

**The Native as Detective: A Case Study of Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* and Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa***

A Dissertation Submitted

To

Sikkim University



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy

By

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May

2022

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Date: 23/05/2022

### DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "*The Native as Detective: A Case Study of Jamyang Norbu's The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes and Sarat Chandra Das's Journey to Lhasa*" submitted to **Sikkim University** for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**, is my original work. Any content or any part of this dissertation has not been submitted to any other institution or any other academic purposes.

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I recommend this dissertation be placed before the examiners for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of this university.

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### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "*The Native as Detective: A Case Study of Jamyang Norbu's The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes and Sarat Chandra Das's Journey to Lhasa*" submitted to Sikkim University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in the Department of English, embodies bona fide research work carried out by Ashish Gurung under my guidance and supervision. No part of this dissertation has been submitted for any other degree, diploma, associate-ship or fellowship.

All the assistance and help during the course of the investigation has been duly acknowledged by him.

Dr. Rosy Chamling

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rosy Chamling'.

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**“The Native as Detective: A Case Study of Jamyang Norbu’s *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* and Sarat Chandra Das’s *Journey to Lhasa*”**

Submitted by **Ashish Gurung**, under the supervision of **Dr. Rosy Chamling**, Associate Professor, Department of English, School of Languages and literature, Sikkim University, Gangtok – 737102, India

  
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## CHAPTER - I

### The Native as Detective: A Case Study of Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock*

### *Holmes* and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*

#### 1.1 Introduction:

Crime fiction is a literary genre that fictionalizes crimes, their investigation, the criminals and their motives. Crime fiction has multiple subgenres, such as detective fiction, courtroom drama, hard-boiled fiction and legal thrillers. Most crime drama focuses on crime detection and does not feature the court room. Suspense and mystery are key elements that are ever-present in the genre. Crime fiction came to be recognized as a distinct literary genre, with specialist writers and a devoted readership, in the 19th century. Earlier novels and stories such as Edgar Allan Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (1842) were devoid of systematic attempts at investigation: there was present a detective, either amateur or professional, trying to figure out how and who committed a particular crime; police not being involved trying to solve a case; and there were no discussion on motives, alibis, the modus operandi, or any other elements which make up the modern crime writing.

One of the earliest stories whose central motive was solving a crime is "*Oedipus Rex*" (first performed 429 BC), in which the search for the murderer of the previous king, leads to the downfall of the current one. Another early example of crime fiction is *gong'an fiction* in China, which involved magistrates who solved criminal court cases and first appeared in colloquial stories of the Song dynasty. *The One Thousand and One Nights* (first translated in 1704) contains the earliest known examples of crime fiction.

Better known are the earlier works of Edgar Allan Poe. His brilliant and eccentric detective C. Auguste Dupin, a forerunner to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes,



appeared in works such as *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (1842), and *The Purloined Letter* (1844). With his Dupin stories, Poe provided the framework for the classic detective novel. The detective's unnamed companion is the narrator of the stories and a prototype for the character of Dr Watson in the later Sherlock Holmes stories.

The concept of a 'Master Detective' is ever-present in the novels. Since Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (1839) introduced chevalier C. Auguste Dupin as a master detective, next in line was the master detective Sherlock Holmes who became a model for master detective. The idea of a detective seems mysterious and secretive, one that requires the usage of immense mental prowess and the ever-present ability of picking up even the smallest of clues that are hidden from the naked eye, and to be a detective who is a master in their field, they must have a variety of specific traits that allows them to get into the mind of the perpetrator and solve sometimes complex crimes. The concept of a detective who solves the mystery alongside the authorities who are present there, became a norm in detective fiction. But, an idea that a detective who is not just a normal detective, but a master in their craft, who would not overlook any details, and have the greatest insight into things that are hidden in plain sight, gradually began taking form. So, with the skillset that a detective already has, they had to bring in more elements into their being, so that the detective can be considered someone who is a master in their craft. The master detective has to master the ability of multitasking – the detective will not only be present on the scene of the crime but whilst they are there, their mind will also be working to find more clues that are hidden, walk through the entire crime scene to get a better grasp of the situation rather than just being content with whatever is on display, and analysing everything that is there to move onto the next part of solving the crime/mystery. Intuition also comes into play here – or in this case, a very strong

sense of intuition – which can also be called a gut-feeling. A master detective has to perceive a lot of things, but most of all, they will have to trust their intuition if they feel that they are missing a part of the puzzle, and sometimes these gut-feelings might seem bizarre in the eyes of the onlookers, but this is a time when their mettle and intuition will be tested. A master detective will always follow their gut-feeling/intuition on cases where the cases seem normal but there is something more to it than it meets the eye. The mental power of detection of a master detective should be extraordinary; but the canonical detective must also stand out physically – he must possess physical peculiarities, idiosyncrasies should be emphasised, the choice of his clothes – he must be someone who stands out both physically and mentally.

Julian Symons comments about the master detective:

It is personality that counts. You are not bound to make your public like the Great Detective... But, he must be real; he must have idiosyncrasies, eccentricities... he must smoke these appalling cigarettes get his English idioms wrong. (Symons, *The Detective Story in Britain*, 1962, p.26)

With the evolution of the print mass media in the United Kingdom and the United States in the latter half of the 19th century, it was a crucial step in popularizing crime fiction and other related genres. Like the works of many other important writers of the day, such as Wilkie

Collins and Charles Dickens – Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories first appeared in the serial form in the monthly Strand magazine (January 1891-March 1950) in the United Kingdom. The series quickly attracted a wide and passionate following on the United

Kingdom as well as the United States, and when Doyle killed off Holmes in *The Final Problem*, the public outcry was so great that he was offered publishing deals for more stories with a lucrative offer, and he was reluctantly forced to resurrect him.

Detective fiction is a subgenre of crime and mystery fiction. The key elements of this subgenre was the investigation of a crime by a detective, either amateur or professional. Although the detective genre began around the mid-nineteenth century, Edgar Allan Poe's publication of *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1842) is considered the first English-speaking detective fiction. Some of the noted heroes of detective fiction include names such as C. Auguste Dupin from Edgar Allan Poe's works, Sherlock Holmes, the great Master Detective from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's works, and Hercule Poirot from the works of Agatha Christie. Poe devised a "plot formula that's been successful ever since, give or take a few shifting variables." Poe followed with further Auguste Dupin tales: *The Mystery of Marie Roget* in 1843 and *The Purloined Letter* in 1845.

Tales of ratiocination is what Poe referred to his stories as. The primary concern of these kinds of stories were ascertaining the truth, and the means used in obtaining the truth in these kinds of stories is to use a process of combining intuitive logic, observation, and insightful inference. The *Mystery of Marie Rogêt* (1842) is an interesting case because it is a fictionalized account based on the theory of what happened to the real-life Mary Cecilia Rogers. Emile Gaboriau (9<sup>th</sup> November 1832-28<sup>th</sup> September 1873) was a pioneer of the detective fiction genre in France. In *Monsieur Lecoq* (1868), the title character is a master in using disguises, a key characteristic of detectives. *Bleak House* (1853) by Charles Dickens is another example of a 'whodunit' plot in detective fiction. Tulkinghorn, who is a lawyer but considered devious, is killed in his office late one night. The investigation of this crime falls under the hands of Inspector Bucket of the Metropolitan police force. Various characters

appeared on the staircase leading to Tulkinghorn's office that night, and it is up to Inspector Bucket to filter out the innocent bystanders and single out the murderer. Dickens's protégé, Wilkie Collins (1824–1889) is credited with the first great mystery novel, *The Woman in White* (1859) and *The Moonstone* (1868). *The Moonstone* (1868) is seen as the novel that contains a number of ideas that established classic features of the 20th century detective fiction: English country house robbery, an inside job, a professional investigator, local police force who are shown as inferior to the detective, detective inquiries, many false suspects, the least likely suspect, a rudimentary locked room murder, a reconstruction of the crime, and a final twist in the plot.

Native, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, means relating to or describing someone's country or place of birth or someone who was born in a particular country or place. This acts as a perfect justification for using the above mentioned novels as reference for this research, as both novels have one important thing in common – the characters in the two novels are natives of a common place, India. While the former mentioned novel is a recollection of the adventures of the character through his letters, the latter is an autobiography, for the author himself was a spy, who was sent on a mission to a place which is also a common factor in both novels: Tibet. The first novel, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, by Jamyang Norbu (first published in India in 1999), revolves around the 2-year absence of Sherlock Holmes (1891-1893), wherein everyone was shocked and surprised to learn about the demise of the great detective at the Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland, in a last deadly struggle with the archcriminal Professor Moriarty. Due to popular public demand, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was compelled to bring the detective back to life in 1893, in which Holmes informs a stunned Dr Watson:

I travelled for two years in Tibet, therefore, and amused myself by visiting Lhasa and spending some days with the head Lama. You may have read the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson, but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, Glossary page 1)

Although the world rejoiced on the fact that Holmes was indeed alive, Jamyang Norbu, an avid reader of Kipling and Doyle, took it upon himself to know about the detective's travel in the East. Jamyang Norbu (born 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1949) is a Tibetan political activist and writer, who previously lived as a Tibetan exile in India. During his school days, he dropped out of school and ran away from home to join the Tibetan guerrilla group *Chushi Gangdruk*, which was based on Nepal. He was the creator of Tibetans-in-exile taxation system, which has helped fund the exile government since 1972. Later, along with Lhasang Tshering, Pema Bhum and Tashi Tsering, he founded the Amnye Machen Institute in Dharmashala in the year 1992. Norbu has written several books and theater pieces in English and in Tibetan. *Illusion and Reality*, a collection of his political essays, was published in 1989. In 2000 he received the Hutch

Crossword Book Award for *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*. The book was published in the United States in 2001, first under the title *Sherlock Holmes - The Missing Years*, and fills in the gap in 1891 when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle temporarily killed off Holmes. In the book, Holmes joins Huree Chunder Mookerjee, another fictional spy who last worked for the English in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901). It was then where he unearths the Mandala, which was written by a wily Bengali scholar, Hurrie Chunder Mookerjee, who was also the travelling companion of Holmes from India to Tibet. In the novel, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, Jamyang Norbu recounts the travelogue of the duo, filled with adventure, mystery, danger.

The second novel, *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) by Sarat Chandra Das, recounts the journey of the author himself, who had not once, but twice, visited Tibet: first in 1879 for four months, and then in 1881 for fourteen months. Sarat Chandra Das (born 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1849-5<sup>th</sup> January, 1917) was an Indian scholar of Tibetan language and culture. Born in Chittagong, Eastern Bengal, he attended Presidency College, as a student of the University of Calcutta. In 1874 he was appointed headmaster of the Bhutia Boarding School at Darjeeling. In 1878, a Tibetan teacher, Lama Ugyen Gyatso arranged a passport for Sarat Chandra to go to the monastery at Tashilhunpo. In June 1879, Das and Ugyen Gyatso left Darjeeling for the first of two journeys to Tibet. They remained in Tibet for six months, returning to Darjeeling with a large collection of Tibetan and Sanskrit texts which would become the basis for his later scholarship. Sarat Chandra spent 1880 in Darjeeling poring over the information he had obtained. In November 1881, Sarat Chandra and Ugyen-gyatso returned to Tibet, where they explored the Yarlung Valley, returning to India in January 1883. Along with Satish Chandra Vidyabhusan, he prepared Tibetan-English dictionary.

