

INTRODUCTION

FOCAL CONCEPT

On 4 February 2006, *The Times of India* reported ‘Mob attacks same-gotra couple, husband killed.’ Shailendra and Pushpanjali from Patna in India eloped in February 2006 and married.¹ They returned to seek the blessing of their families, only to be dragged to the Hindu temple and beaten to death, Shailendra dying at the time and Pushpanjali later in hospital.

It was seeing a report in the early 1990s of an Indian man who hanged his son in public in front of the village temple with a crowd of onlookers that first took my attention. The Indian reporting compelled me to ask the question, ‘Why would parents kill their own children?’ In 1993, my interest in the phenomenon of romance tragedy increased with the shooting of Admiria Ismić, a Muslim Bosniak girl, and her Serb sweetheart Boško Brkić at the time of the Balkan Wars.² Admiria and Boško had attempted to leave the besieged city of Sarajevo after receiving permission from both sides of the conflict but they were killed together by sniper fire while trying to cross the bridge now colloquially called the *Romeo and Juliet Bridge*.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), in his treatise *The Phenomenology of Perception*,³ asks us to accept phenomena as ‘realities’ of humanity; as starting points without further question or analysis. Regarding the phenomenon of romantic love, one can say that Eros and Karma and other gods of love are alive and well, shooting their

¹ *Times of India*, The 2006, *Kin, mob assault couple, hubby dies*. The Times of India, viewed 11 September 2012, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2006-02-04/patna/27830436_1_keshav-rai-ghat-temple-maida-toli-couple

² Reuters1993, Kurt Schork’s signature dispatch from siege of Sarajevo. Reuters, viewed 28 April 2012, <http://www.ksmemorial.com/romeo.htm>

³ Merleau-Ponty, M 1991, *Phenomenology of Perception* (Transl Colin Smith), Routledge, London, 2005

darts across cultural and social standings, leading to conflict or social embarrassment and, in some instances, romance tragedy.

This study of present day romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style is focused on India and Nepal, but reflects on human behaviour related to forbidden love in all cultures. An article entitled ‘Top 20 Most Famous Love Stories’⁴ lists twenty Western historical treasures such as *Romeo and Juliet*. However, the Eastern stories of forbidden love are just as rich. *Layla and Majnun*, adapted and premiered to the Western world in operatic form by the Silk Road Ensemble led by Yo Yo Ma (b 1955) in 2008,⁵ is perhaps the most famous of these.

The research project is an examination of the unique tragic romance scenario happening in Northern India in the time period 1993-2013. It attempts to investigate the background to the tragedies to make them understandable to a Western audience and to elucidate relevant social change over the given period. The *Romeo and Juliet* phenomenon is key to the research. It is an integral part of human nature that will continually recur and need to be accommodated within local society and jurisdiction. Lessons in reconciliation are sought; lessons that carry wider implications than this example involving a microhistory of local communities.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHICAL ORIENTATION

The collected essays found in the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p23) establish a well-founded claim that qualitative research is a

⁴ AmO: Life Beauty Without Limits 2013, *Top 20 Most Famous Love Stories in History and Literature*. AmO, viewed 26 Oct 2013, <http://amolife.com/reviews/top-20-most-famous-love-stories-in-history-and-literature.html>

⁵ Silk Road Project 2008, Doha, Qatar–World Premiere of Layla and Majnun. Silk Road project, viewed 3 August 2012, <http://www.silkroadproject.org/PostcardsfromtheRoad/PostcardQatarConcerts2008/tabid/422/Default.aspx>

discipline in its own right and has matured to a stage where a working definition and research methodology are acceptably agreed.⁶ Denzin and Lincoln suggest that there will be two main streams of future research, one along a 'gold standard' line of verifiable analytical research, and the other along a line of value analysis within society and the world at large. The study of potentially tragic romantic events of *Romeo and Juliet* style lies in the second category, with reliance on values acceptable to the writer and the reader. Nevertheless, words used are likely to remain troublesome.

In the second edition of the *Handbook* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), it is suggested that there is a 'sacred' element to be acknowledged as we look at, and reflect on, a world we can only partially understand. To the writer, spiritual issues are acknowledged but regarded as being beyond objective scrutiny or definition. Unresolvable questions will remain on the relevance of 'nature' and 'nurture' in educational issues aimed at providing children with the best opportunity during their learning years.⁷ These questions are pertinent to this study when lovers reject family influence in favour of 'inner' compulsive drive. In matters of personal and social justice, there are questions of jurisdiction, including the basic question, 'whose opinion matters?' An 'a posteriori' problem is the need to be an equally experienced participant in order to appreciate issues that happen in life and are possibly life changing. Philosophical issues such as equality, universalism, and pragmatism are relevant to the study.

The research project aims to communicate as objectively and effectively as possible new ideological concepts that may alter our terms of reference. Postulates conceived as a starting point for this research included the following:

⁶ Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS eds 2005, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd edn, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California, p3

⁷ Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS eds 2000, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California

- every culture has its own stories of *Romeo and Juliet* style;
- every culture has recurring tragedies of *Romeo and Juliet* style;
- there is, or can be, a moral progression in responses to family-oriented dilemmas of this kind; and
- the telling of legendary stories, and the writing of plays and theatre productions assists moral progression whilst preserving cultural values.

Five research avenues have been examined in the study:

- Mythological and Legendary Stories;
- In-depth Interviews;
- Community Opinion;
- Media Reports; and
- Theatre and the Arts.

The material collected in the course of the study was analyzed to identify ideological progress as a response to Shakespeare's mandate 'what here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.' The thesis investigates romance tragedy of '*Romeo and Juliet* style'. The starting point is acceptance of this kind of romance tragedy as a phenomenon in itself. The mythological and legendary *Romeo and Juliet*-like stories, and those in the theatre and the arts are portrayed in stark reality, almost always ending in fatal tragedy. In Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*, the tragic deaths are followed by affirmation of family reconciliation, leaving a message of hope.

The media reports are of factual stories, in several of which a descriptive judgement 'like *Romeo and Juliet*' is added. The essence is that each lover, at that point in time, prefers death to life without the other. An integral part of the social drama is the family and community response to the marriage. The stories are presented in a progression from violence to acceptance.

I, as the writer, perceive romance tragedy as a recurring real life phenomenon happening within an evolving holistic social framework. I deemed qualitative research (QR), with its multidisciplinary approach, to be the most appropriate methodology for the study because it draws on relevant disciplines and looks beyond established knowledge into a world of natural phenomena. It is unrestricted in its approaches to happenings in any sphere, and is thus an ideal research method and methodological framework for a multidisciplinary approach to the study.

Implicit in the term ‘qualitative research’ is that it is an ethical calling. In Chapter 41 (‘The Seventh Movement—Out of the Past) of Denzin and Lincoln’s *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, there is a section entitled ‘A Bridge into the Future: Toward a Sacred Discourse,’ which contains ethical statements of the belief and assertion that we are working towards a better world. Denzin and Lincoln state:⁸

We imagine a form of qualitative enquiry in the 21st century that is simultaneously minimal, existential, autoethnographic, vulnerable, performative, and critical... [and] ... A universal human ethic [that] emphasises the sacredness of life, human dignity, truth telling, and non-violence, derives from this position.

Denzin and Lincoln suggest there is a ‘sacred’ element to be savoured in our endeavours and our study. For me, the writer, numinous spiritual issues are acknowledged but regarded as being beyond objective scrutiny or definition. However, on the few occasions they impinge on my consciousness, they always take me by surprise.

This study looks for an ethical evolution of community thought and practice in regard to relationships fraught with difficulty. Word usage is a problem. It seems that

⁸ Denzin, N.K & Lincoln, Y.S. eds 2000, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California, p1052

descriptive allusion is the only language available to convey meaning to another ‘party’, who may feel empathy and show acknowledgement, pleasure, exhilaration, sorrow, or anger in agreement—but with their own orientation. So is it the same?

The question of ‘reality’ remains open. For the individual, reality is subjective. What is ‘real’ to you is real to you, but this may not be real to other people. An example is young Wiccans growing up in a community where, before they even know there are other people like them, they claim to see things that others do not see.⁹ Wiccans try to find a way to share their experience but are generally ignored or derided by family and community in our Western society.

Objectivity and subjectivity need constant scrutiny. The difference can be seen with every new mother caring for a newborn baby. Thousands of advisers surround her and are able to give objective advice based on life experience. Yet her subjective response will be, ‘I never imagined it would be like this.’

Of special interest in this thesis is the unconscious ambience of the ‘other,’ with innate and learnt awareness together with perceptions of the senses affecting personal action. Actions may be taken in ‘the heat of the moment,’ impetuously, without further thought or consultation. The action may be commendable or harmful. Quakers have an expression, ‘respond to the promptings that come from within.’ Responding may or not work out well, but the saying presupposes a ‘good’ orientation. The unknowable real-world ‘other’ affects our daily life, sometimes with fate making unpredictable interventions; as people say, ‘You never know what is going to happen next!’

⁹ Courtney, BC, Merriam, SB, & Baumgartner, LM 2003, ‘Witches’ ways of knowing: integrative learning in joining a marginalised group,’ *International Journal of Lifelong Learning*, vol.22, no.2, pp111–131

Garman (1996),¹⁰ although not liking the term ‘qualitative’ for QR, reminds us that it was in the 1980s that conceptual investigations, starting with grounded theory and case studies, separated from empirical research studies and became known, together with narrative discussions, as ‘qualitative research.’ This was despite the fact that in the 1970s anthropologists had progressed to an interpretive approach in anthropological research, looking for meaning rather than answers to preconceived concepts. Garman, raised the following issues relevant to qualitative research:

Qualitative research looks for ‘discursive knowing’ rather than ‘definitional knowing.’

Qualitative research explores a broad understanding possible in natural conversations and narratives.

Qualitative research acknowledges that science cannot claim ultimate truth, and that all knowledge is partial, and dependent on the viewer’s perspective.

Qualitative research acknowledges that ‘knowledge’ comes from an authority in a special social location.

Qualitative research looks at the elusiveness of worthwhile things, possibly in an idiosyncratic way.

Qualitative research provides a revival of interest in the discourse between persuasion (rhetoric) and truth (philosophy).

Qualitative research looks for justice and compassion in the struggle for the human race to evolve in a moral way.

Qualitative research creates space for unknown voices and positions in human enquiry.

¹⁰ Garman, N 1996, ‘Qualitative inquiry: meaning and menace for educational researchers.’ In P. Willis and B. Neville (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice in Adult Education*, David Lovell Publishing, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia, pp17-19

Qualitative research has high standards.

Garman, with her colleague Maria Piantanida, has used criteria such as ‘Verite,’ ‘Integrity,’ ‘Rigor,’ ‘Utility,’ ‘Vitality,’ ‘Aesthetics,’ ‘Ethics,’ and ‘Verisimilitude’ in assessing the ‘quality’ of qualitative research, but adds:¹¹

Perhaps the most important consideration is the unique intent the author seeks to achieve, the worthiness of the effort, and the extent to which he/she accomplishes the challenge...

[and]

We remind ourselves that each piece of research must be judged within the context of the community of scholars it represents.

