



## I AM ANGLO-INDIAN – A STORY OF BELONGING AND THE DILEMMA OF IDENTITY

Walter Hugh Parker

### ABSTRACT

This paper can be considered as a semi-autobiographical work in progress and outlines my realization of the importance of belonging and finding one's identity. It focuses mainly on my dilemma of identification with Anglo-Indians and development of a true community consciousness. My aim is to establish that this dilemma may exist in the lives of other Anglo-Indians, who may have faced the same struggle with identity as I have. I was born in Pondicherry, a town on the southeast coast of India, to Anglo-Indian parents, Leonard Parker and Joan Perreira. I have always considered my life in Pondicherry to be a wholesome experience of good education and parental upbringing. It has also been a journey through which I have discovered who I really am and where I come from. This article describes the challenges I have faced in being Anglo-Indian, and being able to call myself Anglo-Indian, without the fear of rejection and the fear of not knowing about one's true roots. Apart from the main part of this paper being about my personal experiences, the importance that it highlights in terms of the ethnicity and education for every Anglo-Indian is noteworthy. It is possible that the contents of this paper, in relation to my personal experiences, can apply to other Anglo-Indians also. It is therefore my intention to make such experiences visible.

### INTRODUCTION – THE ANGLO-INDIAN 'COMMUNITY'

The Anglo-Indian community is considered a small minority community having its origins in India. The term 'Anglo-Indian' had long been used to refer to the British resident in India, but its use to describe the community of mixed descent can be

traced back to the year 1911. In the census of that year, 'Anglo-Indian' became the accepted term used for people "of European descent in the male line but of mixed European and Indian blood" (Anthony, 1969, p. 3). The European ancestry of an Anglo-Indian was always considered to be paternal<sup>1</sup>. The history of Anglo-Indians can be traced back to the sixteenth century in Portuguese south India, and in the seventeenth century, when other settlers from Europe (particularly the British of the East India Company) came to colonize India and had sexual relations with Indian women.

The British entered India mainly as traders and merchants but soon they decided to colonize the sub-continent of India. Before long they realized that they could not protect their rule in India without allies and so there was a policy created to encourage British men to have relationships with Indian women and marry them: "...the English Directors of the East India Company propagated a policy in the seventeenth century that financially encouraged European men to marry Indian women and have children by them" (Anthony, 1969, p. 11). Carolie Younger further states that, "the Directors of the British East India Company (which had been founded around 1600) paid one 'pagola' or gold 'mohur' (a guinea, coin) for each child born to an Indian mother and a European father, essentially, a family allowance" (Younger, 1987, in James, 2001, p. 1). This historical alliance led to the creation of a new community whose members are known by the term 'Anglo-Indian' (and were earlier called 'Eurasians' by the British in colonial India). The origins, culture, development and social status of this Indian-European minority relate to the political, cultural and racial problems of the British colonization of India. Since the formation of the Community<sup>2</sup>, Anglo-Indians have been unsettled as a community in India and have sometimes been considered foreigners by their Indian counterparts.

The Indian Constitution recognizes the Anglo-Indian community as one of India's minorities and the Community occupies a legitimate position within the consciousness of Indian national identity. In fact, the Anglo-Indians are the only minority community defined in the Constitution of India. But history with non-Anglo-Indian Indians and the hardships faced by Anglo-Indians in India have been rather hard on the Community and some have felt 'homeless' in India when in fact the

homeland of the Community is India. In the next section I describe a situation when I was questioned about my 'community status'.

*A Reflection: What Is My Community Status?*

I remember being taken aback the first time I encountered any negative connotations attached to the term 'community' as an Anglo-Indian. I had finished my 12th grade in school and was about to apply to a college for higher studies. One of the formalities required, as mandatory, was the nationality, residence and community certificates, which we had to apply for in the Taluk<sup>3</sup> office in Pondicherry. The deputy Tahsildar<sup>4</sup> of the Pondicherry Taluk<sup>5</sup> office, after asking me questions about how many years I lived in Pondicherry and where I resided, etc. as a requirement for the issue of the nationality and residence certificates, then came to the final part of issuing the community certificate. I told him that I belong to the Anglo-Indian community. He seemed to have no idea of the term 'Anglo-Indian'. It was at that moment that his assistant told him that Anglo-Indians belong to what they call 'sattu karange', a colloquial Tamil word and stereotypical reference given to Anglo-Indians, as a people who wear only shirts, referring, in particular, to the Anglo-Indian women who wear blouses and other western clothing instead of ethnic Indian clothing like saris, chudithars, etc. Not only was I surprised by his comment but I knew it was not entirely true<sup>6</sup>. In addition to telling me that I did not need a community certificate, he mentioned that I didn't belong to any community and that there was no 'community' as such recognized in any Taluk office in India. So I returned home, concerned that this was going to cause a problem when I went for the interview at the college where I had applied for admission.