For a time, he worked as a spy for the British, accompanying Colman Macaulay on his

1884 expedition to Tibet to gather information on the Tibetans, Russians and Chinese. After he left Tibet, the reasons for his visit were discovered and many of the Tibetans who had befriended him suffered severe reprisals. For the latter part of his life, Das settled in Darjeeling. He named his house "Lhasa Villa" and played host to many notable guests including Sir Charles Alfred Bell and Ekai Kawaguchi. Some of his publications are as follows - *Contributions on the Religion, History &c., of Tibet* - In Journal of the Asiatic

Society of Bengal, Volume (51), Part I for 1882, *Narrative of a journey round Lake Yamdo (Palti)*, and in *Lhokha, Yarlung, and Sakya, in 1882, Avadānakalpalatā: a collection of*

*legendary stories about the Bodhisattvas* - Asiatic Society (1890), *The doctrine of transmigration* - Buddhist Text Society (1893), *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow* -

Originally published at the end of the 19th century. Reprint: Rupa (2006), Sarat Chandra

Das, Graham Sandberg & Augustus William Heyde - *A Tibetan-English dictionary, with*

*Sanskrit synonyms* - 1st Edition - Calcutta, 1902, *An introduction to the grammar of the*

*Tibetan language; with the texts of Situ sum-tag, Dag-je sal-wai melong, and Situi shal*

*lung*. Darjeeling Branch Press, 1915. Reprint: Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1972 and 1983,

*Autobiography: Narratives of the incidents of my early life*. Reprint: Indian studies: past & present (1969).

*Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy*, first published in 1902, is based on the extensive notes he had taken during his second journey. Much of the materials which he had used to prepare the two reports for the intelligence and survey departments were strictly classified until the end of the nineteenth century. When Das was appointed as a spy to infiltrate Tibet, it was a time when trade flourished between India and Tibet. Since the trade route was monopolized by the Tibetans, the only other people who had access to these routes were the Buddhist monks, and this was a loophole that the British began to exploit. They started sending spies into Tibet disguised as monks, who were called *Pundits*. It was a mission filled with danger, for the spies had to carry an array of instruments and also hide them from the border guards. Some of these *Pundits* had shown remarkable acumen and grit, while the unfortunate ones perished or had been caught and executed. But these men lacked the formal education required to gather the kind of in-depth knowledge of the land, particularly its people and culture, which the British government in India hungered after. As an English-educated young man with training in civil engineering, Sarat Chandra Das was cut out for the job. And, his burning desire for Tibet was matched by an eager nod from the top bureaucracy. Due to his great achievements in his endeavour, he became a Rai Bahadur, a

companion of the Indian Empire, won a medal from the Royal Geographic Society and was supposedly the model for a character in a Rudyard Kipling novel.

### **1.2 Aims and Objectives:**

The aims and objectives of this research will be:

- To seek a sense of belonging in native detective novels
- To explore the legitimacy or illegitimacy of texts written by canonical outsiders
- To explore the issues of native culture, their identity and history
- To explore the restoration of harmony the detective as a moral agent, recognition of the existence of the moral dimensions of the human communities and its importance

### **1.3 Scope of Research:**

The scope of this research will be to study the two primary texts – *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902), and explore how these native detective fictions represent real people within their culture. It will explore the legitimacy or illegitimacy of texts written by canonical outsiders. It will explore how issues of native culture and identity are dealt with. It will also explore the importance of restoration of harmony, recognition of the existence of the moral dimensions of the human communities, and how the detective functions as a moral agent.

### **1.4 Research Methodology:**

The method used while conducting this research will be qualitative. The primary sources will be the two novels – *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) by Jamyang Norbu and *Journey*



*to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) by Sarat Chandra Das, and this research will conduct a textual, comprehensive and comparative analytical study. For secondary sources, *The Final Problem*, a short novel from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1893), written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, will be taken. This short novel has a strong connection with *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, for the events that occur in the novel take place two years after the events in

*The Final Problem*. Another novel written by Sarat Chandra Das titled *A Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet* (1902) will also be taken. This novel is a travelogue, where he gives the readers the account of his journey, the paths he took, the various places he went through to reach Tibet and their cultures, traditions, their way of life.

### **1.5 Review of Literature:**

The topic which has been selected for this proposed research has not been so far explored. The present researcher deals with the native as a detective, described in a detective fiction which is written by a canonical outsider. Few critics and researchers have discussed the primary texts,

Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) from different perspectives such as historical, globalised literary studies. Nevertheless, the native as a detective has not been explored yet. This research will bring into focus the native as detective, the differences between the canonical and noncanonical detective fiction, and the legitimacy and illegitimacy of non-canonical detective fiction. *Modern Tibetan Literature and Social Change* (2008), a book that is a collection of writings by fourteen scholars in the nascent field of Tibetan literary studies, includes a chapter titled "Placing Tibetan Fiction in a World of Literary Studies: Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*" written by Steven J. Venturino, talks about how the appearance of Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* is a sign of a new era in Tibetan literary studies. He also addresses the issue of Tibetan literature's place in globalised literary studies, and hopes to show that while 10 Tibetan studies continues to be influenced by other disciplines,

Tibetan studies also influences other literary disciplines. In the same book mentioned above, another chapter titled "Tibetan Literature in Diaspora" written by Hortsang Jigme, he talks about the writing of the Tibetan literature in exile, talks about the life of the exiled Tibetans and the state of the refugee camps, about literary forms in exile, the Tibetan life in diaspora, and how Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* was a well accomplished text written by an exiled scholar. In the book titled *The Political Arrays of American Indian Literary History* (2019) by James H. Cox, there is a chapter titled "Crimes against Indigeneity

The Politics of Native American Detective Fiction”, he talks about how the American Indians are portrayed as “unemotional” and exhibit their “accustomed stoicism” in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s first Sherlock Holmes mystery, *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), in which the murderer “possessed also a power of sustained vindictiveness, which he may have learned from the Indians amongst whom he had lived” . Conan Doyle, who had a strong but imperfectly informed interest in Native Americans and the U. S. West, equivocally suggests Native Americans as one possible stimulus for the crimes in the novel that introduced readers to the world’s most famous detective. In a journal article titled “The Late Arrival of the Native American Detective” by J. Madison Davis, he states that while the Native American detective is a recent phenomenon in popularity, portrayals of Native Americans that have been present in the earliest examples of American literature and in well-known American mystery stories have usually been stereotypical. There has existed the stereotyping or exaggerating of ethnic traits with the intended or unintended result of reducing the complexities of a culture to an entertaining caricature. The different writers and critics interpret *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902) from various angles but the proposed research topic is to study the native as a detective in these two texts, how these texts are different from the canonical texts. Moreover, it seeks the legitimacy or the illegitimacy of the texts written by non-canonical writers.

### **1.6 Research Gap:**

The topic that has been selected for this proposed research, the native as a detective in a non-canonical novel, has not been explored so far. The present researcher deals with the native as a detective, described in a detective fiction which is written by a canonical outsider. Few critics and researchers have discussed the primary texts, Jamyang Norbu’s *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das’ *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902)

from different perspectives such as historical, globalised literary studies. Nevertheless, the native as a detective has not been explored yet. This research will bring into focus the native as detective, the differences between the canonical and non-canonical detective fiction, and grounds in which the legitimacy and illegitimacy of non-canonical detective fiction is proved upon.

### **1.7 Research Questions:**

In the course of the research, the following questions will be of importance:

- Is native detective fiction text-driven or plot-driven?
- Do native / ethnic / indigenous detectives have socio-cultural agenda?
- How are native detective texts different from those authored by canonical writers of the West?
- How legitimate or illegitimate are these texts written by canonical outsiders; on what grounds are the 'legitimacy' or 'illegitimacy' defined?

### **1.8 Chapterisation:**

1. Introduction - This chapter will include the introductory part of the research which consists the definition of crime fiction, its history, and show the native detective fiction as one of its many sub-genres. It will also include the meaning of the word native, and a brief introduction of the two primary texts.
2. Native Detective as Canonical Outsider: An Examination Through Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) - This chapter will focus on how these two novels are canonical outsiders,

for it is written by non-canonical writers and how legitimate or illegitimate these novels are in comparison to the canonical texts.

3. Re-reading the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study Between the Narrative Genres in Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) - This chapter will be focused on the comparative study between the two primary texts, to explore the similarities and differences between the two – in terms of narration, writing style, plot, character development and genre.
4. Situating the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study Between Canonical and NonCanonical Texts - This chapter will be focused on the comparative study between the primary non-canonical texts and secondary canonical texts.
5. Conclusion - This chapter will sum up the arguments made in the previous chapters with concluding remarks.

## CHAPTER - II

### **Native Detective as Canonical Outsider: An Examination through Jamyang Norbu's *The***

### ***Mandala of Sherlock Holmes (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy (1902)***

Detective fiction initially started as the fairy tale of western industrial civilisation, a form of escape literature which was unlikely to ever become anything else. The canonical detective stories followed the formula of there being a crime, investigation and its resolution – and this formula was being used widely to the point where the narrative became static. Because of this, detective fiction was considered a form of writing for entertainment purpose only, where the plot and the formula remained the same. But, when Poe introduced the master detective C. Auguste Dupin to the readers in *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (1839), the idea of there being someone with such mental prowess that goes beyond human logic, but is yet still a human, started changing the way people looked at detectives and detective fiction. The formula remained the same, but the way the case was handled by this individual changed the perspective of the story and the readers. Similarly, next in line was the model for master detective, Sherlock Holmes, whose life was brought to the readers through the writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Now, we look into details how the 'native' element is going to affect this narrative – whether it will add new elements and new areas to approach, or will it be something that does not work in harmony with the formula of the canon.

The term 'canon' is used to distinguish between the original works of a writer who created certain characters and/or settings, and the later works of other writers who took up the same characters or setting. According to *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (2015, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition) by M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, the meaning of the word 'canon' is as follows:

The Greek word *kanon*, signifying a measuring rod or a rule, was extended to denote a list or catalogue, then came to be applied to the list of books in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, which were designated by church authorities to be the genuine Holy Scriptures. The term ‘canon’ was later used to signify the list of secular works accepted by experts as genuinely written by a particular author. We speak thus of “the Chaucer canon” and “the Shakespeare canon” and refer to other works that have sometimes been attributed to an author, but on evidence that many editors judge to be inadequate or invalid, as “apocryphal.” At the end of the twentieth century, the phrase literary canon came to designate – in world literature, or in European literature, but most frequently in a national literature – those authors who, by a cumulative consensus of critics, scholars, and teachers, have come to be widely recognised as “major”, and as having written works often hailed as literary *classics* (Abrams and Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 43).

For example, the fifty-six short stories and four novels written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle that features the detective Sherlock Holmes are considered the canon of Sherlock Holmes. The subsequent works by other authors who took up Sherlock Holmes are considered "noncanonical". Thus, in this case, the work by Jamyang Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* can be considered a non-canonical work.

