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THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY IN INDIAN REFORMERS' DISCOURSE AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR: MADHAVIAH'S CASE

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The question of identity of the "educated Indians" during the colonial era is defined in historiography in terms of "ambivalence", "schizophrenia", "neurosis" etc. This demonstrates the attempts of researchers to explain the specific way of self-determination of Western-educated class of Indians, which breaks down into several parallel levels often being contradictory by nature. At the end of the First World War, the representatives of Western-educated Indians were deeply concerned by the issue of self-determination due to the activation of the liberation movement with the tendency to revive and preserve their own tradition on the one hand, along with the reproduction of Westernized values and habits on the other hand. The limited number of the specific studies regarding the identity question in colonial context in general as well as the lack of the works corresponding to a particular region, period or society of India motivated this research. Addressing the identity problems in the post-war prose of Madhaviah allowed to study the specific behavior of "educated Indians" of Madras presidency and to shed some light on the identity issues within South Indian context. The current case study represents an attempt to clarify in which way Madhaviah, the prominent social reformer and the pioneer in Tamil prose writing, defines the identity question in his post-war prose. His short stories were published in the influential newspaper of that time – *The Hindu,* which dealt with both the social reforms and the nationalism. Therefore, the paper discusses whether Madhaviah's identity as a social reformer suffered due to the abovementioned dramatic events, and whether the reforming trend was in conflict with the nationalistic one in the *Kusika's short stories*.

Keywords: "educated Indians", Western-educated Indians, Indian intellectuals, social reforms, nationalism, British Raj, prose, short story

The consequences of the First World War, which included a loss of human resources, a depletion of natural resources, and as a result, a rising of prices, a ruinous impact on the urban poor and agricultural laborers and other socioeconomic collapses, brought to Indians a deep disappointment in the British Raj, its "stable" order and "reliable" machinery. Especially the Empire's approach towards its subordinates was profoundly rethought by Indian intelligentsia. Offers of military and financial aid, natural resources, cheap manufacturing power and other services, which were provided by Indians throughout the country, were sustained by the main goal – an obtaining of the self-rule. As soon as it became obvious that British government would not give any political concessions to India after the war, it turned a huge part of Indian intelligentsia from loyalty towards civil disobedience and non-cooperation. The disappointment in British government among numbers of Indians had been reaching its boiling point during the war [Pati 1996, *98–136*]. Once it was ended, M. K. Gandhi and some other prominent nationalist leaders openly opposed the Raj in 1918, which led to significant changes in the Indian nationalist political landscape [Raman 2005, *109–110*]. Thus, the activation of Indian national liberation movement in the post-war period reshaped the sociopolitical situation in the whole country.

Many in India felt that they were badly let down by the Raj for their part played in the First World War. Some activists refused the awards presented to them by the British government before the war; some quitted the administrative positions, which were associated with the status and prestige. A. Madhaviah (1872–1925), who was the social reformer and one of the most prominent writers of the late nineteenth – first decades of twentieth century South India, was not an exception [Raman 2005, *109–110*].

Madhaviah is a little-known figure for the Western public, unlike his contemporary Subrahmania Bharati[1]. Madhaviah as well as Bharati belonged to a considerable stratum of South Indian reformers who used literature as a medium for social reforms. Madhaviah gained popular acclaim as a novelist, a pioneer in the new genre for Indian public in that period. Although, while Bharati was a consecutive extremist-fighter against the Raj and at the same time a supporter of radical social reforms, Madhaviah was a person, who had not been openly involved in political struggle and had been for a long time the representative of the so-called "administrative elite"[2]. The latter by definition remained more dependent part of society from the British government compared to "professional elite"[3], where Bharati was a bright representative. Moreover, Madhaviah's case is interesting in a sense of studying the change of an attitude of the prominent representatives of the "new elites" towards the Raj and Western civilization in general after the First World War. One can observe that a degree of a realism in his post-war prose is substantially increasing.

In Madhaviah's series of short stories named *Kusika's Short Stories* written for *The Hindu* in 1920s one can find not only political, economic and sociocultural problems of "educated Indians" of Madras (who mainly are the protagonists here), but also a deep psychological approach. Thus, his characters are suffering from economic disadvantages and social tensions along with the problems of identity – social, cultural, and spiritual. Probably, the author shared these problems with his characters, through which he communicates with the reader.

In historiography, the question of identity of "educated Indians" in the late colonial era is defined in terms of "ambivalence", "schizophrenia", "neurosis", etc. [Srinivas 2005, *57*; Shils 1961, *60*]. In these terms researchers are trying to reach the specific way of self-determination of Western-educated class of Indians, which breaks down into several parallel levels (or several distinct identities) often contradictory by nature. It could be understood in terms of the contradiction of the value spheres. Taking into consideration the significant social change in Indian society, where the western education played a crucial role [Tangri 1961; Srinivas 2005], one could barely find the rejection of traditional social relationships by Westernized Indians, the vast majority of whom continued to maintain them by relating to their traditional environment [Shils 1961].

At the end of the First World War, many representatives of Western-educated Indians faced the issue of self-determination more sharply than ever before. On the one hand, the activation of the national liberation movement in the post-war period strengthened the tendency to revive and preserve its own cultural ground. On the other hand, intellectual paradigms, technologies, methods of social organization and social habits borrowed from the West became an integral part of the everyday life of "educated Indians". Consequently, the problem of identity in colonial context is multilayered and ambiguous. Addressing the identity question, which raised in the post-war prose of such an extraordinary South Indian writer as Madhaviah, gives the possibility to study the specific behavior of "educated Indians" of this region (especially of Madras presidency) and to clarify the identity issues within South Indian context. Moreover, while Madhaviah's post-war prose is dealing with the reformist case, it is needed to figure out, whether he was facing the opposition between reformist and nationalistic trends while publishing *Kusika's Short Stories* during the activation of the anticolonial sentiments among the intelligentsia.

