INTRODUCTION

This thesis argues that auto/biographical narratives—though they propose to bring into being selves that are universal—are always already marked by a specific identity inflected by parameters such as race, gender, religion, region, class and caste. Auto/biographical narratives that however begin with the burden of an identity marked particularly by gender or caste or religion inaugurate a writing that calls into question the universal category of a "self." I will demonstrate through my analyses that recognition of such local specificities enables a writer/reader to understand the material and ideological compositions of the structure of agency, of an "identity," and that such a genealogical enterprise will enable us to have a better handle on the meaning and consequences of contemporary contests over identities.

The virtual explosion of autobiographies in the publishing market is a remarkable phenomenon of the twentieth century. A cursory glance at the catalogue of any publisher, or a quick walk around a bookshop, reveals a wide range of autobiographies by an amazing variety of people and personalities—public figures, politicians, celebrities, sports persons, business-persons, professionals from all walks of life such as CEOs of major companies to small scale success stories. There are literary autobiographies, spiritual autobiographies as well as ghost-written autobiographies for celebrity sports stars or film stars.

The term "autobiography" derives from the Greek words *auton* translated as "self," *bios* or "life," and *graphein* or "write." The term is usually attributed in

English literary history to Robert Southey in the eighteenth century, though the form is regarded as older. An autobiography may be based entirely on the writer's memory. The earlier term for it was an *apologia*, and implied essentially more of a self-justification than introspection. John Henry Newman's autobiography is therefore titled *Apologia pro vita sua* ("A Defense of One's Life"; published in 1864) while St. Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, used the title *Confessions* (written between 397 and 398 C. E.) for his autobiographical work.

An autobiography is technically differentiated from a "memoir"; the latter is regarded as focusing more on the "life and times" of the protagonist, while the former has a more narrower focus, with an intimate concern with her or his own memories, feelings, opinions or emotions. The term "memoir" has been traced to the pagan rhetorician Libanius (314 - 394 C. E.), who framed his life memoir as one of his orations, not to be heard publicly, but to be read aloud privately. This idea of "memoir" is also regarded as a "memo," an unfinished and unpublished writing which a writer may draw upon to manufacture a more "finished" product later on. Though memoir and autobiography may be mixed up on a page or within a text, they are generally regarded as theoretically distinct. Autobiographies are, according to literary conventions of the genre, marked primarily by an attention to the "self" and by the concurrence of the author, the narrator and the protagonist.

The continuing popularity of "autobiography" suggests an abiding interest not just in the telling of a life story or the reading of a life story, but also a deeply shared understanding of the structure and aesthetics of the genre. The narrative strategy of self-discovery, of the subject's evolving consciousness and the corresponding

uniqueness of *his* life, frames an ideal, inviolable self. That is to say, auto/biographies are thought of, one, as authentically reflecting if not revealing the "real" and second, are further authorized by the sincerity of the narrator; moreover, his authority—*his* universality, *his* representativeness, and *his* role—as the rightful spokesman for a community are also uncritically accepted. We are, therefore, fascinated by an invitation to eavesdrop on a "confession" about an encounter—between life and art, personal and impersonal, internal and external perspectives—in which we re-cognize a shared field of a universal, sovereign, subject implicit under the rubric of "self."

Nevertheless, during this "confessional" journey, auto/biographical narratives traverse the discursive boundaries of art and history, masterfully concealing the artistry that produces veracity. "Autobiography" is a conscious literary genre that employs a wide range of tropes and technical resources in order to structure a singular subject who has lived out life at its several stages, in all its intimate and inconsistent textures of personality and experience. Nonetheless, the evolution of this self is structured for arrival at a particular space—a universal space of a "self" that is curiously unmarked by gender, race, class, caste, region, religion or language, to name a few markers of an identity. Yet, a cursory glance at the methodology behind the logic suggests that the author casts herself in the role of a narrator of a scenario over which she usually has only partial control, presenting and commenting on an even more remote protagonist whose script and actions appear to be largely out of her control.

