

## Chapter page

### Representation of the Subaltern Characters in Selected Songs of Bob Dylan

This research is an analysis of representation of subaltern characters in the selected songs of Bob Dylan. In his songs he has brought the subaltern people who are the victims of popular culture of war; efface by political domination and kept aside from the states hegemonic power. Dylan criticizes the role of elites and popular culture establishing hegemony through political domination in the songs, addressing the dominated and subaltern class to seek the salvation and freedom from hypocritical dominance. His song not only relates the political stigma of 60s, but also brings the global scenario of poverty, dominance power politics and freedom. His songs are the songs of salvation for the dominated people, victim of war and the one imprisoned in their own voicelessness. His songs give hope to hopeless, and give redemption to the isolated. These songs are the representation of identityless people as well as name for nameless ones. His literature stands unparalleled to other form of American literature because of his attempts to question the authority and quests for the emancipation of poor and helpless ones. The shortsightedness of Vietnam War creates exploitation on the issue regarding the basic human rights of common people. At the same time Dylan centers on the victims and represents their identity in his songs. Bob does the careful exploration of the society and presents their detailed condition in his songs. The core idea of subaltern theory finds path naturally towards the category to dig the meaning of subaltern representation in Dylan's song.

When people do not have any access to the hegemonic political power of the state and cannot intertwine in the power structure, the dominance and exploitation is inevitable. Community and individuals are compelled to suffer the political misdeeds and its consequences like war and civil crisis. People are being used and the state deprived the people of their personal freedom and basic rights during the war and civil right movement.

This violation takes a shift in the behavior of the people concerning their social habit and conducts in the society. This change in activity takes a turn into revolution and a quest for freedom for prolonged salvation. Dylan prophesizes the rise of subaltern people and the demolition of elite's norms and values. Here, Dylan is successful in creating the thirst for the search of freedom and fulfillment of their basic needs and its security. His exaggeration and overstatements in the verse are the motivations to the subaltern people. Bob Dylan's "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" brings such amplification:

Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?  
 And where have you been my darling young one?  
 I've stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains  
 I've walked and I've crawled on six crooked highways  
 I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests  
 I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans  
 I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard  
 And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, and it's a hard  
 It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

It is also an anticipation of dream for the future generation. In the hegemonic power structure, those elites and masters who are linked with it are contented; egos satisfied and its hegemony established. These popular culture of elites and masters has changed the system of language and lifestyle according to their comfort, disdaining the rural folk literature as a low standard, cowardice and less important. Those elites and urban dominators are criticized by Dylan in his songs. His verses are very powerful and are full of imageries sometimes cryptic as well. He speaks from the hearts of marginalized and the people considered to be in the lowest level of social hierarchy. Subaltern characters are the major subject matter of the poet and his

declaration guides towards the freedom of the subaltern people. His song “The Times They are A-Changing” talks that:

The line it is drawn  
 The curse it is cast  
 The slow one now  
 Will later be fast  
 As the present now  
 Will later be past  
 The order is  
 Rapidly fadin'  
 And the first one now  
 Will later be last  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

The discourse in Dylan’s song is about the people deprived of their basic rights and oppressed by the authority. Above mentioned extract from the song is quiet powerful and carries a significant discourse. Writer tells that the slow and low standard people living in social hierarchy will come to the state power very soon. The people who are considered to be in the power today will have to lose it because there is a curse upon them. As the time is changing, the present condition of domination and hatred towards the minor and poor people will not remain the same. Poet says that those people who are slowest and the lowest now will come in the dominant social structure. They will acquire the power and rise. The order of the domination and hegemonic power relation is fading rapidly. This situation will create a new space for the minor and subaltern people.

Dylan has been successful to show the people’s conditions, identity not truly represented and their voice not heard by the state. Dylan clearly depicts the conflict of

difference between the elites and subaltern people through his songs. His song also provokes the inner struggle of humanity and of the subaltern groups. His verse in the song titled “Blowin in the Wind”, clearly states a condition of a man not being a man until he has not established his identity as a man in the state’s hegemonic power structure:

How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?  
How many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes, and how many times must the cannon balls fly  
Before they're forever banned?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

The time period of America during the Vietnam War and the political crisis makes contextual reading of the text more significant. Symbolically, in the verse Dylan represents dove and its sleeping in the sand with the peace after the war. Further interpretation of the text can be the inner peace of human beings with regard to the authority and its politics. The song is about people overlooked from their other basic rights of living and compelled to be excluded from the state’s hegemonic power. Because of the political crisis and need of political satisfaction during the war, the people’s representation was unobserved and their voice not heard. In the lines “cannonball” are the symbol of the power as well as of weapons. We can examine it in the context of the America’s policy upon weapon; the reference would be the global scenario of use of weapon and its politicization. Weapons are the means to gain the hegemonic power over the state as well. The majority of the people are the victim of such politicization of the nuclear weapon and guns. Researcher has taken the subject matter focusing majorly in an issue of the voice of the dominated group and the people considered to be in the lowest level

in social hierarchy that is depicted in the songs of Bob Dylan. Representations of the social group and of victims who are politically outside of the hegemonic power structure of the world are critically examined in his selected songs.