The identity question raised during the late colonial era

British rule brought to India profound changes that affected the social, economic, political and spiritual aspects of life in India. The introduction of the new technologies that triggered the revolution in communication allowed British to unite India more than ever before [Srinivas 2005, *46*]. Since the nineteenth century, India became a part of the Pax Britannica imperialist project in a relatively peaceful time in the history of Europe, when Britain occupied the place of the world hegemon [Canny 1998, *332–333*]. During this brief and extremely fruitful period of history British established the foundation of a modern state by separation of land based on administrative principle, introduction of a revenue management system, development of communications, creating of a modern bureaucracy, an army, a police, a judicial system, and also by introduction of Western education and opening of educational institutions of Western type [Srinivas 2005, *46–47*]. M. Srinivas relates all these significant changes to the umbrella-term "Westernization". According to Srinivas, the concept of Westernization indicates first of all the process of structural change, the bright example of which is the Indian educated middle-class. Its content was composed by representatives of different hierarchies: higher and lower Brahmin castes, as well as higher and lower non-Brahman castes, and sometimes out-castes. Srinivas states that Westernization by bringing up the serious structural changes in Indian social system produced the social mobility of another level, which had been stimulated before mainly by wars [Srinivas 2005, *90–93*, *114*].

However, it has been already mentioned above, that spreading of Western education played a crucial role in creation of Indian middle class [Tangri 1961], and therefore, the formation of a new identity among Indians, which traditionally was produced by a caste and a corresponding kind of activity, which opened inaccessible before alternative social scenarios [Srinivas 2005]. Moreover, the spread of Western education eventually turned out to become one of the most significant factors of shifting of an intellectual space of Indians. Thus, the monopoly in the intellectual domain, which for centuries belonged to Brahmins (esp. *pandits, gurus, etc.*), was significantly shaken by the new "professional elite", which was represented by lawyers, teachers, journalists, publishers, doctors, etc. [Shils 1961, *20*; Shreenivas 2003]. Thus, the second half of the nineteenth century was marked by the rise of the new intellectual elites of two types: the "administrative", who occupied different ranks in the colonial administration, and the "professional" who played a leading role in reformist and nation-building processes [Shreenivas 2003].

The introduction of Western paradigms (humanistic, liberal, individualistic, democratic, etc.) led Indian intellectuals to rearticulate the Indian cultural heritage in new terms. This also encouraged them to search the ways of building a new society, grounded on principles of law and justice. On the other hand, the harsh critique of the Hindu tradition by Christian missionaries prompted Indians to seek the ways to insert the former into the scheme of the dominant modern world. Thus, a large number of neo-religious reformist movements was based on the idea of "returning to the origins", "the pure ground", i. e. "purification" of the Hindu tradition from the "untrue", "irrational rituals", which caused the degradation of the Brahmin institution and the influences of other cultures for a long time. This discourse gave Indians their right to express criticism towards their own system of social relations subordinated to the strict varna-and-caste hierarchy, and at the same time put their tradition into the new light, appealing to its "true essence", which in course of time was "overshadowed" by illusions and prejudices [Hatcher 2004]. The social reformers promoted intercaste marriages, intercaste dining, developed the programs to integrate the "untouchables" and the marginal people into society, supported the widow remarriages, opposed the child marriages, and so on [Jones 1989]. Nonetheless, in a real life the members of reform organizations also maintained the social relations secured by their castes. The caste system had been criticized, however, its necessity and expediency had been rarely denied. Breaking ties with one's own caste questioned the social status of

Indian intellectual in a traditional society, the comfort and security of his own family, the marriage and status of his children[4], and an ostracism often meant a complete lack of social security, and sometimes posed a threat to life and health[5].

However, while the reformers were at the forefront of the social transformations of Indian society in the late colonial era and often appeared in the epicenter of misunderstandings, then the average Westernized Indians were somewhere "in the middle" between the former ones and the traditional majority. In the mind of the Westernized intellectual, the world of traditional relationships and its liberal Westernized environment (for example, the sphere of his professional activity) often constituted two parallel realities with different types of social behavior. In this perspective, M. Srinivas proposed a term "cultural schizophrenia", stressing that it must not be understood as a pathological one [Srinivas 2005, *57*].

E. Shils, on the other hand, is negatively referring to the definition of "schizophrenia" in this context, to which he refers as to "neurosis", "ambivalence", unrootedness neither in modern, nor in traditional world. According to the researcher, such definition of Westernized intellectual's self-determination is a "very fragmentary truth" [Shils 1961, *61*]. Shils believes that Westernization does not completely disassociate Indians with their own tradition. He mentions that a mother's and a grandmother's figures play a key role in rooting the religious core in the consciousness of an Indian intellectual [Shils 1961, *61–63*]. With the activation of the national liberation movement in the post-war period, along with the developing of feminine nationalist metaphors and the rise of the feminist movement in Indian subcontinent, the role of Indian mother (the "new Indian woman") as the provider of traditional values in the new generation of Indian patriots acquired a sacred meaning, because the younger generation of intellectuals was intended to confront the colonial power [Raman 2000, *95*; Forbes 2008, *80*]. As for the adult life, Indian intellectual remained rooted in his own tradition due to family responsibilities (for example, the need to take part in family ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, birthdays, etc.) as well as by maintaining communication with members of his caste. Thereafter, neither Western education and the professional sphere, nor an involving in capitalistic relations had not abolished the significance of the sphere of traditional values for "educated Indian" [Schils 1961, *63–67*].

Thereby, one should take a close look at the social relationships of a typical Indian intellectual during the late colonial era. It leads to a four main spheres, in which the social communication took place.

1) Traditional sphere (rooted Indian in patriarchal home, caste, religion);

2) Educational sphere (provided an entrance to a wider multicultural public, introduced Western values, provided a valuable social status based on degrees);

3) Professional sphere (connected the middle-class on educational ground; as well as #2 provided a new social status);

4) Modern societies / neo-religious, reformist, cultural, trading and political associations etc. (connected the educated middle-class on ideological ground).

It should be mentioned, that all the new spheres of social activity (#2,#3,#4), which were created by the colonial system, enabled Indians to achieve a brand new social identity confronting the one, which was bound by religion, caste and some sort of activity related to these factors. It also enabled Indians to get rid of the negative connotations of their own inherited communities (if they existed) and switch to more respectful job or social position according to the new dominant modern order of the world[6]. However, it is worthwhile to focus on the fourth group, which is especially important for the chosen period of study.