I was relieved to find later that it had not mattered, but I was left perplexed about the idea of me officially not belonging to any community. It was only later that I realized what he meant. For those who belong to the general community or "forward caste,"<sup>7</sup> a community certificate is not required, because the students of the general or forward caste could not avail of any admission advantage in any educational institution that is based on the quota system<sup>8</sup>. Only those of "backward communities" require a community certificate to prove to the concerned institution that they do belong to such a community<sup>9</sup>, thus availing of any advantage that comes

with it in their admission or recruitment process. But his words did leave their mark and, a feeling of embarrassment remained with me.

#### DEFINITION – AN ILLUSION

The term 'Anglo-Indian' was used more often from the eighteenth century onward to refer to both the British and their children born of Indian mothers. These offspring, who were be natives of India, evolved into the Anglo-Indian community, constituting something of a pact with the British Raj<sup>10</sup>, a sort of bond of kinship, a bridge between the colonizers and the natives.

An Anglo-Indian can be defined in legal or functional terms. According to the Constitution of independent India, 1949, Article 366(2) states that:

An Anglo-Indian means a person whose father or any of whose other male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only...

The legal definition poses quite a few problems within the Community even now, because, among other things, it does not take account of maternal lineage. 'Anglo-Indian' had also become an umbrella term<sup>11</sup> applied to two distinct groups of people: "those persons who have two parents of European descent – previously known as domiciled European" (Gist and Wright, 1973, p. 2) – and those born of both Indian and British parents, thus constituting a 'mixed race'. However, the definition laid down by the Constitution of India does not explain the identity of children who have Indian fathers and British mothers or Indian fathers and Anglo-Indian mothers, with the latter being more prevalent in this post-colonial period. This has made it difficult for these individuals to identify themselves with Anglo-Indians, despite their cultural affiliations with their Anglo-Indian mothers.

#### *A Reflection: Questioning Of Origins*

I remember when I was in school how keen I was to know what 'Anglo-Indian' meant. I studied in Petit Seminaire Higher Secondary School in Pondicherry, which was known to be one of the best matriculation higher secondary schools here, started by

the French missionaries more than a hundred years ago. My classmates, and sometimes teachers, none of whom were Anglo-Indian, would ask me who my ancestors were and what my name meant. I would always find a lot of difficulty in replying to these questions, but that was mostly because I had no idea. I just knew that I was Anglo-Indian and that my name was just a name given to me by my parents when I was born. This type of questioning, however, made me the subject of ridicule in the classroom, whenever it occurred. I always had the lingering feeling that I was a stranger and that I was different from every other child who studied there. I was often referred to, in Tamil, as 'the son of a foreigner'. During the parent-teacher meetings or meetings with the principal to request leave, even with my mother accompanying me or my brothers, everyone would stare at us as if we were from another planet. My mother, Joan Monica Parker, has never worn either a sari or any other ethnic Indian clothing all her life. She would always wear a skirt and blouse. This accentuated the idea of us being considered as foreigners and this was how we were regarded in public.

Wanting to be more Indian than my daily school companions claimed I was, made me feel alien to my Anglo-Indian origin. I stuck to the notion that I could be more Indian, and began to define myself as being and feeling Indian. I would sometime even use an Indian name while speaking with people, who did not already know my real name. I thus came to live in an illusory world, a time when I even remember saying I am not Anglo-Indian but just Indian. The cultural heritage which I shared with Anglo-Indians completely escaped me, and I found myself being abandoned to being regarded as not fitting in by my classmates and sometimes teachers, who had little or no knowledge of what 'Anglo-Indian' meant.

