

THE TURMOIL OF IDENTITY AND THE OPTIMISATION IN DUALITY: A STUDY OF KASHMIRI PANDITS, IRANIAN, AND VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

The post-modernist setting of the world defines itself with the volatility and the change of volatile itself; same is the life of a refugee, frequently changing irrespective of its effects on the refugee lives. In the turmoil of identity crisis, a refugee tries to position himself/ herself as per the changes taking place around him or her. Kashmiri Pandits, Iranian, and Vietnamese refugees are worst hit by it; the struggle of finding the self-identity with a tag of a refugee is a lifetime war. Fight for survival on an alien land having a completely different living, mode of operations, code of conducts, and an added burden of refugee tag makes it harder. A refugee connects the dots to find a place in that society, tries to adapt to the changes suddenly made to his/her life. Optimisation is needed, in order to subtract the alienation and transform themselves into the image of native; the duality appears as an answer. The duality doesn't mean having a dual-standards, but having the flexible approach, agility, and a willingness to optimise as per the need of the time, by discarding the rigidity and becoming a true post-modern citizen; which also minus the identity question posed against a refugee. This very paper does the study of the progress of the spirit, state, and the change in the life of a refugee in the aftermath of turmoil of identity and then optimisation in duality.

Keywords: Identity , Kashmiri Pandits, Iranian, Vietnamese Refugees.

Introduction

"I am rescued cargo. I will prove, repay, transform"

- Dina Nayeri

The ideal nature of the world is to being in the change either it is at the will of time or against it, both the nature and men are subjected to it, the will of men can restraint it for a moment or try to restrain it but at the end the change persists and the newness come to the light; the nature proceeds and the men follows, however men's will is the somewhat equivalent to the changing force matching to the nature, this makes the men the supreme being of the globe, but it is always said that whoever achieve the superiority over the superstructure either it would make the world beautiful or make it would corrupt; in the case of human displacement which eventually leads to the creation of the Refuge, somewhat universally defined as the people forced to leave their home and hearth, in wake of different kind of atrocities played upon them, series of torture, several kind of discriminations and so on; but the undying spirit of human in general; both evil and good extend themselves to the extent of living at the last. But it is often said Satan play at ease and the Good suffer

for its goodness; a Refugee, without being political in any kind of sense, is the victim and is suffering for its goodness, their life can't be put into simple words, it can't be defined as any set definition of the dictionary in words. They are good people paying for their goodness, irrespective of their religious sects, demographic locations, social status, and caste or creed. Dina Nayeri (2019) an Iranian refugee has very aptly and authentically described the uncertain stages of change and make good out of them:

We became refugees. Somehow it felt more settled than what we had been for the past ten months, hiding out in the United Arab Emirates. There were illegal: all the same dizzying displacement, uncertainty, and need, but we had to find our own shelter. Without a state to say, 'Yes, we will be responsible for you,' we were so unmoored it was hard to fathom the next step. Maybe that's why every move had been last minute, someone's kindness or a stroke of luck. Miracles. (p.3)

The above lines are the expressions of a refugee Dina Nayeri quoted from her well-known work *The Ungrateful Refugee*. Nayeri herself became a refugee at the early age of ten due to the civil war-like situations in the years of Iranian Revolutions

and after conquering the battles against the violence, war, time, and death she got. She suddenly found the change something stabilizing. In unsettling conditions, uncertainty, and displacement not just physical but emotional and psychological, the very soul of refugees transform in such circumstances. Dina Nayeri saw the change taking place around her, how things come out of uncertainty and how it breaks the person in bits and pieces. She struggled with the crisis of identity of all shorts, religious, cultural, ethnic, and refugees in general. But she optimized her conditions and unshackled them. The turmoil in the lives of refugees is nothing new and almost every refugee has to go through the harshness of different kinds. Dr. M.L Bhat becomes a refugee when he was an infant just two years. He didn't even realise how the phenomena of Change is going to be operated upon him; he just survived in the laps of his parents and the kin and kiths. However, all the changes are not going well, and becoming a change like becoming is one of such changes, which was not easy. Unlike Dina Nayeri, the life of Dr. Bhat in particular and Kashmiri, in general, was not settling was full subversive, however, to be alive and have the most essential elements of human civilization dignity; the Kashmiri pandits becomes a refugee. Dr. Bhat (2017) writes, "(t)he prides of Indian Nationalism deterred the Kashmiri Pandits to subscribe to this viewpoint of the faithful, and they preferred to leave their homes and hearths in the Mass Exodus of 1990" (p.48). Kashmir pandits embraced the change in the helpless state of life, the unliveable conditions produced by the Jihadist activities against them, forced to migrate from their own homeland and ironically in their own country. Their identity of Kashmiri pandits got shaken; they got a new identity which is not at all welcoming, the identity of refugee. Kashmir refugees were denied every right, everything was snatched from them. *The Odyssey of Kashmiri Pandits* is a defining text of refugee literature, it documents the struggles of Kashmiri pandits both during the refugee making and post-migration. In between this, the lives of Kashmiri pandits took a turn and it caused an irreversible change. Till today they are bearing the burden of undesired identity. Similarly, like Nayeri and Dr. Bhat, Viet Thanh Nguyen, went through the churning of fate as far as the crisis of identity is concerned. Nguyen, also become a refugee at an early age and eventually settled in America as an immigrant, however, later was naturalized. Adding