Elizabeth A. St. Pierre,¹² in her consideration of poststructural feminism in education, quotes Richardson (1994) to explain the limits and possibilities of knowledge and truth in a postmodern world:

The core of postmodernism is the doubt that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty has a universal and general claim as the ‘right’ or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge,.....but, a postmodernist position does allow us to know ‘something’ without claiming to know everything. To have a particular, local, historical knowledge is still knowing.

The work of Denzin and Lincoln, Garman and Piantanida, and St Pierre demonstrates the value of a qualitative research approach and methodology in establishing the importance of an issue leading into general philosophy; ‘My thoughts soar to heaven’ may be a qualitative expression. However, apart from initial inspiration, making it possible to travel to the moon has been almost entirely dependent on

¹¹ ibid 11 p19

¹² Freeman, M et al 2007, ‘Standards of Evidence in Qualitative Research: An Incitement to Discourse,’ *Educational Researcher*, vol.36, p25

quantitative research.

A strange mix of qualitative and quantitative elements occurs when one looks at social questions such as mass suicide. The numbers involved, and time and place of the happening, are factual. Cogent reasons can be described and postulates made, but the analysis of the phenomenon happens with interpretation from a given point of view; it remains speculative and debatable.

In consideration of the above, a qualitative research framework was chosen for the study. Key issues were the multiplicity of disciplines that impinge on the social drama discussed and the relativity of value judgements throughout. The stories examined consist of a combination of factual, real life stories of the present era coupled with a rich history of folklore, including mythological creation stories.

NORTHERN INDIA AND NEPAL

This study has a special focus on Northern India, especially the state of Haryana, and is conceived as a response to media attention given to the killing of eloping couples in India as reported in the general media only since 1993.¹³ A new consciousness of cultural ethics totally outside my Anglo-Judeo-Christian terms of reference motivated me to ‘look’ at romance tragedy. Short periods of work in Nepal beginning in 2001, where examples of violence, reconciliation, and acceptance happened, enriched the

¹³ Telegraph, The 2007, *Getting Away with Murder by Uddalak Mukherjee*. The Telegraph (Calcutta), viewed 5 July 2012, http://www.telegraphindia.com/1070206/asp/opinion/story_7345603.asp

“It is not as if killings such as this one are restricted to the tribal belts of Pakistan or other Islamic societies. The rise in the number of murdered lovers makes it impossible to believe that honour killings are ‘new’ to Indian society. In fact, the first reported honour killing in Muzaffarnagar, a district in western Uttar Pradesh, which has gained notoriety for such slayings, goes back to 1993. Since then, the numbers have been rising. For instance, in Muzaffarnagar, 16 such deaths were reported in 2005 alone. Other districts in the state, such as Saharanpur, Bijnor, and now Agra, have also witnessed similar crimes. Significantly, the claim that honour killings are restricted to certain feudal pockets in north India is a dubious one.”

intrigue. The time period of reform in India theoretically dates from the adoption of a democratic constitution in 1950,¹⁴ but the selected time period for this study is from 1993 when the issues started coming to general public attention.¹⁵ The social change has progressed from ignoring the constitutional human rights of individual lovers to the present-day public outcry in support of lovers, with insistence that the present Indian Government establish effective law and order.¹⁶

What is strange for Westerners to understand is the large number of peer associates in India who are considered consanguineous and for whom marriage is forbidden. It is like the brother-sister relationship applying to all peer group school associates. Prem Chowdhry, in her treatise *Contentious Marriages and Eloping Couples*,¹⁷ emphasizes the importance of village exogamy and caste endogamy in Northern Indian villages where rules of land ownership and inheritance are of paramount importance. Such social strictures are inconceivable to the modern Western mind. However, legality of marriage issues in Western communities remain pertinent today. In a case from Germany, for example, a brother and sister who had been separated at birth met, married and had children.¹⁸ When the situation came to public attention, the father was imprisoned.

The acceptance of gay marriages in the Western world is a current social evolutionary cause of dissention, with some countries adopting new legislation that

¹⁴ Council of Foreign Relations 1950, *India's democratic constitution*. Council of Foreign Relations, viewed 8 August 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/70826/sri-ram-sharma/indias-democratic-constitution#>

¹⁵ *ibid* 4

¹⁶ ABC News 2012, Afghan Man Jailed for honour killings. ABC NEWS, viewed 8 August 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-01-30/afghans-jailed-over-canadian-honour-killings/3799440>

¹⁷ Chowdhry, P 2007, *Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples: Gender, Caste, and Patriarchy in Northern India*, Oxford University Press, London

¹⁸ Guardian, The 2007, *Brother and sister fight Germany's incest laws*, viewed 8 August 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/feb/27/germany.kateconnolly>

permits gay marriage with marital rights.

ROMANCE TRAGEDY OF *ROMEO AND JULIET* STYLE

In this thesis, ‘romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style’ is the focus of the collected stories and their analysis. The *Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged* (2003) gives sixteen usages for the word ‘romance.’ The most appropriate one of these for the purpose of this thesis is ‘love, esp romantic love idealized for its purity or beauty.’ The dictionary gives seven usages for the word ‘tragedy.’ One of these, ‘a shocking or sad event; disaster’ is appropriate for this special consideration of romance tragedy expressed in real life, in mythological stories, and in theatre and drama.

The *Romeo e Julia* story predates Shakespeare, but Shakespeare with his play *Romeo and Juliet* has given us a classic cultural heritage so that ‘like *Romeo and Juliet*’ is a phrase in common parlance. Gottfried Keller, in his book *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, takes the theme of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and emphasizes its ‘universality’ throughout time as a phenomenon of the human condition.

Also included are stories that are potentially tragic, some with a happy ending. The emphasis is on an attitude of willingness to suffer tragic consequences in defiance of family and social restrictions. The kind of romantic love is singled out and specified by Octavio Paz in his book *Double Flame: Love and Eroticism* about sexuality, eroticism, and love, where he uses the phrase ‘no one else will do’¹⁹ to emphasize it. The poignancy of certain situations is highlighted by couples choosing suicide or being murdered rather than being separated.

Emphasis is given to those stories that are transformed into great operas, music, and

¹⁹ Paz, O 1996, *The Double Flame Essays on Love and Eroticism*, Harvill Press, London p32

theatre. The classic romantic period in music 1820–1910 contains much material about unrequited love (examples are Franz Schubert's song cycles *Winterreise* and *Die Schoene Mullerin*, which portray the intensity of emotion felt by lovers), but the term 'Romeo and Juliet style' is not used here for unrequited love, nor do I regard it as appropriate in the concept of *The Florida Romeo & Juliet Law* passed in 2007,²⁰ which is designed to protect individuals from the sex offender list and relates to casual sexual relationships. 'Romance Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet Style' is used in this thesis to reflect common usage both socially and in the media; usage coming from Western society and now spreading to other cultures.

Shakespeare's quintessential expression of romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style in his play *Romeo and Juliet* enlarges on the *Giulietta e Romeo*²¹ story of Renaissance Italy. Almost every day, new productions of the play in modern or traditional style are announced around the Western world and in other cultures.²² The *Romeo and Juliet* theme is a focal point within the broader concept of romance tragedy.

This study looks backward to Shakespeare's sources and forward to the present time, with reference to the arts, related myths and legends, and real life stories. Family vendettas of the 14th–16th centuries in Renaissance Italy are highly relevant to Shakespeare's inspiration. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* comes to us from the Elizabethan era, a time in British history when, under the law of high treason, public executions took place involving Catholic martyrs²³ and others who challenged the authority of the throne. It is pertinent to this study that theatrical performances (then and

²⁰ <http://definitions.uslegal.com/r/romeo-and-juliet-law/>

²¹ Da Porto, L. "*GIULIETTA*" (Juliet), Edizione Bondoni, Venezia, 1530.

²² Google daily references to *Romeo and Juliet* plays around the world provide up to ten reportings every day.

²³ Tyburn Convent 2006, *The Blood of the Martyrs: the Seed of the Church*, viewed 25 June 2012, <http://www.martyrs.faithweb.com/tyburn.html>

now) suggesting social change can be banned, and proprietors and authors excommunicated (or worse) for offending authorities.

Expression in the Arts

This study of romance tragedy,²⁴ although initiated as a response to real life stories presented prosaically in the media, has a central focus on drama and the arts. In Western culture, the Shakespearean voicing has continued with *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, *West Side Story*, and many others. In the colonial era, Westerners discovered other cultures have their own stories featuring romance tragedy, giving scope for great poets, writers, composers, storytellers, and filmmakers to lead and inspire their communities. An example presented in this thesis was the discovery of the Maori legend of *Hinemoa and Tutanekai*, told to, and translated by, Sir George Grey.²⁵ Using this text as a guide, Alfred Hill (1869–1960)²⁶ composed the cantata *Hinemoa*, with libretto written by Arthur Adams.²⁷ It was first performed in New Zealand in 1896.

Globalization is seeing the crossing of cultures in theatre and the arts. Yo Yo Ma's²⁸ Silk Road Ensemble, for example, arranged a version of Uzeyir Hajibeyov's opera²⁹ *Leyli and Majnun* for Western music lovers and presented it at Harvard University in 2007, with lead singers from Azerbaijan. The performance moved the packed house to

²⁴ Evans, D, Jenkins B & Davies, S 2006, *Towards a Study of Potentially Tragic Romantic Events of Romeo and Juliet Style*. Proceedings of the Inaugural Postgraduate Research Conference 2006, pp42-52

²⁵ Grey, G 1885, *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealand Race as Furnished by their Priests and Chiefs*, 2nd edn, Evening Star Office, Auckland, 2004, pp146-152

²⁶ Australian Dictionary of Biography 1983, 'Hill, Alfred Francis,' National Centre for Biography, Australian National University, viewed 7 May 2013, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hill-alfred-francis-6667>

²⁷ Australian Dictionary of Biography 1983, 'Adams, Arthur Henry (1872–1936),' National Centre for Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/adams-arthur-henry-4969>

²⁸ Silk Road Project 2008, World Premiere of Layla and Majnun. Silk Road project, viewed 3 August 2012, http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/33_folder/33_articles/33_hajibeyov.html

²⁹ Azerbaijan International 1995, 110th Jubilee composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov, viewed 23 July 2012, http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/33_folder/33_articles/33_hajibeyov.html

momentary silence before the audience stood and burst into cheers.

Hindustani legends have always been presented on stage within their own culture but, more recently, Indian filmmakers have taken up present day social issues, as in the film *Khap*³⁰ that highlights romance tragedy in Northern India, and these films are being screened in the West.

This section of the study is a tribute to the genius of eminent writers and composers who bring us legendary stories such as *Hinemoa*, *Leyla and Majnun*, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, *Tristan and Isolde*, and *Heer Ranjha* through poetry, writing, theatre, and music, including opera. Legendary stories are a necessary part of the study and classic romantic legends are intertwined with stories of creation. A selection of these is presented by famed storyteller Diane Wolkstein (1942–2013) in her book *The First Love Stories: from Isis and Osiris to Tristan and Iseult*.³¹ Her selection of mythological and legendary love stories consists of *Isis and Osiris (Egyptian)*, *Inanna and Dumuzi (Sumerian)*, *Shiva and Sati (Hindu)*, *The Song of Songs (Hebrew)*, *Psyche and Eros (Greek-Roman)*, *Layla and Majnun (Arabic-Persian)*, and *Tristan and Iseult (Celtic-European)*.

