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HEGEMONY, C-SEMIOLOGICALLY

Ranjit Singh Rangila

HEGEMONY C-SEMIOLOGICALLY

Ranjit Singh Rangila

‘And I think India is probably one of the most interesting countries in the world, as it leads to inter-category competition as opposed to intra-category competition’.

Sergio Zyman in conversation with Malika Rodrigues

TO BEGIN WITH

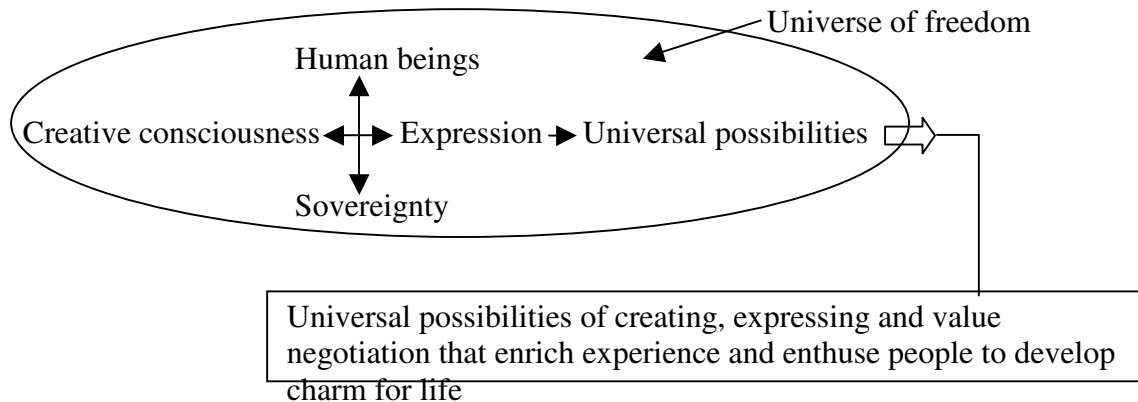
- This writing stems from a realization that the source of hegemony in the case of a fact of human life and of experience is not always the fact itself.
- Hegemony is a force external to an experiential fact. It is directed toward the experience.
- The seat of hegemony is human consciousness. More specifically it arises out of the creative consciousness of people.
- It is created like any other fact, and it joins the rest of the facts to make the existential universe of human beings.
- Hegemony is a force as well as the life-making material that directs and, many a time, distorts the lived experience of man. This double-edged identity of it distinguishes hegemony from other facts of human world.
- Like any other facts. literature is also a fact of human creativity, and there seems no reason that hegemony, the force, may not target it.
- This writing, therefore, is addressed to more than one level of human consciousness. The problem of hegemony and the problem of literature get worked out into a single problematic of human creative behavior, as they arise from the same source.

This is where the vision of C-semiology walks in and receives the problematics by placing it into the depths of human civilization. Seen from the perspective of literature, the problematics localizes itself into that of *a literature* and *the literature* (source of the distinction in Rangila 1989: 11-16), given the essential placement of the fact in civilization, space for comparative analysis surfaces rather clearly.

INTO THE CREATIVE CONSCIOUSNESS – THE UTOPIAN STATE AS IT WERE

At the level of creative consciousness, human beings are the creative personalities who enjoy their sovereign right to express themselves in most illuminative and aesthetically sensuous artifacts. This reflexive illumination gives rise to a whole field of universal possibilities of creating, expressing and value negotiation that enrich experience, and

enthuse people to develop charm for life. The drawing given below has the architecture of the craft that has the human beings in such universe of freedom:

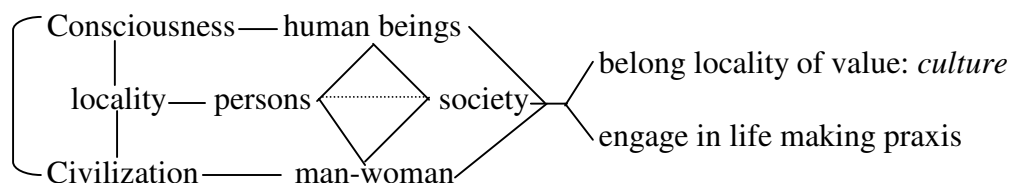


Such a vision of the universal possibilities – placed in the Universe of freedom as it is – may be designated as *the vision of sovereignty*. Or, if Kuhn's idiom is found better, then within the Kuhn (1970) style it could as well be identified as *a paradigm of sovereignty*.

