CEREMONIAL CRYING: THE COLONIAL PROJECTION

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, "Ceremonial Crying: The Colonial Projection" submitted by Anasuya Priyadarshini Pradhan in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies submitted to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology, Rourkela, is an authentic work carried out by her under my supervision. To the best of my knowledge, the matter embodied in the thesis has not been submitted to any other University / Institute for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

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ABSTRACT

Crying is a social phenomenon. It is highly romanticized, gendered and contested. In some cases it is perceived as a psychological syndrome. Sometimes it highly personal and at numerous other times it acts as a social necessity. In the Indian context, it is an essential part in many social occasions. Deaths, marriages and several other ceremonies are often accompanied by social crying and weeping, which depict our culture's understanding towards multiple sociological phenomena. Social crying has its implications over several cultures, religions and cults that need to be addressed in academic pedagogy.

The present thesis explores that colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of social crying at multiple geographical spaces that housed indigenous communities, such as the Andamanese. In the modern times, however, due to lack of documentation and rapid modernization, the discourse does not have the strictest continuity in our traditions. What we have instead is a forgotten episode of Occidental documentation of the Orient. The thesis evaluates a variety of colonial texts, travelogues, journal entries and letters and maps the way colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying—yet another act of discourse— which was chiefly interpreted as a cultural endeavour to document the native. Focusing on narratives on such indigenous communities, while we argue that such documents have shaped the Oriental World, we also suggest that the documentation of it has shaped 'Indian culture' in framing the idea of Other in Western imagination.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter generally introduces the thesis statement, the problem, and puts forward the background of the study. It introduces the basic terms and definitions, serves as an introductory note to the history of crying, and jots down cultural interactions with a focus on gender-based crying. The Second Chapter is a critique of colonial travelogues that explore the concept of crying in relation to colonial perception and documentation on India, its culture and people, as well as its way of life. It takes ceremonial crying as a basic entity in defining the Oriental culture. The Third Chapter is a critique of such cultural interactions and perceptions and concludes the present study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This thesis deals with the way crying and weeping holds ample significance in understanding Indian culture which include beliefs, customs, traditions, ceremonies, values and the way of life of its people. Indian customs, traditions and rituals are extremely diverse and varied. The country has an extremely rich culture that abounds in different religions and faiths, which makes it most unique. Every belief system has its own set of rites and rituals which makes up a multitude of rituals. Indian cultural and ceremonial practices provide a unique sense of identity to the country and give it a mystical touch which attracts the aliens from different countries. The country has made immense progress since the times of the ancient vedas, and the customs and traditions remain relative to situations. Here some kind of transformation has taken place which cannot be ignored. Due to the emergence of the social processes like industrialization, colonization, urbanization, and modernization, several significant changes have taken place. Even though the customs and rituals vary from one region to another, from

place to place, and from time to time, the same in essence can be observed in Indian customs and rituals.

In response to inflicted pain and grief, crying also serves as a non-verbal communication, sometimes in order to elicit "helping" behaviour from others.[1] It helps in relieving stress and expresses our feelings.[2] It derives social support that influences our well-being and defines our physical and mental health as well.

India's diversity has inspired many foreign travellers and writers to jot down their perceptions of the country's culture in relation to crying and weeping. These writings paint a complex and often conflicting picture of the culture of India. Colonial travellers remain important in documenting our culture's development throughout ages. Colonial narratives on India show how our culture has been perceived at the first sight by foreign travellers and narrators, chiefly termed as aliens, in the initial phase. Based on their interaction, perception and conclusion about Indians, various documents have been written by those foreign travellers.

The present thesis locates such cultural meetings and documentation regarding the first ever cultural interaction and explores how in the modern period, our culture—the perception of it

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[1] The causes of the earlier cries are largely ego-centric, and sensuous in nature. "The child often cries from pain, and for sympathy; in maturity the leading motives are grief and trouble, and the infant cries because of bodily need and especially from anger—which is essentially why the child cries. The anger cry comes earlier, than the grief cry. Fear is a leading motive in the child cry. The cry of the infant or child is largely for the purpose of obtaining something. The cry of the adult is a cry of grief or of sympathy" (Hall, 1887, 156).

[2] That the long inspirations of crying are associated with the effort to cry aloud in order to obtain assistance can hardly be doubted (Hall, 1887, 199).

and its documentation—still remains the same. The globalised world, however, in terms of progression such democracy, larger tolerance, human rights, people hardly perceive those encounters as significant. The documentation of them in a variety of ways about Indian folkways and mores has also a greater relevance of understanding our culture.

The thesis explores that colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying at multiple geographical spaces that housed indigenous communities such as the Andamanese. In the modern times, however, due to lack of documentation and rapid modernization, the discourse does not have the strictest continuity in our traditions. What we have instead is a forgotten or shabby episode of Occidental documentation of the Orient. In this thesis, we evaluate a variety of colonial texts, viz., travelogues, journal entries and letters, and maps the way colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying—yet another act of discourse—which is chiefly interpreted as a cultural endeavour to define the native. Focusing on colonial documentation of the indigenous communities and the culture of social crying, while we argue that such documents have shaped the Oriental World, we also suggest that the documentation of the culture of crying has helped the Western mission of Othering the Orient. In short, we argue that the culture of ceremonial crying—whether in native performance or Western projection—has been crucial in understanding our traditions.