There are many love legends within Hindustani folklore. Four popular romance tragedies in the Punjabi tradition of India and Pakistan are *Heer Ranjha*, *Mirza Sahiban*, *Sohni Mahiwal*, and *Sassi Punnun*.³² *Anarkali* is possibly a true, real life legendary story

³⁰ Times of India, The 2011, Cinema owners not to screen movie 'Khap: A story of honour killing' in Haryana, viewed 3 August 2012, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-07-27/india/29820270_1_khap-panchayats-cinema-owners-cinema-halls

³¹ Wolkstein, D 1992, *The First Love Stories: from Isis and Osiris to Tristan and Iseult*, Harper Perennial, New York

³² Punjabi World 2007, *Love Legends in History of Punjab*. Punjabi World, viewed 28 August 2012, <http://punjabiworld.com/Creative-Punjab/Legends-of-Punjab/love-legends-of-punjab.html>

from the lineage of Mogul Emperors.³³

Around the World

Every culture around the world has its own legendary and real life stories. The phrase ‘*Romeo and Juliet* style’ has worked well for me as a focal point in initiating conversation. On meeting a senior Thai Government servant, I posed the question, ‘Do you have any *Romeo and Juliet* stories in your culture?’ His response was immediate, saying, ‘Yes, of course we do, but the West does not know about it!’ He was referring to the story of *Lilit Phra Law*. This Thai epic poem, in common with other stories presented, is likened to Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. It involves romance between royal families in kingdoms previously at war. The enmity of a senior widowed Queen whose husband was killed in battle leads to the murder of the lovers.

Not all the stories are tragic. The legendary real life Maori story of *Hinemoa and Tutanekai* tells how they lived happily ever after only because Hinemoa’s chieftain father belatedly accepted the situation. Hinemoa eloped, swimming three kilometres at night to Mokoia Island in Lake Rotorua in answer to her lover’s flute call. The acceptance led to a remarkable period of peace between these two Maori tribes.

For Aboriginal Australians, family relationships are referred to by the term ‘skin colour’. *Ngurrumilmarmiriyu* (*Wrong Skin*) is an Indigenous theatre play first performed in 2010 by The Chooky Dancers. It explores the challenges for Aboriginal youth exposed to Western culture. Program notes state:

The story of this work is a re-imagining of *Romeo and Juliet* onto Elcho Island where “the complex laws of ‘skin’ and clan define all relationships” and to love

³³ Tourist Development Corporation of Punjab, *Anarkali’s Tomb*, viewed 15 October 2012, <http://www.tdcp.gov.pk/tdcp/Destinations/HistoricalPlaces/Tombs/AnarkalisTomb/tabid/280/Default.aspx>

someone outside these is forbidden.³⁴

Following a presentation given to a seniors group in Adelaide, South Australia, I was pleased to receive an anonymous three-page letter entitled, *I am Juliet*. It told of two English families who used to holiday together, leading to a powerful romance that began when the lovers were too young. They kept it to themselves, thinking their families would regard them as being silly. Many years later, when they announced their engagement, her mother, feeling the secret had been kept from her, took offence and did not speak to them for ten years. They were eventually reconciled.

Sociological Aspects

Can this study of romance tragedy, detailing a path of progress in realizing human rights (in the context of social requirements and basic human nature), contribute anything to social theory or help facilitate necessary social change? The way forward related to forbidden love is from preventive coercion by family and/or local authority to persecution if the relationship proceeds, to nonviolence with estrangement, to reconciliation, to acceptance with reservations, to unreserved welcome and celebration. The value judgement of the way forward and what is considered progress is attested by public outcry. It is the reason this thesis has a timeframe beginning in the year 1993 when the media in India as well as international media started reporting incidents regarded as justice by some and atrocities by others. It is attested also by the High Court of India (see pp 95-98) demanding the upholding of the constitutional rights of the individuals concerned against retaliatory violence towards lovers.

I have attempted a statement of ‘What is progress?’ in the 3-minute PhD given below. Against a background of cultural heritage from the beginning of recorded

³⁴ Chooky Dancers, The 2010, Ngurrumilmarrmiriyu [Wrong Skin], viewed 23 Nov 2012, <http://theatre-of-words.blogspot.com.au/2010/04/ngurrumilmarrmiriyu-wrong-skin.html>

history, exemplified by the story of Isis and Osiris (pp61-62), the work of Schwimmer (pp216-217) indicates that each culture develops its own marital taboos. The cultural stories and real life stories of ‘*Romeo and Juliet* style’ portray lovers in situations where love is unconditional and ignores cultural taboos. This may lead to conflict between individual human rights (the right to choose one’s own marital partner) and the local society in which the lovers live, for example in parts of India where partners are required to be of the same caste and from a different village. The violence that continues to ensue against lovers at the present time is seen as the starting point in defining a road of progress. This leads to the concept that nonviolence is the first acceptable end point, and effective law and order is necessary for this to happen. At this point, I present my view of peace as being the enjoyment of good relationships, which represents the goal posts of the road of progress. However, family estrangement remains a legal option and parents may disown children who marry against their wishes. Reconciliation, as in the case of Mamata and Prateek (p135), is presented as good; it is regarded as a milestone on the road of progress. Acceptance follows reconciliation, which may involve surrendering previously-held convictions. Welcome, celebration, and enjoyment of good relationships, as in the story of *Hinemoa and Tutanekai*, is ideal.

There are links between relationships of individual families at the micro-cultural level of societies and relationships at the state and international levels. The road of progress for conflict between countries and states within countries starts with cessation of hostilities (often described as ‘Peace’ but in my view only the start of the peace process). The goal remains the enjoyment of good relationships.

Law, globalization, and emancipation are all highly relevant to the study. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, in the second edition of his book *Toward a New Legal*

Common Sense: Law, Globalization, and Emancipation,³⁵ provides considerable help in this regard. Santos examines ‘the paradigmatic transition between the paradigms of modernity, and a new emerging time which may not be paradigmatic at all’ (p xv). He depicts an epistemological transition between the dominant paradigms of modern science and an emergent paradigm he calls ‘prudent knowledge for a decent life’ (p xvi).³⁶ He also depicts a sociopolitical transition between a background of global capitalism and the signs of a different future contained in the alternatives to this paradigm, which are emerging in various fields of social activity. Santos’ argument is that the tension between social regulation and social emancipation cannot be resolved by law; he is promoting the concept of common sense in law. He posits that within existing law, different interpretations can be placed on circumstance. However, movements coming from the organization of cosmopolitan groups pursuing emancipatory or non-emancipatory issues must resort to law to advance their struggles.

Change comes slowly, as younger generations challenge the lifelong attitudes of their elders. However, a recent social phenomenon of stories going ‘viral’ (e.g. Kony 2012)³⁷ provides an opportunity for the wider world—the global community—to express opinion and embarrass traditional authorities. This in turn provides an opportunity for acceleration of human rights processes and relevant legal changes to be made, even if attitudinal elements in parts of the community are not changed. The way forward is to make realities plain for all to see. A necessity for compromise becomes

³⁵ Santos, B de S 2002, *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization, and Emancipation*, 2nd edn, Butterworths LexisNexis, London

³⁶ Santos, B de S (ed) 2007, *Cognitive Justice in a Global World: Prudent Knowledges for a Decent Life*, Lexington Books

³⁷ Guardian, *The 2012, Kony 2012: What's the real story?* The Guardian, viewed 18 April 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/reality-check-with-polly-curtis/2012/mar/08/kony-2012-what-s-the-story>

This article was published on <guardian.co.uk> March 8 2012. A 28-minute film about the plight of children in Africa was watched more than 21 million times on YouTube.

apparent, emphasizing the role of responsible community leaders in finding a way forward.

A 3-MINUTE PHD

Although not presented at a 3-minute PhD seminar, the exercise led to preparation of this 3-minute PhD-style summary.

ROMANCE TRAGEDY OF ‘*ROMEO AND JULIET*’ STYLE

Romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style, happening in the world today—and mythological. A study in qualitative research with special focus on Northern India.

My wondering about honour killing of eloping couples in India began when I read of a man who hanged his son in public with a crowd of onlookers, because of an illicit romance offending traditional Hindu law.

I also saw a BBC documentary of a Hindu family who for 10 years tried to prevent their daughter marrying a Muslim. They eventually gave in. The father’s final words were, ‘We will not see them again but we will not become violent.’

More and more present-day stories are now being reported to the wider world. The stories can be very bizarre but illustrate virtually all aspects of romance tragedy and echo themes found in legendary stories, such as betrayal by family members.

Suffice to say in parts of Northern India, the tension between federal laws and village decrees is increasing. In 2010, the first capital punishment judgement against those involved with killing eloping couples was given by the High Court.³⁸ This gives us a conflicting scenario where village councils impose death sentences on eloping couples to deter the young, while the federal government approves death sentences for

³⁸ Kanoon 2012, *Lata Singh vs State Of U.P. & Another on 7 July 2006*. Kanoon, viewed 4 May 2012, <http://indiankanoon.org/doc/1364215/>

those who fulfil these decrees. However, the judgement of 2010 has been revoked in favour of life imprisonment, and it may well be that no death sentences issued by the courts are ever carried out.

Also new in 2011 is the provision of safe houses for eloping lovers who have nowhere to go.

This study is about acceptable progress. It is about young people challenging religious and social tradition. It is about those willing to die rather than surrender their love. Do murder and suicide need to continue? Is nonviolence a satisfactory end point? Will elopers continue to shame their families and have to forfeit family blessing?

How do we view progress?

- Every culture has wonderful legendary romantic stories.
- Every culture has its marital taboos.
- Romance is unconditional.
- Human rights are allowed or withheld by the society or family within which a person lives.
- Nonviolence is the first acceptable end point.
- Effective law and order is imperative.
- Family estrangement remains a legal option.
- Reconciliation is good and can happen at any time.
- Acceptance which may involve surrendering previously held convictions is very good.
- Welcome and celebration is ideal.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

Tell the stories and spread the word.

A PARADIGM OF HOPE

Three real life stories from Nepal are added to those from India and described as ‘Gospel in a Nutshell’ in ‘PAPER 2, Present day romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style: Focus on Northern India and Nepal in the time period 1993–2013’. These were the stories of Parbati Raut and Jagadish Khadki whose inter-caste marriage led to village violence; of Mamata and Prateek’s inter-caste marriage, which led to disownment (later to be reconciled); and the reporting of an inter-caste marriage that was openly welcomed.

Artistic genius has been praised. Eastern, Western, and Pacific cultural legends presented by storytellers and in the arts have always been popular with ordinary people. They give compelling expressions of love with hopeful fulfilment, even though so often fate intervenes with tragedy. The bittersweet combination of joy and sorrow leaves us with an imperative to make things better for those concerned. It is with a feeling of hope that we join Shakespeare in saying, ‘our toil shall strive to mend.’