The common ground that the two primary novels, Jamyang Norbu’s *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das’ *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) hold is the fact that both novels gives us the account of two Indian spies, working for the British regime to infiltrate Tibet. But along their journey, they not only discover the beauty that lie in the hidden land, they also come to appreciate their journey and are given a new perspective on their outlook towards what lay ahead of them – a beautiful journey,

landscape, people, their cultures, rituals, beliefs; all of which worked towards their fascination towards Tibet.

The traditional elements of the detective story are: the seemingly perfect crime; the wrongly accused suspect at whom circumstantial evidence points; the bungling of dim-witted police; the greater powers of observation and superior mind of the detective; and the startling and unexpected denouement, in which the detective reveals how the identity of the culprit was ascertained. In *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999), we have with ourselves a detective whose name and fame was so great that his sudden death was enough to create an uproar among the readers and the general public: Sherlock Holmes himself, who, after his untimely and sudden death after his scuffle with his arch nemesis Professor Moriarty at the Reichenbach Falls, somehow turned out at the Indian city of Simla, unscathed and perfectly fine, and planning his trip to Tibet. Although we do see the return of Sherlock Holmes after two years of absence, the Mandala is Jamyang Norbu's gift to the readers about what had actually transpired in those two years. In a way, the Mandala does keep the Sherlockian narrative alive, as we can see alongside Sherlock is his trusty aid, albeit not Dr. Watson, but Hurrie Chunder Mookerjee, a wily Bengali scholar, is also commissioned for a trip to Tibet. These elements whether present or absent in the two non-canonical novels, will play an important role in proving the legitimacy as detective fiction.

In the chapter titled 'The Red Horror' from the novel *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, we are introduced to the first horrific incident of an unfortunate death, caused by massive bleeding, of one of the hotels employee. As Hurrie observes what took place during this chaotic time:



Sherlock Holmes was kneeling beside the bloody figure... Sherlock Holmes wiped his fingers on his handkerchief. 'Extraordinary amount of bleeding here ... humm ... from just about every part of his body'. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 19)

This marks the beginning of the investigative element of the novel, as enquiries regarding the suspect is carried out and the people present nearby were being questioned, an old sweeper comments that he did see a tall pale *sahib*, who turns out to be the 'ferret-face' that both Hurrie and Holmes had glanced upon before on the *Kohinoor*, the ship that Holmes was boarded in. This in turn marks the beginning of the chain of events that leads Sherlock Holmes and his entourage to unravelling the mystery behind the unfortunate death, the culprit behind the incident, and the mastermind behind all of it. A death was not something unusual, as everyone who were present in the room were people who had a run-in with death in the course of their profession – from Holmes to Hurrie to Strickland – but what stood out in this particular case how immaculate the murder was carried out. The cause of death was massive bleeding, but upon inspection one could make out that there were no external wounds, none in this particular case that would have caused such a massive bleeding eventually leading to death. It was a very minimalistic approach – a body was found with blood over it, no murder apparatus found – as of yet – and only a few things were moved in the room itself. This was all planned in the room that Holmes was staying, so unless the murderer had access to his room, this was not something that was possible in any normal scenario. The window was still intact, so no external or forced entry to the room, which would only mean one thing – the murderer was someone who was either working in the hotel or was someone who had the means to get the keys to Holmes' room, an associate in this case. And the first person on their mind was the manager, but, due to lack of evidence they couldn't press charges nor interrogate him. So all they could do was work the mystery on themselves. Given how

Sherlock Holmes only takes cases that piqued his interest, this was one of them, for we can hear him mutter, “Remarkable, most remarkable”.

This was a unique case that catches Holmes’ attention, and thus begins a journey filled with danger, wonder, and a run-in with a figure from Holmes’ past.

Although in the second novel, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902), we do not see cases of unfortunate death, but we are introduced to death and capital punishment. Soon after Sarat Chandra returned to India, his true identity and the purpose of his mission came to light in Tibet. This was in no fault of his, for he was there for the sole purpose of exploring and uncovering the mysteries of this hidden land, and when he received the ‘nod’ from his superior, he was ecstatic that he was going on an adventure he had been yearning for. He prepared thoroughly for his journey, and having known that his hunger for this venture was shared by his superior, his mind was focused on the journey and the adventures and secrets that lay ahead him. But he was unaware of the fact that his notes and journals he made, an intricate map of Tibet which, before his journey, was a hidden land no one had any knowledge of, was misused and was used for an expedition to plunder the land. After this came to light, the people who had hosted him and assisted him inadvertently during his stay in Tibet were charged with sedition. He had changed his identity, but his intentions were pure. For all he wanted was to explore the land, and there were people who assisted him during his venture. Alas, for them, after the British expedition began, and found out that it was because of this one particular ‘spy’ that infiltrated Tibet and mapped the place, the accomplices of Sarat, albeit all they did was act as his guide, they were arrested, mutilated and thrown into dungeons. Sengchen Dorjechen was drowned alive in the river Tsangpo in a public spectacle of capital punishment. A public display of brutality is one way to instil fear on the citizens – where the message was sent that anyone who broke the law, only death

awaited them. Such brutality was wired into the Tibetan culture, and Sarat had witnessed it during his stay there. During his stay in Tashilhunpo, he observes:

In the market-place my men saw several parties of prisoners loaded with chains weighing twenty pounds and upwards. Some had their hands manacled, others their arms passed through blocks of wood, not a few had their eyes put out. The Government does not provide these miserable wretches with food, but lets them beg their sustenance in the market-place. They are more troublesome than even the Ragyabas, and pour out curses and vile abuse on all who do not at once give them alms. (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy*, 42)

Law was there to keep the order and keep the criminals in check, but Sarat's experience was an eye opener for him, because in this book there are descriptions of petty criminals begging on the streets of Shigatse - manacled, mutilated and their eyes gouged out – a few of the many horrors that lay in the land. Capital punishment was the norm for criminals, regardless of their crimes.

The wrongly accused subject in *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* is the 'ferret faced' – who later on reveals that he was the emissary of the Grand Lama, at whom the whole evidence points out, it literally screams towards him being the prime suspect for the murder of the hotel worker, the death which was actually planned for Holmes. But, the reader nor the individuals present there could have doubts about him not being the culprit, for he was the only person who was seen using the service backdoor of the hotel to get out, point in case being that he was considered a *sahib* and the backdoor was only used by the workers. He doesn't even come up with a valid reason and tries to plead his innocence, but the circumstances were such that he could not possibly look for a chance to explain himself. This is because the ferret faced individual was actually sent to ask for assistance and escort

Holmes safely to Tibet, where his benefactor was residing, but also given the fact that the assailants that were sent to dispose of Holmes' were also looking for any interference or assistance of any sort that the Potala Palace were extending towards Holmes, which would give them edge towards their ultimate goal, to retrieve the *Mandala* from the Potala Palace. The Grand Lama wanted to give Holmes and his party a safe passage to Tibet, for he knew what was on the line and the forces that were hiding on the shadows, lurking, waiting, for the right moment and pounce upon the slightest glimpse of opportunity they could find. Holmes was someone whose name preceded his being, as such the Grand Lama did know that he was indeed perfectly capable of handling anything that comes his way, but this was not 221B Baker Street – this was a completely uncharted territory for Holmes, and the 'ferret-faced' individual was extra help that was sent towards Holmes so that his journey to the Potala Palace would be unhindered, but assassins were already sent to take Holmes' life and unfortunately the 'help' from the palace was placed in a precarious position. The identity of ferret-face is revealed in the chapter titled 'A Dam'-Tight Place':

Ferret-Face and his men were still there before us... I turned around... He came over to us and extended his hand to Mr Holmes. 'Mr Sigerson, I presume?' 'Yes.'

'My name is Jacob Asterman. I am an agent of His Holiness, the Grand Lama of Thibet, and I have been instructed to deliver to you this special passport, permitting you and your companion to visit the holy city of Lhasa.' (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 125)

In the second novel *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, Sarat was the wrongly accused individual. From the beginning towards the end, Sarat never once doubted his mission – for him it was a chance to explore the land that he could only have hoped to catch a glimpse of. No one accused him of anything, but the expedition which everyone came to know about was

due to Sarat's journals and intricate details of the land that he, with a zeal, had captured. He wanted everyone to know about this hidden land, and while his findings use for the expedition, those who were on the British side congratulated him for a job well done. Tibet, on the other hand, who got exploited due to his interference, was not on the same side. He felt wronged, and tried raising his voice against the injustice. A land plundered, innocent people killed, and his friends who helped his stay were met with unfortunate death. Treason is not a small accusation, for the accusation does not end with just the individual, his family would have to bear this stigma for the rest of their lives. Sarat unknowingly became the villain for them, and being a man whose only accomplishment thus far was this journey.

The bumbling dim-witted police, the authorities are present in most detective fiction, same goes for the *Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*. Although Officer Strickland, who can be seen as an a replacement for officer Lestrade of Scotland Yard, does give valuable insights every now and then with the Red Murder case and reveals a few key details form the room that the incident occurred on, it is safe to say that because Sherlock Holmes has an immaculate eye on detection and a close to perfect cognitive ability, adding onto his prowess of deduction, any normal to good individual will most likely seem dim witted to the audience. Either the whole premise was to set up the police as dim-witted or if it is just Holmes who overshadows them with his 'art of deduction', it is therefore safe to assume that this element of the bumbling dimwitted police is also present in the *Mandala*. For instance, Officer Strickland does notice that a furniture was moved and wanted to give his input into the case:

Near the large bed he stopped and exclaimed, pointing at the floor. 'Well, well. What do we have here?'

'It looks like marks left by the legs of a chair,' suggested Strickland.

‘Table, my dear Strickland, definitely a table... Observe the tufts of carpet-pile slowly springing back into place.’ He straightened up and looked around the room.

‘It is just a matter of convenience. One normally uses what is closer at hand.’ He walked over the table and inspected it. ‘I perceived I am correct. Observe these heavy scratches... Obviously someone has stood on the top of this table. Someone wearing heavy boots. Humm.’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 23-24)

Holmes points out that it was a desk, the right one to be precise for he deduces that people tend to utilise things that are close to them, and in this case it was the right desk and the legs spacing of the furniture that also makes a difference. Holmes’ deduction and awareness of his environment play a huge role on his deduction skills, and every time his ability is showcased, not only the readers, but also the characters are surprised. This surprise comes to one and all the same, and it wouldn’t matter if it is the first time or the nth number of time they’ve seen this, example being Dr Watson and inspector Lestrade. Although bumbling or dim witted, every character on a novel has a role to play, and Officer Strickland does play his role perfectly. He is quick on his uptake and he is swift on executing orders, and is ready to offer his utmost and sincere help to Holmes for this investigation and anything that he would require during his stay here. The bumbling of the authorities is an element in detective fiction that helps to make the detective shine and stand out, for the novel does revolve around the detective, who, with his amazing prowess, solves a near impossibly solvable crime.

