, it cannot be limited to that. It is bound up not just with the subjective (individual) identity of the author. The reverberations of historical and cultural sondages (a term used by archeologists to mean surroundings) influence the author. Autobiography is thus a befitting genre to study the ethnic sondages of the central personae taken for this study.

Memory works as a mnemonic device for the autobiographer to write about herself. Generally speaking, the past of the self is the theme of an autobiography. Demarcating autobiographies from the other genres such as memoirs, testimonials, confessions, and fictional autobiographies is not an easy task. In recognition of this fact this study makes use of a fictional autobiography, a memoir, and an oral autobiography.

Autobiographical voices are implicitly bound up with the cultural values internalized by the author. Words used by the autobiographer reflect his/her cultural values as well as the historical underpinnings of the society. According to Chaim Nachman Bialik, "the word's power does not consist in its explicit content- if generally speaking, there is such a thing but- in the diversion that is involved in it" (qtd. in Fischer 79).

Self reflexivity, self realization, autonomy and transcendence are considered to be the principles of autobiography. Because of this it is also a profound human impulse, as James Olney says:

> What is . . . of particular interest to us in a consideration of the creative achievements of individual men and the relationship of those achievements to a life lived, on the one hand, and an autobiography of that life on the other is . . . the isolate uniqueness that everyone nearly agrees to be the primary quality and condition of the individual and his experience. (20-21)

Autobiography is a genre of self articulation and a creative space for 'I.' However it is beyond the developing self of the author, since the intervention of 'I' is itself "political" as noted by Smith and Watson (xix). It is a public utterance embedded in both the self and its social sondages. Udaya Kumar in *Writing the First Person* notes how autobiographical writing serves as "public utterance rather than as the expression of pre-existing 'private' selves" (22).

He also says that "the private domain does not possess any ontological primacy in relation to the public domain" (22).

Autobiographical practices are allied to culture, race, ethnicity and class. Studying autobiography as Fischer stated can provide access to the "'native point of view,' claiming subjectivity grounded in cultural specificity" (80).

As a genre, autobiography exists and mediates between the individual and the social. It is this quality that makes it a fit medium for the marginalized and oppressed. Julia Swindells remarks:

> Autobiography has now the potential to be the text of the oppressed
> and the culturally displaced, forging a right to speak both for and
> beyond the individual. People in a position of powerlessness- women,
> black people, working-class people- have more than begun to insert
> themselves into the culture via autobiography, via the assertion of a
> 'personal' voice which speaks beyond itself. (7)

Nancy K. Miller demonstrates how autobiographical practices are implicitly allied to gender. She argues in her work *Subject To Change: Reading Feminist Writing,* how women are less believed as writers. Promoting a view of the subject as universal, autobiography is a platform for women writers to articulate their subjective experiences.

Autobiographies as Ethnographies: The Emic and the Etic Perspective

The three ethnic autobiographical narratives selected for the study help in analyzing the self and the social/ethnic life of the autobiographers, and their ethnic communities. To gesture towards the collective self, represented by her individual self, Janu in *Mother Forest* addresses herself as '*nammal*' (meaning 'we') instead of 'I.' In the translator's note of the text, N. Ravi Shanker notes: "Janu throughout the text, describes herself or her society in the first person as 'nammal,'a word that, in Malayalam, is used for both 'I' and 'We.' I had to settle for using 'I' or 'We' as the context demanded. This is the one compromise I had to make with great reluctance, perhaps sacrificing accuracy for clarity" (Janu xi). This exemplifies how ethnic autobiographies while being explicitly about 'I,' are implicitly about 'us'-the entire community. Invoking Weintraub, Anderson notes: "As individuals . . . assuming that 'we' represents everyone, are above society and beyond understanding; by implication, therefore, 'we' are also beyond the reach of any theoretical critique" (Anderson 4). Autobiography is about the individual, the social, the location and the time. Neitzsche in his work, *The Use and Abuse of History*, calls an autobiographer "a fighter against his time" (70). The genre of autobiography serves as medium of articulation for the oppressed and marginalized:

The idea that autobiography can become 'the text of the oppressed,' articulating through one person's experience, experiences which may be representative of a particular marginalized group, is an important one: autobiography becomes both a way of testifying to oppression and empowering the subject through their cultural inscription and recognition. (Anderson 104)

Since these autobiographies are important sources of ethnographic information, they are better classified as autoethnographies.

Ethnographical researches gain insights basically from an anthropological research tradition. Anthropologists rely on the concept of culture to guide their research. Sociologists on the other hand have societal concerns. Ethnographers rely on the strategies employed by both anthropological and sociological research disciplines. They focus on both cultural level and societal level as they require detailed information about the groups they choose to study. An ethnographer's duty is to describe a culture or social group from a holistic perspective. A holistic orientation "can help the fieldworker discover the interrelationships among the various systems and subsystems in a community or program under study – generally through an emphasis on the contextualization of data" (Fetterman 19).

"Culture is the broadest ethnographic concept" (Fetterman 16). An ethnographer looks into the ideational and material aspects of culture to study

about a social group. Abstract cultural elements such as values or beliefs of a social system help to gain a deeper understanding about a subculture as distinguished from the main culture since it is these abstract elements of culture that divide or unite a social group.

A close observation of "cultural knowledge" and "cultural behavior" of an ethnic group is essential to describe a culture or subculture adequately as noted by Fetterman (16). Cultural knowledge deals with the customs and ways of life of a social group. A holistic orientation towards the social group helps in affirming the cultural knowledge. Cultural behavior on the other hand can be identified by a cognitive approach. Such an approach helps in identifying the insider's perspective of reality which is called as the emic perspective. As stated by David M. Fetterman, "The emic perspective- the insider's or native's perspective of reality is at the heart of most ethnographic research" (Fetterman 20). The native's perspective of reality explains why the members of a particular group do what they do.

Ethnographic studies employ ethnic autobiographical narratives to study the insider's perspective of reality. Through "in-depth interviewing," as noted by Fischer, an ethnographer analyses "subjectivity grounded in cultural specificity" (80). *Personal/ Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C K Janu* is an oral autobiography, later published as an autobiographical text.

Socially and culturally constructed cognitive experiences are elucidated through this oral autobiographical narrative.

Information collected from the natives in an emic perspective must stand coherent in an outsider's perspective also. As the ethnographer publishes the record of his/her findings as an autobiographical narrative, it must be translated in such a way that it is legible to the outsiders. A native social group's view of reality when narrated in a text may contain native idioms and expressions. This must be translated legibly for the outsiders who read it. Stated in a much wider perspective, in an ethnographic work, an emic perspective of reality must make sense with the outsider's perspective of reality. "An etic perspective is the external, social, scientific perspective of reality" (Fetterman 22). Etic perspective is the outsider's perspective of reality. "Just as thorough fieldwork requires an insightful and sensitive cultural interpretation combined with rigorous data collection techniques, good ethnography requires both emic and etic perspectives" (Fetterman 22).

The editorial commentary that Bhaskaran provides in the book approaches the ethnic experiences of C. K. Janu from an etic perspective whereas he scrupulously stays clear of making any editorial interventions in the narrative per se. This helps the reader to gain an emic perspective of tribal life. The verbatim quotations used in the text affirm the writer's effort to delineate the emic perspective of reality as accurately as possible. The other

two texts- *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* by

Maxine Hong Kingston and *In Search of April Raintree* by Beatrice Culleton

Mosionier are fictional autobiographies. But:

> the distinction between autobiography and fiction has become more
>
> and more blurred, as authors include themselves under their own
>
> names in novels, write autobiographies in the asserted mode of fiction,
>
> or (as in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior,* 1975) mingle
>
> fiction and personal experiences as a way to get at one's essential life
>
> story. (Abrams 31)

A simple generalization of the genre of autobiography is not possible

as autobiographical forms can be found invariably in different genres such as

fiction, drama, poetry, travelogue, etc. Non judgmental orientation of an

ethnographer in balancing the emic and etic perspectives marks the success of

an ethnic-autobiographical writing.

This study makes use of the Jungian concept of individuation and

Althusser's concept of interpellation to study the lives of the ethnic groups

from both emic and etic perspectives. Individuation process helps to study the

narrator's lives from an emic perspective. As David M. Fetterman says, "The

insider's perception of reality is instrumental to understanding and accurately

describing situations and behaviours" (20). Althusser's theory of

interpellation helps to study the approach of the mainstream society towards

ethnic groups from an etic perspective. The etic perspective, that is, an outsider's view or external view of their culture helps one examine the impact of the dominant culture upon the central character, thereby paving the way to investigate the operation of interpellation in their communities.

Ethnic groups, though seemingly uniform from an outsider's perspective display a lot of disparities within in terms of income, class, gender etc. The dominant group looks upon the entire subculture as a homogeneous entity ignoring all divisions and differences within the ethnic group. But this is seldom the case, as the examples of the linguistically and culturally heterogeneous Native Americans and Australian aborigines. For example, when analyzed from an emic perspective, gender gap in pay still prevails within the group. In different parts of the world, women among the ethnic groups are paid less than men even though there is full time labor participation from women. As noted by Joan H. Rollins, "women's work has been structured hierarchically by race and ethnicity as well as by gender" (158). Wages given to the Adivasi groups (*Mother Forest*), and Asian American non-whites in the US (*The Woman Warrior*) are proportionally lower compared to the mainstream labor force.

The dominant group or the nation treats ethnic minorities as a subculture which needs a lot of pruning. This indicates the ethnocentric approach of the nation. Across the world, the plight of minorities is not so

different. They have been stigmatized over the years. They are excluded from

positions of power and are subjected to a process of slow and steady

assimilation with the nation. Forcing the ethnic people to divest themselves of

their ethnic traditions, the nations aim at ethnocide. Needless to say, even if

they put in some efforts albeit reluctantly for acculturation and assimilation

with the mainstream, they are neither accepted as part of the mainstream nor

absorbed into any important positions of the political body. Social

stigmatization does continue in one form or the other. Racial discrimination,

racial harassments, sexual harassments and so on do not get erased. Adivasis

in Kerala are an example to cite. Various reforms and campaigns have been

introduced to 'improve' Adivasi life and culture. Though these benefit them

to some extent all these attempts and interventions strip them of their unique

cultural status. The nation becomes successful in redressing their ethnic

culture as something that needs shearing. The condition of Canadian

aboriginals (Chapter Three) is also not different. They are forced to adopt the

mainstream culture, to which they are exposed to, at foster homes. Education

and learning of the lifestyle and language of the mainstream society at the

foster homes are mandatory for acceptance. Children uprooted from their

homes at a very young age are forcefully sent to such foster homes, and

shifted from one foster home to another from time to time. There they live

and get trained well into an adulthood. Obliteration of the ethnic footprints

completely by transforming the children at a very young age makes ethnocide

easier. Asian American ethnics (Chinese American ethnic groups) also share the same plight. Concerted moves for transformation of ethnic groups are evident, in all national-sub-national interactions. This constant pressure from the mainstream upon the minority to transform them as one nation is interpreted as a process of interpellation-identification, in the thesis. Anything 'personal' to the ethnic group is completely neglected in this constant and unending clash.

Assimilation is the only choice for the ethnic groups to gain acceptance by the mainstream. Social stigmatization often forces them to get assimilated and compels them to disown their ethnic traits:

> Insofar as immigration and integration policies are strongly oriented towards assimilation of minorities, immigrants- as well as other individuals who are disadvantaged, discriminated against or made to feel inferior- not only acquire an undervalued opinion of themselves, but might even be persuaded to adopt the racial stereotypes and negative prejudices connected with immigration. (Bolaffi 140)

However, the conflict does not end even after assimilation. The ethnic groups remain distinguishable by various cultural and religious, racial and linguistic markers, as noted by Paul R. Brass:

> A process of assimilation may not save an ethnic group from being the target of the next to rise as education and industrialization penetrate

more deeply into the society. The assimilated group may remain distinguishable enough by cultural or religious markers – even when its members do not choose to use such markers to build communal consciousness – for it to be singled out as a scapegoat for the next group to rise and thereby serve as an instrument for building communal solidarity in the newly aspirant group. (35)

As B. K. Roy Burman suggests, ethnic identities always maintain a distinct presence even when they are part of the larger society. They are subjected to dominant culture. They are subsumed under the larger social networks and are forced to assimilate with the dominant values. Their organic growth and development that depends highly on their traditional culture and nature is retarded due to the crushing impact of the majority culture from larger domains. The tensions between state, society and ethnic group continue to prevail as "the new states are abnormally susceptible to serious disaffection based on primordial attachment"(Geertz 259). The tribal and clannish ties that mark human history from the very beginning are discarded.

Constant stigmatization at times triggers extreme and unreasonable responses from the target groups. It engenders a higher level of pathology in the marginalized communities. Some of the characters in the texts- *Mother Forest* and *In Search of April Raintree* exhibit this pathological behavior which in Jungian terminology can be described as neuroses. Their drive

towards individuation is neglected due to tug-of-war between assimilation on the one hand and concomitant stigmatization on the other.

The ethnic group is ideologically subordinated and subjected as inferior, derided and inculpated as lacking some qualities that privilege the dominant group as meritorious in many ways. The subjected ethnic groups always tend to be in an asymmetrical relation with the dominant group. They acculturate themselves with the mainstream ideologies and internalize cultural values of the dominant group even without consciously recognizing it. However acculturation is not the culmination of conflict and tension between the ethnic group and the state. Ethno-national movements are a threat to the state. Based on Ethnicity, ethnic identity and culture, minority group may claim autonomy. Ethno-national movements have taken place in different parts of western and Eastern Europe shattering collective bureaucratic systems. Nation takes every measure to prevent such upheavals. The minority groups are thus forced to be one nation.

The dominant group allocates to them roles and rights based on its own political and cultural experiences. This is however, not a conscious effort on the side of the state. A social position is assigned to the addressee through a process of hailing. Unconsciously, the minority recognizes and accepts how they are addressed. This constitutive process is called interpellation. The ethnic minority is hailed and interpellated as subjects of the dominant

ideologies of the state. Language plays a major role in hailing. In fact,

language and ideology are the medium through which individuals are

interpellated as subjects. As posited by John Fiske:

> Hailing is a process by which language identifies and constructs a
>
> social position for the addressee. Interpellation is the larger process
>
> whereby language constructs social relations for both parties in an act
>
> of communication and thus locates them in the broader map of social
>
> relations in general. (313)

Interpellation is a constitutive process whereby individuals

acknowledge and respond to ideologies, thereby configuring and recognizing

themselves as subjects. It is a process through which we encounter the

dominant culture's values and internalize them even without consciously

recognizing it. The French philosopher, Louis Althusser first popularized it in

his seminal essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses."

Interpellation incorporates individuals into the power structure and

reconfigures them according to the templates of the hegemonic culture. The

operation of interpellation and ideology produce the subject who fits in with

the definitions of a citizen. Hence an individual gets interpellated through

various mediums. The pervasiveness of ideology and the process of

interpellation are one and the same. In fact, both are co-terminus processes

that cannot be accounted for in terms of a mere cause and effect formula.
'Ideology has always-already interpellated individuals as subjects.'

The psychological process of individuation is analyzed, to investigate
the lives of central personae in narratives taken for the study and to trace their
progress through various stages in order to map the evolution of their
selfhood. As stated by Jorge J. E. Gracia, the first confused problem related to
individuality is the problem of individuation. He says that "the problem of
individuation has to do with the identification of principles or causes that are
responsible for the individuality of individuals" (147). Edward A. Ross
attempts to define the process of individuation and states that:

> Sometimes a people enjoying large individual freedom has been forced
> into compact groups by the conditioning of living. The individual
> becomes solidarity with some group- the family, the kindred, the
> village community, the guild, the church, so that in many matters he
> ceases to be a free moral agent. But if the conditions of life take a turn
> that the backing of his group is no longer a vital matter to him, the
> groups presently dissolve and the individual reappears. The processes
> which pulverize social lumps and release the action of their members
> may be termed individuation. (469)

The ethnic autobiographical narratives help to study the ethnic lives of Adivasi tribals in Kerala, native aborigines in Canada, and Chinese-ethnic diaspora in the US. Individuation and interpellation are the research tools used to study the subjective processes and ideological operations respectively, along with the ethnic cultural aspects in relation to the mainstream culture.

Chapter II

Interpellation versus Individuation

This chapter explores the operation of subject formation, Interpellation, and the psychological process, individuation to further shed light on the ethnic narratives of the characters belonging to different geographical locations and cultures.

This study analyses the drive towards individuation in the characters of the autobiographical narratives and how they individuate to resist the coercion of interpellation by crossing the threshold of liminality to identify with their true selves. The process through which they individuate and re-individuate marks a rite of passage.

I. **Individuation:**

The term individuation carries diverse meanings in various fields such as philosophy, media, science and psychology. Application of individuation in this study is broadly based on the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung. The term individuation is not used in its clinical context or as in an analyst-analysand perspective in this study but in relation to the sociological ramifications that revolve around individual development. Individuation was Jung's lifelong preoccupation in analytical psychology. He delved deep into analyzing the unconscious of the analyst and the patient and used

individuation as a tool in clinical analyses. Post Jungian analysts such as Polly Young-Eisendrath, Joseph Russo, Terence Dawson, Lawrence R. Alschuler and Ann Ulanov focus on analytical psychology in society. This study on the other hand uses individuation to explore the holistic development of an ethnic personality in a society of constant national and sub-national conflicts and tensions.

Individuation according to Jung is the psychic transformation/ inner transformation and rebirth of a person into another being. According to him, "This 'other being' is the other person in ourselves- that larger and greater personality maturing within us whom we have already met as the inner friend of the soul" (The *Archetypes* 235). Individuation or development of the self is a dynamic process that occurs throughout the life of an individual. "The person is continually developing and learning new skills, and moving toward self realization" (Ryckman 73). As we embark on our own individuation, we see this idiosyncratic process happening in everyone, in various degrees. As stated by Ann Ulanov in her essay, "Jung and Religion: the Opposing Self:"

> we see this process going on in others too , and we gain a whole sense of community. We recognize how much we need each other to accomplish the tasks of facing our shadows as our own, as encountering otherness as embodied in the opposite sex, of gathering the courage to respond wholeheartedly to the summons of the self. We

connect with each other at a new depth, equivalent to what Jung calls

kinship. (305)

The individuation process simultaneously gives us a sense of identity

and community. Jung in *Nietzsche's Zarathushtra* states how one cannot

individuate without intermingling with other human beings and how an

individual is always a link in a chain. According to him, how one cannot exist

"without responsibilities and duties and the relationship of other people to

yourself" (102). In a similar vein, Ulanov says that, "[T]he self acts as an

unconscious source of community" (305).

> *The Cambridge Companion to Jung* defines Individuation thus:

> The process leading to a more conscious awareness of one's specific

> individuality, including a recognition of both one's strength and one's

> limitations. Jung describes this process as emerging in middle and later

> adulthood, first with recognition of one's neuroses and shortcomings. It

> continues as an awakening to one's own divided nature (conscious and

> unconscious) and the ultimate acceptance of that nature. (316)

Individuation is "an emerging transformation into wholeness" (Hart 96).

Mario Jacoby, a Jungian analyst defines individuation as "a process by which

individuals are formed and differentiated" (96). According to Jung, the

process by which the fullest degree of differentiation, development and

expression is attained by an individual, to have a healthy, integrated

personality is called the individuation process. Individuation is an ongoing

process and not a stagnant state. It is an onward journey towards wholeness.

At every point the individual tries to attain greater individuation in search of

wholeness. In this sense almost everybody is an individuating person but none

is a fully individuated person. "Individuation involves the development of

ever growing awareness of one's personal identity with its good and desirable

qualities and ego ideals as well as its bad, reprehensible and shadow qualities"

(Gordan 267). This process also involves an expanding capacity for

comprehension. Thus the individual begins articulating his/her thoughts and

ideas. "Individuation encompasses processes that drive people to search for

the meanings of their own lives, of life in general and of death and of the

universe" (Gordan 267).

In the Jungian scheme, Individuation takes place when the

consciousness is harmoniously integrated with the unconscious. The power of

the unconscious urges the conscious for integration with the unconscious. In

fact, individuation is the journey of the conscious towards the powerful

contents of the unconscious. As the individual follows the impulses of the

unconscious for transformation, the individuation process begins to acquire

momentum. Mario Jacoby while reaffirming the Jungian concept of

interaction between the conscious and the unconscious opines that:

the powers of the unconscious manifest in an aggressive, obsessive,

and destructive manner. Jung discovered that these hostile tendencies

are more easily transformed if the conscious is able to address them

with a more appropriate attitude, if it faces up to the unconscious

openly instead of shunning it off or warding it off. Once confronted,

the contents often change shape and it becomes clear that the powers at

work were seeking conscious attention for the benefit of the individual

and his process of individuation. (97)

Opposition of the conscious with the unconscious deposes individuation and

even results in various neuroses[1]. An awareness of the lesser- known facts

about unconscious and realization of one's own self erase liminality.[2]

Introspection of inner self implies "getting in touch with one's inner life,

which, for the individual, may result in the discovery of a path towards self

realization" (Jacoby 113). Invoking Winnicott, Jacoby notes that, "becoming

conscious ultimately involves an unbiased experience of the 'true self'" (96).

The self, rooted in the "unfathomable domain that has rightly been termed the

unconscious," however, as Jung posits cannot be made fully or completely

conscious (96). The strife for the mutual cooperation of the conscious and the

unconscious is a continuing process like the individuation process. Discovery

of the powerful contents of the unconscious helps "each person to discover

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[1]   The term neurosis is used in the thesis to mean strong anxiety and worry about social
      existence and not in a clinical perspective.
[2]   Liminality is term used in anthropology to mean disorientation and ambiguity.

his/ her own path towards self- realization" (Jacoby 95). As the individual becomes attentive to the unconscious, the ego surrenders its autonomy thereby helping the individual attain "a new centering of the whole personality" (95).