Nonkilling and Social Change: Local and Global

Each story chosen for this study is a localized microhistory. Signs of progress are interpreted under the logic of social emergence. A path of progress related to individual circumstances of families in conflict indicates progressive steps; steps that take time for necessary reconciliation. At the global level, it is noted that it took 60 years for France and Germany to celebrate together the end of World War II.³⁹ Reference is made to the

³⁹ The New York Times 2005, *Europe celebrates 60 years since end of WWII*, viewed 31 January 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/08/world/europe/08iht-web.0508EU.html?_r=0

Global Center for Nonkilling and to the writings of its founder Glenn Paige,⁴⁰ with the claim *Nonkilling is THE Measure of Human Progress*.⁴¹ In his article, ‘To Leap beyond Yet Nearer Bring,’⁴² Paige anticipates the realization of nonkilling societies extending from local communities to encompass all humankind (the essence of positive globalization). Inspirational individuals together with peace institutions give us hope for a peaceful future, albeit one with peace studies as a cornerstone of education in an acknowledgement that human nature does inherently lead to social conflict. Doubts remain regarding ‘right to defend’ and ‘duty to protect,’ but all must accept nonkilling as the primary goal; a pre-requisite for peace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Key literary works selected for this study were:

- Chowdhry, Prem 2007, *Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples: Gender, Caste, and Patriarchy in Northern India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Keller, Gottfried 2008, *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (transl Paul Bernard Thomas), Mondial, New York.
- Paz, Octavio 1993 *The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism*, (transl Helen Lane), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), San Diego, ISBN 978-0-15-100103-3
- Muir, Edward 1998, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta in Renaissance Italy*, John Hopkins, Baltimore.
- Nizami, Ganjavi 1966, *The Story of Layla and Majnun* (transl from the Persian by Dr R. Gelpke, ed, Omega Publications, New York, pp 177.

⁴⁰ Glenn Paige previously taught political science at Princeton University and University of Hawaii as a tenured professor. After finishing his book *The Korean Decision* well known as one of the classics in the field of foreign policy making, he has devoted his research to the development of nonviolence social science. His recent books include *Buddhism and Nonviolent Global Problem-Solving* (1991) and *Islam and Nonviolence* (1993).

⁴¹ Center for Global Nonkilling, *Nonkilling is THE Measure of Human Progress*, viewed 26 January 2013, <http://www.nonkilling.org/node/479>

⁴² Paige, G 1997, “‘To Leap Beyond Yet Nearer Bring:’ From War To Peace To Nonviolence To Nonkilling,’ *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol.2, no.1 http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol2_1/Paige.htm

- Wolkstein, D 1992, *The First Love Stories: from Isis and Osiris to Tristan and Iseult*, New York: Harper Perennial.
- Santos, B de S 1995, *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition*, Routledge, New York

Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples

Prem Chowdhry's treatise *Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples: Gender, Caste, and Patriarchy in Northern India*⁴³ is presented in the classicism style and makes an outstanding contribution to understanding cultural values relevant to the persecution of lovers in India, even today. Her exposition gives a definitive starting point for both an understanding and philosophy of possible social responses relative to the situation. Chowdhry, a research scholar with family roots in Northern India, is a former fellow of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi. She is one of the most significant contributors to bringing the current dilemma over tradition and Westernization in relation to marriage to public attention. Her book has been widely acclaimed. The publisher's comments include the following:

This book deals with the widespread phenomenon of contentious marriages and elopements in rural and in semi-urban North India. Such challenges to norms and customs have recently escalated, and have become more complex due to the changing dynamics of power between, and within, caste groups. As runaway couples question the authority of family, caste, and community, traditional powers become more dictatorial and violent.⁴⁴

In her closing words, Chowdhry says:

What can make a difference to the existing state of affairs? The answer is difficult and complex, with no guarantee of sure returns. The camouflage of hard

⁴³ Chowdhry, P 2007, *Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples: Gender, Caste, and Patriarchy in Northern India*, Oxford University Press, London

⁴⁴ Ibid 43 publishers comments on cover – first flyleaf

material realities under claims of culture and tradition has tended to obscure the problem. Since the social, legal, and political changes cannot be further resisted, cultural practices and notions of ‘honour’ have gained paramouncy. However, these cultural codes can also function autonomously to prohibit choice to individuals who are violating the norm of parental and community sanctioned marriages. It is not necessary that the social and material factors that underpin the marriage system in India are applicable to each case to explain the opposition to choice marriages. Even on cultural claims a certain fluidity of uncertainty exists. The cultural justification may not work in all situations in all regions. Certain regions enjoy traditions that repudiate the dominant cultural justifications. Historically, there are alternative cultural traditions within this region that can be tapped usefully to counter such moves. So far there is no move to explore, adapt, or rejuvenate this alternative tradition. The most significant structural impediments to exercising choice in marriage are therefore still located in the caste system and are too deeply rooted to be easily dislodged. Both caste and endogamous marriages that perpetuate the structures of production and reproduction have remained despite wide-ranging constitutional and legal changes. Caste and its perpetuation through the observance of caste endogamy in marriage has not yet come under the scanner of public debate to be roundly condemned. The need is to understand the political economy of marriage overlaid by cultural and ideological norms, in order to counter it effectively.⁴⁵

Writing later in 2010, Prem Chowdhry discusses honour in an article entitled ‘Redeeming “Honour” Through Violence: Unravelling the Concept and its

⁴⁵ Ibid 44, p309

Application,⁴⁶ saying:

The regional and national dailies are currently full of reports of '*honour killings*'. In fact these crimes have emerged as a raging media news item and although problematic in its coverage, it has helped to draw attention to the shocking violation of constitutional and human rights.

In an interview with Sheela Reddy entitled 'Khaps have to Reform',⁴⁷ Chowdhry points to the prime role of women, affirming, 'Whatever resistance there has been, it has been led by women. I think women's groups in the villages should be encouraged more.'

Her book is a foundation stone for this study, providing authentication for cross cultural opinion regarding the issues that remain debatable within India but are now subject to legal and social changes.

A Village Romeo and Juliet

Gottfried Keller's *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is literary fiction based on a factual story. The double suicide of two young impoverished lovers whose families had lived in enmity appeared in the *Zürcher Freitagzeitung* (*Zurich Friday Newspaper*) of 3 September 1847.⁴⁸ It was reported as follows:

Im Dorfe Altsellerhausen, bei Leipzig, liebten sich ein Jüngling von 19 Jahren und ein Mädchen von 17 Jahren, beide Kinder armer Leute, die aber in einer tödlichen Feindschaft lebten und nicht in eine Vereinigung des Paares willigen

⁴⁶ Chowdhry, P 2012, *Redeeming 'Honour' Through Violence: Unravelling the Concept and its Application*. Cequin, viewed 14 August 2012, http://cequinindia.org/pdf/Special_Reports/Honour%20killings%20by%20Prem%20Choudhury.pdf

⁴⁷ Outlook India.com, *Sheela Reddy interviews Prem Chowdhry*, viewed 14 August 2012, <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?266072>

⁴⁸ *Zürcher Freitagzeitung* (*Zurich Friday Newspaper*), 3 September 1847, Schreiben 10.com, viewed 19 June 2014 <http://www.schreiben10.com/referate/Literatur/36/Gottfried-Keller-Romeo-und-Julia-auf-dem-Dorfe-referat-deutsch-reon.php>

wollten. Am 15. August begaben sich die Verliebten in eine Wirtschaft, wo sich arme Leute vergnügen, tanzten daselbst bis nachts 1 Uhr und entfernten sich hierauf. Am Morgen fand man die Leichen beider Liebenden auf dem Felde liegen; sie hatten sich durch den Kopf geschossen.

In the village of Altsellerhausen near Leipzig lived a 19 year old youth and a 17 year old young woman, both children of poor people living in deadly enmity and forbidding their marriage. On 15th August the lovers went to a place where poor people gather and danced together until 1 am, and left together. In the morning, the unfortunate lovers were found lying in a field, having shot themselves in the head.

This story led Gottfried Keller (1819–1890), best known for his novel *Green Henry* (1855), to write his award winning novel, *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*.⁴⁹ In the book, Keller's briefest of introductions highlighting the phenomenal aspect of romance tragedy flows straight into the text:

To tell this story would be an idle imitation, were it not founded upon an actual occurrence showing how deeply rooted in human life is each of those plots on which the great works of the past are based. The number of such plots is not great, but they are constantly reappearing in new dress, and then they constrain the hand to hold them fast.

Near the beautiful river which flows by Seldwyla at half a league's distance, rises an extensive ridge of well cultivated land...

The Storyline

Sali and Verena, are neighbours and childhood sweethearts. Their fathers argue over

⁴⁹ Keller, G 1856, *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Transl Thomas, P.B with the collaboration of Morgan B.Q 1955), Frederika Ungar Publishing, New York

acquisition of unclaimed land rightfully belonging to the illegitimate ‘Black Fiddler.’ They are forbidden to see each other. Their fathers Marti and Manz reduce each other to poverty through legal battles. Years later, in a chance meeting, their fathers have to be restrained from fighting each other physically; but for Sali and Verena, seeing each other leads to transcendent, pure, romantic love. During a secret meeting they are discovered by Marti, Verena’s father, who angrily abuses her. In defending her, Sali causes Marti to fall, hitting his head on a rock. Marti becomes unconscious, never to recover fully. In time, Sali and Verena meet again and leave their destitute circumstances, taking the little money they have and living a day of pretending that the world belongs to them. Dreaming of what might have been, they reject the opportunity to join the company of gypsies led by the ‘Black Fiddler.’ They are drawn to the river and consummate their love on a hay barge before slipping together into the deep water in the first light of dawn. Their bodies are found the next day.

The story is not complete without reference to the wonderful opera of the same title, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, inspired by, and based on, Keller’s text⁵⁰ and composed by Frederick Delius (1862–1934). Delius, with his wife Jelka, wrote the English-language libretto. According to the biography notes of the Delius Society,⁵¹ Delius was born to wealthy German parents living in Yorkshire, England. He was being trained as a businessman but became totally frustrated and eventually persuaded his father to give him full-time music training at the Leipzig Conservatorium. Delius’s ‘high musical summer’ began in 1901 when he completed his operatic masterpiece, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. Sir Thomas Beecham, who conducted the Argo 1990 Decca Record

⁵⁰ Argo video 1990, ‘*A Village Romeo and Juliet*’ made to sound track of CD with Helen Field (Artist), Arthur Davies (Artist), Thomas Hampson (Artist), Stafford Dean (Artist), Frederick Delius (Composer), Sir Charles Mackerras (Conductor), ORF Symphony Orchestra (Orchestra). Format: Audio CD

⁵¹ Delius Society 2013, *Biography*, viewed 22 January 2013, <http://www.delius.org.uk/biography.htm>

Company presentation of this work, assumed the mantle of Delius's greatest protagonist and retained the position until his death in 1961. Set in six scenes that feature more orchestral storytelling music than traditional opera, *Gramophone* reports *A Village Romeo and Juliet* as 'Delius's forgotten opera [taking] glorious centre stage at Wexford Festival.'⁵²

The last three scenes are pure magic – almost literally so. After Sali has maimed and all but killed Vreli's [Verena's] father, the couple fall asleep and have identical dreams. They are celebrating a joyful white wedding and their families are at peace. The staging is a brilliant theatrical trick. Then, after the interval, there is a complete shift of mood; the lovers have arrived at a local fairground, populated by acrobats, dancers, and human roundabouts. For a while the clowns take centre stage. It is a spectacular change of pace and atmosphere. But only on the surface. The darkly enigmatic figure of the illegitimate Dark Fiddler, who, had he been born in wedlock, would have been the true owner of the barren strip, tempts the would-be lovers to break the chains of their class and upbringing. Is he the Pied Piper, or maybe ... the devil, urging Sali and Vreli to join the free-loving partner-swapping Vagabonds? 'Follow me and my friends up to the mountains, up there 'tis fresh and free. Your own will reigns supreme and for your marriage bed there's soft and purple heather.' He surely holds sway in the Paradise Garden, the spiritually uplifting walk towards which—the famous orchestral interlude—is the one familiar and popular moment in the opera. We watch the star-crossed lovers walking, however, when they arrive at their Paradise, it is anything but. The Paradise Garden is an unholy, down-at-heel inn;

⁵² Gramophone 2012, *Delius's forgotten opera takes glorious centre stage at Wexford Festival*. Gramophone, viewed 22 January 2013, <http://www.gramophone.co.uk/blog/the-gramophone-blog/delius-s-forgotten-opera-takes-glorious-centre-stage-at-wexford-festival>.

