



Bengáli Tűz: A Spectrum of Intercultural Transfer

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Abstract. A definite change occurs when two cultures interact and exchange information, which leads to the transformation in their respective cultures. *Bengáli Tűz* (Fire of Bengal) is a famous Hungarian journal and is often described as a travel journal or a novelistic voyage, which comes from the era of the early twentieth century and displays some impeccable shades of intercultural transfer. A Hungarian housewife went to India with her husband in 1929 and stayed there for three years while recording her personal experiences in a journal known as *Bengáli Tűz* in present time. Rózsa Hajnóczy's journey started with a cultural shock that ended up in making her a knowledgeable person regarding a new culture. It is a chain of prominent events, narrating the story of how the author's perspective about life met with a change and how she gained some openness and became culturally transformed. She had tears in her eyes when she left Hungary and came to India, as she was reluctant to leave her home, but after three years, when she departed from India, she again cried, but this time it was not for either India or Hungary. Her eyes were wet as she missed the notion of the entire "world" under the same roof. Other nationalities in this travel journal also underwent cultural transformation. The journal also showcases other compelling and significant topics, which makes it a tempting piece to read and an authentic piece of literature. *Bengáli Tűz* can be analysed from various points of view, of which here I chose "intercultural transfer", but I am fully aware that a postcolonial reading would also offer fascinating insights into the journal.

Keywords: intercultural transfer, travel journal, *Bengáli Tűz*, Rózsa Hajnóczy, culture.

1. Intercultural transfer

I would like to begin the paper by describing the term "intercultural transfer". But first let us take a look at what culture alone might mean.

Culture is a very extensive and wide expression, which can be fully understood by other terms like the arts and other displays of human accomplishment, including

literature, music, painting, philosophy, civilization, society, and way of living, traditions and practices, background, conventions, ethics and ideals, and the social behaviour of a specific population or society. Culture has been defined by various terms, which has made it a confusing concept in general. *Merriam-Webster* dictionary offers six definitions of culture to make it simple and practical for people (Stevens 2000). To sum it up, culture can be explained as collective ethics and standards as a whole which are carried forward to the next generation by the previous ones and hold a community together. In a certain way, culture is a critical medium for comprehending the attributes, ethics, and responsiveness of a population or society.

When it comes to intercultural transfer, we mean a shift of culture between two modes of culture. A definite change occurs when two cultures connect and share knowledge with each other, which results in the modification in the respective cultures. A culture taking on some attributes of one or more cultures, bringing changes to its practices, or getting influenced are examples of intercultural transfer. It is not just a “cultural exchange” where only two parties are involved and both of them exchange each other’s culture (Schmale 2012). Intercultural exchange is a *quid pro quo* situation where the trade happens in both directions. Intercultural transfer is a process where all the parties involved in the exchange end up being altered. Sometimes a singular party gains more than the other party involved and sometimes both the parties end up gaining equally from the exchange. For example, some parts of the world gained from the concept of yoga and vegan food in terms of health and food, but India acquired information about computers and the Internet. So, in the end, some countries benefited from health- and food-related aspects and some countries from information and technological aspects. It is not a perfect vice versa situation, but every party involved gained the different things they needed in different ways. Hence, it is not just a simple exchange, but it is a proper process which is both scientific and natural and takes time to get completed. An individual experiences a change culturally which changes their personality and makes them never to go back to their old personas as they acquire new experiences each and every day, which get stored in their minds permanently and change their cultural perspective in the long run. The changes can be either positive or negative and alter a human being’s perspective and personality in the long run, which makes it an eye-opening experience. Therefore, it can be said that in cultural exchange the people from both cultures experience changes in their cultures, but in intercultural transfer it is not a compulsion for both of the parties involved to experience changes in their culture.

There is a saying which states that “cultural exchange emphasizes the bi-directional and pluri-directional character of cultural transfer, and its reciprocal characteristic too in some cases” (UNESCO 2009: 40–43, Thomas 2012: 3–7).

