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EDITORIAL

Robyn Andrews and Brent Howitt Otto

This issue opens the twenty-second volume of the journal in the twenty-sixth year since its founding. It is fitting that this issue opens with an article addressing one of the more momentous matters in quite a few years to face the Anglo-Indians living in India: the amendment to the Constitution of India removing the guaranteed representation of the community through nominated seats in the Lok Sabha as well as the legislative assemblies of states where a significant proportion of Anglo-Indians resided. Vishwajeet Deshmukh and Ketayun Mistry of the National Law University explore the legal background of Anglo-Indian nominated seats, the arguments for the Government's revocation of the nominated seats, as well some of the ways in which the Government and the Anglo-Indian community could arrive at a possible alternative to ensure a representative voice of the Community is heard.

Recent years have seen a proliferation of literary production about or authored by Anglo-Indians, in the form of novels, short stories, and various prose and poetic forms of life-writing. Upamanyu Sengupta uses a recent autobiography by Trevor Taylor entitled *The Deaf of Elvis and the Last of the Anglo-Indians: An Autobiography* (2021) as a window into the identity of Anglo-Indians in diaspora, as well as the particular and unique trajectory of the life of the author himself. In his essay, Sengupta asks: To what degree can or should first-person autobiographical accounts, such as this one, be taken to portray a whole community or, perhaps, a generational and geographic subset of it? For whom and for what purpose is life-writing undertaken in the first place?

Penelope Mendonça and her father, Anthony Mendonça, together offer us a review of a recent collected volume, *Anglo-Indian Identity: Past and Present, in India and the Diaspora* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021). They approached the book creatively, reading

it together and conversing about each of the chapters, which address diverse Anglo-Indian identities over time and space, in light of their own reflection on the anchors of their own self-understandings.

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ANGLO-INDIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT

Vishwajeet Deshmukh and Ketayun Mistry

ABSTRACT

The 104th Constitutional (Amendment) Act, 2019 to the Constitution of India discontinued the nomination of Anglo-Indians in the Indian Parliament by amending Article 334 of the Constitution. The reason for discontinuance of the nomination was that the decreased Anglo-Indian population consisted of only 296 people as per the 2011 Indian Census and that the Anglo-Indian community's socio-economic status had significantly improved. However, the Parliament has turned a blind eye to the legislative intent of the drafters of the Indian Constitution, and Report of the Fact-Finding Team of the Ministry of Minority Affairs (2013). This article explores the efficacy of representation by nomination of the Anglo-Indian community in the Indian Parliament, and the contours of the arguments towards repeal of this reservation. The article further suggests possible alternatives to ensure democratic representation of the community to voice its needs and further development.

Keywords: Anglo-Indian, representation, constitutional amendment, minority, Indian Parliament

INTRODUCTION

> "*When you find yourself on the side of the majority; it is time to pause and reflect!" Mark Twain*

The Parliament passed the 126th Constitutional Amendment Bill (2019) in December 2019, extending the reservation for the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), but ending the provision of nominated representatives for the Anglo-Indian

community in the Lok Sabha and 14 State Assemblies. The said Bill was proposed by the then Law and Justice Minister, Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad to amend Article 334 of the Indian Constitution. This Bill has now taken form as the 104th Constitutional (Amendment) Act (2019).

Article 334 of the Constitution of India (1949) reads as follows:

> *334. Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this Part, the provisions of this Constitution relating to—*
> *(a) the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States; and*
> *(b) the representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States by nomination, shall cease to have an effect on the expiration of a period of seventy years from the commencement of this Constitution: Provided that nothing in this article shall affect any representation in the House of the People or in the Legislative Assembly of a State until the dissolution of the then existing House or Assembly, as the case may be.*

The Act extended SC and ST reservation by another ten years but discontinued the Anglo-Indian nominations. A bare perusal of the then Bill's statement of object and reasons regarding the extension of the reservation policy for SC and ST shows them to be in consonance with the intentions of the founding fathers of the Constitution. But no reason had been provided for doing away with the Anglo-Indian nomination in the Bill. In the Parliament, Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has stated that the Anglo-Indian community according to the 2011 Census numbers only 296 across India, (Prasad 2019) stating that most of the individuals of this community have assimilated with the other Indian communities (Deshmukh, 2021). Further, to add to his reasoning in the Parliament, he stated that the Anglo-Indian community has been provided a "Nomination Status" and not a reservation through an election, which is contrary to the concept of democracy (Deshmukh, 2020).

In order to understand the importance of the nomination of Anglo-Indian members of Parliament, it is imperative to understand the socio-political events that led to the inclusion of such nominated members. The drafters of the Indian Constitution were persuaded by the Anglo-Indian leader Frank Anthony to reserve seats for Anglo-Indians by nomination, as seen in the Parliamentary debates. Upon independence, the definition of Anglo-Indian in the Government of India Act, 1935 was replicated by Article 334 of the Indian Constitution. Frank Anthony argued for the reservation in

Parliament, with the intent to socially and economically uplift the Anglo-Indian community. However, over the course of time, the reserved seats for nomination of Anglo-Indians emerged as a pawn to serve political party loyalists as has been explained in detail in point 4.3.1 which deals with the criticism of nominations in terms of being counteractive to democratic processes.

This article shall analyse the reservation policy from a positivist perspective. Legal positivism suggests that law is synonymous with norms made by the legislator or considered as case law. Legal positivism when applied to the case of Anglo-Indian reservation enables a socio-historical dimension to be incorporated. A comprehensive understanding of the Anglo-Indian Community and its representation is crucial for a judicial examination of the reservation. The authors shall examine the parliamentary intent behind the erasure of Anglo-Indian representation to ascertain the rationale behind such an action by utilising parliamentary debates and government reports. Lastly, recommendations shall be provided on the measures we recommend be adopted to ensure efficacious representation and development of the Anglo-Indian community.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN COMMUNITY

In order to interpret the constitutional standpoint of Anglo-Indian representation in the Indian context, it is essential to understand the history of the group and the evolution of the term ‘Anglo-Indian’ and its implications for the community’s representation.

The term Anglo-Indian had two meanings: first, the Domiciled Europeans in India; and second, the mixed-race group formed through the union of Europeans and natives. This article examines the latter group, i.e., the mixed-race group. The mixed marriages in this context are restricted to unions between colonizer men (European) and colonized women (natives). This group has also been referred to as ‘Eurasians’.

The origin of such a mixed group can be traced to the sixteenth century with the arrival of the Portuguese, who colonized the western coast of the Indian sub-continent. The intermarriages between Europeans and local native Christian converts were encouraged by the Portuguese Viceroy and Governor-General, Albuquerque, in order to secure their presence in India (Russell-Wood, 2007). Further, the practice of

intermarriages was continued by other colonizers such as the Dutch, British and French. Thus, the creation of this mixed-race group was propelled by the colonization of India (Jacobson, 2018).

One of the 'mixed race' populations arising from the experience of European colonial empires was a group that came to be known by the early twentieth century as the Anglo-Indians. Through the complicated and long history of mixing in colonial India, this group had developed a distinct identity and became largely endogamous, evoking various pejorative attitudes towards them, and coming to be known as half-castes, East Indians, Indo-Britons, country-born, and Eurasians, among other ascribed and self-asserted designations (Charlton-Stevens, 2018). Even though the community is referred to as 'mixed-race'; the group largely refers to the progeny of unions of European fathers and native mothers. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, these unions were encouraged by the colonial authorities and at times incentivized (Hedin, 1934). However, the attitudes towards such unions changed dramatically in the nineteenth century and caused severe stigmatization to the mixed-race offspring and by extension the community itself (Dalrymple, 2004, p. 380). William Dalrymple (2004, p. 382) describes the stigmatized attitudes drawing on archival sources such as 'wills' from English Officers and even highlights the anxieties which were routed through these attitudes. Colonizers became increasingly concerned about the threat the Eurasians could pose to the racial hierarchies in colonial society. Authorities began to regard racial mixing as more and more problematic (Caplan, 2001, p. 4).

The community was not always referred to as Anglo-Indian. There were terms such as 'Quasi-Europeans', 'Country-Born', 'Half-caste', 'Half-breed', 'Pure Asiatic' and 'Masquerades' (Caplan, 2001, p. 5). In 1826 Major General Sir John Malcolm used the term 'Anglo-Indian' in his book *Political History of India*: "*The descendants of Europeans by native mothers, usually termed half-castes or Anglo-Indians, if they do not form part of the English community in India, are closely allied to it" (*Malcom, 2011). The early understanding of the term 'Anglo-Indian' was used in reference to the British who came and stayed in India as servants of the East India Company and later the British Raj. The evidence of the same is reflected in early writings of the British Indian Historians S.M. Mitra and Dennis Kincaid (Mitra, 1913). In 1870, the Parliamentary Statute referred to the Community as '*Statutory Natives of India*'. Paragraph 346 of

the Montague-Chelmsford report (1918) classified the community as ‘Anglo-Indian’. From 1897, there were multiple attempts to provide a definition for ‘Anglo-Indian’ through a deputation petitioned through the Secretary of State for India and approaching Lord Curzon. However, both the authorities refused to provide a definition.

A significant development in the definition was recorded in 1919 for the purpose of the Census. The definition of ‘Anglo-Indian’ in the Rules for Madras under The Government of India Act,1919 (Mitra, H., p. 196) was given under Schedule II as follows:

> *(1) In this Schedule-*
>
> *(a) An Anglo-Indian means any person being a British subject and resident in British India:*
>
> *i) Of European descent in the male line who is not a European;*
>
> *ii) Of mixed Asiatic and non-Asiatic descent whose father, grandfather or more remote ancestor in the male line was born in the continent of Europe, Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, Union of South Africa or the United States of America and who is not a European.*

The definition was placed under scrutiny in the following years, through the Rules of The Government of India Act, 1935 as a piece of legislation framed by the British Parliament. As well as being accorded certain special, even unique, guarantees in independent India’s Constitution, which came into effect on 26th January 1950, the Anglo-Indian community was the only community to be explicitly defined. The definition is given in Article 366(2) of the Constitution (1950). It is in effect a reproduction of the definition set out in the Government of India Act (1935). The redefined term was:

> A person whose father or any of whose other male progenitor in the male line is or was of European descent but who is a native of India. A ‘Native of India’ means one who is born and domiciled in India of parents primarily resident in India and not established here for temporary purposes only.