In any case, the formation of a new social identity came into conflict with the traditional one. But while the educational and professional spheres gave Indians the new intellectual resources and endowed them with the new social status without obliging them to adhere to a certain ideology, belonging to some modern society gave an impulse to

intellectuals to transmit the new system of values in various spheres of their social interaction. This created many social conflicts, which were discussed earlier in the context of social reforms. However, only modern societies represented a unique sphere of social life of an "educated Indian", which based on the goal of uniting the two worlds – modern and traditional.

Consequently, if the traditional values of Indian intellectuals (which were grounded from the childhood and saturated at different stages of socialization) remained the foundation of their worldview, then fundamentally different qualities and values that they absorbed in the process of Westernization also constituted important facets of his complex personality. This direction of thought gives the possibility to assume that the state of "cultural schizophrenia" for the average "educated Indian" of the late colonial era is not something pathological or sick, instead it is natural and logical. The emergence of modern societies in India, which common ideology broadcast the message of the necessity of connecting the "two worlds", evidently proves the understanding of this state of identity and expresses the intention to seek a constructive way of solving this issue. However, it should be figured out if the state of "cultural schizophrenia" is a real problem that caused inconveniences and troubles in everyday life of educated Indians, or is it just a historiographical construct, a convenient model for describing the historical reality? To answer this question Shils gave a bright example of Jawaharlal Nehru's self-definition: "I have become queer mixture of East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere… I cannot get rid of either that past inheritance or my recent acquisitions… I am a stranger and alien in the West… But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile's feeling" [Shils 1961, *20*]. An example of J. Nehru is not the only one that clearly illustrates this state. In particular, the post-war prose of Madhaviah gives the possibility to find out in what terms South Indians articulated their identity problems. Were they similar as for Indians of the North?

Referring to Madhaviah in solving these questions was not a fortuity. He is not just the outstanding Indian writer of his time and the significant representative of radical social reformers of Madras (especially in women's question) [Raman 2000, *96–97*]. Madhaviah's way of life reflects this very "schizophrenic" tendency: his commitment to radical reformist view did not exclude respect for his own tradition and support of traditional social relations due to his Brahmin upbringing; his bureaucratic ambitions and dedication to work in the colonial administration did not exclude patriotic feelings. Moreover, his literary work combines both reformist and nationalist motifs, which were to some extent contradictory trends appeared united in the activities of some prominent social reformers of Madras.

Madhaviah's "turning point"

Madhaviah's lifelong attachment to social reforms and the civilizational impact of the West, as well as lack of political activity during his lifetime, could raise a question whether he was an anglophile. For some extend it could be true, but it does not mean that he had no patriotic feelings until the end of 1910s. Tamil language, which defined the cultural identity of Madhaviah, was his best tool and weapon for praising his homeland and delivering the social reform message to the local public. In 1914 he won the battle with another literary genius and social reformer Subramania Bharati for the best poem for Motherland, the concept of which operates within pan-Indian terms and based on the idea of the one united India [Krishnan]. S. A. Raman, the biographer of Madhaviah, states that the writer's greater concentration on Tamil language and Tamil cultural heritage throughout his literary career was something very typical for the nationalists of that time for whom being Indians first of all meant to speak their own language [Raman 2005, *106*].

Despite Madhaviah's feelings to Motherland his loyalty to the Raj has been questioned. Going back to the idea of existing of some "turning point", which led to the

writer's radical attitude change towards the Raj, S. A. Raman justly states that in 1915 he still celebrates Western civilization in his English novel *Clarinda*: "But British Rule that finally prevailed over the whole country early in the last century, has indeed worked a miracle in a few decades and changed both the face of the land and its inhabitants, more than they ever changed during twice as many centuries before it" [Raman 2005, *109*]. Further S. Raman points out that it was his last beck towards the British Raj [Raman 2005, *109*].

In the early 1920s[7] Madhaviah prematurely left the post of an Assistant Commissioner of the Salt Department despite the reputation of a dedicated and hardworking subordinate which secured his name and status and led to his promotion [Krishnan; Raman 2005]. But what did really make him leave the administrative position? He did it because of his personal reasons only or because of the existential "turning point" caused by the post-war disappointment in the British Raj? It should be mentioned that it is not a simple question to answer. At first, Madhaviah did have some personal reasons to retire. He had been let down several times by his superiors despite his deep dedication to his job. Once he was superseded by some Anglo-Indian and then posted in some remote station in Andhra country [Krishnan]. In 1916 he asked for a transfer to Madras to be able to educate his children, but in vain [Krishnan]. However, one of the most important reasons for Madhaviah as a writer and social activist was the impossibility to combine the administrative job with journalism and editor's duties due to the mature age and probably the health conditions. In 1917 he had start to editing the *Tamil Nesan*, a journal with the aim of modernizing Tamil language to make it more suitable for the modern era [Raman 2005, *110*]. Until his retirement in 1920s he got used to do his writer's job at night, which was becoming more difficult year after year. The stubborn, brave, a bit risky and principled personality of Madhaviah used to lead both his careers with the full dedication.

Madhaviah's youngest son Madhaviah Krishnan, the first Tamil wildlife photographer, in his biographical sketch states, that "duty was of paramount importance" to his father and "he fulfilled his official obligations meticulously, however irksome or risky they were" [Krishnan]. In this biography we also find that Madhaviah once risked his life to reveal the gang of narcotic peddlers, which at the end resulted in the arrest of the band and his promotion. This risky incident could be hardly dictated by the desire of promotion itself. Madhaviah indeed had strong personal convictions which reflect in both his life and literary career, as well as in his career in colonial administration. It should be mentioned that he was not always that loyal and entirely tolerant subordinate during his civil service. As M. Krishnan wrote: "Madhaviah was both disliked and feared both by his subordinates and his superiors on account of his strict, incorruptible honesty and that he would neither offer nor accept so much as a lime" [Krishnan]. As well as Kandukuri Viresalingam (a pioneer in social reforms and the literary innovator in Andhra country) and some other social reformers of those days, Madhaviah risked his life and dedicated himself not to the Raj, but to the uplift of Indian society by using his professional position in the colonial administration, because he believed in the strength of the British law, efficiency of the whole system provided by British and its "miraculous effect" on Indian society. Obviously, the position of British after the First World War couldn't left Madhaviah untouched and it let him as well as many other educated Westernized Indians to rethink the measure, quality and the consequences of the Western impact upon India. Although it is impossible to diminish the significance of any personal reasons he had, the disappointment in the Raj probably strengthened his confidence in decision to leave the Collector post and concentrate deeply on the writer's activities.

