

Chapter-III

Reflective Nostalgia: Contesting Secularism in Shashi Tharoor's *India: From Midnight to Millennium and Beyond* and Mukul Keshavan's *Homeless on Google Earth*

Secularism is a highly controversial concept owing to diverse backdrops behind its origin and implementation. It has some insightful commitment to democracy, equality, equity, and justice by interrogating the social ills and evils of corruption, poverty and marginalization. Each country has its own secularism with different names and ideologies. Ideally conceptualizing, no country desires to be non-secular in the twenty-first century when the world is supposed to be moving towards egalitarianism. It is, for a moment, a different thing that real secularism does not exist in modern society as it is merely an ideological strategy to demand justice and freedom for those who have been suppressed and exploited by the hierarchical principals of conventional heritage. Undoubtedly, their socio-religious fabric declares to be secular conventionally following selective interpretations of their myths and grand-narratives, but ground realities reveal different truths about their respective societies. No society is thought to be secular in this sense as discrimination and segregation have been part and parcel of the world history.

This chapter deals with the pertinent question of 'secularism' in Shashi Tharoor's *India: From Midnight to Millennium and Beyond* and Mukul Kesvan's *Homeless on Google Earth*, which largely replicates the 'reflective nostalgia' prevalent in Indian society. Before considering the term 'secularism', there is a need to throw some light on the concept 'Reflective Nostalgia'. Largely conceptualizing, nostalgia is all about the functioning of human mind. In other words, Man is a packaging of diverse layers of the functionality of his emotions, feelings, rationality,

imagination and memories. Therefore, nostalgia works at multiple levels of human consciousness revolting against socio-political conditions. Primarily, it is a mysterious play of 'longing' showing no significant difference between 'longing' and 'critical thinking' in case of 'Reflective Nostalgia'. As Svetlana Boym categorically writes, "It [Reflective Nostalgia] reveals that longing and critical thinking are not opposed to one another, as affective memories do not absolve one from compassion, judgment or critical reflection" (62). Therefore, reflective nostalgia is not an uncritical acceptance of all and everything, but attempts to deepen its critical approach to the given subject-matter. Dealing with 'Reflective Nostalgia', this chapter is a critical inquiry of the authors' psyche to know about the role of secularism in India. Both books as non-fictional writings talk about 'secularism' in socio-political sphere.

In Europe, it was Renaissance period when thinkers firstly challenged the hegemonic notions of Christianity and medievalism. Later, it came with its full-fledged form of Enlightenment where reason and logic were preferred to religious dogmas. Further, Charles Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution' openly replaced conservative basis for predictable religiosity by giving new explanation about species and their existence on Earth. Undoubtedly, all these movements largely questioned the hegemony of religion in the West, but it does not mean that they were completely separate from religion. Ideologically, they attempted to remain aloof from the impact and influence of religion, but practically it was not so. Advocacy of 'Victorian Compromise' in England tried to take up both the sides relatively. Finally, 'secularism' is not to be away from religion as its claims of aloofness only perpetuate 'pseudo-secularism'. Religion is not an ideology in its deepest form, but a way of life by which communities desire to live and think of their existence and meaning in the world. Secularism, in this sense, is not a new phenomenon in world history as it has

been defined and re-interpreted variously in different periods of time at different places. It does not have any singular form and unified definition in cultural studies. Literally, the term is reliant on western ideological notions of modernity on human existence advocating the autonomy of public sphere from theological authority. Therefore, it is supposed as anti-thesis of establishment belonging to modern assumptions of liberty, justice, equality and human rights. It largely seeks to frame an ideal picture of human life, but this is the most controversial question of human civilization transferring from generation to generation and country to country. No one is fully able to resolve this riddle of Man's life as it is always very dynamic and crooked phenomenon to be on Earth. Accordingly, layered meaning and confused histories often create problems for scholars and thinkers in every age. If Industrial age stands for mass marketing and sale of its products, then today's Information age does the same treating 'knowledge and information' as its major commodity. Accordingly, in-equalities, injustice, discrimination and marginalization have always been common phenomenon prevalent almost in every age followed by different models of society. One, thereby, should not be sure about welfare and justice even in *Ram Rajya* in mythological terms as it is purely a hegemonic myth by which one is made to feel about virtuousness repeatedly. Truth has its slippery nature to go beyond this politically institutionalized idiom of mythology. Reflective nostalgia, therefore, is to be seen as a negotiation with secularization that is a process of becoming secular. Reflective nostalgia includes everything that one supposes genuinely is missing from today's scenario of human life.

In India, it is a highly debated concept to interpret political psychology of State and religion so that diverse communities can have better space in democracy. Religion is extremely powerful in socio-cultural and political order of India.

Secularism amongst diverse groups has become a political and politicized strategy to abuse one another. Political parties appear to be playing their manipulative game of vote-bank in India. It, in this manner, has become merely a constitutional principle advocating largest democracy, and secularity looks in danger the country. Its legacy of communal riots is an instance to show this fact where scholars can see partition of 1947, Emergency, Sikh-riots of 1984, demolition of Babri Mosque in 1992, and Gujrat-riots of 2002. Besides, there are various incidents of communal violence in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and other parts of Indian society. Therefore, it is not the State that should be secular primarily, but individuals and society.

Secularism is nothing without secularity as it deals with the democratic ethos of individuals' mind influencing the whole social fabric. Otherwise, secularism is an ideology without its solid grounding of secularity in India. Diverse sub-identities are eager to control and manipulate one another for their hegemonic purposes. There is a thoughtful need to contest secularism in reference to present scenario otherwise it will lead to more and more communal violence, partition and demarcation in the country. On the contrary, Indian constitutional mechanism re-assure to protect people's faith, rights and belief-system of all communities without any prejudice, but problem with India is that its diverse groups have their own interpretations of secularism influenced by their respective religiosity and possessed interests. To be religious is not as harmful as to project one's religiosity as the best one to kill others. Accordingly, intolerance and communal violence become the means of satisfying one's personal ego. This ego-satisfaction has no place in an ideal democracy.

Further, scholars can see dynamic form of secularism in Indian history. Undoubtedly, secularism is a modern political and constitutional principle in India emerging from anti-colonial struggle. So, it is an outcome of a resistance against the

British. Simultaneously, India has followed some parts of their legacy as its political administration. Yet, glimpses of secularism have been prevalent in Indian society from the ancient time with its pros and cons. King Ashoka established *Dhamm* to proliferate equal respect for all religions in his kingdom. Later, King Akbar also talked about a similar system called *Din-e-Elahi*. Moreover, Hinduism itself is accepted and known for its 'all-inclusiveness'. However, all these ideals seem to be obsolete as emerging movements of *Dalits*, voices of the margins and the subaltern have categorically interrogated these assumptions of idealism. Subsequently, there are some reflective emotions amongst alienated groups expecting their space in Indian democracy. The chapter, thus, seeks to explore new perspectives on secularism pertaining to the select texts.

I

India: From Midnight to Millennium and Beyond

Shashi Tharoor's writings throw light on the smoldering socio-political issues of contemporary Indian society including secularism, democracy and communalism etc. His critical approach dealing with such issues apparently refers to his imaginative and non-imaginative understanding of Indian tradition and its modern relevance in the twenty-first century observing socio-political realities of the country. This part discusses the treatment of 'secularism' in Tharoor's text *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond* (1997). Writing on secularism is not an easy task when society like India consists of heterogeneous blueprints of having a communal legacy of partition, caste and gender based discrimination etc. Everybody may have nostalgic reflections over secularism beyond the clutches of tactical politics, but nothing is complete without the wellbeing of diverse ethnic groups. The entire socio-political

fabrication is weaved through persistent maneuver. Reflections of secularism remain buried somewhere in memories and emotions of oppressed communities. All these sometimes come out as decisive expressions against dishonest proclivities of ruling elites. Nostalgia is not only about moving backward and forward as it also revolts against the present social setup. In order to justify its present validity, it goes across diverse layers of history, polity, geography, religion, customs and legal mechanism of society. The author appears to have some sense of this layered phenomenon of secularism by projecting his literal and literary experience in the book. Moreover, his textual rendering pertaining to secularism is not always a unique mixture of creativity and criticism in literary sense. It has some touches of concrete sense of political and actual world from where the author starts his imagination and ends by saying something about India. It is not much literary in its highest sense of imagination, but it does not mean that it has nothing to do with reflective nostalgia in terms of secularism. Reflective nostalgia sometimes does not need any imagination as it is an action in itself represented by political sensibilities in concrete terms. It is not always a matter of human consciousness as it shows its manifestation in situational and circumstantial sense of socio-political world externally. It means not to see it merely as a political debate in select text as text itself has diverse implications to say beyond, that is yet to come by hard core imagination inherent in literary texts conventionally. *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond* does not show that setup of decorum of literariness. However, it does not lessen its credibility to say 'what is literary' and 'what not'. It also could not be misinterpreted in the sense that the author does not have any sense of literature as he has shown it by many other texts in his account. It makes his understanding of reality multi-dimensional to depict the un-depicted. Dynamism by having such literary modes is also another way to be literary for the sake of latest

version of artistic representation to say something that is immensely unbelievable. Beauty always does not lie in the eyes of beholder as it also consists in its textual depiction by itself. The author appears to prove it intentionally and un-intentionally by projecting his experiences in the book.