To loop back to the context of autobiography's contemporary popularity, the

second half of the twentieth century is also significant for the ways in which large-

scale political movements all over the world, including nationalist movements and

civil rights movements, gained importance as a way of organization, agitation and

consolidation of peoples against distinctive regimes of oppression and domination,

with the aim of a greater self-determination. The phrase "identity politics" has, in

this context, come to signify a wide range of political activity and theorizing

founded in the shared experiences of injustice of members of certain social

groups. Rather than organizing solely around ideology or party affiliation, the

consolidation of identity politics is understood to typically concern itself with the

liberation of a specific constituency marginalized within its larger context.

As a mode of organization, identity politics is connected to the understanding that

some groups are oppressed; for instance, one's identity as a woman makes one

particularly vulnerable to stereotyping, violence, exploitation, marginalization, or

powerlessness. On the other hand, claims of a universal experience of "gender"

for example, have been critiqued from within "western feminist theory." For

instance, Betty Freidan's proposition during the second wave of feminism in U. S.

A. that women needed to get out of the household and into the professional

workplace was, as bell hooks pointed out, predicated on the experience of a post-

war generation of white, middle-class married women confined to housekeeping

and child-rearing by their professional husbands (Friedan 1963; hooks 1981).[1]

Black and working class women had worked outside their houses, sometimes in

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[1] See, for more, Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963) and bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981).

other women's homes and including working in traditionally male occupations or living alternative domestic lives without a man's "family wage."

Closer in time, Sara Suleri problematizes in a Pakistani context the Western notions of "woman"; she points out that the claim to authenticity,

> . . . only a black can speak for a black; only a postcolonial subcontinental feminist can adequately represent the lived experience of that culture— points to the great difficulty posited by the authenticity of female racial voices in the great game that claims to be the first narrative of what the ethnically constructed woman is deemed to want.[2]

Suleri argues that the restrictions of an either-or paradigm defines or restricts the experiences and identities of women. Such a sweeping category on the basis of sexual difference or experiences of shared subordination shuts out the possibility of multiple, overlapping yet specific axes of political, historical, cultural, and economic locations.

The gendered binary of positioning women, Suleri contends, is precisely that which feminisms seek to challenge. Given the thesis that the self is always a product of discourse, the dangers of identity politics, then, could be that it casts as authentic to the self or group an identity that is in fact defined by its opposition to an Other. Reclaiming such an identity as one's own would then merely reinforce its dependence on this dominant Other, and further internalize and reinforce an oppressive discourse. A more productive effort then would be to understand the discursive formations of a self, with a sharper focus on the local.

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[2] Sara Suleri, "Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and the Postcolonial Condition" *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1992): 756-769.

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Identity, to consider the issue from another angle, is a concept which operates

"under erasure"; it is a concept that may no longer be serviceable, but nonetheless

cannot be abandoned. To paraphrase Jacques Derrida, the line that cancels out the

possibility of a concept's existence also paradoxically allows it to be read.[3] So,

while it may no longer be possible to deploy a concept within the paradigm in

which it was originally generated, it is possible to continue to think with it,

thinking at the limit, thinking in the interval, a sort of a double writing. It is

through this

> . . . double, and precisely stratified, dislodged and dislodging writing,
>
> [that] we must also mark the interval between inversion, which brings low
>
> what was high, and the irruptive emergence of a new "concept," a concept
>
> that can no longer be and never could be, included in the previous regime.
>
> (1)

A useful standpoint here to understand the concept of "identity" is from the

poststructuralist notion of a self-reflexivity, a discursive awareness, of the

tentativeness, the slipperiness, the ambiguity and the complex interrelations of

texts and meanings. Rejecting an essentialist view of "reality" as independent of,

beneath or beyond, language and ideology or a foundational perspective of stable

signifying systems with unproblematic representations of a world of fact, post-

structuralist thought has investigated a primary idea of modernity that

"individuals" are sacred, separate and intact. Such a perspective has led to a

conclusion that it is no longer possible to visualize individual "subjects" as

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[3] Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. and annot. by Alan Bass (London: Athlone; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

masters (sic) of the only true realm of meaning and value, with rights individual and inalienable, and a system of value and nature rooted in a universal and transhistorical essence. Instead, post-structuralist theorists have demonstrated that subjects are culturally and discursively structured, that their agency is created through their cultural meanings and practices and that they are material beings, entrenched in the practices and structures of their society.