1.3 CRYING: TERMINOLOGY AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term "cry" as "shed tears, shout or scream loudly". *The American Heritage Dictionary* explains "crying" as "demanding or requiring action or attention." Hence, linguistically crying plays the role of an attention-drawing mechanism. Similarly, "weep" or "weeping" is generally considered as shedding tears. "Yell" indicates crying out "loudly, as in pain, surprise, or enthusiasm," and "sob" connotes "to

weep aloud with convulsive gasping; cry uncontrollably" as defined by *The American Heritage Dictionary*. Further, it defines "scream" as "to utter a long, loud, piercing cry, as from pain or fear and "mourn" as "to feel or express grief or sorrow." Conclusively, weeping is more of a quiet, reserved, and sensitive act of expressing grief than crying. "Weeping" may be considered literal pertaining to the reality of everyday life. When someone weeps, in principle, generally we focus on the tears, and not on the noise that accompanies it. Weeping is usually done silently. Contrarily crying is often accompanied by noise or sound. Crying is always done loudly; it is accompanied by noise. Crying involves gasping for breath and these results in a lot of chest heaving. Therefore crying can be defined as a peculiar human expression of social emotion that is difficult to control, but as we have been taught by our society that crying is embarrassing or a sign of weakness, generally we do hide it. We hardly ever come across concepts such as "baby weeping". Children mostly cry to draw attention or to fulfil their demands. Charles Darwin records:

> This feeling is probably one of the earliest which is experienced by infants, as shown by their starting at any sudden sound when only a few weeks old, followed by crying. Before the present one was 4 1/2 months old I had been accustomed to make close to him many strange and loud noises, which were all taken as excellent jokes, but at this period I one day made a loud snoring noise which I had never done before; he instantly looked grave and then burst out crying (Darwin 1877: 285-294).

Darwin's is a case in point. Our society witnesses that babies always cry where in the action a lot of tears, accompanied by noise, flow from their eyes. However, baby-crying and adult-crying differ in principle.

Children cry often. Adults do so rarely, although women are said to cry more often than men. If one were to write the history of tears and crying, even if restricted to that of adults, one would quickly find oneself with a great deal of ground to cover (Michael 1988: 4).

One can cry for various reasons, both out of sorrow and joy. Period of doldrums may include death, failure, departure, etc., where feeling of weakness, helplessness, hopelessness, or discouragement are seen in context and happy endings that may cause tears which include social meeting, social occasions or great success. For example, when we cry at a great success, the tears come out of the memory of the severity of the struggle, the strenuous devotion, and the extreme pain that was taken to attain success (Borgquist 1906: 165). In all cases, moreover, crying is socially constructed and it is more social in nature than individual performance. Differences in the meaning of crying at individual level are usually viewed as a sign of distress and social crying is considered as a sign of necessity and cultural expressiveness.

Essentially, however, crying involves gasping for breath and this results in a lot of chest heaving. Notwithstanding its positioning, crying is chiefly considered embarrassing and the general perception of crying shows a sign of weakness in a perceived masculine society. Crying is, however, highly normalized under certain circumstances and is considered "humane" as in the case of death and burial. Stephen Sideroff claims: "Crying is a natural emotional response to certain feelings, usually sadness and hurt. But then people... cry under other circumstances and occasions" (Kathleen 1989: 5-6). Walter Chip in "Why Do We Cry?" claims that a scientific explanation of crying is lubrication of eye glands. Both owing to clinical explanation and social construction, women are supposed to cry more than men. Moreover, crying is chiefly a social construction, highly gendered and hegemonic in nature.

Though rationale in his approach, Darwin considers tear as a more or less useless accompaniment to muscular contractions around the eyes (Thorsten 2009: 161–177). Furthermore, he notes that crying might be helpful in bringing relief "in much the same way as writhing of the whole body, the grinding of the teeth, and the uttering of the piercing shrieks, all give relief when one is in intense pain" (Darwin 1872: 175). Its social and cultural implication, now age old, has been crucial to our understanding of cultural phenomena to its extremity. History rumours that Saint Francis of Assisi became blind from shedding too much tears. In several cultures, crying is considered as an offence in men and crying has a predominant gender-structure. Men are chiefly not supposed to cry and any occurrence of it is considered as an offence and embarrassment for them. Society perceives it as a sign of weakness (Walter 2006: 44). In many cultures, it is more socially acceptable for women and children to cry, and less socially acceptable for men.[3] This may be because women are less reluctant than men to engage in emotional situations.

> In several of the ceremonies described in this chapter it will be noticed that the weeping of relatives and friends occurs as an essential part of the ceremony. The female relatives of a youth or girl who is being initiated come and weep over him or her at the turtle-eating ceremony. Their friends weep over, or with, the mourners at the dance at the end of mourning. The friends of a bride and bridegroom weep over them when they are married (Radcliffe-Brown 1921: 116-17).

Here Radcliffe-Brown has shown how crying and weeping are the essential part of Andamanese society. They do cry and exchange of presents when friends come together as

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[3] Vingerhoets and Scheirs (2000) have identified fourteen studies which apply different research methodologies comparing the crying of men and women. It has been found consistently that women cry more often and intensely than men (Vingerhoets and Scheirs, 2000).

means of reflecting their feelings of attachment to one another. The weeping at marriage, at initiation of any occasion and on the occasion of a death is a reflection of compensation when feelings of solidarity and belongingness are attacked by a partial breaking of the social ties that bind persons to one another. While meeting the friends and relatives after a long time the Andamanese people embrace each other and weep with uncontrolled joy, undoubtedly to releases tension and express their mutual friendship and attachment. This renews their social attachment and social ties are modified. During marriage the bride weeps with the feeling of the sorrow of a partial separation. The family members and relatives console her by weeping and expressing their tenderness towards the girl. Crying and mourning express the belongingness and attachment which is very important in the social life of Andaman Islanders. The purpose of weeping rituals is to affirm the existence of a social cohesiveness and emotional bond between two or more persons.