The second novel *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* does not have as many instances of dim witted police/authorities, but if we take into considering the border patrol personnel who look into the identity of people entering Tibet, we can see one such case here. But the observational prowess of Sarat also comes into play here, for it is one thing to say to impersonate someone, and a different thing when it comes to act upon it. Sarat knew that the

*pundits* were allowed to enter Tibet, but his impersonation of a *pundit* had to be immaculate to pull the wool on the eyes of the personnel, who were guarding the border. Sarat observes the *pundits* that go into Tibet with a zeal, for he had their belongings but he had to look the part. So he took upon himself this task – from their body language, their dress, how they interacted with everyone, their eating habits, everything that he could use to his advantage – he took it all and used it to his advantage. However, for people who had been protecting the border for a long time, they were seasoned veterans and he had heard about people who got caught trying to enter using a persona of a *pundit*, due to which the security was tightened. But his impersonation of a *pundit* was immaculate, to the point where he was able to make his way through the border into Tibet. The personnel were not dim witted, but the protagonist was someone who outsmarted them. Sarat made sure that his guise and the way he carried himself was immaculate – from drinking only one-third from the tea has been offered so that he upholds the given traditions of the place – to reciting lines from ancient Buddhist scriptures to people who came in to subtly check his identity, he was well prepared for his journey. His knowledge was profound not only due to his mission, but also given his passion and zeal to explore this foreign and hidden land, he armed himself with everything he could possibly with for this gruelling yet profound journey.

The greater powers of observation and superior mind of the detective, something that is very common when it comes to Sherlock Holmes. From the very beginning, we can see and observe how Holmes works his way around the mystery. From the smallest of details to the biggest of blunders, Holmes' deduction and awareness of his environment works in such harmony that it baffles the onlookers. But Holmes' deductive abilities are not limited to the present, he tries to look past the event, he tries to trace it back to the past and also deducts if an incident such as this or similar to this will occur in the near foreseeable future. He does try to put other people under the spotlight, for instance, when he knows what is happening and

what are the key points in the case, he lets others voice their inputs on the case, whether to see how much they have 'observed', or just to fulfil the curiosity that he has about the workings of the minds of other individuals rather than himself when they are faced with such a situation, nevertheless he does point out the details they have missed and concludes the case with no stones left unturned. Holmes has, time and again, through the brilliant writing style of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, proved his mettle, his intellect, and his deduction skills. Although at times, his intellect and his way of solving crimes does make him seem like an uncooperative, mocking, arrogant and sarcastic individual, we get to know that it is because Holmes, when solving a mystery, is only thinking about the mystery and nothing else. Strickland's annoyance can be seen here:

'In all my experience I cannot recall a more singular and interesting study... I think you ought to know that our unfortunate dead man downstairs is a victim of both murder and accident.' 'Then who was the murderer really after?'

'None other than myself, I should imagine.' (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 24)

He removes himself from the environment, and only focuses on the aspects that are important for the case. He gets immersed in the case and just ignores anything that does not help in solving the case. But on the other hand, it also shows his intense concentration prowess and his immaculate deduction abilities. The first observation Holmes makes was when he meets Hurrie on the *Kohinoor*, where he inquires whether Hurrie had been dispatched to Afghanistan. Hurrie fumbles, for he was using one of his many aliases to cover his identity, but this particular individual looks right past his disguise, to the point where he deduces that Hurrie was not just a civilian but someone who was dispatched to Afghanistan. Hurrie is baffled, but it was something about this individual that he wanted to know more about him as well. Holmes' powers of observation can be seen in almost all the chapters of the novel, but



knowing that it is Holmes we are reading about, this is not a new thing. Another case of Holmes' prowess comes not too late into the novel, where in chapter 5, titled 'The Brass Elephant', Holmes deduces how the murder that occurred in the chapter The Red Horror, was conducted and the culprit behind it. Turns out, he had observed that the poor chap who died had a peculiar mark on his neck, something that looked like a Y, from which he deduced that it might've been a leech bite mark:

'You are certain there were no wounds?' said Holmes insistently. 'No marks at all? Not even some insignificant puncture in the skin, around the back of the head or neck?'

'Mr Holmes, if you are thinking that the man died from a snake bite, I can assure you that it wasn't so. No reptile, however poisonous could have...'

'Were there any puncture marks?' Holmes interrupted impatiently.

'Well, there were some slight scratches on the back of his neck... These were lighter, mere nicks and...'

'This is the pattern of the scratches, isn't it?' said Holmes, holding out a slip of paper on which he had made some marks. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 51)

But to be specific, he goes to Bombay Natural History Society, where he meets up with Mr. Symington, who fancies himself with varieties of flora and fauna found all over the world. Homes asks for a book with literature about *Hirudenia*, and after a few reads he comes up with a way to solve the murder. On his hotel room, he calls upon the hotel clerk, Mr. Carvallo, and asks him to inspect the brass elephant lamp that was on the ceiling. He reels back in horror, an evidence of his guilt that he shows in front of the people present there, but still hesitates to go near the lamp even after his guilt was caught:

‘Please! Please!’ whispered the clerk hoarsely. The wretched man was now positively shaking with terror, and his large frenzied eyes gazed as if mesmerised at the brass elephant lamp burning above him.

‘The elephant interests you?’ said Mr Holmes, affecting to examine the lamp with a collector’s curiosity.

Galvanised by terror, the clerk leaped from the bed and collapsed before Mr Holmes. He clung to Holmes’s legs and sobbed. ‘I confess. I confess. The thing is in the lamp. It is a trap. Let me out of the room before...’

Just then there was a sharp click from the lamp, and as we looked up a little hatch swung open from the bottom of the brass elephant and a small, bright object fell on the bed. The clerk screamed with horror. The thing was red and shiny, no longer than six inches and about the thickness and shape of a piece of garden hose. It rose up, one end poised in the air, wiggling from side to side. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 54)

Much to everyone’s surprise, the apparatus on the brass elephant opens and a leech falls on the bed. The horror on the clerk’s face is evident, and the other hand, we can see Holmes’ fascination on his face. Turns out his read on the *hiudinea* produced results, for this was a Giant Red Leech, commonly found on the Lower Himalayas:

‘Why, it is a leech!’ I exclaimed in surprise.

‘But not your common or garden variety,’ said Holmes gravely. ‘This one is a Giant Red Leech of the lower Himalayas, *Hirudinea Himalayaca Giganticus*, of the genus *Haemadispa*... My reading this morning at the Natural History Museum informed me

that the Giant Red Leech is not only much larger than the common leech, but that its saliva contains these chemicals in concentrations *many thousand times stronger.*'

'No wonder the poor chap bled as extensively as he did,' I said in dread awe. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 55)

The anti-coagulation factors that are present on this leech's saliva was a thousand times stronger than that of a normal leech, meaning that once this leech bites its host, the blood won't clot and it would continue flowing without any restraint. So the moment the clerk was bit on his neck, his death was inevitable. But Holmes not only finds out about the murder apparatus, he also deducts the mastermind behind this case – Colonel Sebastian Moran, an aide of

Professor Moriarty. But Strickland was not convinced, for Col. Moran was a man of great accomplishment, and it was hard to imply such an outstanding individual of plotting for someone's death:

'You astonish me Mr Holmes', Strickland remonstrated. 'You expect me to believe that an English gentleman, a former member of Her Majesty's Indian Army, the best heavygame shot in India, a man with a still unrivalled bag of tigers, is a dangerous criminal. Why, I was with him just two nights ago at the Old Shikari Club. We played a rubber of whist together.' (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 59)

To prove his point, Holmes asks Hurrie for a lead pencil:

'No doubt you are right,' said Holmes testily. 'Well, it is a very long shot... Now Strickland, since you happen to play cards with Moran, you well surely have noticed a peculiarity in his right thumb.'

‘He has a long, heavy scar running diagonally across his thumb. The result of some accident with a hunting knife.’

Mr Holmes took a penknife out of his pocket and began to sharpen my pencil... After a good twenty minutes... he sprang up from his chair with a cry of satisfaction. ‘Ha! Ha! Capital. Now if I could trouble you gentlemen to come closer, I may be able to amuse you with this parlour-trick.’

‘Now,’ said Holmes, ‘most of these belong to the sweaty fingers of our Portuguese friend, but if you will observe here closely...’ Using the tip of the penknife as a pointer he indicated a large clear impression – a rough ridged thumb print with a diagonal line running across it. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 60-62)

Strickland, upon this discovery, humbly apologises to Holmes for doubting his motives, but given his position, it would have been absurd to suspect Col. Moran for a heinous crime such as this.

Sarat Chandra Das, albeit a spy than a detective, during the course of his work, does find out that his mission was not just a simple infiltration. A simple distinction between a spy and a detective is that while a spy is someone who primarily gathers intelligence on people or objects, detectives mainly investigate crimes. Across Tibet lay the two mighty empires of Russia and China, and the British were uneasy about their imperialist designs, particularly that of Russia. A thorough knowledge of the humongous kingdom – mostly unknown and ten times the size of England – was imperative for them to come to grips with the geopolitical reality of the subcontinent. The British sent spies - called *Pundits*, to infiltrate Tibet. Pawns in the so - called Great Game played by Russia and Britain on the high chessboard of central Asia, these men were drafted from among the hill people. The lucidity and precision in

describing a littleknown land by Sarat Chandra Das helped Francis Younghusband lead a military expedition there in 1903, which led to Tibet being pried open like an oyster:

In 1903-04, British forces under the command of Indian Political Officer, Colonel Francis Younghusband, invaded Tibet. After failed negotiations and a series of battles in which Younghusband's modern weaponry vanquished Tibetan forces, the British entered Lhasa and imposed a treaty on the Tibetans. (Alex, *The British Invasion of Tibet, 1903-04. Inner Asia*, vol. 14, no. 1, p. 5-25).

Thousands of Tibetans defending their land with crude weapons were killed, the temples and lamaseries were sacked. And yes, a few of the still-surviving prisoners who had befriended Sarat Chandra were freed after thirty years of incarceration.

The startling and unexpected denouement, in which the detective reveals how the identity of the culprit was ascertained— in this case, it did take some time to ascertain that it was Professor Moriarty, who was the brain behind a huge criminal organisation and was responsible for the crimes that had occurred in his vicinity, he was able to ascertain who the mastermind was. In the *Mandala*, he and his entourage are faced with a lot of challenges towards their way to Tibet, and even when he feels like he's about to grasp the truth behind this, it slips away. This was something that Holmes was already familiar with, and it was this familiarity that gave him a sense of who the perpetrator might be. But, he was also a bit sceptical: he was a man of science and logic, and although he did plan his fall on the Reichenbach, he did not expect Professor Moriarty to have survived, for he saw the Professor fall to his death. This uncertainty gnawed on his mind and it wasn't until the very end that he found out that his arch-nemesis was really alive and was the one behind all the incidents that befell him and his entourage. His first doubt that it was Professor Moriarty came into his mind when he was targeted by Colonel Moran, he knew that the criminal organisation that

Professor Moriarty made would not crumble after his death, and that Colonel Moran has taken over the mantle of the leader of the organisation, but Colonel Moran was no Professor Moriarty, so Holmes mind was full of doubts, but he did not have any evidence to support his claim, and he knew about Colonel Moran's loyalty to the Professor, so even if they caught him, Colonel Moran would never give Professor Moriarty away. Thus, he had no choice but to see this case through, and there were places where he started doubting everything. He was a man of science, facts and evidence, and the supernatural was something that was something he was not expecting this particular journey would involve. He had no choice but to believe that supernatural forces did exist, for he could not refute the fact that he was attacked by someone who could freely control swords and spears, a good number of them, in the air by just a flick of his wrist:

The thin hand emerged from between the curtains... As if at a command the two swords on the ground flew up into the air... A split second later they shot forward like twin arrows. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 171)

This was no parlour trick, and he knew there was no such mechanism that could do that, as such he was made to believe that he was facing against an extremely formidable foe, who was a rival in respect to his intellect and was a user of supernatural forces. This put Holmes on a bind, and as he wanted to throw the idea of Professor Moriarty away, there was something that he still could not figure out, and kept him from completely ousting the idea of Professor Moriarty having survived the fall on the Reichenbach. One major reason for this was because the mastermind behind this was someone who was devious, crafty, and someone who could challenge Holmes' intellect – a feat that only an individual such as Professor Moriarty was capable of, and up until now he had not met anyone besides the Professor who was capable of that. He wanted to accept the possibility that there was another individual who was capable of

that, but the way everything had happened on this journey, and seeing how the criminal organisation was also playing a major role, it was hard for Holmes to not accept the possibility of the Professor being alive and the mastermind behind this.

