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1   Dreaming of Bridges: Arborescent Identity and Ethical imagination in Artistic Performances of Peace
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Abstract

Informed by Lederach's notion of 'moral imagination' (2010: p. 5)—mobilised in this essay as 'ethical imagination'—which arises from the perception that "we all exist in a web of relationships, even with our enemies" (p. 34), this essay attempts to build a theoretical framework of devising a 'dialogic' (Freire 1972a: p. 61) performance for peace-building. The essay contains two sections. The first demonstrates, by drawing on Cohen's notion of "the symbolic construction of community" (1985: pp. 115-18), that 'arborescent' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: pp. 293-94) nationalist identities built on the analogy of trees, branches and roots, weave, "[t]he invisible screen of the commonplace" (Tagore 1996: p. 121) in our daily life. The second section, using the Derridean concept of 'face-to-face encounter' (1978: p. 100) and the Levinasian "relationship in which the other is a neighbour" (Levinas 1978: p. 59), argues that the pain produced by nationalist strife can best be healed by ethical imagination, a Lederach-inspired concept. Arguing against the sole application of the processes of cognitive analysis in the field of peace-building, I would assert that knowledge, understanding, and deep insight "are achieved through aesthetics" and the capacity that relies "on intuition more than cognition" (Lederach 2010: p. 69). In conclusion I suggest that ethical imagination can be translated into a performance built on a Freirean notion of 'dialogue' i.e., "the encounter between men [sic.], mediated by the world, in order to name the world" (1972a: p. 61), and invite readers to dream of building bridges that will "bring… stream, and bank and land into each other's neighbourhood [and], *gather* [...]the earth as landscape around the stream" (Heidegger 2001: p. 150), by devising artistic performances for peace-building underpinned by ethical imagination and dialogue.

Abstract

While democracy and participant political culture have been viewed as integral parts of the modern polity, the issue of military engagement in politics has been at the centre of debate for many years in comparative politics. Yet, many South Asian nations encounter challenges of institutionalising the civil-military relationship as in the case of the politics of Pakistan and Bangladesh, which are characterised by the dominant role of armies in politics that hinder the process of democratisation in these societies.

This study attempts to highlight the underlying causes of military interventions in Pakistan and Bangladesh, wherein incompetent political elites prepared the ground for the military of these States to appear the most eligible to take over in the political arena. It explores how the role of the military in politics has hampered the institutionalisation of the democratic process in both countries. The article suggests that issues of identity in these States slowed down the stabilisation process and that the political leadership has failed to create a sustainable democracy. The inability of the political systems of Pakistan and Bangladesh to manage multiple identities has provided sufficient lacunae for the military to formulate state discourses derived from within divisive religious paradigms. However, although the factors paving the way for military intervention in both these States arise from within similar contexts the orientation of politics by the military differs. The shaping of politics requires the transformation of military 'rule' into military 'role', which marks a civilianising of the military regimes restoring democracy; this paper explores the manner in which military intervention in both Bangladesh and Pakistan illustrates the control of politics as one part of the task.

Keywords: Pakistan, Bangladesh, role of military, civil-military relations, democratisation, military professionalism, military rule and military role

Abstract

In India, globalisation ushered in the new economic reforms of the 1990s through the Indian government's new market policy. But in the wake of these globalised economic orientations the impact of state-led neo-liberal policies was also strongly felt. During this period while India linked itself to the global economic and political powers, significant countervailing processes—in the form of socio-political movements at the grassroots—emerged from within communities to counter the India's policies of globalisation. The study conducted in North Bengal among the Adivasi marginal tea plantation community assesses the disadvantages of these tea workers in the face of globalisation and the state's neo-liberal policies. It also explores the emergence of Adivasi Vikas Parishad (AVP) as a political force of tea workers in the Terai and Dooars Tea Belts of West Bengal. The responses made are primarily based on the lived experience of economic marginalisation of Adivasi tea workers, revealing contradictions between accumulations of profit by tea plantation owning companies with global market connections vis-à-vis increasing living costs of workers and India's failure to maintain sustainable livelihoods of the workers.

In this context, this study will evaluate the state-sponsored neo-liberal economic policies and their impact on the livelihoods of the tea workers. It will also examine the resultant micro-politics of the community of Adivasi tea workers, possible future trends in the community, as well as the overall implications on the nature of economic policies and politics in the region.