According to Paul D. MacLean when our oldest ancestors cremated their deceased, they were overcome by emotions as well as the smoke that got in their eyes. A theory that follows evolutionary psychology is given by Paul D. MacLean in relation to crying. He suggests that the vocal part of crying is used first as a "separation cry" to help reunite parents and offspring. He assumes that tears are a result of a link between the development of the cerebrum and the discovery of fire. MacLean figures that since early humans must have relied heavily on fire, their eyes frequently produced reflexive tears in response to the smoke. As humans evolved and began to say "Rest in Peace" to their dead, the smoke possibly gained a strong association with the loss of life and, therefore, sorrow (Lutz 1999: 90–91). MacLean believes the crucial link between funeral fire and tears that connected death and tears in our psyche. Weeping, crying, and yelling out in grief and pain are culture-specific and they generally differ from one culture to another. At an outset, thus, crying seems to be

characterized by psychology or physiological syndrome, but in actuality "crying" and "cultures" are contested sites having larger socio-cultural implications. Social or ceremonial crying are loaded terms possessing ample significance of cultural perceptions. Crying, undoubtedly releases tension and increases mutual friendship and attachment. In short, gender and special cultural or social occasions remain central to an episode of crying.

Indian projection of crying is also very often stereotyped. In general sense, the differences seem to emerge around puberty, which may be related to hormonal changes but also to the influence of gender stereotypes. It does not mean that tears are not healthy for men; however, in reality, in several cultures crying is considered as an offence in men and crying has a predominant gender-structure. Men are chiefly not supposed to cry in many cultures and any occurrence of it is considered as an offence and embarrassment for them. Society perceives it as a sigh of weakness (Walter 2006: 44). In many cultures, it is more socially acceptable for women and children to cry, and less socially acceptable for men.[4] Vingerhoets and Scheirs (2000) have identified fourteen studies which apply different research methodologies comparing the crying of men and women. In every case, women reported crying more easily and more often than men. This is because women are less reluctant than men to engage in emotional situations.[5] In the Indian context, "crying" is an essential part in many social occasions. Deaths, marriages and several other ceremonies are often accompanied by crying.

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[4] E.H. Man in *The Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands* (1878) described that the crying chorus is started by women, but the men speedily chime in, and groups of three or four may thus be seen weeping in concert until, from sheer exhaustion, they are compelled to desist; then, if neither of the parties are in mourning, a dance is got up, in which the females not unfortunately take part, but the style of their performance differs from that of the males.

[5] In leisure time, the sexes differ in the kind of stimulation they are interested in. For example, women may be more likely to watch tear jerker or read sentimental novels or poems, while men prefer to spend their leisure time with watching and reading about other topics, such as sports, cars and computers (Kottler 1996).

They indicate our culture's understanding towards multiple sociological phenomena. Crying generates a sense of kindness, sympathy, belongingness and social solidarity. It has vast significance in maintaining social relationship in family life, religion and morality as well.[6] Sometimes it is highly romanticized in different cultures, chiefly gendered and in some cases it is perceived as a psychological syndrome. In Indian context, men are less inclined to explain their tears, hardly they do shed tears and very quietly, basically in response to the death ceremony of loved ones and in response to religious experiences. Men cannot cry openly unlike women, because in India men are considered as the father figures, the heads, and the protectors. The story about ritual mourners in ancient Egypt is still celebrated; the more the number of mourners, the more it seems that the dead was a willed or a famous person. The number of mourners represents the wealth of the person who dies. Sometimes weeping is deeply a personal act and on numerous occasions it is a social necessity. Radcliffe-Brown terms it as "ceremonial weeping" in his study on Andamanese people (Brown 1964: 117). He found that Andamanese society has seven occasions for ceremonial weeping, three of which involved reciprocal (interactive) weeping and four of which involved one-sided weeping like weeping for a dead person. According to him, personally the ceremonial weeping serves as relieving stress, emotional tension and socially its purpose is more interesting and fundamental.

People claim that, while most animals shed tears of physical cause, human beings are the only creatures who shed emotional tears. Those who failed to shed tears on demand were

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[6] E.H. Man in *The Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands (1878)* wrote: "Relatives, after an absence of a few weeks or months testify their joy at meeting by sitting with their arms round each other's necks, and weeping and howling in a manner which would lead a stranger to suppose that some great sorrow had befallen them; and, in point of fact, there is no difference observable between their demonstrations of joy on these occasions and those of grief at the death of one of their number."

judged to be non-human or under the control of demons (Ebersole 2000). Charles Darwin said, "Weeping is one of the special expressions of man." As man is a social animal (Aristotle), he is always in need of social support and social crying helps man to derive it. Radcliffe-Brown distinguishes between seven different occasions for ceremonial weeping: 1) when friends or relatives meet again after a period of separation, they embrace each other and both weep; 2) the same thing happens at the conclusion of a peace treaty between former enemies; 3) at the end of the period of mourning after a death, the mourner's friends weep with the mourner; 4) immediately after a death friends and the bereaved weep over the body; 5) when the bones are exhumed for the 'second burial' they are wept over again; 6) at weddings the relatives of the bride and groom weep; 7) finally, at initiation rites the female relatives of the initiate weep (Michael 1988: 65). Besides the social implications, in psychological point of view, the researchers of South Florida University have viewed that, when we get stressed or face any difficulties, our heart starts beating faster and it starts sweating too. If in this adverse situation, our eyes get tear naturally, then the stress hormone get eliminated. Tears make us feel relaxed and free from worries. It is a very interesting fact that children do not cry at happy endings as because they lack emotional maturity. Emotional tears are stimulated by happy, sad, or other strong feelings.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objectives of the research and the research questions include how crying and weeping are socio-cultural phenomena, how it is perceived as a psychological syndrome, how it is gendered very often, who cries more (men / women / children), how class and socio-economic status make people to weep, how the Colonial travellers perceived Indian Culture and Indians in relation to crying, what they have depicted in various Colonial texts, travelogues, journal entries, letters and diaries regarding Indians and their ability of weeping,

what their will and finally what are the different occasions and festivals where crying and weeping are mandatory in Indian context.

1.5 FURTHER CHAPTERIZATION

The Second Chapter deals with the socio-cultural significance of ceremonial crying with a special focus on Andaman society. It also explores how the colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of social crying at multiple geographical spaces housing indigenous communities. The gendered aspect of crying is projected in this chapter as well. The third chapter includes the conclusion part. It describes briefly the work done in the thesis, how the culture of crying is getting transformed in the present scenario and also depicts the scope of further research.