For Sarat Chandra Das, the startling denouement and the culprit was in fact the British Government, who he later finds out that the findings of his mission were used to lead a military expedition and pillage Tibet. His zeal to discover Tibet was something that was seen as an opportunity by the British Government to pry open Tibet and pillage the hidden land. The British had sent quite a number of spies before, but all of them failed – some failed to enter from the border, others were unable to cope with the extreme weather, and some were unable to communicate or were not learned enough to assimilate with the local people there. Sarat checked all those boxes of shortcomings that the previous spies had failed on, and this was an opportunity for both the British Government and Sarat. They knew Sarat would be able to infiltrate and make his way to the depths of the land, map the whole area intricately and bring back valuable information. Sarat was able to do all that, but he was unknown to the fact that his expedition was going to be utilised in such a manner. All he wanted was to unravel the mysteries that lay on this hidden land, capture its essence, and fulfil his long standing wish of being able to visit the place. But, although this journey was a success, the aftermath of his journey left a foul taste in his mouth – his peers on Tibet who helped him during his stay were incarcerated, publicly executed, and he could not even ask for forgiveness for it was his journals that brought upon Tibet the expedition led by the British Government that pried open the land, looted and pillaged everything they could, and Sarat was kept in the dark all this time about the fine prints of his mission. He was used by the British for their end-goal, and although he raised his voice against the injustice, it was a single individual against an Empire – a David and Goliath but this time the Goliath was too strong, and eventually he was forgotten. He was wronged, and although his wish was fulfilled

and he was able to explore Tibet, he was unable to right the wrongs done towards Tibet by the British with the help of his journals.

Looking at what elements consists of a detective fiction, Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*(1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) ticks all the correct boxes and can be seen as a legitimate detective fiction outside of the canonical writing and being a canonical outsider. The introduction of the native detectives in detective fiction are not simple models of a master detective, but rather someone who gives the readers a fresh outlook in the setting of the novel. While ticking the boxes, they also retain the native elements, and while their counterpart may have been someone as great as Sherlock Holmes, their role is neither diminished nor suppressed, but rather they stand as equals. The native detectives can also be seen as cultural emissaries as we are also introduced to the world of the native detective – their cultures, ideas, beliefs, customs and tradition.



### CHAPTER - III

#### **Re-reading the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study between the Narrative Genres in Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902)**

In a traditional detective fiction, much of the energy arises from the crime's inexplicable horror which in turns sets in motion a chain of events whose ultimate aim is the un-knotting of this web of events and solving of the mystery. But, since most stories carried the same formula, the canonical detective stories were static, monolithic in its narrative form – its narrative rested on assumptions such as obviously there must be a criminal, a crime and a detective. Due to this, detective fiction as a genre may look 'static' and 'sterile' with very little scope for innovation since the time of its origin. This point is asserted by John G. Cawelti, where he states:

The canonical or classical detective story has not shown the same capacity for change and development as the other major formulaic types. (Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*, 1976, p. 43)

The readers always expect a resolution where the crime will be exposed and the guilty will be brought to justice. In all such pursuits, the prevalence of 'justice' is of vital importance. But, with the introduction of non-canonical detective fiction, an attempt is being made to find out the scope of literary experimentation within the broader framework of detective fiction. Such non-canonical detective fiction are and attempt to test the boundaries of the genre. To understand this, a deeper and detailed look into the life, environment, traditions, culture and the position of the non-white native detective in the setting of the novel must be looked upon, while also taking into account that these elements do not veer the novel away from the genre

of detective fiction itself. The formula may be the same, but with the introduction of new elements in the mix, the re-reading may prove that there are new areas to be discovered, and experimented with.

*The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) is a Sherlock Holmes pastiche novel.

A pastiche is a work of visual art, literature, theatre, or music that imitates the style or character of the work of one or more other artists. Unlike parody, pastiche celebrates, rather than mocks, the work it imitates. The main purpose of using pastiche is to celebrate great works of the past. This literary device is generally employed to imitate a piece of literary work light-heartedly, but in a respectful manner. *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902), on the other hand, is an autobiography. The author wrote himself the account of what he went through on his journey to Tibet, and gives his experiences in a first person perspective

One key difference between the two texts, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) would be that albeit both novels are recollections of the journey and adventure of two Indian spies from India to Tibet, Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* is an autobiography, while *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* is a recollection of the journey and adventure of Hurre Chunder Mookerjee which is brought to life by Jamyang Norbu's narrative. While Sarat Chandra Das lived his adventure, Jamyang Norbu, albeit did a fantastic job in bringing the letters and notes of Hurre Chunder Mookerjee to life, is only given a third person perspective to the happenings and the adventure that Hurre and Sherlock Holmes went through together.

Looking into the location/position of the investigator in the novels, we see that they each have their respective positions. While the western detective is mainly focused on solving crimes and pays some attention to local talks and lores, the native detective gives us a

firstperson-perspective into their lives, their surroundings and the native elements. Due to this, we can see a lot of communal participation and cultural, religious, indigenous customs and references from them. For example, Sherlock, albeit the world famous detective, was out of his element and in a place that was new to him. He was away from 221B Baker Street, didn't have the Scotland Yard and Officer Lestrade to carry on to find other details about the case, nor was he familiar with anything in this foreign land. Here's where Hurrie comes in – a lad born and raised in India, having known the place and the people since his early days and how to speak, make people talk – one of his many prowess we see. In the *Mandala*, Hurrie was unaware as to who the Norwegian fellow was, for it was a guise taken up by Holmes to avoid any unwanted attention towards his being. The news of his and Professor Moriarty's death duel on the Reichenbach was already a widespread phenomenon, and knowing that the Professor's criminal network was still active, the last thing he wanted was to let them know about his existence. But, despite the name and fame of the great detective from the West, the author is not swept up by it and still uses words such as *chalo*, *jaldi*, *hai*, *rukho*, ...loud scream, like that of *churail* – among many others, as these are a fragment of the native words that the author uses in the first two chapters. Given the number of chapters present, we can say that the author does not shy away from using native words while breathing life into the narrative. These words or phrases that are used are in the Hindi text, primarily used in the Indian subcontinent. And since the primary texts taken up in this venture are both written and gives us a glimpse in the lives of two Indian individuals, it is safe to say assume that albeit the detective fiction is majorly dominated by Western narrative, native elements present on it will not compromise the integrity of the genre of detective fiction. The meaning of the words used above are *jaldi* meaning quick, *hai*, *rukho* meaning hey, stop, *churail* meaning witch. These words may seem foreign to readers who are not well versed in Hindi or have little or no knowledge of the language – but to us, who share the knowledge of the language, and are

natives of the Indian subcontinent, these words are not foreign. While we do know what these words mean, it gives a fresh outlook to a narrative that is primarily Western dominated and a sprinkle of the native on it gives it a good twist. These are words that are very colloquially spoken and used on a daily basis, and gives the native readers a sense of connection with the native element. But it was not only the use of the native words, but using as it is – that is, there are no English translations or meanings given besides these words and phrases. They are what they are, in their crude, native form – which might confuse the non-native readers but for native readers, they are not uncommon. Having a native side character on a novel who gets overshadowed or plays a very short, indiscernible role – or a native side character who is equally represented in the novel with usage of native language and plays a significant role, and present throughout the novel, are two very different things. In the *Mandala*, readers get the image of a second Doctor Watson, the trusty aide of Holmes, from Hurrie. Hurrie and Watson were both war veterans, lived through the trauma and are now helping Holmes out after an incident. Hurrie might not be the focus on this novel, but he makes his presence known throughout – to the point that his performance gave him a role in Rudyard Kipling's novel *Kim*. Since the final destination of Holmes was Tibet, the author could have chosen to skip his visit to India or just ponder upon the visit on a chapter or so, but instead of that, he chose to not only use the native words, but gave us a tour of the land as well – a glimpse into colonial India of the time. For instance, in the hotel, when inquiring about whether anyone saw a suspicious person here before the crime was committed, the police could've easily used a bit of coercion to bring out testimonies from the people present. Instead, Hurrie talks to the sweeper:

At the end of the corridor an old bhangi appeared, carrying his short-handled broom.

‘Listen thou, old man,’ I asked in vernacular, ‘Hast thou seen anything not of the usual a little time before?’

‘I saw nothing, Babuji but yes,’ his ancient visage lighted up, ‘I heard a loud scream, like that of churail.’

‘This tall sahib is a sakht burra afsar of the police... If thou desirest to retain thy nowkri at the hotel, tell me everything.’

‘Hai mai!’ he wailed. ‘What zoolum. I saw nothing, Babuji. Nobody came this way. Only another Angrezi sahib was leaving by the rear staircase.’

‘Is it normal for sahibs to use the rear staircase?’

‘Nay, Babuji. This is for the servants of the hotel.’

‘Gadha! Why did thou not say so in the first place?’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 20-21)

A coercion from a local individual in the colloquial language about the horrors of the strict officer and that he might lose his job works wonders, and the sweeper opens up about seeing another *angrezi sahib* using the rear staircase, and that he had long nose and funny whiskers. Hurrie also, at times, takes the chance to inform Sherlock about the temples and Gods and Goddesses:

The carriage trundled down Hornby Road towards the Mumba Devi Temple, and I performed my duty as a guide explaining to Mr Holmes the cult of the Goddess Mumba

(a form of Parvati, consort of Shiva) from whom the city has taken its name. Mr Holmes, like Strickland (thus unlike most other Englishmen) was a good listener, and his interest genuine and scientific... Very recently, Palaeolithic stone implements

have been found at Kandivli in Greater Bombay by a scientific acquaintance of mine, a Mr Cunningham of the Royal Asiatic Society. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 45-46)

Another religious context rises up in a conversation between Holmes and Hurrie, when they are on route from Bombay to Simla, Holmes asks Hurrie, while informing that ethnology was

Hurrie's area of expertise, about the symbolic meaning in the representation of an open hand. To this, Hurrie confirms that this is a commonly known symbol of the goddess Kali. He goes to explain that Kali is the very fierce and terrifying aspect of Devi, and depicted as a hideous hag smeared in blood, with bared teeth and a protruding tongue:

‘Well, Mr Holmes, Kali is certainly not your usual benign divinity... She is depicted as a hideous hag smeared in blood, with bared teeth and a protruding tongue. Her four hands hold, variously, a sword, a shield, the severed head of a giant, and a strangling noose. Her rites involve sacrificial killings – at one time, of humans. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 75)

When Holmes further asks about whether the open hand symbol may have a connection to crime, Hurrie confirms that it is:

‘Interesting,’ said he, ‘but does this fiend or the open hand symbol have any connection with something other than mythology – with crime, maybe?’