### SPLIT IDENTITY

Identity is defined as "the characteristics, feelings or beliefs that distinguish people from others" (Hornby, 2010, p. 770). It can also be defined as "a feeling of belonging to a group – the state or feeling of being similar to and being able to understand and identify oneself within the interests of the group" (Hornby, 2010, p. 770). People's sense of identity lies in the importance they place on origin. There was a time when my feeling of belonging to the Anglo-Indian community was limited only to the knowledge that I was Anglo-Indian. In other words, my parents were Anglo-Indians

and so I was Anglo-Indian. This was accentuated by the fact that, when I was around 15 years old, I had started identifying myself within the interests of the 'Other', the majority Tamil community amidst whom we lived, much to the dismay of my parents.

My father was Anglo-Indian in every way, and I would go further to say that he was obsessed with his Anglo-Indianness. He was 'Anglo-Indian enough' for all of us. He didn't like my brothers and me watching Tamil or Hindi movies at home or listening to Indian music. Sometimes, he went to the length of forbidding us from watching movies in Indian languages, saying that they were full of violence and exaggerated fiction. He was proud of his heritage and made us believe that we should be too. Home was the place where I really felt Anglo-Indian. It was and still is the place where my strongest feelings of rootedness to the Community lie, as Brah states:

It [Home] is a discourse of locality, the place where feelings of rootedness ensue from the mundane and the unexpected of daily practice. Home here connotes the networks of family, kin, friends, colleagues and various other 'significant others'. It signifies the social and psychic geography of space that is experienced in terms of a neighbourhood or a hometown that is a community 'imagined' in most part through daily encounter. This 'home' is a place with which we remain intimate even in moments of intense alienation from it. It is a sense of 'feeling at home'. (Brah, 1996, in James, 2001, p. 4)

Home also signifies a psychological and social framework for being defined by the characteristics of the Community. My home has always brought together family, friends and colleagues, who have shared similar memories and interests with us. Home was a place where I remained intimate with my origin, even in times of feeling a little alienated from it. This feeling was mainly due to my difficulty in integrating with mainstream Indian society, while still preserving the values of my Anglo-Indian heritage.

But I could say the same of 'home' when used in the sense of 'homeland'. 'Homeland' meant both 'home' and a wider geographical space containing a series of other characteristics, which seemed to be conflicting with the image of what 'home' brought to me. It was as if I was meant to live two lives, one completely different from the other, in terms of language, behaviour, food, etc., which in turn meant having two identities. If feeling 'at home' meant being and feeling Anglo-

Indian, then I did not feel 'at home' when I was outside of the home. This was caused by the negative portrayal of my culture by my non-Anglo-Indian Indian counterparts. I remember that when I was in the primary grade section, my mother used to pack food for me to have during the lunch break in school. This practise was short-lived because I did not feel comfortable eating with my classmates. They were repulsed by the thought of me eating beef, for example, or any non-vegetarian dish at all. Most of them were Hindus and were not allowed, in their respective homes, to eat non-vegetarian food, above all beef products.<sup>12</sup> They also thought that eating beef would make one a 'dullard'. So I stopped taking lunch to school and used to go home at lunchtime instead.

I think my identity crisis was more in facing my alterity rather than not knowing who I really was. Alterity, some may say inevitably happens to a migrant, at some time or the other, in his/her adopted country as part of the process of integration. Apart from being defined by "the state of being different" from a dominant subject or group of subjects, alterity is also the psychological process of beginning to think as the dominant subject would regard oneself as "other", and enact this thought process in word and deed. I refused to admit to myself that I had started integrating some of the characteristics of being Indian into my Anglo-Indianness. I would listen only to Indian music and watch Indian films so I could share those experiences with my Indian counterparts. Before this, I remember very clearly an instance when three of my friends were making plans to watch a Tamil movie. I had expressed my interest in sharing the experience with them but was left shame-faced when they told me that I didn't deserve to join them because I was only fit to watch English films. To date, I have never joined a group of Indian friends to go for a movie, even if invited. Later, after several other similar episodes, I began to feel that being Anglo-Indian meant being rejected on every level in mainstream society.

## SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Notwithstanding the Euro-colonial social practices and attitudes which distanced and demeaned this 'mixed race' population who spoke for and about Anglo-India – with only some exceptions – insisted, until very near the end of the colonial period, on unequivocal association with the dominant European groups. (Caplan, 2003, p. 16)

Anglo-Indians had some advantages that worked in their favour (compared to other Indians)<sup>13</sup>, when it came to education and employment. With English as their mother tongue they were masters of what was considered to be the elite language, as demonstrated by the steady increase in English medium educational institutions and the use of English as an official language in the Indian governmental administration. Their faith in Christianity, and the history of their alliance with the British, created an image to their Indian counterparts that they were more British than Indian. Although they associated themselves with the British rule, Anglo-Indians created self-awareness and group consciousness within their community in the early nineteenth century. One reason was because they felt threatened by their proscription in mainstream society. This led to the realization that they were a distinct group: "In spite of their disparate origins, they came to regard themselves as possessing a distinct identity of their own" (Hawes, 1996, p. 34).

Although Anglo-Indians were a mixture of mostly British and Indian descent, some of them claimed and still claim to be British in order to free themselves from any prejudice. But this discourse ended in more disappointment as the British themselves did not accept this identity put forward by the Community. They refused to accept any bond or kinship with the Anglo-Indian community thus the latter was socially regarded as 'half-caste' members who did not fit, culturally or by blood, to be the sons and daughters of the British.

At the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, Anglo-Indians realized that they would no more be a part of the British alliance which helped them survive earlier in India. In the early 1940s, a few years before the British rule did end eventually, Anglo-Indians began promoting a kind of Anglo-Indian identity that was consistent with Indian nationalism, and which saw Anglo-Indians as a native ethnic community alongside many others. In a more modern world, Anglo-Indian elites, sharing the multi-ethnic characteristics of the Community, urge their community members to establish strong, lasting bonds with their Indian counterparts. This was, in any case, the only way to seek recognition for their kind and find a source of strength that would help them better their lives. My source of strength came from a personal experience in school, which changed the way I felt about being Anglo-Indian. The



following is a narration of events which marked a turning point in my life, and made me realize that being Anglo-Indian had its own advantages.

*A Reflection: Identity, Stereotypes and Personal Growth*

When I was 16 years old and in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, I began to see and experience a whole different ensemble of teachers in school. They were talented, practical and very good at their jobs, and I learned a whole lot more from them in the two years before I completed school, than from all the teachers who had taught me in the earlier years. Among them was a chemistry teacher who I used to look up to. I thought of him as a mentor. I would also say he saved me, in an indirect way.

It was the beginning of the new term after the winter vacation in December, which we used to simply call the 'Christmas holidays'. The evaluated examination papers of the half-yearly examination, which had been conducted prior to the vacation, were being given out by the concerned teachers. It was a scary time for those who didn't fare well and fulfilling for those who expected the best marks. I had always considered myself as an above average student and was not very perturbed at the time. I discovered, much to my satisfaction, that I had scored well in three subjects and was awaiting the other papers with great confidence. When it came to chemistry, much to my disappointment, I had scored 139 marks out of a possible 200. I remember this elderly chemistry teacher reprimanding me for scoring lower marks than what he had expected, but I very distinctly remember him saying: "See – Anglo-Indian boy – good potential to reach great heights but getting low marks". As was required at the time, I promised him I would improve and went back to my seat, not thinking more deeply about what he meant.

That evening, a close friend of mine, who attended the tuition classes of this chemistry teacher in the evenings, dropped in to see me at home. The first thing he told me about was the mention of my name during the tuition. He said that the teacher had mentioned that Anglo-Indians never aim high and that they always settle for less and don't mind doing so. Their parents are either clerks in a government office or railway employees. They never looked to better employment and higher goals in life. This truly upset me and made me angry. More than being angry with him, I was angry with the whole Community. It was not because I accepted the

teacher's negative stereotype of Anglo-Indians, but because I felt that the Community was responsible for allowing such negative stereotypes to prevail among their Indian counterparts. This had only accentuated my feeling of not wanting to identify myself with Anglo-Indians. I got the feeling that even the general opinion among Indians was that Anglos were people who had no high aims in life. In addition, I felt the need to defend myself against the opinions of this teacher.

A month passed and the results of the mid-term examination were about to be announced. We had two chemistry classes that day, one in the morning and then the last class of the day. The chemistry teacher had given out the test papers in the morning. I had scored 88 percent. There was no comment. The day went by and it came time for the last class. The chemistry teacher walked in and asked the regular bright students their ranks, after calculating a total of their marks in all subjects. The first and second rank students proudly stood up and stated their total and when it came to the third rank holder, no one had come forward. After a minute of silence, I stood up. The teacher, with a very sheepish grin on his face, simply said, "Finally, you have realized your potential. It's not that I think that you are different in any way from the others, but you have an advantage over them which you can use to your betterment, and you have. Never forget who you are".