Nevertheless, not everyone becomes conscious of their own individuation. As Polly Young-Eisendrath observes, "Although everyone has the potential to develop self-awareness, and become relatively freed up from childhood and other complexes, only some people actually do. Everyone's invited, but few arrive at individuation- the experience of 'psychic totality,' in Jung's words" (231). Not all are guided by individuation since at the threshold of integration with the unconscious they withdraw themselves to their usual humdrum. The will of our consciousness or ego stands as a stumbling block, in exploring the powerful contents of the unconscious and the integration of the conscious and the unconscious:

> Our conscious will is by nature one-sided, it is also constantly subjected to the influences stemming from our upbringing, of social values, of personal overcompensations, etc. It can therefore never correspond to the wholeness of our own being and is often in fact in conflict with our true self. In order to realize ourselves, we need first to try and experience who we really, are, including hitherto unconscious aspect of our personality. (Jacoby 96)

What the conscious mind ignores or neglects is addressed by the unconscious. The components of consciousness held in abeyance are illuminated by the unconscious. Jung uses the term 'compensation' to explain this process of attaining "psychic equilibrium" whereby a harmonious fusion of the conscious and the unconscious takes place (Adams 107). Elaborating on the Jungian concept, Michael Vannoy Adams describes how "the unconscious redresses what the conscious either excludes or omits from consideration" (107). "The contact with deeper regions of the unconscious forms an essential part of the individuation process, which Jung refers to as the 'spontaneous realization of the whole person'" (De Laszlo xxvii). Due to the undiscovered unconscious or self, the process of individuation remains in abeyance. In *The Undiscovered Self,* Jung says that not every human being succeeds in discovering his/her own self and listening to the demands of the unconscious. They lack self judgment and self knowledge which are essential to recognize the individuation process. Jung states that the brain needs the faculty of consciousness to perform. "Consciousness is a precondition of being" (Jung, *The Undiscovered Self 33*). However, unconscious, which is an inner experience and coequal of the conscious in Jungian terms is hardly recognized as "a counter balance to consciousness" (59). The unconscious is neglected or overlooked in spite of all its influence on consciousness. "The consciousness of the modern man still clings so much to outward objects that he makes them exclusively responsible, as if it were on them that the decision depended"(60).

Archetypal images are the channels to the unconscious. These images, according to Jung, give expression to the unconscious instincts. David L. Hart, in his essay "The Classical Jungian School," says that "For Jung, to be unconscious was perhaps the greatest evil, and he meant "unconscious" in a specific sense: unconscious of our own unconscious" (97).

Jung saw individuation as war of the opposites resolved in the transcendent function, says Frattaroli. Stating the seminal concept of Jung's individuation, Frattaroli observes that Jung "saw individuation as a process of becoming an authentic integrated person, through a synthesis of opposites in the personality" (178). The conflict between the conscious and the unconscious or the conflict of the opposites was called "complexion oppositorum" or "coniunctio oppositorum," by Jung (qtd. in Frattaroli 177). Various stages of individuation re-direct an individuating individual to the transcendent function, which in turn help them find their "potential space," as noted by Winnicott. Jung called it a dialogical space. "The usual outcome of this process is greater courage, insight, empathy, and creativity – means for uniting the opposites, as Jung would say" (Young-Eisendrath 233). Emergence of a new attitude out of a tension of the opposites was called transcendent function by Jung. It is the "process through which the new comes about in us" (Ulanov 310). The conflicts within the self (conscious and unconscious) or with oneself and the society are resolved through the transcendent function of individuation. The collision of outer and inner

conflicts gets resolved as individuation reaches "a new third" (Douglas 22). In fact, the end result of Jungian formulation of transcendent function is the attainment of this 'new third.'

> The goal of individuation is the power to draw on the transcendent function, the tension and interplay of opposites, in everyday life. In order to reach this goal, one must develop 'metacognitive processes' – the capacity to think about and entertain one's own subjective states from different perspectives. To do this, one comes to see oneself not merely from the perspective of the conscious ego complex, nor merely from a complex- related hyper-emotional ('gut feelings') perspective. Instead one can find a 'third' point of view from which both of the others can be entertained and looked at without impulsively enacting them. This third perspective is the transcendent function (comparable to Winnicott's 'potential space') from which one can engage in a dialectical relationship with aspects of oneself. (Young-Eisendrath 233)

The central personae of the autobiographical narratives we examine here undergo conflicts and tensions of the opposites as they are part of an ethnic culture on one hand while at the same time being exposed to the dominant culture on the other. This study maps how they individuate and try to resolve the conflicts to reach their own potential space i.e the new third. "The psyche,

says Jung, possesses this function to overcome opposition through arriving at a third point of view that includes the essence of each conflicting perspective while at the same time combining them into a symbol of the new" (Ulanov 310).

Jung discusses how social organizations like churches and schools impede the journey of the individual towards realizing the soul by applying their ideologies in the free consciousness of individuals. According to Jung, social organizations:

> rope the individual into a social organization and reduce him to a condition of diminished responsibility, instead of raising him out of the torpid, mindless mass and making clear to him that he is the one important factor and that the salvation of the world consists in the salvation of the individual soul. (Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* 40)

Jung had devoted some of his time for the cross cultural study of individuation process as he explored the Taoist alchemical treatise, *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. He mentions this in his work *Four Archetypes:Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster*. "C. G. Jung through his definitions of the 'collective unconscious' and of 'archetypes' introduced the concept of comparison and contamination between the various cultures, a substantial addition to the ethnopsychiatry of that time"(Bolaffi 104). According to Andrew Samuels, although Jung's cultural values have sometimes been criticized as elitist, he is

the greatest writer on individuation. Other psychoanalytic writers on cross cultural references and individuation include Winnicott, Milner and Erikson.

The transformation of the individual subject is corollary to the assimilation of the unconscious components with the conscious. Jung admits that it is an unfathomable task to describe the transformation of an individual. He denotes individuation as a "natural transformation . . . an inner transformation and rebirth into another being" (*Four Archetypes* 65). He mentions that "This "other being" is the other person in ourselves- that larger and greater personality maturing within us" (65).

Individuation as Jung notes lies at the base of the development of personality. Jung elaborates on how this process can be intensified and made conscious so that the individual can "'compete' or 'round out' his personality" (Jung, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung* 107). A conscious effort in recognizing the intra-psychic processes of the unconscious helps in intensifying the individuation process. Jung analyzes this aspect of individuation as part of practical psychotherapy. His main focus is his patient's consciousness. In a departure from the clinical orientation of Jung, this study focuses on the transformations that the ethnic characters undergo in the process of individuation; as hinted earlier, this is both a subjective and a social process, given the rival pull towards assimilation exerted from above by the dominant group, with its monopoly over the means of interpellation.

"Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to oneself" (Jung, *Basic Writings* 122). It is an ineluctable and indispensible necessity for the development of personality. In *Psychological Types* Jung defines individuation as "a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality" (29). In the same volume, he states that "since the individual is not only a single entity, but also, by his very existence, presupposes a collective relationship, the process of individuation does not lead to isolation, but to an intense and more universal collective solidarity" (325).

For David L. Hart, Individuation begins with the "willingness for an inner voyage of discovery" (99). He considers individuation as an act of spiritual undertaking and liberation from the clutches of the ego. He observes that:

> It is the conscious response of an instinct not recognized in biological thought, an innate and powerful drive toward spiritual realization and ultimate meaning. As such it involves the whole person, who, in the process of emerging into wholeness, is progressively transformed not into something different, but into the true self: out of its potential and into its reality. Whoever in any age or condition, is prepared to heed and respond to this spiritual and fundamentally human drive, is prepared for the process of individuation. (Hart 99-100)

The goal of individuation is arriving at selfhood or self realization. This process fosters the unique and collective qualities of human beings that are necessary for better social integration. As Jung observes, "Individuation means precisely the better and more complete fulfillment of the collective qualities of the human being, since adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to better social achievement than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed" (*Basic Writings* 182). Jung in the Volume 7 of his *Collected Works: Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* elaborates his discussion on individuation and says that though every human face has eyes and nose, there is a wide range of variability that makes each individual distinct and unique. Similarly, individuation is "a process by which a man becomes the definite unique being he in fact is" (Jung, *Basic Writings* 182). As the individual individuates, s/he is "fulfilling the peculiarity of his [sic] nature" (Jung, *Basic Writings* 182).

Individuation is likely to be stifled in an unhealthy environment. A threatening environment hampers the ongoing process of individuation and not everyone overcomes the obstacles. Constant repression of the urges of the unconscious impedes individuation, resulting in personality dysfunction in some cases. Richard M. Ryckman gives a coherent and focused view of Jung's notion of personal development:

The movement toward actualization is often a difficult and painful

process. It involves continual attempts by the individual to understand

his or her experiences and to develop healthy attitudes. The person is

often beset by crises during the middle years. Adequate resolution of

these crises helps move the person toward an accurate perception and

full understanding of himself or herself. Under these conditions, the

person becomes individuated, that is, all he or she is capable of

becoming as a human being. The person is then able to reconcile the

oppositioning forces within the psyche through transcendence. (74)

II. Interpellation:

Louis Pierre Althusser is best known in the Anglophone world for his

statement – 'Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects.' Michel Pecheux

observes: "The individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he

shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e., in order that he

shall (freely) accept his subjection" (92). Althusser popularized this idea in

the seminal essay- "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin*

and Philosophy and Other Essays. His theories are deployed in different

disciplines such as cultural studies, media studies, sociology and literary

criticism. Interpellation is used in this study to explore the dynamics of

subject formation in ethnic life.

While individuation revolves around the fulcrum of psychoanalytic unconscious, interpellation is a part of the social unconscious. The unconscious- psychoanalytic and social- articulates through various modes. The structure of the psychoanalytic unconscious expresses itself through dreams, imaginations and fantasies. The social unconscious on the other hand, articulates through ideologies. The signifiers of ideological discourse include "gestures, modes of behavior, feelings, words and, generally speaking, any other element of other practices and other discourses" (Althusser, *Humanist Controversy* 50). The signifiers of ideology in relation to the operation of interpellation in various cultural contexts are analyzed along with the process of individuation in the chapters that follow.

According to Althusser, "ideology is necessarily a distortive representation of reality. It is the imaginary representation that men make of their real conditions of existence. Ideology is a system of unified ideas that act on men's consciousness " (280). On account of the social function, Althusser states that, "ideology performs a social function: that of ensuring the cohesion of the members of a society" (280).

According to Althusser, ideology is not a static set of ideas or a static phenomenon but a dynamic process that changes continuously as per the changing thoughts, actions and understanding of the people. In fact, it works in the thoughts and actions of people and defines them in relation to society.

"Ideology interpellates individuals by constituting them as subjects
(ideological subjects, and therefore subjects of its discourse) and providing
them with the reasons- of- a subject (interpellated as a subject)" (Althusser,
Humanist Controversy 51-52). The social institutions are ideological state
apparatuses (as Althusser states) that produce subjects who think and act in
socially acceptable ways. These institutions naturalize the social norms and
instill ideologies (into the individuals) which later work to justify their
actions. "An ideology is a body of ideas that license, enable and direct social
action" (Ryan 40). As John Fiske observes, it is a "dynamic social practice"
(312). Ideology functions in multiple ways in the society and justifies all its
actions. It works to transform individuals as subjects. "The individual is
produced by nature, the subject by culture" (312). According to Althusser,
individuals are transformed as "subjects-in-ideology," as and when they are
part of the society and culture (Fiske 312). Althusser notes that, "ideology
acts or functions in such a way that it recruits subjects among the individuals
(it recruits them all) by that very precise operation which I have called
interpellation or hailing" (*Lenin and Philosophy* 174). He explains hailing
with the example of 'hey, you there!' by a police man, in his essay "Ideology
and Ideological State Apparatuses." As the individual responds to the 'hail'
positively, it is an indication that s/he properly fits into the slot of that subject.

Language plays a key role in hailing. Social position is constructed and
given to the hailed subject through language. If the addressee responds

optimistically towards hailing, it is an indication that s/he has adopted the position offered.

> Hailing is the process by which language identifies and constructs a social position for the addressee. Interpellation is the larger process whereby language constructs social relations for both parties in an act of communication and thus locates them in the broader map of social relations in general. (Fiske 313)

Fiske notes that interpellation and hailing are words used by Althusser to stress the role played by media and language in the "constant construction of subject, by which we mean the constant reproduction of ideology in people" (312). This illustrates the fact that language as verbal, visual or tactile is the key factor in communication as well as reproduction of social relations. We hail the addressee and as we hail, they recognize it as directed to them alone even without mentioning it.

Althusser's framework of interpellation has been utilized and expanded by numerous critical theorists like Michel Foucault, Michel Pecheux, and Ranciere. Pecheux discusses the modalities of subject formation such as identification, disidentification and Counter-identification in great detail. Foucault expatiates on how subjects defy and resist the dominant power. Max Hokeimer, Theodor Adorno and David Gauntlett use Althusser's insights and apply the idea to study the interpellation processes of mediation in our times.

Ideology as Pecheux notes is an 'omni historical reality' (103). He links this facet of ideology with Freud's expression: "Unconscious is eternal" (104). Both ideology and unconscious are intangible; and as Pecheux observes, their operations are concealed. "They conceal their own existence within their operation by producing a web of subjective evident truths"(104). Ideology and unconscious perform through the medium of language. Althusser has already stated the link between hail,subject, language and meaning. Michel Pecheux who has extended the theoretical framework of Althusser has defined the "linking of the question of the constitution of meaning to that of the constitution of the subject, a linking which is not marginal but located inside the 'central thesis' itself, in the figure of interpellation" (105). Certain elements of language that irrupt in utterances give way to the operation of interpellation putting the subject tactfully under a veil of ignorance. Thus interpellation involves the role of language or power of words. The texts that serve for this study include oral autobiographies translated into English. Dialectical language used in these autobiographies exemplifies interpellation and hailing. Pecheux rejects semantics and analyses how words and utterances do not carry their own meaning but the meaning with which they are addressed. He quotes Lacan and identifies interpellation-identification as "a process of signifier." The individual passes through series of representations from outside, with which he finally identifies himself. 'Duplication and division' occur within through these multiple

representations. As Lacan says, the subject is caught in the network of common nouns, proper nouns, shifting effects, syntactic constructions etc. (qtd. in Pecheux 108). The individual who is thus caught in the web of these representations believes all that is attributed to him/her (be it a common name, or a joke etc.) by reasoning it out to him/herself. Spinoza uses the phrase "cause of himself" to mean this contradictory effect happening in the individual:

> And it is precisely the existence of this contradiction (the production as a result of 'cause of itself'), and its motor role for the process of the signifier interpellation-identification, which justifies me in saying that it is indeed a matter of a process, in so far as the 'objects' which appear in it duplicate and divide to act on themselves as other than themselves. (Pecheux 108)

The belief of the subject as 'cause of himself' is noted by Pecheux as a 'phantasy effect' by which the individual is interpellated as subject. He calls this phantasy effect as Manchausen effect[3]. Pecheux uses the term Manchausen effect to posit how the individuals volunteer to interpellate as subjects as they "accept as evident the meaning of what they hear and say, read and write" (109). It is ideology that imparts 'evidentness' to a word or

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[3] Pecheux named this effect after Baron Von Manchausen who claimed to have 'lifted himself into the air by pulling on his own hair' (Pecheux 108). Baron Von Manchausen was a German noble man who used to entertain the guests who visit the court by sharing fictional stories.

utterance. But for this operation: "Words, expressions, propositions etc., change their meaning according to the positions held by those who use them, which signifies that they find their meaning by reference to those positions, i.e., by reference to the ideological formations" (111).

Pecheux quotes Althusser and states that, interpellation is an illustration which is "concrete enough to be recognized but abstract enough to be thinkable and thought, giving rise to a knowledge" (105). He observes statements like "I see, I think, I see you, I speak to you etc," as "theatre of consciousness" which is observed from behind the scenes where "the subject is spoken of," and the subject is "spoken to" (105-6). The concept of 'I' or 'the subject' as unique and identical with himself is absurd when compared to the statement 'it's me' (Answered to the question 'who is there?'). It echoes the fact that in the unconscious realm, the "evidentness" of 'I' is concealed or hidden as "the subject has always been 'an individual interpellated as a subject" (106).

In everyday circumstances, the individual unintentionally forgets the desire for individuation and acts in an intepellation-identification mode[4]. This mode involves concealing the actual individual and assigning him an offered identity from outside. Ideology which is "nothing but outside," [though it has 'no outside for itself' as Althusser says] offers the individual, an identity from

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[4] Various modes of interpellation are discussed in detail in the following pages

outside, based on which a subject turned individual must act (127). "The 'evidentness' of identity conceals the fact that it is the result of an identification- interpellation of the subject whose alien origin is nevertheless 'strangely familiar' to him" (107). Thus the origin of the subject in him remains unfamiliar to the individual him/herself. Pecheux also uses the term "the effect of preconstructed" to quote this plight of the subject (107). The individual has always and already been preconstructed as subject.

The function of the ideological discourse is to "transform individuals into subjects" (Althusser, *Philosophy of the Encounter* 281). Althusser addresses this subject function as an "unconscious effect" or "subject-of-the-unconscious" (*Humanist Controversy* 53). Ideological practice is a mechanism that transforms individuals into subjects. A system of ideological notions prevail in the social unconscious. The mechanism or operation of transforming individuals into subjects begins at the instant when the conscious recognizes and believes these ideological notions to be true. This precise mechanism or operation is interpellation. Althusser elaborates upon the operation of ideology in one of his interviews:

> This is how the ideas that make up an ideology impose themselves
> violently, abruptly, on the 'free consciousness' of men: by
> interpellating individuals in such a way that they find themselves
> compelled 'freely' to recognize that these ideas are true- compelled to

constitute themselves as 'free subjects' who are capable of recognizing the true whatever it is present, and of saying so, inwardly or outwardly, in the very form and content of the ideas constitutive of the ideology in question. (*Philosophy of Encounter* 281)

For Althusser, "Ideological discourse is the discourse of everyday life" (*Humanist Controversy* 54). Though it functions in the unconscious the effects of this function are visible outward. It is the all penetrating ideological discourse that interpellates individuals and induces subject-effect. Althusser states that this form of subject effect:

allows the interpellated subject to recognize himself and recognize his place in this discourse, even as it offers him the guarantee that he is truly the one being interpellated and by someone, . . . who is the centre from which every interpellation emanates, the centre of every guarantee, and, at the same time, the judge of every response. (*Humanist Controversy 54*)

Althusser describes ideology as 'transhistorical' as it has always existed and continues to exist. "Individuals are always-already subjects, that is to say, always-already-subject to an ideology" (*Philosophy of Encounter* 282). The content of ideology may vary but its function continues. Man continues to live in the "sway of ideological social relations" (*Philosophy of Encounter* 282). It is not a single ideology that interpellates individuals as subjects.

Plurality of interpellation operates as the individuals live and act on the basis of several ideologies. Several ideologies, neither of the same kind nor of the same level, operate in the individual/subject resulting in multiple interpellations. Althusser quotes this operation of transformation as "subject function" (*Humanist Controversy* 53).

Althusser also talks about the influence/effect of ideology on the unconscious. He states that, "the interpellation of human individuals as ideological subjects produces a specific effect in them, the unconscious effect which enables these human individuals to assume the function of ideological subjects" (*Humanist Controversy* 56). This unconscious effect in the subject function is described as the "subject of the unconscious" (53). According to Althusser, "The unconscious is essential to the functioning of the ideological subject" (57). Thus concomitantly, as individuals are interpellated by the ideological discourse, the unconscious effect is induced. Althusser posits engendering of the unconscious as important as the subject-effect of the ideological discourse and stresses the fact that the unconscious effect constitutes an autonomous structure. The unconscious articulates through the ideological structure or the ideological subject. Both the unconscious and the ideological subjects have effects upon each other. Goshgarin calls it the "articulated combination" (x1vi). Reaffirming his faith in Althusser's concept of interpellation, he describes how "the process of interpellation is conditioned by the unconscious" (x1vi).

Michel Pecheux in his work *Language, Semantics and Ideology: Stating the Obvious* explores the operation of interpellation and various modes of subject formation. He mainly elaborates upon three modalities of subject formation that ensues interpellation. The first mode is identification, the second is counter-identification and the third, disidentification. With respect to the cultural background of the central personae or narrators taken for the study, the thesis analyses whether they identify, counter-identify or disidentify as they are driven by the rival pulls of interpellation and individuation.

Overdetermination[5] of ideologies interpellates individuals in multiple ways resulting in multiple interpellations. However, the subject has the freedom to decide which all ideologies he/she must subject him/herself to. When the subject freely consents to take up the position offered and accepts subjection, interpellation-identification modality of subject formation ensues. The subject's internalization of the core ideologies of the hegemonic classes is interpellation-identification mode. The subject spontaneously adapts with the power structure and ideology, without any resistance in this mode. Such an individual is emblematic of a 'good Subject.' In Pecheux's words:

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[5] Overdetermination is a concept used in field of science, psychoanalysis and Marxism. The concept of overdetermination used by Athusser is taken over from Freud. The causes that determine interpellation are not uniform. A variety of causes result in the plurality of interpellation.

The first modality consists of a superimposition (a covering) of the

subject of enunciation and the universal subject such that the subject's

'taking up a position' realizes his subjection in the form of the 'freely

consented to': this superimposition characterizes the discourse of the

'good subject' who spontaneously reflects the subject (in other words:

interdiscourse determines the discursive formation with which the

subject identifies in his discourse, and the subject suffers this

determination blindly, i.e., he realizes its effects 'in complete

freedom'). (157)

The second modality discussed by Pecheux is the 'bad subject.' The

'bad subject' is the result of counter-identification. In counter-identification,

subject resists or revolts against taking up the offered position. In this

instance, a reverse interpellation occurs against the dominant discursive

formation. According to Pecheux, the second modality is the "symmetrical

inversion" of the first modality:

In short, the subject, a 'bad subject,' a 'trouble- maker,' counter

identifies with the discursive formation imposed on him by

'interdiscourse' as external determination of his subjective interiority,

which produces the philosophical and political forms of the discourse-

against (i.e., counter-discourse) which constitute the core of humanism

(anti-nature, counter-nature, etc.) in its various theoretical and political

forms, reformist and ultra leftist. (157)

The third modality is disidentification. Pecheux defines

disidentification as "taking up of a non-subjective position" (158). This

modality is an operation of "desubjectification of the subject" (158). This

modality is called "transformation-displacement" mode. This is not the

complete abolition of the subject form but a subjective appropriation. The

subject meanders deviant whereby the individuals neither identify nor

counter-identify with the dominant ideologies but make a detour to reach an

"overthrow-rearrangement" of ideological formations (159). The subject of

disidentification mode is neither a 'good subject' nor a 'bad subject'.

Disidentification is a process in which "ideological interpellations continue to

operate, but as it were against itself" (195). Pecheux also states that it is an

operation which is "on and against itself, through 'overthrow- rearrangement'

of the complex of ideological formations" (159).

Interpellation and its various modes of identifications operate as a

corollary of individuation process and vice-versa, both functioning in the

unconscious realm. In the chapters that follow, this study tries to explore the

operations of subject formations in the central characters and to trace how

they make a detour to a transformation displacement mode. It is also an

exploration of how the process of individuation guides them to meander and maneuver their ways to counteract the forces of interpellation.

Experiences of alienation, explicit and implicit discriminations, racial and sexual harassments and all other tensions and conflicts encountered in the mainstream society by the ethnic minority pave the way for interpellation-identification process:

> The psychological process of identification with the aggressor occurs when individuals find themselves in a subordinate or uneasy position as the result of severe criticism or admonition by an authoritarian figure and thus defend themselves- either consciously or unconsciously- by adopting the attitudes, values and symbols of power of the authoritarian figure. (Bolaffi 140)

Interpellation-identification is a psychological process of imbibing the ideologies of the dominant society to be identified as one among 'them.' The minority groups resolve their inner conflicts by identification with the aggressor.