‘Why, yes, Sir. She was worshipped by the Thugs.’

‘The *modus operandi* of these dastardly murders was to worm their way into the confidences of wayfarers and, when all was hail-fellow-met, strangle them from behind with a handkerchief that had knotted into one of its corners (to give it a better

grip) a silver coin consecrated to Kali... Although their essential religious creed was worshipping Kali, there were traces of Islamic practices present in their rituals’.

(Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 76-77)

After the incident of the red horror that had occurred sometime back and the whole revelation that the people who were the employees of certain places were also involved in the crime, it was pretty evident that their movements were already being tracked and monitored, so Hurrie wanted Holmes to get out of Bombay as soon as possible, for it was the place where Colonel Moran was at, according to Strickland, and that there heinous murderers were still at large, the risk of one losing their life was always prominent. Since Simla was quite a place away from where they were at the time, it seemed like the perfect place to be away from the watchful eyes of the enemies and also prepare for their journey to Tibet.

When they arrive in Simla, Hurrie, being a native of the place, does what he deems best given the situation – he goes around and visits certain people and creates an information network for himself, on the provision of pecuniary remuneration:

But I reminded myself that I had been charged with Sherlock Holmes’s safety, and, though I had till now done little to merit this great trust, I must not, for the honour of the Department, be caught off my guard again. Afterwards, I set out to meet certain people: rickshaw-pullers, saises, shopkeepers, government clerks, hotel employees, beggars and a pretty little Mohammedan lady of easy virtue... I made pretty dam’ sure that neither Colonel Moran, his confederate Ferret-Face, nor any of their hired cut-throats could commence nefarious activities, or even arrive at Simla without the fact becoming first known to me – me, Hurree Chunder Mookerjee M.A. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 85-86)

The people were more likely to give him information because of the native familiarity, and he did that to ensure that neither Colonel Moran, his confederate ferret-face, nor any of their hired cut-throats could commence nefarious activities or even arrive at Simla without the face becoming first known to Hurrie himself. Hurrie was blaming himself for his inadequacy about not knowing about the murder attempt beforehand in the hotel, so he was making absolutely sure that the task handed to him for the Department, and the trust of Mr Holmes towards him, he would meet each and every expectation and to rise to the enormous challenge that was placed on his shoulders. As the reader of the novel, we can make light of the situation that the murder attempt at the hotel was something that no one would have been able to predict, and that it was purely luck on Holmes's side that someone else was the victim, unfortunately, but that allowed them to get a hold of the whole situation. Hurrie's concern was what if it was Holmes that had been afflicted with the horrendous attack and had died without him being able to do anything. He was, as per his superiors, appointed as the bodyguard of Mr Holmes after the incident, and he was now making sure that there would not be another 'what-if' situation as long as he keeps his vigilance, as such he was doing everything in his power to ensure the safety of the great detective, Sherlock Holmes.

In Sarat's travelogue, he dives a bit more into the culture and traditions of Tibet – while giving us the roadmap from India, the paths/passages he took on his journey to Tibet. Unlike the *Mandala*, where we are introduced to Tibet, the lamas, and the scene of the crime and the criminal mastermind, Sarat delves into the culture, tradition, and the general public. He introduces us to his aide, Ugyen-gyatso, who helps him cross across to Tibet:

The lama, who is a Tibetan from Sikkim and connected with the reigning family of that State, was born in 1851 at Yangyang, and at the age of ten entered the lamasery of



Pema-yangtse, where he took the usual course of monastic studies for twelve years. In 1873 he visited, for the first time, Darjeeling in the suite of the Raja of Sikkim, and a little later on in the same year he was designated by that Prince, and at the request of the Deputy-Commissioner, Mr. Edger, to fill the post of the Tibetan teacher at the Bhutia school at Darjeeling, which it was proposed to open. For a time the lama was employed in the office of the Deputy-Commissioner, and accompanied that officer on a visit to Sikkim. In 1874, he entered upon his duties as a teacher in the school, and continued there until 1878, when he went to Tibet, as previously noted, to bear tribute from his lamasery to the heads of the church. During the lama's residence at Darjeeling he had been instructed in the use of such surveying instruments as it is customary for the trans-frontier surveyors to use, and the accurate work which he did during his various journeys bears witness to the thoroughness with which he was instructed and to his own ability. From this journey of 1878, the lama brought back with him the passport which enabled Sarat Chandra Das to make his two journeys to Tibet, in both which he accompanied him, rendering him everywhere true and valuable services. (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, Introduction xv-xvi)

Sarat was very well versed with the tradition and culture of the places he visited, and as his guise as a pundit, with his entourage towards Tibet which allowed him to pass by unnoticed and didn't raise any eyebrows from anyone who saw him. For instance, in Tashilhunpo, when Sarat and party were given the news that the Minister's secretary had arrived and wanted to meet them, he got dressed in his lama attire and went carrying a few coins and some *khatag*. Dressing up is one thing, but to act like one without raising any suspicions from anyone is a whole different ordeal, but Sarat pulls it off immaculately:

Being conducted into his presence, I presented him with a scarf and a couple of rupees, and Ugyen did the same. We were then given fine *khatag*, and asked, with an air of genuine cordiality and kindness which greatly pleased me, to be seated beside him. A stuffed raised seat, covered with a Chinese rug, was given me, and a small table placed before me. Ugyen occupied a lower seat, and the table given him was also lower than mine, to show the difference of rank between us. Plates of dried and boiled mutton, together with bowls of *tsamba*, were served us. An attendant then brought from the minister's shelves handsome china cups, and, filling them with tea, asked me to drink with "*Pundib la, sol-ja-she*" ("Please drink, Mr. Pundit"), at which I drank about a third of the contents; for it is customary in Tibet not to drink more than this at first, while to drink less would be a reflection on the cook or the host.

(Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The*

*Diary of a Spy*, 42-43)

He is well versed in the customs of the place and well versed in the language which lets his guise be perfect. But that was not enough to deceive people to a hundred percent, for instance, in one of the villages Sarat and his entourage took refuge while travelling, the people were a bit conspicuous of his identity so they sent someone to verify his identity:

In a little while the big men arrived. The headman, conspicuous by his earring, boots, and red serge robe, nodded to me slightly, and took off his hat. He asked me why I had chosen such a bad season for going to Tibet. I told him that I did so in obedience to the command of our holy and learned chief lama (*Tsawai*), and not by my own wish. His object in coming to see me was to find out if I spoke Tibetan and understood the Buddhist religion. My fluency in Tibetan, and the citing of one or two proverbial sayings in the course of or conversation, made him form a high opinion of

my knowledge of the sacred texts and histories, as well as my character and holiness. “*Laso, laso*” (yes, yes), he said, and then he apologised for not having brought me some presents. I answered him that our acquaintance was only just begun, and there would be time in the future to cultivate it, and, handing him a scarf (*khatag*), I expressed the hope that we might meet the next year (*sangpoi ja chog*). (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, 27-28)

Even though the headman believed him, a few bystanders in the crowd, as they were leaving the village, said that he was certainly not Tibetan. Then other swore that Sarat was Indian, and a third said that they would soon have news of him: “That Hindu will surely die in the snows, and his servants will soon return here with the news of his death.” Given his knowledge and understanding of the native language and culture, he still had trouble regarding his appearance when he was on his journey. It could have been because of the colour of his skin, or his facial appearance, because it was certainly not his attire or his speech and conduct. Sarat made sure that he would do everything – from research about the language and learning it along with the sacred texts as his guise was that of a *pundit* and no respectable *pundit* would not know about the sacred texts – his extensive research and work was not the problem here. He tried his best, to the point where not even the Minister would have doubts about his identity – the way he presented and conducted himself was immaculate.

On the religious side, one of the religious customs that Sarat gives us a glimpse of is the marriage customs of the Limbus, which he refers to as curious and interesting. When a man and a girl think of marrying, they meet, without consulting their parents, at some place, for example a market, if there is one nearby:

Once there they sing witty songs, in which test the man is required to do better than his fair rival. If he is beaten in this contest by the maiden whose hand he covets, he runs away in deep shame at his defeat. If he wins, he seizes her by the hand and takes her to his home without further ceremony, but usually accompanied by a female companion.

If the man has some previous knowledge of the girl's superior ability in singing, he sometimes bribes her companions to declare him the winner of the singing competition.

Another way of wife-winning is to court her in the house of her parents. Free access is readily gained by presenting the girl's nearest relative living in the house with a pig's carcass, a present called in their language *phudang*. When the marriage ceremony takes place, the bridegroom, if rich enough, kills a buffalo or a pig, which is presented to the bride's parents with a native coin fixed on its forehead. Among the lower people, the bride's parents seldom know anything about the marriage until the return of the girl from her captor's house. Then the marriage ceremony takes place. The friends and relatives assemble in some spacious courtyard, each bringing a present of a basket of rice, a bottle of murwa or arrack. The bridegroom then beats a drum, and the bride dances to its music, with outsiders also joining in the dance. Afterwards, a Phedangba priest conducts certain religious ceremonies beginning with the following *mantra*:

“According to the commands handed down to us from ancient times and the doings of the patriarchs, we bind our son and daughter today in marriage.” (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, 7-8)

But the narrative does not just indulge in the native elements, but also gives the readers a glimpse at history and events too. For example, Hurrie mentions the Kanheri caves, located north of Greater Bombay:

North of Greater Bombay are the Kanheri caves (which is a very jolly holiday spot) and the site of an ancient Buddhist University. More than a hundred caves have been discovered filled with gigantic Buddhist sculptures. The Portuguese who obtained the islands in 1534 presented them to Britain in 1661 as part of dowry of Catherine of Braganza, sister of the king of Portugal, when she married Charles II. Ever since then, under the aegis of the Viceroy of India, Steward of our Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen Empress, this city has seen such tremendous progress, *pro bono publico*, in industry, building, education, and what not, that it is, without doubt, the foremost megapolis in the Empire – after

London, of course, which I have not yet had the privilege of visiting. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 46)

Tibet has exchanged hands in the ruling power of the land, from Dalai Lama, who is considered the spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism and also a political leader, to various kingdoms in the past. One such ruling power and the effects it brought upon the land is explained to Holmes by Hurrie, when Holmes talks about entering Tibet by learning the language:

‘And a valuable one you would be performing for me Huree, if you were to teach me the Thibetan language.’

‘Well, Mr Holmes, you may have heard of Thibet referred to as “The Forbidden Land” – and that is exactly what it is to all foreigners, especially Europeans. The

priestly rulers of that country are jealous of their power...Therefore Europe and their agents are forbidden, on pain of death, to enter Thibet.'

'What do the Manchus have to do with Thibet?'