So one could argue that both reasons (the personal and the ideological ones) could have influenced Madhaviah's decision to retire in 1920s and led to radical change of his attitude to the Raj. Nevertheless, there are still some questions left to answer. Although Madhaviah's enthusiasm towards the West after the war had been undermined, could it

be considered that he renounced the achievements of Western civilization in India? Also in the context of the current research, we need to figure out if his identity as a social reformer suffered in connection with the above-mentioned dramatic events? And above all, how and in what terms Madhaviah defines the identity question in his post-war prose?

The prose as a revolution in Indian literature: Madhaviah's contribution

The emergence of the prose in Indian literature, in the form of novel, short story, essay, etc. is associated with the development of the intellectual middle class, the spread of Western education, and in particular the influence of Western literature, which brought new paradigms and new forms of creativity to Indian intellectuals. A special part in the process of establishing the prose genres was taken by the colonial criticism of the vernacular literature, which the colonial educators defined as "weary and unprofitable", "superficial", etc. and completely unsuitable for the reader's audience, which grew rapidly during the nineteenth century [Ebeling 2010, *205–208*].

Since the classical Indian literature is represented by poetic genres that were the prerogative of educated elite circles, who able to perceive a "high literary language", Indian literary innovators, who with a highly attached to their own literary tradition, understood the need to put literature on the service of a wider audience, making its language more accessible and filling it with new socially meaningful content. The demands for change came from everywhere: growing need for educational texts, the demand of female literate audience, the need of connecting with the wider audience for spreading the reformers' and nationalists' messages amongst the masses and so on [Ebeling 2010, *205–208*; Chari 1999].

For the pioneers in Indian prose the writing was more than an art form or a tribute to the new fashion. For many of them the literary product was a manifest, a reflection of an author's personal ideals and beliefs[8]. For Madhaviah, who gained the reputation of one of the most original writers of his time [Raman 2005, *11*], his writings was "the reflection of his strong personal convictions" [Madhaviah's Family Archive]. As a social reformer, Madhaviah used literature as a tool for delivering the social reform message, but as an artist, he was using this tool ingeniously, in his own unique manner. This artist entered the history of modern Tamil literature as the one of the first authors of a realistic Tamil novel (*Padmavati Charithiram*) [Madhaviah's Family Archive]. Moreover, realism and psychologism became the distinctive features of his fiction.

Regarding that Madhaviah was a significant figure for developing the vernacular Indian novel, he was also one of the first Indian authors, who wrote about India in English [Raman 2005, *47*]. *Kusika's Short Stories* is a series of short stories written by Madhaviah in English under the pen name Kusika, which were published by the Hindu in 1920s and won popular acclaim among South Indian public [Madhaviah's Family Archive]. It was the late period of Madhaviah's literary career, when he was already retired and totally dedicated himself to the literature, his true passion. The reason why the well-known Tamil novelist chose English as a medium for spreading his ideas, most probably was his need of reaching the very specific audience, in particular, the most influential part of educated Westernized Indians, who spoke more English than Tamil, even at home. In this perspective, choosing English seems very logical [Madhaviah's Family Archive].

As for *The Hindu*, those days it was already an influential daily English-language newspaper headquartered in Madras, which supported both the nationalist and social reform trends. Although, despite the increscent of the nationalist liberation movement during the post-war period, the newspaper adopted only "nuanced approach" toward anticolonial sentiment [Chandrika 2011, *314*]. But for Madhaviah this half-hearted approach to nationalism of *The Hindu* could meant the possibility to present his reformer ideas in a popular newspaper without facing a harsh opposition of nationalistic trends, which concentrated on preserving the Hindu tradition[9].

Before collaborating with *The Hindu* Madhaviah once had an unpleasant incident with the newspaper. When he published his Tamil novel *Muthumeenakshi* in 1903, focused on the yet scandalous topic of widow remarriage, he received a sharp opposition from *The Hindu*, which itself had been concentrated on social reform subjects [Madhaviah's Family Archive]. As B. Meenu explains the situation, "while in the popular narrative about social reform, reformers and traditionalists appeared to be on the opposite sides of the battle when it came to widow remarriage, the reality was that 'the two sides in this dispute were not always clearly defined' " [Meenu 2017, *253*]. The "woman's question" was indeed the "litmus test" for the reform sympathetic Indians, for the vast majority of whom the rising of the former was an infringement of their private territory, which was associated with the home [Hancock 2001; Chatterjee 1989]. Madhaviah definitely went beyond this majority not only by supporting the widow remarriage case, but also by putting this question to a higher degree. In his novel *Muthumeenakshi* Madhaviah did two things, which distinguished his approach from other reformers' novels (even those, who supported the widow remarriage case): he gave the voice to the widow by using the autobiographical form of narrative, moreover, the text supported the remarriage of the woman, who was not a virgin [Meenu 2017, *254*]. No wonder, *The Hindu* opposed such a radical position, which could have had divided its audience, even if it was formed by many sympathetic to women's uplift in society.

Madhaviah saw the publishing of *Kusika's Short Stories* and their popular acclaim as a sign of emerging change in Indian society in the post-war period [Madhaviah's Family Archive]. As for a "woman's question" these series of short stories remained unradical and maintained the moderate male reformers' position, which probably was a compromise, which Madhaviah chose to gain attention of the influential section of society, mainly Brahmin, from which the writer drew the protagonists of his short stories. However, it is not the aim of the current paper to discuss only a "woman's case" or explain all the complexity of subjects raised in *Kusika's Short Stories*, among which are such important themes as ruinous practice of dowry, child marriages, women's subjugation, family violence, children's rights, educational reform, corruption, nationalism, etc. Instead, the last paragraph will be focused on the undisclosed question of identity of educated South Indians, and the contiguous question of rethinking of an impact of Western civilization upon them.