CHAPTER II

CEREMONIAL CRYING: THE INDIAN PROJECTIONS

The chapter explores that colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying at multiple geographical spaces that housed indigenous communities such as the Andamanese. In the modern times, however, due to lack of documentation and rapid modernization, the discourse does not have the strictest continuity in our traditions. What we have instead is a forgotten or shabby episode of Occidental documentation of the Orient. It evaluates a variety of colonial texts, viz., travelogues, journal entries and letters, and maps the way colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying—yet another act of discourse—which is chiefly interpreted as a cultural endeavour to define the native.

Crying is a social phenomenon.[7] It is highly romanticized, gendered and contested. Very often society grants women and children to cry and in case of men crying regarded as an embarrassing act.[8] In Indian society, men hardly cry.

> The sound of lamentation with which he is welcomed may then quite simply have the function of appeasing the spirit, in some cases even frightening it away. This is probably in many cases how one should explain the strange welcoming ceremony

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[7] The purpose of crying is social; it demands and assumes the co-operation and good will. It involves a sense of hope. The act of crying is therefore a psycho-social situation having social significance. It is the reverse of the objective side of the act of helpfulness which lies at the bottom of social development. Hence the ability to cry primarily depicts the need, and does not stand for the moral state of the crier.

[8] It is said that women who are able to find relief in tears keep their youth longer than those who repress them.

found among the Indians which has been called "the tearful greeting", and in which the women and children play the main role (Michael 1988).

Crying is not always a social or ceremonial act, in some cases crying is perceived as a psychological syndrome as well. Some things in life cause people to feel; these are called emotional reactions and crying is the best example of the emotional reaction.

In the Indian context, "crying" is an essential part in many social occasions. Deaths, marriages and several other ceremonies are often accompanied by crying. They indicate our culture's understanding towards multiple sociological phenomena. Crying generates a sense of kindness, sympathy, belongingness and social solidarity. It has vast significance in maintaining social relationship in family life, religion and morality as well. Crying is highly romanticized and chiefly gendered and in some cases it is perceived as a psychological syndrome. In the Indian context, men are less inclined to explain their tears; hardly do they shed tears; and if mandatory, basically in response to the death ceremony of loved ones and in response to religious experiences, the episode lasts a shorter while as compared to women's tears. Men cannot cry openly like women, because in India men are considered as the father figures, the heads, and the protectors. Ceremonial crying is mostly initiated by women in India. They are treated as the weak gender. Mourning rituals were originally established to help individuals cope with bereavement by emphasizing kinship and solidarity and providing a meaningful and legitimate grieving process.

Marriage is so significant to both Indian culture and society that it includes both happy and sad experience. This social system in India, chiefly among the Hindus, best displays the culture and tradition, where "crying" plays a vital role. Likewise, death rituals involve tradition that has been drawn from the Vedas. Although is follows a particular pattern yet

there can be seen some variations according to the changes in region, sect, caste, class and most importantly family tradition. Certain death rituals are traditionally performed by priest whereas others are performed but the family members of the deceased. Especially the 'Homa' ritual which is significant is performed by the family. The ritual is led by a chief mourner from among the members of the family. Chiefly, in case of the death of the father it is the eldest son who becomes the chief mourner and in case of the mother it is the youngest son. The tradition is flexible enough to allow the eldest son, the wife, son-in-law or any nearest male relative to serve as the chief-mourner. The family then builds a shelter—a place for fire ritual (homa). The chief mourner leads the rites of the homa who performs the arati by passing an oil lamp over the body and then offers flowers. Depending upon the gender of the diseased, male or female relatives carry the body to the back porch for cleansing. In the extreme case when there is no secluded place for the purpose the body is sponge-bathed. First, the relatives apply sesame oil on the head and then pour water on the body from the nine Kumbhas that is placed in the Homa in the beginning of the ritual. Later on the body is dressed and is placed in the coffin or on a palanquin as desired by the family and is carried to the Homa shelter. The younger member of the family moves round the body holding lighted incense stick and singing hymns. The women too walk around the body and offer puffed rice into the mouth signifying nourishment of the diseased for a heavenly journey ahead. A widow becomes the greatest mourner on the death of her husband who places her 'Tali' i.e. wedding pendent around her husband's neck which is significant of her cherished and eternal relationship with him. The tradition of a group of women relatives crying aloud for long as a gesture to show their bereavement for the dead still persists in our society. The dead body is then taken away for burial or cremation. Rituals are a method to help individuals understand and accept the finality of life and to teach us to live with the pain. Therefore, social crying or

mourning has its implications over several cultures, religions, and cults that need to be addressed in the academic pedagogy.

Crying has a lot of psycho-social significance. Very often it is manipulative—a way to express our emotions, a means to maintain social relationship and a weapon to fulfil our demands too. Whether we ask a friend to go out for shopping, or agree with a spouse to have a luxurious vacation, our faces also hold the key to wonderful communication; we can smile, and we can cry. Smiling is clearly developed chiefly for social purposes; crying, on the other hand, may have begun as a solely biological mechanism (for reducing stress) and then acquired an important social meaning. And so crying evolved for the dual purpose of physically dissipating tension and conveying profound emotion in the social functions as well. In our social interactions; culturally, greater female weepiness is taken for granted which is perhaps seen in every corner of the world. That is why in most of the social ceremonies where crying is considered mandatory, mostly the females do play the role of the criers. The occasions such as marriage and death ceremonies, we require emotional support. Grief can draw together the people who knew the deceased, bonded by the same emotion. Our traditions, religious rituals and beliefs, folkways and mores give us great support and hope. Emotional tears may be a piece of the equation that renders human beings biologically and culturally unique.