Irrespective of the fact as to whether it can be realized in existential conditions, the vision has a sovereign state of becoming, an ideational possibility that can be grasped, received, and realized as desirable for human beings. As a category of human experience it belongs to those mental constructs that are visible to mind's eye, becomes a reference point and guides conceptualization of infinite number of other constructs.

The constructs thus conceptualized have their reality within the conceptual vision that every human being creates. Literature is such a vision, a construct and category. And, if there is anything that can be characterized as a utopian state, it is literature, because it may enjoy, at least in principle an absolute ideational freedom. In other words the state of becoming in the case of literature is called utopia because it offers the absolute ideational freedom and it has its reality as it does happen in creative consciousness.

Human beings in this universe are real life categories like man, woman and so on. They are social persons as they form some society; belong to some locality of value called *culture*; and they engage them selves in life making practices. And, importantly so, that they are just not half an ear phenomenon. In fact they are real within the horizon of some civilization. The Picture- has the architecture:



Picture-

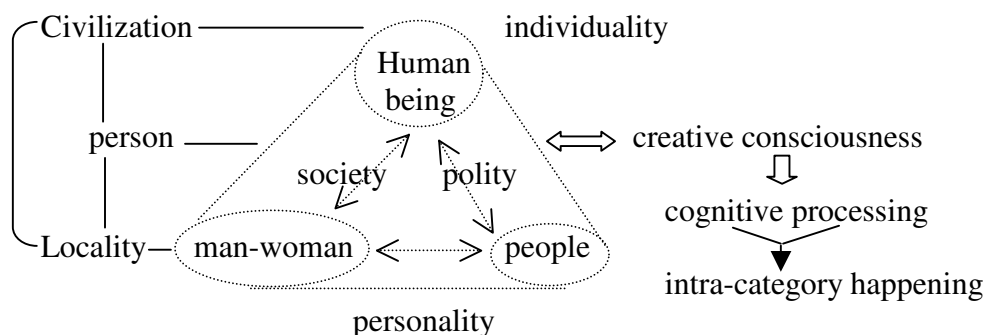
In this sense the human beings are real life category to the extent that they are anywhere wherever human life is possible as per the natural (meant in physical sense) conditions that are to be fulfilled for a life to be. They are real because they think creatively. In fact to think is to be real, and if this equation is ruled out as non-real, then there is hardly any thing that may be left for human beings to claim as their contribution to the making of their civilization.

The human beings in this vision also make into a category called *people*. This category places them with reference to some polity. This reference to polity, and hence to people, makes human beings further real at the level of their creative consciousness.

Had this been not the case then human beings must have been moot objects not worth even a miser wink. They form society-polity, and are interesting to discover, because they have their historically tapable consciousness, aesthetically spread present, deeply vast pool of value and meaning potentials anchored in civilization that they create and live with. Actually this is the level at which being real of human beings matters to this writing as well as to C-semiology.

Further, at the level of creative consciousness, even though the construct called *human being* may be maintained as one site as against that of *man-woman*, on the one end, and against *people*, on the other end, there is much of the free flow of creative energy among the three as they act as cognitive reference points in creative consciousness. This flow renders the cognitively realized creative processing (see Rangila 1998 for an earlier version) into ***an intra-category happening*** most of the times.

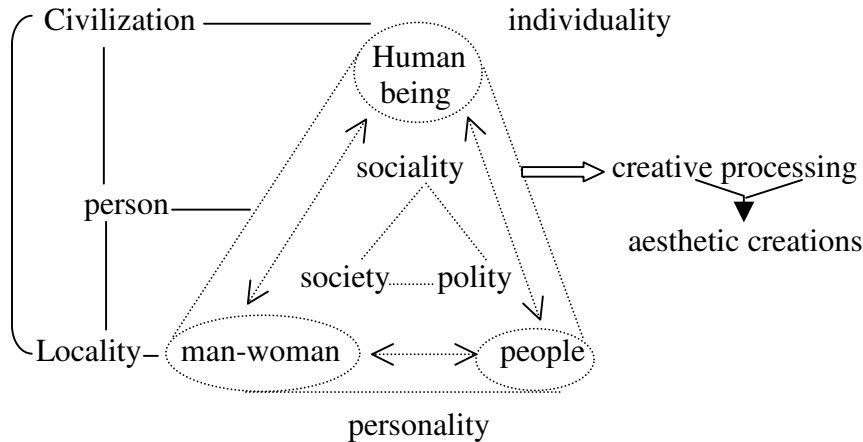
The essential defining feature of such a polity, at least in principle, is that it grants the right to sovereignty, freedom, reflexive sensuousness, and above all liberty to create artifacts that are delicately aesthetic. The Picture- has the architecture:



Picture-

People in this vision are thinking personalities. Under all normal circumstances they do negotiate their right to act, express and to opinion. They may have their right to belief and liberty to undertaking such acts that could be helpful in decent life making.