This accepted legal definition emphasizes two important facts about the Anglo-Indian. First, that the individual is of European descent from the male line and second, that the individual is a native of India by virtue of being born “within the country of India of parents habitually resident therein”. The dual heritage of the Anglo-Indians has given them a special position apart from other Indians as recognised in the Constitution of

India. In 1957, Frank Anthony fought for a new definition, so as to include the linguistic aspects of the community (i.e., English as their mother tongue), however the same was rejected (Gaikwad, 1967, pp. 168-169).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ANGLO-INDIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT

The survival of the Anglo Indians in India was one of their major challenges in the opinion of Arnold J. Toynbee. They faced multiple obstacles; external challenges from their early masters (Younger, 1987) and internal ones from their Indian counterparts (Gist, 1960). At times they successfully undertook these challenges and at times they faced serious setbacks. However, during the early days of the English settlement, they thrived.

Their community developed under favourable European policy and attitude, especially that of the British. The Anglo-Indians are primarily Western in their outlook on life and in their lifestyle (Lyons, 2005). The social functioning of Anglo-Indians where men and women enjoy equal status and choose their own spouse was all quite unusual in the Indian society (Gaikwad, 1967, p. 24).

As the British hold on Indian society strengthened, they were viewed as possible threats. They purportedly resented the growing strength of a parallel ethnic group in the colony and feared a challenge from the Anglo-Indians and thus framed policies for their progressive exclusion from British society and industry in India (Snell, 1944, p. 14). This was evident from three discriminatory orders imposed at the instigation of the Court of Directors of the East India Company within a decade which ultimately led to social and economic impoverishment of the community. The first one was in 1786 which prohibited the wards of mixed-heritage (Anglo-Indians) of the Upper Orphanage School at Calcutta from proceeding to England to complete their education to qualify for the covenanted services. The second order was passed in 1791 by which the Indian-born children of Britishers were prohibited from being employed in the civil, military, and marine services of the company. The third order of 1795 prevented the employment of all persons not descended from European parents on both sides in the army except as fifers, bandsmen, and drummers. People of mixed race faced several barriers to education and employment, and their legal status as British subjects was

questioned by the East India Company (Otto, 2014, p. 13). John William Ricketts presented a petition on behalf of the mixed-race community to the House of Lords and the House of Commons in London in 1830. The petition from the burgeoning mixed-race community of European and Indian ancestry, was a plea to remedy injustices they faced under the East India Company's authority (Otto, 2014). This petition resulted in strengthened social and political bonds as a community, wrought by the need to contest these restrictions by the state.

After the Indian rebellion of 1857, British colonists again pulled the Anglo-Indians close, relying on them in disproportionate numbers to run the railway, postal and telegraph networks. Active policy organisation began to take shape in the early twentieth century through a long process of amalgamation of pre-existing bodies (mostly philanthropic and social associations) that led to significant integration of the Anglo-Indian voice under the largest of such bodies: the 'All India Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association'. Henry Gidney was the President of the Association in 1929 at this time (Charlton-Stevens, 2012).

It was clear in 1942, that the British would have to leave India. As 1947 approached, a deep sense of insecurity settled on the Anglo-Indian Community. It was difficult for them to imagine a country without the English Masters (D'Souza, 1976). But to their great surprise, they received more recognition and elevation than they had in the pre-independence era.

The history of representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the post-colonial Indian Parliament stems in large part from the efforts of Frank Anthony, who was also the leader of the All-India Anglo-Indian Association. He himself was nominated to the Lok Sabha seven times on account of Article 331 of the Indian Constitution (Wright & Wright, 2004). Anthony in his capacity as the President of All-India Anglo-Indian Association represented the community at various forums (Lyons, 2008). He appealed to the Anglo Indians: "let us cling and cling tenaciously to all that we hold dear, our language, our way of life and our distinctive culture. But let's always remember that we are Indians" (D'Cruz, 2006).

To ensure that the problems faced by the Anglo Indians were appropriately addressed, the constitution-makers deliberately created constitutional safeguards under Article 331 *(Representation of the Anglo-Indian Community in the House of the People)* and Article 333 *(Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Legislative Assemblies of the States)* which provides that the President or Governor of a State can nominate members of the Anglo-Indian community to Parliament and the Legislative Assembly if they feel the community is not adequately represented. This was in addition to the protections provided by the constitution for religious and linguistic minorities.

The Sapru Committee

The partition of British India into the nation states of India and Pakistan on the basis of religious grounds led to communal tensions for the minorities in these states. In the early 1940s, the political situation in India was mired by the communal question created by the conflict between the Muslim League and the Indian Congress Party over the constitutional future of Muslims upon independence (Sapru, et al, 1945). In 1944, the Non-Party Conference formed a committee and named Tej Bahadur Sapru its Chairman, questioning the capacity and willingness of major political parties to make headway on the sectarian issue, the 'future of minorities' (1945, Recommendation 1). The Committee was convened on the following topics:

> ...to examine the whole communal and minorities question from a constitutional and political point of view, put itself in touch with the different parties and their leaders, including the minorities interested in the question, and present a solution... (1945, Recommendation 2)

The Constitutional Proposals of the Sapru Committee, often known as the Sapru Committee Report, were presented in 1945 to address minority concerns that have plagued Indian political and constitutional discourse (1945, Recommendation 3). In November 1944, the Non-Party Conference created a committee to draft it. Tej Bahadur Sapru, a well-known lawyer, hosted the inaugural Non-Party Conference in 1941. Individuals in this group represented a wide range of interests, with the exception of those of the leading political parties, which were the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, and the Communist Party (1945, Recommendation 9). As per the Sapru Committee Report, Anglo-Indians were categorized as a minority in British India (1945, Recommendation 9). The Committee proposed that Anglo-Indians

should be given two seats in the Constitution-making body (1945, Recommendation 9). Subsequently, it mentioned that the Union Legislature must have representation of the Anglo-Indian minority along the others (1945, Recommendation 20, 23).

Constituent Assembly Debates

The Draft Constitution of India provided for 'Representation of the Anglo-Indian Community in the House of the People' under Draft Article 293:

> Draft Article 293, Draft Constitution of India (1948):
> Notwithstanding anything contained in article 67 of this Constitution, the President may, if he is of opinion that the Anglo-Indian community is not adequately represented in the House of the People, nominate not more than two members of the community to the House of the People.

Hukam Singh, a member of Shiromani Akali Dal from East Punjab, expressed opposition to this draft article on account of the number of minority communities that existed in India (1949, p. 9). Hukam Singh proposed an amendment that would empower the President to appoint 'an acceptable number' of members to any minority committee to the Lok Sabha without regard to number or community. Mr. R. K. Sidhva, Member of the Parliament, was concerned that the change would establish a dangerous precedent, especially since article 81 of the Draft Constitution (providing for the nomination of Anglo-Indian parliamentarians) addressed the issue of minority community representation (1949, pp. 9, 123, 144). M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar said that Draft Article 293 was an exception to the previous article, and that it was required since the Anglo-Indian population was exceedingly tiny and needed to be represented in the Lok Sabha (1949, pp. 9, 123, 150). The Assembly rejected the modification, and the Draft Article was accepted unchanged.

ANALYSIS OF THE REPEAL OF ANGLO-INDIAN REPRESENTATION

2011 Indian Census

The foundational argument put forward by the 126th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2019, with regard to terminating the representation of Anglo-Indians in the Parliament, focused on their numerical minority. The data relied upon the premise that only 296 Anglo-Indians were identified according to the 2011 Indian Census (Prasad, 2019). However, this data was contested by many in India, including the Anglo-Indian nominated member of Parliament, Shri Hibi Eden, during the Lok Sabha assembly

debates on the 126th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2016. He quoted the distinct population numbers of the Anglo-Indian community living in various constituencies (2019). Further, data presented by non-political international groups such as 'Minority rights group international' suggest the population in India of approximately 125,000-150,000 Anglo-Indians (n.d.). In order to understand the difference behind this varying numerical data, the 2011 Census Questionnaire, which is primarily used to gather data for the Census, must be taken into consideration.

The 2011 Indian Census posed a distinct set of 29 questions spanning a wide array of sociological, anthropological, economical, biological and religious themes. Of the total of 29 questions on the census, the 10 questions of pertinence to the paper are listed below:

1. *Name of person*
2. *Relationship to head*
3. *Sex*
4. *Date of Birth and Age*
5. *Current Marital Status*
6. *Age at marriage*
7. *Religion*
8. *Scheduled Caste (SC)/Scheduled Tribe (ST)*
9. *Disability*
10. *Mother Tongue*

Question 8 refers to the SC/ST status which is included in the reservation policy under Article 334 of the Indian Constitution. Since the SC/ST status includes people belonging to three separate religious identities (Constitution Order, 1950, s. 3), it becomes necessary to provide a question to further identify people belonging to SC/ST minority. It is pertinent to note that since there is no question for the Anglo-Indian Community to mark their identity, it becomes exceedingly difficult to count their numbers precisely. Even though a majority of the Anglo-Indians are Christians, a separate sub-category is needed to account for their identity as Anglo-Indians. Hence it can be deduced that the 2011 census only recorded those Anglo-Indians who stated their religion to be 'Christian Anglo-Indian', which led to drastically low numbers.

To remedy the above lacuna in our census, in 2014 Minister Derek O'Brien addressed a letter to the Chairman of the Indian Census Board which was an appeal to add 'Anglo-Indian' as a separate category (O'Brien, 2014).