India is replete with several crooked structures of history, religion and myths. All this seems to be the strength and weakness of its socio-cultural arena. Expressing plurality of the country is easy, but justification of its legitimacy remains questionable owing to the propagated history of revenge, violence and communalism. Re-envisioning secularism, thereby, becomes more relevant to destabilize and dismantle conventional blunders of Indian society. Emergence of rebellious voices from the marginalized communities has challenged the conservative and contingent medium of established beliefs of the ruling groups. *Dalit* discourse, thereby, remains apart from primordial identity of Hinduism. There is a relative contradiction between conventionality of Hinduism and existing ideology of secularism. These conflicting structures have been running parallel to each other throughout the twentieth century. It, in other words, is an unending dispute between the rightists and the leftists articulating their respective claims for justice, liberty, fraternity and equality in society. Both groups have their own interpretations about secularism. One attempts to perpetuate tradition, and another stands with modern-political ideology of 'anti-establishment' showing a complete segregation of religions from the State. Moreover, Hindus appear to be snobbish with prehistoric notions of Hinduism. On the contrary, the *dalit* and the minority do not see their welfare in the majoritarian outlook of Hindu-secularism. Such polarization is riddled with resistance and re-adjustment of the margins in a newly born democratic State. India, thereby, is not a secular country conventionally as *dalit* movement has explored layers of exploitation analyzing Hinduism in contemporary

contexts. Problem with Indian secularism is how to negotiate these opposite worldviews. Victorians in England faced similar dilemma in the nineteenth century, but resolved by introducing the concept of 'Victorian compromise' to negotiate the chasm. Eventually, India has no such compromise even in the twenty-first century.

Catastrophic incident of Indian partition in 1947 depicts the failure of socio-political cooperation and togetherness of diverse ethnic groups. Indian communities, in that way, do not decide their destiny as it already consists in the grimy politics of communalism. Tharoor, referring to the demolition of Babri Masjid, critically remarks, "The Hindu fanatics who attacked the mosque had little faith in the institutions of Indian democracy. They saw the state as soft, pandering to minorities out of a misplaced and westernized secularism." (*IMMB* Preface xxvi). Ironically, the greatness of the country lies only in certain homogenized and hegemonized myths of Hindutva forces. The author also knows this falsification of trapping communities through religious influence. India, in this sense, should not be supposed to have innocent socio-cultural life style as communities are made to realize different connotations of religiousness. Demolition of the Babri Masjid does not refer to a small incident in Indian history as it is not a matter of "a specific mosque", but "their place [Muslims] in Indian society." (*IMMB* Preface xxv) Largely speaking, it is a sheer madness by which the Hindu communities are made to feel about correcting the history at the cost of spoiling the present. Reality of life, in this way, does not consist in wrong corrections in politicized history, but in doing right arrangements and assimilation belonging to the utopian evolution of social system. History does not teach violence, destruction, wars and corruption as it provides an experience by which Man can establish alternative paths of co-existence and togetherness. Thus, he evidently asserts:

All the ways of worship, Hinduism asserts, are equally valid, and religion is an intensely personal matter related to the individual's self realization in relation to God. Such faith understands that belief is a matter of hearts and minds, not bricks and stone. The true Hindu seeks no revenge upon History, for he understands that history is its own revenge. (*IMMB* Preface xxvii)

The author markedly advocates philosophy of Hinduism, but he does not accept it without critical appreciation. Further, the persons, who read Hinduism selectively through certain politicized tools, are "disloyal to the religion" (*IMMB* Preface xxvi). Hinduism and 'pseudo-Hinduism' should be seen as two separate things. One is dynamic and flexible having capacity to make compromise with social changes. Second is linked with discrimination, injustice and abominable communal-politics.

Secularism is not an anti-thesis of religion as it eventually does not come from laws merely, it also comes from society. Therefore, to be religious does not mean to be fundamentalist primarily. Man needs religion to promote the cultural values and civilized model of society. In *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond*, Tharoor does not mean to promote religious preferences in making public policies, rather he focuses upon the importance of religiousness in human mind. Every dimension of Man's life cannot be decided by the State and its constitution, as they remain untouched for that silent part of human existence where humanity has to survive its ways. Moreover, religiousness is directed by certain codes of faith aloof from factual realities. Marginalization of such faith is not considered the mark of a civilized society and secularism. Tharoor observes, "We are secular, not in the sense that we are irreligious or unaware of the forces of religion, but in that we believe religion should not determine public policy or individual opportunity." (*IMMB* 41)

Secularism is not the deformation of any belief system, but an exclusion of institutionalized and hegemonic religion from public sphere. Such type of inclination consists in Indian secularism which has been introduced in “the 42nd constitutional Amendment proposed in September 1976” (Chishti 189). In this way, Tharoor himself does not speak, but it is Modern Secular State which speaks through him. Certainly, he talks about Hinduism as a substitute of secularism relatively. He is not rigid towards this notion as he also criticizes the discriminatory side of religion by which people hate one another. Hinduism is not an exception to this view as India has discriminatory records of communalism, child marriage, untouchability, *sati* and *devadasi* system in history. Such things should not be taken as a manifesto of ideal religion. Readers, therefore, can see Tharoor’s dichotomous position in which he appears to be neutral and non-neutral simultaneously pertaining to the matter of religion. It is also the position of Indian secularism as a State in which it seems to be working out through this paradoxical view of secularity. This paradoxical status of secularism is necessary to maintain the idea of multiplicity and pluralism in contemporary India. This idea holds ground in Donald Smith’s following statement:

The secular state is a state which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with religion. (4)

Ideologically, Indian secularism is humane centric taking care of equality in social system. It is clearly based on the abstract assumptions of neutrality and non-neutrality of State towards diverse ethnic groups of the country. The author evidently remarks that “Not religion, since India is a secular pluralist state that is home to every religion known to mankind” (*IMMB* Preface xix). He, therefore, is not supposed to be

influenced by the process of institutionalized practices of any specific religion. To reveal this conceptualization, he further writes, “And not even territory, since by law, anyone with one grandparent born in pre-Partition India—outside the territorial boundaries of today’s state—is eligible for citizenship” (*IMMB* Preface xix). He is not obsessed with any predetermined notions of history and religion as all things are “a shared history, sustained by pluralist democracy” (*IMMB* Preface xix). No religious practices should be seen and celebrated in isolation as they all are so much mixed up with one another that they remain almost inalienable scholastically. Religion and history do not show segregation in its deepest form, but all this sectarian agenda is weaved strategically to make communities realize their communal identities rather than citizenship by which each individual should be conditioned and regulated. These notions of neutrality and non-neutrality are the outcome of his reflective nostalgia critiquing the false side of institutionalized propagation of religion that is clearly linked with crude jingoism in religious and historical terms.

Certainly, secularism is in massive danger after the rise of Hindutva ideology in recent decades. There are some political agencies which attempt to re-locate secularism by intrinsic politics of Hindu-nation propagating prudent schema of ‘one religion’, ‘one race’ and ‘one nation’. All this ends in communal riots and communalization of minority and marginalized groups. “The Indian political history of the last three decades has been determined by the tension following from the rise of the Hindutva ideology” (Chandoke 2). Religious intolerance, violence, communal riots and censorship have enormously increased in contemporary India. The author, thereby, criticizes the prevalent political ideology of Hindutva implemented to hijack Hindu vote bank in India as it is the communalized exploitation of Hindu sentiments by biased communication of religious allusions. The author clearly states, “The rise of

Hindu nationalism as a political phenomenon in recent years has articulated an alternative view of Indian identity—one that is explicitly narrow and definitional” (Preface xx). Ideology of secularism does not allow governance of any specific religion in absolute terms. “It is necessary to demystify both the bogey of demonical ‘secularism’ and the myth of a divinely tolerant society of an imagined past which is being projected by many ... as an alternative to secularism” (Banerjee 1826). Therefore, secularism should not be supposed as an outcome of any specific religion like Hinduism since India is not purely a theocratic State after Independence of 1947. Its actual meaning consists not in its genesis but in exclusion of discrimination and oppression from social system.

Gandhi-Nehru dynasty, in a way, appears to be a profound base for this modern secularism in India, which Tharoor takes into consideration for secularism in India. He insistently comments, “Under Gandhi and Nehru, Indian nationalism [secularism] became a rare animal indeed. It was not based on any of the conventional indices of national identity” (Preface xviii). Eventually, it is neither purely Gandhian nor absolutely Nehruvian, but a unique amalgamation of the both. Gandhi does not separate religion from politics. To him, politics is nothing without religion. His religion shows adherence to truth and non-violence. On the other hand, Nehru evidently accepts a complete segregation of State from religion. Indian State constitutionally practices both types of approach in different circumstances. State provides equal opportunities for all irrespective of their caste, religion and place of birth etc. It would not discriminate citizens on the basis of racial paradigms considering larger contexts of justice and welfare of communities. It, therefore, is a complex status of neutrality and non-neutrality of State maintaining a meticulous disengagement and principled engagement in the matter of religious preferences.

“Sometimes the secular states pass social and national laws for the proper management of the religious institutions, so that they might function smoothly and the masses might not be exploited by interested parties.” (Chisthi 188) Conservative model of Hindu (religious) secularism is not adequate to illustrate the widened worldviews of diverse ethnic groups. On the contrary, political agency uses it to operate this hegemonic discourse in which the marginalized do not feel safe and comfortable. Progressive thoughts, in such totalitarian regime, are hard to imagine except for notions of Hindu inheritance which ideologically attempts to legitimize the pseudo-secularism. Therefore, the author is not happy with the scheme of the ‘Hindu nation’ as India is a mixture of diverse cultures. He writes:

With diversity emerging from its geography and inscribed in its history, India was made of pluralism. It is not surprising, then, that the political life of modern India has been rather like traditional Indian music: the broad basic rules are firmly set, but within them one is free to improvise, unshackled by a written score. (*IMMB* 13)

To define this heritage with homogenous paradigms would mean to advocate totalitarianism in which the marginalized communities would have to live without having their accommodating socio-political space in modern democracy.

