Part III

The Identity Map of Lucknow Muslims and Christians
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC–PRIVATE IDENTITY: LUCKNOW SITUATION

Identities are fostered on to us against our will... My identity as an environmental victim is one that I play for all its worth in front of selected audience. Am I even in a position to reveal my essential core - identity - not if we construe social behaviour to be one of performance and counter-performance. 1

Phenomenology does not believe in this "masking" concept of identity that Brittain proposes. In phenomenological reflections, public identity need not necessarily be antagonistic to private identities but it is certainly antithetical to it, the relationship between the two vary depending on the strength of the epochal belief and of the experiential self; 2 it is neither purely transcendental in the Husserlian sense nor situational as in the existentialist definitions of Sartre. 3 It is both and hence its dialectical composition. 4 This is reflected in the forthcoming section on data analysis and interpretation, drawn on the basis of the 230 case-histories collected in the course of field work.

Data Analysis A La Phenomenology

The ethnobiographies made available from the interviews provide the hardcore data for analysis which means

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interpretation. The method of dialectical triad followed by the conceptual format calls for a three tier data study. Hence, besides the self-society axis, the pre-categorical impact on knowledge, its genesis, development and distribution within the minority syndrome, including the existing academic notions in the field of minority studies constitute the significant third dimension of the data triad. Our primary focus will be on self-images or Minoritiness, Minoritization or image of the collective self, and the minority concepts institutionally prevailing in the Indian situation. As already stated in Part II, Chapter III, the phenomenological framework facilitates conceptual resilience such that the perceptions of those respondents who do not fall within the minority syndrome can also be accommodated within the general theory of identity. Hence de-minoritiness and de-minoritization are of equal research value to us.

Set in a descriptive-interpretative research design, the task of phenomenological analysis is to unfold the respondents meanings untarnished by research dogmas. Therefore, the "native categories" become the indispensable indication to the subjective understanding of the social world. Scanning the interview material running into 230 case histories, it was found that the range of "native categories" spread over a wide spectrum of personal meanings

* These include institutions, norms and stereotypes developed and engendered by the course of history of Indian Republic.
that were diverse in degree and dimension as well. Such an erratic distribution of "ideas" had to be however made meaningful to others, besides the researcher and the respondents. So the symbolic universe of the individuals' meanings was hermeneutically interpreted for academic consumption through what Schutz named as second order constructions. 5

As individuals, both Muslims and Christians of Lucknow spun a web of constructs to describe what it is or is not a minority situation and how far it is "real" to their consciousness. For some, the phenomenon was meaningful in a political sense of competitive struggle between ethnic communities, for others, it was the traumatic experience of being a black sheep in the flock; to some others, the reality of being a minority was a matter of simple arithmetic and economics; to many, minority existence was false but bitter and unbearable; yet, their understanding of the reality as "myth" could not be overlooked in the interpretative process. Still, for some others, it was an epiphenomenal reality for which they believed that they were falsely understood by others. The multiple reality definitions put forward by the respondents made it well nigh impossible to use either minoritiness or minoritisation as a blanket concepts in the empiricist's sense. Nor was it theoretically sound to do so for the risk of violating the pedantic concerns of subjectivity, and hence the cause of phenomenology itself.
The case-histories also revealed that the respondents were not always consciously oriented to divided domains of public and private categories, though such a division was marked at the level of identity. So the analytical process of isolating the self and community as a methodological exercise was essentially the researcher's contribution in understanding minority identity. The "native categories" of speech had to be transformed through "type constructs" of the researcher to unfold the dual dimensions of identity through the method of dialectical reasoning in place of phenomenological reductionism. Thus, unlike in the formal methods, the most distinctive feature of phenomenological task is the onset of researcher-respondent dialogue at the stage of data analysis only and not earlier during the data collection phase. In other words, the researcher did not go armed with concepts to the field.

As already mentioned, the respondents "ideas" were not uniform in terms of reality-constructions of the minority situation. Definitions of "reality" to cultural, economic, political and psychological were equally complemented by non-definitions and dis-orientations to it. Since the dominant meaning-framework common to all participants (including the researcher) was minority ethnicity, the existing-types of reality-definitions were therefore either Ethno-national (cultural), Ethno-political, Eth-class (economic) Xenophobia (psychological) and in non-minority
frame of reference what may be loosely termed as 'secular'. These constructs were the respondents' theory of the communal milieu emanating from experiences of self and of the community (whatever that may be in his frame of reference). Needless to add, the respondents' theory constructs are formed without knowledge of the researcher's concepts attributed to them. Their knowledge has very specific orientations of the inter-subjective world historically, existentially and genetically. It is this orientation underlying what is called the public identity or minoritization that surfaces the self in society through ethno-national ethno-political, ethno-class, secular and xenophobic definitions. These were interpretatively and intuitively inferred from the respondents' perception of (a) who is or what is a majority, (b) who or what it is to be a minority? (c) of the well-known "problems" associated with Muslims and Christians either at the national or at regional, local levels; such issues could not logically overlook the relevance of cultural relativism and its bearing on personal and public identity formation. (For example, the local rivalries between Shias-Sunnis may be more relevant as the all-India issues of Bahai Muslims).