> The community has made significant contributions in education, railways, nursing, sports and the armed forces. The community, whose mother tongue is English, continues to play a key role in education. However, the population of the community remains uncounted since the 1941 census. The 2011 census only enumerated Christians as a category, and not Anglo-Indians. There are an estimated 500,000 Anglo-Indians throughout the world, of which around 200,000 live in India. It is my appeal to the government to make 'Anglo-Indian' a separate head in the census.

The religious identity of the vast majority of Anglo-Indians has always been 'Christian' (Maher, 2007). But, certainly, the two identities, Anglo-Indian and Christian, are not analogous. Without a header for 'Anglo-Indian' as provided for SC/ST, ascertaining the population of the entire community is impossible to determine accurately. It is paramount that the identity markers for Anglo-Indians are not relegated to being a sub-caste of Christians. This causes confusion amongst the diaspora who mark their religion as 'Christianity' or otherwise when a specific sub-category is not provided, may identify as Anglo-Indian.

Furthermore, enacting a Constitutional Amendment without clear deliberation is unjustified because it severely affects the representation of a community.

SOCIAL STATUS OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN COMMUNITY

The second aspect of the foundational argument instrumental in repealing the reservation policy against Anglo-Indians is the claim that the community has developed over the course of time and does not require the reservation anymore (Prasad, 2019). There are multiple arguments which disprove the claim made by the Centre.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs Reports

The Ministry of Minority Affairs was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment on 29th January 2006 to ensure a more focused approach towards issues relating to the six notified minority communities namely Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Parsis and Jains (2019). According to the Second Schedule to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, (1961) and amendments for The

Ministry of Minority Affairs; the 'Representation of Anglo-Indians' under clause (vii) is one of the allocated subjects to be studied by this Ministry.

A fact-finding team was appointed by the Ministry of Minority Affairs in (2013, p. 7) to identify the pertinent issues of the Anglo-Indian community (Dias, 2020). The team observed and recommended on paragraph VII as follows:

> 1. The Anglo-Indian community in India is a community with a unique history and culture. The contribution of Anglo-Indians in the past has been significant in the areas of education, post and telegraph, railways, customs as well as in sports. Almost all Anglo-Indians live in state headquarters and cities. Their population is low and largely scattered in different parts of the cities they live in.
>
> 2. It is observed that amongst the various challenges and problems being faced by members of the Anglo-Indian community in India, the more significant ones are related to (i) identity crisis (ii) lack of employment, (iii) educational backwardness, (iv) lack of proper housing facilities and (v) cultural erosion.

The Report of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities

The Report of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities administered by Ministry of Minority Affairs from (2007) highlights the socio-economic stature of the minorities including Anglo-Indians in different states of India. The report includes recommendations to be included for the upliftment of such minorities. A brief overview of the recommendations from NGOs and community representatives over different States/Union Territories (UTs) derived from Annexures of this Report are as follows:

> (i) Anglo-Indians be given preference in certain employment e.g., Railways, Posts and Telegraphs.
>
> (ii) Need for review of the provision to nominate Anglo-Indians to the Parliament and State Assemblies as they do not represent the Christians.
>
> (iii) Anglo-Indian community be treated as a backward class and 2 percent job reservation be made in Central Government Services.
>
> (iv) Anglo-Indians should be considered for BPL (Below Poverty Line) cards.
>
> (v) Anglo-Indians should be given reservation by fixed numbers including professional colleges.
>
> (vi) The Catholic Association of India desired that Anglo-Indian community should be given reservation.

The list of these suggestions from the Report concluded in 2007 provides an insight into governmental perspectives of the Anglo-Indian Community and the conditions that persist for them.

The Anglo-Indian Welfare Bill, 2016

On 5th August 2016, the Anglo-Indian Nominated Member of Parliament Prof. Richard Hay introduced *The Anglo-Indian Welfare Bill (2016).* The features of this Bill covered a wide array of social issues such as: the right to life and personal liberty, education, social security, rehabilitation, skill development and employment. Since these rights are already guaranteed by the Indian constitution and various other legislation, no ground for this separate legislation was found. This Bill was hence not passed in the Parliament.

These reports and proposed Bills give us an insight into the social stature of the Community in the recent past. Historical accounts of social issues of this community have been made, but in the present, it becomes necessary to discuss the future of the Anglo-Indian Community and whether representation via nomination is necessary in order to set up policies for upliftment of the Anglo-Indian community.

Democracy by Nomination

Elections are at the very core of democracy. In the transition to democracy within regimes the words “free and fair elections” are often invoked to name an integral part of democratic society. It is necessary to have a government of the people, for the people and by the people. The Indian Parliament has two houses; namely the Lok Sabha known as the House of the People and the Rajya Sabha also known as the council of states. The citizens of India elect members who represent their constituencies in the Lok Sabha. Thus, they are the direct and immediate representatives of the people which protects the tenets of a democracy. But when elections do not take place, as in case of the representation by nomination, it risks becoming a tokenistic gesture which serves a political purpose as opposed to helping out an underrepresented minority.

Two members of the Anglo-Indian communities are nominated to the Lok Sabha and thirteen to the legislative State Assemblies. The idea behind the nomination was that

since they did not have their own state, and were too small and geographically dispersed to get elected, Anglo-Indians needed reserved seats in Parliament or state assemblies to adequately represent community interests. Thus, representation was preferable via nomination. Yet this rationale is against the basic tenets of a democracy. It is paradoxical to nominate such representatives from constituencies where Anglo-Indians are sparsely populated or absent. The State of Tamil Nadu, for example, is home to more than 40 per cent of the Anglo-Indian population, but has never figured greatly when it comes to Parliamentary representation (Peppin, 2019). This is just one example of how underrepresented this community is.

Modern Criticism of Parliamentary Nomination

Modern criticism of the Parliamentary Anglo-Indian nomination by the President of India has dual aspects from the perspective of power and politics:

Firstly, there is no standard mechanism with respect to the nomination or a set of rules that would qualify an individual to be nominated. Neither was the All-India Anglo-Indian Association asked to recommend names for the nominated seats. The only qualification being that the Indian individual should have "a patrilineal European ancestor"; this also means that the individuals would not necessarily identify with or play an active role in the community. This vague nomination status paves the way for the party in power to nominate party loyalists who qualify with the singular criteria of a patrilineal European ancestor.

Secondly, there was no accountability with respect to whether or not the nominated individual during their tenure had served the interests of the Anglo-Indian minority. In the case of an elected parliamentarian, the collective interest of people is embodied through democratic channels, with universal adult franchise providing an opportunity to elect. However, in the case of nominated parliamentarians from a minority community, where the only qualification is identity, the democratic essence is lost. It poses the question of accountability and whether a nominated parliamentarian serves the social interest of the minority. This representation may only enable them to have a say in the legislative bodies and maintain a presence in mainstream Indian politics.

Thirdly, there was no criteria established by the Constitution, with respect to who could be nominated by the President of India as an Anglo-Indian Member of Parliament:

whereas as per Article 80 of the India Constitution, the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) is composed of not more than 250 members, of whom 12 are nominated by the President of India from amongst persons who have special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service. By adopting the principle of nomination in the Rajya Sabha, the Constitution has ensured that the nation must also receive services of the most distinguished persons of the country who have earned distinction in their field of activity, many of whom may not like to face the process of the election (Prasad & Mukherjee, 2020). However, there exists a threshold to justify the nomination which is absent for Anglo-Indian nominees to the Parliament. This feature leads to party loyalists being nominated to the seats, and they who may not even be active with respect to the Anglo-Indian community. An example of this would be, George Baker, a film actor, who in 2015, after losing the Parliamentary election from Howrah Constituency as a Bhartiya Janta Party candidate, was nominated to one of the Anglo-Indian seats in the Parliament (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2015).

Further, many scholars have asserted that the nomination process has made these representatives lackadaisical as opposed to those who have to contest elections to assume office (Peppin, 2019). The community has not seen much progress even with the nomination being in place for more than seventy years (Hibi, 2019). Hence it is argued that a nominated member to a legislative assembly is not the best option.

The nominal reservation was not envisioned to permanently exist

The representation given to Anglo-Indians was initially for a period of ten years. In 1959, by the eighth amendment of the constitution, the period was increased to twenty years. Further, it was extended for ten years each by the twenty-third, forty-fifth, sixty-second, seventy-ninth, and ninety-fifth constitution amendments. The drafters of the Indian constitution estimated a time-bound effort on the part of the Government machinery and the general public for the enhancement of special category communities such as Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians (National Committee, 1978). Thus, the nomination of Anglo-Indian parliamentarians was never envisioned to permanently exist and would cease when the legislative intent of the nomination was be fulfilled.

In place of a nominated member to the Lok Sabha, there are two possible alternatives for Anglo-Indians to be able to better represent their community interests and address change in the country:

a. Nomination to the Rajya Sabha or;
b. Designation as a 'Minority' by the Central Government and thus be made part of the National Commission for Minorities.

These options may prima facie seem very similar to the nomination to the Lok Sabha, however they are intrinsically different and better suited to ensure democratic representation of Anglo-Indians. They are further elaborated below and reasons are expressed for both options as would be better suited to serve the community's needs.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Anglo-Indian community has a long record of discrimination at the hands of Government, not only by the Republic of India but the British colonial government as well (Kaul, 1996). For the Centre to solely consider numerical statistics of Anglo-Indians provided by the flawed census count, and remove the representation guaranteed to them by the drafters of the Constitution, is unfair towards the community, and shows ignorance of their problems and their need for democratic representation. To ascertain whether there was justification for repealing the representation, the Centre should have focused on creating a detailed report on the Anglo-Indian community and debated the effect of such a major policy change on the community. Further, the numbers as submitted by the Anglo-Indian nominees during the Lok Sabha debate should have been verified and taken into consideration while deciding on the representation (Hibi, 2019).