On the other hand, cultural transfer emphasizes the process of bringing definitive changes at a particular location, which may be a particular residence, in a regional,

transregional, national, imperial, or any other extensive context. The scrutinization of cultural transfer leads to a wide domain. Cultural transfer can be spotted in all historical eras, and it is possible to recognize the different phases. The Italian model and the French model have been recognized as the two consecutive big periods of cultural transfer which operate in different ways (Hurn–Tomalin 2013).¹ Culture is turning into a “melting pot” under the influence of globalization these days, and the process of intercultural transfer is supporting the said statement.

1.1. Definitions of cultural transfer

Intercultural transfer can be defined as ICT, which is a process of “transfer of cultural and personal knowledge” (Kovac 2015). A cultural transfer incorporates more than the recipient: it entails at least two distinct cultural backgrounds, conflicting conceptual systems, socio-historical connections, and the problem of otherness (Rogers 2002).

Here we can see that the process of cultural transfer requires two different cultures, which then make the transfer happen.

The term “transfer” is generally used to quote the systematic effects some existing information suffers after the acquisition of new information. The term “transfer” points to any carryover of information or skills from one difficult situation to another in the field of psychology. So, the intercultural transfer is the transfer of pragmatic information from one culture to another (Spencer 2000).

Here it can be seen that a simple transfer is the process of shifting an element from one place to another for the transfer to be successful, but intercultural transfer deals with the shift of cultural knowledge and skills from one place to another. Cultural transfer is considered as “a one-way activity, and not just a regular exchange between two parties” (Zhou 2008).

It is not a compulsion for the change to happen to both the parties involved in the process. In the process of cultural transfer, one of the parties involved can get affected in their culture, while the chance of the other party remaining unaltered remains possible.

No society has evolved in segregation. One idea gets transferred from one culture to another one. In short, intercultural transfer is explained as a motion of matter object, people and notions between two different cultures and societies. It has added to the construction of modern society and the modern world (Hurn–Tomalin 2013).

1 The French Revolution put an impact on other countries such as Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, or England, while the Italian Renaissance had a strong impact on the architecture of different parts in Europe such as Poland and Russia; hence, we can see that these two examples play a significant role in cultural transfer in the whole Europe, which are the main factors of European consciousness and perhaps European identity.

In the contemporary world, different countries interact with each other along with their population doing the same. Two parties belonging to different cultures interact, and the process of cultural transformation takes place if at least one of them (if not both) gets affected culturally.

1.2. Negative cultural transfer

As it was stated earlier that cultural transfer is not a cultural exchange where both parties end up with benefits, it can be said that a negative version of the cultural transfer also exists. It points to the case where people get transformed and end up with misconceptions. I will also elaborate on a few examples in the context of *Bengáli Tűz*. Negative cultural transfer frequently leads to communication issues, misconceptions, and sometimes even resentment.

Every nation around the globe has its different culture, which are distinguished on a universal and specific basis. It frequently results in negative cultural transfer during conveyance if the speakers are heedless of the cultural differences present. Negative cultural transfer often results in communicative difficulties, misunderstandings, and even hatred (Dai 2000).

1.3. Elements of cultural transfer

Surface-structure transfer: The differences of cultures can be found in these aspects if people are aware of their existence. This form of cultural transfer only takes place on the surface level of an individual or a society. People experience change but only on the exterior of their personalities (Zhou 2008). For instance, the effects one experiences after interacting with someone from a different culture in their professional and social values fall under this category. After visiting a foreign country or staying there for a while, an individual might change their dressing style and food preferences for a short-term period and resume their old lifestyle after arriving back in their native country.

Deep-structure transfer: this form of cultural transfer occurs on the psychological level of a person. It is often the result of some long-term habits and ideas which make the change a bit difficult to tame (Zhou 2008). It is rooted very deep inside the human psyche and is also way more powerful than the surface-structure transfer. Not only dressing but linguistic skills, eating habits, etc. also come under the category of this change, also including the personality and the perspective of human beings.