Shashi Tharoor re-invents the classics and history of India to justify pluralism in it. He believes that diversity is a sound base of Indian secularism. Language, religion and geography depict a unique sense of pluralism and diversity. The author, thereby, endeavors to locate secularism as pluralism deforming politicized legacy of Hindu State. He opines, “What can destroy India is a change in the spirit of its people, away from the pluralism and coexistence that has been our greatest strength” (*IMMB* 323). He, for this reason, attempts to decolonize the communities from the hegemony

of such conflict-ridden politics. Repeatedly, he assures readers about pluralism in Indian society as an alternative to secularism. He deftly demonstrates, “My generation, ... the singular thing about India was that you could only speak of it in the plural. This pluralism emerged from the very nature of the country; it was made inevitable by India’s geography and re-affirmed by its history.” (*IMMB* 52)

Ideologically, it is correct to accentuate pluralism as secularism, but socio-historical realities of India after Independence reveal different pictures as the country has passed through Indira Gandhi’s Emergency, Sikh riots of 1984, demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992 and Gujarat riots of 2002. Certainly, India is made of diversity showing pluralism, but killing one another indicates neither pluralism nor secularism. If there is no civilized dialogue amongst communities, then it evidently questions such pluralism of society.

Pluralism has an enormous adherence to multiculturalism pertaining to cultured notions of co-existence. No one is low-graded owing to dogmatic presuppositions of monopolized religion as it goes against multiculturalism. “It [multiculturalism] reflects a concern to make the liberal democracies of the west more sensitive to the existence of cultural pluralism within the boundaries of the nation state, which had till then be considered to be culturally homogenous.” (Ali 2503)

Undoubtedly, India shows pluralism in its lingual, cultural and geographical formation, but still it is very far from multicultural secularity. Furthermore, secularism is a political and legal ideology whereas secularization negotiates with the multiculturalism respecting differences of diverse ethnic groups. All countries of the world would have to be secular in multicultural sense passing through the transformation in establishment due to the emergence of new identities. Social evolutionists would have to address issues of resistance and adjustment among

communities. Tharoor's reflective nostalgia goes quite far justifying secularism as pluralism which is ideologically correct, but it loses its signification considering actual socio-political scenario. Therefore, his critical reflections deal with opening the discourse of secularization replacing unbendable conventionality with nostalgic reflections of secularism rather than establishing it in actual sense.

Communalism has no place in modern ideology of secularism for its being an insult of the prospective vision of the welfare of people. Both presumptions have oppositional aesthetics of their respective discourses. Secularism works for betterment of communities in terms of justice and equality. Communal riots viz. violence and secularism cannot go side by side in this utopian vision of society. Diverse reasons are explored and analyzed to re-define socio-cultural history to eliminate the roots of communalism, but still communities are unable to update themselves by this secular approach. Tharoor emphasizes, "We carry with us the weight of the past, and because we do not have a finely developed sense of history and historicism, it is a past that is still alive in our present. We wear the dust of history on our foreheads, and the mud of future on our feet" (*IMMB* 126). This violent discourse in social history of India is supposed not to be psychological in nature as it is provoked by the opinionated interferences in religious communities. Communities have forgotten to respect the differences of one another. Additionally, the most determined factor of identity in India is religion and caste, not citizenship. Political parties operate themselves to use this communitarian complex of communalism for political gains. The author conceptualizes this propaganda as a political myth in order to de-stabilize the communalism. He thinks that 'majority complex' is an illusion in India as it does not exist. He apparently writes:

So we are, as I have already observed, all minorities in India. A Hindu-speaking Hindu male from the Gangetic plain state of Uttar Pradesh might cherish the illusion that he represents the “majority community,” to use an expression much favored by the less industrious of our journalists. But he does not. As a Hindu he belongs to the faith adhered to by some 82 percent of the population, but a majority of the country does not speak Hindi, a majority does not hail from Uttar Pradesh; and if he were visiting, say Kerala, he would discover that a majority is not even male. (*IMMB* 113)

The author’s reflective nostalgia becomes a sharp critique of these colonial structures through which one has to be reliant on ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ complexes. This, in a way, is a politicized pattern popularized by political parties through social media. Accordingly, society is not secular as it is controlled by such master ideas leaving pathological impressions of communalism. It is certainly an injustice to innocent people who are made to live by such notions of polarization. Beyond this sordid politics, society has no space for discussion and negotiation. Indeed, it is a murder of secularism by communalizing them. Therefore, the words ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ are extremely highlighted and discussed by crude political agencies. They are propagated for divisive politics of pseudo-religiousness. Such religion, in that way, cannot be a solid base of secularism. Tharoor ardently remarks about a Hindu person in the book, “Even his Hinduism is no guarantee of majorityhood, because his caste automatically places him in a minority as well: if he is a Brahmin, 90 percent of his fellow Indians are not; if he is a Yadav, 85 percent of Indians are not, and so on.” (*IMMB* 113) Diversity of Indian society is not so easy to define in terms of sectarian politics. Society, in this sense, does not rely on pseudo-religiousness, which is unable

to inculcate socio-emotional bonding amongst communities. It shows a threatening possibility to rupture them by political idioms of 'minority' and 'majority' complexes.

Tharoor's reflective nostalgia while negotiating with secularism becomes a diversified phenomenon as he does not see happiness and justice only in material terms. All this is inherent in the western notions of Communism and Marxism. Secularism, therefore, is not only an establishment of equal distribution of economic resources but it also shows an adherence to feelings of love and brotherhood amongst people. Only economic base and its proper justification is not a legitimate base of equalities in society as it also belongs to reasonable freedom of living and thinking pertaining to other spheres of life. Therefore, theocratic nationalism and nationalism are contradictory for many scholars as nationalism is considered synonyms with secularism belonging to diverse ethnic groups of India. This discourse does not show clear-cut antithesis of conventionalism as it is popularized by western notions of modernity and progress followed by movements of Renaissance and Enlightenment etc. Also, it does not stand by modern political calculation of ethnic groups dividing them by minority and majority complexes. Tharoor's reflective nostalgia plays its critical role in-between this political game of ethnicization that shows much interest in creating new discriminative socio-cultural boundaries. This new structuration aims to protect various marginalized communities from hierarchical heritage of pseudo-secularism that has to be justified absolutely in theological terms. "Hence the notion of Sanskritization—a word coming from the classical language and cultural knowledge systems associated with Brahmins—that M. N. Srinivas has defined as the 'process in which a "low" Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently, "twice born" caste that is the Brahmins, but also the Kshatriyas or even the Vaishyas" (Jaffrelot

81). On the contrary, the phrases like 'Dalit Bahujan' and 'Bahujan Samaj' are in fashion through various political narratives. It reveals different groupings and re-hegemonization and re-homogenization of communities locating them as an alternative to the Brahminical pattern. The whole premises of this new coming discourse are reliant upon conceptualization of "a non-Aryan, non-Sanskritic ethos" (Jaffrelot 85). Tharoor's reflective nostalgia desires to refashion this trend of minority versus majority as both are against secular norms. To be democratic, thereby, is one thing, but to be secular is beyond that tight notion of sub-identities. Democracy stands for people to say as they are in their groupings owned by class consciousness. It deals probably with the discourse of modernity belonging to western concepts of socialism and communism whereas secularism is a different type of life style of living and learning harmoniously with Nature. It is this very dynamic belonging to undoing of such political calculations which make to feel sensitization of communalism and caste-consciousness amongst different ethnic groups.

Human society is not a fixed entity owing to ever changing socio-cultural pattern. Meaning of secularism has really not been invariable and fixed for particular purposes of governances only. Its real meaning consists in non-governing or less governing mechanism that shows its disbelief towards the notions of power for power's sake. On the contrary, power has utilized religious sentiments to govern over people rather than to say something by which religion gets transformed itself for others' sake. Politics and religion are not anti-human initially, but intentionality to remain in the power is the centrality of power interests. It, thereby, works for the principle of 'by hook and crook' primarily, then it may show different intentions to be there. With this point of view, religion enters into some profound ideological crisis as life is just a game of such baffling signifiers through which mass-manipulation has

been occurring for centuries. All substantial and non-substantial philosophies have their roots in this political communication later or sooner. Secularism, thereby, has to be very fluid and flexible to sustain the affirmative lubricants with gradual growth in society. Modern education, science, progress and technological advancements have changed Man's worldview entirely. Religious significations would be just a small component of all this shifting. It does not mean that religion is discarded from society, but it is not solely the means of governance in constitutional and modern terms. Religion, therefore, is there to stay in the minds of people to nurture them for values of love and brotherhood rather than for governing others.