In academic pedagogy, western texts that project ceremonial crying have shaped the Oriental World and the documentation of it has shaped "Indian Culture" in framing the idea of others in Western imagination. Such Western imagination is constructed through the literary texts and historical records that often limit the understanding of the facts about Indians. The

travelogues explain how the foreign travellers were welcomed by Indians with an episode of crying:

> The women speak of all the accidents the traveller could have met with, and try to find the saddest expressions, those best suited to provoke tears. When the traveller is a Portuguese, they lament most grievously the misfortune of their ancestors, who didn't know such a worthy and remarkable people as the Portuguese, whose country supplies them [the Indians] with all the good things they see; and then they reel off precisely those things they are fondest of (Metraux, 1928:181).

Mourning is thus not only seen in death ceremonies, marriages, or any other social occasions, people also do cry for travelers. During traveling the travelers do take much pain, to depict that concern people do cry for the travelers. But in the recent years such traditions are hardly followed. But crying for relatives is universal and seen in almost every parts of the world. During the course of our lives, the most important emotional events without exception are typically accompanied by tearfulness, whether they are positive (e.g., weddings, reunions, the birth of a child or successful performances) or negative events (e.g., loss of beloved persons or cherished goods, separation cries, or failing important events) (Vingerhoets and Randolph 2001: 80-81). Captain E.H. Man, for instance, in *The Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands* states: "Home, after an unusually successful hunting or fishing expedition, the men raise a shout of triumph in order to appraise their friends of their good fortune, and the women take up the cry and express their delight by yelling and slapping their thighs." (149).

It is said that emotions of the Indians speak more than their words. The expression of our emotion is more pronounced than others. Indians do exhibit their distress more openly than

that of the European or even other Eastern societies. This reaction is involuntary in them and not easy to suppress, because it is cultural. Indian culture (the way of life, the literatures, folkways and mores, habits, gestures, tools to enable them to survive and prosper, customs and traditions that define values and organize social interactions, religious beliefs and rituals, and dress, art, and music to make symbolic and aesthetic expressions etc.) is itself very unique one.

Grinnel says: "Indians at home and when acting naturally, freely express their emotions. They laugh and chatter and make jokes and cry, shedding actual tears, sometimes with the appearance of great grief, anger or self pity: sometimes with no apparent reason…Mourning for the dead is usually accompanied by the shedding of tears." (Hall 1887: 153-154).

The Westerners documents also depict the inferiority status of women in Indian socio-cultural milieu, where their capability, power, wishes and freedom are highly neglected.[9] Not only the social setting but also the women themselves love to be treated as the slaves of men. They were dedicating their lives for their men in such a way that they assume going for *Sati* as their duty. Moreover, their tradition regarded them as sinners if their husbands sacrifice their lives in the burning pyre of their wives.

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[9] During the time period of 1586-1652, the Italian Traveler Pietro Della Valle visited in India. He wrote a documentary on the Sati rituals. In November, 1623, he saw the incident of Sati ritual in the town of Ikkeri. He saw a procession in which a widow was mounted on a horse. She was holding a lemon in her right hand and a mirror in her left. In that procession, people sang her glories and admired her sacrifice. Pietro Della admired the courage of the women. On the day of Sati, he visited the widow. She was wearing of white cloths. She was also decorated with flowers and jewellery. She had two children. She was one of the three wives of her husband, but she had to go Sati. She told Pietro Della its reason that a woman goes Sati only by the wish of God. She explained all the rituals that were going on to Pietro Della.

Sati or *Sahagamana* was prevalent among a certain class of women, who either took the vow or deemed it a great honour to die on the funeral pyres of their husbands. Ibn Batuta observed that *Sati* was considered praiseworthy by the Hindus, without however being obligatory. The *Agni Purana* declares that the woman who committed *Sahagamana* goes to heaven. (Kamat 1980: 121)

The origin of Sati system is traced in the Puranas where there is an example of suicide committed by Satidevi in the sacrificial fireplace *Yajnakunda* of Lord Brahma. Whereas some argue that the system of Sati originated from the Vedic period of Indian society. An instance of Sati can also be found in the epic Mahabharata, where Madri sacrificed herself on the funeral pyre of her husband Pandu. Feminists argue that this system is the reflection of heinous crime against women, as it portrays their torture in the hands of men. On the other hand the system projects the Brahminical dominance over the people of lower caste. The English translation of Jyotsna Kamat's popular research book on Indian women *Ondu Adhyayana: Studies in Womanhood* (1999) is a case of study. It portrays the status of Indian women beautifully and reflects the society's denial of rights and freedom to women. The interesting part of the society presented in the book is that women are exploited inspite of the fact that Indian society is a society which takes credit in worshiping and respecting women. In the book, Kamat throws light on some of the unique features and issues of Indian woman and society.

In the Indian context—either as a social phenomenon or social construct—emotions are as meaningful as words. Specific to cultural occasions, the purview of crying encompasses folk songs to modern literature and its ever-arching purview is, in most cases, para-Indian in nature. Sitakant Mohapatra's collection of tribal songs, for instance, indicates multiple tribal

societies have songs which are accompanied by crying. The Kondh and Praja of Odisha, for instance, have sundry songs that mourn the dead and rituals for the dead which are accompanied by crying. Numerous other celebrations such as marriages and separations also are accompanied by crying. Its genesis is age-old, as old as civilization, and its continuity can be witnessed through the vast continent. Hence, crying has a greater significance in literature and society from ancient period to modern times. For example, owing to the tears that Cinderella shed on her diseased mother's grave, she was gifted with the garments that she needed for her transformation (Walter 2009: 345-50). In the Indian context such aspect of ceremonial crying—that neglected the personal one—has been portrayed as exotic:

> A husband who is childless and has been absent from his home for some time, on his return to the encampment visits first blood relation (if any), and when they have wept together he goes to his own hut, not in order to shed more tears, but to see and talk to his spouse. The same remark applies to a wife similarly circumstanced. But in the case of married couples who are parents, the meeting takes place first between them; the wife hangs round her husband's neck sobbing as if her heart would break with joy at their re-union; when she is exhausted with weeping, he leaves her, and, going to one of his relations, gives vent to his pent-up feelings of happiness by bursting into tears (Man 1876: 451-469).