2. *Bengáli Tűz*

Bengáli Tűz (Fire of Bengal) is a famous Hungarian journal and is often described as a travel journal or a novelistic voyage. It comes from the period of the early twentieth century, written by Rózsa G. Hajnóczy (1892–1944) between the years 1928 and 1931, before the Independence of India from Britain (G. Hajnóczy 2002). It was first published in 1944, and a great number of – especially female – readers have received it with acclamation since then. The second edition of *Bengáli Tűz* was published in 1972, and the English translation, *Fire of Bengal*, was made after this edition. *Fire of Bengal* was prepared by a Hungarian woman, Eva Wimmer, along with her husband, David Grant.

The journal was finally published in 1993 (Hajnóczy 1993) and another translation was done by Mr Kartik Chandra Dutt into Hindi language, which was published in 2011 with the title *Agniparva–Santiniketan (Ek Hungarian Grihavadhuki's Diary*, Hajnóczy 2011). Hajnóczy's husband was a well-known orientalist and was known as the famous explorer of the East, Gyula Germanus (1884–1979). He was a highly reputable Hungarian scholar of Islam and received an invitation from Rabindranath Tagore to teach at Visva-Bharati. Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) was a famous Bengali polymath and poet. In fact, he was the first non-European poet to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (Shamsud 2016: 4–10).

Tagore founded Santiniketan – an *ashram* (monastery) –, which was an institute and the very first Centre of Comparative Literature in India. Many different nationalities came together in Tagore's *ashram* and taught aspiring students while doing unorthodox research for the betterment of mankind. Tagore forwarded invitations to teachers around the globe to visit Santiniketan and distribute irreplaceable knowledge belonging to different fields to all the international students attending the *ashram*. Hajnóczy's husband, Germanus, was one of the teachers receiving an invitation from Tagore. Hajnóczy accompanied him during his stay of three years, and in a journal which is now known as *Bengáli Tűz* she recorded all her experiences while staying in Santiniketan.

3. Different nuances of intercultural transfer in *Bengáli Tűz*

Travel has been a very notable activity since the nineteenth century, which led to the emergence of intercultural transfer. *Bengáli Tűz* was not an exception to this case as it fell under the genre of a travel monologue.

Bengáli Tűz is a travel journal, which makes it possible for many examples of intercultural transfer to appear throughout the journal.

3.1. The author's cultural transformation

The author met with a drastic climate change as she arrived in Calcutta in mid-April. The beginning of the summer season is not a pleasant time for anyone, may they be a native or a foreigner. The dressing of Indian people used to make her feel different. She saw a woman in *sarees* instead of skirts, and men were wearing *dhoti-kurtas* instead of pants and shirts.² The food also proved to be a big problem for her as she was not a fan of spicy food, but she eventually adapted herself to the environment.

Her book, a chain of prominent events, narrates the story of how the author's perspective about life met with a change and how she gained some openness and became culturally transformed. She had tears in her eyes when she left Hungary and came to India as she missed her home, but after three years, when she departed from India, she again cried, but this time it was not for either India or Hungary. Her eyes were wet as she missed the notion of the entire "world". After spending three years in India, her statement changed because cultural transformation is a slow process. Hence, it took three years for her to get culturally transformed. She did undergo some changes in the end, which left a powerful impact on her personality, and she finally became a new person. Rózsa Hajnóczy's journey started with a cultural shock and ended up in making her a well-informed person of the new culture. By making some statements, I would like to cast light on the above observation. Some of Hajnóczy's statements from the Journal proving that it was a clear case of deep-structure transfer are as follows:

Hajnóczy's initial impression when she first arrived in India:

- (1) *It was a bleak place, where wisdom is piled so high, yet where all is so comfortless.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 56)³
- (2) *I was excited, at last, the company of a white woman, to make life in India bearable.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 57)

Hajnóczy's thoughts at the end of the Journal and her stay in India: on her way back to Europe, as she sailed out of Bombay, joining others with the feeling of homesickness for India, seeing the setting sun – the radiance of the Fire of Bengal (Hajnóczy 1993: 588).