Man might have certain problems and issues now-a-days, but all this has to be resolved with the emerging tools and techniques of forthcoming theories of world changing ideas. Absolute domination of theocracy is not enough to decide and analyze the contemporary predicaments of this advancement. Non-religious or more religious do not justify secularism spreading justice and equality in society as Man also feel the emptiness and oppression even in religious and non religious societies where such threatening structures of exploitation have been replaced by some other things of doing the same exercise, but by different discursive practices of marginalization and exploitation. The world might be perceived as flat as digitalization and modernity looks. Reality has different picture to say about those who may be completely flat if they are represented by digitalized notion of flat. Secularism, thereby, has its real meaning in secularization by ramifying its scope and range with evolutionary modalities of human civilization. Ideology of secularism is not something consisting in vested interests of such groups who desire to earn money and power by the narcotic and persuasive blandishments of modernity. It is, thereby, associated with the words 'neutrality' and 'non-neutrality' referring to religion, but

freedom of faith and unfaith are equally respected in Secularism in modern Indian scenario. On the other hand, the degree of freedom is always a controversial point in the case of ever going clash between national identity and sub-identities of State. The author affirms:

Too many Hindus now fail to draw distinction between the bearded Muslim priest preaching sectarianism or even separatism on religious grounds and the bearded Muslim priest who merely sees his faith as a vital personal anchor in a troubled world. Both are objectified politically in the same way, and the nationalist discourse suffers accordingly. (*IMMB* 123)

Thus, the idea of reasonable freedom appears to resolve this problem dividing human preferences into public and private spheres. Religion as private preference does not interfere with public policies. Therefore, this 'wall of separation' between State and religion is also visible in Indian ethos. It makes the concept similar to western assumptions of it. Some people have been creating a false dichotomy between the so called western and the so called Indian definition of secularism (Chandra 6). Intentionality of secularism is to save communities from discrimination. Ideological notions by projecting secularism as *Dharm-nirpekshta*, *Sarvadharm Sadbhava* (Goodwill to all religions) and *Panth-nirpekshta* remain slippery in their appropriate signification for justice and equality for all in society. Diverse signifiers might have baffling significations to show divergence and convergence from other cultures, but secularism always goes against exploitative maneuvering.

Religion has its roots almost in every society becoming a core substitute of respective identity as well, but society always evolves with new thoughts. These new thoughts sometimes are taken as hindrance to religious hypnotism, but they are not in

real sense. On the other hand, evolution has to accept these challenges through a profound critical and creative process of assimilation and de-assimilation. Responses to rigidity of stabilized entities might be different from society to society, but it has to negotiate with larger and positive changes of sustainability and development. Secularism in India, thereby, addresses all these issue and phases of development. India looks different belonging to diverse ethnic and religious groups. Treatment of secularism is likely to be legitimate and challenging mechanism as it is mutually supportive and mutually hostile due to the political interference that attempts to make communities much conscious about their sub-identities. Contrarily, State has to take care of the broader truths of distributive justice and freedom amongst various communities. It also shows some sense of positive discrimination to prevail in secularism by uplifting the margins through diverse public policies. ‘Representation’ seems to be more relevant than academic ‘efficiency’ pertaining to development of the downtrodden. Eventually, policies of reservation and justice have made communities more conscious about their differences. The author further writes:

The uses of caste as an index of eligibility for affirmative action and as an instrument of political mobilization have, in particular, made today’s Indians more caste-conscious than ever before.... Instead we have become more conscious than ever of what divide us: religion, region, caste, language, ethnicity (*IMMB* 123).

This statement clearly shows that Tharoor’s reflective nostalgia is unable to identify the actual signification of ‘efficiency’ and ‘merit’ as he seems to be bending towards consciousness of conservatives who have the same notions about these affirmative steps of social change as “It must be noted that each class defines merit in its own interest. This is true not only of merit but also of things such as beauty, honour,

excellence and so on” (Ilaiah 195). Therefore, politics of difference is an essential part of secularism as it would support diversity and pluralism of Indian sensibility, but this politics does not mean to dismantle the parallel discourse of togetherness. Wrong politics of difference leads to communalism that is to its full in politicians and capitalists. Removal of rights of representation should not be de-stabilized by saying that caste and class are merely a state of mind as it also entails the sense of being equal and suitable as human beings. It is not a matter of conventionality and anti-conventionalism. Beyond that, it is related to have some humanitarian sense towards those who also expects to be with others for collaborative efforts in societal evolution. Poverty, hunger, violence, communalization and exploitation are stigmatic spots of any ideal society. These are to be removed to realize the un-realized for the sake of betterment and in establishing secularism considerably in society.

Now, India is no more a democratic State as its basic structure has become capitalist where technocrats, industrialists and politicians have literally been playing with the emotions of people. The author, therefore, does not look at secularism pertaining to relations of State and religion. Moreover, there is an essential need to expand its scope with reference to economic arena of the twenty-first century. Modern aesthetics of secularism accepts the marginalization of communities in economic terms. Justice and fairness might prevail if India would operate itself by tangible spirit of secularism eliminating corruption, unemployment and unequal distribution of income. Mostly secularism has been discussed with respect to relations between State and religion literally, but less is explored and available pertaining to today’s economic rivalry. Undoubtedly, perspectives of Marxism and Cultural Materialism are there to say for socio-economic rubric, yet it is not holistic towards earlier significations of secularism. It has no meaning in isolation dealing with an affirmative negotiation with

social evolution. Thus, there is a possibility of judging secularism in terms of economic variables without neglecting the reasonable layers of religious faith if it exists somewhere amongst communities. Tharoor's reflective nostalgia directly does not emphasize on the specificity of secularism by narrow means as it frankly functions throughout the book with reference to different issues. His strengthened and prolonged conceptualization of transforming the realities is clearly visible in the following lines:

Corruption, violence, sectarianism, the criminalization of politics, and widespread social tension all mounted during a period when a degree of economic liberalization opened up a new entrepreneurial ferment. A new consumer culture was born amid a population of whom 65 percent live below a tragically low poverty line and 35 percent earn less than twenty-five dollars a month" (*IMMB* 324).

Consequently, it becomes the case of cultural studies in which blurring-boundaries of specific disciplines offer complementary results to know about the critical questions of power, politics and institutionalized sites of religion. "Culture is concerned with questions of shared social meanings, that is, the various ways we make sense of the world" (Barker 7). Tharoor as a critic is aware about this eclecticism of cultural theories and practices in the book. Hence, he is not against such faith which lies in collective unconsciousness of diverse communities, but it also does not mean to kill others. "Of course, proof is not a valid currency on issues of faith; but to destroy the mosque and replace it with a temple would not, they say, be righting an old wrong but perpetrating a new one" (*IMMB* Preface xxv). Therefore, people would have to realize how certain narratives are politically propagated to create communal boundaries amongst various ethnic groups. These idioms do not resolve emerging gap between the poor and the rich.

Institutionalized religious politics has been popularized for decades of the twentieth century. It is an absolute negation of the marginalized groups under the clutches of false religion as it has been a base of power politics in India. Therefore, actual debate of secularism is not only about the issues of State versus religion or politics versus religion, but it is also about the existential problems of the poor and downtrodden. “None of this is ground for complacency. We still have a long way to go ... We must take the necessary steps to ensure that every Indian is given the means to live a decent life, to feed his or her family, and to acquire the education that will enable him or her to fulfill their creative potential” (*IMMB* Preface xxii). Accordingly, the author appears to be a relative Marxist in his approach concerning the development of the poorest people. Without including the poor, the country is not supposed to be secular as every citizen and its human existence matters in secularism. The author’s reflective nostalgia, thereby, crosses the tight notions of secularism reliant on relationships of State and religion. Tharoor starts thinking beyond literal trajectory of secularism associating it with the latest issues of theocratic interests by projecting them as commodities. Today’s profitable competition, thus, is also directly and indirectly linked with communalized sentiments twisted by commercialized forces to exploit resources of livelihood and employment. Vipin Chandra in *Communalism in Modern India* asserts:

The system of reservation of seats and weightage in representation to minorities also generated communalism. To the minorities it appeared that communalism, as also the government, was protecting their interests, while the majority tended to feel deprived of its ‘natural’ right to be in majority” (311).

Therefore, today's socio-economic realities are not aloof from the communal politics which has been raised and regulated for decades. Tharoor knows about this dark side of Indian history and the present politics in governance arena. He evidently writes, "The sad irony is that India's secular co-existence was paradoxical made possible by the fact that the overwhelming majority of Indians are Hindus" (*IMMB* 55).

Communalized structures of communities are more visible in socio-economic realities of the present time. Even social media and print media also provoke such rivalry sentiments of communalism amongst communities by narcotizing the ability to think beyond a particular mindset. Tharoor comments:

Hindu chauvinism has emerged from the competition for resources in a contentious democracy. Politicians of all faiths across India seek to mobilize voters by appealing narrow identities; by seeking votes in the name of religion, caste, and region, they have urged voters to define themselves on these lines. (*IMMB* 58)

It is Man's primitive nature to be possessive preserving resources for sustainability and progress, but opium of religious chauvinism has replaced this tactic of violence. Violence is also a legacy of species evolution. Everybody struggles to save oneself by negotiating with environment and resisting against it. Self-preservation, in primitive sense, does not know any religious philosophy to live for others as it is based on the principle of living at any cost. Primitivism, then, does not end by religious teaching alone as Man often forgets religion as he is also governed by selfishness, greed, possession and intentions to kill others. It is his inherited sense of primitivism to kill others in order to save only his possessed sense of self-centrism. He, in this way, is not social animal, but only animal who has become more dangerous than his primitive form. Religion, thereby, has no meaning to set up better life on Earth as it is used as a

weapon to destroy others in order to justify its power and false identity. Therefore, it is today's need to condition people with modern ideology of secularism. It is a new way of plurality and co-existence respecting harmonious way of life.