While the *Statement of Object and Reason* in the 126th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2019, provides for a clear justification of extension for the SC/STs reservation; it fails to offer any explanation in its reasoning for why the same extension has not been granted to the Anglo-Indian Community (Ministry of Law, 2020). This lacuna in reasoning paves way for superficial legislation which is against the spirit of the Indian Constitution. A clear rationale for such an action is necessary since the reasoning for its repeal is based on inconsistent data.

Immediate Measures to be Taken by the Anglo-Indian Community

In such tumultuous times it is necessary that the Anglo-Indians present a united front to the government and showcase a need for their representation in the Rajya Sabha or any other appropriate governmental policy making body. This may be done by providing verified state-wise statistics of Anglo-Indians residing in India. Furthermore, a consultation with the State Assemblies should be set up to ascertain whether or not the representation of Anglo-Indians in the State Assemblies is valid taking into account the communities in those States. For all States it is imperative to protect all minorities residing within their boundaries, hence clarity must be provided on the status of representation post the Amendment. To pass an amendment which interferes with the State Government's autonomy is contrary to the quasi-federal structure of the Constitution (Sen, 1988).

In addition, a consultation with the representatives of the Anglo-Indian Community is necessary. The Government should establish a consultation process with the All-India Anglo-Indian Association to test the veracity of the data they have based their decisions on. Incorporation of such steps may provide for a factually correct recognition of numbers which paves the way for stronger representation and policies.

Two Alternatives for Ensuring Democratic Representation in the Parliament

No country must ignore its minority's voices, no matter how small a part of the population they form. To ensure that the lawmakers are made aware of the social and economic needs of the Anglo-Indian minority, some form of democratic representation is a must. Before we delve into the alternatives that may be pursued by the Anglo-Indian community, it is imperative to understand that the recommendations suggested by the authors are based on the premise that Anglo-Indians have been thwarted in the past due to improper representation marred by inadequate solutions which have plagued the community and hindered its progress. The most important goal for the Anglo-Indian community, in the authors' opinion, would be to focus on obtaining a legitimate platform whereby their voices are not just heard but respected. After hereby separating the wheat from the chaff, this platform should form the fundamental pillar of creating new policies which directly effected affirmative change. Since representation by nomination to the Lok Sabha has not worked in the past, and it is

extremely difficult for a minority to elect its own representatives, a solution may be found in either of the two alternatives as elaborated below.

Nomination to the Rajya Sabha

The Rajya Sabha is the second house of the Parliament. Rajya Sabha being a federal chamber representing States/Union territories, enjoys certain special powers as allocated in the Constitution of India, It empowers the Lok Sabha to make laws in the national interest in respect of creating the All India Services, and approving proclamations (governance orders or announcements of policy issued by the President of India) issued under articles 352 (in cases of national emergency), 356 (in cases of failure of constitutional machinery in the State) or article 360 (in cases of financial emergency) if the Lok Sabha stands dissolved. The Rajya Sabha differs from the Lok Sabha such that the tenure of the Lok Sabha members expires every 5 years after which elections take place, however in the Rajya Sabha, one-third of its members retire every two years. Further, budgetary bills which specifically deal with allocation of taxes, and the revenues and expenditures of the Government can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha, while the powers of the Rajya Sabha regarding them are limited.

The Rajya Sabha currently has 250 seats allotted by the Constitution of which 12 persons are nominated by the President, and 232 are elected representatives of the State and Union territory assemblies. As has been explained earlier in section 4.3.1 of the paper, the Rajya Sabha nominations for 12 members as done by the President of India are reserved for people with accomplishments in the field or special knowledge in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service.

As explained earlier, the Lok Sabha reserves seats for those who are directly elected representatives of the people. However, the format of indirect representation to the Rajya Sabha, makes it the perfect solution to garner representation for the community in the Upper House of the Parliament. To reserve a special representative seat for an Anglo-Indian nominee in the Rajya Sabha would tackle problems of nomination in the Lok Sabha and challenges of electoral voting, while ensuring representation for the community in the Parliament. Such a nominee must be qualified and capable of

adequately representing the Anglo-Indian community and making strong cases for policies affecting them.

If this method of nomination were to be adopted, to ensure a transparent nomination process which entails true representation of the Anglo-Indian community, the All-India Anglo-Indian Association or a committee of such associations that can claim a representative voice of the people must be the source of recommendations of potential nominees. This recommendation to the Rajya Sabha would act as the voice of the Anglo-Indian people where nominees will be chosen after due consideration of their skill set, their service to the Anglo-Indian community and potential to effect positive change.

Designation as a Separate Minority and Inclusion in the National Commission for Minorities

The Anglo-Indian Suburban Front (AISF) had submitted a formal memorandum to the Prime Minister in October, 2020 demanding the Anglo-Indian community be given the status of a separate minority (The Hindu, 2020) by amending the National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992, as had been done for the Jain community in 2014 to protect their ethnic, religious and linguistic traditions (Ministry of Minority Affairs, 2014). Designation as a separate minority would allow the inclusion of the Anglo-Indians in the National Commission for Minorities (1992).

The National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992 lists a plethora of functions such as monitoring the development of minorities, conducting studies and making recommendation for implementing safeguards for the minorities, preparing special reports to be presented in the Central and State Governments and looking into complaints regarding the deprivation of rights. This would accord the Anglo-Indian community with a platform to voice their needs, and make a case for legislation affecting reforms.

CONCLUSION

This article delves into the history of the Anglo-Indian community wherein the focus is placed on comprehending the rationale behind granting them the two seats in the Lok

Sabha and eleven state constituencies via nomination. This has been in effect for a minority which otherwise would not have the chance to elect its own people or the opportunity to voice their concerns in parliament. Further, the paper analyses the reasons behind the removal of this right via the 104th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 while also providing suggestions to improve the veracity of the statistics. The population of Anglo-Indians is supposed to be greater than 1.5 Lakhs (Minority Rights Group, n.d.) however the speech given by Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad in the Lok Sabha indicates that the 2011 census accounts for only 296 Anglo-Indians.

The reason behind their statistical low numbers is that in the 2011 census only those Anglo-Indians who entered their religion as 'Christian Anglo-Indian' have been accounted for. While the vast majority of Anglo-Indians are practicing Christians this census designation is an anachronistic way of naming themselves, not in use among them.

The article also explains why representation by nomination breaches the essence of a democracy. In addition, it may be argued that not much has been achieved for the community by these nominated seats due to separated pockets of population within different constituencies and sometimes lax nominated members who are unable to represent each group's needs individually. Further after consideration of the Parliamentary debates and recommendations given by the Ministry of Minority and Linguistic Affairs the authors provide recommendations in the form of authenticating the exact population of Anglo-Indians, which could then be used to either gain access to a nominated Anglo-Indian member in the Rajya Sabha or to be nominated as a minority and hence become a member of the National Commission of Minorities. Thus, the authors attempt to provide measures to help the community regain a platform to effectuate policies for their progress and upliftment.

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MEMORIES IN MUSIC: READING TREVOR TAYLOR'S *THE DEAF OF ELVIS AND THE LAST OF THE ANGLO-INDIANS*

Upamanyu Sengupta

ABSTRACT

The Deaf of Elvis and the Last of the Anglo-Indians: An Autobiography *is a life-story by Trevor Taylor, an octogenarian Anglo-Indian who migrated to England in 1960. The author's identity as an Anglo-Indian immigrant serves as both a theme and a backdrop against which he charts his ambitions of a career in music. I read this book to find out how the two thematic strands intersect and bring out the author's portrait as an individual. Taylor's narrative simultaneously embraces, but also cuts across, each aspect of his identity, whether as an Anglo-Indian, a South Asian immigrant, an aspiring artist, or a doting family man. In the process, I also examine my own expectations, preferences and practices as a reader.*

INTRODUCTION

The Deaf of Elvis and the Last of the Anglo-Indians: An Autobiography, published in 2020, is a life-story[1] by Trevor Taylor, an Anglo-Indian currently in his early eighties, who migrated to England in 1960. An aspiring artist and avid Elvis Presley fan, Taylor charts his life across seventy odd years from his childhood days in Mumbai (then Bombay) to the present in Purley, London. While most of the book devotes itself to his time in England, it is the chapters based on Taylor's early life in India that carry some of the finest detailing in terms of the cast of characters and events that shape the

[1] I use the term 'life-story' interchangeably with 'autobiography' throughout my essay. This is a term I borrow from *A Philosophy of autobiography: Body and text* by Akash Singh Rathore, who in turn has borrowed it from Carlos Baker's biographies of Ernest Hemingway (Rathore, p. 66).

author's life. Perhaps the earlier chapters engage us more because of how intricately he connects his own life's turns with critical moments in history: the Second World War and the independence of India.

As we move from the opening chapters of his childhood and youth, to his marriage and family life, this connection is less evident, but the more personal narrative note he strikes makes up for it. The most prominent among the people in his life is his wife Zoe, whom he describes on more than one occasion as a 'guardian angel', but also his parents, and especially his mother, brother, children and grandchildren, about each of whom he speaks with doting fondness. All in all, Taylor's book recounts the life of a content and loving family man living a comfortable life following all his struggles as an immigrant, if also beset by regret for not being able to be the artist he aspired to be.

Why do people feel the need to write about their lives? In our times, celebrities lead the charge in penning autobiographical accounts, and understandably so. The gossip, glamour and drama surrounding their lives serve up rich material for such an exercise. *The Deaf of Elvis and the Last of the Anglo-Indians: An Autobiography*, does not fit into any of these categories, however. Neither does the author Trevor Taylor claim to be a celebrity, nor does it relate a particularly eventful life. In his title though, he promises to share the story of a community on the wane, as he identifies himself as among the last of its members. Autobiographies after all, can also be a record of collective memories, as the present work shows. Such recollections are especially significant for a number of reasons.