The identity question in *Kusika's Short Stories*

Kusika's Short Stories is the continuation of the chosen realistic line, and at the same time, it represents an attempt to bringing the latter to a new level. The genre of the short story itself often implies greater concentration of meaning in lesser volume of the text, however, it does not prevent Madhaviah from skillfully using of a dialogue, a satire, fulfilling text with vivid metaphors and poetic passages, using all these to enhance psychological tendency in the narrative. The inner world of his characters becomes more explicit for the reader, since Madhaviah enabled the latter with an ability to reach the depths of feelings, emotions and thoughts of the character. The main characters in the series are experiencing a crisis of identity through certain personal and / or sociopolitical problems. Most of them belong to the class of "educated Indians". The author highlights this question in this series, so, the most striking examples will be discussed below. The protagonist of *A Soul's Tragedy* is an average Indian official Ramanathan. Disappointed with British Raj, however, he continues to perform his duty diligently.

Starting to attend the meetings of the National Congress, Ramanathan became aware of his involvement in something great, which was the birth of the Indian nation; however, he carefully hides his patriotic feelings. In order to emphasize the controversy of the image of his character, Madhaviah quotes Tennyson: "his honour rooted in dishonour stood and faith unfaithful kept him falsely true", and no physical or mental search could

have unearthed any trace of his early patriotism or ideals, or even his discontent, so completely did he hide his real feelings" [Madhaviah 1924, "A Soul's Tragedy"]. Madhaviah builds up the new identity of Ramanathan on the ground of rejection of an old identity, which caused by the depreciation and disillusionment of the colonial system: "He had zealously and honestly served Government for over twenty five years and how had he been rewarded?" [Madhaviah 1924, "A Soul's Tragedy"]. Here the identity is found rising up from a conflict: "Scratch a public servant and you find a seditionist. This is true, as a rule, of most Indian officials, high or low, in these days… They know better than any outsider the secret and inner wheels and revolutions of the bureaucratic machinery and, after all, they are Indians first and officials afterwards" [Madhaviah 1924, "A Soul's Tragedy"]. Therefore, the sharp feeling of the Other gave Indian official the clear vision of the Self: "Ramanathan's long suffering and sorely-wounded heart was all in tremor of patriotic fervor and excitement and he yearned… announcing himself openly proclaim aloud his freedom from all official fetters and his determination to devote himself to the service of that sacred banner" [Madhaviah 1924, "A Soul's Tragedy"]. However, the tragedy, which Madhaviah emphasizes, lies in the impossibility of asserting himself in the new identity and openly renounce the old one. The result of this short story does not relieve his stress, on the contrary, it increases the impossibility of any release: "By attending the Congress meetings… he was still afraid to give his name or be recognized by someone there" [Madhaviah 1924, "A Soul's Tragedy"]. Madhaviah relied here on his own experience, as he went a long way in the service of Colonial Other himself and met many people. He knew that to be aware of the feeling of the "true self" often does not correlate with disposing of strong internal resource and favorable external circumstances, which could help to establish one's self in a new identity. The lack of both inner resources and life circumstances forced many colonial employees to experience an internal tragedy of this kind, accompanied by fear, frustration and the inability to change anything.

The identity question, however, appears in other short stories of Kusika not only in nationalistic terms, but also in other versions and in different specific contexts. In the other short story Madhaviah's protagonist is described as a personality full of contrasts and contradictions. Here he is discussing by two British civil servants. "I confess I can't understand this Sheristadar of mine", Collector Jones tells his assistant, "His stolid looking face lit up with unusual intelligence and he gave a clear and truly eloquent exposition of the principles of Herbert Spencer and Kant, whom he regarded as the best representatives of western philosophy, and then he expounded the absolute monism of Sankara with a lucidity which I have scarcely come across in any book on the subject". And later: "But what puzzles me more is that notwithstanding all his boasted philosophy and eloquent discourses on the 'limits of the human intellect', the 'Unknowable' and 'Pure Reason', he should be such an ass as to believe in witchcraft and demons and deliberately help to send his only daughter to an early grave" [Madhaviah 1923, "As Others See Us"]. According to the plot, Sheristadar's daughter was married at the very young age and began to live with her husband, twenty-two years old man, at the age of twelve. Six months later she became sick. The doctor writes in a letter to Jones that his attempt to intervene in the course of "treatment" of his subordinate's daughter by removing the magician and starting the "proper" medical treatment instead, met severe rejection from Sheristadar and his relatives. Evidently, Madhaviah links the issues of child marriages with witchcraft, considering both practices as s relic of the past, which made a sharp contrast to the modern intellectual ideas of the protagonist, which remains completely incomprehensible to the British. However, it is important to emphasize that the author constantly keeps aside without giving any preference to any of the sides; instead, he deliberately brings the contrast between the two sides to its apogee by using the sharp satire: "…he quotes Hamlet and flings the names of Sir William Crookes & Co. at my

head and somehow tries to make out that they support and share his beliefs… He talks of karma and fate and a whole lot of such gibberish and attributes his daughter's condition to anything but the right cause" [Madhaviah 1923, "As Others See Us"].

Madhaviah personally believed that Indians borrowed selectively from the West, in particular from the European Enlightment and from the Christian humanists [Raman 2005, *5*]. K. Kailasapathy, while exploring the intellectual phenomenon of Indian novelists, complements this line of thought: "The Indian elite who devoured Spencer's philosophy took to his social thought very readily but discarded the scientific elements in it. The idea of progress naturally appealed to them. But they ignored the fact that the idea of Providence was incompatible with it" [Kailasapathy 2006]. In the same context, one can recall the opinion of M. Shrinivas that the intellectual and technical progress did not "disenchant" the Indian society, where Western rationalism is peacefully coexist with Indian religiosity [Srinivas 2005, *50–57*]. Madhaviah himself studied Sanskrit and Tamil literary traditions and treated them with a great respect [Raman 2005]. Probably, he attributed these systems to the apogee of the intellectual (and at the same time spiritual) culture of Indians, clearly distinguishing them from the "primitive beliefs", which his character Sheristadar was followed.