In general we presume that most animals shed tears due to physical cause, while emotional tears are shed by human beings. Our emotions are projected through crying, where our psychological state is reflected. "Emotion goes on and off for everyone"—this statement depicts how people's emotion varies from situation to situation. Our thoughts, observations, perceptions and feelings make us cry. Emotional tears are goaded by happy, sad, or also other

strong feelings where our culture's understanding towards multiple sociological phenomena is reflected. The notion of crying due to emotional reasons is very old and unique to humans. Hence here it can be noted that in Renaissance Europe suspected witches and werewolves were required to cry in order to prove their human nature. Hence, the act of crying has also defined human nature and socially its relevance has been very crucial to human existence. Certainly children do not cry at happy endings because they lack emotional maturity. Emotion strengthens relationship and develops cohesiveness among people. Mourning rituals were originally established to help individuals cope with bereavement (Mystakidou et al., 2003) by emphasizing kinship and solidarity and providing a meaningful and legitimate grieving process (Houlbrooke, 1989; Thompson, 2002).

Mostly weeping is judged as a sign of weakness; an emotion exhibited on sadness and for mourning. The work of women in Rome is chiefly to shed tears for the dead relatives, or the diseased friends and rulers. Likewise crying is more often a feminine concept in India as well. In ancient India there is a ready evidence of it; once when Parashurama returned home, he found his mother crying hysterically. When he asked his mother about the reason of her cry, she replied that it was the result of her sorrow and anguish upon her husband's death.   In modern India, the role of tear has been increased mainly to gain public attention. Another case can be included here, the case of the Wimbledon Men's Singles Final 2012, on 8th July where we got to see Andy Murray crying on the ground after losing the match. At the same time being the winner Roger Federer also shed tears. It is noted that Federer regularly cried at the end of his matches no matter what the end was. Federer believed it was fine for men to cry and "to show you are human, that your heart can be broken too." He is of the opinion that fans get more attached emotionally with the event. He also told, "When you cry, you communicate with fans. I think they appreciate the fact that we care about winning and

losing, we care about what they feel. So, it's OK to break down, to let it all out" (Nangia 2012). It strengthens the emotional relationship between the player and the audiences.

Every social structure is a complex framework within which different institutions, associations, and groups are tied together in organizational and functional interdependence where some traditions and customs are followed. Among the ancient thoughts about tear speaks that in the Eastern part of the world, it was customary for mourners to collect their tears in bottles and put them at the tombs of their loved ones as a proof of their intense grief. Ancient Greeks buried their dead with lacrimatories vials full of mourners' tears (Lehr 2011). By Egyptian wall painting it was discovered that their dead body burial procession was accompanied by a ceremony of crying. The funeral ceremony is considered as one of the most vital ceremonies where eight women and four men do cry reflected by many different gestures of mourning. They beat their breasts, throw dust on their heads, tear their garments, they do sit among the ashes and cry too heavily (Borgquist 1906: 170). In the same way even the culture of crying is deeply rooted in India. Instances are found where women are paid to cry at a complete stranger's (The Landlords, Maliks, Mahajans, Maharajas etc.) death ceremony. Indian society has a hierarchy based on caste. The system of domination is prevalent depending on the hierarchy of caste, class, gender, religion, etc.. The marginalised are left with no voice.

In India, among the castes, Brahmins are dominant whereas in relation to gender, men dominated the opposite sex. The higher caste landlords, traditionally maintained the authority over the village and having more strength numerically had an upper hand politically. Besides they demanded respect for their status in the society. During the time of Zamindari system in India the status of wealthy families were defined in terms of *Rudaalis* they could hire at the

death ceremonies of their kith and kins to cry and mourn publicly at their funeral ceremonies. *Rudaali* (a professional mourner) used to visit funerals to cry over any landlord's death and burial. Such crying was accompanied by songs praising the dead, his personality and past deeds. Rudaali is one of the notorious orthodox practices where mourning was compulsory expressions of uncontrolled emotions by rolling on ground and beating head and breast accompanied by songs in praise of the dead (Devi 1999: 75). Chiefly the poverty-stricken women belonging to lower castes were forced to become *Rudaalis*. They were regarded as no less than prostitutes. Hence the socially outcaste women were leading the lives of most vulnerable and marginal group in society. *Rudaalis* could still be found in the northern parts of India where the culture of public mourning made by professional mourners were in practise. Not only among Hindus, the culture of crying at funeral can also be seen among Muslims. Elegies (Poem or song composed especially as a lament for the dead) that are sung in Zinab's lamentation among the Kashmiris for instance—remain central to mourning for the dead representing his contribution to society. This system is culture-specific to India. But with the decay of feudal landlordism and fiefdom practices, the Rudaali profession is dying out slowly. As discussed, especially the poor and distressed women were forced into such profession, it is very clear to note that the status of women in Indian society has been marginalized. The roles that they play are chiefly confined within the four walls of the house. Women in those days had not even an iota of socio-economic rights in the patriarchal society.