The conceptualization of the architecture at the level of creative consciousness is designed on the bases of the known truisms. That is, although the Picture- offers *society* and *polity* as the terms representing *social reality* and *political reality*, respectively, in creative consciousness, it may be realized that mental reality must have its own construction of them also. Creative consciousness does possess an active reference to the facts of universe *out there*, and it creates its own construct that is more than a simple construal (see Rangila 2002 ringed for details). Such an internal construct is offered as ***sociality*** in the Picture-:



Picture-

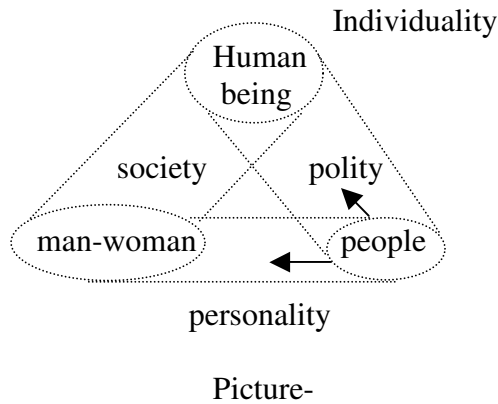
To be careful on the representation side of the picture, it must be added that both society and polity are representatives of externity – even when they are placed in consciousness and in that they are real – whereas sociality represents the axis of internity of any kind of cognitive processing, including happenings based in *creative leaps*. There is no either-or separation in this case – both externity and internity axes are relevant partners in any piece of processing that leads to the creation and articulation of a fact, concept, percept and the rest.

This constitutes the minimum state of the ideating activity that keeps occurring. Creation of literature, through basically on the same lines, is much complex a play of the creative consciousness.

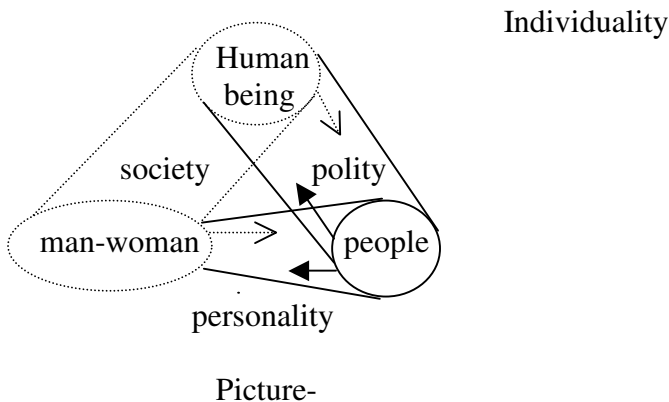
INTO THE CREATIVE CONCIOUSNESS – the power implemmentive state

There is, however, a curtail check. As social identities the human beings are the popular man-woman individuals. Though their life making routines do demand negotiations of different kind, yet most of them are sourced through mutual dependence and sharing. In this sense societal negotiations are ‘you respect me and I respect you’ type – and in that they are more innocent as compared to the negotiations that are conducted in the care of a polity .

Polity redefines the socially given individuals into power owning personalities. This is where a check of a more serious kind surfaces. That is, in polity every one does not have right to every act. Certain acts, expressions, and statements are not within the right of certain human categories. Even right to exist is defined under the conditions laid down by the directives of polity. The Picture- has the architecture of this existential state:



The Seed of Hegemony



INTO THE CATEGORY ARCHITECTURE – the hegemonic core

It remains to be added, however, that this state is a real and ideal state, through not idealized state that leads to the required fearlessness that is the seminal and primordial base for being is self respected person to begin with and, say a poet within the universe of freedom referred to above.

Take for instance, a recent statement of Guenter Grass (2002) on US President George W Bush Jr. (in German Weekly Weltam Sonntang – carried by Deccan Herald, 2002, Bangalore, December 31, 2002). Grass asserts that Mr. Bush is posing a “threat to world peace” with his policy towards Iraq. George Bush, maintains Grass, is comparable to a tragic Shakespearean character that seeks only to impress his father.