Thus, Tharoor's reflective nostalgia is also a critique of the communalized historicity of India as it has been unable to cope with this shifting of secularism. No doubt, it can never be a supreme way to justify its validity of full-fledged secularism concerning all spheres of human life as individuality may expect more than expressed means of secularism. Therefore, secularism is a healthy fusion of different ideologies which contains seeds of progress and development critiquing the littleness and narrowness of Man's mind. Tharoor accentuates, "Caste is suddenly all important again. Your caste determines your opportunities, your prospects, your promotions. You can't go forward unless you're a Backward" (*IMMB* 111). It refers to a sense of panic and terror amongst certain communities by perceiving the upcoming changes as an attack on their livelihood. Process of secularism is also coeval with pain and suffering of some classes. It should be supposed as 'positive discrimination' on the long way of secularism in the country where representation is more important than efficiency and merit for the betterment of the downtrodden. To understand this idea of positive discrimination, readers have to understand the historical mechanism and economic status quo of such communities which are given facilities of reservations. Historically, the margins refer to the downtrodden existence and the so called weaker sections of society. Their downtrodden living is fully justified in reference to caste-class pattern in socio-financial terms. Therefore, modern ideology of secularism is a type of reformation in that old structure which may not be discriminatory in its theoretical sense primarily, but its idealism fails to replace discrimination and exploitation from society. Democratic life style is their fundamental right which is

still a distant dream without their equal and mutual participation and representation in political economy. Secularism supports assumptions of inclusiveness towards those sections which are still out of the mainstream of society. Secularism, therefore, is an unending journey of providing equal opportunities to the margins. On the other hand, it also eliminates layers of caste and class prejudices against them by re-conditioning the society for togetherness.

II

Homeless on Google Earth

Secularism looks problematic owing to the unbending hypnotic effect of diverse sentiments including history, politics, religion and castes on people. These notions are linked with some innermost parts of human conditioning for ages. Any particular stance of human un-synchronized thinking does not refer to a solution, but a problem pervading in its menacing rendering over communities. India is seen as highly influenced by the spirit of medievalism justifying old modes of signification reflecting biases and prejudices of specific castes, groups and religious sentiments. Diverse countries across the world have fought wars for the relevance of their belonging notions, and the whole ends in fragmentations, censorship, books-burning and communalization etc. Problems with societal governance deal with a quest for legitimate mechanism for good governance and its negotiation with scattered diversities that show contradictions towards one another. Theocratic governance has a profound influence on communities. Now it is conceived as fruitless basis for the progression of human civilization. Progression is not only the materialistic prosperity of human beings in terms of technology and nuclear weapons. Beyond that, it belongs to a realization of such unaccepted system which has no place in existing society due

to the encircled dimensions of morality and religion by its general and politicized perspectives. Religion, thus, is reliant upon the comprehension of a bizarre authority pertaining to some divine design that remains untouched by modern ideology of knowledge and progress. Continual resistance between faith and knowledge throughout ages is nothing but a nature of its existential being in different terms. Violence and genocidal attacks have been the central history of countries for centuries to save the vulnerable ones. Both sides claim for their respective exclusiveness and inclusiveness justifying their absolute truths. The same problem is an integral part of Mukul Kesavan's reflective nostalgia projected in the book *Homeless on Google Earth* (2014). He does not have a consolatory perspective on this religious monopoly or its intervention in public sphere as today's India is to be judged by the latest program of secularism. He, thereby, attempts to support the idea of 'the wall of separation' between State and religion. Role of both can be conceived with reference to private and public spheres. Private sphere is linked with one's approach to religion with one's autonomous codification. It, in this way, is a subject of one's home constructed by individual's belief system. Each individual has autonomy to choose its faith and unfaith privately. Kesavan's evidently writes:

If there is a moral to my story, it must be that reality of "home" is subject to alteration, that the native place is as often a place of transition as a point of origin, that instead of being a still centre to which we are historically attached, home is an idea to which we choose to belong. I choose not to belong to Jind. (*HGE* 6)

Private sphere shows requisite respect for individual's autonomy and intentionality of belongings by their respective sentiments, but they are not merely

larger truths for political governance in concrete terms. Neither, they are antithetical to the establishment for their validation and invalidation as notions have some truth; even lie itself is truth because it is something which is not truth. Projection of truth and untruth is just a symbolic corollary of contrastive perspectives which remain there to replace and re-replace one another for their temporal justification. Things are layered and uncommon when they are studied and explored from research angles. Correctness of their legitimacy does not consist in a particular intellectual antagonism of political discourses. Levels of thinking have some covered variation consisting of many truths. So, academic outcome is just a small episode to resolve this multiplex phenomenon of socio-cultural mysticism. Problems and issues are the same for ages, but only symbols and ideological conceits are fabricated variously to value and de-value each other. It is the way that sustains a basis for the author's reflective nostalgia. It is not considered as an actual realism in its corporeal sense as it is a process of human consciousness. Realm of consciousness has its own limits and delimits deciding their legitimacy as it is not socio-political activism in real sense. It is a type of 'magic realism' which justifies realism without any substantive realism. Its roots lies somewhere in human mind that is termed as reflective nostalgia in this whole analysis. Public sphere, then, is a different thing providing an open space for all communities so that they can discuss about the existing problems by pushing aside their conditioned sentiments of religion, caste, region and gender etc. It is a space where society and its diverse aspects are tested, verified and explored without the malicious interventions of rigid sentiments of certain communities. Ari Adut evidently remarks, "The public sphere involves a space, but not necessarily a physical one, and it is public only insofar as it contains signs that are generally accessible by

spectators” (243). Public sphere seems to be an abstract realm of human society where one has to share one’s interests pertaining to larger truths of communities. It does not mean to say that it has nothing do with the private life as it is to be merged with it someday when one would start realizing its appropriate symbolic signification for secularism. It is a false dichotomy to declare that they are apparently separate. Justification for their separation is nothing, but a re-documentation of value pattern to eliminate the offensive politics of communalisms. Meanwhile, this dichotomy is linked with the arbitrariness of its dual signification as societal life is not a matter of classification always; reverse of it is equally true that without this projection, language cannot maintain its new meaning about the system in terms of ideological mechanism. Its actual relevance of classification refers to a critical analysis of existing problems pertaining to the preconceived notions of diverse communities. Dena Goodman is right in quoting Hebermas in an article, “In the Middle Ages, he argues, there was no public sphere in the sense of a separate realm distinguished from private sphere” (4). The outcome of this dichotomy of spheres in the West deals with the civil war concerning the shifting in power structures. Historical conditions might be different in India, but it is the only mechanism to transform system. Communities have to pass through similar type evolution of societal realities.

India has to be packaged differently nurturing its sense of diversity. Liberation of public sphere in India is, therefore, imbued with a profound basis for secularism destabilizing the derogatory projections of religious governance. Kesavan internalizes and concentrates on such problems by which public sphere seems to be in danger. He frankly remarks, “It isn’t as easy to make sense of the direction of Indian lives today as it was in that Nehruvian noon, but on balance it is probably better to live in the

chaos of the real world than the tidy fantasies of a nation state” (*HGE* 18). Extremism of prejudicial sentiments is a social problem primarily, and then it shakes hands with politics or politics takes it as an instrumental medium for governance. They have been affecting each other mutually for political purposes. Therefore, the whole history is replete with violence and censorship showing authoritative agenda of certain groups.

Note, for instance, the following:

With the end of the Emergency and the end of continuous Congress rule, History came visiting again. It brought in its wake the secessionist insurgency in Punjab, the assassination of an India prime minister, the massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi in 1984, Mandal, Mandir, Masjid, Kashmir, the Bombay pogrom, the Gujarat killings, “liberalization”, “Maoist” insurgency, BMWs on our streets, and mobiles pressed to our ears. (*HGE* 18)

Subsequently, the communalized ideology is reported as a great practice of Indian history in the latter half of the twentieth century rather than looking into different sides of small lives where one can have different history of assimilation and inclusion respecting one another. Devolution and re-evaluation of any mechanism depends not on consisting the essence of thing in itself, but putting them into practice of some assumed functioning of respective society. One, therefore, has to test them with reference to the evolving form of problems and issues.

Dichotomy between the public and private spheres is an individual epistemological projection primarily; later it offers its justification for existing and non-existing issues of the society in its functioning. Society and Man themselves may be taken as neutral entireties primarily as there is some invisible system outside and

inside which compel them to be in a specific order. Knowing this order of governance is always a matter of becoming and un-becoming in history of order. No one is at the centre, and eventually no one is at the margins in philosophical sense. Simultaneously, one cannot underestimate the practical side of the day-to-day functioning. Kesavan, hence, sees some sense in humanities to save it. Chapter-39 of the book shows how Marawael-Sherbini, Egyptian sportsman, is murdered by some racist intentions. It questions the pure validity of the idea of Enlightenment in the West. The author remarkably quotes Kamran Pasha in the chapter:

The fact that Europeans have chosen to ignore the brutal murder of a woman, whose only crime was that she covered her head with a piece of cloth, ... The fact that her death has not been a source of European soul-searching suggests that some truths are too painful to face”
(*HEG* 214).

Rationality, religion and other truths of human life are no more than life of humanity in itself as the whole search and re-search has to come back to common sense of life that appears to be uncommon due to some deep rooted layers of stringency. Occidentalism has been diffused without values of sweetness of life, earth, love, animal and man. It is nothing, but a harmonious way of existential truth, if it is used and realized in proper sense of its assumed and exercised knowledge. The author emphatically remarks:

Western hysteria around veiling is not about the emancipation of Muslim women; it’s about Europe’s visceral intolerance of visible difference. The veil has become a symbol for an inassimilable minority, an alibi for the dislike that large numbers of European feel for laboring “guests” of a different colour and faith who have outlived their usefulness and their welcome. (*HEG* 216)

Injustice is not something cultural and un-cultural, but it is some area of pain and suffering where life itself needs others' sympathy and empathy to put the order in its proper functioning. George Orwell's idea, in this sense, is not wrong justifying the completeness of humanity in saying "All are equal, but some are more equal". Equality and in-equality are consistently significant if everything has an order to feel some sense of compassion for each other.