First, each such telling makes for a powerful assertion for a community that finds itself increasingly marginalized in the Indian national life.[2] According to Kathleen J. Cassity (2014), Anglo-Indians who tell their own stories correct "the distorted historical record" of the stories penned by the British or the other Indians about Anglo-Indians. In the process, they strike a new, autonomous trajectory distinct from having their stories told by either the British or the Indian mainstream (2014, p. 4). Even as descendants of

[2] The 126th Amendment Act passed by the Lok Sabha in December 2019, for instance, discontinued the provision for nominating members of the Anglo-Indian community to the parliament and fourteen state assemblies.

the Raj, Anglo-Indians like Taylor forge an independent path away from the shadows of its more numerous contenders.

Second, an individual life even in its utmost ordinariness deserves narration, if only to record and celebrate its uniqueness. As Adriana Cavarero (2020) argues, the story of a life allows a glimpse into its distinct, unrepeatable narrative arc that larger, community-based identities often gloss over and miss. Autobiographical accounts are expressions of the singular instance of a person, the 'who' subsumed by the larger 'what'—the slew of identities that pin them down (2020, p. 45). To borrow an analogy from the philosopher Akash Singh Rathore (2019), autobiographies render in flesh of the lived experience what identities and epithets trade in mere abstractions (2019, p. 1). An autobiography captures in intimate particulars the lives lived behind these abstractions, and sketches them in sharp, vivid relief. Abstractions after all, function at the level of theorizing: Who are the Anglo-Indians for instance, as per the constitution? What role do they play in the economic life of the country? Where do they stand sociologically? What impact does the country's politics have on them?

As we see, an autobiography can raise these vital questions, but who exactly is the person, Trevor Taylor, beyond these group identity questions? How do we know him? What are the quirks of daily life that foreground the individual in him, while also telling us of how they relate to the larger collectives of identity? Delving into a life-story answers to that curiosity of knowing the person beyond his identities, as an Anglo-Indian, an immigrant, an artist, any of those terms that straitjacket him into a type. Calling a life unique, as Cavarero or Rathore do, is a nod towards its fundamental unrepeatability, that this life is Taylor's and his alone, and not a mere measure of how exceptional it has been in terms of achievements. In being narratable then, every life stands out, and navigates past the identity brackets that seek to arrest it and make it conform. In my reading too, I had to constantly grapple with the challenge of how much Taylor let us into his life as an Anglo-Indian versus finding out more about him as a person. In writing this review, I approach the problem by examining the book's title, how its author sets the social context of his life story, lets us into his artistic growth, and the contradictions and dilemma that mark his journey.

A TWO-PART TITLE

Autobiography titles often carry an air of nostalgia and an instant, catchy appeal. Taylor's title too treads this line. On the one hand is the word 'deaf', evidently both a play on 'death' of his hero Elvis Presley as well as his own hearing impairment. It is the second part of the title referring to 'the last' Anglo-Indians that pique one's interest. Is this a reference to the declining numbers of the community in India and elsewhere? Could it be a more limited allusion to his immediate family's presence in India, as they migrate to England, Australia and elsewhere over the last decade of the twentieth century? Or perhaps, it is a hint at the gradual, but steady fading away of a distinct way of life, as more and more Anglo-Indians in India either migrate or culturally align themselves closer to a normative idea of a 'national mainstream'.

Taylor explains:

> Anglo-Indians finally began to settle and raised families and then related to their children and grandchildren their roots; this next generation of Anglo-Indians were not called Anglo-Indian because they were born in the UK or wherever and they had been born British. They adapted to that particular country's ways […] They found it quite difficult to understand their parents' roots, of such a mixture of English, Dutch, Polish, Armenian, Scottish, Welsh and Irish. We are the last of the Anglo-Indians of our generation, those who emigrated during 1947 till 1960. (p. 7)

He thus defines the 'last' in terms of an entire migrant generation, and places himself and his family somewhere towards its tail end. In explaining the title, he evokes a sense of nostalgia for this generation, now British citizens, and fading. Children and grandchildren born to them no longer fathom their mixed ancestry and see themselves as singularly British and laugh at the accents and seemingly strange manners of Taylor's generation of migrants. As he notes elsewhere, Anglo-Indians had always been something like outliers in British society too, not unlike in India. However, with the passing of generations, Taylor and others of his time find themselves a bit out of place in their own families too, and fervently hope that the stories survive the test of time. Noticeably, he cannot pin hopes on them continuing the Anglo-Indian way of life, but must settle for them becoming custodians of these stories. What Taylor essentially nudges towards, is a memorializing of his personal life, as it twines with his collective identity. One might infer his life story as a first step in that process.

The book's title is something of a giveaway of the protagonist's commitment to a life of music, and his admiration for Elvis Presley in particular. At the same time, the title's reference to deafness captures something of his frustration, if also self-deprecating humour, at all the obstacles he had to overcome while pursuing his passion. At another level, it also pays homage to his Anglo-Indian upbringing and exposure to a variety of music from early in life. Added to that, the cosmopolitan setting of Bombay meant exposure to a wide variety of western music for the young Taylor. His natural talent and the childlike lilt in his voice caught the attention of the priests at school and in the local church where he quickly became a part of the choir groups. At home, his songs were a regular fixture at the pound parties, his 'caruso' style adding to the charm. Churning out one song after another for such occasions meant staying updated on the latest trends in music from an early age, something he rather enjoyed doing.

SOCIAL SETTINGS' IMPACT ON IDENTITY

Taylor's memoir explores his identity on multiple fronts: that of an Anglo-Indian, a migrant, and an artist. I was especially struck by how his Anglo-Indian identity takes greater prominence when he recounts his youth in India. While not so evident in his early childhood, this highlighting of Anglo identity becomes more pronounced from his teenage years. What explains such a shift? Perhaps, what accounts for it is his growing up in a locality marked by identity awareness and a gradual coming of age amid these differences. We read that the apartment and its neighbourhood housed a mix of diverse religious and linguistic communities and classes. At Dehdusty Building, his childhood apartment, they "had the landlord, Mr Dehdusty, a Muslim man, living to the right side of us, and to the left, we had Hindu neighbours" (p. 45). From their balcony overlooking the road, a young Taylor would watch life flow by at all hours of the day, "the huge crowds coming out of the late-night movie around midnight and talking aloud and smoking their *beedis* [and] the *paan*, which went along with the *beedis*" (p. 47). As much as they all inhabited this space, they would no doubt have had a deep awareness of their differences too. While nothing suggests animosity among the neighbours, a constant, unavoidable awareness of each other's differences marked their daily interactions. This is perhaps the reason Taylor identifies his neighbours by religion as he reflects on his childhood a good six decades later.

If these were boundaries the grown-ups drew around their own identities, they found an echo among the young ones too. Predictably, at school too, Taylor's friend circle gradually coalesces around groups of Anglo-Indian boys who share an interest in music, and scout their own hideouts in the jukebox joints, cinemas, and late-night pound parties. The only exception seems to be a friend called Velu, presumably a Tamil, who the author describes as a Madrasi, as was the wont then. Taylor obviously admired Velu. Their easy bantering around each other's food, skin colour, and accents makes for a delightful read, especially when we learn Velu is that one friend from Bombay still in touch with the author. However, such moments are rare. By and large, Taylor's childhood shows how in mixed societies when children navigate social boundaries, they often creatively mirror the behaviour of the grown-ups.

In this, the contrast with the latter half of the book is especially striking. By then, the question of identity takes on a more settled, calmer tone. Two things have happened by then: first, Taylor's migration to England, and second, he has settled into family life. As if on cue, the heady pace of the earlier half of the narrative eases down. At this stage, most of it reads like standard fare for the? ordinary middle-class life of an immigrant family gaining a steady foothold in a new country. I felt that recollections from his youth come across as all the more convincing as a result of this narrative shift. Taylor casts his early, formative years as turbulent, devoid of the certainty that marks the later years. It is no coincidence then that his evolving sense of Anglo-Indian identity should overlap with other accounts of coming of age: his earliest sexual adventures, and also the first serious considerations of a career as a singer.

This portrayal of simultaneous growth of all these aspects of self-identity lends the initial chapters a real, palpable feel that the later chapters lack. As a reader, I was left wondering if the later silence on more personal aspects of identity is a deliberate attempt at showing a shift. Does it convey a reconciliation with himself in his identity, a more settled acceptance of the person Taylor, with all his flaws and shortcomings, portrayed with such admirable frankness in recollecting his youth? Or is it simply a hindsight advantage that allows a more realistic take on the past than it does for the present? Either way, given its formative role, I felt this transition could have been charted with a greater degree of care and attention.

EVOLUTION AS AN ARTIST

The greater detailing in the earlier chapters also has the author link the evolution of his artistic streak with the support offered by his family and school. Consider this, for instance:

> I was always a caruso as a little boy and used to sing along with my parents' gramophone player to old Johnny Ray records and old songs my dad used to sing when he was tipsy. He was of Irish descent and used to sing songs like 'Danny Boy' and 'I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen' and my little sister used to sing as well and did a song called 'My Happiness'. (p. 23)

Again, while talking of his selection for the school choir, Taylor highlights how he aces through with ease and just how elating the experience of being in the choir is for him:

> It was as if an angel of God was guiding us with his wings and inspiring the choir and me to sing with special emotions and feelings. It was the best experience that happened to me as a choir boy, being selected to sing with the soprano's section of the choir. […] We had a massive sound, and I was in heaven. (p. 25)

The 'Elvis' and the 'Anglo-Indians' of the book's title are thus closely related and the author's passion for music is an integral part of his Anglo-Indian identity. The earliest bands he forms are mostly with fellow Anglo-Indian boys, some of them from school and some from elsewhere. All of them bring to these groupings a shared sense of musical pride and heritage drawn from their family and social settings. By this stage, Taylor already falls silent on any mention of how the other communities fit or engaged with this musical space. The somewhat exclusive nature of these groupings is hard to miss: none of them counts a non-Anglo-Indian fellow student among its members.