Common sense reaction to Grass may term it calling spade a spade. As a matter of fact such a sense is best suited as a characterization as it has sufficient metaphoric subtlety, dig and sophistication of wording a reaction. This is a reason enough for C-semiology to take common sense as one of the central points from where an observational craft should set in.

A little deeper probe into Grass act reads it much valiantly as one realizes that the spade in the case is the highest power point among the world polity and has almost unilateral right to ‘protect America’ at will even it means destruction of anything wherever. The Grass statement in this sense is targeted against mightiest of the powers that may be there in the world at large. No kidding and surely something that no representative of a polity may think of trying. This statement may unfold through its reality if one keeps in view the way political power works in the world.

Wherefrom Grass drives the power to target the highest power point, represented by Mr. Bush for the present, in the world polity? This may be a very important question for the political establishment of Mr. Bush. From the point of view of this writing the fact of prime consideration is that Grass does it, and thereby challenge the power point. More importantly, Grass statement comes at a crucial point in time when very intense ground work, may be to avoid war or to make war, is going on; there are agencies which have come out with the date on which Mr. Bush is likely to wage war on Iraq; UNO is more active in its own role.

Given the map of the power play the extraordinariness of Grass statement and the act as it is may not be very hard to realize. In fact the Grass act presents a counter as the very face of the statement may read. Uncovering the C-semiologique (see Rangila 2002 for the relevant craft statement) would have it Grass opens up an otherwise absolute power point for negotiation. This is what challenges etc. normally do. That is, such ***acts are the invocatories that are directed at opening up of the possibilities of negotiation, especially where the situations seem to be sealed.***

That is, if Mr. George Bush is constitutional head of a state and thereby has an authority invested in him by the state, Mr. Guenter Grass draws his authority from his pen that has been empowered by the most celebrated recognition that Nobel Award brings with it. It is this equation of power-persona value that adds sense to the fact as to why the Grass statement may be taken as a relevant player in the power play. It is in this sense that the Grass act walks into the center of the problem of hegemony.

That is, the act presents that hegemony is just not some kind of unilateralism, a one sided implementation of absolute power to influence, to block and to punish some force, power,

entity, individual, polity, country and the like. Such a state of absolute power play must be identified as ***the sate of tyranny*** – a state of absolute contempt and condemnation, where there is no room for negotiation, no check, no say.

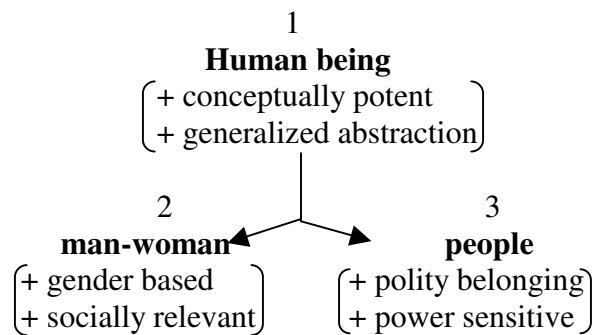
For the vision of C-semiology hegemony is a game between-among voices that match in some sense or the other such that they are capable of striking balance in spite of tilting of power scale in one direction or the other. That is why hegemony at an ultimate analysis is characterisable as a state of negotiated power praxis.

INTO THE CREATIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

This writing is offered as an investigation into the creative consciousness of human beings within the vision of C-semiology. To be sure the investigation is directed at the lives and creative experience of the people that engage themselves in life making praxis such that they perform real man-woman roles, recode their experiences including the ones that nay possess very rare aesthetic caliber.

The investigation in this sense is more into the human creative consciousness as it is at its play – engaged in creative leaps and creating diverse forms including literary genres, than into the structure and potential of this consciousness.

There is an explicitly drawn conceptual hierarchy among three of the primitive concepts that are crucial from the point of view of this writing, namely, (1) human being, (2) man-woman, and (3) people. The Picture- has it:



Picture-

[That this hierarchy among the concepts does guide the inquiry is realized as the writing progresses.]

The investigation is based in a realization that it is creative consciousness that is source of all human creativity, as well as, of the whole of the creative behaviour that gets expressed through multiple modes that man has created during the long and archeological process of civilization making. *Life making* (see Rangila 2001 for details) and *form creating* are manifestations of the creative urge that is one of the central properties of human creative consciousness.