At the same time, Madhaviah does not take the side of the British, who introduce here a simple educational message, which, at first glance, would be difficult to disapprove: "Education is the only panacea for such evils". And later: "We must go on improving the quality of the seed and maturing the more or less effete soil and leave the rest in God's hands" [Madhaviah 1923, "As Others See Us"]. The narrative would have been quite didactic, and the last quotation (which is the end of the story) could have become a morale, if one could have closed his/her eyes to offensive manner, in which British officials discuss Madhaviah's character as well as carrying the all merits of Indians to their own account, as the development of the local press, political platforms and educated youth. However, the most eloquent statement of Madhaviah's position is the title of the story: *As Others See Us*, where the author clearly differentiates the idea of "Others" from the idea of "Us". Thus, Madhaviah leaves to the judgment of the readers his Sheristadar, whose image clearly shows the features of "cultural schizophrenia".

Another short story *My Queer Sammandhi* begins with the sharp statement of one of its protagonists, who is also a narrator: "Yes, I am old fashioned and I am not ashamed of it" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. The narrator is traumatized by education in English school, where he several times failed to pass a matriculation examination. A little further he got free from the education, when his father, who had "huge ambitions" for his son, unexpectedly died. Satisfied with the return to the rustic world the protagonist is captured by the feeling of rejection of all Western: "And since then, my innate antipathy to the new, alien civilization and all that has come to us in its wake has been growing in intensity as steadily as my fond partiality for our own and ancient ideas" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. This rejection strengthens by acquaintance with his future in-laws, who hold double degrees.

Madhaviah skillfully draws up a sharp line of contrast between co-fathers-in-law. The first father-in-law i. e. "the rustic man" (narrator), who wants to get his daughter married, tries to communicate with the second one, the leader of the local N.C.O.[10], who in every possible way ignores the letters of the first co-in-law and disrespects the traditional family etiquette, sending in return his clear instructions about cash and presents for the marriage. The image of the father-in-law by the groom's side is extremely contradictory: "Our Sammandhi has become a non co-operator and has left off practicing at the bar", but at the same time "he does not non co-operate with his son for practicing at the bar" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. "He now preaches the loftiest principles of national unity, self sacrifice and suffering… He seems to think that only politics need principles, and not one's family affairs. He's one of the N.C.O leaders now" [Madhaviah

1924, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. The image of the unequivocal peasant at a first glance is clearly counterpose with the image of the "respectful" lawyer Sammandhi: "I am only a failed matriculate, and no astute politician with the most uncompromising principles…" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. But with each new discovery of Sammandhi's "true nature", the narrator is rooting into the identity of a noble rustic man he has chosen at the very beginning. The disclosure of Sammandhi is reaching its peak by leading his character into grotesque appearance: "He was clad in coarse Khaddar and his turban was of such stuff that I should hesitate to use for tape-strapping my cot, light sleeper that I am" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. The unfortunate leader of the local N.C.O. inspires an enthusiastic crowd to sacrifice for the sake of Mother India and its people, most of whom stood below the poverty line. He calls to cease spending money on expensive silks and jewelry, but at the same time, he does not hesitate to accept expensive gifts from his own in-laws: "I saw the Arch-priest of Khaddar, the uncompromising president of the previous evening, feel the texture of the laced clothes and silk daintily and expressed a doubt if the cloth were really of two hundred counts" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"].

In the end, his antagonist finally affirms his choice by repeating the first message of the story: "No, I am not one of your modern men and I am not ashamed of it" [Madhaviah 1923, "My Queer Sammandhi"]. Consequently, in this narrative the author obviously condemns the "double moral standards" of Westernized intellectuals. As for the image of Sammandhi, he is presented in a frankly negative sense. However, despite the sympathy to the "rustic man" it is difficult to argue that the author is totally on his side. On the one hand, the image of the latter is more holistic: he is honest, consistent, straightforward, sincere and kindly naive. This character seems to implement the project of returning to "total Indianization", which is itself utopic according to E. Shils[11]. However, his come-back-to-the-rural identity grew up on a failure, and he devastatingly comes back to this unfulfilled experience of another possible existence by saying that he is "only a failed matriculate". Moreover, Madhaviah endows his character with chauvinistic statements about his wife, who do not fit into his "positive" image, but, on the other hand, do not violate the integrity of his traditional identity.

As for the image of social reformers and liberals sympathetic to reform movement, Madhaviah, apparently, acquired a decent share of skepticism depriving all his characters of any idealization at the time of writing his short stories. Experiencing by himself and realizing how difficult it is to follow the reformer's principles uncompromisingly[12], while simultaneously being in contact with a traditional society, he speaks from the name of his female character of *An Advertisement And Its Sequel*: "You know our social customs and rules are so crude and anti-deluvian and so rigorous with all, that our modern young men with noble cosmopolitan ideas and a wide outlook on life, feel cribbed, contained and confined by them and seek to break away if they cannot mend them" [Madhaviah 1923, "An Advertisement…"]. According to Victorian ideology Madhaviah is explaining the half-hearted behavior of young Indian liberals by the "lack of masculinity"[13]: "There are many such young men nowadays and though most of them have not the courage of their convictions and fear to put their beliefs into practice there are a few brave souls who dare to act as men…" [Madhaviah 1923, "An Advertisement…"]. Nevertheless, the idea of emancipatory and transformational potential of social reform is presented in his short stories implicitly or explicitly. In particular, due to the need of taking care of his daughter a Western educated lawyer underwent the path from "bohemian liquor drinker" to a liberal father: "He took pains to educate her and wedded her to a young man after his won "reformed – transformed" heart and as we already indicated, her short married life was very happy" [Madhaviah 1923, "An Advertisement…"]. The same transformational idea could be found in the short story *How Ethiopian Changed His Skin*, where the protagonist is experiencing an intense stress after breaking off his daughter's marriage agreement, which

gives way to insight – instead of rushing his young daughter's marriage, providing her with education [Madhaviah 1924, "How Ethiopian Changed His Skin"].