At the intra-subjective level of private worlds, the respondents' concepts were equally bewildering in their diversity. Here again the researcher's constructs has classified the domain of private identities according to its
degree of conformity with public identities, in the process of ego-synthesis. Thus, we have four major types of self-images - Core, Compartmentalism, Dualism, and Marginality. Excluding the latter, the other three patterns of identity reveal different degrees of isomorphism with the social worlds of typifications referred to earlier. We are not using core, compartmental and dualism as psychological concepts and, therefore to repeat, our analysis is not based on any psychological model. It is so because the concerned respondents may not necessarily be aware of these levels in their identity maintenance. These are used essentially as researcher's labels or indicators to assess self-society equilibrium. Accordingly, identity crisis suggested by dualism may or may not be perceived as crisis by the subject experiencing it.

The "Core" individuals are those who perceived themselves to be in the nucleated core of their public identities, be it ethno-national or ethno-political ethno-class, secular and xenophobic knowledge categories. In this case the process of dialectics in identity formation takes place between the individual's primary parochial being as a Muslim or Christian with his inter-subjective status as a minority and citizenship identity in objective world of reality. The synchronisation of meanings in the first two levels overcomes the contradiction of the next two levels to become Core. Among them there is a revivalist group
who believe in outright renewal of their ego-attitudes through the idiom of religion in its diverse meanings; the others in the core are drawn into a self-imposed isolation of withdrawal from active participation in the life of the community either due to want of opportunities or due to some rejection. Nevertheless, all Core individuals display no rift in their public or private worlds of identity. Existence is meaningful to them as an ultimate totality whether of religion or politics.

The compartmentalism is a state of ego-identity that seeks a compromise between public and private identity, where the two are inconsistent and asymmetrical. It is a kind of self-management through reconciliatory techniques such as behaviour offset by attitude or vice-versa by shifting the anchorages of identity depending on the exigencies of situational constraints and pressures. This shunting between worlds or meaning-provinces is very essential to compartmentalise the tensions surfaced by subjective urges on the one hand and fulfilment of societal obligations on the other for role effectiveness.

The last category, viz. dual identities are of those individuals who are failures as Core and compartmentalists. The public-private conflict is so acute and sharp that it is absolutely irreconcilable surfacing a crisis of identity for the individual. The duality is
very distinctly seen in cases where the individual is himself aware of it and admits it as a traumatic experience. Hence for him it is neither false consciousness nor false perception. Perhaps, it may be conceptualized as a state of perpetual dilemma and yet real but not false consciousness. As already mentioned, "crisis" in phenomenological interpretation does not mean a state of neurosis or impending neurosis because we are not indulging in psychologisms. Hence dualism is out of the psychoanalytic repertoire of neurasis. It falls directly under Stone's conceptualization of dualism as alternate identities. 11

The three major individual identities (Core, Compartmental and Dual) as per the logic of phenomenological thinking operates in a social milieu, which for our study has been delineated as minority relationship of Muslims and Christians with Hindu majority. Hence, the theory of identity cannot but take cognizance of the degree of isomorphism between the two worlds viz. the subjective (Minoritization) and the inter-subjective (Minoritiness). The relationship thus crystallizes into three identity-types in the researcher's construct; that is to say, the Consistent Compromising and Crisis biographical situations. Diagram 3 provides a clear outline of the public-private identity synthesis, as two levels of reality under phenomenological theory. The third level provides the ontological backdrop to the first two indicated as A and B in Diagram.
Diagram 3

Identity Spirogram

A. Minoritization  

I. Consistency

1. Ethno-Nationalism
2. Ethno-Politicalism
3. Eth-Classism
4. Secularism

(13) Xenophobia

II. Compromise

5. Ethno-Nationalism
6. Ethno-Politicalism
7. Eth-Classism
8. Secularism

III. Crisis

9. Ethno-Nationalism
10. Ethno-Politicalism
11. Eth-Classism
12. Secularism

IV. Identity Polarity

13. Xenophobia
14. Marginality

III Compartmentalism
(between secular and ethnic values; the sectarianism of Lucknow is an additional factor) Hence compartmentalism can be at intra and inter-communal categories.