For instance, Michel Foucault has demonstrated that the genealogy of the idea of an author, responsible as a thinking and moral subject, developed in Western culture towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Foucault argues that the notion of an author as a subject, one who authorizes, as responsible for a text is a comparatively recent invention. The name of the author refers not to "a real person," but

> . . . it organizes them . . . reveals their mode of being, or at least
>
> characterizes them. The function of the author is thus characteristic of the
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> mode of existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a
>
> society.[4]

This idea is in turn also tied to the economic and social responsibilities connected to the production and dissemination of texts.

However, in Foucault's terms, the production of discourse, the (historical, material) way we know our world, is controlled, selected, organized and distributed by a certain number of procedures. There are a set of rules that exclude, internal systems of control and conditions under which a founding

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[4] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" trans., James Veit, *Partisan Review* 42 (1975): 698.

subject, an originating experience is presented. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that discourses are multiple, discontinuous and contingent. That is to say, each idea or ideology has a surplus of meaning, because of the multiplicity of language and the linguistic composition of our realities. Or, that there are a variety of possible meanings continually differing, overflowing, in flux. Conversely, this is not to suggest a haphazard chaos or a teleological ordering: rather, the suggestion is that multiple actors work with differing, even antagonistic, interests and construct worlds that may actually have slight, even negligible, differences that are nonetheless crucial to the perception and ordering of a reality.

Following such a discursive realignment of the idea of a subject, the transparent notion of a subject is hence conceptualized in a displaced, decentred, position within the paradigm. Identity, understood as a self-sustaining subject at the center of post-Cartesian western metaphysics is therefore critiqued. For instance, identity is not to be understood as an essential self unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change, nor is it always already the same. Neither is it that "collective or true self hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves' which a people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common" and which can stabilize, fix or guarantee an unchanging "oneness" or cultural belongingness underlying all the other superficial differences.[5]

This maneuver of recognizing the interpellation of subjects in discursive formations leads to a take on the constitution of "identity" itself.

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[5] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in J. Rutherford, ed., *Identity* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990).

It seems to be in the attempt to rearticulate the relationship between subjects and discursive practices that the question of identity recurs—or rather, if one prefers to stress the process of subjectification to discursive practices, and the politics of exclusion which all subjectification appears to entail, the question of *identification*.[6]

What emerges in this critique of an essential or stable identity is that identity is more of a strategic, positional concept: identity always operates within, not outside a discourse of representation. Or, not a singular construct but constituted across different, even intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions, "identity" is constantly in the process of transformation, identification; in fact, as I argue, identities are under constant institution even as they are interrogated.

However, given the changing nature of narrativization of the self, the "fictional" character of the process does in no way undermine its discursive, material or political effectiveness. In fact, Stuart Hall suggests that identities are exactly about using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being.

> Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies.[7]

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[6] Stuart Hall. "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), 1-17.
[7] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in J. Rutherford, ed., *Identity* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990).

In other words, identities are not so much "who we are" or "where we came from," as much as what a "self" might become, how it has been represented and how that bears on how it might represent itself.

Hence, though the phrase "identity politics" in academia, particularly in the West, has a particular provenance and while earlier claims of "identity politics" may appear totalizing or not sufficiently nuanced from a contemporary perspective, the notion of "identity" appears indispensable in contemporary discourse of rights and justice even while it raises issues of "self," inclusion/exclusion and the possibilities of alliances. For example, the globalizing claims of white western feminist theory have been demonstrated as working to construct third world women as "less developed" or unenlightened versions of their white European counterparts, rather than understanding a distinctively different paradigm. It has been argued, instead, that alliances need to be explored in non-identical formations.