In contrast to this, individuation results in the birth of a renewed and transformed individual. While the end result of interpellation is the creation of 'subjects,' individuation paves the way for the emergence of, most often seen conformist individuals. It was Althusser who tried to link the process of subject formation with Freudian psychoanalysis. He referred to the Freudian

theories regarding the process of subject formation and concluded that the ideological subject is rooted in the historical and the social. His study of psychological process in the formation of subject brought him to the concepts of 'hailing' and 'interpellation.'

Althusser states that, "Theories on the individual concentrate on differences between people and explains these differences as natural. Theories on subject on the other hand concentrate on the people's common experiences in a society as being the most productive way of explaining who (we think) we are"(qtd. in Fiske 312). According to Althusser all are 'subject in' and 'subject to' ideology. As stated by John Fiske, the subject is a "social construct and not a natural one" (312). He explains this by stating how a female can have masculine subjectivity and a black can have white subjectivity:

> A biological female can have a masculine subjectivity (that is she can make sense of the world and of herself and her place in, that world through patriarchal ideology). Similarly, a black person can have a white subjectivity and a member of the working classes a middle- class one. (312)

The subject formation is dependent on the interests of the dominant class. While individuation moves towards a never ending wholeness, a process that lasts and continues till death, interpellation or subject formation

continues as a progressive ideological process of the dominant class. The ideological process of subject formation is a dynamic process by which "a dominant class wins the willing consent of the subordinate classes to the system that ensures their subordination" (Fiske 315). The subjugated group always struggle for a free social existence. Quoting the ideological theory of Althusser, Fiske observes that, "the power of ideology to form the subject in ways that suits the interests of the dominant class is almost irresistible" (315).

The ethnic autobiographies taken for this study are analyzed in the context of sociopolitical, racial and religious factors using the research tools-interpellation and individuation. The select ethnic autobiographies substantiate the research in studying the ethnic aspects along with the subjective process of individuation and the ideological operation of interpellation.

Chapter III

C. K. Janu: The Rebellious Voice

"Ethnic cultures are some of the richest and most interesting in the world" (Ryan 71). Adivasis/tribals in Wayanad, Kerala are one such ethnic group with a diverse culture, predominantly scattered across the forests and mountains of the Western Ghats. "Tribals" is the word used in India to refer to the indigenous population of the country. They are also called "'Adivasis' in the terminology of Asian activists" (Devy xi). They are considered to be pre-Aryan settlers of India. This chapter analyses how the Adivasi ethnic group is treated as a separate category by the mainstream discourse and how they perceive their own position in the society through an analysis of C. K. Janu's *Personal/ Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu*. Janu's attempt to resist the interpellating forces of the dominant culture, by sustaining the drive of individuation is analyzed. This chapter also explores the constraints and choices of Adivasis in Kerala with the help of Janu's oral autobiography. *Personal/ Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu,* as the title suggests is an account of unfinished/ongoing journey of Janu's individuation, resisting the repressive forces of interpellation.

Etymologically, ethnic means "other." The Adivasis in Kerala are treated as 'the eternal other' and have been suffering injustice at the hands of the urban population and the mainstream society. There always existed a power conflict between the civil society and the ethnic group. The expanding capitalist societies make efforts to draw and fit people into the ambit of their overarching system. Mainstreaming the minority groups like tribals with an eye on tribal possessions such as land and forest is their hidden agenda. "For the majority, the 'tribals' are like relics who need to be quickly 'modernized' and 'mainstreamed' as government and corporate houses eye their lands for mines, industries, dams, or national parks" (Sundar 1). Adivasis are an oppressed group of stereotyped classes including scheduled tribes, impecunious slaves, and poor peasants who are politically, economically and culturally exploited. They have been discriminated and segregated as racial and ethnic minorities.

Dominating power as Anderson observes, "works to instill its own cultural values on the traces of society. These values are not 'true' or 'natural,' but groups attempt to persuade us that they are" (84). Jenmis and immigrants acquired hegemony over the tribes. The dominating powers started interpellating the Adivasi group by convincing and exhibiting their superior cultural values as natural. They projected their culture before them as an alternative to be adopted and assimilated. Hegemony refers to a situation "where it has become accepted that this cultural group will dominate over all

others, it is ordinary and natural that this hegemonic group 'rules okay'"

(Anderson 84). The hegemonic group interpellates the tribes to identify with

the ideological order of the dominant culture. However, no effort is taken to

safeguard their rights.

Discrimination on the basis of caste and gender prevails in the

established social order even today. These are situations over which the

individual has little control. Discrimination in all forms has resulted in the

marginalization of the weaker sections of society. Robert Park observes a

marginalized person as:

> A racial or cultural hybrid: one who lives in two worlds, in both of
>
> which he is more or less a stranger; one who aspires to, but is excluded
>
> from, full membership in a new group. The marginal person is between
>
> two cultures, and not fully a part of either. (38)

Consequently the marginalized person loses the sense of security. Increasing

economic disparity, globalization, liberalization, privatization and poverty are

some of the other factors that lead to marginalization. Marginalization or

social exclusion also refers to "ways in which individuals may become cut off

from full involvement in the wider society. It focuses attention on a broad

range of factors that prevent individuals or groups from having opportunities

open to the majority of the population" (Tabassum 2). The Adivasis form

such a marginalized group in Kerala.

Many objectionable qualities were ascribed to the Adivasi minority group in accordance with their caste and they were discriminated in many ways. "Discrimination" as stated by Norman Yetman, may be manifested in a number of ways:

> mild slights . . . verbal threats, abuse and epithets; intimidation and harassment (such as threatening phone calls); defacing property with ethnic slurs, graffiti, or symbols; unequal treatment (such as refusing to hire or promote qualified applicants); systematic oppression (such as slavery); or outright violence (vandalism, arson, terrorism, lynching, pogroms, massacres). (9)

At all stages of interaction with the mainstream, the Adivasi ethnic groups had to encounter verbal threats and abuses, uncouth jokes and even body shaming. Janu talks about the negative perception of the mainstream society towards the Adivasi community. "The way they spoke and the way they behaved became a matter of shame and degeneration. The way they dressed invited lewd comments" (48). Adivasis have been suffering harassment, unequal treatment, poverty, oppression and violence for a long time. They are hailed as 'kaattukuruman,' 'karumban,' 'pulayan' etc. which are equivalent to hailing someone as a 'Negro' or barbarian. Quoting Louis Althusser, and describing the term 'interpellation,' Frantz Fanon uses the expression- "Look! A Negro" to illustrate racial interpellation (qtd. in Rangan 398). Hailing a

Black American as a Negro is equivalent to hailing an Adivasi as 'karumban'
or 'pulayan.' The status of an Adivasi in class conscious Indian culture is
almost equal to the status of a Black American in racist American culture. The
difference is that apart from racial interpellation, Adivasis in relation to the
mainstream Indian culture are discriminated and marginalized on the basis of
caste and class. To be the 'good subjects' of such an ideological system, they
are supposed to subject themselves to multiple levels of interpellation.
Concomitantly, if they counter-identify with the mainstream ideological
norms they must resist in multiple ways to survive or to find their potential
space.

Always and already the citizens in general are interpellated in one way
or the other. Thus the coercion of interpellation is much higher in the case of
ethnic minority groups like Adivasis who are subjugated in number of ways.

The majority-minority (Adivasi ethnic minority) relation in Indian
context is akin to the colonizer-colonized relation that was once prevalent in
the country. An internal colonization effect persists in this majority-minority
encounter. An internal migration that takes place within the nation (migration
of the dominant group from urban areas to the rural areas where Adivasis
dwell) is similar to the entry of the white colonizers into the country with the
aim of expanding their frontiers. Janu's autobiographical orature clearly states
how the colonizer-colonized effect is recreated with the influx of immigrants.

Oppression, slavery, marginalization, discrimination etc. followed as its after effects.

Tribal Literature

In the recent times, tribal literature gained momentum through oral narratives. Various tribal narratives have been published in more that ninety languages. Ramnika Gupta observes:

> This literature has proved quite cataclysmic in positively shaping the
> non-Adivasi's perception of and attitude towards the Adivasis. Adivasi
> literature is about life. It is about man's [sic] co-existence with nature;
> it is about freedom, equality and brotherhood, about social integration
> and honesty. It is free from greed and acquisitive instincts. It favours
> social equality and is against injustice. The Adivasis' love for nature is
> the mainstay of their literature. (191)

Hulibandi has noted that "the roots of Dalit literature in Kerala as in Tamilnadu lie in the strong corpus of oral and ritualistic literature" (12). Oral autobiographies and narratives play a key role in understanding tribal traditions. As Ramnika Gupta states:

> The writing of the tribal people is a testament to their agony and their
> trials. It is also a medium through which they try to find solution to
> their problems. Their writing is an expression of their revolutionary

spirit against the 'established' who have conspired to kill their culture and control their resources. (191)

Mother Forest was initially dictated to Bhaskaran in Malayalam and translated into English by Ravi Shanker. Janu's translator Shanker states in a note, "I reworked the draft and used the simplest language possible, keeping the flow of the language close to the Malayalam that rolled off Janu's tongue" (xii).

Janu was introduced to learning only at the age of sixteen through a literacy campaign organized by the Canfed project. She picked up alphabets from those classes. She started reading newspapers soon after the campaign. Later she started participating in various literacy programs. She started reading reasonably well and began teaching other tribal women and children reading and writing.

Mother Forest vividly explores the ethnic identity process and socio-cultural re-organization of the Adivasis in Kerala. Janu's autobiographical narrative gains attention, thanks to its distinct language saturated with Adivasi idioms. It can be said that she narrated her autobiography in a prelapsarian tongue. Janu has admitted in her interviews that the language that the tribals speak do not have a script. The writer Bhaskaran has given meticulous attention to details and depicted her life and community in the text without any dilution. The style of the language used, punctuation and other techniques

incorporated in the English text are examples of innovative translation practices to capture the essence of the Adivasi dialect. The translator N. Ravi Shanker has tried to translate the work into English in such a manner that circumvents the rigorous rules of English language. The fragmented sentences, phrases instead of complete sentences, altered punctuations such as the beginning of sentences without capitalization are examples. For example: "there was little to eat too. couldn't look out for tubers either. leeches swarmed the forests in the rains. and no songs flowed from the chini" (4). This quote from the text has all the sentences beginning in small letters. Janu's narrative does not subscribe to the rules followed by any academic establishment. It is the voice of an ordinary individual with a very strong communal feeling. Her narrative can be seen as an individual's expression of concern for thousands of ethnic Adivasis, it is simultaneously an account of her selfhood as well as the voice of all Adivasis who share the same plight. Invoking Rathi Menon, Tom Thomas observes:

> Janu's autobiographical narration, presented as an extended conversation with an editor, conveys her lack of compromise in her assertions. The shifts in tone, pauses or changes in diction reflect her refusal to erase the inevitable gaps and fissures of the actual narrative events. She is not positioned as a cultural icon, but as an ordinary individual with strong communal feelings. (231)

"Each individual possesses a unified, unique selfhood which is also the expression of a universal human nature" (Linda 5). The way Janu talks about herself as 'we' or '*nammal*' implies that her autobiographical narrative is an articulation of the existential anxieties of the ethnic group to which she belongs. 'Nammal' in Malayalam means 'we'. 'Nammal' is used throughout the text instead of 'Njan' which means 'I.' *Mother Forest* can be considered as an account of Janu's struggle to win the lost land and culture of Adivasis. As she puts it, the "retrieval of land will help them retrieve their culture" (ix):

> All our songs, customs and medical practices were born from the system of life that we adopted as intimately related to the earth. They have no existence in different system. The pictures of different gods and *cinima* stars defaced the walls of the colonies. Folk Art academies took over our customs like *gaddiga*. All these traditions were signs of our presence in the world. They cannot exist in another system and it is not for the community to insist so. It is not the need of this community to recognize these signs. They should exist on their own, striking a balance with the changes that time brings about. (49)

Any reader can sense how Janu is closely knit with the forest from her words of admiration and devotion towards her 'mother forest.' As one of the post Jungian theorists notes, "Sometimes the mother is referred to as 'carrying' the infant's self. This is akin to the process called 'mirroring'" (Samuels 9). The

mother forest is here referred to as carrying Janu's self and identity. She mirrors/identifies herself with the forest.

The Wayanad district of Kerala has the largest tribal population in Kerala followed by Idukki and Palakkad. *Mother Forest* is a vivid account of a life of more than two lakh tribal people in Wayanad. According to Mathur, a reputed anthropologist, there are 48 tribal communities and a population of 364,189 tribals as per the 2011 census in Kerala. In the Malabar region they came to be known as 'Kattukuruman' meaning 'people of the forest.' As they are mostly settled on the Western Ghats and the borders of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, they are also known as 'Girijanmam,' people of the hills. But they are generally called as Adivasis in Kerala. Some of the prominent tribal groups in the district of Wayanad mentioned in *Mother Forest* are Adiyan, Cholanaikkan, Malappulayan, Malai Arayan, Malayan, Paniyan, and Parayan.

C. K. Janu belongs to the Adiyar community[1]. The name 'Adiyar' originates from the word 'Adiyan.' It is a word in Malayalam that is used by a slave to refer to himself before his/her master. The way they address themselves before the upper class exemplifies the symbolic nullification of their very existence or ontology. Chekkote Kariyan Janu from Chekkotte colony in Trissileri in Wayanad district, was an unknown Adivasi illiterate

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[1] "The ancestors of this tribe migrated from Coorg. But the only indication of this fact is in the name of their deity kuttath Karinkali- the first word being supposed to be a corrupt form of a word 'Kotaku' Coorg. The headman of Adiyans says his tribesmen are still to be found in that province. They are field- labourers and have also hill-cultivation" (Nair 97).

girl till the age of 17. *Mother Forest* is her plea for the preservation of forest and for the rights of Adivasi community.

"Adivasis' life is closely linked with land and forest" (Aerthayil 44). Their ecologically oriented modes of subsistence such as hunting, fishing, garnering, domesticating, snaring, bartering, foraging, and pasturing were affected by the advent of settled agriculture and industrial revolution. "Migrants entered our society and changed our farming ways. Agriculture turned into commerce," observes Janu (52). Surinder Jodhka's statement substantiates what Janu says:

> All economic activity is carried out in a framework of social relationships. Production is organized socially, markets function as social institutions, and consumption patterns are shaped by social norms and cultural values. Agriculture is no exception. The institutional framework of agricultural production determines how and by whom land is cultivated, what kinds of crops can be produced and for what purpose, how food and agricultural incomes can be distributed, in what way or on what terms the agrarian sector is linked to rest of the economy/ society. (365)

With the advent of settled agriculture, there was massive deforestation. As Janu says:

in the uncultivated forests, the trees have to be cut down and the
undergrowth cropped. the bushes would be thick with creepers and
thorny bushes all to be hacked down with choppers and heaped up with
sticks. then the undergrowth would be set on fire. we call it torching
the *punam*. (1)

Government tactfully employs certain strategies in order to make the governance, regulation and interpellation easier. The objective is to make the citizens recognize their subject positions consciously or quasi-consciously. Modernization and developmental schemes are some of the strategies employed in order to convince the ethnic minorities of "the generative (as opposed to repressive)" notions of the nation (Rangan 401). Modernization took away tribal life in its sweep. Modernization theory rooted in the transformation of non western societies (as per the definition of the *Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*), aims at transforming Adivasis at the grass root level. As Janu puts it, "the signs of our presence in this world" were swept away by the developmental strategies (49). Pointing at the futility of modernization she asks why there should be any road if they did not own even a bicycle: "All development projects emphasize profits for civil society. That is why they build shining roads to colonies that do not even have a bicycle" (50).

Modernization and capitalist intrusion led to the gradual decline of the domestic economy of the tribes. With the advent of various developmental schemes, Adivasis lost their land and opportunities to work in their environment. Their lands were segregated for selling and other government-run projects. Thus the 'mother forest' lost its naturalness and was converted into "departmental forest" with barbed wires and fences (31). "Our children had begun to be frightened of a forest that could no longer accommodate them. All the land belonged to the migrants," says Janu (30). The fragile existence of Adivasis was affected by the influx of immigrants. This dispossession was co-terminus with a kind of cultural denudation: "All our songs, customs and medicinal practices were born from the system of life that we adopted as intimately related to the earth. They have no existence in a different system" (49). Tom Thomas's statement, "Development paradigms and development goals, which lead to the management of natural resources without the participation and consent of the natural resource communities have to be vehemently criticized," is significant in this context (232). The intrusion of external forces and modernization affected their normal lifestyle and worsened their plight:

> Earlier we used to sow thina, chaama and such and eat them. Also,
> kappa, Kachil, and chena. Because we are landless now we have to buy
> everything from the shops. People from the civil society say that tubers
> from the forest are inedible, they are poisonous, that they do not

contain nutrients. And that potatoes and grain from the shops are excellent. When our people try to buy something, there is no money. And there is no work. there is no work on the land. Land is a commodity for sale and other deals. Lands are left fallow because they claim that agriculture is not profitable. It is in this situation that we felt we must have some land of our own to keep hunger away. (52)

The Adivasis were forcefully interpellated as subjects of the dominant ideology. They were subjected to the established social and cultural practices through various means such as literacy campaigns, religious teachings, modern technology etc. The modern socio-political and religious organizations considered it their responsibility to work for the transition of Adivasis from their traditional customs. Under the label of certain progressive tribal movements and schemes, the dominant classes tried to extend their power and generate profit out of tribal labor and land. Modernization introduced ethnic cuisines in the market. Dishes made out of bamboo shoots and cane, dried fish recipes, rice cooked in bamboo tubes, roasted meat etc. are some of the common tribal cuisines. A fusion of tribal and mainstream culinary habits is marketed and is gaining prominence in the mainstream society these days. However, tribals are not benefited by this and no measures have been taken to stave off Adivasi's hunger and poverty. In one of her interviews Janu states:

Those who come amidst our people with ideas of upliftment and programmes are the ones who exploit our people. It happens in dealings of land and women. Our women and girls are used for the pleasures of mainstream society. The situation today makes them lose everything. (*Bhashaposhini* 212)

Thus intervention of modern social institutions had a deleterious effect upon the tribals. As Janu remarks, "The lifestyle of our people, rituals, and existence itself are closely connected to the land. If that is severed, they have a lot of problems. It will be wrong to compare it with the mainstream society's ways and customs" (210). The mainstream civil society considers Adivasi life as highly divergent.

Rights and interests of the minority cannot be overlooked, prioritizing modernization and developments such as mega projects, five year plans, construction of dams, industries, mines, wild life sanctuaries etc. This is because without natural resources, Adivasi's subsistence is nullified. Forest nestles the lives of Adivasi communities. "no one knows the forest like we do. the forest is mother to us. more than a mother because she never abandons us" (5). There are National Rehabilitation and Resettlement policies in India to integrate rehabilitation and to enhance the standard of living of the evictees. However, the implementation of such policies post-displacement is often passive. The tribal evictees are completely neglected or paid a delayed and

inadequate compensation. The only choice that remains for the Adivasis is to accept what the government implements and the mainstream advocates; and interpellate themselves as 'good subjects/ good citizens' by identifying with the mainstream.

In her autobiography Janu chronicles the atrocities faced by the tribals and the power exercised by the dominant group upon them. Adivasis had to labor and slog day and night for their masters either without wages or for paltry wages like a handful of rice. "Wages were given as grain. Two bags of chaff went into each bag of grain" (36-7). "When we worked at the Jenmi's fields we had to do whatever the jenmi men ordered" (12). The tribals were very much dependant on the Jenmi as he was their only employer. Irrespective of the amount of work they did, they had to go underfed with a very simple meal of rice soup and chilli. "One could call it kanji vellam, with more water than rice" (12).

Adivasis never thought of protesting for wages. "in our community there never was a tradition of protesting when the wages were low" (16). They were made to work for long hours for meager wages. "All our people had become mere coolie workers. All our lands were usurped and no farms remained and we became just labourers." (Janu, *Bhashaposhini* 205).

After working as a maid at Vellamunda, Janu was taken back home by her mother to work in the field of a land owner in Thrissileri. The life at the

work place was strenuous and they were under constant supervision of the

Jenmi's men. "when our people worked in the fields there would be a man

dressed in a Sleeveless Shirt standing on the ridge supervising our work. We

were quiet frightened of him" (13). "In fact they fell prey to two kinds of

slavery, one that existed traditionally and the other that came after the arrival

of the migrants" (Introduction viii). The jenmi would rarely visit them. "in

those days getting a glimpse of the jenmi was a terrifying experience for our

people" (15). However the supervisors forced the tribal folks to slog like

animals.

> . . . if there were no bullocks around we also hauled like animals. when
>
> we hauled the plough it was very difficult to pull our feet out of the
>
> slush. as if they were sucked down and trapped in quagmire. when it
>
> rained heavily we used the areca *paala* as cap. just watching the water
>
> streaming down from its front as we heaved the plough was enough to
>
> make us forget our hunger. (13-14)

The irony was that even after slogging like animals they could not stave off

their hunger.

The Adivasis did not even dare to look up at their master. Janu says

that, "the back of our people seem to be bent because they have been terrified

of so many things for generations. When our people speak, they don't raise

their eyes and that must be because they are so scared" (13). The lands were

taken over by the Jenmi in exchange of a bottle of arrack or a piece of tobacco. The immigrants on the other hand took away not only their fertile land but also their work force along with it. They divided the lands into various segments in order to cultivate different types of crops.

The progressive land reform laws that the government introduced did not help the Adivasi community. Instead, they lost their lands to rich migrants who exploited the loopholes in the law to confiscate their properties at a nominal price. Adivasis were unable to prove their ownership and hence lost their possessions. Thus the influx of immigrants completely disrupted the tribal life. They were evicted from their own land. Janu says that, "Most of them lost their lands for a pinch of tobacco or a glass of tea or some arrack. Many in civil society and the Party had taken advantage of this" (46).

The civil society began encroaching on the forest and burial grounds of Adivasis and the surrounding wastelands. They also encroached on Kurumarchira- a burial ground and its surrounding areas where Adivasis performed "traditional rites and gaddiga rituals" (38).

There was a massive dispossession of Adivasi tribes of Kerala in the early 60s due to influx of immigrants. Janu says that, "When transplanted we lost not only our lands but also the environment in which we existed" (52). "The development induced displacement" has resulted in the social exclusion of various Adivasi communities (Boban 145). Forced eviction of people from

their space for land acquisition without taking adequate measures for their rehabilitation made their life miserable. Walter Fernandes quotes Nehru's response to the massive displacement caused by Hirakund dam: "If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of the nation (qtd. in Boban 151).

Development induced displacements of the weaker sections of the society- the dalits and tribals are proportionally increasing. "These voiceless communities can be displaced without their consent and conveniently ignored. Most of them are not even re-settled. The compensation they receive is low and they are unable to start a new life with it" (Boban 153).