2 It is a garment worn by male Hindus, consisting of a piece of material tied around the waist and extending to cover most of the legs. Men typically wear the dhoti with a kurta. Saree is a garment traditionally worn by ladies. It consists of a piece of cotton or silk elaborately draped around the body.

3 All the quotes by Hajnóczy are rendered in the author's translation.

- (3) *Now, I realized that Himjhuri was right to seek solace in the wisdom of India.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 123)
- (4) *It is a tension which goes beyond literal divisions between “East” and “West”.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 588)
- (5) *All of us are born with the same eyes, yet we see things differently.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 4)

Different shades of diverse languages can be seen in the Journal, including not only Hungarian but Hindi, Bengali, English, Arabic, German, and Russian too. She also started to understand languages around her such as English, Hindi, or Bengali. Language and communication skills were crucial in the intercultural transfer procedure. Her attitude along with her linguistic skills also went through a change. For instance, in the first year of her stay, she was not able to speak fluent English, but she still tried it (Hajnóczy 1993: 33), while in the last year of her stay *Accha, Memsahib, Sabji, Baksheesh, Namaskar*, and other words of Hindi were not strange for her anymore.

In my opinion, this is a clear-cut case of deep-structure transfer. The dialogues mentioned above display the slow and careful process of the writer's intercultural transformation. In the initial period of her stay in India, the writer had a reluctant and bolting attitude towards the idea of staying there, but she did end up accepting India and introduced and showed a new image of India to the Hungarian readers. The most prominent change in her personality was that she was not the same Rózsa of 1929 – she did undergo a significant and permanent change in her personality and was a new person in 1931 with new interior characteristics in her essential nature.

Therefore, when a person experiences change in him- or herself after acquiring information about any other culture is known as cultural transformation. In the case of *Bengáli Tűz*, the cultural transformation occurred on both sides, influencing Indians and the foreigners alike over the course of three years. It was not a sudden process where just an exchange took place quickly, but a chain of events made it possible for the transformation to take place as it is a very natural and systematic process. The journal also displays other captivating and notable concepts, which make it a tempting and original piece to read in the field of literature. The author was not the only one to undergo a cultural transformation as many other nationalities in the journal also went through the same process and ended up culturally transformed.

3.2. Examples from the cases of Indian men

A) The prime tale that Hajnóczy narrates, except her own experiences, is the tale of Atanu Ray and his wife, Helga, who later took an Indian name and was known as Himjhuri. The modern and metropolitan Atanu Ray came back from

Europe to teach English at Santiniketan. Even though himself a Hindu of the Brahmin caste, he had a very western and modern appearance and acquired his education from Oxford University. The time he spent in Europe and his debates and communications with his western peers and their culture changed his personality and made him culturally transformed, as he was considered to be another foreign guest teacher at Santiniketan. The transformation in him, though, could be considered as a case of negative cultural transformation as he did not just applaud the other culture but also criticized his own without any logical reason, which was a case of a clear misinterpretation. As Atanu stated:

- (6) *I have become virtually a European, only my skin has remained dark.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 28).
- (7) *I cannot accept the Ayurveda because it is founded on superstition. European medical practice is presumptuous and overrated.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 193)
- (8) *Ray made an example of the contrast between women and furniture and exclaimed that Gertrud is as west as an armchair and his wife Himjhuri/Helga is as east as charpoys and moras.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 450)

From my perspective, this statement displays the fact that, after staying abroad for a few years and being in contact with other cultures, Ray's behaviour altered and he underwent cultural transformation. The modification left a deep scar on his personality which he would carry throughout his life – a European in Indian body, which proved another fact true, that this transformation was a case of deep-structure transfer. I found this to be a case of negative cultural transformation, which is a pessimistic side of cultural transformation. Praising a culture that is different from your own is fine, but when a person starts criticizing his or her own culture and making comparisons between the two, it becomes a case of negative cultural transformation. Ray did not just criticize his culture in general but also started differentiating between his culture and the Western one in the everyday life in reference to all the aspects of daily life. Ayurveda had its own science mentioned in the 5,000-year-old Vedas.