The concern that scholars raise here is with the question of a transparent experience as necessary to an essential part of an identity and with the univocality of its interpretation. Experience cannot be available, critics have argued, in a singular meaning; it requires a theoretical framework for it to be meaningful.[8] Otherwise, it sets up truth claims on an experiential basis and furthermore closes off the possibility of critiques from those who do not share the experience. This in turn denies political dialogue as well as alliances.

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[8] Joan Scott, "Experience," in Butler and Scott, eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 22-40.

Put another way, the issue is one of identity and difference. While identity politics encourages a mobilization around a single axis, it thereby puts pressure on members to identify with that axis as the single definitive characteristic of their "self" when in fact they may comprehend themselves as heterogenous selves with multiple identities and political goals. Therefore, this understanding of the subject that makes a single axis of identity stand in for the whole may also work as a disciplinary function within the group, not just describing but also dictating the self that members should work with.

Given that the politics of difference has to negotiate with a conventional liberal individualism and more traditional identity politics, critics have argued to work for new accounts of subjectivity, new ontologies, and new ways of understanding solidarity and relationships. For instance, "hybridity" is Homi Bhabha's theorization of multiple experiences whereas Gayatri Spivak has suggested deploying a "strategic essentialism" where one should act *as if* an identity were uniform only to achieve interim political goals, without implying any deeper authenticity.

In the context of India, contemporary feminist scholarship has shifted away from an earlier framework of "status of women" or the "women's question" to a layered understanding of gender and identity, not only in terms of a third world location or a class-based analysis but more sharply through the lenses of caste and religion. This again is further refracted through regional and linguistic politics. Thus, identity is not merely a question of the subordination of a genre or a gender, but of the structures of subordination—the nature, the texture, of specific material and

cultural oppression and of the relative power women may wield in relation to other women, and men, of a differing caste or religion or social order.

That is to say, to argue in terms of a humanist subject as in an earlier feminist framework will deploy structures of caste and community in ways that mask the inequalities of, say, secularism-democracy. The urgent need therefore, it has been suggested, is to critically examine the subject of feminism for the hidden premises of its humanist tradition. According to Tharu and Niranjana, the earlier understanding of a human subject allowed the possibility of gender, caste and community (even class) only in the realm of the social, marking these as "*incidental* attributes of a *human* self" and simultaneously made invisible the "historical and socio-cultural structuring of the subject of politics."[9] The shaping of a normative human-Indian subject, then, involved ". . . on the one hand, a dialectical relationship of inequality and opposition with the classical subject of Western liberalism and, on the other, its structuring as upper-caste, middle-class, Hindu, and male" (236). Exploring the possibilities of new political alignments and alliances, they analyze the logic of earlier formations:

> The structuring was effected by processes of othering/differentiation such as, for example, the definition of upper-caste/class female respectability in counterpoint to lower-caste licentiousness, or Hindu tolerance towards Muslim fanaticism, and by a gradual and sustained transformation of the institutions that govern everyday life. Elaborated and consolidated through

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[9] Susie Tharu and Tejaswini Niranjana, "Problems for A Contemporary Theory of Gender" in Amin and Chakrabarty eds., *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 232-260. All emphases throughout this thesis, unless other specified, will be as in the original text.

a series of conflicts, this structuring became invisible as this citizen-self

was designated as modern, secular, and democratic. (236).

Such a sharp focus on the genealogy of the identity of a woman-subject, it is

argued, will enable us to understand the history and consequences for cultural

meanings that are contested and refigured and open up possibilities to shape a

feminism that will generate a "counter-hegemonic politics adequate to our times"

(260).

Nonetheless, the aim of this thesis is not to produce a counter-discourse for the

practice of constructing alternatives. The intention, rather, is to probe the contours

and the textures of specific and strategic instances delineating a "self" and an

"identity." The purpose is to enable a critical practice that can distance itself from

an Enlightenment project of both Marxism and liberalism and see the shape of a

problematic relation to the claims and the categories of our political modernity. In

other words, I propose to investigate the genre of autobiography for the narrative

identities it imposes, and the questions re-turned from the location of such

identities in their critique of the genre.