As evictees, Adivasis began encroaching upon other areas. Encroachment of land by the Adivasi's at Muthanga and other parts of Kerala were expressions of tensions wrought by modernity's incursions into native ecosystems. The continued act of plundering their traditional land and establishing laws unfavorable to Adivasis from the side of the government indicate a hostile attitude towards the downtrodden communities.

As Aerthayil states, "The utter disregard of the ruling class and the government of Kerala for the most marginalized people, is a clear example of how a group which doesn't have political power and influence is ignored and marginalized by them" (39). It is from such a deprived and marginalized background that Janu rises as a spokesperson for the tribal population. She

counter-identifies with the established socio-political and cultural order of the dominant society.

The intervention of political parties also affected Adivasis' freedom of existence. "issues related to our agricultural lands or better conditions of life for us hardly found their way into party circles," notes Janu (34). Though the entry of the political parties promised the welfare of the tribals, they had only personal and political motives. Janu states that, "I also had the feeling that the party, which lusted after nothing but power, saw the people of our community as mere exhibition pieces. AKG, EMS, Hammer and Sickle, Hand, Cow and Calf, Indira Gandhi, all these were big idols that we had to pay obeisance to" (37-38). Though it was professed in public that the objective of the political parties was a harmonious co-existence of the ethnic group and the civil society, their thinly disguised motive was nothing but the "greed for power" (38). There was a racial disconnect between what was flaunted and what actually happened. The political parties worked with the mute support of the landlords. According to Janu:

> The fact that we could no more collect fallen twigs from the forest, the
> fact that tree after tree was cut down and transported in lorries down
> the mountains, that our huts had walls that could crumble any moment,
> that we could not thatch our fallen roofs, that we had to squat in front
> of the Panchayat officers demanding drinking water, that out

indigenous medicine and occult customs became calendar pictures printed on newspapers- all this we knew by being within the Party. We knew that all this happened with the Party's mute support and because of its greed for power. (38)

The political parties tactfully ignored the problems of the ethnic minority groups. Janu who initially worked with the Communist Party of India- Marxist left the party in the year 1991. "It was when I knew that I could not do anything for my community or anything else in an honest manner by remaining in the party that I decided to stay away from the party work. I thought it was better to do whatever little things we could do among our own people" (40).

Though she worked for the party initially, she realized how the tribals are exploited by right/left political parties to satisfy their political motives. She states:

To deal with problems of our existence, and to work for it, became impossible for the party. Not only that, the mainstream party people looked upon us as mere land labourers. Therefore the party needed us only to shout slogans, partake in meetings, and at times of voting only. The party workers behaved very badly towards women in our community. This was no different from the behavior of mainstream society. (*Bhashaposhini* 206)

Janu realizes the need to fight for her rights and decides to choose a path of resistance than submission. Through her narration she:

> boldly resists 'taken for granted' attitudes towards these neglected segments of the population and speaks for them. Thus they make an effort to locate themselves as a subject, rejecting the object status to which cultural identities have confined them. The text illustrates the need for a revisionary method of reading the discourses of people regarded as marginal to the dominant literary tradition. It also compels one to reassess the psychological simplicity attributed to marginalized groups. (Thomas 232)

Janu never tries to mould herself as a 'good subject' following the dictates of mainstream ideologies. She counter-identifies with the ideology of the political party and the mainstream society. The Sit-in-Strike in 2001, the Muthanga Revolt, and other protests of The Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha can be considered as examples of counter-identification. The second chapter of *Mother Forest* discusses how the operation of interpellation manifests among the tribals. The translator Ravi Shanker notes that the first chapter "was closer to Janu's inner world, while the second was more polemical and belonged to the outer world" (xiin).

Janu talks about sexually exploited Adivasi girls and unwed mothers. She says, "our women have been used by the jenmi and by the people from Civil Society as well as by Party Men" (29).

> They took our girls saying they wanted to educate them, and put them into hostels where the very people responsible for them misused them for power and money. Their greedy, fear-inspiring, powerful hands forced our girls into doing wrong things. They imbibed only the wrong aspects of civil society. (48)

Based on economic situation, class and gender, Adivasi women are triply marginalized. In fact, the coercion of interpellation is felt with greater intensity in their case. To resist racial interpellation, gender based interpellation, and class based interpellation, an Adivasi woman must triply individuate to find a potential space of her own. However, the process of individuation is problematic for Adivasi women as their basic necessities for survival itself are at stake. Living below poverty line and constantly exposed to atrocities that are increasing at an alarming rate, fulfilling the basic needs become their only priority.

The introduction of modern agricultural inventions and industrialization deprived the economic opportunities of the Adivasi women more than that of Adivasi men as the women's lives were more intimately connected to the forest. Their works include hunting, gathering firewood,

collecting medicinal plants, farming and animal rearing. According to

Tabassum:

> The role of women in development is most intimately related to the
>
> role of comprehensive socio-economic development, and is a strategic
>
> question for the development of all societies. Any development
>
> strategy which neglects the need for enhancing the role of women
>
> cannot lead to comprehensive socio-economic development. (7)

The developmental strategies introduced with the advent of outsiders were not

much in favor of Adivasi women.

The Adivasi tradition offers autonomy for women in choosing their

spouse, divorce, re-marriage etc. But religious values cultivated among the

Adivasis through Hinduization and Christianization began eroding their

indigenous cultural values. The cultural and religious values that crept in with

the influx of the outsiders into their region started putting more restrictions on

women. The traditional egalitarian values were superseded by a new and

modern value system. Adivasi women suffered sexual harassment at the

hands of the land lords and politicians. Janu says:

> our women had been used by the Jenmi and by the people from the
>
> Civil Society as well as by party men. Our community fears the Jenmi
>
> who gives us work and all outside our culture. We are also terrified of
>
> starving to death. (29)

This shows that it was not only the economic exploitation that was prevalent in the backdrop of developmental strategies of the political parties but sexual harassment as well.

The government had the hidden agenda of assimilating the minority to the status of common civilians. As noted by Tom Thomas, "The Adivasi is represented as one who is 'unable to speak' and who is to be benevolently 'rehabilitated', 'protected,' 'developed,' and slowly 'integrated' into civil society" (232). Literacy campaigns, government's legislations and the intervention of the political parties were used to achieve this. However, all these efforts remained largely futile as the minority groups continued to remain inassimilable. The tribals could not take an equal footing with the civil society. Their sub-national identity remained stubborn and tenacious despite threats and blandishments. This agitated the majority obliquely.

Adivasis are exposed to cultural assimilation or acculturation which is a route to interpellation. By teaching Malayalam language in literacy campaigns, restyling their attire, altering their work habits etc. the Adivasis are bought to the threshold of cultural assimilation. They are coerced for interpellation-identification with the dominant culture. This however is not for the benefit of Adivasis. Professing a prospective intention of the upward mobility of the minority group in disguise, the dominant group 'hails' the Adivasis as mere slaves or indentured laborers. Joseph Heaney observes that, "The legal and political institutions of colonial society were shaped to benefit

the land owners and give them almost total control over their slaves" (61).

Aerthayil notes that "The tribal slaves were auctioned, sold and bought for Rs

10 to 30 per person at the annual festival of Valliyurkavu temple in Wayanad"

(30).

The influx of immigrants into the premises of Adivasis was never with

a positive attitude towards the tribals. It created conflict and resentment

among the two groups. The interpellative forces demoralize the very existence

of Adivasis. The dominant social and political forces effectuate interpellation

by putting in efforts to erase ethnic Adivasi identity through various channels.

Implementation of Vallippani[2], forced obeisance to various political parties,

encroachment of their lands and displacement of their habitats prove this

motive. Without consciously recognizing the functions of the dominant

ideological system, the Adivasi groups subdue themselves before the Jenmis,

political parties and immigrants that encroach upon their lands.

Janu's aim was to work for the betterment of the landless tribal

population in Wayanad. She describes in her autobiography about her efforts

to regain the lost possessions of forty five landless and homeless Paniyars,

Adiyars and Kurichyars. "All the land we had, had been taken by the land

lords and the new settlers put in their names" (*Bhashaposhini* 205).

---

[2]   Vallippani is a bonded labour system introduced by the landlords. The labourers had to
     work for them for one whole year for paltry wages of "only seven sers of rice and a
     piece of coarse clothing" (36). Paniyars, Ooralis, Vettanaykkars and Cholanaykkars
     were the communities that entered this bonded labour. "They had to work as slaves for a
     whole summer and for a whole rainy season" (36).

Interpellated as submissive 'good subjects' who identify with the dominant culture and power in complete obeisance, Adivasis seldom questioned the jenmis.

The jenmis who usurped their land, employed the tribals themselves as their laborers in the same land and cultivated crops, paying them paltry wages. Janu says:

> when our forefathers cleared the wild forest by burning the foliage and stumps and planted the thina, the fertile land would be taken over by the landlords; or the new settlers would pay them something and make it theirs. They will start planting. We had to toil on the same land and would not be paid any wages either. (*Bhashaposhini* 205)

Adivasis had no documents to prove their ownership. Janu says that, "Our people, who had never had to keep records and documents for their lands, would once again have to work in those same lands as labourers and grow crops for the jenmi" (32).

The evicted tribals (Paniyars, Adiyars and Kurichyars) had to move out in search of other areas to live. So they moved to Thirunelli, a land that was once owned by their forefathers. As they tried to settle on this land to reclaim it, political parties, government and civil society turned against them. The police arrested Janu and her followers who "encroached" on this land. All of them were physically assaulted. Janu notes that, "This land was taken from

our people and that is why we encroached on it. When we built a hut there it became a big issue. Because of this our people were not called for work for a long time" (*Bhashaposhini* 209). However, they did not quit. Janu says: "The police first tried to use force and drive us away but since we had nowhere else to go we stood our ground. They beat up many people very badly. I was also beaten. Yet we stayed on" (41).

Clambering down the hill to fetch water, encountering with wild elephants that enter the premises, constant crop raiding by other wild animals, lack of electricity were all routine affairs for the Adivasis settled there. Groceries were denied for them from the shop down the hill after this dispute. Moreover they could not seek the help of the government for water, electricity or transportation as they were camping on a disputed land. There was tap water facility downhill but they were restricted from fetching water from there.

To be interpellated as 'good subjects,' tribals should please the Jenmis as ideal labourers and slog without wages. They must assimilate with the mainstream ideologies and accept the incommensurable laws of the government. How long can a community survive such an unflinching disregard towards their life? "The monolithic representation of Adivasis distorts their plurality and prevents the expression of their anxieties. "While

migrant land encroachments are 'natural' and 'legitimized,' the Adivasi struggle becomes 'unnatural' and 'criminal'" (Thomas 232).

While the dominant group defines its norms by proclaiming their culture as the universal one, the minority group unconsciously heeds to it and is likely to forget exploitation. As Anderson observes about the dominating power, "If one cultural group can achieve this power it can authorize its own version of reality as the 'official' one; it can create a common sense view that the majority of people subscribe to, and ultimately ensure the reproduction of its own culture" (80). So in order to safeguard or retrieve their trampled culture and legacy, Adivasis ought to develop another power.

Resistance is a power that can transform and dismantle the orthodoxy of the dominant group. Janu chose the power of resistance to retrieve the Adivasi land and life:

> Resisting power is that which seeks to intentionally oppose, challenge and dispute acts of domination. Resisting power seeks to transform the traces of dominating groups and dismantle their cultural orthodoxy. Acts that reform, reconfigure, or reject the traces and places of cultural orthodoxy. (Anderson 88)

Janu exhibited her resistance in subtle forms initially. Later she took it to various stages that bore concrete results. The vibrant tribal leader practiced a 47-days Sit-in-strike in front of the Kerala- secretariat without any support

from any mainstream political party. This turned out to be a staunch resistance and successful historical struggle. Majority of the Adivasi community along with Janu counter-identifies with the entire socio-political system of the dominant group. They characterize themselves as 'bad subjects,' "by 'taking up a position' . . . of separation (distantiation, doubt, interrogation, challenge, revolt…)" as Pecheux observes (157).

The economic and physical exploitation, coupled with deprivation of habitat and subsistence economy prompted Janu to fight for the ethnic rights. A realization of this exploitation and futility of the laws of the government led her to rise for the tribes. In fact this realization can be related to the context of the ongoing individuation process in her. The study traces in an emic perspective, the steady and gradual rise of Janu as a tribal leader and also the process of individuation which is the potential but regressive undercurrent that plays the key role. Individuation is an ongoing process that takes an individual to achieve as much wholeness as possible. As suggested by Jung, whoever, in any age or condition, is prepared to heed and respond to their spiritual and fundamental human drive, is prepared for the process of individuation. But the process of individuation in people like Janu seems problematic as aforementioned. She is in fact nullified to dis-individuation by the dominant system. Her inferior positioning is shared by the way she

addresses herself as 'adiyan,'[3] before the Jenmi; an indication of her symbolic nullification. It is from such a nullified condition that she listens to her inner individuation and potential to rise to the status of a tribal leader.

Janu began her life as a daughter of the forest. She bestows her trust upon the forest as her own mother. The tribals depended on forest for all their basic needs. She says that, "in the forest one never knew what hunger was" (2). All her life and thoughts revolved around forest. They looked out to forest not only for food and shelter but also for all kinds of entertainment. She says, "we would sit for hours, listening to what the forests mumbled" (3). After grazing the cattle till evening, they go to bamboo groves and "cut pieces of young bamboo reeds to make chini. We could make music by blowing into it" (7). Janu's autobiography gives a detailed description of her childhood in the forest. She beautifully describes how she used to go to ridges to pick 'chappa,' graze cattles, roam aimlessly in the wood, and pluck wild fruits. That was a life full of happiness to her.

Janu travelled out of the forest at the age of nine, when she was appointed as a maid in Mary Kutty teacher's house in Vellamunda where her job was to look after the teacher's daughter. It was then that she saw roads, vehicles, houses, well dressed people, buses, and noise of motor pumps, smell of chemicals and much more for the first time. She enjoyed a totally different

---

[3]   "They are truthful and trustworthy and do not run away from their employers like the Paniyars. They are to be found only in the amsams of Vemom, Tirunelli, Kupathode and Puthadi and as agricultural labourers they are very useful" (Nair 99).

ambience at the teacher's house. Rice served in plates, kerosene to light lamps, painted pots, tiled floor and other household articles in and around that house became a new experience to her. She listened to radio, travelled in bus, watched movies in theatre, and wore new dresses at the teacher's house. All these were totally different experiences for her. For the first time in her life, she saw herself in the mirror. Until that age she had not seen an image of her own as there was no mirror at her home in the forest. "in my childhood, there were no mirrors at home, and there was no such tradition either. i saw a mirror for the first time when I went to Vellamunda as a maid to look after a baby. it had a wooden handle"(55-56). She identifies her visual gestalt in the mirror. Once when she returned home, she saw a small mirror stuck at her home. It was a broken mirror and she could only see her fragmented image in it. "I never knew who stuck that piece of mirror to the wall like a seed. because it was tiny, it was not possible to see myself fully in it. it could show me only in fragments." (56). This image seen in fragments serves as a door for her to a retrospective reconstruction of the self. It is in the mirror stage that a child identifies its lack and displaces its dependence on mother. This crucial juncture provides a child the "promise or anticipation of (self) mastery and control the subject lacks" (Gorsz 32). In fact, the mirror stage renders the child a platform to be self-reliant. Janu's visualization of herself in fragments is the recognition of 'lack,' which would help her to search for her identity just as a child in the mirror stage who is "propelled into its identificatory

relations by this first acknowledgement of lack or loss" (Gorsz 34). Her

autobiography ends with the note: "need to buy a whole mirror." (56) This is

an indication of an urge in her to view her 'self' to attain as much wholeness

as possible. Individuation is an ongoing process in one's life to gain as much

wholeness as possible by developing self reflection, self awareness, and

knowledge of one's own true nature. Janu's urge to view her whole image in

the mirror can be seen as a symbolic representation of such an attempt

towards individuation.

> According to the classical Jungian precept:
>
> Individuation is a spiritual undertaking. It is the conscious response to
> an instinct not recognized in biological thought, an innate and powerful
> drive toward spiritual realization and ultimate meaning. As such, it
> involves the whole person, who, in the process of emerging into
> wholeness is progressively transformed- not into something different,
> but into the true self: out of its potential and into its reality. Whoever,
> in any age or condition, is prepared to heed and respond to this
> spiritual and fundamentally human drive, is prepared for the process of
> individuation. (Hart 99-100)

Janu begins her tortuous individuation process from a nullified existence to

recognize the primordial 'I' in her. As Tom Thomas observes, "Her narrative

ends with a desire to know herself more" (232). In Jung's words, everyone is

invited but a few arrive at individuation. An individual who fulfills the goal of

individuation gains– psychic totality, recognition and resolution of inner

conflicts, conscious and unconscious complexes, awareness of self division–

which brings in the ability to develop self reflection, self awareness,

knowledge of one's own nature, new kind of freedom, ability to acknowledge

one's aspects of personality, personal meaning, ability to disidentify with the

constructed aspects of personality and so on. In order to freely individuate to

various stages of wholeness, a favorable atmosphere is essential. As Goldberg

argues, "the universal sameness" is important for the liberal self for self-

realization (6). But Janu had to survive in a setting where upliftment and

liberal ideology were laced with covert racism and overt forms of

discriminations. In such an unfavorable condition, where a person is afforded

little space for survival, it would be out of question to recognize the inner

human drive to individuate. However, we see in Janu a daringness to beat all

odds to individuate and re-individuate to attain her goal.

It is for this reason that Thomas wrote, "No political history of Kerala

can be written bypassing her" (Thomas 233). In a political scenario where the

majoritarian interest is taken as the social consensus, it is difficult to fight

against the dominant order. The civil society or the mainstream is considered

as representing a standard format to which every member is obliged to fit in.

Nevertheless, "No universally agreed definition of 'minority' exists at the

present time precisely because the 'problem of minorities' often manifests itself in efforts to distinguish between those who belong to a political community and those who do not" (Preece 9). So Adivasi ethnic minority can be called "political outsiders," as noted by Preece (9). It is at this juncture that Janu launched her struggles to redefine the concept of majoritarian consensus. As the majoritarianism tries to de-individuate her, Janu individuates herself from the status of an unknown illiterate woman to a leader who re-individuates to resist the atrocities against the muted group. Janu, who thus embarked on individuation, could "gain a whole sense of community"(Ulanov 305). The drive behind this individuation is the thrust exerted by her communal feeling, something which Jung described as 'kinship.' Tom Thomas observes: "The autobiographical narration of Janu is not merely a retrospective summation of past events and experiences. She genuinely wishes to change the condition of the community to which she belongs" (232).

Individuation, as I repeatedly stressed in this study, is about the awareness of self. Jung refers to the potential condition of wholeness and development of the self as the ultimate but elusive goal of the psyche's individuation process.

The self acts as an unconscious source of community. Awareness of the self shifts our focus from the private to the shared, or to put it more

accurately, to the inevitable mixture of the public in the private, of the

collective in the individual, of the universal in the idiosyncratic.

(Ulanov 305)

This kind of individuation is evident in Janu's orature where she reveals her

desire to "position herself in a more liberated future, not only for her own

personal benefit, but for the welfare of her community as a whole" (Thomas

232).

Undoubtedly, it is the ongoing process of individuation that stabilizes

Janu to move forward resisting the established majoritarian consensus, and

other interpellative forces. Her growth as a literacy instructor, member of the

Communist Party of India- Marxist, and above all as a tribal leader and

spokesperson of Adivasi ethnic group exemplifies the process. She

represented India in many international conferences, and worked for Adivasi

Vikasana Pravarthaka Samiti and *Karshaka Sangam*. In 1994 she declined the

award for the best scheduled tribe social worker, as the government was

negligent towards the demands of the tribal populace. "Janu is a symbol that

defies conventional right/left dichotomies" (Thomas 232). The historical

struggles of Adivasis under the leadership of Janu in 2001 and 2003 are

examples. Janu's struggles and individuation are ongoing. She continues to

fight for the lost land, culture and rights of the Adivasi community. She notes:

However, if the tradition of working on the land is preserved, the

difficulties of our people would be removed. The right to live on the

land, for claiming ownership of the land for its rightful owners, led to

all the strikes and movements. The systems of land ownership in

mainstream society, their ways and ideas and the systems necessary for

our community are different. That is why for our existence on earth,

we had to fight the governmental powers. (*Bhashaposhini* 214)

Analyzed from an etic perspective, the individuation process motivates Janu

to counter-identify (thereby becoming a 'bad subject') and rise to the status of

an Adivasi spokesperson. The dominant culture that penetrates into the

Adivasi ethnic life scenario as part of the development schemes introduced by

the government, works to transform individuals into a group of literate, well

dressed and disciplined people who stick on to formative standards and

perceptions. This domestication process goes on as long as the Adivasis

continue to remain unabsorbed in the mainstream body politics. The

Muthanga incident[4] was a concrete example. In fact, the nation tries to

bulldoze the ethnic groups into conformity with the mainstream culture, and

this triggers the process of hailing- the operation of interpellation. This

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[4] "In 2003, protesting against the inaction of the Government in fulfilling the promises made in the agreement, the tribal people led by Janu encroached upon a reserve forest in muthanga in Wayanad District of Keralam and established a tribal settlement. The police action to evacuate the area executed on 19 February 2003 resulted in the death of a policeman and a tribal" (58).

operation aims at constructing concrete pliable subjects by transforming concrete individuals.

The people of the ethnic community are hailed as 'slaves.' This exemplifies the interpellative mechanisms of the dominant society. The tribals accept their offered subject position by responding to their masters as 'adiyan,' without consciously recognizing the subjugation behind such a response. The identity of a subject is determined by hailing and the 'adiayans' heed to their subjecthood as slaves before their master/Jenmi or other immigrant settlers. Most of the tribals submit themselves to accepting subjugation instead of confronting the issues that haunt them on a daily basis. Thus Adivasi ethnic groups are eternally interpellated as the 'other.' However, Janu individuates to counter-identify with this constructed subjecthood.

As the autobiographical note ends, we see Janu disidentifying with the constructed aspects of her own personality. Her autobiographical account ends with a strong desire to know more about her own self, an indication of the individuation process:

> when i came back from vellamunda i found a piece of mirror stuck
> with some dung on the back wall of our hut. a tiny little piece of
> mirror. we preserve our seed like this, stuck to our walls with dung. i
> never knew who stuck that piece of mirror to the wall like a seed.

because it was tiny, it was not possible to see myself fully in it. it could

show me only in fragments. need to buy a whole mirror. (56)

While many are not cognizant of the drive of individuation in themselves,

Janu individuates to counter-identify and re-individuates to disidentify with

the established norms and ideologies.