'Since the army of the Emperor Yung-Cheng entered Thibet at the beginning of the last century, the Manchu throne has claimed certain suzerain rights in Thibet... At the moment, unfortunately, not only has the senior Manchu Amban in Lhasa, Count O-erh-t'ai, gained an ascendancy over the Dalai Lama and the Thibetan Government, but he also has an intense and virulent hatred for all Europeans, especially the English.'

(Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 91-92)

We see the possible reason the Tibetan rulers to have denied entry to the Englishmen, but the hatred of the Manchu count, O-erh-t'ai, was unforeseen. Later, we get to know why it was:

'Would that be count O-erh-t'ai, the man who hates the English?'

'Yes, and we've found out why he's so rabidly xenophobic. It seems that his father, the Marquis T'o-shih, was burned to death when British troops set fire to the Imperial Summer Palace in Peking.'

In 1860 an Anglo-French expedition led by Lord Elgin (born 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1811 – died 20<sup>th</sup> November, 1863) occupied Peking after defeating Imperial Chinese forces and forcing the Emperor to flee to Jehol. Every palace, temple and mansion in the capital was thoroughly plundered, and the Imperial Summer Palace was burned to the ground. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 105)

Since their journey was bound to be through the tough mountain terrain, due to the extreme and strong denial to the entry of Englishmen, Holmes and party needed to not just brace

themselves with the harsh terrain and weather. But more than that, the perilous path through the mountains was their first and foremost challenge, and for that they needed a mountaineer – someone who had extensive knowledge of the mountain range and preferably travelled through this terrain too. Luck favoured them, for they were able to acquire the services of a great and sturdy mountaineer – Kintup:

In order of importance, the first thing I had to do was hire our expedition Sirdar. We were very lucky to acquire the services of Kintup, a sturdy mountaineer of Sikkhimese extraction, who had on previous occasions performed a few commissions for the Department, and had also been my guide on my last abortive trip to Thibet.

In 1881, Kintup (or K.P. as he is listed in Departmental records) was sent secretly to Southern Tibet to throw marked logs into the Tsangpo River to prove its continuity with the Bhramaputra. This intrepid spy pushed his way through unexplored jungles infested with wild animals, cannibals and head-hunters, and after four years of thrilling adventures and narrow escapes finally managed to throw the marked logs into the river. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 110)

During their travel to Tibet, they come across the place where the first Catholic mission station was formed. Missionaries travelling to different kingdoms and countries was not something new or unheard of, and this was one of the historical site which had now crumbled down and was in ruins:

But from then on the land became increasingly waterless and desert-like, what geographers would describe as a *dorsum orbis*. After two days we reached the town of Tsaparang, once the capital of ancient Thibetan kingdom of Guge, abandoned around 1650 because of incessant wars and a drop in the water table. The citadel of the kings, and impregnable fortress, stood on the top of the sheer cliffs that rose above the ruins

of the city. I had learned from certain records in the archives of the Asiatic Society that the first Catholic mission station had been founded here in 1624. The Portuguese Jesuit, Antonio de Andrade (born 1580 – died March 19, 1634), had formed a Catholic community and is reported to have built a church. I told Mr Holmes this strange story and both of us searched for traces of a Christian building in the ruins, but found nothing. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 139)

Sarat's travelogue also contains various historical events and the origins of different traditions behind them. One such event was where the Kashmir Government sent an envoy every three years with tribute to Lhasa:

The origin of this tribute from Kashmir to Lhasa is as follows: after the conquest of Ladak, Balti, and Skardo, Zorwar Singh, the famous Sikh general of Maharaja Golab Singh, turned his arms against Rudok and Gar in the year 1840-41. These two provinces, which produce the finest wool of Tibet, and contain the wealthiest and most sacred of its monasteries, were held by the great Buddhist ruler of Tibet as his most valued possessions, and the Sikh general, by attempting their conquest, excited the wrath of the Lhasa Government, who, applying to their suzerain, the Emperor of China, was able to put more than 10,000 men in the field. Zorwar Singh, with some 5000 men, invaded those two provinces, and the governor (*garpon*) fled to the Chang tang, leaving the fort and the whole country at the mercy of the enemy. The general established himself near the sacred lake Mapham (Mansarovar), and sent detachments all over the country to pillage and spread desecration in the holiest of Buddhist sanctuaries at Mapham and Kailas; and one body of troops he posted at Purang, near the Nepal frontier, to watch the Lhasa forces. The combined forces of Lhasa and China now marched on Rudok under the leadership of one of the Shaps; and Zorwar



Singh, whose contempt for the Tibetan soldiery was great, and who underrated the strength of the forces opposed to him, sent some small detachments of his troops to oppose their advance. These were cut to pieces, when he himself, at the head of his troops, advanced to counter the Lhasa forces. The two armies fought for two days and nights without any decisive result, but on the third day the Sikh general fell, and victory declared itself for the lamas. The defeat was complete, and the number of slain on both sides immense. The victorious troops now threatened Ladak, and the Maharaja sued for peace. A treaty was concluded by the agent of Golab Singh, and the Government of Lhasa, of which one of the terms was the payment of triennial tribute. (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, 46-47)

The Dalai Lama, who is the Supreme Head of Tibetan Buddhism and a spiritual leader, and whose position resembles that held until lately by the Pope of the Christian world, cannot be taken out of context when speaking of Tibet. Dalai Lama is known throughout the world, and Sarat Chandra Das gives us how the name originated:

In the year 1474 Gedun-gyatso was born, an embodiment of Gedun-dub, who was an incarnation of Chen-rezigm and the founder of the famous lamasery of Tashilhunpo. Gedun-gyatso was elected head lama of Tashilhunpo in 1512, which office he resigned to fill the same position in Dabung, the chief lamasery of Lhasa. He built at this latter place the Gadan phodang of Dabung, which since then has been famed it is the principal seat of Buddhist learning. He was the first of the line of Dalai Lamas.

His successor was Sonam-gyatso. He was invited to Mongolia by the famous conqueror

Altan Khan, and on his arrival at the latter's camp the Khan addressed him in Mongol by the name of Dalai Lama, the Tibetan word *gyatso*, "ocean," being

equivalent of *dalai* at in Mongol. Altan, knowing that the Lama's predecessor had also the word *gyatso* in his name, took it for a family name; and this mistake has been the origin of the name of

Dalai Lama since given to all the reincarnations of the Grand Lama. (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, 154)

All these historical elements present in the two novels, along with cultural, religious and indigenous practices that the novels have included within themselves work harmoniously to give us, the readers, a point-of-view perspective of the native detectives, and how they had travelled and completed their journeys respectively. These historical, cultural, political facts performs the role of informing the readers about the events that took place in those respective times, and transfers the reader's attention towards the introduction of the 'non-white' detectives in their respective roles. The positionality and the location of these native detectives, along with their ethnic identity, both help and hinder them in the native setting, as we have seen in the cases of Hurrie and Sarat, and the authors have used the detective fiction element combined within the historical context in the novels. Due to this historical elements present in the novels, we see the issues of colonialism in India and Tibet, by multiple forces – including the British, Portuguese, Chinese, Mongolian – among the colonising forces. Due to all these elements present in the novels, the plot is not a simple one. The traditional 'whodunnit' mystery plot, which is ever-present in the novel, yet the novel does not completely circle around it. Instead, it focuses on what is happening/has happened in that era, the indigenous elements introduced in the novel, also acts as a bridge that closes the gap between the pan-readers and the native detective and his world. The vivid representation of the ethnic and the indigenous, their culture, traditions, historical events, all acts towards informing and introducing pan-readers to the world of the native detective. The wonderful narration of the two authors in their novel, where while retaining the traditional elements of

the detective fiction genre yet also introduced the native detectives in a brilliant manner, they were careful as to not wander off from the literary genre they were undertaking yet they beautifully incorporated the native detective and the sociocultural, ethnic world of the native detectives which gave these novels a wonderful and vivid outlook in the detective fiction genre.

## CHAPTER - IV

### **Situating the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study between Canonical and Non-Canonical Texts**

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, it can be seen that detective fiction is a sub-genre of crime fiction, the first work seen in this field being Edgar Allan Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1842). Through this dissertation, an effort is being made towards locating where the native-detective fiction lies in this timeline – or if native-detective can also be included as a 'legitimate' form of writing among the canon of detective fiction. For that purpose, a number of key elements that consists in a canonical detective fiction has been taken and, with ample textual references from native detective texts taken up for the purpose of the dissertation, has been thus far proved in the previous chapters that the native detective fiction does include these key elements. The canonical texts in the detective fiction genre are those works that follow all the elements and points that were made in the preceding chapters – from the seemingly perfect crime; the wrongly accused suspect at whom circumstantial evidence points; the bungling of dim-witted police; the greater powers of observation and superior mind of the detective; and the startling and unexpected denouement, in which the detective reveals how the identity of the culprit was ascertained. But, this dissertation is not only focused on proving the legitimacy of native detective fiction, but also to see how unique the native detective fiction is from canonical works of detective fiction. The native elements present in these two novels: the authors gave us, the readers, a glimpse into the world of the native detective. Not limiting themselves to just the setting, but also delving into the lives, the environment, historical facts and socio-cultural elements in the novels. A sub-genre of detective fiction, that not just only focuses on the case and the elements related around it, the native detective fiction, as the name suggests, delves into the native element in a way that it adds something new to the genre, while not making it redundant or driving it astray from the

traditional elements of the genre. From the first work of Poe on detective fiction in 1842 to Sarat Chandra Das' work which was published on 1902, there is a sixty year gap where the detective narrative was considered solely a Western narrative, and within that narrative, a non-white, native detective is trying to take their first step.

Although the sub-genre is unique, it is not something new. The first detective fiction was *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1842) by Edgar Allan Poe. So, it would be wrongful to state that the sub-genre on a Native Detective fiction is distinctively new when the roots that its share with the canonical detective fiction is already something that has existed for a period of time. However, the distinctive elements of the native detective sub-genre: the native elements, the historical facts, the introduction of a non-white detective and giving the readers a glimpse into their worlds, can be seen as a distinctive mark that this sub-genre has made. Keeping in mind that even with all these new elements, the novels do not deviate from the traditional elements of the detective fiction writing, the legitimacy of these two non-canonical texts can be ascertained. The native detectives, with their native identity and positionality, were able to introduce new elements during the investigation, and where sometimes their identity helped them while times hindered them too.

The final convention of the mystery, crime and detective genre is the resolution, which will here be further explicated while dealing with these native detective fiction. According to the Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing:

The typical ending of a detective novel usually involves the final confrontation in which, ideally, all the suspects are gathered together. The detective demonstrates that each suspect in turn is capable of having committed the murder and then clears each, one by one. (Herbert, 88)

The typical ending of a detective novel usually involves the final confrontation in which, ideally, all the suspects are gathered together. (Herbert, 384)

According to the above statement, we have with us two non-canonical text with the elements of detective fiction in them, so the final resolution is something that needs to be seen – if the two novels, Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902) adhere to this pattern, as compared to canonical texts or if the ending is open-ended. And also, to see if the two novels deliver justice to the wrongdoers towards the end or not. For comparative study, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's work, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902) will be taken while looking into the resolution factor in *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*.