The songs of Dylan argue about the people's freedom, dominated by the state power and do not have the access to the state's hegemonic power structure. In his songs he asks question to the victims and marginalized people and calls them to find the answer. He wants the subalterns to protest and rebel by bringing their emotion of being dominated and ignored by the state. He also mentions that he knows the suffering and the sentiment of being disposed in subaltern position. It identifies the social groups, excluded from a society's established structures for political representation. Politically dominated class has been represented in the songs of Bob Dylan symbolically. Some of his selected songs consist of those signs or language of subalterns. Particularly lines from his song "A Hard Rains Gonna Fall" , "I saw ten thousand talkers whose tongues were all broken, I saw guns and sharp swords in the hands of young children" and "I met a white man who walked a black dog, I met a young woman whose body was burning" (qtd. in Bob Dylan's "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall". Ten thousand talking with broken tongues is a clear sign of the subaltern character with their actual voice lost. Use of the children in the war is the ruthlessness of humanity. The title of the song itself is the symbol of the nuclear warfare. In following lines Bob representatively puts white with a black dog, symbolizing the black peoples plight. Here, Bob presents the notion of slavery and discrimination. In next verse the burning of a female body can be interpreted as discrimination towards female characters. Spivak in her famous essay "Can Subaltern Speak?" she has made it clear that she wrote this essay on the subject matter of sati 'Bhubaneshwari Bhaduri'. She writes in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' "it was the peculiar and singular subalternity of the young Bhubaneswari Bhaduri that seemed of interest. Her story

was my mother Sivani Chakravorty's testimony" (475). This is the discussion of the "sati" with regard to female subaltern characters.

The subaltern and dominated people represented in Bob Dylan's some of the selected songs can be recognized because of the Dylan's musical choice. He has chosen to put his lyrics into the composition of folk tunes. Folk tunes have always captured the signs of dominated class. In words of Dr. Shrestha, Taralal "Folk songs are the heart beats of subaltern which beats continuously. Throughout the history till now folksongs from folk literatures have survived and will always survive" (60). They are the best and mostly used by the people in their common raw selection of the words. For Example in the selected song of Dylan entitled *The Times They Are A-Changin* the word choice is typical to those of rural American folk culture. In many other places of the songs like "Blowin In the Wind", 'g' is omitted and in the starting of the verse "yes, 'n'" words are repeated. The use of nasal voice of the singer and the overall composition to the song gave it an authenticity to the song as a folk song. The subject matter of his song which researcher has taken as an issue has the representation of people considered to be the lowest level in social hierarchy, poor, rural and voiceless. His selected songs represent the social group who is politically outside of the hegemonic power structure of the world and are dominated by the elites and higher class people.

This study aims to capture the representation of subaltern characters that lay in the selected songs of Dylan. Researcher analyzes those songs based upon the theoretical perspective of subalternity. Subalternity identifies and describes the man, the woman, and the social group who is socially, politically and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structure of the world. This heterogeneous community consists of those denied the opportunity of self-and access to hegemonic power. To find out the answers, this research thesis searches about the issue of the question: how are the politically dominated classes has

been represented in the songs of Bob Dylan? And in particular does Dylan's song consist of those signs or language or culture of subalterns who are the victim of power politics played by state?

The primary objective of this study aims to capture the feeling and representation of subalterns in the hegemonic power politics of the state and their way of assimilation into the society. This research also investigates the subalterns their weakness on which the dominant class will be contented. It has its more effective objective on cultural studies which is its secondary objective. This thesis will find the subaltern issue in context of representation of dominated people in Dylan's selected songs, who have been put out side of the state hegemonic power. Then it will find the answer to the question like: are these people whom Dylan tries to convince in his songs really a victim to power politics and are they a subaltern? This study will make significant use of concepts developed in the subaltern scholars but will not offer a comprehensive analysis of Post-colonial theory.

Dylan and his songs are being studied by former scholars with point of view of poor and oppressed. This research is somewhat revisiting to the subject but with more powerful insights of subaltern and their freedom. This research actually argues Bob's song as a freedom song of all the dominated and subaltern people of the world. Here, Dylan addresses those people's freedoms who are the victim of hatred oppression and political dominance. Researcher in this research paper will evaluate criticism and do the textual analysis of the songs on the basis of politically dominated subaltern and its heterogeneous group. The subject subalternity deals with a study of power. Who has it and who does not. Who is gaining it and who is losing it? Power is intimately related to questions of representation.