In a nutshell, it can be narrated that Rudaali is a clear indicator of the marginalized status of women in connection with the socio-political scenario. In some instances, the funerals of aristocrats (such as Zamindaars and Landlords) involves hiring Rudaalis sometimes before their death, to make sure that well-known Rudaalis come to their funeral to cry out. Dalit women in India, chiefly in Rajastan were subjugated to a great extent the depiction of which

can be seen in Indian made movies *Rudaali* and *Bawandar*. The extreme form of patriarchal hegemony and the caste stratification has created havoc in the lives of the Rajasthani women by exploiting them in many different ways. They have been highly discriminated, exploited and subjugated for their marginalized socio-economic status. And they were mostly exploited by Maliks, Mahajans and Maharajas of the hamlets who were from higher castes chiefly displaying Brahminical patriarchy. Even if Rudaalis were reluctant to do the job, they had no voice and were denied to express themselves rather were supposed to express others' emotions by wailing at others' burial. They were dressed in black and with unkempt hair, were expected to beat their chests, crying and wailing over the dead and even dancing by scattering themselves with vehement outcry in praise of the deceased. This signifies the barbarous practices of the death rituals. Dalit women thus were forced to a culture of subjugation and tolerance. The narrative texts in documenting Indian culture, tradition, beliefs and practices disclose of extreme form of marginalisation of women—marginalisation that is caste specific, gender specific, culture specific and society specific.

The movie *Rudali* portrays a low caste woman as a victim of the phallocentric Brahmanical patriarchy.[10] The barbarous treatment by the society's superiors and feudal lords along with the class oppression and economic misery made women to be *Rudaalis*. Hence, *Rudali* refers to a humiliating toil of the low caste women who wail over their caste master's death:

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[10] Uma Chakravarty in "Conceptualizing Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India: Gender, Caste, Class and State," *Economic and Political Weekly* 28 (1993) describes this Brahmanic Hindu world in which extreme form of social stratification is practiced by which the low caste people especially low caste women are subjected. Caste and gender hierarchy are the chief causes of this Brahmanical social order. Even the upper caste women are forced to maintain not only patriarchal succession but also caste purity, and the state of low caste women was horrible.

Sexual violence in the form of rape has been the time-old practice to discipline women who have weaned themselves away from socially-acknowledged canons of conduct. Sanwari's protest against child marriage and Shanichari's consistent refusal to be a *rudaali* poses a challenge to the redundant caste system, which defines a *Dalit* as a mute, bound to obey the *diktats* (norms) of society. *Bawandar*shows, as Karin Kapadia puts it, 'Rape is not only sexually motivated—it is a weapon of power…it is a violation of a physical and mental nature (Arvind 2002: 120).

The Westerners documents also depict the inferiority status of women in Indian socio-cultural milieu, where their capability, power, wishes and freedom are highly neglected. [11]

Noteworthy to mention here is that Colonial travellers were greeted with an episode of crying in various cultures. As Colonial documentations state, in several Indian cultures—the Andamanese for example—Colonial travellers and occupants perceived and documented such episode of crying which have been crucial in the mission of Oriental narratology. Captain E.H. Man, for instance, states in *The Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands* states: "Home, after an unusually successful hunting or fishing expedition, the men raise a shout of triumph in order to appraise their friends of their good fortune, and the women take up the cry and express their delight by yelling and slapping their thighs" (149). During the

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[11] During the time period of 1586-1652, the Italian Traveler Pietro Della Valle visited in India. He wrote a documentary on the Sati rituals. In November, 1623, he saw the incident of Sati ritual in the town of Ikkeri. He saw a procession in which a widow was mounted on a horse. She was holding a lemon in her right hand and a mirror in her left. In that procession, people sang her glories and admired her sacrifice. Pietro Della admired the courage of the women. On the day of Sati, he visited the widow. She was wearing of white clothes and was also decorated with flowers and jewellery. She had two children. She was one of the three wives of her husband, but she had to go Sati. She told Pietro Della its reason that a woman goes Sati only by the wish of God. She explained all the rituals that were going on to Pietro Della.

course of our lives, the most important emotional events without exception are typically accompanied by tearfulness, whether they are positive (e.g., weddings, reunions, the birth of a child or successful performances) or negative events (e.g., loss of beloved persons or cherished goods, separation cries, or failing important events) (Vingerhoets and Randolph 2001: 80-81).

The globalized and Westernized world however in terms of progression such as democracy, larger tolerance, human rights perceives those encounters and thereby documentation of them in a variety of ways. For example, women travellers during the period of starting 17th century to 19th century had a different side of the cultural encounter to document. The perception of women-natives by colonial women travellers show in principle the role of the native women in the Orient. Unlike Occidental cultures, where any public expression of grief and pain is considered indecent, because grief and pain are taken to be extremely private and intimate, in Oriental cultures, to withhold such public expression of grief through loud crying is considered to be unhealthy and almost abnormal. It is observed that with the rapid pace of urbanisation and Westernisation, the open show of grief in the form of crying and weeping is on the way of decline [Shoma A. Chatterji, The Culture specific Use of Sound in India Cinema, Film Critic, India (Paper presented at International Symposium on Sound in Cinema in London April 1518, 1999)]. Social ties are breaking, values are disappearing, the families are collapsing, companionship is at risk and child-socialization is becoming defective with the passage of time. Love, affection, mutual understanding and sacrifice are getting replaced by the materialism and urban way of living. In this scenario there is least place for tears. People are becoming so busy, their life is getting so hectic and materialistic that results in disappearance of emotional bondage which ultimately drops or degrades the value of crying.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

The thesis basically deals with the phenomenon of crying, the related terms and terminology (cry, sob, weep, yell, scream, mourn etc.) speculation about the history of crying, different socio-cultural interactions and the role of crying in various ceremonies are focused here chiefly in Indian society. Critical review of colonial travelogues that explored the concept of crying from their perception and documentation on Indians, their culture and tradition, and their way of living is also reflected in the thesis. Ceremonial crying and the documentation of Oriental culture are being given emphasis to the last two chapters. This chapter is a critique of the cultural interactions and perceptions of the travellers and concludes the study with a summary of the work done.