Eden long after Adam and Eve have been expelled and the serpent has done his business. There is nothing physical stopping the lovers from becoming gypsies and indeed joining the Vagabonds, but Vreli is much too psychologically conditioned and the heartbreaking apotheosis is their own inevitable 'Liebestod'.

The orchestral *Walk to Paradise Garden*, which depicts Sali and Verena approaching the gypsy meeting place, is well-known to music lovers worldwide. Musicologist Arthur Hutchings (1906–1989) has written of the ending: 'The orchestra alone then concludes the work with a perfection unattainable by words; the music suggests the deep and enfolding waters.'

In the Beecham production⁵³ of the opera, program notes written by Christopher Palmer claim Delius's main interest lies in the progress of the love affair, being preoccupied with the wonders of human love, the wonders of non-human nature, and the infinity of their reverberations.

Reflections on Realism

Robert Holub (b 1949), in his appraisal of *Realism in 19th Century German Prose*,⁵⁴ points out three elements inherent in the title of Gottfried Keller's *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe* (*A Village Romeo and Juliet*): the characterizing reference to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; an implication that the story reflects universal truths; and that the event is taking place in a cultural moment of time.

Holub goes on to talk about two issues that have occupied commentary on the novella since its appearance: the motivation for the double suicide; and the nature of the

⁵³ *ibid* 26

⁵⁴ Holub, RC 1991, *Reflections on Realism: Paradox, Norm, and Ideology*, in *Nineteenth-Century German Prose*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit

bond between the two protagonists.⁵⁵ Holub gives three reasons for Sali and Verena's ('Vrenchen' in Holub's writing) inability to remain happy and together. The first is their social status. The second is the more abstract but related issue of honour and their values. Critics have been particularly fond of citing the following sentence in relation to this, which refers specifically to Sali's thoughts:

The feeling they can be happy in the middle-class world only in an entirely honourable and irreproachable marriage was just as alive in him, as it was in Vrenchen, and in both of these forlorn souls it was the last flame of that honour which had formerly shone in their houses, and which their fathers, each feeling himself secure, had blown out and destroyed by an inconspicuous mistake when they so thoughtlessly appropriated the land of the missing man, thinking to magnify this honour by increasing their property, and believing themselves safe in doing so. (p109)

The third reason is Sali's role in the mental derangement of Vrenchen's father. This seems to be the major obstacle for Vrenchen in particular, since she mentions it twice. Holub points out that Sali and Vrenchen are less pretentious than Romeo and Juliet but the story is an important reflection on realism, being both the result of an actual occurrence (the real life events that informed the newspaper story) and the fact that reality, what Keller calls *Menschenleben* (human life), necessarily repeats itself throughout time.

Michelle Bailat-Jones, in her book review (2009)⁵⁶ of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, describes this novel as 'a timeless love story ... reinterpreted into a psychological portrait of rural Swiss life,' and 'a tale of two families destroyed by feuding and the

⁵⁵ *ibid* 27, p108

⁵⁶ Bailat-Jones, M 2009, *Book Review—A Village Romeo and Juliet*, viewed 9 May 2013, <http://www.suite101.com/content/book-review-a-village-romeo-and-juliet-a123832#ixzz198wt4nk1>

love story that could have saved them ... *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is realism with a fairytale aesthetic.’ Bailat-Jones claims that Keller does not regard the suicides as ‘accidental’ but as a representation of ‘the folly and legacy of consuming hatred.’ She says that using Marti and Manz (the feuding farmers), and their children Sali and Verena as his templates, Keller portrays rural Swiss life in accurate, minute detail with an unswerving focus on depicting life and character ‘as it truly is’—a hallmark of 19th century realism—making *A Village Romeo and Juliet* both a historical document and a vivid story. Keller’s brand of realism is depicted as startlingly lyrical, smoothing away what amounts to a harsh criticism of the psychology of village life. The lyrical and unique combination of realism and romanticism makes it the wonderful story it is. The ‘Black Fiddler’ is an extraordinary contribution to the story. The rightful owner of the disputed land, disinherited because of his illegitimate status, the Black Fiddler invites the lovers to a life as gypsies. Sali and Verena make their own decision—not to become Vagabonds but to die together.

The tragic romance of *Romeo and Juliet* style is portrayed for us in the book and the opera with their reflections on ‘reality without’ (the society and world we live in) and ‘reality within’ (our inmost thoughts and feelings). Their interplay leading to fulfilment or tragedy is sometimes determined by fate and often by circumstance. This novel, a foundation reference for this study, establishes the concept that emotional decision making is, and always has been, an integral part of human nature and that the circumstances recur, albeit in new ways and circumstances.

The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism

Perhaps to love is to learn
to walk through this world.
To learn to be silent

like the oak and the linden of the fable.

To learn to see.

Your looks scatter seeds.

It planted a tree.

I talk

because you shake its leaves.⁵⁷

Octavio Paz's *The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism*, is a philosophical treatise about love, sexuality, and eroticism. Octavio Paz (1914–1998) was awarded the 1990 Nobel Prize for Literature 'for impassioned writing with wide horizons, characterized by sensuous intelligence and humanistic integrity.'⁵⁸

In his preface to *The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism*, Paz reflected on how the book was written late in life in response to a sense of compulsion but that its substance had been forming in his mind over a lifetime. Renowned as a poet and writer, Paz related that his first poem was a love poem and that love had appeared in his poetry ever since. He was an avid reader of tragedies, comedies, novels, and poems, mentioning specifically *A Thousand and One Nights* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Praising poetry in his opening chapter entitled 'The Kingdoms of Pan,' Paz talks of the fusion of seeing and believing, and how the poem shows us what we do not see with 'our carnal eyes' but with the 'eyes of the spirit.'

Poetic testimony reveals to us another world inside this world, the other world that is this world. The senses, without losing their powers, become servants of the imagination and let us hear the inaudible and see the invisible. (p2)

⁵⁷ Weinberger, E 1990, *The collected poems of Octavio Paz 1957-1987*, pp635, New Direction Books, New York

⁵⁸ Nobelprize.org 2012, The Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize. Nobelprize.org, viewed 8 May 2013, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/2012/

Paz discusses eroticism and sex, the latter expressed in human and non-human life, but the former identifiable only with human life. In 1960, he wrote about *Sade*,⁵⁹ attempting to trace the boundaries between animal sexuality, human eroticism, and the more restricted domain of love. He was not satisfied with the essay but it made him realize the vastness of the subject. Paz pursued this interest with a further publication entitled *An Erotic Beyond: Sade*. Laura Jamison, in a review for the *New York Times*, commented:⁶⁰

While sustaining his youthful admiration, Paz, the 1990 Nobel laureate in Literature, proceeds to examine the ontological impossibilities of Sade's thought in a hermetic, occasionally oblique, but ultimately brilliant treatment. Finally, however, Paz's fascination with Sade wore off. In the 1980s, when Sade had become the rage in the academy, Paz wrote that the infamous libertine was a curiosity but not a great writer or even a great philosopher – now he found Sade as philosophically tyrannical as the moralists who oppose him, and equally boring. “An Erotic Beyond: Sade” (well translated from the Spanish by Eliot Weinberger) serves as a valuable artifact of Paz's intellectual life.

While living in India in 1965, Paz fell in love. He decided to write a little book of love. This first attempt had to be abandoned, as did a second attempt. He continued to write love poems, and in them there appeared, ‘like recurrent musical phrases, like obsessions, images that were crystallizations of his thoughts.’⁶¹ In 1993, Paz remembered the abandoned book, felt more than regret, in fact shame, saying that ‘this

⁵⁹ Paz, O 1998, *An Erotic Beyond: Sade*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York

⁶⁰ New York Times, The 1998, *Books in Brief: An Erotic Beyond: Sade*, by Octavio Paz, New York Times, viewed 15 December 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/04/19/books/books-in-brief-nonfiction-438456.html>

⁶¹ *ibid* 65, p viii

was not forgetfulness but a betrayal.⁶² He spent several sleepless nights gnawed by remorse, then suddenly one morning he began to write with a sense of ‘joyous desperation.’ In two months, it was finished.

Paz’s command of philosophical scholarship is overwhelming but he described himself as a layman. His last chapter is entitled ‘Recapitulation: The Double Flame’ to help his readers orientate themselves. In this chapter, Paz gave us his stepwise progression of thought:

- We live in an age of communication. Dialogue is wonderful but contains a *confrontation of irreducibly different viewpoints*. Thought and language are bridges, but cannot erase the distance between ourselves and the outer reality. Poetry, Fiesta, and Love are genuine communication, leading communion. *Communion is inexpressible, and to a certain extent it excludes communication; it is not an exchange of news but a fusion.* (p251)
- Eroticism begins with the sight of the desired body. Plato represented carnal love as a sin against the spirit but did not condemn reproduction, instead, in *Symposium* he called the desire to procreate divine, a yearning for immortality. (p253)
- Human love denies neither the body nor the world. Without a *soul* there is no love, but neither is there love without a body. *Both love and eroticism – The Double Flame – are fed by the original fire: sexuality. Love and eroticism always return to the primordial source, to Pan and make the forest tremble.*
- Love is twofold. It is a supreme happiness and a supreme misfortune. Paz

⁶² ibid 65, pix

quotes Peter Abelard (1079–1142) in *The Story of My Misfortunes*,⁶³ where he says his greatest calamity was also his greatest happiness: *to have met Eloise, and been loved by her. Because of her he was a man: he knew love. And because of her he ceased to be a man: they castrated him.* Paz claims that lovers pass constantly from rapture to despair, from sadness to joy, from wrath to tenderness, from desperation to sensuality. Unlike the libertine, who simultaneously seeks the most intense pleasure and the greatest moral insensitivity, the lover is perpetually driven by contradictory emotions. *Love does not preserve us from the risks and misfortunes of existence. ... even [that which is] the most peaceful and happy [does not] escape the disasters and calamities of time. Love, any love, is made up of time, and no love can avoid the great catastrophe: love is subject to the assaults of age, infirmity, and death.* Paz continues, saying that despite all the misfortunes of life, we always endeavour to love and be loved. *There is a couple – Adam and Eve – that includes all couples, from the elderly Philemon and Baucis to the adolescent Romeo and Juliet; their images are those of the human condition in all times and places. Adam and Eve have equivalents or counterparts in other religions. They live in paradise, a place that is not beyond time but at its beginning. To reinvent love is to reinvent the original couple, the two creators of this world and of history.* (pp261-272)