Perhaps the author deliberately avoids mentioning this to steer clear of any controversy or blanket generalizations. However, addressing this issue might have added more nuance to his narrative, especially since it is a recollection that allows him the benefit of hindsight. It could have served to remind us, for instance, of the reticence that marked the mainstream Indian engagement with even cultural aspects such as western music in the pre-liberalization era. Moreover, part of the appeal of an Anglo-Indian life memoir lies in how its protagonist navigates the complex terrain of identity and inter-cultural contacts in the Indian social setting. This issue becomes all the more critical since it moulds his interest and taste in music too.

COLLECTIVE AND SELF-IDENTITIES

An autobiography or life-writing then links an individual and their community at multiple levels. It is acutely conscious of forging a link between the self, the individual, and the world, and their society, that is, the larger community relationships they find themselves in. As Mikhail Bakhtin contends, in exploring the formation of the individual, the form also records the emergence of the world as they see, encounter and inhabit it (Bakhtin cited in Graham, 2019, p. 4). The larger social cultural context that sustains an individual's journey through life is more than a mere prop in life-writing. Recollection of a life's formative moments as presented in autobiographies is also a record of how an awareness of oneself emerges in relation to the world, in how they interact, defy, and engage with it. At the same time, the impressions of this world that we get are invariably inflected through the perceptions of the individual observer. However, as one flits between people, contexts, and places, what emerges is not just one world, but an ongoing blend of multiple worlds and their own rich perspectives.

Portraying socio-political influences of one's life helps contextualize an autobiography better. Musings on a community's past, its origins and its evolution in that social setting also serves us well here. Early on, Taylor offers a background to the Anglo-Indian story, especially around the heady days of partition riots and independence. While on this, he sets up, almost anecdotally, the Anglo-Indian community as something of an outlier in the Indian social-political mainstream. This disconnect with the rest of Indian society was an inheritance for the Anglo-Indians, the first generations of whom were born out of unions between British men and Indian women. While the British as sahib rulers never quite jelled with the larger Indian populace, for the Indian women such marriages often triggered exclusion from their communities of birth for exogamy. Consequentially, the children of these unions grew up attracting a mix of scorn and begrudging respect from fellow Indians.

While parts of this historical backdrop might read a bit too reductive to a scholarly gaze,[3] the casual, easy tone he adopts makes a complex story enjoyable. After all,

[3] As Benita Parry notes in *Delusions and Discoveries: India in the British Imagination*, "the British-Indian encounter became a battle expressed as a political struggle and experienced as a psychic crisis" (1972, p. 30) and goes on to add about European perception of mixed marriages, "...intermarriage with Indians and Eurasians had by mid-nineteenth century become a symptom of degeneration, and in popular fiction Eurasians were shown as debased and without dignity, as shrill and cringing, a warning against

nothing obliges him to adopt an objective, analytical framework when offering the history of his people. It only provides a setting for his own story, and thus even starts off on a personal note where he explains his very English sounding name, presumably to an unsuspecting English reader. If anything, such a framing strikes the right kind of informal, conversational tone. Consider, for instance, the question "Quite fascinating, wasn't it?" he playfully tags with his account of the unlikely relationships that occasionally led to almost fairy-tale marriages between European officials and the *aayah*. Such an informal, easy take on the subject skilfully taps into the community history as a means of making the story of Taylor's own life all the more relatable.

Not always does Taylor's use of a historical background to trace his own life story make for a convincing narrative. He explains his decision to leave India, for instance, in light of how "the Anglo-Indians did not fit in India any longer" (p. 7). However, we need to take his version with a few riders. For one, even as he concludes the Anglo-Indians did not fit, he hints at the quandary the prospect of migrating posed:

> I was in two minds about leaving India for good, because after so many difficult years, I felt I was living the life of a king in comfort of every kind […]. The English side of my birth was calling me to England. How could I leave the place where I was born and ate the salt of Mother India? I was in turmoil and totally confused. (p. 8)

Perhaps, his career and family pressures prompted his call to migrate at the age of twenty. On more than one occasion, he talks of lapsing back to reckless lifestyle when in Bombay, which was always a train journey away from any part of India. A lot of these habits traced back to his childhood years and early teens, and could return at the slightest nudge. While Taylor calls these years out for their "juvenile, delinquent ways" (p. 28) in hindsight, that he nevertheless expresses a certain fondness for these memories after all that time shows just how addictive and appealing he found them.

In fact, I sense his passage out of India was more his mother's intervention to ensure greater stability in his career. For his part, he wavers around the decision, even after reaching England, and is tempted to return on more than one occasion. I do not intend

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the mixing of the races" (1972, p. 50). Also, scholars such as Adrian Carton observe that the earliest records of Anglo-Indians in fact pre-date British imperial presence in India. Drawing from early European travelogues, he shows "…the existence of Eurasian communities in India before the arrival of the British, suggesting that the Eurasian community had a pre-British heritage quite separate to the imperial connection (2000, p. 3).

to play down the author's feeling of not belonging in India. At the same time, it helps to keep in sight the myriad concerns that influence such critical decisions. Banking on the much-charted reason of non-belonging as the sole reason for his leaving India does not quite capture this complexity.

NARRATIVE TENSION

Whether in descriptions of his social cultural settings, or the decision to leave India, Taylor's narrative carries within it a recurrent tension. We see this manifest in the form of the multiple divides he sets up in the story. While relating his Bombay days early on, Taylor sets up the Anglo-Indian social sphere as culturally distinct. For instance, he refers all non-Anglo-Indians as 'Indians' throughout the book to bring out the distinctly hyphenated identity of his community. If he sets up this distinction in terms of socio-religious divides, he also separates his own childhood personality between that of home and the world outside. On the one hand, is the homely, warm and comforting environs of his home, steeped, like his school chapel, in comforting religiosity; and on the other, the world outside, "filled with all sorts of places of vice" (p. 29) such as the gambling snooker hubs around the dockyard area where he would cavort with his schoolmates.

The two distinct worlds coalesce around his boyhood in formative ways. While the one outside exposed him to the risks of bad company, even as he mostly managed to steer clear of harm, home was where he could return to a safe and assured shelter and redemption. Home offered a refuge against the vices of the outside world and allowed him a connection with his spiritual side, which he also felt as a choir boy in the school chapel.

In these early chapters then, Taylor weaves his story into the social setting he grows up in. He highlights their competing and even contradictory influences in terms of straddling a spatial, cultural divide. Indeed, these portions of the book contain some of the richest detailing in terms of how the social world leaves an imprint on the individual in their formative years. That this description appears against the backdrop of his inner, personal struggles and maturing shows how much of a central role such tensions play at this point in the narrative. After all, even as he recollects his years of

turpitude, he does so with evident relish, conveying just how enjoyable these escapades might have been back then.

At the same time, he highlights the inevitable phases of guilt that would follow as he tried to expiate his wrongs through service to the church. Then again, the comforting spirituality of the church and the home held its own charm for the young mind and allowed him a space for what he was most passionate about: singing. We thus see the home-world divide as not merely a backdrop for his life's narrative, but also marking his inner self and shaping his personality. At his level, the divide functions also as a link between his self-perception, and his sense of belonging to the myriad social groupings around him.

The divide informs his passion for music and dance too. In more than one instance, we see how he picks up the more 'hip-hop' and jiving styles from outside, while being guided by country and blues music at home. At the same time, because of the contiguity of tastes and styles across home and school, church music and carols leave a deep imprint on him. As an author looking back at his life, Taylor has crafted this stage especially well. From a reader's perspective, it sets up an anchoring point for the narrative where he realizes his artistic streak, along with all its contradictions. Even as the refinement and solemnity of carols inspired him, the charms of jazz beats and rock were too attractive to let go. Not only did the beats of jazz and rock appeal for their youthful, rebellious energy, but the escape and transgressions they promised in the company of friends, proved too addictive to ignore. Throughout these chapters, Taylor builds and develops this tension as it courses through his own boyhood and into the larger sphere of his evolving relationships with his friends, family but also the community.

Why does Taylor make this dilemma so central to his narrative? After all, we find it play out well beyond his growing up years. In England too, he constantly vacillates between keeping a full-time, often secure job, and pursuing his passion for music. At the same time, a sense of guilt too gnaws at him as Zoe, his wife, works that much harder to sustain the finances. Throughout the narrative, he seems torn between charting a predictable, settled career arc and craving a life of artistic freedom. Even during his Bombay days, the conflict essentially pivoted around these same concerns.

Music surely provided him an escape from the daily grind of a life dangerously close to poverty. More alluringly though, he had just the right share of talent to potentially make a glamorous career out of it. In effect, he set this as a goal in life, and *The Deaf of Elvis* indeed reads like a journey of gradual reconciliation with this being a chimeric and unattainable possibility. To his credit, even in cherishing a spirited, carefree past and the lost dream it conjured, Taylor steers clear of over idealizing it, and sustains till the end the tension between the two types of life. That he refrains from making a judgment one way or the other reflects an inherent merit of life-writing in capturing complexities in detail.,.

For William Dilthey, life itself forms a fundamental narrative act allowing "a reiteration, in order to trace its footsteps and gain a better grasp of the flurry of events lived through, or reconcile its open, untied ends" (Dilthey cited in Steiner, 2019, p. 90). For Taylor, these loose ends space out across his life in the form of dilemma between choosing a stable career path and pursuing his passion in music. Whether one consciously attempts charting a course of character/career formation, the story of one's life invariably addresses this as a theme. Often, such conflicts appear as critical moments of decision making, not only about choosing a career, but also as in Taylor's case, taking a call on migration. Without a doubt then, such moments hold a special significance for the author. And yet, the question remains as to why such moments should appeal to the reader too? What piques our interest around these episodes?

Perhaps, such junctures realize one of the most crucial aspects of life-stories, that of the conflict between the individual self, their aspirations, and the demands of social conformity that tie them down. What complicates this conflict in Taylor's narrative is its refusal to be framed neatly along these binaries. They surface in his life at critical moments, when he has already started aligning his own expectations to social demands of a stable career, and yet cherishes his passion in music. Months before he sails for England, the manager at the Premier hotel in Srinagar almost convinces him to remain there as their star showstopper, and Taylor is "tempted to take up his offer" (p. 87). Even in England, he flits between jobs, hoping to buy himself more time to take up music more seriously, trying a desperate balancing act between his job and his passion.