a new dimension to the genre of refugee literature, he took a fictional way to tell the tale of refugee struggles and the crisis of identity and the ultimate change in life; living a life of duality, which gives space for the former and current identity. He profoundly portrays the Vietnamese refugee crisis, which is also known as the second Indo-China war in *The Sympathizer*, through an unnamed narrator who is a dual agent, having a link to both sides, but the crisis of identity is so severe that he finds himself in an equilibrium. Viet has presented an un-American version of the Vietnamese refugee crisis; his hero is not superficial but a normal man who lives a compromised life, both at home and abroad. Change is the reality of life, whether it is good or bad, and men have to accept it, as it is evident in Kashmir, Iranian, and Vietnamese, they all accepted their fate of becoming a refugee. From a turmoil of identity, a refugee transforms himself/herself into a new being, who even after, the fatalities of previous life, aspire to live and move forward. But what leads a life even in adverse circumstances and what is the secret of being alive and living? There could be a thousand reasons, thousand ways and places to be there at one day, or just hope for the darkness to get over and dream to be dreaming the dream beneath the open sky on subtle land which cannot be snatched from them next moment, there could be numerous shades of courage which transform into the action, which would include from merely saving breath for the next day to seeing your loved ones dying next to you but observing the pain and keep moving on. This could be an assumed state of a refugee's life, but the real struggle of men or women in completely adverse states cannot be portrayed at its absolute but only an attempt could be made. The above-mentioned abstraction which is made is not only for the sake of sympathizing with the cause of refugees but this diversifies the scope for the logical argument or the rational approach to solving the world's one of the grimmest and most alarming dangers in the form of failure not as a state or nation but as a human.

The Making of Refugee and the Identity

1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as a person who is forced to leave their counter or habitual residence under the threat of killing, persecutions, and not able to return or the native country not ready to provide safety and security. The making of refugees is no less than any disaster

of magnitude. It is like an irreversible phenomenon that can't be reverted. The science of Tsunami says, it is caused by an undersea earthquake or generated by a landslide, as per Sarlin, W., Morize, C., Sauret, A., & Gondret, P. (2021) scientific paper *Nonlinear Regimes of Tsunami Waves Generated by a Granular Collapse*, Tsunami, is a by-product of granular collapses, either in the form of landslide or earthquake, which is generated by the dynamic disturbances in the ideal positioning of the solid states; similarly, the refugee crisis is generated by the very science of Tsunami. The breaching of fundamental rights and constant fear of death and physical or psychological harassment and tortures amid the disturbance of the natural states of shake-ups the victimized masses and from the turmoil, the crisis of identity emerge. However, as far as the state of being a refugee is concerned it is more manmade and appears like the Shakespearean play of fate and for the victims of uneven circumstances it is like the pope's (1711) notion "to err is human and forgive divine" although it is a matter of political, humanitarian, and intellectual discussion that how to define the refugee or whom to make accountable for this compromise of human right and welfare. The debate of right and wrong is never-ending and so are the questions and confusions of the identity, which ultimately becomes a lifelong crisis for the refugee masses. Identity is an essential element to live a dignified and sustainable life, we do not need to define what is identity, and what is the theory; identity is an integral connection to the native land, culture, religion, and anything which connects the soul to the native inhabitant. Ullah (2014) interpreted, the crisis of identity is threatening to the very notion of civilisation, and the anatomy of identity is complex borne out of political policies and the capturing of power. A refugee tends to manufacture a new identity for survival, willingly or unwillingly, they have to mould themselves in the image of native and bears the loss of previous self and the hereditary identity. Kashmir, Iranian, and Vietnamese, refugee lost their ethnic identity, their identity of native land snatched from them, their merits and prospects got a tag of refugee, which going to remain with them more innumerable generations to come.