Tom Palaima analyses the meanings of Dylan's song as deeply rooted with the human emotions compared with the time they live. Tom Palaima mentions that Dylan is still writing

for the poor and dispossessed as he was doing in 60s at the same time Tom Palaima compares Dylan's subject matter with woody Guthrie's deep care for the victims of poor and homeless:

Bob Dylan matters because he is doing now what he was doing in 1960 to 1962, when he was transfusing into his own being the restless, tragic life and poetic art of Woody Guthrie, who cared deeply for the poor and dispossessed and sang out about them and the people of wealth and power who robbed them with fountain pens and killed them in Ludlow, Colorado or Los Gatos Canyon. (Palaima, 'A classicist reveals the poetic artistry of a song and dance man who explores the human heart')

Tom Palaima, describes the personality of Dylan and his notion as a man who cares of poor and needy people. He also suggests that there is the role of wealth and power that can exploit and destroy them. Tom Palaima knows Dylan for his songs of poor and dispossessed. The victims of the civil war and political propaganda of 60s are the major subject matter of the Dylan's song which leads Dylan to compose for the freedom of the stigmas of 60s. Palaima agrees with the issue of Dylan and song as an artifact of the people who were the victim of the different criminal occasion.

Richard F. Thomas, professor of classics at Harvard University, does the contextual reading of Dylan in his popular book *Why Dylan Matters*. Thomas approaches Dylan's work through the context of war as he explores:

Similarly, Dylan's art would speak to the horrors of the wars of his day, the second world war and the cold war that followed, historic episodes like the Cuban missile crisis, and the fear of nuclear warfare, eventually Vietnam, even Iraq. And in both cases, through music and poetry that would prove to be enduring, memorable, and meaningful to ages beyond their own, Dylan and



the ancients explore the essential question of what it means to be human (ch. 2).

In the reading of Thomas, Dylan is a writer of his time who is conscious of the politics and horrors of wars. The conditions of war and its long lasting impact upon the people are exposed in the lyrics of the Dylan. The crisis, wars and similar incidents are the subject matter of Dylan. Dylan explores the questions of humanity, its meaning. Thomas has spoken of Dylan's art and its subject matter as meaningful as memorable and enduring. Thomas' discourse of war is; war always has left the common people victimized as disagreements between the countries creates conflict and turns the conflict into war. Society suffers badly by the war and the writer and critics are obliged to bring subject of sufferings and identity of being a human in their work. Such obligations are seen in the lines of Dylan he was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature on Thursday, October 13, 2016 for his contribution on English.

Dylan appeals:

Come writers and critics  
 Who prophesize with your pen  
 And keep your eyes wide  
 The chance won't come again  
 And don't speak too soon  
 For the wheel's still in spin  
 And there's no tellin' who  
 That it's namin'  
 For the loser now  
 Will be later to win  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

This discourse is the appeal for the intellectuals to have an insight upon the matter of people. It is also a revelation of a victimized peoples' revolution against the elites and dominant class. It suggests the now nameless character in future will come in the power of the state and seize their identity. Next, the suggestion of the Dylan makes it even clearer about the power of the people and the consciousness people gather throughout the changing of time.

Browning, Gray takes Dylan's song "It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)" and talks about it as a representation of cultural oppression. This song has the issue of the question on social values and its meaning, who controls them and what constructs its meaning, what are its politics and the role of wealth and power in constructions of meanings. To establish the hegemony and its continuation elites deceitfully puts meaningless social values upon the conscience of the civic society. Browning in *The Political Art of Bob Dylan* closely reads Dylan's song:

Again, 'It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)' invokes Koestler's novel, *Darkness at Noon*, at its outset and the guillotine of the French Revolution at its close, but it sees totalitarian cultural oppression in the so-called free societies of the West. This raw, stripped-down blues castigates capitalist materialism and the reduction of value to advertising copy. It takes religion, sex and communication to be evacuated of meaning while political and social elites hypocritically enforce meaningless social values. (120)

Browning, further talks on the song meticulously and give the political reading to the text. His says that "The 'you' addressed throughout the song invokes all of these objects and the strength of the later Dylan's critique of conventional politics is that he relates the political world to the oppressiveness of love, the claustrophobia of celebrity and subterfuges of the self" (123). His analysis is concerned with the lie and deceit impended on the people through

the nonsensical social values established by the elites. This system of hegemony construction is full of deceit and conspiracies.

Browning, Gray in his essay “Dylan and Lyotard: Is It Happening?” has discussed the symbolism of Dylan’s song. "In discussing “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” Dylan insists that the rain to which the song refers is not a simple reference to impending nuclear war, but stands more generally for the less easily recognized lies in society against which individuals must struggle (Browning). So, the struggle of the subaltern character is the major subject matter for Dylan to construct his discourse of subaltern freedom in the song. Dylan talks about the victims of these ruthless lies and subterfuges of the hypocritical elites who have annihilated the humanity from their hearts and minds. Browning searches the symbolic meaning of rain which Dylan writes in his song “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall”. Researcher has tried to analyze the selected song through the notion of subalternity. These heterogeneous groups of people who are talked by the Dylan in his song are actually subalterns. They are the dominated people who are put aside from the direct political power by the state.