- We are the theatre of the embrace of opposites and of their dissolution, resolved in a single note that is not affirmation or negation, but acceptance. What does a couple see in the space of an instant, a blink of the eye? The

⁶³ Abelard, P 2005, *Historia Calamitatum: The Story of My Misfortunes*, Abelard, Peter (1079-1142), Dover Publications, New York

equation of appearance and disappearance, the truth of the body and the non-body, the vision of the presence that dissolves into splendour: pure vitality, a heartbeat of time.⁶⁴ (p274)

Paz's conclusion comes in his penultimate chapter. It is brief. The ills that afflict modern society are political and economic, but they are moral and spiritual as well, threatening the foundation of our civilization; the human person and love. The political and social reform of liberal capitalistic democracies must be accompanied by a no less urgent reform of contemporary thought. Paz claims we are at a propitious moment, since in many of the sciences, as far as we laymen can judge, a noticeable movement of self-reflection and self-criticism is underway. The dialogue between science, philosophy, and poetry could be the prelude to the reconstitution of the unity of culture; the prelude as well as the resurrection of the human person who has been the cornerstone and was to bring about civilization.

Paz's defining phrase of romantic love, 'no one else will do,' is taken on board in this thesis, encapsulating the immediacy and imperative of 'falling in love' whatever the cost. The lovers who are the focus of this thesis are potential martyrs experiencing the all-consuming passion of love in *Romeo and Juliet* style. They would rather choose death than separation.

Mad Blood Stirring

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire:

The day is hot; the Capulets abroad;

And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,

For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring. (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.1 1-4)

⁶⁴ Excerpts from Paz, Octavio 1993 *The Double Flame: Love and Eroticism*, (transl Helen Lane), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), San Diego, ISBN 978-0-15-100103-3, pp 251,253, 261-272, 274

One of my research supervisors, Dr Susan Davies, is a historian. On returning from a conference for historians, she said ‘You must look at *Mad Blood Stirring* by Edward Muir. It could be one of your chapters.’ Yes indeed, the historical framework of Shakespeare’s plays is a cornerstone of Western thinking and *Romeo and Juliet* is a portrayal of romance tragedy of the kind pertinent to this study.

Edward Muir is a historian and writes in classicism style. *Mad Blood Stirring* is an abridged readers’ edition of *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance* (1993), the latter containing extensive technical historical analysis. Edward Muir (b 1946) found himself researching *Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance* concurrently with Professor Furio Bianco.⁶⁵ They began their projects at about the same time without knowledge of each other and have since collaborated and shared their findings regarding the remarkable Friulian peasant rebellion and noble vendetta of 1511.

In *Mad Blood Stirring*,⁶⁶ Muir presents a *Dramatis Personae* of leaders and followers, annotating whether they were murdered, their property sacked or looted, or their house or Castle burned. Sixteen of the fifty listed were murdered. Edward Muir presented his findings in the Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture under the title, *The Idea of Community in Renaissance Italy*,⁶⁷ describing his study as a ‘microhistory.’ One of his reviewers, Thomas V. Cohen of York University, alludes to different threads, stating:

To make sense of the work, it is best to review what microhistory attempts to do.

⁶⁵ Bianco, Furio 1995, 1511, La “crudel zobia grassa”: Rivolte contadine e faude nobiliari in Friuli tra ‘400 e ‘500, Pordenone

⁶⁶ Muir, E 1998, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta in Renaissance Italy*, John Hopkins, Baltimore

⁶⁷ Muir, E 2002, ‘The 2001 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: The Idea of Community in Renaissance Italy’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol.55, no.1, pp1–18

One should think of this Italian innovation not as a method, but as a mere *approccio*... Microhistory dictates no lines of investigation and validates no canons of proof. By now, many social historians recognize the lineaments of the genre: a taste for narrative, a liking for the marginal and the bizarre, a passion for untangling all the causal threads that knot in a situation, a penchant for spinning hypotheses, and a modicum of shyness about drawing larger lessons.

Let us take these traits in order to see what Muir has wrought.⁶⁸

The individual stories of romance tragedy are more micro than the local massacre of the 'Cruel Carnival of Udine' described but the individual stories highlight the realities of community life and practice, examples of which are paramount in this study, with some leaving a permanent legacy, such as the *Romeo and Juliet Bridge* of Sarajevo.⁶⁹

The massacre happened on Carnival Fat Thursday, 1511, in Northern Italy. It spread into the hinterland. The peasant followers of Antonio Savorgnan initiated the uprising against his hereditary enemies the Castellans of the Strumieri faction, butchering them in a manner reminiscent of the Crusades. Cohen adds:

The story is followed through treason, deposition, flight, and murder, and then traces the blood feud through its eclipse, revival, and guttering end as it dwindles into raucous pamphleteering over points of honor and then, finally, in mid-century, lapses into brokered peace.⁷⁰

At the time, towards the end of a period lasting several centuries, the political power belonged with kinship chains and consortia, 'who used vendetta as a disorderly

⁶⁸ Cohen, T Book review, "Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance." *The Free Library*. 1994 *Journal of Social History* 17 Jun. 2014, viewed 18 June 2014
<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Mad+Blood+Stirring%3a+Vendetta+and+Factions+in+Friuli+during+the..-a016108190>

⁶⁹ Robertson, N 2012, *Tragic 'Romeo and Juliet' offers Bosnia hope*, viewed 17 Jan 2013,
<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/04/05/world/europe/bosnia-romeo-juliet/index.html>

⁷⁰ *ibid* 74

machinery for keeping a shred of public order.’ From the publisher’s comments, ‘...the carnival massacre ... marked a crossroads: the old mentality of vendetta was soon supplanted by the emerging sense that the direct expression of anger should be suppressed – to be replaced by duels.’⁷¹

While Shakespeare’s portrayal of *Romeo and Juliet* is also based on Italian family vendettas, instead of the vicious hacking to death by peasants and the distribution of corpses to the dogs, the upper class have progressed to sword fighting, an affirmation of family honour to be performed by the elite themselves – a more courtly behaviour! One of Shakespeare’s sources for his *Romeo and Juliet* is the novella of Luigi da Porto entitled *Giulietta e Romeo*.⁷² On pages 87–88 of *Mad Blood Stirring*, Muir recounts da Porto’s inspiration for his novella. As a young soldier, he felt instant love at the time of the ‘Cruel Carnival of Udine’ in 1511; a time when circumstances prohibited realization of that love. Twenty four years later, da Porto published *Giulietta e Romeo*. He dedicated it to ‘the most beautiful and graceful lady Lucina Savorgnano.’ Muir describes the original incident, saying that in spite of the turmoil all around, a sweet interlude occurred when the Savorgnan clan, friends, and guests gathered for a ball:

Singing to the accompaniment of a clavichord, a rare sixteen-year-old beauty cast a delicious spell over the evening....and at least one young soldier fell in love with her, probably on that evening. She was Maria and Giacomo’s daughter, Lucina. The love smitten soldier was da Porto, who had already earned local acclaim for his courage in the guerrilla skirmishes, and would later achieve lasting fame for his literary and historical writings.

Muir was awarded the 1993 Howard Marraro Prize for the best book on Italian

⁷¹ *ibid* 72, publisher’s notes, back cover

⁷² Da Porto, L *Giulietta E Romeo: Novella Storica BiblioBazaar*, 2010

history. His study of an exceptional event in an exceptional place unmasks the hidden assumptions of community life as it existed. Muir claims it provides an opportunity to look at community as social interaction in an institutional guise, as a space in time, and as a process of social exclusion. One can say that the vendetta mentality and the process of social exclusion continue to be enacted in the world today.

Mad Blood Stirring is a book of outstanding worth and of prime significance for this thesis. People often think that Shakespeare wrote the storyline but this is not true. Muir takes us back to original legends and events prior to Shakespeare. The concept of microhistory is established as being of supreme importance. The current stories from India are also microhistories with widespread implications.

Layla and Majnun

Nezāmi of Ganja⁷³ is one of many poetic authors who bring to us this truly epic legendary story that is as central to Arab-Muslim-Persian-Turkish culture as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is to the Western world. The *Layla and Majnun* fable has roots in a historic story attributed to a poet named Qays. *Leyli O Majnun* is a narrative distich (two line couplet) poem of approximately 4,600 lines was composed in 1192. Gelpke's edited translation of Nezāmi of Ganja's version is written in fifty-four crisp, fast-moving short chapters.⁷⁴ We are indebted to Gelpke for this translation presented in prose as a key entry point for Western readers. The underlying theme is love madness leading to mental derangement and spiritual transcendence.

The Storyline

The storyline begins thus:

⁷³ Encyclopedia Iranica 2010, "*Leyli o Majnun*", AA Seyed-Gohrab. *Encyclopedia Iranica*, viewed 4 April 2010, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/leyli-o-majnun-narrative-poem>

⁷⁴ Nizami, Ganjavi 1966, *The Story of Layla and Majnun* (transl from the Persian by Dr R. Gelpke, ed, Omega Publications, New York, pp 177.

The Sayyid, a Sultan of the Arabs, a Bedouin in Arabia, was well respected and had a kind heart for the poor. No other country flourished like his. Although respected like a Caliph, to himself he felt like a candle slowly consuming itself without ever spreading quite enough light – for his secret sorrow was that he had no son. The older he grew the greater became his desire and for many years his alms and his prayers were in vain. Yet he continued to pray and clamour, and in the end God fulfilled his wish; he was given a son who was wonderful in every respect. Under the care of his nurse he flourished and grew more beautiful every day. At school, Quays was one of the best pupils – he easily mastered the art of reading and writing. His fellow pupils included girls who came from noble families of various tribes. One day a beautiful little girl joined the group and the name of this miracle of creation was Layla. In Arabic Layla means night and her hair was the colour of night. Whilst everybody was attracted to this girl, young Quays felt more. He was bound in an ocean of love before he knew there was such a thing. He gave his heart to Layla before he understood what he was giving away, and Layla fared no better. A fire had been lit in both and each reflected the other. Together they inhaled the scent of the flower and as yet no one had noticed. So they went on drinking their wine. They drank and dreamed by night, and the more they drank the deeper they became immersed in each other. Their eyes were blind and their ears deaf to the school and the world.