Chapter IV

Beatrice Culleton Mosionier: Unmasking the Mask

Take up the White Man's burden-

Send forth the best ye breed-

Go bind your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need;

To wait in heavy harness

On fluttered folk and wild-

Your new-caught sullen peoples,

Half devil and half child.

Rudyard Kipling

Sharp inequalities prevail in colonial societies due the purported superiority of the white colonizers and the ideological gulf between the whites and the natives. The ranking of the whites as superior equipped them to interpellate and civilize the natives- "half devil and half child," as quoted above. They are 'half devil' natives in the sense that they counter-identify with the dominant discourse, and referred to as 'half child' because some of its members are submissive 'good subjects' who identify with the dominant discourse. This chapter explores the life of a Canadian minority ethnic group called Métis often referred to as half-breeds due to their mixed origin- half native Canadian and half Euro Canadian.

Ethnic autobiographies of women depict the doubly marginal existence and constant search for a third space as they encounter double assault- gender biased marginalization and ethnic discrimination. Their autobiographical narratives are a representation of their struggles and hardships to carve out a new/third space where they can survive as autonomous individuals.

Aborigine is a generic term used to refer to people who inhabited the land before the settlers colonized the region. The Canadian aborigines are collectively referred to as 'First Nations' and are considered as a minority ethnic group. The ethno-cultural diversity and racial differences brought in via colonization made Canadian society pluralistic consisting mainly of the dominant white settlers and the non-white native population. The European settlers are considered as whites and the ethnic aborigines are considered as non-whites. A mixed race of the whites and non-whites is Métis. It is their mixed origin that gave them the appellation 'half breeds.' They are a minority ethnic group in Canada. Métis along with other non-whites and natives have undergone a long history of colonial oppression and racism. Despite its much vaunted claims of being a mosaic of cultures and ethnicities, official Canadian policies are largely aimed at ensuring conformity to the dominant Anglo-Saxon ethos. And so the native ethnic groups are bulldozed to conform to the normative standards and perceptions of the mainstream society and its hegemonic values. The heterogeneous native culture that encompasses a variety of languages, religious beliefs, customs, practices, values and norms

are often neglected or overlooked. In order to erase pluralism they are forced

to interpellate and homogenize with the mainstream. During colonization, the

white settlers encroached upon their lands and the natives were forced to

relocate to different geographical locations. Their socio-cultural existence was

jeopardized mercilessly and this developed in them, repulsion and repugnance

towards the settlers. Physical relocations resulted in psychological

dislocations as well. However, the occupational prestige, affluence, high

status and other superficial factors attracted some of the members of the

ethnic group that they tried to conceal their traditional ethnic status and

integrate with the white community. Nevertheless, the white settlers showed

an unsympathetic and unaccommodating attitude towards the natives. Maria

Campbell explains the confiscation of land and properties by the settlers.

Consequently they "became squatters on their land and were eventually run

off by the new owners" (Campbell 13). The nation's indigenous past revolves

around the cultural history of the natives. Despite their contributions to the

nation, the native ethnic people are stamped as uncivilized aborigines.

Campbell notes:

> That generation of people was completely beaten. Their fathers had
>
> failed during the rebellion to make a dream come true; they failed as
>
> farmers; now there was nothing left. Their way of life was a part of
>
> Canada's past and they saw no place in the world around them, for
>
> they believed they had nothing to offer. (13)

Most of them were deracinated from their own lands.

This chapter analyses the life of Canadian aborigines and their levels of assimilation- positive or strong assimilation and reverse assimilation. Positive assimilation is attained by acculturation and integration with the dominant discourse, thereby interpellating as 'good subjects.' Reverse assimilation is attained by resisting the coercion of interpellation and asserting the drive of individuation, thereby revitalizing their ethnicity.

The Canadian aboriginal ethnic writings mark the quest for justice and cultural acceptance. The aboriginal writers claim that "As native people, we are different but we are not less" (Isaacs 191). Some of the mainstream Canadian writings represent the ethnic groups as superstitious and irrational people. While many contemporary texts make a misrepresentation of native people and their stories, Culleton depicts the harsh realities of aboriginal life through *In Search of April Raintree*.

Culleton hails from a dysfunctional Métis family background and underwent bitter foster home experiences. She was born in St. Boniface, Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1949 as the youngest of four siblings. Culleton's own experiences led her to delve into the traumatic disintegration of Métis families. Culleton is a traumatized author who tries to re-memorize[1] and understand the traumatic experiences at foster homes. She describes her

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[1]   Re-memory is a term used by Toni Morrison to mark the re-representation of the past self.

autobiographical writing as a therapeutic exercise in one of her interviews with Harmut Lutz. *In Search of April Raintree* deals with the lives of two Métis sisters, their search for identity and the complex ramifications of their difficult childhood. The traumatic childhood foster home experiences led to the death of Culleton's siblings- Vivian and Cathy. The semi autobiographical work brings into limelight, the bitter foster home experiences of Culleton herself and her siblings. Her work is a strong and determined voice of protest despite the painful physical, cultural and psychological harassments she had to suffer as a child. She is one of the first indigenous writers of Canada who juxtaposed the aborigines' condition of being forced into assimilation and acculturation on one hand and exposed to discrimination and neglect on the other.

In Search of April Raintree belongs to the genre, fictional autobiography. It is an account of Culleton's own life through her alter ego- April Raintree- the main character in the novel. Culleton chronicles eighteen years of her foster home experiences, that is from six to twenty four years through the character April. Focusing on the psychological growth and development of April, the narrative aims at bringing the attention of urban Canada towards social and psychological marginality of the natives.

In Search of April Raintree is an account of re-representation of the forgotten self. She stated thus about the impetus behind the book:

I decided to write the book after the second suicide of a member of my

family. . . . Both my sisters committed suicide at different times, and I

just decided that I was going to write a book after the second one. And

what I would use in the book was what had affected our lives. And part

of that was being raised in foster homes, because of the alcoholism of

my parents. I think the effect of growing up today, all these Native

people growing up in urban Canada today, is that there is a lot of

pressure on you to assimilate and forget totally what you are as a

person, what your heritage is . . . . So it was after the second suicide

that I really thought, "Why are my family members alcoholics?" And

"Why do we have so many problems?" (Lutz 98-99)

"Ethnic life writing" through re-memory is a route to self recognition or self

actualization which is synonymous to individuation (Sandten 308). Culleton

re-memorises and re-represents her life through *In Search of April Raintree* to

achieve individuation and re-individuation that pave the way towards a

liberated self identity.

The European cultural and economic invasion thwarted the inherent

ethno-cultural strands of the natives. As April Raintree says, "White

Superiority had conquered in the end" (87). The colonial discourse portrays

the aborigines as ruthless and barbaric savages; while at the same time

exhibiting a kind of sympathy towards the natives. Quoting Alan Smith,

Barsh states that they "derive satisfaction from the fact that they were sympathetic with the displaced while at the same time enabling them to feel superior" (274). With the noble mission of transforming the aborigines to civilized Canadians, the "settlers strove to transform the continent into a facsimile of the material comforts that many of them had left behind or been denied, in their home countries" (Barsh 273). Thus Canadian civilization is a conflict between "a sense of European cultural and intellectual superiority and the depressing human toll of Aboriginal peoples' dispossession," states Barsh (273). Daniel Francis notes that there remains "an ambivalence at the heart of our understanding of what Canadian civilization is all about" (223).

The constitutional act of 1982 categorizes the aboriginal people of Canada into three groups namely, Indian, Inuit and Métis. *In Search of April Raintree* offers a counter history of the Métis life. Through the life of two Métis sisters- April and Cheryl Raintree, Culleton chronicles the native Indian life and culture, particularly Métis, in the text.

Métis in French means 'mixed.' The Métis came into being from the clash and mixing of two distinct cultures. Raintrees were a mixed race family often addressed as 'half-breeds,' a term now considered derogatory. April's mother had an Irish Ojibway ancestry and her father had a Native American lineage. "Being a half-breed meant poor and dirty. It meant being weak and having to drink. It meant being ugly and stupid. It meant living off white

people. And giving your children to white people to look after. It meant having to take all the crap white people gave" (47). Cheryl out of hatred says in one of her letters, "It makes me wish those white men had never come here. But then we would not have been born" (78). Métis ethnicity revolves around a life caught between the whites and the natives.

The nation and the dominant society consider it their responsibility to mould and civilize the sub-nation to the expected standards. However, the sub-nation may not always allow itself to be interpellated. A large chunk of the minority communities always resists the process of integration. As the term itself suggests, a total assimilation where both the nation and sub-nation share equal rights is an illusion. Assimilation becomes problematic in case of the subalterns. As mentioned in *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity and Culture*:

> Assimilation was first applied by French and Portuguese colonial systems in Africa to the relationships between populations and cultures. The basic assumption was that colonized peoples could become citizens of the colonizing state- acquiring official citizenship – provided they have a certain income, a good level of education, a good knowledge of the language and that they kept a standard of behavior adequate to the status of citizenship under consideration. (Bolaffi 19)

Uprooting of aboriginal children from their own homes and raising them at foster homes is a strategy advocated by the Canadian government for

introducing homogenous citizenship through assimilation. It is a model of

assimilation and it aims at molding the children to become 'good citizens/

good subjects' of the nation who would abide by its laws and protocols.

> The model of assimilation is a precise political strategy which intends
>
> to keep the national community as homogeneous as possible by
>
> endeavouring to ensure that the same basic values are shared by the
>
> whole population. Implementation of a model of assimilation sees the
>
> host country set up specific policies to assimilate newcomers and thus
>
> encourage them to become citizens. (Bolaffi 19)

However, these models of assimilation might not always prove successful due

to the unwillingness of certain ethnic minorities to relinquish their ethnic

culture. At the same time some members are easily amenable and they

undergo interpellation-identification with the dominant discourse or

mainstream culture.

Residential schools were introduced in Canada under the Child

Welfare Policy for First Nations as part of missionary endeavors since 1860s.

Their avowed aim was civilizing the natives. Education was provided by the

church with an operating grant from the federal government. The response of

the First Nation towards their children's education was positive but soon they

realized that it was not necessarily a step towards treating them on par with

the whites. In 1904, Clifford Sifton (Minister of Indian Affairs) was

categorical in his assertion about the innate intellectual inferiority of the native children. He says: "I have no hesitation in saying – we may as well be frank- that the Indian cannot go out from school, making his own way and competing with the white man… He has not the physical, mental or moral get up to enable him to compete. He cannot do it" (qtd. in Armitage 104). The residential schools existed in Canada till 1960s.

The concept of the residential school system was later replaced by Children's Aid Society, principally due to pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other epidemics to which the children were exposed to at the dormitories in the residential schools. There were substantial discussions for the welfare of the aboriginal children and the federal government decided to provide services through provinces. The provincial child welfare agencies separated children from their parents and entrusted them to the care of white foster families.

> The impact of the adoption program on the First Nations families and children was also substantial. This program operated, principally, without the voluntary consent usually required in the non aboriginal community. Typically children would be removed from their parents at birth, be declared children in care, and then the provincial child welfare agency would apply to the court to waive adoption consent. (Armitage 115)

Without any regard to the differences of culture, ethnicity or history, the children were forcefully sent to families of various cultural backgrounds. It was assumed that ethnicity carried much less importance compared to the physical health, diet, housing and so on. Foster parents capable of meeting the daily needs and providing a healthy environment to grow and live were considered competent than the aboriginal parents. The objective of the government was to create a generation of concrete 'good subjects' for the future nation. The foster homes became crucibles of assimilation; a chain of melting pots that sought to produce homogeneity and conformity.

Needless to say, the paternalistic approach of the government exposed the children to discrimination and racial prejudices in their foster homes. The child welfare system exerted greater pressure on children than the residential schools to assimilate and acculturate into mainstream culture. The basic privileges of love and care were denied to the kids as they were uprooted from their parental homes. The residential schools did offer companionship and meeting platforms with their siblings and annual return to their homes and parents. But such opportunities were denied in the foster home system of Child Welfare Policy. A true picture of this trauma is stated by Andrew Armitage:

> The children were isolated from each other, usually losing contact even with their brothers and sisters. They were caught in the system not

because they were First Nations children but their parents had been

judged by social workers and a court to have treated them in an abusive

or negligent manner. There was no promise of return to their home

communities and people. Immense pressure was put on them to forget

all those things which made them First Nations persons. No wonder

that the records of First Nations children in foster homes and adoption

homes contain repeated stories of the attempts of the children to scrub

the brown color off their skins. It was the color which made them

different, and, in some way which they could not understand,

unacceptable. (121)

Culleton challenges the notion that "Canadian society is not racist," by

illustrating the traumatic experiences of April and Cheryl (Kateri 103). The

agents of the dominant ideology highlight the majoritarian culture as much

superior. April at one point notes, "And white people, well, they've convinced

each other they are the superior race, and you can see they are responsible for

the progress we have today" (142). The coercive interpellation works to reject

the aboriginal ethnic culture in favor of the superior culture. In spite of the

efforts laid on for assimilation, racist attitude prevails among the urban

Canadians. The aboriginal brown skin visibly differentiated them from the

whites. Though both April and Cheryl are victims of racial discrimination,

Cheryl the darker skinned younger sister is a greater victim of this

chromatism. April, on the other hand, camouflages as a white, thanks to her fairer skin tone.

> And, with all this pressure, assimilation may have 'succeeded' had it not been for mainstream Canadians' racist attitude toward people who were visibly of First Nations descent. It was their visibility which prevented many First Nations people from being accepted in mainstream society and which, consequently, made it impossible for them to assimilate. (Armitage121)

Cheryl was unmistakably different from the whites in her outlook. Cheryl's relationship with Garth and his rebuff of her due to her appearance exemplifies the harsh reality of racism. Garth was hesitant to introduce her as his partner. She later reluctantly tells her sister, "He didn't want them to know about me. That hypocrite! He's ashamed of me" (79).

"Race remains a potent basis for identity- our sense of sameness and difference" (Bilton 164). Race and ethnicity are at times mistaken. Race is the biological difference based on skin color where as ethnicity is the sense of belonging to a particular culture or tradition. Isajiw defines ethnicity as "a group or category of persons who have a common ancestral origin and the same cultural traits, who have a sense of people hood and a group belonging, . . . and have either minority or majority status within a larger society" (118). It is ironic that Cheryl is often mistaken as a native Canadian though she was

Métis, due to her darker skin tone. Since the major maker of difference is

color, Cheryl does not get any privilege of even a Métis.

> The race-specific irony, then, insists on dividing Canadians into whites
>
> and non-whites, as opposed to dividing them according to their
>
> ethnicity. The major marker is colour, as opposed to ethno-cultural
>
> diversity. It is so because colour, at least from the perspective of non-
>
> white Canadians, is a codification of privilege. Therefore, colour and
>
> colour coding, became major carriers of ironies in the literature of non-
>
> white Canadians. (Mukherjee 71)

This race-specific irony prevents April in the initial phase of her life, from

accepting Cheryl's sisterhood in public. She tries to hide her partial Indian

identity by disowning her darker skinned younger sister to her acquaintances

and friends. She says, "I credited my ability to make friends easily to the fact

that none of them knew I was part Indian" (82). She feared that the discovery

of her dark skinned sister would reveal her Métis lineage. Fearing racist

backlash, she tried to conceal her kinship: "I didn't want anyone at work to

see her, to know she was my sister. Even now I knew this wouldn't change

me. I would continue to walk the five blocks or so at lunch time, so I could

meet her where she was already accepted" (79).

As a means of integration and identification with the nation, the

minority groups are forced to renounce their identity. The Euro Canadian

society exerts its superior cultural power upon the native Canadians and Métis to erase indigeneity and to establish a homogeneous culture. The coercion of interpellation works to wipe out the ethnic culture completely. The efforts to bring in homogeneity exacerbate tension between the ethnic group and the nation. There arises a conflict between the white's supposed cultural superiority and aborigine's ethnic belongingness.

Ethnic identity is a socio-psychological phenomenon. *In Search of April Raintree* is Culleton's journey in search of her own original identity from which she was trying to run away. The native Canadians lack a concrete cultural status due to adoption into foster care homes and forced assimilation. Their ethnic identity is aborted without their consent and knowledge. They themselves develop a sense of negation towards their ethnic identity as they are stamped uncivilized on account of alcoholism, child abuse, violence, rape, poverty and so on. Nonetheless, some of its members individuate to restore and revitalize their aboriginal sensibility resisting the interpellative forces of the hegemonic culture. Cheryl who counter-identifies with the dominant ideologies is an example. Culleton's growth to the status of an ethnic writer, accepting her ethnic identity also exemplifies the same process.

April and Cheryl were forcefully taken away from their parents to foster homes. "Frantically I screamed, 'Mommy, please don't make us go. Please, Mommy? We want to stay with you. Please don't make us go'" (8).

Mother herself had no choice but to give away her children as decided by the officials. The aboriginal parents were considered incompetent to raise their children. Though the non-aboriginal families were equally accused of alcoholism, their children were not separated from their parents. But the aboriginal parents who were alleged of parental negligence and alcoholism were forced to hand over their children. Alice, the mother of April and Cheryl resigns to her fate and sends her children off to the "grasping hands of the social workers" (18). Alice later commits suicide. The comparatively high prevalence diseases and premature death among aboriginal children draw the attention of the social workers who come to separate them from their parents to help them grow in better circumstances. It was Anna's ill health and malnutrition that caught the attention of social workers. Anna was the little sister of April and Cheryl. Social workers took away April and Cheryl with them but neglected infant Anna's health and did not take any step to save her life.

The separation from parents, parents' abusive alcoholism, exploitation at foster homes, shabby lifestyle, and racism made the life of the Métis sisters miserable. Desperation, negligence and lack of love and affection form the gamut of Métis childhood. As the children are separated from their parents they are deprived of security, love and guidance. Quoting Chris Bagley, an expert in the field of Child Welfare, Patrick Johnson states that "separation from parents – even from supposedly 'bad' or 'abusing' parents – has

profound, negative and sometimes disastrous psychological consequences for a child" (59). Apart from this, they are exposed to new forms of cultural malaise as they move to the urban areas. They are stigmatized as natives and are treated as 'other' in their foster homes.

The Raintree sisters are forcefully separated and transferred from one foster home to the other as per the orders from the Children's Aid. April and Cheryl were handed over from one social worker to the other and also from one foster home to another. As kids they were initially taken away by Mrs. Grey, and then handed over to Mrs Semple, Miss. Turner and Mr. Wendell. They took them to different foster care homes of Dions,' DeRosiers,' and Steindalls.' They had to live with different families from different cultural backgrounds and in different locations.

As noted by Janice Acoose, the foster home children suffer "cultural malnourishment" (qtd. in Smulders 230). At Dions' April is introduced to Roman Catholicism, while at De-Rosiers,' she is exposed to a very impious life. Mrs. De-Rosier forces her to earn and subjects her to domestic violence. At times foster homes became a hub for missionary activities. Influenced by Dions, April cultivates strong faith by attending mass at church and begins to fear about the salvation of her parents who remain "sinners." This indicates how the foster homes become a medium to interpellate children as ideal subjects of dominant religious practices. The foster parents receive a stipend

from the federal government to look after the kids. However, foster parents like Dions enslave the children and assign them tough domestic duties. In many instances, violence is exercised by women in foster homes. Social workers, teachers, cruel foster parents etc. in *In Search of April Raintree* are mostly female characters. The powerlessness of an aboriginal woman while encountering a Euro Canadian woman is portrayed in the episode in which Alice gives away her children to the social workers. Alice, in spite of an Irish ancestry is treated as an incompetent aboriginal mother as her husband Henry Raintree was of native ancestry.

Despite the hardships at the foster homes, the sisters contact each other through monthly visits and exchange of letters. However, this bond shows signs of fading as they grow older. They are destined to take two different paths.

April was light skinned and Cheryl rather dark complexioned. While April tried to hide her Métis lineage, Cheryl proudly proclaimed her identity as a Métis and worked for the rights of the Métis and native community. Cheryl counter-identifies with the Euro Canadian ideology and remains inassimilable. April on the other hand, is torn between the two ends of the whites and the natives, and she exclaims that, "It would be better to be full-blooded Indian or full-blooded Caucasian. But being a half-breed, well, there is just nothing there. . . . But what have the Metis people got? Nothing. Being

a half-breed, you feel only the shortcomings of both sides" (142). April tries

to identify with the whites and follows their standard of living in the initial

phase of her life.

Mrs. De Rosier addresses April as half-breed. "I know you half-breeds.

You love to wallow in filth. You step out of line once, only once, and that

strap will do the rest of the talking. You don't get any second chances" (37).

On another occasion, Maggie the daughter of De-Rosiers calls her a "Lazy

half-breed" (39). Mrs. Semple makes this scathing remark about native girls:

> . . . and you girls are all headed in that direction. It starts out with the
>
> fighting, the running away, the lies. Next comes the accusations that
>
> everyone in the world is against you. They are the sullen uncooperative
>
> silences, the feeling sorry for yourselves. And when you go on your
>
> own you get pregnant right away, or you can't find or keep jobs. So
>
> you will start with alcohol and drugs. From there you get into shop
>
> lifting and prostitution, and in and out of jails. You will live with men
>
> who abuse you. And on it goes. You will end up like your parents,
>
> living off society. (62)

Mrs. Semple calls it a "native girl syndrome" (62). April was chided and

whipped and had to endure many physical tortures at the De Rosier's. Foster

home experiences meant for child welfare in effect became little better than

hell. In order to obliterate her memory of these harassments and "two sided

complexity," of being a white or native; April accepts subjection. She embraces the mode of interpellation-identification with the dominant ideology and tries to integrate fully with the white society. She keeps on reassuring herself that she could assimilate with the white society and escape discriminations. "Knowing the other side, the Métis side, didn't make me feel any better. It just reinforced my belief that if I could assimilate myself into white society, I wouldn't have to live this way for the rest of my life" (78). She tries to see the brighter side of the white society in order to escape the harsh realities of marginalization. She plans to camouflage as a white woman by misappropriating her name as 'Raintry' because 'Raintree' is a common Indian name. She believes that if she changed the spelling of her name, she could pass for Irish. It was better to be someone else than to be Métis since she was always hailed and labelled as a disrespectful Indian and scorned as a half-breed. "No one at school would talk to me or play with me. They call me names and things, or else they make like I'm not there at all" (43). She proceeds to identify with the whites by repressing and concealing her ethnic legacy under her white skin. She undertakes the identification mode initially, unlike Cheryl who counter-identifies since her very childhood. As a child and teenager, April always wanted to escape from her original identity. However, she is often confronted with a dilemma of whether to be a white or native. She asks Cheryl, "How do you do it Cheryl? How is it that you are so proud when there is so much against being a native person?" (49). Caught in the quagmire

of constant discrimination and disrespect, she is clueless as to whether she should think of rekindling the active instinct in her for her native tradition and people, or merely run away to a far away land where nobody would recognize her as a Métis.