Ayurveda may take more time to heal a patient in comparison to allopathic practices, but patients do get the benefit of getting rid of their symptoms permanently, without any negative side-effects. Atanu was not able to comprehend the difference between the two treatment plans belonging to the different regions of East and West. The two treatments are not necessarily good or bad, but they do help the patients in different ways depending on the patient's condition and symptoms, which is a scientifically proven fact. Atanu also compared women in respect to furniture, except for medicinal comparisons. This displayed his male egoism and narrow thinking process with regard to women in general. In the

end, the matter is up for discussion if his transformation was a positive one or a negative one in the literary field, but the definite fact was that he did undergo a deep cultural transformation which changed his personality and professional life. As it can be seen at the end of the journal, his attitude led to the initiation of one of the biggest disturbances in his life.

B) Another case of Indian men is of Sudin: he was an ordinary Indian villager working as a cook, and he had the experience of working for European professors – so, he was acquainted with a few western dishes. Sudin and Ganpati were Hajnóczy's servants, who had a low sense of sanitation and were also caste-conscious. This led to them not being able to form a link with their mistress. But their attitude changed after they had spent some time with her and had learned new European habits, which resulted in a drastic change in their professional personalities. They also acquired some English language skills along the new kitchen habits. One of Hajnóczy's statements supports this change:

(9) *When I went to the kitchen, an incredible spectacle met my eyes. The kitchen had a table instead of the floor and they are cooking on the table.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 220)

This case depicts surface cultural transformation because it occurs only on the external professional levels. They learned and acquired some new Western cooking habits and dishes, which made them a kind of perfect cook for their Western boss or guest. So, acquiring a new professional habit on just a surface level did not affect their life deeply.

3.3. Examples of the cases of Western men

A) Monsieur Benoît was a professor of French language and literature in Santiniketan. Mr Benoit was very much influenced by the Indian culture; he married an Indian woman and stated that “a nation's true essence can only be learned through a woman”.

Hajnóczy's views about him are as follows:

(10) *When I first met him, I held out my hand but the French man did not take it. Instead, he put his palms together and greeted us in the Hindu fashion. Not only this, he only feels at home among the Hindus.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 49)

This was a case of surface-structure transformation as the change in the professor's personality happened after his daughter's birth, when he moved back towards the Western way of living. So, cultural transformation can be permanent, making it a long-lasting one and can also be a short-term one, which only changes

a person on the outside. This argument of doubt proves that the change appeared in the professor was not a case which fell under the category of deep-structure transformation.

B) Trapp, a German student, started wearing dhoti kurta and also recited Sanskrit shlokas loudly.

(11) *Mrs. Bogdanov stated, Trapp is studying Sanskrit, or rather he is not studying it but mugging it up.* (Hajný 1993: 72)

Wearing dhoti kurtas, having Indian social habits, passing his time studying Vedic Sanskrit and Hindi were the signs of the exterior level of surface-structure transformation in him. While learning a foreign language, you can never be sure if the change is going to last long or not. Therefore, his learning a foreign language was only an activity for the time being, which made it a transparent case of surface-structure transformation and not a deep-structure transformation as it could not be considered a permanent one to make the change last for a long time.

C) Mark Collins was a professor of comparative philology who tried to adapt to a few Indian practices during his stay in India. Dr Collins was an Englishman and could speak about forty languages in total.

The fact of him learning specific Indian regional languages while staying here indicated a case of surface-structure transformation similar to the German student, Trapp. He was trying to get engrossed and participate in the Indian festivities and other cultural activities with the natives. This change was not a permanent change in his psyche as he could also be doing all those things out of common courtesy without getting emotionally influenced. This led us to believe that it could not be said for sure that this change had left a mark on his inner personality. Hence, this situation did not fall under the category of deep-structure transformation as it cannot be considered permanent that the change brought by learning a new language would persist for a long time or not.