But can such happiness last? Was not a shadow already falling even as the children failed to notice? As Layla became more beautiful, not only Quays but also his companions became aware of her beauty and openly or secretly they began to stare at her. For the first time a bitter taste mingled. He was no longer alone with Layla. A small crack appeared in his blind happiness and when the

lovers turned their backs on the world the eyes of the world turned on them. How easy the lovers made it for their enemies to set their traps. *What? Have you not heard?*, they sneered. From mouth to mouth it was whispered, and now Layla and Quays began to notice the pointed fingers. Suddenly they realized their blindness. Was there a way out? They could not see any. People who looked on said, *He is a Majnun, a madman*. Soon everybody knew, and the madder Quays appeared. He walked amongst people praising Layla's beauty. Who would do such a thing? Disaster swiftly followed. It became too much for Layla's people. Was not the girl's honour also that of her family, and more, that of her whole tribe? Was it right that this mad fellow should play around with her until her name became a laughing stock? Layla's parents kept their daughter home. Layla had to hide the sadness of her heart. Only when she was alone did she drop the curtain and shed lonely tears...

Majnun is left at the crossroads between death and madness. At first he becomes mad and his poetry becomes his salvation. He survives his sorrow because he is living in another realm with his mind wandering amidst poetic symbols. Poetry, in the context of 'poesis' of the ancient Greeks, becomes his 'creation.' And for this reason, he does not die out of pain but stokes it alive, renewing it daily. Trying to ease the pain in the boy's heart, Majnun's father takes him to a sacred temple to ask for God's help. However, instead of praying for relief from his madness, Majnun pleads, *Dear God, for your own sake and for the sake of love, let my love grow stronger with each passing hour. Love is all I have, all I am, and all I ever want to be!* Without this emotion, Majnun knows his life would be deprived of all meaning. Eventually, Majnun retreats to the wilderness, preferring the company of wild beasts to that of men. There he communes with the animals and recites his poetry. He continues to decline and

eventually dies, out of madness, having exhausted all symbolic and psychological desire. Upon his final meeting with his beloved, he no longer wishes to live and cannot prevent his death; and so he dies, contented. Layla dies as well. The conclusion clearly elaborates the death of the lovers, but not the death of love. In some versions of the story, it is Layla who dies first and then Majnun afterwards. Lying upon her tomb, he passes away, guarded by his only friends, the wild animals.

The second part of this storyline is by Jean-Pierre Guinhut, French Ambassador to Azerbaijan, writing for *Azerbaijan International* in an article entitled ‘The Man Who Loved Too Much: The Legend of *Leyli and Majnun*.’⁷⁵ Guinhut recounts that many art miniatures have been painted depicting the final death scene of Majnun with the wild animals. They were especially prevalent between the 15th and 17th centuries, inspired by the Miniature Schools of Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, Herat, and Bukhara. Today, these paintings can be found in St. Petersburg, Paris, London, and Tehran.

Guinhut asks, ‘Why does this story still have a profound effect on modern audiences, especially youth?’ In the past, love had been a matter of privacy. Union between a couple had been a matter of family diplomacy. Guinhut continues, saying the dilemma still causes trauma today, especially for Eastern families who have settled in the United States. Consider Southern California, for example, where one million Iranians reside. Many families have been devastated by the existential contradictions between Oriental traditions and the impact of the Western sexual liberation ideology of the 1960s and 1970s. For this reason, even up to the contemporary period, in most Oriental countries, the identification or association to Majnun or Leyli is immediate for any youth or lover who has experienced passionate love. Guinhut adds, *I myself have*

⁷⁵ Guinhut, J-P 1998, ‘The Man Who Loved Too Much. The Legend of Leyli and Majnun’. *Azerbaijan International*, vol.6, no.3, pp33–38, viewed 7 May 2013, http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/63_folder/63_articles/63_legendleyli.html. Note that ‘Leyli’ not ‘Layla’ is used in this version

met young Arab lovers who could not face the distress of an impossible love and ended up dying either by becoming mad or by committing suicide.

Echoing the duo of writer Gottfried Keller and composer Frederick Delius for *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, the story of *Layla and Majnun* is not complete without reference to the wonderful opera *Leyli and Majnun* by Uzeyir Hajibeyov (1885–1948). Hajibeyov is credited with composing it as the first Western opera in the Muslim East at age 22.⁷⁶ It was the first example of traditional mughams being used in their unwritten, improvisational form, but within the broader context of the European opera genre and a symphonic orchestra. Together, Uzeyir and his younger brother Jeyhun (1891–1962) wrote the libretto based on the poetic rendition of *Leyli and Majnun* by Azerbaijani poet Fuzuli (1480–1562). Many of the verses were kept in their original form. The idea for the opera can be traced to the boys' childhood in their hometown of Shusha. In 1898, there had been an amateur dramatization and the brothers had sung together in a boys' chorus interpreting the song of Majnun at Leyli's graveside. The experience had a profound effect on them. While the plot, based on an immortal love story, can best be compared to *Romeo and Juliet*, in the oral tradition the legend of *Leyli and Majnun* predates Shakespeare by more than a thousand years.

Uzeyir Hajibeyov's opera *Leyli and Majnun* premiered at the Taghiyev Theatre in Baku on 12 January 1908.⁷⁷ The opera has since been performed continuously in the Eastern world but not in the West, the difficulty being the combination of Eastern and

⁷⁶ Blair, B 2001, 'Leyli and Majnun: First Opera of the Muslim East (1908),' *Azerbaijan International*, vol.9, no.3, pp54–55

⁷⁷ UNESCO 2008, *100th anniversary of the first opera in the East: "Leyli and Majnun" (1908)*. UNESCO, viewed 25 January 2013, http://www.unesco.kz/publications/clt/Anniversaries_2008-9.pdf

Western style music, and Western singers not trained in the art of mughams.⁷⁸ However, artistic globalization is happening. Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble is now bringing an arrangement written for Western music lovers, with lead singers from Azerbaijan, to the Western world, as reported in the *Silk Road Project*.⁷⁹

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo Yo Ma's 2007 residency at Harvard used as its centerpiece the classic Arabian love story of *Layla and Majnun*. Known and beloved throughout Central Asia, the tale tells how ill-fated love turns the protagonist into Majnun—literally a 'madman.' Ensemble member Johnny Gandelsman arranged the 1908 opera by Uzeyir Hajibeyov into a 35-minute chamber piece. The Silk Road Ensemble arrangement of *Layla and Majnun* was made possible in part by generous support from the Académie Musicale de Villecroze. Performed on two nights as a work in progress by the Silk Road Ensemble with Yo Yo Ma, *Layla and Majnun* moved the packed house to momentary silence before the audience stood and burst into cheers.

As the present study looks at other cultures for understanding of tragic romantic circumstances, the story of *Layla and Majnun* is of huge relevance and importance.

First Love Stories

Thwack! The arrow of the great archer, Kama, hits its mark.

Thwack! Struck by curiosity, Psyche wounds herself with Eros's arrow.

Once there was a time before love; then, love begins...pxi.

⁷⁸ Fijilive 2009, *Azerbaijan's traditional music thrives again*. Fijilive, viewed 25 January 2013, <http://www.fijilive.com/news/2009/12/azerbaijans-traditional-music-thrives-again/22294.Fijilive>

⁷⁹ Silk Road Project 2007, *Massachusetts, U.S.—Harvard Residency, November 26–30, 2007*. Silk Road project, viewed 25 January 2013, <http://www.silkroadproject.org/PostcardsfromtheRoad/PostcardHarvardResidency2007/tabid/258/Default.aspx>

Thus Dianne Wolkstein (1942–2013),⁸⁰ doyenne of folklore storytelling, begins her book *First Love Stories*.⁸¹ Wolkstein sparked a storytelling revival during her five years as New York City's only full-time storyteller. She has published thirteen award winning books, mostly collections of folk tales, legends, and creation stories gathered during research trips.

Wolkstein says of the seven mythological and legendary love stories she has chosen that:⁸²

Isis and Osiris (Egyptian) embodies love that is stronger than the forces of nature;

Inanna and Dumuzi (Sumerian) explores the cyclical quality of love;

Shiva and Sati (Hindu) portrays the explosion of passion and the taming of the mind;

The Song of Songs (Hebrew) suggests a sensuous, celebratory, yearning quality of love;

Psyche and Eros (Greek-Roman) presents the forging of the psyche;

Layla and Majnun (Arabic-Persian) reveals the path of the soul; and

Tristan and Iseult (Celtic-European) expresses the struggle of inner and outer loyalty.

She adds:

... after the material excesses of the 80s, we have reached a time when we are looking to our feelings for guidance and fulfillment. No value is more eternal

⁸⁰ New York Times N.Y. / Region, The 2013, *Diane Wolkstein, Children's Author Who Spurred a Storytelling Revival, Dies at 70*, viewed 14 February 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/04/nyregion/diane-wolkstein-author-who-sparked-a-storytelling-revival-dies-at-70.html>

⁸¹ Wolkstein, D 1992, *The First Love Stories: from Isis and Osiris to Tristan and Iseult*, New York: Harper Perennial

⁸² *ibid* 87, pp3-36, 39-71, 75-89, 93-109, 113-146, 149-180, 183-223

than love; and now more than ever we need to know how the great lovers of the past have lived their passion.

One of the stories, *Isis and Osiris*, an Egyptian creation story, exemplifies cosmological mythology and invites us to immerse ourselves in a wonderland of supernatural powers intertwined with raw human emotions.

Isis and Osiris, together with Seth and Nephthys, were the children of Geb and Nut (Earth and Sky), who in turn were the children of Shu and Tefnut (Air and Water), created by Atum (the One, the great He-She). Atum's tears of happiness became the first men and women. All the other gods were offspring of Isis, Osiris, Seth, and Nephthys. Atum, in the form of the sun god Re, gave Osiris the kingship.

There was no barrier to the marriage of Osiris and Isis. Their love was 'perfect' and Osiris ruled the kingdom with magnificence. Unnoticed by others, however, Seth's jealousy of Isis and Osiris's happiness was mounting, and he began planning Osiris's murder. Osiris left Isis in charge as ruler of the kingdom so he could explore other countries. Seth at first tried to seduce Isis, but to no avail. After a time, Isis wrote to Osiris imploring him to return. They exchanged intense love letters and Osiris eventually returned.

Seth's next ploy was to groom his wife Nephthys to look like Isis. Osiris mistook Nephthys for Isis, made love to her, and Nephthys became pregnant. Nephthys hid her pregnancy then abandoned the newborn baby. Isis was made aware of the situation, rescued the baby and reared him as her personal attendant.

Finding others who were jealous of Osiris, Seth arranged a grand party where Osiris was tricked into lying in a coffin that precisely fitted his measurements. The lid was slammed shut and sealed with molten lead. The coffin was cast into the Nile. Isis, distraught, searched for the coffin and eventually found it alongside a huge tree. She hid

it in the marshes but Seth found it and cut Osiris's body into bits. Isis found all the pieces except one and put them back together.

Osiris's spirit, however, was not dead. Eventually, he impregnated Isis who gave birth to Horus (the falcon god), who, eighty years later, reclaimed Osiris's throne; the double crown of the two lands Upper and Lower Egypt. Osiris became king of the underworld, Horus king of the living, and Seth ruler of the deserts as the god of chaos and evil.

Wolkstein's comment, 'after the material excesses of the 80s we have reached a time when we are looking to our feelings for guidance and fulfillment' and her choice of stories are all pertinent to the theme of this study.