The inner psychological turmoil of choosing between being a white or Métis haunts her, throughout. An ideology of the white culture is forced upon her through the medium of education, and city life. Either she has to accept the ideology of the whites and live a 'white life' or courageously accept her Métis lineage like her sister, Cheryl. If she blindly followed the white world accepting all that was taught to her at school about her lineage and history, she could live the life of a camouflaged white. Although, awareness about the prevailing class distinction prompts her to safeguard her identity as a 'good subject' by presenting herself as an elite white woman, there is always a direct encounter in her unconscious mind between the forced ideology of the white society and her inherent Métis lineage.

The inferiority complex engendered by stigmatization forces April to camouflage her ethic identity and remold herself as a 'white' Canadian. Unlike Cheryl, she initially mutes her resistance. The novel presents a number of instances of interpellation-identification mode as described by Michel Pecheux.

Pecheux's second mode of subjective operation, 'counter-identification' represents instances wherein an individual denounces the dominant discourse. Cheryl counter-identifies and denounces the white ideologies taught at school, shattering all the acculturative efforts undertaken by the educational institutions and Children's Aid Society. More subtle forms of the same process can be identified in the narratives in which the speaker privately expresses an "uneasy sense of standing under a sign to which one does and doesn't belong" (Butler 219). Cheryl's uneasiness to sustain herself according to the rhythm of the whites can be detected in her firm announcement to April, "And I decided that I was going to do what I could to turn the native image around so that one day you could be proud of being Métis" (102). Cheryl values the native history and stands adamant in upholding the beauty of her culture. While April moves to Toronto, she chooses to remain in Winnipeg to continue her school and pursue her dream of revolutionizing the world's view of the native culture and people.

Cheryl stands firm in rooting her identity as Métis and proudly flaunts it. She questions the white ideology, shouts at the teacher who explained in a history class about how the Indians massacred the brave white explorers and missionaries. She exclaims:

‘This is all a bunch of lies!’... I'm not going to learn this garbage about the Indian people... ‘If this is history, how come so many Indian tribes

were wiped out? How come have they haven't got their land anymore? How come their food supplies were wiped out? Lies! Lies! Lies! Your history books don't say how the white people destroyed the Indian way of life. That's all you white people can do is teach a bunch of lies to cover your own tracks!' (53- 54).

Cheryl has internalized the Métis culture and dares to openly flaunt it. This is the reason why she says, "They are wrong. Because it was written by white men who had a lot to cover up. And I'm not going to learn a bunch of lies" (54). By internalizing the values of her Métis culture, she counter-identifies with the urban Canadian ideology. She counter-identifies, fighting against the dominant ideology and identifies with the Métis lineage. She tells April, "Me, I've been identifying with the Indian people ever since I was a kid" (55). She represents a number of instances of counter-identification in the text. Her controversial piece of writing- an essay/a speech excerpt appreciating buffalo hunting and Riel is an example of counter-identification. She explicitly rejects the dominant social discourse and explains how the colonizers confiscated the land and exploited the natives. All her letters to April were about Métis life and history written with great pride. She wrote of the Métis hunters, 'running the buffalo,' Métis wars against settlers, Riel and so forth, with great enthusiasm. Unlike her sister, she couldn't think of disowning her parents: "No! They're our parents, April! And we're not orphans" (84). She plans to look out for her parents who were forcefully separated from them.

Cheryl dreams of being a good social worker to work for the uplift of children belonging to her community and also to rebuild her lost family. Cheryl dreams of being an Indian by uniting with her family. She tells April:

> Well, I used to think that when Mom and Dad got better and took us back, we could move to the B. C. Rockies and live like olden-day Indians. We'd live near a lake and we'd build our own log cabin with a big fireplace. And we wouldn't have electricity probably. We'd have lots and lots of books. We'd have dogs and horses, and we'd make friends with the wild animals. We'd go fishing and hunting, grow our own garden and chop our wood for winter. And we wouldn't meet people who were always trying to put us down. We'd be so happy. Do you think that would ever be possible, April? (83)

In her letters to April, Cheryl coaxes eloquent about their lineage and culture. She writes essays on 'Riel and the Red River Insurrection.' She questions the official history for its biased views:

> Nothing those tribes ever did to each other matches what the whites have done to them. Whoa, there, Cheryl. You probably don't agree with me, do you, April? But History should be an unbiased representation of the facts. And if they show one side, they ought to show the other side equally. Anyways, that's why I'm writing the

Métis side of things. I don't know what I am going to do with it but it

makes me feel good. (78)

Cheryl is quiet adept in her understandings as well as writings. She projects

cultural independence in her stand not conforming to the standards of the

whites. As Peter Barry states, being 'adept' is assuming an independent form.

A constant struggle of the colonized is visible in her character. April, on the

other hand, takes an adopt phase as she tries to alleviate the cross cultural

stress by adopting the values of the whites that has "universal validity" (Barry

195): "If only Cheryl would forget about them, forget that she was Métis. She

is so smart that she could have made it in the white world. White people have

a great respect for high intelligence" (84).

Counter-identification coupled with the process of individuation is

what drives Cheryl to a phase of self awareness. The process of individuation

involves an expanding capacity for comprehension, the individual begins

articulating his or her thoughts and ideas. The incident that happened at

school in the history class where Cheryl yelled at the teacher, as quoted above

is the best example. She develops a vivid understanding of the Métis

historical background: the encroachment of their properties and shredding of

familial ties by the settlers. She raises an unapologetic voice for Métis with

verve, a sign of active individuation process. "Individuation involves the

development of ever growing awareness of one's personal identity, with both

its 'good' and desirable qualities and ego ideals as well as its bad ,

reprehensible and 'shadow' qualities" (Gordon 267). As the process of

individuation guides her to take a defiant stance by identifying herself as a

Métis and rejecting the dominant ideologies completely, Cheryl interpellates

to be a 'bad subject,' counter-identifying with the white ideology .

Individuation gives her the strength to bring out the repressed and shadowed

notions about her ethnic past.

On the other hand, a string of bad experiences from schools and foster

homes had forced April to adopt white mannerisms. Later, she chose Bob

Radcliff, a white boy as her life partner. However, after various attempts at

assimilation and identification with the whites, April realizes the futility of

assuming the "white" mask. Despite all her attempts, the whites refuse to

accept her. She continues to be discriminated as a half-breed. April does not

receive a space of her own where she can move freely like other white

women:

> When we lived with our parents, I used to take you to the park. The
>
> white kids would call the native kids all sorts of names. If they had let
>
> us, I would have played with the white kids. Never the native kids. To
>
> me the white kids were the winners all the way. I guess what I feel
>
> today started back then. It would take an awful lot for me to be able to

change what I've felt for a life time. Shame doesn't dissolve overnight. (153)

The process of individuation takes April to a different stage after a series of events ranging from a brutal rape experience, to the inefficiency of the law to support her as a Métis, to the death of her mother and of her only sister, Cheryl and the betrayal by Bob Radcliff. The double assault- racism and rape opened her eyes to a self realization. Although she succumbs to be interpellated as a 'good subject' of the white ideology in the initial phase, she realizes that no level of assimilation will help her conceal her true roots. April who had been in search of her true soul and space since childhood evolves as an individuated woman only at this stage. Towards the end, she too becomes an espouser of Cheryl's ideology:

There was little in our conversation we hadn't discussed before, but sitting there in our tent, surrounded by proud Indians everything seemed different. . . That night we sat Indian style, around a bonfire, listening to the chanting and tales of Indian singers. Cheryl told me that was probably how it had felt on those long- ago buffalo hunts. I was impressed by all the sights and sounds. It went deeper than just hearing and seeing. I felt good. I felt alive. There were stirrings of pride, regret and even an inner peace. For the first time in my life I felt as if all of

that was part of me, as if I was a part of it. It was curious to feel that

way. (154)

In the midst of this crisis April tries to re-individuate to find a space for

herself. This is an attempt to resist from being interpellated as a good subject

of the white ideology. She begins viewing the brighter shades of the native

tradition. A deviant psychic development- the synthesis of a "new third," as

noted by Jung takes place in her case (Young-Eisendrath 233). The 'new

third' formulated by Jung is called as the 'transcendent function' in

Individuation.

Transcendent function of individuation in April drives her to take a

new turn to a unique realm of disidentification to sustain her ethnicity after

various trials of assimilation and identification. At this juncture, she neither

interpellates to be a 'good subject' by identifying with the whites, nor a 'bad

subject' by counter-identifying with the white ideologies but individuates to

be a transformed, 'transcendental new third.' Though she identifies with the

whites at the outset; in the end, she disidentifies as a re-individuated and

renewed person occupying a third space.

Only a peaceful co-existence and loyalty among each other can create a

multicultural society that can provide a political solidarity and a space of

one's own. But the lack of such an existence coupled with tug-of-war and

tension between the dominant culture and the subjugated ethnic culture takes

her to a third space. When Roger asks April about her origin and whether she was proud of being a Métis, she says that she was neither a 'full-blooded Indian nor full blooded Caucasian' but a Métis. She relates herself with her adopted brother Joe who believes that, "It's not important what others think of him. It's what he thinks of himself that counts" (143). She realizes the futility of discarding the native lineage and interpellating as a white. As Sandten notes, "Yet, April realizes how superficial life at the top is, gets a divorce, is tragically raped because she is mistaken for her sister Cheryl, and afterwards devotes herself to her true Métis identity" (311). She individuates to be a renewed and revived Métis, and becomes a mother to Cheryl's son Henry Lee:

> It was tragic that I had taken Cheryl's death to bring to me to accept my identity. But no, Cheryl had once said, "All life dies to give new life." Cheryl had died. But for Henry Lee and me, there would be a tomorrow. And it would be better. I would strive for it for my sister and her son. For my parents. For my people. (207)

April raises Henry Lee, "A part of Cheryl that still lived" (205). She undergoes the "metacognitive process" of individuation which is "the capacity to think about and entertain one's own subjective state from different perspectives" (Young-Eisendrath 233). She individuates to regain and reclaim her identity by resisting the interpellative forces. Cheryl continues to live

through April. In her final note to her sister, she says, "April, you have

strength. Dream my dreams for me. Be proud of what you are, of what you

and Henry Lee are. I belong with our mother" (207). Guided by the process of

individuation and the operations of interpellation – Counter-identification and

disidentification, the Métis sisters negotiate to consolidate their recognition as

a liberated ethnic group.

Chapter V

Maxine Hong Kingston: The (S)word Warrior

> "As soon as possible he [the white man] will tell me that it is not enough to try to be white, but that a white totality must be achieved."

Frantz Fanon

The co-existence of an ethnic group with other ethnic groups makes ethnic identity more relevant in our present day global context. Immigration brings people of different ethnic cultures together and therefore the process of immigration can be regarded as "a prime contributor to ethnicity" (Royce 108). Immigration has become common among populations since ages and the factors leading to it are many.

This chapter analyses the life of Chinese immigrants in the United States to study the Chinese American ethnic life and the push-pull factors[1] that lead them to the search of a third space. Chapter Three- *Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu* was an exploration of internal migration, i.e. the migration of urban population to the rural areas within the country. This chapter is an analysis of the ethnic immigrants/diasporas who left their homeland on a more or less permanent basis.

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[1] These are factors related to migration. The push factors are the reasons for emigration from the place of exodus. The pull factors are those elements that attract immigrants to the host land.

The twin coercions of interpellation from the homeland culture and host culture upon the ethnic diasporas and the resistive measures that they adopt to overcome it are analyzed in this chapter. The struggle of the first generation diasporas to retain ethnic succession in the adopted homeland is examined here to explore the impetus of interpellation due to ideologies of the homeland culture. This discussion of individuation and interpellation is guided by the developmental autobiography, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston.

Transnational ethnic writings reconfigure the existing notions of nation, history and identity. They become a voice for the subjugated; as "history speaks for power while literature provides a voice for the oppressed and marginalized" (Dirlik 420). These writings represent the struggle of the ethnic diasporas in a hyphenated space. In the context of Asian American diasporas, there exists a persistent struggle in the hyphenated space to achieve as much 'white totality' as possible in order to attain equal status or footing with the dominant host culture. However, this struggle will have no culmination as achieving white totality satisfying the pristine notions of America is almost impossible for the racially distinguishable minority immigrants. Therefore they remain in a state of uncertainty and indecisiveness in the host society.

The term 'Asian-American' denotes both inclusion and exclusion at the same time. It marks "the distinction installed between 'Asian' and 'American' and a dynamic, unsettled, and exclusive movement" (Palumbo-Liu 1). Asian-American diasporas are always in a state of dilemma regarding the choice of their culture.

One of the important issues observed in the case of ethnic diasporas is ethnic pride versus assimilation. While the first generation ethnic diasporas struggle to sustain their ethnic pride, the second generation shows a slight deviation from this. The latter shows an inclination towards enculturation.[2] As denizens,[3] the second generation diasporas enjoy social, political and economic rights. Nevertheless, they remain as citizen aliens. Thus the problem of immigrants' struggle to assimilate with the mainstream culture and America's constant rebuff of the immigrant minority as ethnic other continue to persist. In fact, pluralism in America is not an inherent factor of everyday life. The theories of assimilation popular in the United States such as Anglo-conformity and melting pot-ism are aimed at homogenization and not pluralism. Hence cultural pluralism fails to gain total acceptance and recognition as is illustrated by the examples of Hispanics, Asians and other minorities.

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[2]   Enculturation is the process of cultural acquisition. The individual consciously or unconsciously imbibes the contents, practices and values of a culture and assimilates with the new culture to which they are exposed.

[3]   It is a term introduced by Thomas Hammar. They are foreign citizens, not actual citizens but have legal rights of permanent residence and enjoy all social, economic and political rights.

The Woman Warrior by Kingston is an autobiographical narrative that chronicles her struggle to emerge as an individuated woman from the doctrine of *Classical Sizi,* a part of Confucian philosophy which incorporates virtues such as *Zong, Xiao, Jie,* and *Yi* corresponding to loyalty, filial piety, continence and righteousness respectively. These four virtues contributed greatly to the hierarchical order of Chinese feudal society. It confines a woman's position into an overarching male order: loyal wife, dedicated mother and dutiful daughter. Kingston's mother Brave Orchid carries with her all the virtues and values of Chinese traditions and trains her daughter to retain it throughout her life. Her girlhood was controlled by her mother's talk-stories. 'Talk- story' is an expression that Kingston uses in her work to indicate the mythical stories that her mother narrates to her (19, 20).

The Woman Warrior is a personal narrative that moves around her own story of growing up in America as a second generation diaspora. Unlike the traditional bildungsroman that solely describes the development of the protagonist from childhood into maturity, *The Woman Warrior* is Kingston's attempt to bridge the gap and to reconcile the conflicts between the two disparate cultures. "Those of us in the first American generations have had to figure out how the invisible world that emigrants build around our childhoods fit in solid America" (5). Exclusion and other tensions that she endures as a transnational ethnic woman can be seen in this remark. There are incommensurable differences between the invisible Chinese culture to which

she is exposed to via talk stories and solid America where she is born. However, Kingston like Ts'ai Yen[4] who blended the songs of barbarian reed pipe with the Chinese songs unites Chinese traditions and American culture in her writings. She thus bridges the gap between the Chinese tradition and the modern American life.

The Woman Warrior is an account of various stages of individuation in Kingston leading her to self-actualization and discovery of a 'potential third space.' This text thus serves as an ideal case study to explore the process of individuation. Kingston herself describes it as an 'I-book.' In an interview with Shirley Geok-lin Lim she says:

> I think the progression or the evolution is such that first *The Woman Warrior* is an I-book; it is self centered. I got that out of the way. It's very necessary, at least for me, to write that book in which I can establish who I am. As a writer it seems to me that growth takes place when I can put it into words. If I can say who I am, if I can say what powers I want, then I can have them. That was the function of *The Woman Warrior*: self understanding, understanding of myself in relation to my family, to my mother, my place in my community, in my society, and in the world. (158)

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4   "Ts'ai Yen"is a poetess born in A.D. 175 (206). She is a character in the last talk story in *The Woman Warrior.*

James Craig Holte states that, "there is evidence that many writers use autobiography as a means of imposing order on experiences that are disruptive and confusing" (122). He cites Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* as an example of a specific literary form imposing order on chaos. It is a fusion of fictitious images, dreadful thoughts and dreams, myths and realistic life situations, ranging from childhood memories, girlhood dreams, and youthful resistance. She harmonizes luminous fantasy and blunt reality in her writings by delving into Chinese American lives. The myths she learnt and memories she gained from Brave Orchid is mixed with the bone grinding experiences of Chinese American men at the Gold Mountain in her writings. While her earlier work *China Men* is about her male ancestors, *The Woman Warrior* speaks about her female ancestors. Kingston is noted for her works in divergent genres. She says that *The Woman Warrior* was one of her experiments with the genre. She says, "I think that *The Woman Warrior* is a mix of . . . it's got myth, and nonfiction, autobiography. I am writing about people who have wild imaginations, so I also have to use fictional techniques, and I am mixing genres" (Geok-lin Lim 161).

Ethnic writers often assume the role of outsiders when they write about their experiences in America. The autobiographical writers like Andrew Carnegie, Jacob Riis and Mary Antin followed the tradition of assimilation. On the other hand writers like Piri Thomas, Malcolm X and Black Elk pronounce their longing for their lost homeland culture and see themselves as

outsiders. However, Kingston who bridges the gap between the two cultures as a transnational writer brings out her ethnic experiences in both the etic and emic perspectives. She translates the talk stories of an 'invisible culture' into a 'solid culture' as aforementioned, in such a manner that it 'fits' in with the ethos of the host culture.

The use of term diaspora to designate ethnic minorities is problematic. However, as noted by Mackerras, if they "fit into a definition which sees diasporas as people who dwell outside their own state but maintain their own culture, then it seems to be legitimate to use the term" (17). Immigrants that go in search of jobs or migrate due to social or political upheavals in their own country live as diasporic minorities in the host country. *Huaqiao* is the term used by the Chinese to denote the Chinese diasporas. The term 'ethnic diaspora,' (to denote diasporas within another country as ethnic minorities) is handy in the sense that it helps to define the ethnic minorities as cultural minorities with certain specific demarcating features in the host land. As noted by Rey Chow:

> The presence of a Chinese diaspora in almost every part of the
> contemporary world inevitably complicates matters: these displaced
> populations, many of whom have nothing anymore to do with China,
> its languages, or its cultures, but who are nonetheless identifiable as
> Chinese, obviously problematize the grand narrative of a continuous

ethnic heritage. Yet in the controversies over cultural identity, the signs

of the times are that the diasporic is fast becoming the norm. (132-33)

Kingston's father left China in the year 1925 for America in search of a job.

He later brought his wife in 1940 and Kinston was born in Stockton,

California.

Emigration of Asians to America began since 1849 in order to escape

various conflicts in their home countries. The British Opium wars, the peasant

rebellions, "Punti" and 'Hakkas"[5] rebellion over delta lands, the Tianmen

incident etc. became reasons for waves of Chinese immigration to America

(Takaki 192). Early Chinese immigrations were in search of gold from the

'Gold Mountain.' As per records, millions of 'Chinese sojourners' lived in

America and they addressed America as the 'Gold Mountain.' Min Zhou,

Whenhong Chen and Guoxuan Cai in their essay "Chinese- language Media

and immigrant life in the United states and Canada" say that, as per the US

records, "China has been on the list of the top ten immigrant origin countries

in the United States since 1980" (42).

Unlike other Asian American or European immigrants, Chinese

Americans had to encounter severe discrimination and racism. "For instance,

citizenship was expressly forbidden to immigrants from China until the

1940s. Federal laws restricted the entrance of Chinese immigrants, and state

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[5]   "Punti" means the natives and "Hakkas" means the encroachers.

and local laws denied opportunities for education, jobs and housing to

Chinese Americans" (Healey 58). While the Page Act of 1875 prohibited the

entry of Chinese women; the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act prevented the entry

of Chinese Men. However, "[t]he country outside Asia with the largest

Chinese population is the US, the 1990 census showing a total of 1.2 million

people who spoke Chinese in home" (Mackerras 17). There is a presence of

the ethnic Chinese across the globe. As observed by a Singaporean sociologist

Chua Beng Huat they are "dispersed and disparate body of people . . .

discursively constructed as a 'diasporic community' and politically mobilized

to promote different Chinese causes" (75). The contemporary immigrants

unlike the old uneducated peasants are extremely diverse in socio-economic

backgrounds. Nevertheless, the immigration patterns of Chinese immigrants

are different from that of the European immigration pattern. The Huagong

pattern[6] (the coolie pattern), Huashang pattern[7] (the trader pattern), Huayi

pattern[8] (Re- immigrant pattern) etc. are some of the patterns of Chinese

migration as noted by Wang Gungwu.

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[6]   Huagong pattern represents the migration of large number of peasants and laborers who were landless. Chinese laborers were invited as indentured laborers as slavery was abolished in the west. These coolies suffered immense discrimination and exploitation in the United States. In order to survive they began building their own ethnic cultural space and they later named it as Chinatown. This pattern had a shorter historical life span.

[7]   Huashang pattern has a longer history as the immigrants coming under this pattern could set up their base at ports and trading cities. This pattern refers to the immigrant merchants and artisans. They maintained their Chineseness as part of their close connection to trade interests and cultural ethnicity.

[8]   The re-immigrant pattern called Huayi refers to the group including highly educated professionals such as doctors, engineers, scientists, lawyers, and business executives.

The Asian Americans including Chinese Americans are objects of a virulent strain of American racism. This hostility hampers their assimilation into the host culture. Marie Paule Ha also says that as per a brief survey, the Chinese "diasporic identities undergo constant transformations" (394). However, "Chinese ethnicity is sometimes affirmed as a survival strategy to withstand the violent hostility of the host population as in the case of Chinese coolies in the United States" (Paule Ha 394). In spite of violent hostility from the host nation, majority of these immigrants continue to live upholding their Chinese ethnicity. Brave orchid and her sister Moon Orchid in the novel are examples of such resistance. They are victims of cultural shock and racism.

Racism as noted by Osborne and Sanford is a "hierarchical mode of social differentiation and exclusion; and a fundamental form of social division" (1). Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid live in memories and beliefs; tell stories and myths. They follow their traditional culture at home and pass it on to generations. Brave Orchid expects her daughter Kingston to imbibe all Chinese values as she grows up. Interpellated and subjected to Chinese patriarchy, Brave Orchid advises, rather coerces Kingston to be an ideal daughter, a dutiful wife and a submissive daughter-in-law. She warns Kingston not to be like her aunt-'No Name Woman,' who gave birth to a fatherless child in a pigsty in China. Kingston says, "When we Chinese girls listened to the adults talking-story, we learned that we failed if we grew up to

be but wives or slaves. . . . She said I would grow up a wife and a slave" (19-20).