Attwood, Tony, an English psychologist says while discussing upon the songs of Dylan that it is the folk character of the songs that truly represents the segregated class and the people who are oppressed. This folkness is discussed by Tony taking the reference of Bob’s song, he says:

Child considered that folk ballads came from a more democratic time in the past when society was not so rigidly segregated into classes, and the “true voice” of the people. I’ve no idea if Dylan knew of the history of the discovery of the song – but it would be nice to think so, because whatever else it is, *Hard Rain* is a song about the ordinary people, each and every one of us, fighting the tyranny of the oppressor. (Attwood)

Tony Attwood clearly suggests the folk component of the song has highlighted the inner voice of ordinary people. This democratic form has helped ordinary people to express their desire of fighting the tyranny of the oppressor.

Taking Gramsci's notion of hegemony politics and subaltern, this paper will analyse Dylan's selected songs through the perspective of subalterns. Gramsci, Antonio had particularly examined the hegemonic relation of subalterns in his famous book *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, where he discusses the exercise of hegemony among the dominant group and subaltern group. In *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Gramsci examines the relation and functions of two levels:

These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of "hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of "direct domination" or command exercised through the State and "juridical" government. The functions in question are precisely organisational and connective. The intellectuals are the dominant group's "deputies" exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government. (12)

Gramsci considers the intellectuals as deputies of dominant group for it they functions of subaltern. In his own words Gramsci writes that "The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a "State": their history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society, and thereby with the history of States and groups of States (52). This suggestion upon the behavior of subaltern taken from Gramsci notion defines subaltern to be considered as a common people knotted with the civil society except they are not united and cannot unite either unless they become a state. Therefore, they are those minor tribes of society or groups of society who are not as well free from the civil society. Gramsci further concludes:

Therefore, the history of the parties of the subaltern groups is very complex too. It must include all the repercussions of party activity, throughout the area of the subaltern groups themselves taken globally, and also upon the attitudes of the dominant group; it must include as well the repercussions of the far more effective actions (effective because backed by the State) of the dominant groups upon the subaltern groups and their parties. Among the subaltern groups, one will exercise or tend to exercise a certain hegemony through the mediation of a party; this must be established by studying the development of all the other parties too, in so far as they include elements of the hegemonic group or of the other subaltern groups which undergo such hegemony. (52-53)

Considering the activity of subaltern, the above mentioned discourse can be studied as the power dissemination relation of the hegemony with regard to subaltern and their parties as well as the parties of dominant group. This notion of the hegemonic power structure that under lie in the society is mediated by the parties and its members to exercise the hegemony. Dylan's song has the signs of repercussions or consequence of party activity and that of dominant groups.

Gayatri Spivak has the most theoretical look at the subaltern, and her work is still the root text for a discussion of the subaltern, in her article 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' The subaltern does not have a voice. Indeed, subaltern has a voice, they are no longer the subaltern. They become other, merely subaltern. Subaltern needs someone to represent on behalf of them. In discussing her idea she mentions in her essay:

The critique of ideological subject constitution within state formations and systems of political economy can now be effaced, as can the active theoretical practice of the transformation of consciousness'. The banality of leftist intellectuals' lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands

revealed; representing them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent. (Spivak)

Here, in this study of the issue of subaltern and their intellectuals the author or intellectuals can be taken as a transparent whereas the whole group which the author is writing on behalf of is actually the subalterns. The leftist intellectuals subaltern consciousness has transformed into the representation of subalterns in their works, where intellectuals are hidden or not seen. Their characters are identified as the subalterns in their work of art and they speak or put their ideas through such characters activities and so on. This is the clear sign of the voicelessness of the subaltern people. It says that subaltern require someone to talk or speak on behalf of them.

For Spivak, definition of subaltern is quite interesting to her as she defies Deleuze's thought:

If the thinking of subalternity is taken in the general sense, its lack of access to mobility may be a version of singularity. Subalternity cannot be generalised according to hegemonic logic. That is what makes it subaltern. Yet it is a category and therefore repeatable. Since the general sense is always mired in narrow senses, any differentiations between subalternity and the popular must thus concern itself with singular cases and thus contravene the philosophical purity of Deleuze's thought. (475)

Spivak regulate the misconceptions defined among the theory to subaltern with her concept of generalizing hegemonic logic with the version of singularity. This concern of delusion contradicts the concept of Deleuze, Gilles's notion of singularity.

Guha, Ranjit also generates much similar opinion as that of Spivak but in much political articulation he writes reading the history of India and its relation to the hegemonic

culture. Guha concludes in *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* by examining Gandhi's theory:

The task of "the educated classes" was therefore to help that intuition to mature by giving it voice and direction, for the masses did not know how to formulate their wants into demands nor how to go about securing them.