3.4. Examples from the cases of Western women

A) A Danish lady struggling with an Indian husband, struggling to adapt to Indian rituals, religiously dressing in Sarees, displaying commitment towards her husband are some of the things portrayed in the journal. Helga changed her name to Himjhuri and became an Indian. Her Danish name was Helga, but she took the Hindu name Himjhuri after arriving in India. She changed herself completely for the benefit of her Indian Hindu husband, but in the end she took a liking to the Hindu culture. She was very much interested in the Indian religious contentment and she also joined Gandhi's movement later on to fight for freedom. A few statements that narrate her journey of cultural transformation are:

- (12) *I felt that Mother India whispering to me – proud daughter of the west, try to understand me and love me.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 59)

Her husband requested her to wear western attire for an evening party held in Darjeeling. She denied the request and stated:

- (13) *I am Hindu now, retorted Himjhuri, I am the wife of a Hindu husband. Darjeeling is still India and European dress is a foreigner, not my sari.* (Hajnóczy 1993: 82)

A change in Himjhuri's personality occurred, so she could display her love and loyalty towards her husband, and with time she was committed to the Indian culture and started leading the life of a typical traditional Indian housewife. Similar to Ray's case, the cultural transformation taking place here is deep-structure transformation. She did not just change her dressing habits but also started following all the religious and other customs and traditions voluntarily, without any pressure from anyone else. She became a completely changed person. Her husband's and her case of transformation was similar as they both experienced deep-structure transformation, but they both had it in different directions. He was fond of Western culture, while she turned into an Indian woman. This cultural transformation led to various problems in their married life later on.

B) Gertrud was a German girl, who played the role of a powerful character in the journal. She always depreciated the Indian rituals and voiced her opinions against the inequality women had to face in Indian contemporary society. She left an impact on many Indian girls on the issue of women's liberty and motivated them by giving advice on promoting marriage over the caste system and widow remarriage. Initially, she disliked the double standards of Indian girls and the negative customs society had in store for women in general. She also used to make fun of Indian girls after listening to their cravings of finding a soul mate to fulfil their true love fantasies. But in the end she fell in love with Atanu, who was an Indian married man and began to support the topics of an Indian girl's ideology of true love.

In my opinion, this is a very complex case of cultural transformation, and, due to a number of transparent reasons, I would announce it as a case of surface-structure transformation. One of those reasons was the fact that the change did not leave a significant and permanent mark in her life. The basic change that emerged due to this cultural transformation was the one that made her start supporting an Indian girl's ideology of true love, which earlier was a subject of amusement for her. She left Santiniketan and ran away with Atanu Ray because of this change. The change in her opinion might have been a negative and cynical one, but it was a change nonetheless. The alterations in Gertrud's personality came under

the category of negative cultural transformation. She took part in an extramarital affair with Atanu and turned into a lovesick Indian girl who believed in the ideas of true love and soul mates like all the other girls present at Santiniketan, which was the stark opposite of the strong girl that she had been before, who would always dismiss and criticize the notion of love. It was a case of surface-structure transformation, which comes under negative cultural transformation from a social point of view. She only had the belief of an Indian girl, but then at the end all these changes led to her downfall. She was criticized by the community for her actions of wrecking Helga's and Atanu's marital life. Even Tagore did not condone her actions. Hence, her case displayed the negative aspects of cultural transformation.

C) The American lady doctor shows us a new and original face of womanhood with caring attributes present too. She knew how to deal with Indian patients, especially with female patients.

Dr Timbers underwent transformation; so, she could treat Indian female patients with ease. The change that occurred in her life was a positive one which was similar to the case of the Indian cook, Sudin. She got culturally transformed on the outside, but she did it for the sake of her profession and patients. Hence, her change fell under the category of surface-structure transformation as she got culturally transformed, but it was not permanent to last for a long time and it did not affect her whole personality or left a permanent mark in her life; thus, it altered her life only for a temporary period.

D) Boske 1 and Boske 2: a potty Hungarian painter and her dotty daughter. They were fascinated by the Indian culture so much that they came to India all alone and changed completely. They painted Symbolist pictures and did many other things all in the nude in Santiniketan, which made them turn into a sensation there, especially to their secret Hindu audience. The mother and daughter duo was deeply influenced by the Indian rituals and spiritualism and spent their time in India because of that. Elizabeth Brunner is a significant name in the list of painters of India.