II Compartmentalism
(between secular and communalism and sectarianism once again at the intra and inter-communal level of existence).
Some Notes on Diagram 3

(1) The absence of Xenophobia from the categories of Compromise and Crisis (II and III of Diagram 3) merits attention. Scanning the case-histories of the few xenophobic biographies, it was evident that for these individuals, being a minority is a hallucinatory experience and hence a kind of reality. It does not mean that they do not make compromises or experience alternate identities for sake of meaningful survival. But at the time of the interview their exclusive articulation of minority psychosis both in private and public words urged the classification under Core. Their compartmental and dual identities were not forthcoming.

(2) Though Xenophobic identity has been analysed as Core, on account of its distinctive category articulated exclusively in terms of psychosis, it has been dealt along with Marginality under the rubric of identity polarities as indicated in Diagram 3.

(3) Besides the three categories, yet another syndrome of individual identity is manifested in Marginality. This is discussed as a separate theme at the end since its conceptual implications are distinct from the rest.

(4) The choice of eth-class as against ethno-class is intentional. The concept of eth-class as used by
Gordon implies the consciousness of a segment within any community (Muslims and Christians in this case) vis-a-vis other segments (or classes) within it, and also across in other communities as well. On the contrary, Cohen's coinage of ethno-class is crystallization of awareness on lines of ethnic cleavages dividing groups into majority and minority. The intra-communal perceptions are therefore outside the gamut of ethno-class identity. On account of the highly institutionalised phenomenon of intra-communal schisms in Lucknow, our choice rests in favour of ethno-class as against ethno-class to typify the collectivity perceptions of those individuals for whom "minority" suggests economic relevance.

The cross fertilization of public and private images as shown above yields identity groups as against the two identity-types of a communal or nationalist minority familiar in academic interpretations so far. Furthermore, the compartmentalist and dual categories can have any form of private identity that is not consistent with their manifestations in public. Thus an etho-class individual may confide to be either "secular" or fanatically communal in public but can have more liberal outlooks in private which for want of acceptance or of opportunity in general cannot be publicised. Hence, they experience duality of selves in silence, though compensate it with masquerading
of more than one identity in public.

The crux of interpretative analysis lies in the meaning compatibility between the researcher's constructs and respondents' categories. In other words, minoritiness being defined as a political reality" by say, X, may not be in fact meant as political by him in the same sense as that of the researcher. Also, he may identify one issue as "economic" and other as "cultural". So his reality can become eth-class and ethno-national as well. The problem is even more serious in case of respondents who start with one "type" of reality reductions and then gradually shift their orientation to another. One plausible solution to this was to seek a finer breakdown of meanings in the respondents' verbalisations. For example, the Urdu issue for Muslims may be apparently perceived by X as culturally meaningful for his primordial group but on further probe will indicate his deep rooted fears for Muslim solidarity through collective safeguards. Therefore the issue is more anxiety-oriented and hence psychological. It could have been interpreted as political had it been signified as resource for competitive strength of Muslims. Most of the respondents more or less maintained consistency of orientation; wherever inconsistency dominated, the difficulty of interpretation was overcome by taking into account the individuals basic premises as to who or what is a minority or a majority. The lack of internal consistency
in definitions and congruency in perceptions has effectively brought out the force of subjectivity to the forefront of research and analysis in this study. The yardstick was not standardisation of data but fragmentation of people's meanings to get at its hidden depths; and hence the human aspect of research were not reduced to figures and "facts" reeling out statistical information, but treated at the level of its "natural attitude" as seen by the individuals themselves.

The 14 identity profiles obtained through case-studies are illustrated with case-histories along with a discussion on their salient characteristics and choice of vocabulary of respondents from each wherever possible. Each category of identity is the dialectical by-product of the respondents identity in public (i.e., with his primordial community) and his private identity as a "minority" individual. As already stated, the three major patterns of identity synthesis are: (a) the Consistency or Core cases; (b) the cases of Compromise or compartmentalism, and (c) the Crisis of Dualism. We shall discuss each in detail.