"Herein comes the use of leadership" designed explicitly to interpose between the will of the masses and its political articulation. Gandhi's theory of leadership amounted thus to a formula to dissolve the immediacy of mobilization in the subaltern domain, and open up a space for the nationalist elite to step in with its own will, initiative, and organization in order to pilot the political activity of the masses towards goals set up by the bourgeoisie.

(143)

This extract is the clear statement of subaltern being dominated throughout the time in the history. Because the subaltern class did not know what to do and what to expect from state, there always remains a chance of the leadership to step in between the politics and the people.

In the book *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Gramsci puts forward the idea of organic intellectuals characterized by their function in directing the ideas of the social class to which they purely belong.

Secondly, there are the "organic" intellectuals, the thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong. (3)

The function of the organic intellectuals is of thinking and organizing the emotions and identity of those social classes who are kept aside from the hegemonic power structure. These intellectuals have the role of speaking in behalf of those whose voice is being dominated. They are distinguished from the class structure because they express the feeling of subalterns which subalterns cannot express.

Bob Dylan in this sense can be considered as an intellectual who represents the social group who are being neglected and their representation being dominated. Dylan from his own social class separate himself as an intellectual and expresses the thoughts and ideas of his social class. Dylan is considered an organic intellectual, who has the function of mediator among dominant and dominated group and of which he is well aware of. As a song writer and singer, his professionalism is distinguished from other song writers of his era because of the issue and depths of emotions it carried about the minor class people. His songs can be considered of those working class people of America whose identity and voices are being suppressed by the authority. In the time when these songs by Dylan were written and composed, America was struggling through many problems concerning the issue of black, working class people and human rights struggle. But the American politics and the authority could not recognize those issues rather it focused in the fulfillment of the political satisfaction and capitalistic ideologies. At this time America gave much priority to the war which resulted in the domination of the people's emotions and feeling. This political domination resulted into the loss of faith towards the American government by the people. It also resulted in the Civil Rights Movements and Anti-War Movement. This very context was the root cause for Dylan to write his songs and distort them into folk tunes of his country. And in another case, though, Dylan confesses the act of changing his name from "Robert Allen Zimmerman" to "Bob Dylan" just as the name that stuck him. But in more hypothetical sense it can be viewed



as an act of transforming himself from the social group to the organic intellectual from his own social group.

Guha is also considered one of the prominent intellectual figures in the history of Indian politics and its magnitudes, who mention the paradoxes of subaltern sides saying they are following the same path constructed by the upper class or castes. The peasant's activity thereby seems like the revolt but is not quite exactly the same. Guha further interprets this in the manner of deceit and cleverness of the elites and dominant class:

And one need not probe too far to discern the play of paradoxes on the subaltern side as well in a peasant rebel's vision of God as a white man who writes like a court clerk; in lower-caste attempts to move up by emulating the conservatism of the upper castes; in a working-class struggle for better wages carried out as a campaign for Truth; in revolts against pre-capitalist property relations calling out for support from the regime which insists, by law and administrative measures, on perpetuating those very relations; and a myriad of other contradictions of that kind. (62-63)

Guha's Indian subaltern study argues that the peasant rebel was not the natural rise of rebellion but was pre-defined and made-up revolution. So, he thinks it is quite relative at present time to revisit and restudy those episodes. He establishes another fact that the domain of subaltern is removed from its system, their originality is effaced by the colonizers and their association ruled out. His analysis is clear in next lines:

With the subaltern domain surgically 'removed from its system, all initiative other than what emanates from the colonizers and their collaborators strictly ruled out. and ' all elements of resistance meticulously expelled from its political processes, colonialism emerges from this historiography as endowed with a hegemony which was denied to it by history (94-95).

Guha discusses subaltern resistance if removed from its political process and its details erased then the hegemonic culture of the dominant emerges which was not possible before. So, the representation and resistance of subaltern is much needed to defer elite's hegemony. Dylan's song is such songs of resistance of the dominated and colonized people. His famous verse in the song gives the consequences of the process of state hegemony.

Researcher has taken Dylan's songs: "Blowing in the wind", "A hard rains gonna fall", "Hey Mr. Tambourine man" and The Times They Are A-Changin' to further analyze through the perspective of subalterns theory. The first lines of Dylan's song "Blowing in the wind" Dylan sings:

How many roads must a man walk down  
 Before you call him a man?  
 How many seas must a white dove sail  
 Before she sleeps in the sand?  
 Yes, and how many times must the cannon balls fly  
 Before they're forever banned?  
 The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
 The answer is blowin' in the wind.