Literature in this vision is one among a vast array of expressive modes that are known to express creative experience human. It is known to be created, like any other form, fact, product that results as a creative category, when creative consciousness moves through some powerful creative leap, gets ruptured, and gives an aesthetic shape to the ideational mass that it carries.

The place the problem of this writing into a working perspective, one should be willing to discover that the statements made above, with reference to human creativity getting articulated, address and relate to the sector 1 of the Picture-1 above. That is, as if there is some conceptually potent human being who may enjoy a universal freedom and express its blissful experience at will and desire.

There is no reason to deny such a level of becoming for human beings that this writing is concerned with. On the contrary, this writing proposes to look into the possibilities that may give rise to such elevate human becoming real.

To get guided by the Picture-1 would be to discover that such a becoming where an individual human being may enjoy a blissful experience of freedom, but this experience could be real when reference to the sectors 2 and 3 is maintained. That is, the play of the creative consciousness will have to have position on gender, be socially relevant, and sensitive to polity power.

In other words, as and when the creative consciousness gets into creative urge, the creativity of the consciousness, its resources must be available to all the three sector of the picture. It may be argued that, in spite the suggested hierarchy, the person remains as it is. The person, in all the three sectors of its becoming, is sustained by the resources of the same creative consciousness.

There is, however, experiential realization that what happens in the play of the creative consciousness is rather subtle that the Picture-1 has it. That is, it does not suffice to have cross sector reference and to maintain the same. That goes without saying. The real problem is the nature of the reference, and to discover its functional participation in the actual happening of the creative process.

A discovery to that effect may have to probe deeper into the relationship that the hierarchy among the three concepts establishes. The level of 'human being' in the hierarchy is in 'generalised' relation to that of the level of 'man-woman', on the one end, and of 'people' on the other end, and hence sheds some of the specificities of the lower level. To that effect it is more abstract in its conceptual potent.

Given the two defining features, namely, generality and abstraction of the level of *human being*, it may as well be seen as a cognitive facility, a point of subtlety at which a person can conduct reflective thinking, and from where it can view resourcefully at that which is present at lower level of hierarchy. This discovery does have very delicate consequences for the proposed investigation.

That is, even though the same creative consciousness may be available to a person, yet the same creative resources cannot be explored for making a creative act and/or creative statement, as the person moves from one level of generality and of abstraction, to another level defined with the same features. This explains as to how and wherefrom flight in abstraction in literature comes, and as to why all sorts hitherto unheard and unknown relations among known things come. May be aesthetic makeup in any statement made by person could also be function (mathematically) of the possibility of such newness of the elemental relations.

If this hypothesis stands some chances of validity, then there are even more exciting discoveries to look forward. Could it be the case that the three concepts get concretized differently, since there are two levels of abstraction (or concretization if viewed from that end) separating them? If yes, then the codes that get created, and the discourses that get articulated at these two separate points of cognitive subtlety may also carry these features, and hence differ substantially.

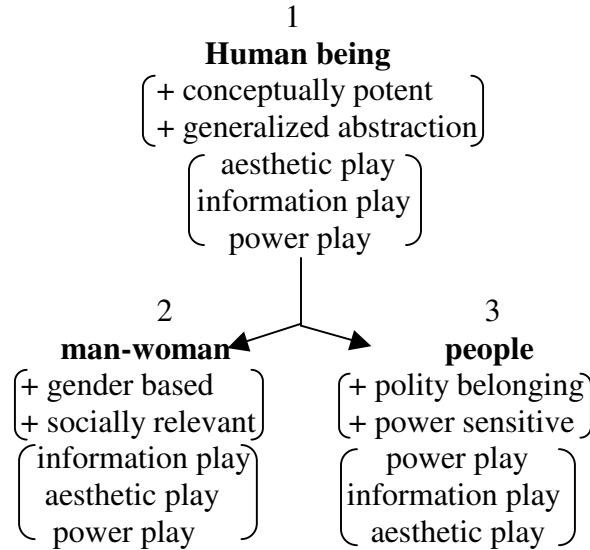
Any comparative analysis that may be constructed to should find this discovery rather more instructive, because what one finds is just not three concepts of a language, they present three positions, definable through the combined resources of cognitive subtlety, generality, abstraction and/or concretization. So much so the discourses that such an analysis is led to deal with carry the features of a level in question.

The analysis in that case may discover hierarchically located three categories among the three concepts. And, in that case the investigation into creative consciousness opens into human category consciousness. It is experientially learnt that these categories are more clearly visible from the 2nd level of hierarchy. The category distinctions at maintained and held more rigorously at this level.