In this regard, I have chosen to investigate the genre of "autobiography" primarily

because such texts consciously work with their material in order to craft an

identity, a "self." I have chosen texts written by both women and men whose

lives are particularly marked by their third world locations and gender, caste,

religious and racial specificities. The texts are sometimes, though not always and

not necessarily, polemical in their stances towards their contemporary life-worlds.

Even so, I claim that the texts stage the material reality of the ideology of religion

or caste as the fulcrum of their texts. The texts are further complicated by the fact that sometimes they are written in English and sometimes they have been translated into English from various regional languages. However, allowing for a wider perspective that all texts are acts of translation, linguistic or otherwise, my choice of texts has been dictated by the broad contours of my argument and, sometimes of course, by a "subjective" taste. My point is that these texts from "marginal" locations raise significant, in fact imposing, questions on the imposed nature of identities.

My study of auto/biographical narratives for a negotiation of identities proceeds in four chapters. In chapter one, "Autobiographics: Structures, Sutures, Subjectivities," I track a history of the genre that focuses on the canonical definitions of the genre of "autobiography" through a historiographical analysis and a brief examination of certain key texts. I do so in order to lay the ground for understanding the shifts in meanings that have organized the genre over time, and have in turn been interrogated across spaces. I trace strands in the history of the writing and theory of women's autobiographical narratives as well as later research that theorized women's writings as not inversions of dominant traditions, or even a rescue of lost traditions, but understandings and analyses of historical negotiations. My intention is to lay the ground for the ways in which autobiographical initiatives can be understood as drawing on the personal to tug at, to "mess up," the social, the layering of concepts of "self" and "identity," of "language" and "writing," of "personal" and "public." The chapter also examines certain recent interventions on autobiographical texts by scholars in India, such as

the editorial introductions of Tanika Sarkar, Rimli Bhattacharya and the work of

Uma Chakravarti.[10]

In chapter two, "Questioning Woman: Leila Ahmed and Nawal El Saadawi's

Takes on Race and Religion," I examine the critiques set up by Black feminists of

a deployment of "woman" as a category for analysis, a move which characterizes

women as a singular group on the basis of a supposedly shared oppression. While

reading black writing would perhaps open a direct window over the contestations

of understanding "woman" in white women's autobiographical narratives, I opt to

visit the issue of race via the issue of religion, since I believe that such a route

would complicate both to raise significant questions from interesting perspectives.

I therefore read the autobiographies of two non-Indian Muslim women—Leila

Ahmed's *A Border Passage: from Cairo to America, A Woman's Journey* and

Nawal El Saadawi's *A Daughter of Isis: The Autobiography of Nawal El*

Saadawi[11] to tease out the implications of "Muslim" in very different discursive

formations of economic, social and power relations within a particular society.

Though the former has been written in English and the latter translated into

English, my rationale in juxtaposing the two texts is to avoid a reductionist

imposition of categories, "race," "Muslim" or "women." I also point out that

though the primary task of assembling and recording genealogies is crucial, we

also need to place the frameworks of our genealogies under similar, constant

scrutiny.

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[10] Tanika Sarkar, *Words to Win: The Making of "Amar Jiban": A Modern Autobiography* (Delhi: Kali, 1999); Rimli Bhattacharya, ed. and trans., *Binodini Dasi: "My Story" and "My Life As An Actress"* (Delhi: Kali, 1998); Uma Chakravarti, *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai* (Delhi: Kali, 1998).
[11] Leila Ahmed, *A Border Passage: from Cairo to America, A Woman's Journey* (New York: Penguin, 1999); Nawal El Saadawi, *A Daughter of Isis: The Autobiography of Nawal El Saadawi*, trans. Sherif Hetata (London and New York: Zed, 1999).