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* Mental divisions of reality as political, economic or psychological is in itself of thematic significance to the interpretations of identity.*
Notes and References


2 This is basically a Schutzian argument that so long as the taken-for-grantedness continues, there is a suspension of doubt known as the epochal belief. The pre-categorical influence in experience is therefore an important variable on the consciousness of the self as much as the latter's own perceptions (or experiential self) because the subjectivity of man is articulated essentially in the context of his intersubjectivity. Helmut R. Wagner (ed), Alfred Schutz: On Phenomenology and Social Relations, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1970.

3 For Husserl, Schutz and Sartre, Action theory varied according to their notion of human consciousness and identity. For Husserl, consciousness is a transcendentental element of noetic and the ego is noematic i.e., part of the stream of consciousness ontologically and invariably available. For Schutz, it is a product of experience of life-worlds, a derivative of the reflective experience in a symbolically typified world of human existence. That consciousness varied from situation to situation was not in Husserl's theory as in the case of Schutz, Sartre's notion of consciousness is dogmatically existential to the core of the feelings (and not just perception alone) experienced by self in the situation. The distinction between Existential Sociology of Sartre and the Phenomenological Sociology of Schutz lie in their emphasis on the impact of the ontological forces. For Sartre, consciousness in-the-world is a decisive force as against Schutzian consciousness of the world. J.D. Douglas and J. Johnson, Existential Sociology, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1977.

4 The Bergerian notion of identity is a successful amalgam of the Husserlian Transcendental and Schutzian Experiential consciousness. In this study we have sought to incorporate the Existential Self of Sartre with the Experiential Self and the Transcendental Self to unfold the "real me" as different from the "typified me" in the analysis and presentation of case-histories, thanks to the dialectical method and
The term "native categories" coined by Schutz (Collected Papers Vol I), implies the meanings as understood by the individual in his own framework of knowledge be it religion, science, politics, art, fantasy or dream. The methodological notions of his homocnlar model was such that the "native categories" had to be transformed into "type constructs" as scientifically communicable for understanding within the community of scholars. The process of double hermeneutics of "meanings" from the respondent to the researcher cannot under any circumstances alter the individual's personal or subjective frame of defining reality. Hence Schutz calls his homocnlar model as a "personal-type". See Jack Douglas and J. Johnson, op. cit., 1977.

These five type-constructs of public identity of the self are elaborated in detail subsequently.

The term ego-synthesis is an Ericksonian coinage to describe the participation of the ego in the on-going process of social world. In his view ego-identity takes place among men who share an ethnic area, an historical area and a symbolic universe as well. Phenomenologically however this is not accepted since ego-identity can take place in other realms resulting in ego-synthesis. From E. Erickson, The Challenge of Youth, Doubleday Incorporation, 1965.

The term ego-attitude was introduced by C. Sheriff and M. Sheriff in their book Attitude, Ego-Involvement and Change, Wiley and Sons, 1967. By ego-attitude, he means "my experience type".


In the light of phenomenological ethos, a researcher cannot identity ego-tensions as crisis in the sense of neurosis as in psychoanalysis. Unless the respondent himself/herself confesses the dilemma resulting from interpretation of one province of
meaning in terms of the other (e.g. politics and peity), the situation cannot be called clash of meanings.


12 M.M. Gordon, *Human Nature, Ethnicity and Class*, Oxford University Press, 1976. "Eth-Class" (identity) implies not only crystallisation of consciousness across ethnic barriers but also across "classes" both within one's own ethnic group and outside it. Hence it is broader in scope than "ethno-class".

13 Abner Cohen, *Urban Ethnicity*, Travistock Publications, London, 1974, he uses the term ethno-class to denote the structure of relations between a minority or minorities and majority community i.e. the formation of ethnic identity on class lines.

14 The term "secular" is one of most ambiguous concepts due to its heavy valueloads. In the Indian context it is used in three senses: (a) separation of Church from State; (b) Universal tolerance of all religion or pluralism; and (c) privatization of religion. All the three definitions are expressed by the respondents in the case-studies. In fact in one of the case-histories, the respondent has defined even ethnocentrism as a case of pluralism, and, hence secularism itself. Peter Berger has formulated a theory of objective and subjective secularisation to indicate the difference between institutional symbols and individual understanding of them. Subjective secularisation is in effect atheism and not privatization of religion but can be any of the three interpretation and even an ethnocentric disposition discussed above. See Peter Berger, *Social Reality of Religion*, Faber and Faber, 1969. In this essay secularism is used exclusively in the sense of privatisation of religion, be it atheism, agnosticism or even fiery religiosity. Secular identity can be either of the two extremes, i.e. atheist or devoutly religious provided it is an end in itself without having other transitory instrumental values.