At this level of thinking, reflective nostalgia does not end with its imagination for the sake of imagination only or with some feelings that make its position irrelevant for practical purposes of life. The author's reflective nostalgia is not an end in itself for creating such alienation that has to remain socially unacceptable. His critical tendency towards the visibility of cultural brilliance is not a mechanism of criticism for its own sake as he knows the technique how to make it relevant for controversial relationship of the present society. Discussing the concept of 'sex by deception' in Chapter-38 in reference to 'sex by consent', the author shows how justice and injustice are part and parcel of power mechanism through which majoritarian sentiments attempt to de-stabilize the actual meaning of incidents in social arrangements for their vested interests. He evidently writes, "... it isn't hard to see a Dalit convicted of rape by deceit if his dupe was a Brahmin woman and no possibility at all of a case being brought if the roles were reversed" (*HEG* 212). It might be taken as a technique of system breaking mechanism which does not appear to be politically correct as the author justifies it in reference to the marginalization of the margins. Moreover, it is also a tool to de-value the conventional foundation of Hindu sentiments in India. The author, thereby, appears to have biases in its position to reject the others in order to justify the *dalit* one, but truth also has the other side of its position. This side also shows that values are to be broadened if there is a part of

society that is about to end due to an area of little values or no value in their operational form. It is not something that has to be dismantled by others as it is not a question of self and others. Beyond that, it is a question of questioning those values that has yet to be developed or replaced by well-developed versions of truths. It should not be supposed as rejection of the possessed values as values are not values if they lose their brilliance in operational form. Man, therefore, is not there to defend values as they are there to expand his consciousness. All values of the world religions fail if they maintain that rigidity of mindset which allows them to exercise power to destroy others' rights of survival. Therefore, values work not by the principle of narcissistic survival of possessed 'self' only, but they prove their legitimacy by negotiating reasonably with the forthcoming versions of a significant rapport. They do not have their relevance beyond the existential value of actual human being who has to die out from the system if one is not ready to evolve and level one's consciousness for others. If one does it for others, then dichotomy of 'us' versus 'them' starts dissolving in order to produce a new Man. It is real meaning of reflective nostalgia which seems to have its justification in terms of secularism.

In contemporary scenario, there remains not only the ideological fight for justifying untruth of truth, but it becomes an amusing negotiation with contrariness as well. It is also the meaning of conventional Hinduism. Therefore, the writer appears to be wrong and biased towards Hindu sentiments primarily, but he does not have any antagonism with Hindu religion itself. He just critiques that part of religious sentiments which stops nurturing the values of religion itself. Religious values themselves are not worst as they are thought to be in terms of general political discourse of repulsive politics. All the political parties appear to use religious sentiments to sustain their hegemony over others, but this is not an ideal dimension by

which they operate power through religious sentiments. It is deprecating projection of one's religion. It is not the way to realize the meaningful sense of any religion. On the contrary, religion in its actualized form has no jealousy with human existence. It is made contradictory when religiousness comes out with just as a name. Value of Hinduism is not in its name as something like 'Hindu' only, but its actual meaning is also linked with consistency of mankind that needs its space for living. Religion is not a property, but looks like property in materialist world only to destroy others. It is beyond selfishness of mankind in its genuine form. The world is in conflict and would have ended probably in conflict someday, but self-actualization of any religious sentiments is not the same. They are made to see oppositional entities due to obsessed sense towards recourses, representations of caste and communities in an imagined form of power mechanisms as the margins demand considerable justice by projecting themselves with lances of democracy, liberty, equality and equity. It is an eternal fight for oppositional aesthetics to let justice prevail, but contradictions are unable to realize each other. The author also feels to see them in the divisibility of private and public spheres. It is another symbolic projection of his reflecting nostalgia where Man can get an appropriate space to realize the futility and utility of fabricated contradictions. It would have to be dissolved probably in some zone of super-consciousness where duality has no meaning to see something like 'others'. It is the most fundamental truth and untruth of human life, but all cannot feel this uncommonality of common things. It also cannot reject the other perspective until one is not able to realize 'what is inside' that does not stand against 'what is outside'. Position of that realization makes the difference in the outside and inside worlds.

All the centres and lances are true, but reality outside is more true as it is an outcome of the inside truth probably. It can be verified at different levels, and then the

choice of the best one is the ultimate truth. It is not the truest as process of thinking and analyzing does not end here. Gandhi puts it as *Swaraj* that has to be understood through various phases of human consciousness inside and its manifestation outside, but it is not something as anti-Hinduism. Gandhi believes in some ideal realm comprising of Hindu philosophy of *Dharma* and *Karma*. He operates Gita's philosophy of *Gyanyoga* and *Karmayoga* where *Gyan* and *Karma* appears to be two things, but they complement each other in their functioning. It is not something that rejects materialistic justice which becomes need for human survivability. It is also an inherent motif in the epic *Mahabharata* which is supposed to be only a story of murdering and killing one other. *Pandvas* and *Kaurvas*, thereby, are not apparently two sides of outside world in material sense. Beyond that, it is something like Christopher Marlowe's portrayal of good angels and bad angles in the play, *Dr. Faustus*. They are properties of the inside of human mind. They can also be seen as private and public spheres. They have to be in oppositional forms to show ever going projections of human destiny of being and non-being. Only symbols have to be different to say the same, but in different situations. Similarly, Gandhi himself is not a central truth as super-consciousness is the message of the enlightened self. It has some affinity with other enlightened 'Self' like Kabir. David Canalos rightly remarks that Kabir did not care for any formal religion; he speaks of Allah and interchanges that indifferently for Ram and Krishna. His *dohas* (couplets) and his view of God as his mistress shows his affinity with the Persian Sufi poets like Hafiz, Rumi, and the massively translated Omar Khayam; his preoccupation with paradoxical statements and inverted meanings comes from the "Sandhy Bhasha" or twilight language of Medieval Hindu-Buddhist tantric sects; his tone and way of saying usually start from everyday happenings and proceed from their matter-of-fact into cosmic process

(63-64). Similar is the case with idea of public sphere where one has to reach by delaying one's conditioned notions so that one can really see what there is in private sphere. These words are just new, but their significance has been realized much earlier by spiritual philosophy of India and others. Therefore, Kabir, Gandhi and others in this series are not merely locations of some truth, but it is a structure of consciousness which always seems to be a zone of mobility, but it is not imbued with nothingness. It does not lead to nothingness as it appears to be the initial stage of perceiving through language. Language has its limits to disseminate what is there to share with consciences of evolved 'Self'. Interestingly, implications are not decided by language alone as it works as a medium to know the unknown. Consequently, Gandhian philosophy in Indian history is not contrary to Amedkar's position, as their dichotomy is just like discussed perception of private and public spheres that has to be operated by the Nehruvian dynasty of secularism. Things, thereby, do not get justified by the categorization only without the experience of their totalitarian aura, otherwise arguments end in further argumentation. It is a never ending battle for an exact destination replacing finite for infinite and infinite for finite. The author seeks some sense of living in-between these two positions.

Undoubtedly, the public sphere is an abstract space of practicing some sense of common good, but it cannot occur in vacuum. Institutionalization and de-institutionalization of society has to be possible through institutes like universities. They are given autonomy to re-shape societal modality with latest versions of researches and scholarships. These are public institutes, but public sphere has yet to come as nature of societal reality is extremely diverse and conflicting entity. Definition of any school of thought cannot remain unchallenged as it gives birth to a

new knowledge of inclusiveness and exclusiveness. The only constant thing about significant perfection is to realize by glimpses of imperfection. Kesvan also weaves an idea of secularism in his imagination that attempts to de-stabilize the fanatical authority of religious regime in public institutes. The communities have started recognizing the homogenized power structure operated through religious discourses. Absolute acceptability of such mode of governance prevents the further scope of imagination that is the task of universities formally. University as a public institute is situated in society, but it is not society in the outside sense of boundaries. It has its own mechanism for new knowledge and creativity. It does not have its exact position in assumed society by some preconceived notions of nations, religions, colours, castes and regional sentiments. Beyond this, it is an area of creation and creativity for itself without having biases towards societal outlook. Simultaneously, it is always with society, but without being completely within it. This area of being and non-being deals with the ideology of secularism that is discussed by the author. Therefore, it is not different from each other apparently in mathematical and scientific terms as it is a matter of maintaining some considerable distance with its autonomy negotiating with secularity. Invisible hands of religious governance show conservative nature of universities. It is sometimes wrong to say something wrong before understanding what wrong is. University is the central space in an ideal democracy from where innovative ideas come to support the societal evolution. Additionally, it is an open space to re-produce knowledge, but India sometimes shows a different picture reflecting biases in public institutes from which some sense of public sphere has to come. About the deletion of A. K. Ramanujan's essay from the course of Delhi University, the author categorically writes:

The essay is a marvellous account of the hundreds of ways in which the Ramayana has been told, complete with examples of this narrative diversity. I can't imagine that vice chancellor, a member of that urbane cohort, the Class of '75, wanted the essay removed because he agreed with the ABVP goons who first agitated the issue three years ago (*HGE 25*).