The transformation they went through was deep-structure transformation as they got culturally transformed for the long haul. Elizabeth Sass Brunner was a famous Hungarian painter, who came to India in 1930 with her daughter Elizabeth Brunner and stayed in the country until she passed away in 2001. After moving to a new country, a person can initially change their personality due to sheer fascination for the culture, but they adopted the Indian lifestyle completely and spent their whole life in India after moving there. This kind of cultural change, where you move to a whole new country altogether, leaves a powerful and lasting mark on a person's life, changing their lifestyle and culture forever.

3.5. Examples of the cases of Indian women

Indian women did have love marriages and Indian widows did remarry. Indian females struggled for their tuition among other factors such as marriage, discrimination, and caste issues, which led to their existence displaying distinct shades of an Indian female's life. They primarily got influenced by the German women, who were powerful, broad-minded, and had feminist advice to pass on to the Indian women, which were the reason for their cultural transformation.

A) Parvati: the little sixteen-year-old widow fell in love with Santilal and tried to marry him.

B) Ayesvariam: she was another victim of child marriage who became a widow later on. She met Tayunama in Santiniketan and thought about marrying him.

C) Nandini: she took Gertrud's advice and chose her own husband, Bhandarkar, against all the rules and laws of marriage. She did a love marriage and refused the caste system.

The cases displayed deep-structure transformation as it changed their lives completely for the long run. In other words, they got rid of the shame of child marriage and got the new honour of widow remarriage. The remarriage of a widow and the marriages defying the caste system would change their entire life. The major reasons of these marriages were the impact all the strong and powerful Western females like Dr Timbers and Gertrud had on the women by motivating them to be more open and make their own choices over the poor customs society inflicted on women in general. In cases like these, not only women but the entire contemporary Indian community was also influenced due to the foreigners arriving on Indian soil. When the same kind of cultural transformation occurs in the lives of a number of persons at the same time, it makes the whole society culturally transform on a broad scale instead of just mere individuals on a small scale.

4. Conclusions

In the end, intercultural transformation took place on both sides, including Indian and the other nationalities present in Santiniketan. All the nationalities became culturally transformed. It was a transparent case of intercultural transformation, which is more powerful than intercultural exchange. It is a process which frequently leaves a powerful impact on the life of individuals and their respective points of view after undergoing the change. When people from different cultures interact with each other, a cultural exchange takes place. But it is not a definite process as sometimes the cultural transformation might not take place at all. For example, Italian professor Guadagni and the Russian couple Mr and Mrs Bogdanov did only go through cultural change. The Italian professor

appreciating Mussolini showcases his ties to his native culture. The Russian couple felt a strong urge of going back to their own country, which proved the fact they might have experienced a cultural exchange, but they did not experience cultural transformation for sure.

But when it comes to their perspectives, in my opinion, they did experience a change in that connection after interacting with Indian natives and getting to know India in its deeper sense. This instance can also be used to prove the fact that there are exceptions in the process of cultural transformation. As stated earlier, it is not a compulsion for everyone to undergo the impact of cultural transformation after spending a brief amount of time on foreign soil. This corroborates the statement I made earlier saying that during the course of this travelogue, people belonging to other nationalities changed along with the author. From the Eastern side, Ray's, Sudin's, and Ganpati's cases were significant, and from the Western side Mr Benoit's, Trapp's, and Dr Collins's attitude altered definitively. From the Western female side, Hajnóczy's, Helga's, Gertrud's, and Dr Timbers' attitude also changed and from the Eastern women side Parvati's and Nandini's attitude also changed. This also altered their perspective towards the ill and conservative customs for women. This indicated that not only individuals but the society also went through a cultural transformation as a whole. Overall, in *Bengáli Tűz*, different shades of intercultural transformation can be found, including negative and positive transformation, surface-structure transformation and deep-structure transformation. Intercultural transformation is a very broad term, and different aspects belonging to it can be displayed through *Bengáli Tűz*.

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All the quotes by Hajnóczy are rendered in the author’s translation.