To recount these in a life story is not merely an act of recording, reporting sets of facts, but an attempt to fit them in the larger scheme of life formation that one wishes to draw up, to closely scrutinize those moments when the individual wishes came into a contact, and often conflict with social mandates, and how these conflicts/moments of contact channelled/shaped one's life. An autobiography like Taylor's drives home the truth of just how implicit such conflicts are in our lives and decisions. Narrating these incidents offers clarity past life's unpredictable turns.

NARRATIVE LOOSE ENDS

In tracing an individual life arc, an autobiography brings forth an entire world. However, when we say, that a world emerges alongside the story of formation of the protagonist, which world are we talking about? It might after all be too reductive to refer to Taylor's emerging world as merely Anglo-Indian, or a South Asian immigrant or an artist. They are all of these, and more besides at any given point. In the latter half of the book, for instance, we see his artistic-self take centre stage and consequently, even holiday trips to Cyprus, Italy and the USA read like packed performance tours as he charms his way from one hotel to the next. Similarly, both at the beginning and end of the book we see a highlighting of Taylor's spiritual side, often in tandem with his deep romantic affection for Zoe, and for the reader. Each of these stand out as defining the person and his actions. Does he want us to choose or prioritize one set of identities and worldviews over another? For the world that the text highlights also determines how we eventually perceive Taylor.

It is on this count that I found the book somewhat lacking in places. Many a time, the text read like disjointed bits spread out over a lifespan without the sort of connecting threads that frame a narrative recollection. While a narrative arc might map a lifespan, it cannot really imitate its passage in toto. A life marks passage from one point of time to the next, and perhaps even depends on an at least partial obviating of the past. Even as it traces this journey, a narrative arc cannot afford to re-enact too literally this glossing over of the past by the present. In many ways, a narrative framework remedies this fragmenting, disjoining impulse of life and helps us make meaning by piecing individual events into a coherent, meaningful whole. In this, past events often offer a stage, a context to those in the present, and help us make better sense of them.

A critical part of the interaction between the world and the self involves coming to recognize and reconcile with its realities and disappointments.

As a literary convention, an autobiography devotes itself significantly to exploring how we come to terms with the disappointments life inevitably throws at us. Typically, the protagonist moves through a series of challenges and eventually experiences closure as they come to value virtues such as perseverance and fortitude that bring them success. Within the western tradition, this appears as a major factor favouring the *bildungsroman* as an instrument of example and learning for young minds. As Jose Santiago Vazquez (in Hoagland, 2019) notes, however, autobiographies and other similar forms of life-stories written from non-western perspectives both adopt and contest some of these essential norms. For him, such writing arising from postcolonial traditions "incorporate the master codes of imperialism into the text, in order to sabotage them more effectively" (cited in Hoagland, 2019, p. 218).

However, I differ with such a position in the context of Taylor's life story. He shows no obvious intent to defy or challenge a literary form. The bildungsroman continues being an effective and simple narration of a life and lends such narration a perspective to make sense of it better. Taylor also closes his life story with an increasingly spiritual slant. In fact, he also ties together his passion for music with a search for the divine as he signs up as the lead voice and frequents the local church more often. To that extent, Taylor largely toes the generic convention in trying to tie together the various strands of his life in a continuing search for the divine. Speaking of how he feels blessed at this stage of life, he observes:

> Every day we thank our loving saviour Jesus Christ. We thank him every day for all his help and the loving wisdom he has bestowed on us, how to love each other and our fellow neighbours. He has blessed us abundantly with our dream home and financial situations, where we rose from rags to riches, so to speak. (p. 245)

Such a move even mimics his early adolescence torn between the solace of religion and appeal of delinquency. At the same time, his life story does leave loose ends too. For one, he fails to make much of his musical career, and admits as much in his usual humorous fashion, with perhaps a tinge of warning: "try to be yourselves as copying Elvis all my life did not get me anywhere" (p. 249). If anything, towards the end his narrative shifts from trying to stitch together a musical career to a search for an ideal

English home to settle down for the rest of his life. His musical ambitions remain unfulfilled, but so does the reader's curiosity to know how he comes to terms with it.

DISILLUSIONMENT AND NOSTALGIA

Unfulfilled ambitions are not the only disappointments in Taylor's life. Yet another marked moment of disillusionment for him is the visit to India thirty-eight years after his migration and the sheer disconnect he feels from what was once home for him. Except for a short sojourn at Kerala, his trips to Agra, Nagpur, Calcutta and Bombay all prove fairly underwhelming. One remark following his stay in Bombay sums it up. He asks, "How did I even live there for eighteen years of my youth?" (p. 213). An immigrant's disenchantment upon returning to their home country is of course, a familiar theme in postcolonial literature. In his research, Rishi Iniyan (2013) traces the trajectory of novels that engage with the theme of disillusioned return in authors as diverse as Balachandra Rajan, Amitav Ghosh and Arun Joshi (2013, p. 19). At the same time, in the context of life-writing, such a theme takes on an even more real, almost visceral quality. This is particularly the case for Anglo-Indian life-writing, especially overlaid with a story of migration and diaspora.

Predictably, the author arrives in India full of hope, and eager to revisit the haunts of his early youth. Even more predictably, he finds himself gripped in agonizing disappointment to discover all the places that are gone or have been transformed beyond recognition. However, he does not give up on the nostalgic tenor entirely, but sustains it as an idyllic foil to his actual experiences in all these places. As a reader, I initially found this a bit puzzling: why would someone simultaneously recognize the delusionary nature of nostalgia, and yet continue indulging in yearning for a past so surely out of reach? What explains this contradictory narrative movement?

In the *Future of Nostalgia* (2008), Svetlana Boym distinguishes between two kinds of nostalgia in the western literary tradition: restorative and reflective. While restorative nostalgia pines to revive an idyllic past and reconfigure the present to the requirements of that past, reflective nostalgia acknowledges the irretrievable loss of that past, and focuses on our process of coming to terms with that loss. Taylor's recollection too charts a movement from restorative nostalgia to reflective nostalgia as he comes to

grips with the stark reality of never being able to salvage the country he had once known.

Such a movement mimics the inevitable coming to terms with the past and its loss, that he undergoes. In life-stories, coming to terms with the past, the passage of time, and its accompanying transience are critical ingredients of identity formation. In fact, these serve as crucibles where multiple identities such as ethnic, professional and religious overlap and draw up a sketch of the protagonist. In presenting this sketch too, however, Taylor's account feels a bit wanting. Even as the keen anticipation of the earlier leg of his India tour gives way to disappointment, he wraps up its account a bit abruptly. While these episodes read like a string of let-downs, we do not get enough of a glimpse into the mind that nevertheless keeps pursuing them, in spite of accepting the passing of his world. It would make for so much more of an interesting read to know, for instance, if and how the present, with all its disappointments, manages to hold out that special and unique attachment in him we reserve for our homes, and especially the homes of our childhood. He does tell us how be tears up on seeing Dehdusty Building gone, but leaves it there, with just that much of a mild emotional nudge.

CONCLUSION

If, as Cassity says, Anglo-Indian life narratives provide space for their own voices, they also build an expectation with which the reader approaches the text. In this case, I was especially curious to know if being an immigrant brought challenges unique to the Anglo-Indians in the UK. Sure enough, literature on the politics and social circumstances surrounding Anglo-Indian immigrants is available aplenty, but only a life narrative can render these as intimate snapshots more accessible to readers like me. I have always wondered if Anglo-Indians abroad stood apart from the rest of the South Asian immigrant communities owing to their distinctly western ways, but came away none wiser after reading the book. Insights on the dynamics between the different immigrant communities too might have been a great addition. We do hear of a certain Joyanti, presumably a Bengali Hindu, going by her name, but no further details are shared. As a result, these portions often seem incomplete and a bit abruptly rounded off.

It is not as if interactions with other Indian immigrants from other communities is completely absent in the text, though. We see him sign up, for instance, as the lead musician mostly at bars and pubs run by Indian businessmen in and around London, and for a moment it seems he shows an unstated preference for these. Possibly, it follows patterns of preference and affinity determined by social networks of his, which might have been predominantly Indian, or connected to Indians.[4] With him throwing hardly any light on these connections however, they remain largely distant and formal, and we miss out on a crucial aspect of his social and professional life. As mentioned earlier, I also could not help but notice just how starkly contrasting this silence appears versus his rich and detailed descriptions of community lives around him at his childhood apartment in Mumbai. Perhaps, he recreates in text a transition that echoes in our lives. Experiences of the other, and aspects of their lives that do not match our own milieu, are particularly vivid for the young and leave quite an impact on impressionable minds. As grown-ups, perhaps that sense of wonder fades, and we notice these idiosyncrasies a lot less or take them for granted. Be that as it may, some description of the distinct cultural lives of other immigrant communities he encounters would no doubt have made for an even more enjoyable reading.

But then, a critique of Taylor's silence on this aspect is also perhaps a questioning of my own expectations as a reader. Reviewing a book after all, also involves a closer scrutiny of the reader's approach to it. I cannot unsee how prone I am to straitjacket the text within an imagined Anglo-Indian narrative type. In fact, as mentioned before, this search for the author as an Anglo-Indian and the author as himself – not arrested

[4] In his article "British South Asians and Pathways Into Selective Schooling: Social Class, Culture and Ethnicity", Tahir Abbas observes that the social and educational networks among first and second generation South Asian immigrants were defined by "their social interaction with others like themselves in their own communities" (2007, p. 83). It is more than likely a broader pattern that holds for other age groups too, and might explain Taylor's preference for seeking employment in Indian run establishments.

by any one of his identities – underlines my reading. Why does his silence on the British-Anglo Indian relationship seem jarring? Does it confound an expectation with which I approach the text of him documenting experiences as an immigrant, and in the process also bring up the unique stories of engagement as an Anglo-Indian? Am I beings a bit too presumptuous to suppose there was a struggle in these processes of engagement and settling down in the first place? Or did time make it easier, and he became 'used to' enough to not even notice?