As for the rearticulating of the Western impact on India, in *Kusika's Short Stories* Madhaviah became much more critical, his admiring spirits for Western civilization, which could be found in *Clarinda*, were definitely cooled down. He criticizes an implied consumerism and an economical damage of India by sharing the N.C.O. views, addiction to alcohol and gambling, especially the race course[14]. However, his criticism primarily concerns the superficial consumers' attitude towards the Western civilization as well as perverting the cultural values of its own society, which caused the unrootedness "neither there, no here": "…but he was Bohemian by nature and early habits, and so he drifted back easily into the muddy shallows of Bohemianism, once the rudder of his barge was gone" [Madhaviah 1923, "An Advertisement…"]. As for the emancipative intellectual potential of the Western thought, Madhaviah definitely remained its deep admirer, although, he vigorously put the Indian spiritual thought on the same height of the world intellectual heritage. Referring to Madhaviah's own identity question, M. Krishnan proposes to turn to his father's library, which could "reveal his true identity and values". Here we could find the whole range of Tamil and English literature corresponding to his time: from Tamil classics to Shankara, Kalidasa, Buddhist, Jain books and Koran, from Shakespeare, Blake, Goldsmith, Shelley, Byron and Kipling to Spinoza, Tyndall, Huxley, Spencer, Carlyle, Emerson etc. [Krishnan]. The intellectual freedom and its free expression were the things Madhaviah appreciated above all, and he truly believed that if society would deny them to a person, they could be forbidden forever or extremely hard to take back again. The best representative of this idea could be found in his *Sundu In the Mill*. Once hit by an old *pandit*, Sundu, who used to be free, enthusiastic and open-minded boy, never would have had recovered from the trauma of denying the right to resist injustice by expression the truth. Broken down by the world of strict subordination and hierarchy, never had he felt again that free joy of playing in his favorite mill.

Conclusions

A series *Kusika's Short Stories*, which belong to one of the most original South Indian authors of the first decades of the twentieth century indicates that the question of identity of an educated Indian is neither just a construct of scholars, nor an overinterpretation of the post-colonial researchers of India. This problem deals with reality, which Westernized Indians had been facing during the late colonial era. This series of stories enables us to understand the specific South Indian context of this multi-layered problem. Therefore, the question of identity appears here in various ways – intellectual, spiritual, national, and cultural. In this context, one should speak of a new social identity linked to the introduction of Western education, the formation of the new "administrative" and "professional" elites, as well as the rise of modern societies, united on the basis of a common ideology. When the liberation movement had been taking momentum in the post-First World War period, the question of identity of an educated Indian became more palpitating because of disappointment in the Raj and in Western civilization in general, which led to a sharp division between colonial "Other" and colonized "Us". Madhaviah due to his own disappointment in the Raj mentions the negative impact of Western civilization, but he imposed the responsibility not only on the West, but also on Indians themselves. His characters feel the tensions from the state of "fragmentation", which defines their identity, because it is connected with the need to choose: duty vs. patriotic feelings, intellectual borrowings vs. faith, new moral principles vs. traditional social customs, social reforms (i. e. modernization of society) vs. revival of tradition.

Through his characters, Madhaviah demonstrates that cultural regression and rejection of everything derived from the "alien civilization" is an extreme case, moreover, it is not constructive and hardly possible. His characters, like the author himself, realize

themselves "in between the two worlds", and they aware that borrowing from the civilization of the *Other* is something natural and inevitable. Although, the idea of national unity in the series gives an inspiration of building something "third", which is essentially unique.

As for to some extent controversial trends of social reforms and nationalism, one could barely find such conflict in *Kusika's Short Stories*. Comparing to his previous works Madhaviah definitely softens the "woman's question", which could be seen as a need of reaching the specific audience constituted mainly of Brahmins. Considering the "nuanced approach" of *The Hindu* towards the anticolonial movement, Madhaviah, who saw the introduction of social reforms as an important condition of the nation-building process, could present here his deepened reformist ideas without dealing with the opposition between social reforms and nationalism.

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[1] See, for example: [Frost 2006].

[2] See, for example: [Sreenivas 2003, *63–64*].

[3] Ibid.

[4] See, for example: [Chatterjee 2010].

[5] Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu (1848–1919), who was a pioneer in social reform movement, faced the violent conflict with the orthodox society by spreading the social reform ideas [see, for example: Anjaneyulu 1976]. The vivid example of social ostracism one can find in Madhaviah's novel Muthumeenakshi [see: Raman 2005].

[6] In this perspective, one could find helpful the social identity theory, discussed by H. Tajfel and J. Turner, which mainly related to the post-modern societies, but as it is proposed in the current paper, this theory is partly working on the case of Indian intellectuals of the late colonial era, i.e. on the modern ground as well [see, for example: Tajfel, Turner 2004, *283–285*].

[7] M. Krishnan in his biography of A. Madhaviah mentions the building of the house by Madhaviah in 1922, in the year he was retired. Instead, Sita A. Raman, contemporary biographer of Madhaviah, argues that he was retired in 1920. Raman also mentions some mistakes in data and other information in M. Krishnan's biography [see, for example: Raman 2005, *110*].

[8] As S. Raman noticed, the new prose genres, especially the novel, "significantly shaped the self-perception of the bourgeoisie" [Raman 2000, *95*], which means they reflect the complex and to some extend contradictory worldview of an Indian intellectual. The new genres, which appeared due to the complex cultural processes during the colonial era, were standing "in between" the two different worlds – Indian and Western, traditional and modern. In her thorough study of colonial change of Indian literature, S. Ebeling wittily illustrates this view: "the earliest Tamil novels emerged as sites of dialogues between tradition and modernity, reality and imagination, didacticism and entertainment, the self and the colonial other, the written and the spoken word, and Tamil and English" [Ebeling 2010, *206*]. Proceeding from the definition of the novel by Bakhtin as multivocal text S. Ebeling stresses, that the first leads to the clear conclusion: "the novel was not simply 'imported' from English into Tamil literature… and that it was not a mere 'response to a Western impact' " [Ebeling 2010, *206*]. The novel, as well as other prose genres, such as short story and essay, includes a specifically Indian core, centuries-old literary tradition and a special Indian vision of adapting these new modern genres to the tastes and needs of Indian society, which faced significant changes.