Toward a New Legal Common Sense

Boaventura de Sousa Santos,⁸³ Professor of Sociology at the School of Economics, University of Coimbra (Portugal), Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, and Global Legal Scholar at the University of Warwick is Director of the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra and Scientific Coordinator of the Permanent Observatory for Portuguese Justice. Santos is coordinator of the research project *ALICE – Strange Mirrors, Unsuspected Lessons: Leading Europe to a new way of sharing the world's experiences*, financed by the European Research Council, one of the most prestigious and highly competitive international financial institutes for scientific excellence in Europe.

Focusing on the 'sociology of emergence,'⁸⁴ Boaventura de Sousa Santos unfolds 'signs of the reconstruction of the tension between social regulation and social

⁸³ Santos, B de S 2012, *Homepage*, viewed 25 December 2012, <http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/pages/en/homepage.php>

⁸⁴ Santos, B de S 2002, *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization, and Emancipation*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 592 pages

emancipation,’ and ‘the role of law in such a reconstruction’ (pp494-495). Santos claims that work under the paradigm of modernity has revealed a vast wealth of social experience that has now been largely discredited. Furthermore, he states that modern law has been subjected to a radical critical analysis, leaving it in an unthinking state that merely abides by dominant conceptions of reality. His view is that the modernist legal canon is narrow and reductionist, and arrogantly discredits, silences, or negates the legal experiences of large bodies of the population.

Writing in the classicism style, Santos critically discusses the construction of the modernist legal canon (chapters 1 to 3), and examines its internal diversity, its many scales, and its many contradictory political and cultural orientations (chapters 4 to 6). In Chapter 7, entitled ‘On Modes of Production of Law and Social Power,’ Santos explores the recognition of a plurality of legal orders, forms of power, and forms of knowledge, stating a need for a theoretical reconstruction of these differing legalized social systems. He discusses obstacles to ‘transformative agency,’ emphasizing the opposite impediments of self-justification and passivity, as well as relations between national societies, the interstate system, and the global economy. In chapter 8, entitled ‘Law: A Map of Misreading,’ he states:

Because people are permanently (even if inconsistently) socialised and acculturated in the types of scale, projection and symbolisation that are characteristic of the national state legal order, they refuse to recognise as legal those normative orders that use different scales, projections and symbolisations. They are beyond the minimum and maximum threshold of legal cognition. Some (infrastate, local) legal orders are too close to everyday reality to be viewed as a fact in law (a *legal* fact), while other (suprastate, global) legal orders are too remote from everyday reality to be viewed as a law of fact (a *legal fact*). The

symbolic cartography of law, using as a metaphor such commonplace and vulgar objects as maps, contributes to the creation of a new legal common sense, another key component of the post-modern conception of law advanced in this book. (p438)

In his last chapter (pp439–495), Santos poses the rhetorical question, ‘Can Law Be Emancipatory?’ Santos makes it clear that the use of law often goes beyond the modernist legal canon. Forms of law frequently not acknowledged as such (informal, non-official forms of law) are used. When state official law is used, the way it is used is never conventional. Rather, such law becomes part of a vaster set of political resources. Often, law is present under the guise of illegal practices that are used to fight for an alternative legality. Finally, what is designated as law, illegally or even a-legally, consists of components of legal constellations that can be activated on the local, national, and global scale. Santos designates them as ‘subaltern cosmopolitan legality.’ He then answers his own question about whether law can be emancipatory, saying that although investigating the question is both profitable and inadequate, law can be neither emancipatory nor non-emancipatory. The pursuit of emancipatory or non-emancipatory issues is a movement coming from organizations of the subaltern cosmopolitan groups that resort to law to advance their struggles.

Santos aims to justify the adoption of broader conceptions of reality and realism, and states the best way to capture reality is by means of an open research agenda. He presents a grand overview of progressive social law and order. Highly regarded as a current world leader of social theory with knowledge of social history and social evolution which, for the majority of readers, is hard to match or even to understand,⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Perry, R, 1997, ‘Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law: Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition by Santos,’ *Contemporary Sociology*, Washington, vol.26, iss.2, Mar

Santos acknowledges that the 1st edition⁸⁶ of *Toward a New Legal Common Sense* contained too much material for people to grasp. He says that ‘only the most persistent and resilient of my readers succeeded in handling the book in its entirety.’ In the preface to the 2nd edition, Santos states that perhaps no book has ever been so deeply revised. He pursues only one of the two major topics of the book, saying:

The relevance of modern law in our time and the specificity of the crisis it undergoes convinced me of the need to devote myself exclusively to law for the time being, and leave further analysis of modern science for later studies.

The problematic, one of paradigmatic transition—the idea that our time is a time of transition between the paradigms of modernity, which appears to have exhausted its regenerating capacities, and another emerging time of which we have so far only emerging signs—remained unchanged.

Santos is promoting the concept of common sense in law. He has shown how, within existing law, different interpretations can be placed on circumstance. Juries are required to make decisions when the evidence is beyond reasonable doubt. The assumption remains that jurors not only have common sense but are fair minded. Local, national, and global legalities are there to maintain law and order. Enforceable law and order is a requirement of society. Offenders are penalized in a variety of ways that include removal of dangerous persons from the public arena, time for re-education and rehabilitation, and as a deterrent.

Currently the High Court of India is advocating the death penalty for perpetrators of honour killing of eloping couples as a deterrent. Yet there are those for whom honour is so important that they willingly accept whatever penalty is imposed. In December 2012,

⁸⁶ Santos, B de S 1995, *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition*, Routledge, New York

there was a call for the death penalty for a gang rape that happened in New Delhi, the capital of India. Do we have good people with common sense to make judgements for the community? India is noted to have at least one criminal politician, renowned for being charged with murder on multiple occasions, and with his son in prison for the murder of his sister's unacceptable lover. The request for bail and parole for the son has been brought back to court continuously and will go on until a favourable outcome is reached.⁸⁷

Santos finishes his book with an appeal against lazy reasoning and the waste of experience it creates. The common sense theme, however, is a value judgement. We may not know how to define the word 'good' but we have to proceed in society with the assumption that we are working with 'good' people. There were religious martyrs willing to die for their principles from both the Catholic and Church of England persuasions in the Elizabethan era. The issues of honour are life-and-death issues, focused in this thesis on *Romeo and Juliet* style martyrs. In this true-romance scenario, where 'the tension between social regulation and social emancipation'⁸⁸ is so starkly represented, we look for social debate supporting the lovers and, hopefully, social progress in the wider world.

Just laws are necessary. Good people with common sense are essential for social progress if we are to achieve, in Santos' words, 'prudent knowledge for a decent life.' The present study notes the importance of law in social progress related to romance tragedy, and Santos' critical analysis of society and the law indicates the parameters within which change can happen.

⁸⁷ Times of India, The 2008, *Ashok Todi in judicial custody till Dec 12*. The Times of India, viewed 27 October 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2008-12-02/kolkata/27903447_1_14th-metropolitan-magistrate-court-ashok-todi-rizwanur-rahman-death-case

⁸⁸ *ibid* 91, p494

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The first paper submitted in this thesis is a research proposal published in Proceedings of the Inaugural Postgraduate Research Conference, BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN IDEAS AND DOING RESEARCH, held 8-11 August 2006, Faculty of Education, Health and Professional Studies, University of New England, Armidale NSW. Entitled ‘Towards a Study of Potentially Tragic Romantic Events of *Romeo and Juliet* Style (Happening in the World Today and Mythological),’ it is a study in qualitative research that sketches the scope and focus of the overall research project. The goal is to determine a ‘Path of Progress’ in relation to forbidden marriage under the logic of ethical social emergence.

The concept for a study of *Romance Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet Style* began in 1993 as an intercultural philosophical problem for the author that was offensive to his Western Judeo-Christian morality and upbringing. The author read of an Indian man who hanged his son in public, whilst a mob stood by, because of a forbidden marriage. It was a story of romance tragedy in a non-Western cultural setting. Also in 1993, during the Croatian War of Independence 1991–1995, the *Romeo and Juliet* tragedy theme was echoed by the signature dispatch from Reuters’ war reporter Kurt Schork in which two lovers with permission to leave the besieged city of Sarajevo were killed by sniper fire.⁸⁹

With the help of personal contacts in India and Nepal, I put together a collection of real life stories of gross personal and community tragedy involving mainly the Hindu and Muslim religions and related to intermarriage. Briefer reference is made to stories from other cultures that exemplify the universal phenomenon of romance tragedy, a

⁸⁹ Reuters1993, Kurt Schork’s signature dispatch from siege of Sarajevo. Reuters, viewed 28 April 2012, <http://www.ksmemorial.com/romeo.htm>

subject of cultural folklore and artistic heritage.

Shakespeare has given us a mandate for the study of romance tragedy of this kind in his quintessential expression of the ancient story of *Giulietta e Romeo*.⁹⁰ In the last line of his prologue to his tragic play *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare says, ‘what here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.’ The published paper ‘Towards a Study of Potentially Tragic Events of *Romeo and Juliet* style (Happening in the World Today and Mythological)’ presented at a research student seminar in 2007,⁹¹ sets the stage for the thesis. The core paper of the thesis is entitled ‘Present day romance tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* style: Focus on Northern India and Nepal in the time period 1993–2013.’ The burden of the article is to demonstrate a ‘Path of Progress’ expressed under the logic of social emergence. Three related papers examining romance tragedy historically, artistically, and socially follow. These are entitled:

‘The *Romeo and Juliet* phenomenon 1: Before and after Shakespeare.’

‘The *Romeo and Juliet* phenomenon 2: Expression in the arts – A tribute to genius.’

‘The *Romeo and Juliet* phenomenon 3: Sociological aspects of romance tragedy – Local and global.’

The concluding summary chapter reviews challenges to honour and tradition, social shame and social pride, globalization, and rights to options, law, and social progress, and working toward a ‘Path of Progress’ with a paradigm of hope. Links are made between local and global peace initiatives, with an emphasis on maximizing pacifism and nonkilling. Nonkilling is seen as the first acceptable end point in the path of peace.

This thesis is designed to follow JOURNAL-ARTICLE-FORMAT FOR PhD

⁹⁰ Moore, O 1950, *The Legend of Romeo and Juliet*, ChVI, p43, The Ohio State University Press, Open Access Initiative, viewed 27 September 2013, <https://ohiostatepress.org/index.htm?/books/book%20pages/moore%20legend.htm>

⁹¹ Evans, D, Jenkins B & Davies, S 2006, *Towards a Study of Potentially Tragic Romantic Events of Romeo and Juliet Style*. Proceedings of the Inaugural Postgraduate Research Conference 2006, pp42–52

THESES AT UNE guidelines. It comprises five inter-related papers together with introduction and summary chapters. The stand-alone papers necessarily contain some unavoidable duplication of information in relation to orientation and methodology. While the original title ‘Potentially tragic romantic events of *Romeo and Juliet* style happening in the world today and mythological’ was modified to ‘Present Day Romance Tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* Style’ and then to ‘Romance tragedy of ‘*Romeo and Juliet* Style’: A study in qualitative research with special focus on India and Nepal in the time period 1993–2013,’ the focal theme of the study has not changed over the course of the investigation. The time period is an important defining element of the study as it examines and develops appreciation of the *Romeo and Juliet* phenomenon.