There is very subtle reason for this heightened category sensitiveness. That is, given the very creative facility of reflective act that is rooted through better degree of generality and of abstraction, category consciousness get sublimated at the higher level. This could be one of the important supports for a contention if it is held that the definitional matrices of these categories may have the features that could differently rated among them.

For instance, and let this be just a hunch, if a feature is identified as *aesthetic play* it may not figure very strongly among the matrices that 'man-woman' and 'people' should have. A frequency count could bear it out that these two categories are more oriented to socially relevant information. But, if 'man-woman' category is compared with that of 'people', especially that segment of the category that owns power privileges in a polity, then it is *power play* that should receive top listing in its matrix.

That is, the non-privileged section of the category 'people' is practically an equivalent of the one represented by 'man-woman' one. In this sense, they may conduct *information play* through their creative consciousness, as this is where their orientation directs them best. The Picture has a summary:



Picture-

the life especially as they form people of polities, on the one end, and on the other end, they behave as the thinking selves who may be at time the best creative luminaries. The hypothesis seems a genuine proposition for human desire to will and to freedom and liberty.

The question that this writing may never ask is: Why hegemony? On the contrary, the writing just moves through its discovery and locates where and how **hegemony** may arise out of creative consciousness of people who, over and above their human selves, engage in power creation and power play in polities.

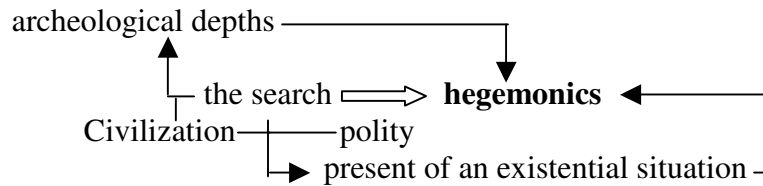
The writing proposes to read literature and power implementive discourses differently – basically as two different types of creations.

An inquiry into hegemony within the vision of C-semiology, therefore, may primary be understood to mean a discovery into the nature, spread and the dynamics of power play in the affairs of human civilization, on the one end, and into the play of creativity that gives rise to the ideational contours of the civilization, on the other.

THE POSSIBLE ROUTES

The First

There are at least two popular routes that the inquiry may follow. The first is made of conceptual churning that searches through the archeological depths and relates itself to the search that is addressed to the present of any existential situation. This study leads to a conceptualization that may be termed as **hegemonics**. The Picture- has it:



Picture-

As such this route leads to a detailed field of inquiry that deals with the whole problematics of the structures of power, their negotiation, their counters, the power dynamics, power neutralization and its consequences in the form of revolutions (see Rangila 1992: counter transitivity for further details). In that sense this route may provide a general intuition, the background vision for the study of hegemony as a local problem within a zone of human creative behaviour, like, for instance in literature that the Conference proposes to discuss.

The second

The other route is mainly formed of a direct inquiry into any act, fact, concept, percept, product etc. – as the nature of the category may be – and look for the play of the power dynamics.

the categories – civilization and hegemony

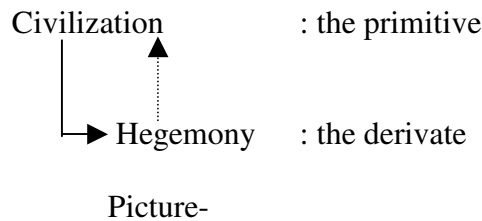
Though no C-semiological inquiry is ever directed to the mere-bare present and that too the one received at a single time-point zone, yet in such inquiry fact remains that civilization rarely figures as one of the important players in the conceptual game that may sustain, for instance, hegemony among others.

There is a very fundamental reason for the invisibility of civilization from a sensibly conceptualized craft of observation. That is, at a level of observation where each and every conceptual category matters to discovery, civilization itself is received as a category. In that civilization gets treated as any other category. This is something very normal to happen.

But what does not happen in the process is the placement of the categories in the existential universe of the people on the one hand, and in the craft of observation, on the other. It is here that no category is equal to the rest of them. In both the cases categories stand for varied roles to facilitate vastly different functions.

For instance, civilization as a category within a conceptual universe is of a primordial order as compared to, say, culture. As a result it cannot participate as an immediate field of reference at an apparent layer of discourse creation. That makes civilization to leave the foreground if an analytic inquiry and go to the background of the possible discovery. It is logical that must the anchoring role, and for matter it should hardly surface as the direct field of reference.