The patriarchal Chinese society considers chastity of woman as the yard stick to approve a woman's status in the society. Any woman violating this code would suffer along with her family, like Kingston's aunt. Nowhere in the text does Kingston mention the name of the aunt. She remarks her as either 'No Name Woman'-which is also the title of the first chapter or as "father's drowned- in- the- well sister" (6). Any woman who counter-identifies with the mainstream patriarchal ideology is denied of an identity; they do not even deserve to be addressed by their name. No Name Woman had to pay a huge price for counter-identifying with the patriarchal ideology and committing adultery. Her house was plundered by the villagers. They slaughtered all their cattle, and ruined the entire household. Finally she drowned herself in the well along with her baby. In Brave Orchid's words, "Your aunt gave birth in the pigsty that night. The next night when I went for the water, I found her and the baby plugging up the family well" (5). Brave Orchid constantly reminds Kingston of her chastity through the story of her aunt and other talk stories. She advises Kingston saying, "'Don't let your father know that I told you. He denies her. Now that you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don't humiliate us. You wouldn't like to be forgotten as if you had never been born. The villagers

are watchful'"(5). Kingston's mother is an example of 'a good subject' of the Chinese patriarchy.

Kingston suffers American mainstream hostility on one hand and the patriarchal ideology of Chinese culture on the other hand. Belonging to a second generation diaspora, she confronts the tug-of-war between the two cultures. Kingston's identity as an American born diasporic Chinese coerces her to behave as per the socially accepted norms of the American society. She is much in favor of the western culture though she is influenced by the Chinese traditions too. She says, "Walking erect (knees straight, toes pointed forward, not pigeon toed, which is Chinese-feminine) and speaking in an inaudible voice, I have tried to turn myself American-feminine" (11). In fact she finds herself more assimilable than her mother who keeps ruminating over past Chinese memories. Brave Orchid is an inassimilable character longing for her homeland. "In the United States 86% of foreign born Chinese speak Chinese at home" (Min Zhou 45). This is an indication of the inassimilable nature of the Chinese ethnics, especially the first generation diaspora as stated by Alain Marsot. He discusses the complex relationship of Strong sinocentrism of Chinese people towards their host societies. A pervasive sentiment is dominant among the diasporic Chinese, Brave Orchid is just one example. An obsession with Chineseness and longing for the homeland can be seen in both the sisters- Brave and Moon Orchid. Rey Cow observes:

In a habitual obsession with 'Chineseness', what we often encounter is

a kind of cultural essentialism – in this case, sinocentrism – that draws

an imaginary boundary between China and the rest of the world.

Everything Chinese it follows, is fantasized as somehow better –

longer in existence, more intelligent, more scientific, more valuable,

and ultimately beyond comparison. The historically conditioned

paranoid reaction to the West, then, easily flips over and turns into a

narcissistic, megalomanic affirmation of China; past victimization

under Western imperialism and the need for national 'self-

strengthening' in an earlier era, likewise, flip over and turn into

fascistic arrogance and self-aggrandizement. (136)

However, Kingston's approach towards Chineseness is notably different. Quoting Sau-ling Cynthia Wong, Stella Bolaki says that "Kingston seeks a balance between self- actualization and social responsibility" (41). Translinguistic stylistics adopted in her writings exemplifies this strategic balancing. She attempts a linguistic adventure by using Chinese verbal inflections in her writings in English.

While Brave Orchid tries to raise Kingston as a pious and silent Chinese daughter, she evolves as an individuated woman endowed with "rhetorical sovereignty" (Lyons 239). Using Chinese-inflected English, she says along with Lyons, "I speak, I speak like the people with whom I live"

(256). Brave Orchid once cut Kingston's frenulum in her childhood claiming that it was done to help her talk freely. However Kingston believes that her mother had just the opposite intention of silencing her because "The Chinese say, 'a ready tongue is an evil'" (164). The first line of *The Woman Warrior* begins with Brave Orchid's statement to silence Kingston- "You must not tell anyone" (3). Here she warns her daughter not to be like her aunt- No Name Woman. Though the beginning is a coercion of interpellation to silence Kingston, the last part of the memoir- 'A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe' represents the individuating Kingston who begins to tell her own talk-stories. Unfettering the shackles of Chinese patriarchal ideologies, she individuates gradually.

By narrating the story of No Name Woman, Brave Orchid instills a sense of verbal infibulation[9] in Kingston. Mutilation of Kingston's tongue mentioned in the last chapter- *A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe* needs to be read along with this. The more the mother tries to imbue traditional values coercing Kingston to interpellate as another carrier of Chinese patriarchal ideologies to ensure ethnic succession, the more the daughter slithers away to evolve as an individuated woman. David Wallace Adams cites native-white relations in *Education for Extinction* and says that the educational system is designed to promote "the eradication of all traces of tribal identity and

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[9]   Infibulations refers to the mutilation of female genitals. It is also called as clitoridectomy. This is practiced in East Africa for the prevention of sexual promiscuity.

culture, replacing them with the commonplace knowledge and values of white civilization" (335). Though the talk stories of Brave orchid influenced and haunted Kingston concomitantly, she steps out of it courageously at a later stage, probably imbibing certain values of white civilization as Adams states (336).

Nevertheless, a partial detachment from Chineseness could not find her a potential space in a culturally different society like America. This is because "the decolonized world has steadily shifted into a new, 'differentialist racism,' which finds its justification no longer in the absoluteness of blood but in the insurmountability of cultural difference" (Chow 137). The ideological and cultural differences resulted in the marginalization of the immigrant ethnic groups like the Chinese Americans. Assimilation into the American culture is not very easy as overt discrimination of the dominant group prevails. As mentioned, they remain as citizen aliens and continue to be in an auslander[10] situation in spite of being denizens. The traditional motto of the United States – E Pluribus Unum which means 'from many one' alludes to the union of different cultures. The melting-pot effect also implies the integrating capacity of the American society. However, integration at all levels is not possible because of the strong hold of Anglo-conformity and the

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[10]   They are non-citizens having different ethnic affiliation.

fear of Uberfremdung[11] condition. This condition arises due to excess immigration into the host land. This triggers a paranoid fear about the racial identity of the host nation.

The official American ideology proclaims the "unitary nature of the culture," while the ethnic immigrants face the pressure of Americanization and remains unassimilated, while searching for their unique space (Holte 125). Thus in reality American society remains as a salad bowl. The immigrants maintain their cultural specificity and remain 'un-meltable' ethnics.

Hyphenated Americans are torn between the two cultures. Ethnic writers have left a large and diverse record of their observations regarding the ethnic immigrants and their affirmation or rejection of the American culture from the vantage point their first hand experiences afforded them.

Due to cruel exclusion and rejection, the Chinese ethnic immigrants started establishing ethnic enclaves or separate sub-societies within the host land. Chinatown is one such enclave organized within the country. They even had internal city government among them. CCBA-Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association is an example of an internal city government. Such organizations tried to resist the anti-Chinese campaigns in America. However

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[11]   It is a German term that stands for the penetration of foreign culture. In racist language this condition is denoted as bastardization. It is a condition of the alteration of traditional features and national identity of a country due to increased immigration of foreigners. The policy of 'national preference' is affected by this condition.

there were disputes within the organizations as evinced by Tong wars[12]. On one side there was the pressure of Americanization and on the other there were the internal disputes.

Brought up in these conflicting scenarios, Kingston neither identifies fully with the Chinese traditional culture, nor adheres to the dominant American culture. She individuates and disidentifies as neither a Chinese nor an American but a new individual like the poet Ts'ai Yen who successfully bridged the Chinese Han and Hsiung-nu traditions. Ts'ai Yen was a poet who was born in AD 175 as the daughter of Ts'ai Yung , a famous scholar known for his library. She was captured during a raid when she was twenty years old by the chieftain of southern Hsiung-nu. The barbarians who caught her sang at nights, a barbaric note using their reed pipes while she sang about China and her family. Later when she was ransomed after twelve years and was married off to Tung Ssu by her father to retain Han descendants, "she brought her songs back from the savage lands" (209). As a closing note of the text Kingston says, "one of the three that has been passed down to us is 'Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe,' a song that Chinese sing with their own instruments. It translated well" (209).

The five prominent women characters mentioned in the work are No Name Woman, the mythical woman warrior Fa Mu Lan, Brave Orchid

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[12]   The internal conflicts over the control of resources within the native Chinese people were known as Tong wars.

(Kingston's mother), Moon orchid, (Kingston's aunt) and Kingston herself. We have already discussed the counter-identification by No Name woman vis-à-vis the Chinese patriarchy. Interpellation-identification with the traditional Chinese culture is seen in Brave and Moon Orchid. They are the 'good subjects' of Chinese patriarchy and are the carriers and transmitters of the power of tradition. At the same time, they counter-identify with the host US culture. In the case of Kingston, it is double disidentification.

Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid and the No Name Woman could not claim a space of their own in their life. They were coerced to interpellate as ideal female subjects of their patriarchal society. They had to surrender their life without questioning the hierarchy or battling for power. No Name Woman who gave birth to an illegitimate child in a pigsty had hardly any chances of survival in a society that had hard and fast notions about an ideal woman. She did not interpellate as a 'good subject' adhering to the norms of Chinese patriarchal society. Therefore she could resort only to a quiet rebellion of drowning herself along with her baby in the well.

Brave Orchid, who was a qualified with a medical degree, had to downgrade herself as a mere laundry laborer. As a Huagong immigrant, she got demoted to a mere laborer compared to her respectful status as a medical practitioner and midwife in China. She was forced to work in tomato fields

and Mexican farm lands when they had to close down their laundry as a part of 'urban renewal.' Her hardships are well depicted in the following passage:

> 'Mama, why don't you stop working? You don't have to work anymore. Do you? Do you really have to work like that? Scabbing in the tomato fields?' her black hair seems fitted with the band of white at its roots. She dyed her hair so that farmers would hire her. She would walk to Skid Row and stand in line with the hobos, the winos, the junkies, and the Mexicans until the farm buses came and the farmers picked out the workers they wanted. (103)

Brave orchid is a victim of "role entrapment" (Royce 199). Her medical degree is not valued by the American public. Royce states:

> In role entrapment, the token's status is brought into line with the status of the token's category in the population at large. A stranger seeing a Mexican-American businessman in an area where most Mexican-Americans are itinerant farm workers, would assume he was a farm worker. Similarly it is assumed that Chinese-Americans own laundries, Japanese-Americans would make good gardeners, and the Zapotec are the Jews of the Isthmus. (199)

Brave Orchid becomes a victim of this kind of a generalization. Accepting the false classification as a laundry worker without any resistance, she subjects herself to the operation of interpellation-identification with the role

entrapment and status leveling. "The negative implications of status leveling and role entrapment are various and almost impossible to avoid. If one accepts the labeling, then one's options for maneuvering advantageously are drastically reduced as one's range of expression is limited" (Royce 199-200). The process of individuation is almost nullified at this point in the case of Brave Orchid. Royce also observes that "It is often easier to accept the false classification than to insist on being recognized as an individual with many aspects" (200). When she returned to her village in China after her studies Brave orchid was welcomed with "garlands and cymbals" and was carried in a sedan chair. "She had gone away ordinary and come back miraculous, like the ancient magicians who came down from the mountains" (76). However she had not much to perform as a doctor in America. Her acceptance of the offered role without questioning and positive response towards the 'hailing' as a laundry worker makes her a 'good subject.'

Brave Orchid says, "When I stepped out of my sedan chair, the villagers said 'Ahh,'at my good shoes and my long gown. I always dressed well when I made calls. Some villagers would bring out their lion and dance ahead of me. You have no idea how much I have fallen coming to America" (77). These words indicate how invisible she is in the new culture. As noted by Uncle Bun in *China Men*, "the white demons were not the only oppressors, that the upper class Chinese made their money off lower-class ones; the immigrants got twenty-five cents an hour if they were lucky. No day off. We

children made exactly twenty-five cents an hour" (*China Men* 192). They were oppressed firstly at the hands of the racist American culture and secondly by upper class Chinese themselves. Thus they were twice marginalized. Brave Orchid continues to cling to the Chinese traditions and customs and sees whites as different kinds of demons or ghosts- Garbage Ghosts, Panhandler Ghosts, Milk Ghost, Urban Renewal Ghosts, and so on. She says:

> 'This is a terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away,' . . . Even the ghosts work, no time for acrobatics. I have not stopped working since the day the ship landed. I was on my feet the moment babies were out. In China I never even had to hang up my own clothes. I shouldn't have left, but your father couldn't have supported you without me. I'm the one with the big muscles. (104)

Brave Orchid longs for her home and culture back in China. However, it now remains as a frozen diasporic imagination for her. "The distance, both physical but more so psychological, was so vast, that the motherland remained frozen in the diasporic imagination as a sort of sacred site or symbol almost like an idol of memory and imagination" (Paranjape 9). Moving away from one's homeland and settling elsewhere on long term basis brings in a sense of loss, loneliness, nostalgia and longing. Strangeness in a foreign land

coupled with the issue of alien milieu fires longing. Quoting Verma, William Safren remarks:

> They [members of the diaspora] retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland and regard their ancestral home land their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendents would eventually return when the conditions are appropriate. (100)

Brave Orchid considers her home in China as the ideal place where she should have been. Her longing prevents her from identifying with the alien culture. She complains often about the new lifestyle and longs for a beautiful life left in China as memories and nostalgia haunt her. She says:

> Time was different in China. one year lasted as long as my total time here; one evening so long, you could visit your women friends, drink tea and play cards at each house, and it would still; be twilight. It even got boring but to fan ourselves. Here the midnight comes and the floor is still not swept, the ironings not ready, the money's not made. I would still be young if we lived in China. (105-6)

Torn between the two cultures, Brave Orchid finds herself as a victim of cultural conflict. She is unable to adapt or assimilate completely with the new culture. Passively counter-identifying with the American lifestyle and culture she suffers all the traumas of diasporic experience such as alienation,

nostalgia, loneliness and longing. At the same time, unable to resist she falls prey to role entrapment. However, she continues to live in America as her husband gives away his land in China to the villagers to take over. With a broken heart she says, "We have no more China to go home to" (106).

The experience of Moon Orchid who comes in search of her husband in California is not much different from that of her sister Brave Orchid's. Moon Orchid portrays a contrasting image in front of her Chinese American nieces and nephews. "Even the girls stared at her like cat-headed birds. Moon Orchid jumped and squirmed when they did that. They looked directly into her eyes as if they were looking for lies. Rude. Accusing. They never lowered their gaze; they hardly blinked" (133). Moon Orchid sticks onto Chinese culture in California and fails not only to reclaim her husband but also her own space in the new world. She remarks, "Oh I can't go out into Gold Mountain myself" (137). All efforts put in by Brave Orchid go in vain as she starts feeling guilty about coming to America in search of her husband who is now living in Los Angeles with his second wife. She does not claim any rights but is diligently submissive to all atrocities done to her, though her sister keeps on insisting, "Claim your rights" (125). Moon Orchid does not have the courage to reclaim her husband. "'I'm scared,' said Moon Orchid. 'I want to go back to Hong Kong'" (125). Hailed and interpellated as a 'good subject' of the Chinese patriarchal ideology, she is unable to step down from

the status of ideal wifehood. She suffers all atrocities inflicted on her in complete obeisance. Praising her separated husband, she tells her sister:

> He didn't abandon me. He's given me so much money. I've had all the food and clothes and servants I've ever wanted. And he's supported our daughter too, even though she is only a girl. He sent her to college. I can't bother him . . . 'But he gives us everything anyway. What more do I have to ask for? If I see him face to face, what is there to say?' (125)

As Nivedita Menon says:

> The family is an institution that rigidly enforces systems of inheritance and descent and in this structure, individuals- sons, daughters, wives, husbands- are resources that are strictly bound by the violence, implicit and explicit, of this frame. We tend to take this frame for granted, and it becomes obscenely visible only in extraordinary situations. (49)

Moon Orchid's nullified individuation is well depicted as she says how dreadfully nervous she is when she goes to meet her husband and his second wife: "'Oh, I can't move. My knees are shaking so much I won't be able to walk. He must have servants and workers in there, and they'll stare at me. I can't bear it'" (146). Moon Orchid who has completely identified with the Chinese traditions consciously or unconsciously, counter-identifies with the American culture and slowly goes insane with paranoid delusions of Mexican

ghosts following her. She is also a victim of the terrible effects of cultural clashes. Both the sisters are subjugated in American society and are forced to be passive agents in the system.

Kingston and Fa Mu Lan on the other hand maneuver their ways to carve up their own space. Neither the ethnic Chinese tradition nor the bossy, racist American society could interpellate Kingston as a 'good subject.' The mythical fantasy of Fa Mu Lan, helps Kingston to individuate and transcend beyond the constraints of Chinese patriarchal traditions. In fact, she identifies with Fa Mu Lan. Kinston says, "There are stories that are in your DNA" (Lim 162). The story of Fa Mu Lan is symbolic of Kingston's own life. She narrates about Fa Mu Lan in the first person. Disguised as a male warrior, Fa Mu Lan went to the battle to fight in the war. While Fa Mu Lan rises to the status of a woman warrior with sword, Maxine individuates to be a woman warrior with words. In an interview with Shirley Geok-lin Lim, Kingston says, "We hear words – the Word – words – and they come into our bodies, into our ears, and then we find a way to transmit it into the written word. I want everything that I hear to get into the way that I write, oh, like the way I become poetry, oral. Everything that I write I say it aloud" (162).

Kingston as a warrior uses words as her weapon. As Jon Anderson notes, "Language is a key means through which we form and articulate our identity" (225). Kingston individuates from silence to forge her identity in an

alien culture adopting her second language- English as her medium of communication. Like Fa Mu Lan who uses the weapons and skills she learnt from the old couple in the mountains, Kingston uses words (she learnt at the Gold Mountain) to claim her space in the same alien land and to 'order her identity.' As Jon Anderson says:

> Language can therefore be a product of culture- language can be written to identify, transform and give the last word on how we think about the world; but language is also a practice, it is a medium to communicate culture, forming our identity and locating where we are and where we are from. (225)

Words help to create the world, as language is said to be a cultural practice. Kingston indivudiates to be a word warrior making her "scaffold, a stage" through writing as she states in *Tripmaster Monkey:His Fake Book* . The protagonist of *Tripmaster Monkey* Whittman Ah Sing ends his poem with the declaration: "I vow: I will make my scaffold, a stage" (30).

Kingston's existence as an Asian American subject faced a systematic challenge of mixophobia.

> Mixophobia refers to an unconditional fear of mixture and describes the dominant form of racism associated with Nationalism. . . . The concept of mixophobia includes the tendency to demonize others and treat them as deviants from the norm, repulsion at any contact or

mixing with anyone considered different, obsessive defence of purity,

the resultant fear of cultural or biological hybridization and the

uncompromising defence of a pure racial lineage and thus a primordial

identity which is assumed to have lasted from time immemorial.

(Bolaffi 182)

The Chinese ethnic immigrants in America did not receive an equal

opportunity to integrate with the American culture. As a person belonging to

marginalized Chinese ethnic diaspora, Kingston's life was set on a scaffold.

However, she individuates to carve up her space as a word warrior and sets up

her scaffold, a good stage to perform.

Chinese Americans were often hailed as 'nigger yellow' in public

without any hesitation. Kingston's experience at the art supply house

exemplifies this attitude. "I once worked at an art supply house that sold

paints to artists. 'Order more of that nigger yellow, willya?' the boss told me.

'Bright, isn't it? Nigger yellow'" (48). Hailed as a "yellow nigger," Kingston

wanted to retaliate against the slur but she did not have the courage to do so.

She could only whisper in an inaudible voice: "'I don't like that word,' I had

to say in my bad, small person's voice that makes no impact. The boss never

deigned to answer" (48). She also had to face, alienation, cultural shocks and

racism like her mother and aunt. But the difference is that she individuates to

own up her space as a woman/word warrior in the hostile host culture.

"In the man of color, there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence. Whenever a man of color protests there is alienation. Whenever a man of color rebukes, there is alienation" (Fanon 60). Here Kingston protests, rebukes and resists being hailed as 'yellow nigger.' Hailing her as 'yellow nigger' indicates the effort of the dominant culture to alienate the ethnic minority. Though she could not retort firmly to the boss at art supply house, Kingston elaborately discusses this event in her autobiographical work later. Her response becomes quite prominent and noticeable when she individuates as a word warrior and uses her (s)word to write about the incident. She writes:

> The swordswoman and I are not so dissimilar. May my people understand the resemblance soon so that I can return to them. What we have in common are the words at our backs. The ideographs for revenge are 'report a crime' and 'report to five families.' The reporting is the vengeance- not the beheading, not the gutting, but the words. And I have so many words- 'chink' works and 'gook' words too- that they do not fit on my skin. (53)

Kingston individuates to the status of an articulate writer from her silences and fearful whispers. Brave Orchid who adhered to the collective culture of the patriarchal society tried to silence her daughter continually. Kingston says, "My silence was thickest-total-during the three years that I

covered my school paintings with black paint…during my first year I spoke to no one at school, did not ask before going to the lavatory, and flunked kindergarten" (165). Silence was considered natural and becoming for girls. In her childhood, she was firmly instructed not to talk back. In the last chapter *A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe*, Kingston says, "We American-Chinese girls had to whisper to make ourselves American feminine. Apparently we whispered more softly than the Americans" (172). Thus Chinese-American females are twice coerced for interpellation when compared to the American females.

Kingston does not identify with the collective notions of both the Chinese and American cultures. According to Jung, adaptation to the collective culture is not the ultimate goal of individuation. Unlike her mother Brave Orchid and her aunt Moon Orchid, Kingston disidentifies with the collective Chinese culture and becomes non adaptive to its patriarchal ideologies. Concomitantly, she could not acclimatize completely with the dominant American culture and its system.

Brave Orchid's efforts for ethnic-identity retention or ethnic succession fail to achieve the desired result thanks to her daughter's rebellion and intransigence. As a result, a constant tension ensues between the mother and the daughter throughout. It is the tension arising because of the interpellation-identification (with the Chinese tradition) sought by the first generation

diaspora and disidentification cherished by the second generation diaspora. "In fact, evidence shows that subsequent generations do develop ethnic patterns of behavior or a subjective identity of a type not present in the first generation" (Isajiw 34). As mentioned by Isajiw, Kingston develops an ethnic transformation by developing certain attributes that are different from her previous generation. Needless to say, it is not a complete assimilation to the American culture. As Isajiw observes, "Ethnic-identity loss should not, by itself, be interpreted as an indicator of assimilation. Assimilation into the culture of a larger society and retention of some forms of ethnic identity can and often do take place concomitantly" (35).

Kingston individuates to partially assimilate with the new homeland and to partially discard her mother's Chinese tradition. However, she does not completely adhere to either or discard neither. She is not a 'good subject' in both the cultures. In fact, she neither gives consent to take up the subject position of a yellow nigger offered by the racist and bossy American culture, nor does she conform to the Chinese patriarchal tradition. The diaspora struggle to choose between the dichotomous cultures, especially the second and third generation diasporas. Torn between the stronghold of gender ethos in relation to the ethnic background and cultural ethos of the dominant American society, Kingston anchors her identity at a new space of her own.