I never once had the opportunity to ask him what he really meant. Perhaps, he meant I was truly talented and didn't realize it, or perhaps he made allusion to my good knowledge of English, which was the medium of instruction and learning. But his words had a long and deep impact on me. I have never forgotten that day or his words and it is fresh in my mind like yesterday. No measure of unease or apprehensiveness could shake the confidence that was instilled in me that day. It was like a new beginning. It was then that I began to work hard with every possibility of a brighter future for myself. I realized in the later months, well into the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, that this particular teacher really meant no harm, or rather that he had no intention to hurt my feelings in relation to my Community. His methods, though unorthodox, seemed to bring out the best in most of his students. He seemed to know the point to which every student needed to be pushed, to make them work harder, even if he had to make offhand remarks, as he did in my case.

I found that I was rather consistent in learning as the syllabus became tougher in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. As a test of my consistency, he would often call me out of my seat to use me as an example to other students, who seemed to study the prescribed exam portion only before the date of the exam. I remember his words clearly: “For all those who don’t study every day, see how he writes...” This gave me a feeling that his intention was only to help me realize my true potential. Nevertheless, I have not forgotten either his insult or his praise. Both have left lasting impressions on me.

This teacher was as kind as he was reprimanding. I cannot say the same for all teachers, who sometimes made off-hand remarks about my culture. For example, my physics teacher once referred to the music Anglo-Indians listen to as a genre which included singers talking instead of singing. This was a direct remark to me, as I found that I was the only one not laughing, and being stared at after what seemed to the others to be a hilarious statement. Though initially appalled by this remark, I dismissed it quickly, feeling that he could never know or understand my culture. I do believe that this may have happened to other Anglo-Indian students also. I am sure that at least a few will be able to openly identify with what I have experienced. I realized that being Anglo-Indian and identifying myself with the community did not put me at so much of a disadvantage as I earlier thought. I was also at an advantage in a way. I felt the strength to use that one positive source to develop and help myself grow into an upstanding member of the Community.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

The Anglo-Indians have greatly contributed to the Indian nation by their noteworthy efforts in the domain of school education. One of the primary boards of school education in the country is run by Anglo-Indians. The ‘Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, New Delhi’ (CISCE)<sup>14</sup>, which includes the ‘Inter-State Board for Anglo-Indian Education’, has now evolved into a major body of education, conducting public examinations at the secondary and senior secondary school levels in India and abroad.

The Anglo-Indian minority community in India, supported by Article-30 (1)<sup>15</sup> of the Indian Constitution has continued to set up and run educational institutions providing

access to quality education and opportunities without distinction or preference to all sections of society.

In almost all spheres of life, Anglo-Indians in India feel threatened realizing the tentative position which they occupy socially and culturally within the new nation. Competition, and not ascription, is the keystone of the new nation. Although numerous Anglo-Indians are well-trained (Wright and Wright, 1971, p. 177)

Good quality education and vocational preparation have been the experience of many members of the Anglo-Indian community in the last twenty to thirty years. As a result, Anglo-Indians, who had traditionally occupied many areas of employment in the past, are being replaced by better qualified members of the Indian society. The Community members are left with the choice of pursuing higher education and becoming better qualified, entering new domains of employment, being unemployed, or migrating out of India. As my own education experience demonstrates<sup>16</sup>, higher education is also an opportunity for the Anglo-Indians to learn more about themselves and their culture. It is only through research that I have truly discovered the importance of identifying with my roots, and therefore educating others about it. When I started studying Anglo-Indians in 2013, I found that I did not know much about the history of my own community. As I learnt more, I began talking to other Anglo-Indians and Indians about the Anglo-Indian community. I have shared my research with my family and friends. By doing so, I have educated a few members of the community on who they are, and where they come from.

## CONCLUSION

Through my experiences, I have discovered that I have found the solution to my dilemma of identity. I have also realized the importance of knowing about my origins. I have done this by educating myself on my community in India. But it is only through a firm educational background that I have accomplished this. Success has a major role in being understood and respected as a distinct part of the society. I feel that this is possible only by achieving credibility in terms of education and employment and development of community ideals.