It clearly shows a worst impact of conservatism on secular space of knowledge dissemination that is monopolized by power centred assumptions of religious sentiments.

Knowledge is a matter of constant change and transformation. To prevent such path of knowledge shows its position in connivance with anti-secularism. Evolution of knowledge shows that real India is not to be delimited by rendering of specific combo of classical texts only, as acceptability of this view depicts a parochial mapping of a secular modality. Beyond this, there is always a maximum probability of becoming better with the latest schema of secularism. Any system of thought cannot go beyond by extreme obsessions of some rigid sentiments of sub-identities as reasonable freedom of expression is also to be seen as a basis for good society. On the other hand, creation of creativity has its individual space to say the unsaid. It opens closed mindset of Man to feel some sense of humanities. Purpose, thereby, behind all these micro-narratives of classical text as Ramanujan does in the essay evidently shows new perspectives to see the established reality. It should not be supposed as destruction of conventional program of rendering certain set of truth-representation. It is a critical tactic to de-stabilize the discursive reality of violence and narrow-mindedness. It does not mean that the idea of grand narratives is always horrifying sharing intrinsic meaning, but to stabilize it as an absolute truth is a huge blunder looking into the

widespread phenomenon of world history. De-stabilization of such oppressiveness transforms itself into secularism if imagination is realized as the author realizes it by reflective nostalgia.

Aesthetic beauty of any culture is not to be judged only by fixed perspectives as the whole world shows a continual evolution by having fresh worldviews. The author ironically writes, “The reason Hindutva militants attacked this essay is not difficult to understand. Hindutva seeks to remake diversity of Hindu narratives and practices into a uniform faith based on standardized texts” (*HGE* 28). Indubitably, widespread belief should be respected, but art has its own liberty to go beyond formal projection of unchanging prejudices of a common man. It would probably be a case of censorship to suppress the artistic vividness of a work that gives man an alternative option to think differently. Area of creative imagination leads to new findings of life through artistic rendering about some restricted themes. It has been a solid medium of opening space throughout centuries. The author again emphasizes about the essay, “... it is a text that revels in the incredible diversity of our epic narratives” (*HGE* 29). The very idea of grand narrative has been controversial to define the basis for human existence in the twentieth century owing to new perspectives of micro-narratives. Reality is supposed to be operated at diverse levels of thinking and knowing the unknown by imagination only. Intervention of preconceived notions deals with some dangerous intents of discrimination and segregation in a society like India which decides to be governed by models of democracy and secularism. It does not mean again to say that tradition in itself is less secular or more secular as it has its legitimate relevance somewhere in Man’s mind; but it is not something like public sphere of the present. The author, thereby, feels to see some faults in its operational mode of rigidity in public sphere.

Socio-cultural reality and its possibility is something enormously improbable that depends upon the artistic representation. It does not satisfy the sentiments of a particular box of knowledge and truth. It has a universal appeal that remains forever, and does not live for some bracketed societal norms. Shakespearean literariness somehow has that sensibility of being apposite for ages for this creative representation. His writings are not for the special groups of people fixing their relevance for the sake of a prejudicial position of specific caste, country, colour and gender etc. Artistic representation, thereby, is not a tool to say only specific truth as they are certain half-truths. It deciphers its objectives in creativity without being a commodity of a particular time and space. There is an inherent beauty embedded in creative representation without prefixed intents. Art always makes representation possible beyond the mathematical calculation of the stabilized entity of societal memory. "Of course, it was said long ago that not only print but writing itself displaces memory" (Tankard 112). Kesavan also knows how literary and cinematic representation in India is riddled with the mainstream ideal of societal reality. It has become the property of public interest preposterously. Largely, movies and literary writings are adjusted to show the preconceived notions of hierarchical customs. Artistic representation, thereby, is to be condemnatory in order to open a space for secularism in society. Art is not frivolous rendering of its creative representation. On the contrary, Indian cinema does not do justice with its representational norms of creative arts as it provides some selective reading of existing society. It shows not unreal of the real as it projects real of real enormously. There are a few movies which have gone beyond conventional setup of representation to think differently. Potentiality to show fictional probability for new social arrangements and other dimensions are profusely missing in conventional representations. Kesavan ardently writes about the role of Muslims in Hindi cinema:

Muslim as plebeians had began to impress themselves on the consciousness of the film market. Muslim lumpen were movie consumers, they were symbols of an increasingly impoverished community and they were also a way of dramatically representing all lumpen (*HGE 87*).

Indubitably, cinematic representation is imbued with social transformation rather than pacifying public interests and entertainment only.

Creative representation also deals with mixture of fancy and realism to highlight the probability of something which seems to be improbable to affect social imagination freely. It is also linked with the representation of growing consciousness which is somewhere stopped by some authoritarian aspects of realism. It is an insult of artistic imagination which remains free from hypnotic assumptions of corporate and industrial temptations. It is a play of imagination between what exists and what does not. On the other hand, Indian cinema has forgotten the inventive representation of its imaginative construct. Moreover, it is a medium of misrepresentation owing to the politicized framework of societal imagination. Truthful representation does not always means to show ridiculously a truth that is bounded by great tradition merely. This means censorship of the other so called little traditions that might be visible differently in the present. Therefore, art is not reality in itself as it is just an image of something which has its own form. Art and its representation may appear as criticism of life, but it is not purely criticism. Absence of criticism is to be seen sometimes as spirit of its manifestation. It is very difficult to realize it by having general perception as generality of things does not do justice with the basis for a creative imagination. The author feels that cinematic representation just sustains capitalist intents to make it a commodity for those who deal with the hegemonic functioning of society. It does

not mean to say that people are worst to maintain their notions. Moreover, cinematic representation has twisted its role for society in artificial sense as it primarily thinks art as representation of society with its socio-cultural forms. Undoubtedly, it can be one way of thinking and rendering, but not ever and always as it is a conditioning of socio-cultural reality in itself through cinematic representation. A character in a movie is just a character projecting certain qualities of its signification. Problem is not with its signification primarily, but it is with the repeated projections of some roles with the same sentiments which make it less credible for realism. Realism in artistic projection, in a way, is not realism. Beyond, it is also true that it is not beyond realism. Therefore, there should be some creative sense of its being for non-being. This taste of creativity is a profound base for secularism. The author feels its need in cinematic representation. Structures of art in its signification are not for some parochial and commercial purposes primarily. Art is not to be used for some theoretical purposes of certain truths as it is a creation without its creative spirit. Creativity is not just a matter of projecting it with configuration form. Moreover, it is something that has to do something with sequel notions digression with earlier configurations. It does not happen with commercial intents only, but also with some intentions beyond commerciality. This is the best way of imagination and secularism to have in the mind before its manifestation. It means, at some level, to support the idea of creation for creation's sake. Socio-cultural value is to be explored and discussed that belongs to criticism for some different purposes. Both sides, in this process, are a way of maintaining considerable position of criticism and creativity in representation.

Secularism does not have an unalterable positioning ramifying its branches for particular time and space. It can be spoken and discussed from various angles even

being politically correct while hiding vested interests. Therefore, the concept should not be considered immensely aporetic, as scepticism on it starts with its present adjustment and survivability of diverse groups at a particular point of time and space. Pre-positional logic of Indian secularism is reliant on a distant truth of ancient philosophy of Hindu religion mainly, but it has lost its actual significance due to the constant transformations of Indian civilization. Secondly, India does not have its representation only through historical and specific lingual particularity of its communication. Specific realism is automatically evaporated as society moves ahead. The author emphatically writes, “India was so diverse that any attempt to promote a cultural nationalism would alienate some important constituent of the would-be nation” (HEG 194). Thus, diverse versions of the past are available, but they remain just politicized iconography for political parties. Problem with India, therefore, starts with the critical questionings to justify secularism disinterestedly. This is the place where Kesvan’s reflective nostalgia starts articulating a logical relation between multiculturalism and secularism. Now, India is no more a singular country, but a package of many countries showing its fecundity for diversity. Hence, repeated application of distant past governance would not be enough to justify its secularity of the present. This is evidently proved when the author becomes obsessive with the disappearance of *Slumdog Millionaire* in translation. The movie is based on Vikas Swarup’s novel *Q & A* (2005) telling the story of Ram Mohammad Thomas, a young waiter who tremendously wins in a quiz show. After this, he is accused of cheating in this show, but his life narratives as a common man are so diversified that the visibility of its reality remains a challengeable task for the writer and the film director as they are mere adaptations of its gist. They have to do it for their convenient selective communication. This strategy of half-communication is evidently embedded in

conventional consciousness that is projected as absolute correspondence of its inference for society. Kesavan asserts, “[this signification] ... undermines the credibility of the story” (*HEG* 70). Secularism does not occur in vacuum as it has to be possible appropriately through a valid means of communication. It is connected with the very essence of society. Language including its politics of signification deals with cultural communication of any civilization. Therefore, language is not reality in itself, but given context attempts to provide a meaningful rendering for that signifier which remains senseless without it. Core problem consists in language and not in the capacity to communicate that remains always outside. This emptiness of Indian multiculturalism profusely shows writer’s longing for non-communicated realism.