In my third chapter, "Contra-dictions: Nationalist Conundrums and Caste/Gender

Narratives," I review gender and caste as relational categories that, critics have

argued, have to be culled out of a pre-discursive or sociological framework. I

analyze the autobiographical narratives of two Dalit men— Sharankumar Limbale

and Vasant Moon[12]—both of whom belong to the Mahar caste of Maharashtra,

regarded earlier as an "untouchable" caste. I also explore the autobiographical

narratives of two women—Bama, and C. K. Janu[13]—a Tamil Dalit and a tribal

from Kerala. I choose to read the texts for the strategies deployed from the

margins to stage a "self" that raises concerns from, by implication, a different

angle. My readings have attempted to understand the richness of ideas that are

possible about the idea of "individual" or "self" that each of these underprivileged

women or men, not quite, aspires to. Each of these texts composes the lived

material reality of contemporary ideologies of caste as the fulcrum of their texts.

They in fact, as my analyses have endeavoured to bring out, dispute notions of

freedom, choice, development, and progress as defined under prevailing

hegemonic liberal democratic regimes of a benign nation even as they offer

particular interpretations of caste experiences.

In chapter Four, "Purdah/Parliament: Modern Muslim Woman and the Political

Oblique," I focus on the autobiographies of two Muslim women from the Indian

subcontinent in the twentieth century. Autobiographical initiatives in twentieth

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[12] Sharankumar Limbale, *The Outcaste: Akkarmashi*, trans. by Santosh Bhoomkar with an Introduction by G. N. Devy (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003); Vasant Moon, *Growing Up Untouchable in India: A Dalit Autobiography* (Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 2002).
[13] Bama, *Karukku*, trans. Lakshmi Holmstrom (Chennai: Macmillan, 2000); C.K. Janu, *Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu*, as told to and written by Bhaskaran, trans. N. Ravi Shankar (Delhi: Kali for Women and Women Unlimited, 2004).

century India are inextricably linked to the inauguration of "public" lives during the anti-colonial movements. I chart Ayesha Jalal's discussion on Partha Chatterjee's thesis about the nationalist resolution of the women's question.[14] According to Ayesha Jalal, the thesis fails to take into account binaries of "secular nationalism" and "religious communalism." I map her argument about the fraught nature of the idioms of religious identities, idioms that cannot be accommodated in a frame of equal citizenship of inclusionary nationalisms that work with a homogenizing narrative. I read the two texts—titled in both cases, *From Purdah to Parliament*[15]—by Shaista Suhrawardy Ikramullah and Begum Qudsia Aizaz Rasul for their negotiation of the disjuncture of being "Muslim women" in private/purdah and "secular citizens" in public/Parliament. I contend that while strategic uses of the identity "Muslim" woman may be productive, it would be self-defeating to consider it in essentialist terms.

In the "Conclusion" I review the results of my readings in the previous chapters. I point out that it might be useful to think about identity as something that is an excess, that which is subsumed under the genre of the "private," the gendered religious, caste "identity," in order to establish the "public," "secular," citizen. I draw on the distinction made by Partha Chatterjee between the notion of "civil society," though not deployed by Chatterjee in Gramscian terms, and "political society" where he suggests that a separation of civil society-modernity and political society-democracy will allow a working out of a "new forms of

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[14] Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850.* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[15] Shaista Suhrawardy Ikramullah, *From Purdah to Parliament* (London: Cresset, 1963; Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998, 2000); Begum Qudsia Aizaz Rasul, *From Purdah to Parliament* (Delhi: Ajanta Books, 2001).

democratic institutions and practices."[16] I thereafter scrutinize the autobiography

of Ziauddin Sardar, *Desperately Seeking Paradise*,[17] for his preoccupation with

individual and collective forms of becoming and belonging. I attempt an analysis

that weighs the feasibility and pragmatics of Sardar's praxis of an activist search

for immediate solutions while retaining a vision and a questioning of the

frameworks of thought in order to live his life as a Muslim man in twenty-first

century Europe.

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[16] Partha Chatterjee. "Beyond the Nation? Or Within?" In *Economic and Political Weekly* (4 January-11 January 1997): 30-34.

[17] Ziauddin Sardar, *Desperately Seeking Paradise: Journeys of a Sceptical Muslim* (London: Granta, 2004).