Society is being a web of social relationships, where a pattern of norms of interaction by the members of the society is maintained. The cultural traditions of India has been passed on from generation to generation and is deeply rooted in the Indian way of living even in this twenty-first century. But due to the emergence of the social processes like industrialization, colonization, urbanization, and modernization, some changes have taken place. Being culturally very strong, India has been attracting many outsiders to explore itself. India, in the past, has witnessed successive waves of cultural meeting, with the Persians, the Arabs, the British, the Turks etc. who came to India. They have left behind their indelible mark which is still reflected in the culture and traditions of India. After the cultural interaction, they have documented on India and its people. Today, in this globalised world, in terms of progression like democracy, larger tolerance, human rights, people perceive those encounters and documentation as significant.

The documentation on crying certainly proves that crying is a socio-cultural phenomenon, which is seen in every society. Till date, although there is much speculation about crying, there is less evidence on origin of functions of crying, a unique and typical human form of expressing emotions (Vingerhoets, Cornelius, Van Heck and Becht 2000: 354). Human psychology is always linked with all its actions. It is same in case of crying as well. One does not cry at any social gathering unless and until he/she has not developed an intense feeling within. Sobbing out is a way to relieve our stress, to show our feelings, and to get out of tensions. Even we do cry at felicitous situations because any strong emotion can cause tears in our eyes. Tears, basically serves as a mechanism to know how we are feeling and it also help others to see how do we feel. It is something that needs to catch the attention of others. Sometimes crying is manipulative in various social functions. Indian society gives greater emphasis to crying. Crying has much social implications, which is narrated in different documents in relation to various cultural interactions. Of course every culture has gone through some transitions, but still it is same in many ways.

Crying has a gender structure. Men are especially not supposed to cry in many cultures and occurrence of it is generally considered as an offence and embarrassment. It has been found consistently that women cry more often and intensely than men. Both the social and the scientific reason behind frequent crying among women has been clearly mentioned in both the chapters. The hormone Prolactin plays the key role causing more tears among women and as crying is more socially acceptable for women. The most important occasions when crying plays a crucial role—death, puberty and marriage. In puberty and marriage, the socio-cultural history is displayed; social and moral values are connected with crying. Women do cry, because these two ceremonies represent a turning point in their lives, where their roles

change. They enter into a life full of endurance and responsibilities. The sentiment of being away from her family, the bondage, and the affection create the platform of ritual drama among the family members and relatives. The tears depict the bride's past, present and her uncertain future. Traditional marriage songs do multiply the essence of crying event. Crying due to death of any family members, relatives or any near and dear ones is accompanied with crying to depict the pain of losing someone very special. Many rituals are often followed during the time to display the grief. While welcoming friends and relatives, very often lead to a tearful environment. Most importantly, tears come out as a result of the result of the anguish of being away from them, the pain they took to reach and of being empathetic to each others' suffering.

Here the instances from Colonial writing where Colonial travellers / Imperial soldiers have concluded about Indian culture are taken into consideration. The variety of colonial texts—travelogues, journal entries, letters and diaries have thrown light on Indians and their culture in relation to crying. The chief focus is made on Andaman Islanders and their rituals. Among the most significant rituals practised by them on the occasion of different ceremonies and social functions are the rituals of crying. The same ritual is observed on the many different occasions of very many different ceremonies, its function in all these ceremonies should be interpreted as identical. In the words of Brown, the weeping and exchange of presents when friends come together to meet is a means of renewing their feelings of attachment to one another. The weeping at marriage, at initiation and on death ceremonies is a reaction of defence or compensation feelings of solidarity are attacked by a partial breaking of the social ties and emotions that binds a person to one another. The weeping ritual among Andamanese may be observed on the occasions like, expression of affective state of mind, consciousness of duty, connectedness with laws regulating the life, renewal of social sentiments, fulfilment

of social needs etc. where they shed tears out of the sense of solidarity, social ties, feeling of responsibility, social consciousness etc. to maintain the social relations altogether (Sharma and Sharma 1997: 249-50). Death rituals incorporate the elements of separation, transition and feeling of loss. Normal social life is in a state of suspension for a prescribed period of mourning, the activities hemmed in by taboos. For Radcliff-Brown, death rituals are the collective expressions of feeling appropriate to the situation. In this common display of emotion, individuals display their commitment to each other and to the society itself. Ritual functions to affirm the social bond. (Radcliffe-Brown 1968: 168).

Besides crying for their friends and relatives, people also cry in welcoming the unknown colonial travellers who come to visit India. They were greeted with an episode of social crying at multiple geographical spaces housing indigenous communities. The tears were shed with a sense of empathy towards the travellers; for the pain they undertook and for the sufferings they had undergone while travelling. But in the present era, due to lack of documentation the issue is given least focus.

In the present modern life, ceremonies involving crying have declined in importance in modern life. Now ritual is less important in our society because relationships are distinctive, spread out in different physical surroundings with different sets of performers. Families, roles, and social ties are segregated. Social cohesion and solidarity have weakened. Disputes are compartmentalized. Disharmony and conflicts are contained within institutional boundaries. Importance of rites in traditional society was comparatively of more significance, but now in the present context people focus more upon materialism, professionalism, money, status, power etc. The social gathering is of very formal and with less emotional attachment. Ceremonial participation teaches and reminds the individual of the responsibilities he / she is

to be obligated with. He / she learn to act in accordance with norms and sanctions that legitimize the role. Rituals bind social relationships and cohesiveness which is lacks in the present times. If ritual is less important in modern society, it is because of the availability of alternative channels of access to new social power and positions. In traditional society, an individual has to undergo ritual passage in preparation for a new social role, but today an individual moves ahead by gaining credentials, by meeting universal criteria set by schools and colleges, offices, and by birth, marriage and death registries. In a nutshell, we are losing our values, morals and culture while running before power, prestige and status.

Future Research:

The transitions that are taking place in our culture and tradition with the passage of time in relation to crying can be an ongoing document. The effects of westernization, globalization, modernization and industrialization should be focused. In addition to these four social processes what are the other factors leading to the transition can be narrated Any other ceremonies, where crying played a vital role chiefly among the indigenous people that has been extinct can be further explored.

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