I feel that the Anglo-Indians who have had similar experiences will be able to identify themselves within the frame of this essay, and I hope that they also share experiences as I have. I know that even though I faced some difficulty in the past

with regard to my Anglo-Indian identity, I have crossed that hurdle and have come to a stage in my life where I can truly feel proud to be an Anglo-Indian and part of this distinct community in India. I hope that many more Anglo-Indians take this effort to learn more about themselves and cherish their identity, which will not only make them proud of their heritage, but also noteworthy citizens of the world.

***Dr. Walter Hugh Parker*** has completed *M. Phil and Ph.D in French from Pondicherry University, where his area of specialization was Franco-Maghrebian literature. His Ph.D. thesis is a thematic study of identity and social exclusion in 'Beur' literature, which is writing by second generation authors of maghrebian origin. Since 2013, he has been doing research on the Anglo-Indian community. He currently works as an Assistant professor in SRM University at Chennai and can be reached at walterhp4@gmail.com*

---

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A person is called 'Anglo-Indian' only if one of the male progenitors in the family is Anglo-Indian. However, within the Community, even children born of Anglo-Indian mothers and Indian fathers, being raised in the 'Anglo-Indian way,' are considered by most to be Anglo-Indian, though this perception is debatable.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'Community' with capital 'C' used throughout this document refers to the Anglo-Indian community. It is a specification that the people of this community constitute a closed group with common cultural characteristics. Cf. "I use the term 'Community' in terms of a people who have a sense of 'groupness' because they identify with each other through geographical, historical and experiential connectedness, and they recognize the commonality of their cultural characteristics and ethnicity. Another significant reason for use of this term is that this is how they refer to themselves" (Andrews 2005: 2).

<sup>3</sup> A Taluk or Taluka, often referred to by other terms in Hindi such as *Tahsil, Tahasil* or *mandal*, is an administrative centre in India, of a city or town which acts as a control centre of a larger area of land with possible additional towns, and usually a number of villages.

<sup>4</sup> A Tahsildar is a district official in India, who is in charge of collecting revenue and taxes from the people who live in the concerned Tahsil or Taluk. The word is a fusion of Hindi and Persian. Cf. The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition (2000). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/tahsildar>

<sup>5</sup> The Pondicherry (now called 'Puducherry') taluk is one of four taluks in the District of Pondicherry, which is just one part of the union territory of Puducherry. It constitutes the Puducherry Municipality and the villages of the Ariyankuppam Commune. The Pondicherry taluk is further divided into three sub-taluks, otherwise called *firkas*, namely Ariyankuppam, Mudaliarpeta and Puducherry.

<sup>6</sup> Many Anglo-Indian women wear Indian clothing, in particular, the working women. Most of them wear Indian clothing because they are required to in their work place, for the simple reason being that other non Anglo-Indian Indian women wear the same. In fact, apart from my mother, most Anglo-Indian women I know personally wear saris or other ethnic Indian clothing to work and even at home.

<sup>7</sup> 'Forward Caste' (also known as Forward Class, Forward Community and General Class) is a term used in India to denote groups of people who do not qualify for any of the 'Reservation' schemes operated by the government of India. This is better explained by note 9 on the quota system. Forward castes are basically upper castes which total around 15% of India's Population.

<sup>8</sup> The quota system or 'Reservation' in India is the process of setting aside a certain percentage of seats (vacancies) in government institutions for members of backward and under-represented communities (defined primarily by caste and tribe).

<sup>9</sup> Those groups who qualify for 'Reservation' are listed as Other Backward castes (OBC) or Scheduled castes (SC) and Scheduled tribes (ST). They are defined in Articles 340, 341 and 342 of the Constitution of India, 1949. They can take advantage of defined quotas amongst other benefits for education, tax benefits, special government schemes, government employment and political representation. The lists are subject to change from time to time, dependent upon social, educational and economic factors. However, although lists are produced for those groups entitled to take advantage of the quotas, there is no such list for the forward caste group; if a person does not belong to any of the listed groups then that person is by default a member of a group classed as forward caste. (Gupta 2004:129-131). For more on this, see the article titled, "What more do the other castes want?" (May 16, 2006), which is an interview by Managing Editor (National Affairs), Sheela Bhatt of Dr. Udit Raj (formerly Ram Raj), chairman of the All-India Confederation of the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Federations. <http://www.rediff.com/news/2006/may/16inter2.htm>

<sup>10</sup> British rule in India.