Though no inquiry worth its name may gain sufficient depth and richness without gaining its coordinates from civilization to anchors its analytical apparatus, yet what is surprising is that civilization has been given a convenient slip in the society studies of the contemporary academic culture. C-semiology restores the multiple layered status of the category called civilization. The relationship of hegemony as a category in the human world is that of a derivate to a primitive. The Picture- has it:



This second type of inquiry in C-semiology generally addresses to zone-product-category specifics. In this sense, such an inquiry is more of an inductive journey through the details of a field of data that a specifies product-fact-genre offers. Such an inquiry leads to the understanding of dynamics of creative behaviour. Power play in such inquiry is a form of creative behaviour, as it uses the same coordinates that any other creative act would be based on.

There is, however, an essential difference in the choices that are made and implemented during the actual occurrence of the creative process. That is, in most of the creative behaviour that results into aesthetic grandeur, collective elevation and ethical ingenuity, the choices are made from the position of an hermeneutic consciousness, whereas in the case of power implementive discourses, it is the will of a hegemonic consciousness that decides and executes its choices.

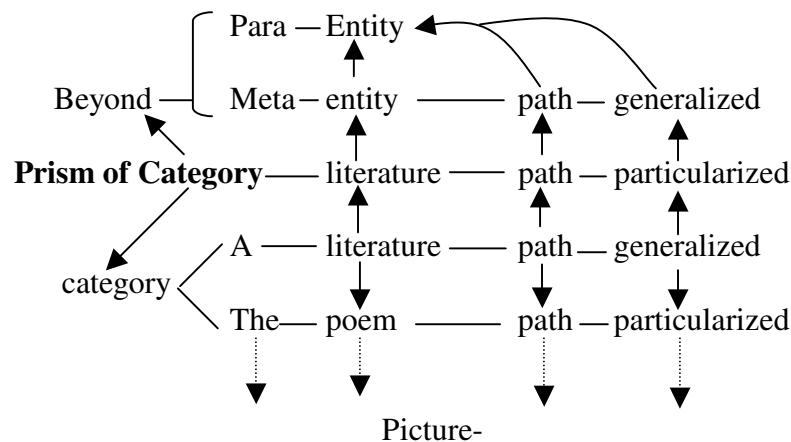
There is, in this sense, an important case for a fundamental distinction that the vision of C-semiology must capture for its craft of observation. That is, from the point of view of C-semiology literature as a category in human creativity is a different proposition, especially when it is viewed in comparison to power implementive discourses. And, therefore, the writing proposes to treat them as two separate categories such that they relate too two different positions of consciousness.

One may suggest that it could be too intentional a play, who knows it could be a hegemonic play in itself, to treat the two types as one category, or at least to assign them an equal status in their creative import. Such an analytical wisdom may afford precious little and insignificant insight into creation of power configurations that project any form of hegemony.

Since the present Conference concerns literature as the field of human experience and creativity, it makes sense to follow the second route of inquiry in to the issue of *hegemony*. But, to stand by the obligations of a real C-semiological analsis, it is

Assertions) and a thing as a configuration with its representational qualifications, and with the possibility of its having a trajectory gains an entity status (see Rangila 1998 and 2001-Kaul). Literature, seen at the level of entity to begin with, must follow the principle, otherwise it cannot be cognized and there cannot be any possibility of an enquiry. This may be formalized into a principle called ***entity ensured principle***. A shade of the fact that calls for this principle was formulated elsewhere (Rangila 2001) as ‘existential adequacy’, i.e. for a thing to be, it must exist in the first place.

A seductive argument that may vulgarise the conceptualization offered above by holding that ‘literature’, the object in the present case, cannot be reduced to an entity, and that it does not have any thingness. Such a position does sound very tenable, but it looses its right to conduct any inquiry on behalf of those who hope to do one, because with its own innocence it rules out facility to generalise and to particularize, the essential requirements for an enquiry in order to formalize. For instance, if one wants to start from *literature* and hopes to include *poem* in it, one is moving within the prism of a category in the way that Picture- has:



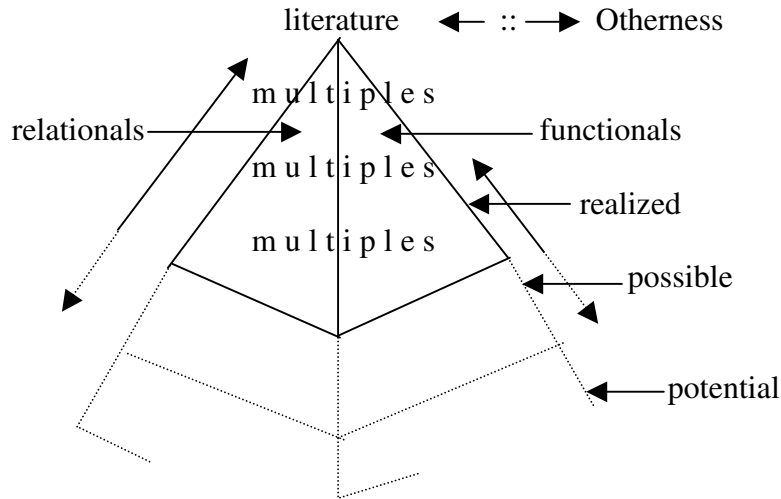
The Prism of Category presented in the Picture- has two directions of the *path* and three paths. The one that takes to ‘entity’ may be termed as ***the path of entity insurance***, following the principle offered above. The one that takes ‘category A’ to ‘category The’ may be termed as ***the path of category implementation***. And the one that lies at the site of ‘Category’ can be designated as ***the path of category identification***.

The picture may be taken as a conceptualization of a convention to be called *prism convention* in the general vision of C-semiology. The expression ‘convention’ is meant in the sense of Karl Popper.

THE CATEGORY LITERATURE

As an entity in human creativity literature may have multiple identity features, but this seems the case, an undisputable realization, that it has to be literature first at its own site – rest of the conditions imposed by the ‘prism convention’ remaining the same.

This realization brings forth a vision that helps in gaining the definitional primitives for a craft of observation with explanatory principles and possibilities build into it. Purely on definitional grounds, then, the realization may find the representation in Picture-plausible:

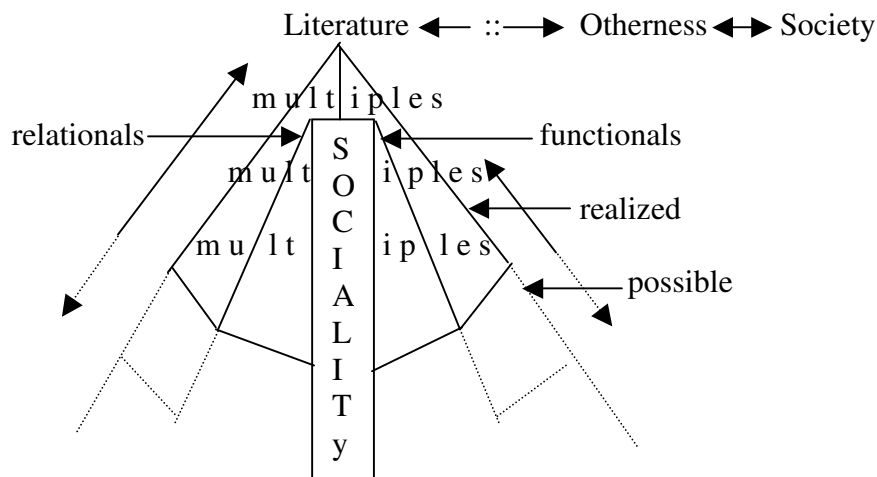


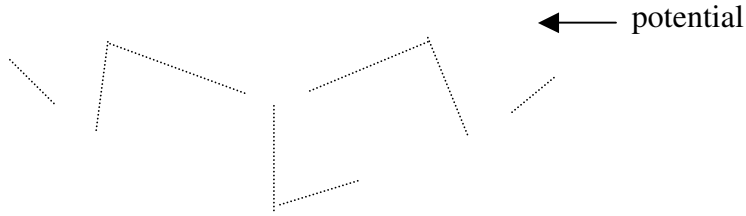
Picture-1

The definitional pyramid offered in the picture just opens up the issue as it is certain about the categorihood of literature. It is also clear that the multiples are the products of the relational, as well as, functional correlates of this category.

That is, literature as category is both anchored in and related to, through relationals and functionals, the existential universe wherein human beings make their lives; create their value potentials and synchronises; negotiate their power ownerships and thereby, may be, kind into some society if they will.

The best statement is called for, especially from the point of view if one is obliged to relate literature as a category of civilization to the *otherness*.





Picture-1

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