This song "Blowin' in the Wind" is a song written by Bob Dylan in 1962. Dylan wrote this song at the height of the civil rights struggle, in 1962. This song has raised rhetorical questions about the war, peace, power and freedom, it has also raised the issue of the people who are suffering and are ignored by the authority. "Blowin' in the Wind" deals Civil Rights Movement during the Vietnam War. Dylan views on this song is that the government and its political affairs focuses on war and exploits' the violation of people's rights. This song feature lyrics with hidden meaning. At the same time, they are highly suggestive, evoking many of the social issues confronting the United States and the world in the early Sixties

Women's Rights, Gay Rights. Dylan is implying that these groups of people have done far too much to still be denied basic human rights. Here are many rhetorical questions that appeals for the answer such as how much does someone need to do in order to have their basic rights. How long will the war go? How long it will take until we, as a society, reject war as a means of settling our differences, this also shows that how the political hegemonic structure has created the difference between the dominant and dominated. The question of how many times one will have to face the wars in order to gain freedom and liberty refers to the long quest of the people for the freedom. Great injustices go unnoticed by everyone around them. The poet asks that how many times the weapons will be used before they are totally banned. This is the clear case of power politic which the state has established. And its victims are those people of the nation. Lyricist suggests the answer does exist but is unseen, untold, unexcavated. It is just blowing in the wind. The second stanza of the lyrics goes:

Yes, and how many years can a mountain exist

Before it is washed to the sea?

Yes, and how many years can some people exist

Before they're allowed to be free?

Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head

And pretend that he just doesn't see?

Above mentioned verses is the reference to the discrimination against the African Americans who were treated as second-class citizens in spite of living in 'free' country. This imagery suggests something monolithic gradually swept away by the tides of change. This seems to be confirmed by his straightforward evocation of the civil rights struggle. Civil right movement and the war establishes the social group who are politically outside of the hegemonic power structure of the state and is much parallel to the subaltern community. Lines saying that people turn their heads to injustice quite often even if it does bother them suggests that

People are either too afraid to help or just don't see something was wrong. This is the clear sign of people being ignored and their suffering being unnoticed. Many symbols are used to suggest different ideas for example 'mountain' in the song symbolizes the pride and ego of those who desire war. According to the poet, the lust for the war of the strong (as mountains) will not last for long. It will sink into the sea someday. In the second couplet, the poet wonders when these people will be able to live freely and might not just 'exist' on the earth. Here Dylan seems to be wondering how long it will take to wash away the edifice of racism-- for whites to acknowledge the fundamental humanity of African-Americans by affording them equal treatment. He also seems to tie together war and poverty, wondering how long we will tolerate injustice in general. "How many ears," he asks, "must one man have before he can hear people cry?" We cannot, he seems to be saying, continue to ignore suffering around us. The final stanza of the song says:

Yes, and how many times must a man look up

Before he can see the sky?

Yes, and how many ears must one man have

Before he can hear people cry?

Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows

That too many people have died?

Dylan uses figurative language with lots of symbols and imageries. Symbols like 'sky' represents 'freedom' and 'cry' represents the voice of subaltern. According to him, the sky i.e. freedom is hidden before the wars. In the second verse, he wonders how long the government will remain deaf to the sorrows of the commoners. When will it hear the peoples' plea against war and in favor of peace? When will the elites hear the subaltern's plea against domination and in favor of equality? This is the sign of total ignorance of ordinary people's freedom by the authority. Those people whose voices are not heard, whose identity is

neglected are represented in this song. Bob asks why are their representation considered as a minor, and are left behind of the power structure of the state politics.

He isolates the music of the song. The isolation articulates to the message of “Blowin’ in the Wind”. The song is not immense or well structured. It’s not the group of people coming together but Bob Dylan, singing alone. He sings it whenever and wherever he wants. This isolation of music matches many imagery of the song. For instance, a young man walking down the roads, the gloominess of the death or the isolation of the prison. The simple, repetitive sound of the song brings to mind the other form of the resistance songs of the time, but this one stands apart because of its tranquil rhythm and instrumental. This can be viewed through the perspective of subaltern as they are isolated in their own voicelessness, calm and slow representationlessness. Bob powerfully presents his next song “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” with the sense of over exaggeration:

Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?

And where have you been my darling young one?

I’ve stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains

I’ve walked and I’ve crawled on six crooked highways

I’ve stepped in the middle of seven sad forests

I’ve been out in front of a dozen dead oceans

I’ve been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard

And it’s a hard, it’s a hard, it’s a hard, and it’s a hard

It’s a hard rain’s a-gonna fall.

This song is in the traditional style of question answer pattern the style of the traditional Anglo-Scottish border ballad “Lord Randal”, “O where ha you been, Lord Randall my son? And where ha you been my handsome young man?” but theoretically “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” is quite different. It is the song of anti-racism, protest against the way the rural

poor have been treated. Bob Dylan performed “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” for the first time in September 22, 1962. This also depicts the conflicts of the time, particularly the Vietnam War. It could also apply to conflicts between different groups -race, age, gender, economic status, or beliefs- within America. He attempts to voice his opinion on war and politics, specifically the Vietnam War and the civil right movement.