[9] It is known, that the Theosophical Society and especially its leader Annie Besant, who preached the Hindu revivalism, were influential those days in society and politics. The Theosophical Society supported both the social reforms and nationalism, but it definitely put the "revitalization" of Hindu tradition to a higher position. Nevertheless, unlike the context of Tilak-Ranade's controversy in Maharashtra, one could barely find such strong opposition between nationalism and social reforms in Madras presidency [see, for example: Chaganti 1996; Jagirdar 1983, *233–249*].

[10] i. e. National Congress Organization. From here and further, we keep using the same abbreviation as Madhaviah did.

[11] E. Shils argues, that Indian intellectual is feeling estranged from his own people and contributes to his being "ambivalent" (i. e. "half an Englishman, half an Indian") is mainly because of unfulfillness of a "desire for a complete renunciation of his modern intellectual identity and its replacement by a complete 'Indianization' " [Shils 1961, *69*].

[12] Despite the already published novel *Muthumeenakshi*, which promotes marriages by a free choice, Madhaviah married off his twelve-years-old daughter Lakshmi in a traditional manner, which therefore had unfortunate consequences. Afterwards Madhaviah provided his daughter with education, which contributed to her future career [see, for example: Raman 2005, *56–57*].

[13] In a number of Madhaviah's works the idea of female "masculinity" in a traditional Indian family explains by a "lack of masculinity" among the men, which leads to family violence, including the violence of women over men [see, for example: Raman 2005; Meenu 2017, *257*].

[14] In *The Cup of Iniquity* a man commits suicide because he lost everything in the race course, in *The Last Straw* the family is ruining by an addicted man, in *An Advertisement And Its Sequel* a young widowed Chellamma warns her married friend Kamakshi that the race course "may ruin you both someday", etc.

Illustration 1. Madhaviah with his family
(second person from the right side in the first row).
Photo from the family archive

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До питання про ідентичність
в індійському реформістському дискурсі
після Першої світової війни: приклад Мадгавайї

М. М. Усольцева

Питання ідентичності "освічених індійців" у колоніальну еру в історіографії визначається в термінах "роздрібненості", "шизофренії", "неврозу" та ін. Це відображає деякі спроби дослідників осягнути особливий і певною мірою суперечливий спосіб самовизначення класу по-західному освічених індійців. Наприкінці Першої світової війни перед представниками цього класу питання ідентичності постало ще гостріше, ніж раніше. У першу чергу це було пов'язано з активізацією національно-визвольного руху та тенденціями до відродження й

збереження власних традиційних цінностей, з одного боку, та неможливістю заперечувати вестернізований спосіб життя та нові ціннісні орієнтири, які стали невід'ємною частиною особистості індійського інтелектуала, – з другого. Разом із тим зростання ролі товариств модерного типу, об'єднаних на ґрунті нових ідеологій, вступало в неминучий конфлікт із традиційною сферою соціальних відносин "освічених індійців", зв'язки з якою підтримували навіть найрадикальніші представники інтелектуального авангарду.

Обмежена кількість специфічних досліджень, що розкривали б тему ідентичності на базі колоніальних та постколоніальних студій, та нестача конкретних індологічних досліджень, пов'язаних зі специфікою певного періоду, регіону чи частини суспільства, стала основним мотивом у написанні цієї роботи. Звернення до проблем ідентичності в дослідженні післявоєнної прози одного з найбільш оригінальних авторів Південної Індії Мадгавайї дає змогу вивчити особливості характеру "освічених індійців" Мадрасу та пролити світло на проблему ідентичності у специфічному південноіндійському контексті. Це дослідження являє собою спробу визначити, у яких термінах Мадгавайя, провідний соціальний реформатор та літературний новатор, визначає питання ідентичності в післявоєнних оповіданнях, написаних для впливового на той час видання "The Hindu", що мало справу одразу із двома важливими суспільними трендами – соціальним реформаторством та націоналізмом. Тож у цій роботі обговорюється, чи постраждала ідентичність Мадгавайї як соціального реформатора у зв'язку зі згаданими нижче драматичними суспільними зрушеннями, а також чи реформаторські тенденції вступали в суперечність із націоналістичними в циклі оповідань під назвою "Kusika's Short Stories".

Ключові слова: "освічені індійці", по-західному освічені індійці, індійські інтелектуали, соціальні реформи, націоналізм, британський радж, проза, оповідання

О вопросе идентичности
в индийском реформистском дискурсе
после Первой мировой войны: случай Мадхавайи

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Проблема идентичности "образованных индийцев" в колониальную эпоху определяется в историографии в качестве "раздробленности", "шизофрении", "невроза" и т. д. Это отражает некоторые попытки ученых постичь специфический путь самоопределения по-западному образованного класса индийцев, чья идентичность распадается на несколько параллельных уровней, которые часто вступают в противоречия. По истечению Первой мировой войны представители индийского интеллектуального класса были остро обеспокоены проблемой самоопределения, что было связано, с одной стороны, с активизацией национально-освободительного движения и попытками индийцев возродить и сберечь свою традицию в условиях колониального владычества, а с другой – с невозможностью отказаться от новых ценностных ориентиров и вестернизированного образа жизни, которые стали неотъемлемой частью жизни индийского интеллектуала. Ограниченное количество работ, посвященных проблеме идентичности в контексте колониальных и постколониальных студий, наряду с нехваткой специфических индологических исследований касательно определенного региона, периода или части общества, послужило мотивацией для написания данной работы. Обращение к проблеме идентичности в послевоенной прозе одного из наиболее оригинальних авторов и социального реформатора Мадхавайи дает возможность изучить особые настроения "образованных индийцев" Мадраса, а также пролить свет на вопрос об идентичности в специфическом южноиндийском контексте. "Kusika's Short Stories" Мадхавайи были опубликованы во влиятельном и популярном издании "The Hindu", которое имело дело и с социальным реформаторством, и с национализмом, в некоторой степени конфликтующими трендами. Поэтому в статье осуществляется попытка выяснить, пострадала ли идентичность Мадхавайи как социального реформатора в связи с упомянутыми событиями, а также существует ли в его рассказах конфликт социальных реформ и национализма.

Ключевые слова: "образованные индийцы", по-западному образованные индийцы, индийские интеллектуалы, социальные реформы, британский радж, проза, рассказ

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