Optimisation in Duality: The Change

"Ho HO Ho was not the signature call of Satna Claus, but instead the beginning of a popular chant

that went Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is gonna win!" -Viet Thanh Nguyen.

The life of the refugees in change bears the characteristics of semiotics. The Saussurian theory or concept of sign; signifier and signified, applies to the life of a refugee, it changes from country to country, from culture to culture, from refugee to refugee; it never remains the constant, the signifier and the signified vary within the man itself, as the respective experience refugee crisis gives their own kind of meanings. The refugee life is not normal; it is a fight that keeps changing its forms and pace. The Kashmir Pandit refugee was denied even this change as they are hit by duty as terrorist pushed them out of their motherland and then government didn't recognise them as the victims of refugee crimes, rather labelled them as runaways. The Iranian refugee also becomes the victims of religious fanatics, who did not allow any flexibility or change in their conservative practices. The Iranian refugee flew to find the change; the same is the case with the Vietnamese, the conflict ideology forced people to leave their country, and eventually, with the American influence, the conflict between South and North Vietnam created a huge number of refugees. The refugees proceeded on the quest for change with an optimisation. Survival in the dictionary of refugee life ranks at the top, for a refugee surviving for the next day is an achievement and when they eventually master the skills of survival from the dangers and threats of displacements, the suddenly the meanings changes, a new quest for survival comes in light, which is more torturing than the threat of physical death. We have come a long way, the voices of refugees are being heard, and several non-profit organizations (NGOs) are making commendable efforts towards this but the battle of daily bread and breathe only to be fought by the subject of displacements, the refugees.

When the storms get over a refugee found itself helpless, out of all the sources, miserable, tortured in various ways, the aftermath of displacement is the real challenge, their struggle has no bound, no fixity, numerous kind of discriminations, sexual and physical assaults and a sheer kind of threat to their ethnic and individual identity arises to them. Out of all these difficulties a refugee chose to survive, choose to fight, and make a place for him or herself. But what makes them immune against such adversity, what are the factors which help them to sustain? The apt confrontation would be the gradual

development of the flexibility in the attitude and the adaptability; here arise the optimistic outlook of mankind, and the will of change which makes the men alterable. The outlook of the men and the will of living is the driving force, the optimization and the way of looking at life is the key. The Duality, here, is not something negative but is a way of attaining the flexibility, between the difference of thought, culture, identity, and anything which brings a change to a refugee. A refugee optimises his or her state of change, to live the previous self and to adopt the newness which the change of refugee crisis has brought to them.

Conclusion

Be it Kashmir Pandit refugee Dr. M.L. Bhat, Iranian refugee Dina Nayeri, or Vietnamese refugee Viet Thanh Nguyen metamorphosed in the unnamed character of Sympathizer, the turmoil of identity forced them to remake themselves by optimising the changes in the duality; which escaped them for the survival as a refugee in the outside world, the host nations. The crisis of identity is taking a shape of an existential crisis in the post-modern era, where a well-to-do human is

finding it difficult to cope with the crisis of identity in the ever-changing world. Amidst all these turmoils, the life of refugees becomes, even more, harder, they are fighting against the evils of humans and also the evils of time and post-modernity.

Duality provides them the mobility and agility to transform themselves as the conditions and demand of the host nations. It not only helps in the optimisation in their grim conditions at the foreign-land but at the same time, it makes their lives easy in the post-modernity, as it sanctions to the fixities and asks men to have an open and changeable attitude in order to survive in extreme pace life. After sustaining the turmoil and crisis of identity, a refugee set on the journey of change, is as difficult as becoming a refugee, but the optimisation in duality makes the world accessible to them. Kashmiri, Iranian, and Vietnamese refugees are defining examples of optimisation in duality as they have sustained the turmoil of identity crisis and made their voices heard, however, justice is yet to deliver to them for the crimes which were happened to them. The Duality came to their rescue as a way of life.

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