"A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" tells a story of the lasting effects of the Vietnam War for future generations. Dylan tells the listener that by taking away the innocence of these young men who are being forced into war, there will be a devastating effect which includes the death of these men. The imagery on the songs suggests other outcome that is directly related with the political policy making. Crisis in the faith in humanity, religious crisis, inequality, suffering, environmental hazards, global warming, rising of seas, pollution and warfare are the references that Dylan provides which has influenced the people’s lives. But at last Bob gives the answer to all the ill happenings. He says that to find the answer one needs to revisit the essence and the depth of all troubles, from where it originates. The final lines are most crucial to bring here first:

And what'll you do now, my blue-eyed son?  
 And what'll you do now my darling young one?  
 I'm a-goin' back out 'fore the rain starts a-fallin'  
 I'll walk to the depths of the deepest black forest  
 Where the people are a many and their hands are all empty  
 Where the pellets of poison are flooding their waters  
 Where the home in the valley meets the damp dirty prison  
 And the executioner's face is always well hidden  
 Where hunger is ugly, where souls are forgotten  
 Where black is the color, where none is the number

And I'll tell and speak it and think it and breathe it  
 And reflect from the mountain so all souls can see it  
 And I'll stand on the ocean until I start sinkin'  
 But I'll know my song well before I start singing.

This song evokes the need to search for the root of all the problems. This is only possible when one is free and segregated from the lies and hypocrisy. The verses of the song speak to the global context. It speaks of the colonizers and the colonized. It speaks of the master and the slaves. It speaks of the capitalists and non-capitalistic. It speaks of racism and social values. It speaks of prejudice and sufferings. And at last it speaks of freedom and redemption. Bob calls the people to admit the fact of being the sufferer. He prophesizes the people are coming to regain what they have lost. And he also suggests the people to get conscious and keep power of unity in them self in this changing period of time. In his song, "The Times They Are A-Changin'" he writes:

Come gather 'round people  
 Wherever you roam  
 And admit that the waters  
 Around you have grown  
 And accept it that soon  
 You'll be drenched to the bone  
 If your time to you  
 Is worth savin'  
 Then you better start swimmin'  
 Or you'll sink like a stone  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

This song is another powerful song which depicts the picture of the common life of the people and the time they are living in. In the song writer asks the heterogeneous group of individual to raise their voice and prepare themselves for the struggles that waits in near future. Dylan requests the minor class people to acknowledge their fate and their weakness. Its phrase “For the times they are a-changin’” is typical tone of a rural life and the composition is quite near to the folk tunes. This makes the song an artifact of a common people and of the minor tribes and of subalterns. Elites and Authority are criticized in terms of doom:

Come senators, congressmen  
 Please heed the call  
 Don't stand in the doorway  
 Don't block up the hall  
 For he that gets hurt  
 Will be he who has stalled  
 There's a battle outside  
 And it is ragin'  
 It'll soon shake your windows  
 And rattle your walls  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

Dylan Addresses to the community totally affected and are ignored by the authority in the song. He also suggests that the now working class and dominated marginalized one will soon come to search for their freedom. The people are coming in the policy making level so, don't bother to stand on their way or either be ruined. These are the most powerful lines showing the near future of the destruction of now rich and elite class. Symbolically, the domination of the elites will be effaced and so will be to the deceitfulness. Ordinary people are brought in the songs like:



Come mothers and fathers  
 Throughout the land  
 And don't criticize  
 What you can't understand  
 Your sons and your daughters  
 Are beyond your command  
 Your old road is  
 Rapidly agin'  
 Please get out of the new one  
 If you can't lend your hand  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

Addressing the common people Dylan requests to take part if possible in the people's revolution but not criticize. The "father" and "mother" are the subaltern characters, victim of prolonged domination. The true representation of subaltern people is seen in the verse "The slow one now will later be fast", here, the slow one is the direct reference to the subaltern. In the song he represents subaltern people not a powerless people but the people gathering the immense potentialities to overpower the system and destroy the popular hegemonic structure. This is quiet different perspective in representing subaltern characteristic of overpowering the state hegemony. Dr. Shrestha, Taralal in his book, *Power, Intellectuals and Subaltern*, points out the idea of folks songs as the song of freedom and salvation to the subaltern. His notion is that "Folksongs are the creation and discourse of the people's tongues. This is expressed in free tone"(61). Bob's songs are the songs of freedom for subaltern. These songs are composed in folk tunes so that it can easily express the feeling and emotion of rural people.

Sam Tanenhaus, in his essay “Dylan defies all categories-musically and politically”, writes Dylan as a game changer in the musical history. Sam finds Dylan’s lyrics extensive, objectivity and substantial in contrast to other categories. He contrasts Dylan as:

Dylan, in contrast, defies all categorisation. He performed at the great civil rights march on Washington in 1963, but then fled the crushing embrace of the movement, just as he fled the crushing, virtuous embrace of the folk revival—and has since boasted of “changing ideologies like tyres, like shoes, like guitar strings. What’s the difference? (Tanenhaus)

So, Dylan stands apart from others as he defies all the categories and performs for the different groups, for different people and for different cause. Sam Tanenhaus, suggestion is clear for Bob wrote and sang the unobvious for his time. This made his songs a timeless one and all time favorite for the marginalized and subaltern people.