Reality of India is always imagined, but never articulated properly as its culture does not exist in assumed ways of communications through Hindi or any specific language like English. India has to be spoken through the existing plurality of its diversified phenomena of languages and cultures. Multiculturalism is entangled with untranslatability of its essence. Representation of this iconography through specific ways is a fact, but does not decide its overall aura of truth. Missing portion turns into longings of the writer’s mind in the book. Additionally, secularism is not something to pacify that the conventional print of fixed cultural communication, but also makes promises with other possible prints of becoming something more significant. These prints cannot be replaced by predetermined essence of tradition as there is a huge difference of cultures. Constant transformations are an integral part of human civilization; nothing remains unchanged in social evolution. Ideology has to be projected differently in order to make it fit for the existing one. Accordingly, ideological projections of secularism cannot be neutral as it has been dissolving itself

in order to be born again. The author feels it in his mind, but he does not take his position from history only to justify the multiculturalism of the country. Moreover, he sees it from the existing movies and their partial view of projecting India through a specific language. Even a single man in India is not riddled with only one language. S/he is more than that mode of stabilizing with some influence of a language. To assume India from this homogenized angle of any specific language is also a misrepresentation and misconception about what really exists within it. This layered version remains missing in translation. It does not mean to underestimate the credibility of translation or translator in itself. Beyond this, it shows some sense of reality which is exposed and transformed by the new version. It is a new discovery from the existing one. Therefore, reality of its secularism in India does not have its basis for a language, but for languages. On the other hand, it has something more to share with the multi-layered phenomenology of its being. Experiences are different, and expressions might be more different and diverse than written or reflecting one. India, thereby, cannot be a documentation of some languages as it is an unsaid entity existing beyond languages. They have their limitations to say about it. Even secularism itself is misunderstood when it is conceptualized by its literal and political definition. Therefore, problem with understanding the secularism in the country does not lie in its superficial definition that is a partial reflection of something that remains invisible in its realization of lingual signification. Therefore, fault of its projection consists in its specific indexical output that remains half of something which is not there to fit in articulated symbolism. This lack of communication with the non-communicated is the problem of the author's mind in the text. Language alone has no justice with that is communicated, as language is innocent, but intentions behind language exposes the unexposed. Justification of truth, thereby, is always a history of

changing and replacing metaphors to say which remains beyond its exact domain in a particular context. Segmentability and categorization are nothing, but just to make one realize about something that has been taken for granted in human civilization for centuries. De-conditioning is not a bad thing if it really is a means to say about that lost one.

Cultures are collections of certain habits of clothing, feeding, speaking and living. By this system of thoughts, one creates one's worldview. Therefore, base of such worldview is not an ultimate attempt of living and thinking by a particular context. It does not mean an end of imagination, but it seems to be an end for those who are made to think of life with cultural parochialism. Parochialism itself is not a bad realization to be in the world, but when it becomes a substitute for constant truth of life itself, creates problems for others. H.G. Wells, therefore, rightly says, "We are to restrict ourselves first to the limitations of human possibility as we know them in the men and women of this world ..." (15). A critical thinking provides a new space for others who have no space in the present schema of being moral and social. Therefore, one has to revise the older versions of morality and practicality to articulate the latest stipulation. The author seems to be doing this when he has taken up an issue of sexual minorities in the chapter thirty "*Kothi, Panthis, and Men Who Have Sex with Men*" (HGE 163). Conventionally, it is not acceptable to provide a valid space for such relationships. Without assimilation of their natural identity, society's secularism is superficial and fake projection of cultural codification. Scholars talk about *hijra*, gay and lesbian, but less is available about *Kothi-Panthis* relationship that is supposed to be unnatural and immoral entity of prevailing social arrangements. *Kothis* are considered to be "unnatural men" (HEG 164) or "feminized men unnatural and unsuitable" (HEG 169). They are socio-culturally marginalized

owing to the conditioned means of hegemonic morality. If dalits, tribals, women, blacks and third gender have been recognized somewhere as cultural identities, then there should also be a space for *Kothi*-communities which have been suffering due to delimited cultural classification of sexuality. Traditional sexuality is immensely glorified heterosexuality pertaining to male and female relations. Beyond that, all is supposed to be immoral and unnatural. Therefore, there has been a problem with conventional designs of human culture. Kesavan tends to re-identify such biased categorization of human relations by which rest of the communities have to suffer without any fault. The author writes about *Kothis*' predicaments in India, "In Hyderabad district in Andhra Pradesh, a third of the surveyed *kothi* population is HIV positive. In Madurai district in Tamil Nadu, the figure for infected *kothis* is over one quarter of the community's population" (*HEG* 163). This happens to them not only by their choice, but they are enormously forced to make multiple relations in order to survive. Kesavan evidently remarks:

Even *kothis* who are aware of the danger of unprotected sex are forced to submit to it if their customers insist. Their economic dependence on sex work leaves them with little or no discretion in the matter. Even in consensual sex, *kothis* often agree to sex without condoms if *panthi* is good looking and desirable. If he is a long term partner, they do without protection as a token of affection and trust. And oral sex is generally performed without protection because many *kothis* are not aware that HIV can also be acquired through this route. (*HEG* 162)

Remedy for such problems is not just distributing condoms and making them aware of HIV. Beyond that, it is an outcome of parochial conditioning that is embedded in

one's consciousness preferring to stay with pseudo morals delimited by program of bounded realism.

In the abovementioned analysis Shashi Tharoor and Mukul Kesavan have shown their perspectives on shifting modes of realism by exploring some sense of secularism. Reflective nostalgia is strategically weaved as a tool to know about their productiveness of textual representations. No specific order of governance is enough to say for secularism in the country as it has continuously been influenced by the diverse layers of religion, politics, culture, modernism including new political thoughts of liberalism and neo-liberalism. Secularism, thereby, is not an unchanged entity of justice, equality and well being in literary and non-literary texts as it re-shapes itself as society evolves pertaining to displacing and re-placing of forthcoming versions of power structures. No structure or political thought is fully applicable to justify its consistency. Society, therefore, is not fixed as it rapidly changes and transforms itself for new ways of communication and signification. Simultaneously, basic realism appears to be the same in the minds of common men, but it is not always the same in larger terms as they have to be just commodities of all this shifting. Ethics, values, security, individual interests, expectations and needs are the issues of Man's mind by which he is controlled and manipulated by structures of socio-political compendium. Broadly, it becomes difficult to differentiate between incorrect and correct. Text is always the same, but its hidden qualitative property is always a matter of doubt, inquiry and renovation. Both writers know all these complexities of societal apparatuses. Society does not govern by reason alone as reason has to negotiate with the diverse forces scattered in society. To realize this phenomenon of human

civilization, Tharoor and Kesavan offer their critical and creative projection regarding socio-political issues of the contemporary society.

Both writers are of the opinion that secularism is not only a little trajectory to say only about conventional setup of strained relationship between State and religion only. It is not just a definition to say about separatism of State from religion as society is not only a mathematical projections of laws and order. Beyond that, everything including violence, pity, corruption and morality are there in visible and invisible forms. Things show that society is not in evolution, but it appears to be in evolution by its external manifestation only. To project his mindset for particular type of behaviour is layered psychology of socio-political ideas for ages. Man, thereby, does not live by bread alone as he is condemned to live and think of outside realism by encircled dimensions of ethics and purposes. On the contrary, his individual interests sometimes appear to be in clash with outside forces of stabilization. Secularism, thereby, belongs not only to a pure justification of outside realism as it also has numerous things to share about the inside view of human psyche. It is not possible to say about all these sides of his mind by selective rendering of symbolic iconographies. Both authors attempt to disillusion Man's mind from these ups and downs of outside world by exploring a new worldview of realism. Secularism, in the texts, is not a political articulation primarily, but it is a technique to address the realities of world at different levels of language, art, communication, materialism and spiritualism etc. Society is not regressive or progressive in its evolution as it is just a fictional and imaginative event of Man's mind to define it by certain vocabularies of theoretical assumptions. Therefore, the effort of the writers is to shake the rigidity of human condition in order to create some sense of love, brotherhood and harmony in society.

Simultaneously, all offensive and dirty layers are there to project different pictures of human relationships. This is the point where Man and his expectations to outside world always change creating hypnotic and un-hypnotic effects towards existence. He is neither a machine nor a puppet in the hands of others' socio-political forces. His space is not defined by himself, but by several other factors of mythology, history, astrology and politics. So he has no individual space to say what he is to be for himself in this sense. It is the point where his quest for existence starts undoing the imposed codes of socio-cultural worldviews. Both writers, thereby, deal with the existential issues of Man and his responses to outside realism. So, it is the scepticism of writers' mind towards outside realities to twist them for justice and liberty in society. Society is not just a battle of ideas alone as there remains something valuable even beyond ideas and ideology of its socio-political projections.

Furthermore, the writers have critical sense of concrete realism by telling about the pragmatic view of the contemporary society. Tharoor does this by running between two poles of liberalism and neoliberals. His experiences look like a journey of observing the socio-political twists. Initially, it reveals his sensitization towards notions of the freedom of press, rights and human thinking; secondly, it merges with some sense of neoliberals justifying secularism in terms of economic settlements. On the other hand, Kesavan addresses the issues of the margins and non-margins by projecting a critical sense towards Indian cinematic representations, art and university-culture by covering up the widened zone of human world. His major focus is to show a critical sensibility for the subalterns in this way. He desires to re-place the oppressiveness by showing affection and human sentiments. He is liberal rather than neo-liberal. Tharoor does the same by addressing the same issues, but his

approach to deal with them is more pragmatic than Kesavan. He shows his socio-political exposure to unfold the problematic component of India where Kesavan engages with them by his academic and literary understanding of the country. Largely, they are the part of the same, but playing it differently having some common sense of criticism and creativity at some philosophical and pragmatic levels.