<sup>11</sup> An umbrella term refers to a working definition which comprises of several functions or criteria which all fall under the same category.

<sup>12</sup> In Hinduism, the cow is revered as the source of food and symbol of life and may never be killed. However, many non-Hindus interpret these beliefs to mean that Hindus worship cows. This is not true. It is more accurate to say the cow is taboo in the Hindu religion, rather than sacred. In ancient India, oxen and bulls were sacrificed to the gods and their meat was eaten. But even then the slaughter of milk-producing cows was prohibited. Verses of the Rig-Veda (Hindu scriptures) refer to the cow as Devi (Goddess), identified with Aditi (mother of the Gods) herself. Even when meat-eating was permitted, the ancient Vedic scriptures encouraged vegetarianism. One scripture says, "There is no sin in eating meat... but abstention brings great rewards" (The Laws of Man, V/56). <http://www.religionfacts.com/hinduism/things/cow.htm>

<sup>13</sup> This was mainly because of their mastery over the English language.

<sup>14</sup> CISCE is a private board of school education in India, based in New Delhi. Two examinations are conducted by the CISCE in India: the 'Indian Certificate of Secondary Education' (ICSE) and the 'Indian School Certificate' (ISC). This board of education was started in 1956 when the Inter-State Board for Anglo-Indian Education met for talks on the appointment of an Indian council to run the 'University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate's Examinations' in India. For more on this, please visit the official website of the 'Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations' at <http://www.cisce.org/council.aspx>.

<sup>15</sup> Article 30(1) of the Constitution of India states that "All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice". <http://www.indiankanoon.org/doc/1687408/>

<sup>16</sup> I completed an undergraduate course in French in Tagore Arts College, Pondicherry in the year 2007, after which I pursued post-graduation in French translation and interpretation in Pondicherry University from 2007 to 2009. In 2009, I continued my post-graduation studies and acquired the degree of Master of philosophy in French. From 2010 to 2014, I did research under a Doctoral program in Pondicherry University. My thesis (submitted in August 2014) is a thematic study of the themes of identity and social exclusion in the literature of children of North-African immigrants in France. Since 2013, my interest in research has developed and has inspired me to study my own community. It is only because of my higher education that I have managed to learn about Anglo-Indians and this paper, being a personal reflective narrative, is intended as a contribution to the Community.

## REFERENCES:

- Andrews, Robyn. (2005). *Being Anglo-Indian: Practices and Stories from Calcutta* (Ph.D. Thesis). New Zealand: Massey University.
- Anthony, Frank. (1969). *Britain's Betrayal in India: The Story of the Anglo-Indian Community*. Bombay: Allied Publishers.
- Brah, Avtar (1996). *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Psychology Press.
- Caplan, Lionel. (2003). "Colonial and Post-Colonial Hybridities: Eurasians in India" in *The International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter* (pp. 16-17). Vol. 30. Leiden.
- Gist, Noel P., and Roy Dean Wright. (1973). *Marginality and Identity: Anglo-Indians as a Racially-Mixed Minority in India*. Leiden: Brill Publishers.
- Gupta, Dipankar (2004). *Caste in Question. Identity or Hierarchy?* New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Hawes, Christopher J. (1996). *Poor Relations: the Making of a Eurasian Community in British India 1773-1833*. London: Curzon.
- Hornby A. S. (2010). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- James, Sheila Pais. (2001). "Anglo-Indians: the Dilemma of Identity". Paper presented at Counterpoints Flinders University Postgraduate Conference (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April). South Australia. <http://home.alphalink.com.au/~agilbert/dilemma1.html>
- Wright, R. Dean, and Susan W. Wright (1971). "The Anglo-Indian Community in Contemporary India" in *Midwest Quarterly* (pp. 175 - 185). Vol. XII. Pittsburg: Pittsburg State University.  
<http://escholarshare.drake.edu/bitstream/handle/2092/237/Wright%23237.pdf?...>
- Younger, Coralie (1987). *Anglo-Indians: Neglected children of the Raj*. Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation.
- Central Government Act. Articles 366, 340, 341 and 342 in the Constitution of India, 1949. <http://www.indiankanoon.org>