Kingston moves out of the stifling traditional Chinese culture and the discriminating host culture to propel herself into a third space. She individuates to attain 'a transcendental self' – 'a new third' and disidentifies to find an anchorage in the new space. This transcendental self as a woman warrior in the third space offers her a hybrid nature as this space involves social exclusion and inclusion of both the cultures. "I saw myself having to build a railroad, but it's done in words. I thought the physical exertion of it was just as hard as if I were building a rail road , but it's done in words" (Geok-lin Lim 159).

Kingston individuates to attain disidentification mode maneuvering her ways as a writer breaking the silence of the 'ideal Chinese feminine' and whisper of the 'ideal American feminine.' She disidentifies and becomes an empowered word warrior who uses her pen, which according to her is mightier than the sword. She writes explicitly about No Name Woman about whom she was not allowed to talk to anyone. Kingston thus individuates, resists and re-individuates as a woman warrior and (s)word warrior. Part of the strategy of becoming such a word warrior is reflected in the variety of language that Kingston uses in her narrations.

Language plays a key role in the construction of ethnicity. "Linguistic assimilation" happens along with interpellation-identification (Fought 27). As the individual subjects himself/herself to assimilate with the dominant cultural

ideologies s/he consciously or unconsciously succumbs to linguistic assimilation as well. In certain cases, even if the individual sticks on to a resistive footing, s/he may adopt the dominant vocabulary. This is because there is always a natural human propensity for creolization in the case of language. In *The Woman Warrior*, Kingston uses a creole with Chinese derived vocabulary. Many of the usages in the text have a Chinese element attached to it. The recent anthropological and sociolinguistic studies of language and ethnicity state the dominance of the language of the whites. Carmen Fought observes that "Anything standard is associated with white speakers; for example, speaking standard varieties of English (which may be hard to define, but play an important ideological role)" (117). The creolized language that Kingston employs in her texts proves her resistance towards the "super standard grammatical forms" (Fought 117). Her linguistic disidentification with the standardized norms of 'whiteness' (as noted by Carmen Fought) and dominance is seen in the type of language she uses. John Ogbu states that, "both voluntary and involuntary minorities consider standard English to be white language and a symbol of white identity" (154). Kingston disidentifies with both the white language and white identity.

Chapter VI
Conclusion

The central claim of this study revolves around the challenges faced by the ethnic minority belonging to diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds. The coercive interpellation to enforce conformity adversely affects the ethnic pride and dignity of the minority as evinced by the autobiographical narratives taken for the study. The previous chapters examined the process of individuation in the central personae of the autobiographical narratives, to trace the resistive strategies employed by the minority against the interpellative forces.

This chapter focuses on the conclusions derived after the investigations into the ethnographical details gained through the ethnic autobiographical accounts. It also documents the results and conclusions based on the analysis and survey done in the previous chapters.

When two ethnic groups belonging to two different cultural backgrounds come in contact with each other, there develops a competition between them for power and superiority. The victorious ethnic group – in usual situations the group with substantially larger population size coupled with vast resources, strong leadership and manpower – attains dominance. The competition or cold war continues to prevail until the minority group is either completely eliminated culturally if not physically, or subjugated and a

homogeneous community is established. Power differentials are handed over based on dominance. Power differential or differential in power is the "ability of a group to achieve its goals even in the face of opposition from other groups" (Healey 56).

The Noel hypothesis considers ethnocentrism as an essential factor in ensuring social solidarity and cohesion. Nevertheless, it has negative consequences as well. Apart from unifying, ethnocentrism develops a tendency in people to believe that their cultures and traditions are superior vis-à-vis the cultures elsewhere. "Ethnocentrism tells the dominant group who to dominate, competition tells the dominant group why it should establish a structure of dominance, and power is how the dominant group's will is imposed on the minority group" (Healey 57).

In order to sustain social solidarity and cohesion, the dominant ideology interpellates the individuals of the minority group as ideal homogeneous subjects as homogenization is a means to hegemonisation. Homogenization is a technique aimed at stripping the marginalized communities of their demarcating features. Nevertheless the 'us and them' dichotomy continues to prevail even if the nation succeeds in establishing homogeneity. "The differential in power allows the dominant group to succeed in establishing a superior position" (Healey 57). In fact, the dominant

group conquers power and establishes 'a contact situation'[1] or an environment conducive to interpellation. The process of interpellation compels the ethnic minority to relinquish their traditions and succumb to and internalize majoritarian ideology. Both colonized and immigrant ethnic minority societies suffer institutional discrimination, competition for power, injustice, inequality, racism, oppression and rejection, in spite of embracing and proclaiming homogeneity externally.

As the process of interpellation succeeds, the dominant group becomes capable of enforcing their will upon the minority groups. The majoritarian ideology establishes itself with its superiority in power. The minority groups are subjected to the ideologies of the dominant system and coerced to assimilate. However, the individual's response towards the coercive power of interpellation determines whether they are victimized or interpellated. The provocative and radiant force of individuation initiates the rites of resistance withstanding the coercive influence of interpellation. An individuating individual takes either the mode of identification, counter-identification or disidentification.

This study surveyed the lives of three women from diverse geographical locations with the help of their ethnic autobiographies to study

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[1]   Sociologists namely, Robert Blauner and Donald L. Noel use the term 'contact situation' to denote the situation under which the groups come in contact with each other for the first time. Their initial condition or situation at the point of time of contact decides their minority/ dominant status. According to these sociologists, the contact situation forms the intergroup relations.

the process of individuation in them. The dominant-minority group relation

has also been analyzed, taking into account the lives of a native ethnic

minority of mixed origin (Métis), a tribal ethnic minority (Adivasis) and an

immigrant ethnic minority (Chinese ethnic group) in order to trace the process

of interpellation. The study employed the ethnic autobiography of Beatrice

Culleton Mosionier- *In Search of April Raintree* to study the Métis ethnic life.

The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts- ethnic

autobiography of Maxine Hong Kingston, was examined to explore the ethnic

immigrant experiences. *Personal/Polital: Mother Forest: The Unfinished*

Story of C. K. Janu was used to examine the ethnic tribal experiences.

Based on ethnic belonging, these groups can be classified as ethnic

community of "putative descent" and ethnic community of "putative consent"

(Preece 138). In the case of putative descent, the ethnic bonding is based on

blood and consanguinity. Social bonding in terms of mutual consent is the

basis of ethnic community of putative consent. All the three ethnic groups

discussed in the study are ethnic communities of putative descent. However,

in the case of the second generation Chinese ethnic diaspora, apart from the

bond of kinship or blood, their consent also matters in defining their ethnic

belongingness. They share customs, rituals, memories, mannerisms etc. with

the host society through constant intermingling and social interactions. A

partial but optimistic consent towards the American culture is seen in the

second generation Chinese American ethnic diasporas. As a result of social

interactions over a period of time, a natural human propensity for conformity is noticed in their case. Kingston, belonging to a second generation diasporic community shows a partial optimistic inclination towards the American culture though not assimilating completely. The degree of ethnic pride when compared to the first generation (including Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid) is less in the case of the second generation diasporas.

As observed by Blauner, immigration and colonization are "the two major processes through which new population groups are incorporated into a nation" (46). The ethnic groups chosen for the study can also be classified as colonized ethnic groups and immigrant ethnic groups. The native ethnic aboriginal group in Canada (discussed in Chapter Four) is formed by colonization. The Chinese ethnic minority immigrants (discussed in Chapter Five) are the result of mass emigration. The colonization effect is felt by the Adivasi ethnic tribal community (discussed in Chapter Three) in India as well. Adivasi tribal groups are under a shade of "internal colonialism" or "domestic colonialism" (Blauner 64). Comparing the three minority groups with their corresponding dominant groups and applying Robert Blauner's hypothesis, it can be presumed that the ethnic groups formed by coercion and conquest suffer intense oppression than the immigrant ethnic group. Comparing the three ethnic groups taken for the study, the Adivasi and Métis ethnic groups seem to occupy a markedly oppressed position than the Chinese immigrants. Robert Blauner's hypothesis substantiates this argument:

Minority groups created by colonization will experience more intense

prejudice, racism and discrimination than those created by

immigration. Further-more, the disadvantaged status of colonized

groups will persist longer and be more difficult to overcome than the

disadvantaged status faced by groups created by immigration. (qtd. in

Healey 57)

Immigrants voluntarily move to the host society. Voluntary

immigration of the Chinese ethnic group to America is considered mostly as a

positive opportunity. Chapter Five discussed the experiences of immigrant

ethnic minority group. Emigration to America was their own choice to escape

political victimization, famine, poverty, unemployment etc. On the other

hand, "Colonized groups become part of a new society through force or

violence; they are conquered, enslaved or pressured into movement" (Blauner

46). This implies that the coercion for homogenization is greater in the case of

colonized groups than the immigrants. While interpellation aims at enforcing

conformity, individuation establishes ethnic pride and works to sustain

ethnicity and recognize diversity among individuals.

The paternalistic approach of the dominant group is another version of

interpellation noticed in the study. This approach prevents the ethnic minority

from pursuing their rights (as the dominant group sustains the power

differential). Healey observes:

> The key features of paternalism are vast power differentials and huge
>
> inequalities between dominant and minority group, caste like barriers
>
> between groups, elaborate and highly stylized codes of behavior and
>
> communication between groups, and low rates of overt conflict. (59)

This kind of a paternalistic approach is obvious towards the Canadian

aboriginal group discussed in Chapter Four. The dominant white community

in Canada considers it their burden/responsibility to control the lives of the

natives and Métis. Laws were implemented by the federal government in

favor of the majoritarian interests to wipe off the stains of native kinship, clan

and lineage to rebuild an ideal Canadian society. As a part of it, native/Métis

children were forcefully sent to foster homes and subjected to coercive

acculturation.

Chapter Three discussed how the competition to gain control over land

and labour profoundly moulded the dominant-minority group relations in the

case of Adivasi ethnic tribals in India. The journey of this ethnic group from

slavery in the formative years to forced indentured labour to overt social

segregation gives a colonial shade to their dominant-minority group relation.

"The nature of intergroup relationships will reflect the characteristics of the

larger society" (Healey 59).

The dominant group tried to take complete control over the Adivasi

tribal communities. Plundering their lands, the rich landlords began to make

the tribals their slaves. However, the dominant group moved from an agrarian paternalistic approach to a competitive approach later, as the Adivasis began to be more assertive about their rights. The paternalistic approach aims at making the minority powerless. This is because, "The lower the power of the minority group, the lower the threat to the interests of the dominant group" (Healey 78). Though the government provided free education and other services to Adivasis, the aim of the dominant group was to gain complete control over the vast forest resources and to be the all powerful masters. Injecting assumptions of racial inferiority, and handicapping their ability to survive in the forest, the civil society proclaimed their superiority over the impoverished tribals. Stamping an inferiority status using the existing laws and paternalism, the dominant group vigilantly eliminates competition from the minority's end.

Moreover, ethnic groups are attributed to have a higher level of pathological behavior by the mainstream discourse. This is a notion that prevails predominantly among the elites. It is this notion that provoked the mob to beat Madhu, an Adivasi man, to death- an incident that was reported in the leading news papers in India. He was suspected to have stolen food and was beaten to death at Agali in Kerala, in 2018 ("Tribal"). This is a clear example of mob (an elite group) violence against Adivasis. "The ideology of racism, for example, provides a coherent set of beliefs and reasons that justify social or physical violence against another ethnic group" (Ryan 40).

"Conservative racist thinkers," as Ryan calls them believe that the external physical features reveal internal mind and thoughts (71). That is the reason behind equating the impoverished Adivasi appearance of Madhu to a pathological behavior. Cheryl Raintree in *In Search of April Raintree* is also accused of such a pathological behavior.

> Who we are as individual beings – our 'identity'– is bound up with the culture we live in. Although it is something outside us, culture makes its way into us through our eyes and ears. We learn the languages of culture as we grow up- what particular kinds of cloth "mean," for example, or what particular actions are good or bad or what words and attitudes are appropriate or not in what situations. We also acquire ways of understanding and methods of reasoning that we use to read the cultural world around us. (Ryan 83)

Madhu was a non-interpellated / non-assimilated Adivasi man caught in the midst of a refined and interpellated mob that follows the ideologies of racism, class consciousness and caste system. "The arguments and word images in the ideology portray the other ethnic group as lacking qualities that would make them meritorious, qualities supposedly present in the racist group" (Ryan 40). On similar grounds, it is said that the African Americans lack initiative. Racist, caste and class based discriminations still exist in Kerala. The paternalistic ideologies of the conservative elite group deny economic power

and financial freedom to the tribal groups. They are treated with disdain and pushed into impoverishment. Madhu's incident exemplifies this scenario. Chapter Three explores the harsh realities of Adivasi life. Michael Ryan posits that, "Poverty when persistent over time and from generation to generation, produces a sense of disillusion and disaffection. That sense of disaffection can reduce initiative because effort seems not to guarantee results" (40). Adivasis are represented as not being industrious and lacking a sense of economic purpose. They are depicted in *Mother Forest* as lazy freeloaders and drinkers, inconsistent in their works and irresponsible about their folks at home. They are questioned for lacking initiative forgetting the fact that the drive behind such disaffection is poverty.

In the dominant-minority group relations, the minority group need not always be a numerical minority. They may be very large in size. In the early phase, white colonizers were less in number compared to the vast colonized ethnic population. The minority groups discussed in this study are numerical minorities compared to the mainstream population size. They are disadvantaged and unprivileged people who suffer inequality, discrimination and exploitation ranging from slavery, genocide and sexual harassments. Rosabeth Moss Kanter refers to the numerical minority as 'tokens.' She observes that these tokens suffer "over-observation." Quoting Kanter, Royce states that, "Anonymity is a luxury they cannot expect. They are visible as representatives of their category, and so whatever they do takes on additional

symbolic meaning. Their behavior is seen as a predictive of what every other member of their category will do" (195-6). C. K Janu is a victim of such over-observation. Media seems to be agog about what goes around "tokens" like Janu. When she bought a car in 2017, it became news in the leading dailies sarcastically questioning her initiative for status leveling. Political leaders were suspicious of a dalit farmer's income and ability to own a vehicle. However Janu retorted that she was being targeted as she belonged to a tribal group.

Ethnic minority with religious, racial, cultural and linguistic diversity or pluralism is considered as a threat to the political order of the nation. Though pluralism is celebrated peripherally, various patterns of social discriminations can be seen in the society based on the above mentioned factors. The minority rights are often curtailed as the dominant groups often remain apprehensive of the ethnic minority's political aspirations. Homogeneity ensures peace, security, economic stability etc. Thus the dominant ideologies work to subjugate the minority by interpellating them as ideal subjects. The coercion of interpellation to mould ethnic minority as a homogeneous group within the nation prevails in the politically organized nation.

Nations give a superficial impression of acceptance for pluralism. Pluralism is "seen as sophisticated and progressive because it seems to be

associated with increased tolerance for diversity and respect for all peoples and ways of life" (Healey 40). In an era of multiculturalism, people celebrate their ethnicity and heritages. Nevertheless, in reality the normative tradition chiseled out of solid political, historical and religious ideologies discards diversity and pluralism. This can be attributed to fears of fragmentation. The sustenance of homogeneity is the safety measure taken to prevent fragmentation.

Therefore freedom and socio-economic parity for the minority has become a distant dream. As mentioned above, it is true that ethnicity is celebrated in this era of multiculturalism, but the ethnic groups do not gain an equal footing with the dominant groups. They are forced to subjugate to the dominant ideologies and assimilate with the mainstream discarding their tradition. However, the process of individuation acts opposite to the coercion of interpellation. The central personae in the three narratives taken for the study exemplify the profound effect of individuation in them by resisting interpellation and sustaining their ethnic pride without complete assimilation.

This study makes an attempt to read the three select ethnic autobiographies in terms of the relationships between ethnic groups and the larger society. How these ethnic groups confront the rigid forces of interpellation from the dominant group is analyzed from an etic perspective. The drive towards individuation in the three female ethnic autobiographers,

with which they resist interpellation and propel into the modern world, is also analyzed from an emic perspective with the help of their autobiographies.

The introductory chapter defines ethnicity and discusses in detail the select ethnic groups. The objectives of my research and the significance of investigation are documented here. Detailing how the term ethnicity is linked to race, culture and nation, this chapter moves on to define and describe the terms autobiography and ethnography and how autobiographical narratives become relevant for this study. This chapter also outlines the research tools used for the investigation- interpellation and individuation. The research methodology and two perspectives of analysis- etic and emic also come in this chapter.

The Second Chapter discusses in detail the processes of interpellation and individuation. It also details the common ground between the two. Michel Pecheux's three modalities of subject formation such as identification, counter-identification and disidentification are introduced here.

Chapter Three studies the Adivasi ethnic life using the oral autobiographical narrative of C. K. Janu- *Personal /Political: Mother Forest: The Unfinished story of C. K. Janu*. The chapter analyses how the Adivasis in Kerala are treated as 'eternal other' by the mainstream discourse. Modernization and industrialization, deforestation and destruction of natural resources followed by the encroachment of outsiders are documented in this

chapter. How the influx of immigrants distort their life and how they were made indentured labourers by the Jenmis are also documented here. The phase of counter-identification and disidentification in Janu with respect to the process of individuation and her growth to the status of a tribal leader are also analyzed along with the strong retaliation of Adivasi community against exploitation.

Chapter Four moves on to study the aboriginal experiences of another ethnic group under a colonial shade- Métis in Canada. This chapter maps the process of individuation in April and Cheryl Raintree as they encounter the coercion of interpellation. Identity switching for status leveling followed by revitalization of ethnic identity at a later stage in the case of April, and Cheryl's strong retaliation against dominant ideology are delineated here.

Chapter Five moves on to study the ethnic conflicts encountered by an immigrant ethnic minority through an analysis of the Chinese American ethnic group. Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* is used to study the experiences of the immigrant ethnic group and their modes of resistance against the interpellative forces of the dominant ideology. This chapter focuses on the struggle of Kingston to individuate as a Woman Warrior resisting the interpellative forces of both the Chinese patriarchal ideology and the dominant American culture. It documents the phases of identification and counter-identification in the

women characters in the narrative along with the diasporic experiences of assimilation and longing.

The 'interpellation-identification mode' is attainable through assimilation. Identity switching is employed for the operation of interpellation-identification and assimilation. In order to attain status leveling, some are vulnerable to lose or choose to forgo their ethnic identity. Individuals and communities that are upwardly mobile often try to shed their demarcating features and imbibe dominant values in order to be admitted to the mainstream. They also develop a sense of inferiority complex of their status as underdogs and embark upon a self-conscious and aggressive process of cultural self-negation involving identity switching. This switching may be on a short term or long term basis depending on their immediate needs. The driving force behind it is interpellation and it gets executed as the individual freely allows for interpellation-identification. Identity switching is seen in April in the initial phase. Suppressing the drive of individuation, this category of people disclaim the identity they gain, by virtue of birth, to become 'good subjects' or desirable subjects of the larger society.

"Being born and socialized into an ethnic group is ascriptive" (Royce 184). However, a long term association with the ethnic group and complete acceptance of the ascribed ethnic identity are essential for affirming the identity gained by birth. As Royce observes, "individuals must affirm and

reaffirm their identity in order for it to remain a salient feature of their personalities" (185). A few markers of identity are sufficient for outsiders to identify a distinct ethnic group: colored feathers on head in the case of Native Americans, scarifications on skin that demarcate Andamanese tribals, big ear locks for Adivasi tribals, payot and black robes that serve to identify Jews are examples. In order to reaffirm one's ethnic identity, some individuals tend to counter-identify with the dominant ideologies of the larger society. Cheryl Raintree, Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid exemplify this quality. By the operation of counter-identification, they become 'bad subjects' or 'trouble makers' of the larger society. They overtly resist the coercion of interpellation and embrace all nuances of their ethnic culture. They do not switch identity or assimilate with the larger domain but remain a threat to the host society.

This research has attempted to identify and classify the characters in terms of their approach towards interpellation and individuation. The characters such as Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid and No Name Woman in *The Woman Warrior*, Cheryl Raintree in *In Search of April Raintree,*C. K. Janu (initial phase) in *Mother Forest* etc. exemplify the operation of counter-identification. The characters such as Kingston's father, Kingston's siblings, April Raintree (in the initial phase of her life), parents of April etc. are examples of the operation of interpellation-identification. The process of individuation is almost nullified in their case. Either due to fear of or due to

admiration for the aggressors, they cultivated certain attributes to their identity that are favorable to the dominant culture.

The study also attempted to analyze the third category that is the ones strongly guided by the drive towards individuation. They evolved as neither 'good subjects', nor 'bad subjects' but individuated to attain a 'transcendental self' and 'potential space' of their own. Instead of an overt resistance, they employed a strategic resistance to oppose the coercion of interpellation. C. K. Janu, Kingston, April Raintree and the mythical character Fa Mu Lan exemplify disidentification. The strong drive of individuation, not exhausted by any particular interpellation can be seen in the central personae (from three diverse ethnic backgrounds) of all the three autobiographies. Sustaining the process of individuation and resisting the forces of interpellation, they retain their ethnic identity.

'Word' and '(s)word' are the two resistance strategies employed by the three ethnic autobiographers. By following their literary pursuits and through their ground level activism they individuate and continue to resist interpellation.

'Interpenetration' and 'fusion' trigger tensions between the ethnic and the mainstream societies. And quiet often it becomes a unilateral phenomenon where the minority group is forced to renounce their cultural specificities to amalgamate into the dominant society. A certain degree of assimilation and

enculturation is possible. However, the melting pot effect remains ineffective to a great extent as the immigrants and other minorities resist and remain as 'un-meltable' ethnics, maintaining their ethnic identity and sustaining their ethnic pride. As part of homogenization, the dominant section of the society victimizes the weaker sections through various means. Ethnic minorities that do not subscribe to interpellation-identification are subjected to persecutions as enforced by this study through its scrutiny of dominant-minority dialectics as it operates among Adivasis, aborigines and immigrant ethnic minorities. The characters that Counter-identified such as Cheryl Raintree, Moon Orchid, No Name Woman and many others had to confront with mass murder, rape, plunder or torture as exemplified in the previous chapters.

The minorities deserve a potential space to preserve their ethnicity, art, culture and language in today's multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual societies. Their interests need to be safeguarded by providing them proper platforms to practice and foster their unique cultural values.

This study aimed at examining how ethnic groups from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds are subjected to the coercion of interpellation and how they sustain or renounce their ethnic identity in the face of such experiences. It explored the challenges faced by these ethnic groups as they counter-identified and disidentified with the mainstream. This field of study is open to further exploration of various other ethnic

communities belonging to diverse multicultural societies. This is especially

significant in our era, where increased interactions between peoples

necessitate greater mutual empathy and understanding.

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