It is justified that the researcher has felt the urge to find the subaltern psychology underlying in the lyrics of the noble prize winner Dylan. Those songs have not been researched previously to find out the subaltern behavior and their representation in the states hegemonic power. So, the researcher seek to investigate and excavate the signs of those people who are repressed and are not represented in the policy making power of state.

Dylan has expressed the emotion of the subaltern quite inexplicably in one of his song, “Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man”. his concept is presented rather with different methods in this song. The following verse from his song “Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man”, writer puts himself in the position of the subaltern to express the exactitude of the emotions. From this position he sings:

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me

In the jingle jangle morning, I'll come followin' you.

Tambourine man is a representation of the intellectual and the writer is asking to say something to him despite of his sleeplessness. The character, writer presents himself as a subaltern and says he does not contain any place to go. The “jingle Jangle” morning is the symbolical suggestion of the morning of the freedom day for all the marginalized and dominated class. This individual character in the song expresses the emotion of being dominated in an emotional manner it seems as if it’s so gloomy, dystopia and sad. His verse “I have no one to meet, and the ancient empty streets too dead for dreaming” is the expression of the condition where people don’t have any one to meet or hope for because everyone is full of treachery and deceit. All the hope seems lost and there is no need for the dream because there is no chance of gaining attention from authority regarding their basic rights of being a human. The condition worsens because his beliefs are actually not a truth but are those illusions and fallacies ingrained in his mind by the elites and governing class. The idea is depicted in the line of the song:

Take me on a trip upon your magic swirlin' ship

My senses have been stripped

My hands can't feel to grip

My toes too numb to step

Wait only for my boot heels to be wanderin'

I'm ready to go anywhere

I'm ready for to fade

Into my own parade

Cast your dancing spell my way

I promise to go under it.

“Mr. Tambourine Man” was written and composed in early 1964. It represents the desire for freedom, a freedom from the political domination as well as from the indifferent social rules and their rulers. This song shows the situation of those whose personal voice is unheard. It can also be seen from the time in America, millions of young people began to discard the conventions and conservatism, politically, and otherwise. Tambourine Man is the symbolism of the intellectuals who acts their function. And here the writer himself is the person who acts the role of the victim of domination. He searches for the freedom. He could not sleep because of the many unexplained things that seem like the illusions. And as if in the trip of the drugs writer has expressed the voice of the subaltern. It represents his way of finding an escape. This individualism comes out of the consequences of being a subaltern. It is the psychological behavior of subaltern. “Into my own parade, cast your dancing spell my way”, “It’s not aimed at anyone, it’s just escapin’ on the run”. Here, this line undoubtedly shows the sign of the subaltern who is escaping and cannot address any one besides him. A single person cannot be a society but is also not free from the society so, he is tied to a boundary of society and its behaviors. Thus, he is a minor part of a society outside of the generalized society.

Dylan in his songs puts the idea to protest against those political set up by the bourgeoisie. He calls the subaltern group who are the captive of their own voicelessness to give their emotions a language and recognize their faults and powers. Dylan through his song has been successful to give the representation of those heterogeneous groups who are not away from the society and its hegemonic power. In his cryptogram and the meaning between the lines lies a difference between the elites and the poor, the dominated and the dominant.

The songs of Dylan argue about the people who are dominated by the state power and do not have the access to the states hegemonic power structure. In his selected songs he asks question to the dominated people and calls them to find the answer. He wants them to protest

and bring their emotion of being dominated and being ignored by the state. His songs truly represent the voice of those heterogeneous communities who are the victim of oppression and the state's political agendas. His subject matter is the civil rights, issue of African-American, rural people, poor people and other individual underdogs. His song mentions that he knows how it feels to be in the position of subaltern. Dylan has identified the social groups who are excluded from a society's established structures for political representation and symbolized them in his songs. The politically dominated class has been represented in many ways through different technique in the songs of Dylan. And in particular some of his songs have represented signs and language of subalterns.

Analyzing critically, Bob Dylan can be considered as an organic intellectual. Dylan's intellectual capacity is depicted brilliantly in these selected songs. These songs are the songs of salvation and redemption where he intellectually thinks the conditions of people and presents vividly the images of subaltern characters in his songs. These selected songs of Dylan, talks on representation of the subaltern, dominated people and the victim of power politics. His songs are about those people not included in the states hegemonic power and does not have any representation in direct social power. He writes the lyrics consisting the signs and language of the dominated class, exploited by authority, where he is successful directing the ideas of the social class to which he purely belongs. He sings for the freedom of minor, marginalized and victim of domination. His songs are freedom songs for voiceless and identity less people. His lyrics are about the emancipation from the double standards which high ranking elite authority has created. The treachery and oppression among the people is centralized and highly criticized by Dylan in his songs.



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