Which readership Anglo-Indian life-writing caters will remain a shifting goal, and not without its share of paradox. It is perfectly possible that Taylor writes primarily for an Anglo-Indian audience, and especially in the latter part of the book does not feel the need to engage with questions of identity all that much. At the same time, these questions might often be the staple fare that often leads non-Anglo-Indian readers to take up a book like his. What we have then is indeed a tricky terrain to navigate. At some level of course, to expect a narrative coloured in the Anglo-Indian lens places an unfair and unnecessary burden on the author. At the same time, as Taylor himself says, the stories of Anglo-Indians of his generation need to be told, and in a manner that foregrounds their identity as an anchor for collective memory. For an author who sets himself to that task, I must concede there are moments which leave more to be desired. It would perhaps not be off the mark either to say that it might even feel the same way for Anglo-Indian readers who did not migrate out of India. The task of the author in this case would be a tricky balancing act between these expectations and a telling of his life story as just another unique event. While Taylor's narrative does waver a bit on this count at times, it reminds us of the extraordinary eventfulness of a supposedly ordinary life, and for that reason alone, should be worth a read.

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International Journal of Anglo-Indian Studies

A REVIEW ESSAY

Anglo-Indian Identity: Past and Present, in India and the Diaspora, eds. Robyn Andrews and Merin Simi Raj, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

A FATHER AND DAUGHTER REFLECT ON NEW SCHOLARSHIP ABOUT THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY

Anthony Mendonça and Penelope Mendonça

It is exhilarating to discover a book which examines something about which you have personal experience, particularly when that lived experience has in the past been ignored, misunderstood or over-simplified within dominant narratives. The name of the book is *Anglo-Indian Identities: Past and Present, in India and the Diaspora* and is edited by Robyn Andrews and Merin Simi Raj. We are reviewing it together, as father and daughter. Tony is eighty-eight years old and identifies as an Anglo-Indian from Karachi. He has spent decades researching his family history and has on numerous occasions participated in academic research. In 1963 he married Gill, a Pakeha (white) New Zealander whom he met in London, England, where they had two sons. Their daughter Penelope was born in Ōtautahi Christchurch following their emigration to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1968. She is an arts academic, a graphic facilitator and cartoonist working on social justice and health inequalities.

This review includes quotes from Tony, recorded as he engaged with the rich and diverse perspectives included in this collection. The book revealed to us new knowledge about a 500-year history, opening our eyes to perspectives from other parts

of the world, and stimulated discussion about the way colonialism, colourism, gender, disability, class and poverty impact upon identity.

> I haven't lived in Karachi for near on seventy years, yet I still love the curries and the culture, I read the latest books about partition, watch documentaries and dramas on YouTube. So, identity includes a question about the land of your birth. And let's face it, your traditions, they all come out in what you eat. I am proud of my Anglo-Indian heritage, but I am also open-minded about it. There are times when the Indians hated us, the locals hated us, and the British just used us, didn't take us seriously. Within our community, the darker Anglo-Indians were frowned upon, as were the poorer Anglo-Indians. The assumption was that your father must be white English, and your mother must be Indian, but there are many different kinds of Anglo-Indians. It was my Mum who was fair skinned. She had an English mother and an Anglo-Indian father. My dad was dark. He was Portuguese-Indian. Yet when I did my DNA last year it said that I was 68.4% South Asian, 17.3% Irish, 8.5% Scandinavian and 5.8% Finnish!

Anthony Mendonça holding his baby sister, surrounded by his brothers – Karachi, 1940s

Anthony Mendonça – London, 2019

Organised into five parts, the collection covers: (1) Identities: Historical (2) Identities in Contemporary India; (3) Diasporic Identities; (4) Gendered Identities; and (5) Identities in the Arts, Literature, Film and Performance. This combination of wide-ranging topics reflects a growing passion for Anglo-Indian Studies, and achieves its aim of widening the scope of interdisciplinary and transnational scholarship in this area. Exploring the contributions led to discussion about the fluidity of identity for those who lived through the partition of British India, who migrated across borders and oceans, who chose to remain or found themselves unable to leave.

> After partition we still had Muslim friends in school and at parties. We never ever argued about religion because we just respected each other's way of life. But some politicians openly stated that they wanted to make Pakistan an Islamic state, and some educated Indian women were referring to Anglo-Indians as 'lackeys of the British'. Anglos got scared and left. To me it wasn't that easy in the 1950s, even though I spoke English. If you were Anglo and went for a job the chances of getting it was low as they were obliged to give the job to Pakistanis, and by Pakistanis, they meant Muslims. You could still have a good quality of life if you had a good job, but many ended up in menial jobs and were exploited really. Some wanted to leave but couldn't get the money to pay for the passage. A lot were left behind, some of them embraced Islam. We were open to intermarrying. After a while England began to close its

> doors and it was harder. I remember Canada would not accept my sister's family because her sons had learning disabilities. They had a hard life in Karachi.

We considered the impact of new lands and new relationships on one's identity, how children and grandchildren engage with increasingly complex family narratives, developing their own perceptions of who they are, and where they are from. 'Diaspora', we reflected, is not necessarily a word used widely within the communities it describes. Our hope is that this collection of writing, the art forms it examines and voices it amplifies, will be shared widely, including in forms accessible beyond the academy, and help advance understandings of and debates around this complex ethnic identity and the world histories it reflects.

> The British didn't know who the Anglo-Indians were and the Kiwis were even worse; they just class all Indians as one. 'How come you speak English so well?' they asked. When I first came to New Zealand one of the guys assumed that I must be West Indian, because of a cricket match that had been on. Even to this day if you say you are Anglo-Indian people think: 'What the hell is that?'

From poetry to music, examples of creativity are discussed throughout this book, including a case study looking at country music singer, Terry Morris, but it is especially encouraging to see an entire section devoted to Anglo-Indians and the Arts. Glenn D'Cruz's arts practice-based inquiry highlights the value of visual and performing arts as a means for transforming and challenging conceptions of Anglo-Indian identity. We were inspired to read about Rhett D'Costa's colourful participatory artwork 'Masala Mix' (2019). Here it would have been useful and interesting to have included imagery alongside the creative contributions and methods, offering readers additional opportunities to engage and analyse.

We were particularly interested to see Dolores Chew's work deconstructing representations of Anglo-Indians which led to us to reflect on the risks facing Anglo-Indian women in 1940/50s Karachi, including harassment and violence, both outside of and within the community, and subsequent restrictions and protections afforded them by family members, and church and community leaders. Also of note here, was Carolyn D'Cruz's 'A Queer Encounter with Anglo-Indians: Some Thoughts on National (Non) Belonging', inviting valuable discussion about belonging and unbelonging.

> I can believe that it was a very closed society, if you were different, you would soon have a reputation. I knew people of non-conforming gender

> at school. We didn't associate with them. One girl rode a motorbike and had a short haircut, I was told she was a 'butch'. A friend came out as gay when we got to London, perhaps it was easier for him there.

This collection opens up diverse and intersectional perspectives including personal experiences and autoethnographic approaches, it represents a tremendous wealth of knowledge and histories, drawing links between contrasting and shared understandings. We considered the way stories of privilege can at times distract from stories of adversity and agency. As such it was refreshing to see Brent Howitt Otto piece 'Which Eurasians May Speak? Elite Politics, the Lower Classes and Contested Eurasian Identity'. Tony, who is quoted in Dorothy McMenamin's chapter on Anglo-Indian Identity in Pakistan, reminds us of the importance of continuing to seek out narratives that may be less visible, in order to reflect regional, cultural and socio-economic contexts, and the way these may shape identity and understandings.

> Some Anglos were gifted with a better upbringing, education and houses. They used to have the whiskeys, they danced the night away and carried on like life was great for them. Whereas a lot of poorer Anglo-Indians had to struggle and work for minimum wages. Rich Anglo, Muslim and Hindu families sent their children to private schools, but many couldn't afford it. It was a question of money. Yes, the Catholic Church gave us a free education, but we were expected to raise funds for the church in return, collecting money from a community that was already poor. Yes, the Anglo-Indian Society paid for my sister to do her teaching degree, and our relatives who had these big houses sometimes brought us tins of spam. But we never got any financial assistance; like most Anglos we struggled. Mum had to buy tinned stuff off a cart that might have been rotten. We didn't have money for books and the teachers didn't help. They just sent us home because we didn't have the books. We didn't have school uniforms; we were lucky enough to have clothes. I remember having to wear mum's Women's Auxiliary Corps., India (WAC-I) uniform to school, some of the guys used to call me a 'WAC-I'. I wanted to stay at school, but I had to get a job.

There is a beauty and mystery within identities, languages, cultural practices and physical appearances which do not neatly reflect majority populations. Misunderstandings about Anglo-Indian identities endure and as Anglo-Indians continue to have relationships outside of the community, identities become increasingly complex and colourful. As Tony suggests: "Mixing race has always happened, and it will always happen. It is inevitable." This vital collection offers an impressive variety of lenses and creative responses through which we can view, celebrate and question identity. It preserves and promotes the voices of our elders,

and will stimulate enthusiastic discussion, new research and new art. It is our hope that this book will travel as widely as Anglo-Indians have, finding its way on to mango wood coffee tables, hand painted bookshelves and student reading lists everywhere from Anjuna to the Algave, from Bangladesh to Battersea, from Mahé to Marseille, from Karachi to Christchurch Ōtautahi.

Anthony Mendonça *has extensive knowledge of world history and politics, though his career was in engineering. He loves biryani, grandchildren and Duke Ellington. His favourite films are High Noon, West Side Story (1961) and Lagaan.*

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