The solution to the crime, in case of Sherlock Holmes and his party, where Sherlock's life was threatened and multiple assassination attempts were made, comes towards the final chapters of the novel. Although, even as the novel reaches its end, Sherlock, until the very final moment that the antagonist is revealed, has a lot of doubts in his mind about the identity of the antagonist. This could be said so because he had experienced things that were – quite literally – out of this world. He came, and experienced the supernatural in a very close proximity. The supernatural – for a person who was very sceptic and relied only on facts – was something that was an eye-opener and a new world of experiences to which Sherlock glanced upon in this journey of his. Sherlock comes to believe the supernatural forces that exist beyond the realm of human beings when he sees the swords being brandished in thin air and attack him and the warrior lama savagely – where the warrior lama loses his life – but he gets a taste of the supernatural a bit earlier than this, when he reaches the Palace and is welcomed and invited for tea:

‘You will forgive me. I am Lama Yonten, Chief Secretary to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Please, please be seated.’

‘You will, no doubt, be wondering how we came to know of your true identity,’ he continued. ‘The explanation is simple, though it may not convince one not of our faith... The Great Seer of Taklung, the “Tiger’s Prophecy”, is one such. His inner vision pierced the mists of time to find you.’

‘I was aware that of late my reputation has been enhanced somewhat, thanks to my friend Watson’s lively accounts of my work, but that it had transcended physical laws is somewhat surprising...’

The Lama Yonten smiled, his face creasing like old leather. ‘Mr Holmes, I assure you that no one in Thibet was even aware of your existence before the Great Seer discovered you in his vision. Indeed it came as a great surprise to me that he should have chosen a *chilingpa*, an outsider.’

‘Chosen? For what?’

‘To protect the life of my master, Mr Holmes,’ said the Lama simply. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 152-153)

In this conversation, we can make out that the Lama Yonten, the Chief Secretary knew about Sherlock Holmes through the visions of The Great Seer – in fact, he knew, as well, about how Holmes will not believe in superstitions and visions as such. That is the reason we see the Lama explain while informing Holmes that this is a land of ‘ignorance and superstition’. We can also see how Holmes was very sceptic, for he believed that the Lama came to know about his existence through the writings and records of Dr Watson. But to make assumptions about his scepticism and his belief in logic and not in the supernatural without proof is a wrongful thing to do. But given the dire situation when Holmes and Hurrie are informed of

the situation in the Palace and the danger upon the young Dalai Lama, Holmes speaks out his mind and let his thoughts be conveyed:

‘There is always the first time,’ Holmes sighed despondently and remained silent and deep in thought for a long time. ‘Excuse me, Reverend Sir. In no way do I wish to belittle your beliefs, but my entire career, indeed, my life has been based on logic and reason... You require the services of an army, Sir, not a consulting detective. I must regretfully decline the responsibility.’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 159-160)

He makes his views and stance on the matter perfectly clear, and leaves no room for ambiguity as he does not want to give any false hope to the Lama, who was eagerly waiting for his arrival and for him to undertake this mission of protecting his master, the Dalai Lama.

For every protagonist, there is the antagonist. And for every resolution, the antagonist has to be identified and confronted by the detective while revealing everything related to the case and how the detective was able to track his moves, motives and apprehend him. In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the identity of the antagonist is revealed when Holmes visits the Baskerville estate and examines a portrait:

I looked at the broad plumed hat, the curling love-locks, the white lace collar, and the straight, severe face which was framed between them. It was not a brutal countenance, but it was prim, hard, and stern, with a firm-set, thin lipped mouth, and a coldly intolerant eye.

“Is it like anyone you know?”

“There is something of Sir Henry about the jaw.”



“Just a suggestion, perhaps. But wait an instant!” He stood upon a chair, and, holding up the light in his left hand, he curved his right arm over the broad hat and round the long ringlets.

“Good heavens!” I cried in amazement. The face of Stapleton had sprung out of the canvas.

“Exactly. This chance of the picture has supplied us with one of our most obvious missing links. We have him, Watson, we have him, and I dare swear that before tomorrow night he will be fluttering in our net as helpless as one of his own butterflies. A pin, a cork, and a card, and we add him to the Baker Street collection!” (Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 183-184)

The antagonist in the *Mandala* is only introduced to the readers towards the end of the novel, where he is referred to as ‘The Dark One’, when Holmes tasks Tsering to track the palanquin after the flying swords incident:

‘It was no problem following them, Sir.’ Said Tsering, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. ‘And we were careful not to let ourselves be seen, as you instructed... They carried on in an easterly direction, sticking all the while to the back streets till they came near the Kashgar caravanserai, which they skirted, and finally they entered the compound of the *yamen*, the Chinese legation.’

‘Are you sure?’ asked the Lama Yonten anxiously.

‘I am certain. The main gate of the legation walls was open and the Amban himself with servants and guards was waiting.’

‘Then it is him!’ the Lama Yonten went white as a sheet. His hands trembled.

‘Who?’ asked Holmes.

‘The mysterious guest that arrived at the Chinese legation, the person within the palanquin who caused swords to fly, the power to whom even the Amban must bow.

It is him. The Dark One!’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 178-179)

The Dark One was a title, not a name, which was given to someone who had diverted from the path of righteousness and given in to the dark forces lingering in their hearts. As such, even though Holmes and everyone else – including the reader – had no idea as to the identity of the Dark One. But, as Holmes had said to Lama Yonten earlier, the identity of the Dark one was one of his ‘first-time’ experiences, the identity which sent chills down the spine of the people present when his identity was revealed:

‘Perhaps this is what you are looking for,’ he said in a low hiss that I felt had heard somewhere before... The light revealed cadaverous-looking blighter with a bent, broken body and a lame right leg, somewhat incongruously dressed in the rich silk robes of a high mandarin. His face was badly distorted... But the most remarkable thing about him was the great bulge of his forehead, which moved and twitched on the occasions when he seemed to feel great emotion.

‘Moriarty!’ cried Holmes.

My skin went cold at the name.

‘Yes, it is I, Holmes.’ His lips twisted in an ugly smirk. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 195-196)

To Holmes’s and to everyone else’s surprise, Professor Moriarty had survived the fall. The fall, for Holmes, was something he had planned for, but Professor Moriarty was able to survive it as well – albeit paid the price with his disfigured condition – but nevertheless was alive. And he was the Dark One, who was using the powers of the supernatural to perform feats that was humanely impossible to do. With this, the perpetrator was revealed, but the

solution to the crime was not yet revealed. Holmes had a lot of questions – the main being how was Professor Moriarty able to survive the fall. How did he end up here in Thibet, and how was he able to tap into the supernatural powers? What was his ultimate aim, and why did he need the Mandala in the first place? According to Lama Yonten, the previous incarnation of The Dalai Lama were assassinated, but when there was a break in on the Palace and the assailant, who had entered the vicinity and had every possible opportunity to assassinate the young Dalai Lama, when everyone was busy battling the Dark One, why did the assailant only take the Mandala? What was the end goal? These questions were still to be answered, for the answers to these questions would gradually form a link, and describe his motives, while also giving Holmes the whole picture and possibly the resolution to this case.

To possibly continue with the case, they needed to know the origin of the antagonist. In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the identity of the antagonist comes after the case is over and Holmes clarifies to Watson the identity of Stapleton:

“My inquiries show beyond all question that the family portrait did not lie, and that this fellow was indeed a Baskerville. He was a son of that Rodger Baskerville, the younger brother of Sir Charles, who fled with a sinister reputation to South America, where he was said to have died unmarried. He did, as a matter of fact, marry, and had one child, this fellow, whose real name is the same as his father’s. He married Beryl Garcia, one of the beauties of Costa Rica, and, having purloined a considerable sum of public money, he changed his name to Vandeleur and fled to England, where he established a school in the east of Yorkshire. His reason for attempting this special line of business was that he had struck up an acquaintance with a consumptive tutor upon the voyage home, and that he had used the man’s ability to make the undertaking a success. Fraser, the tutor, died, however, and the school which had begun well sank from disrepute to infamy. The Vandeleurs found it convenient to

change their name to Stapleton, and he brought the remains of his fortunes, his schemes for the future, and his taste for entomology to the south of England. I learn at the British Museum that he was a recognised authority upon the subject, and the name of Vandeleur has been permanently attached to a certain moth which he had, in his Yorkshire days, been the first to describe.” (Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 213)

In *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, Lama Yonten gives Holmes and Hurrie an introduction to who and how the Dark One came into existence:

‘The College of Occult Sciences in Lhasa is the highest institution of occult knowledge and practice that exists in Thibet... In the year of the Water Monkey (1873), the college produced two of the greatest adepts of the occult sciences that the country had beheld for more than a century.’

‘It was there, Mr Holmes, that certain demonic ministers of the Emperor lured one of them into the ways of evil. With great cunning they filled his mind with every kind of filth and abomination – and even with the unthinkable ambition to take the Grand Lama’s throne and rule Thibet.’

‘On the eve of the Great New Year’s Festival, when everyone was busy preparing for the coming ceremonies, Gangsar *trulku* saw the Dark One enter the Grand Lama’s chapel... In his brave struggle with the Dark One, he lost his life. Unfortunately for this incarnation of evil, the Grand Master of the College of Occult Sciences appeared upon the scene... His mind was partially shattered, and he lost his memory and most of his former powers.’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 179-180)

Here, we can see that from the two prodigious students produced from the college, one of them was lured into the ways of evil by the ministers of the Chinese Emperor. He, who was

unable to pull himself away from the darkness that lurked in his heart, furthered flamed by the whispers of the ministers, he started to divert from his teachings and plot his schemes. He was unable to hide his intention of achieving more than he already had – he was blinded by power and ambition. He was, although, stopped in his tracks by the Grand Master, but Gangsar *trulku* lost his life alongside the Grand Lama. With his mind shattered, memories and powers lost, it seemed that the dangers from within was dealt with. But, that was not the end of the Dark One's malicious exploits.

Professor Moriarty, albeit the hideous and grotesque form he had donned, was still alive and in front of them – now equipped with supernatural prowess alongside his cunning mind that rivalled Holmes's. The mystery of his escape from the Reichenbach Falls are given by the Professor himself, alongside his newfound power:

‘Aaah ... you mock me, Holmes. But you will pay ... It was a wicked, cruel thing to throw me over the precipice ... As I fell into space ... I remembered my power ... yes ... my great powers.’

‘So you see the Great *Mandala*. Much good will it do you, even if you have it. Fool. What can you know of its great secret, when you never even knew mine... But just that paltry fraction of my power – and a little help from my Chinese friends, who helped to establish me in Europe to avenge themselves against the nations that had humiliated China – was sufficient to create the greatest criminal empire in the world.’

(Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 196-197)

The Dark One, who had lost his memories and powers, had awakened as Professor Moriarty, and during his fall and final moments of his life flashing in front of him, the memories and the powers eventually came back, but not before he hit the rock-faces and his body was disfigured. This also explains how the Professor was able to survive the fall and make his

way to Thibet – mainly due to his mental powers in paly here and with the help of the Chinese that he was receiving help from beforehand. With this, we come to know about the identity of the perpetrator, and how he was able to survive the fall. So the assailants sent for the Grand Lama, Holmes, and the involvement of the second head of the Professor's criminal network, Colonel Moran, was all the Professor's handiwork and his schemes and to either delay or possibly assassinate Holmes before he reaches Thibet. But now, the main question remains – why did the Professor desperately needed the *Mandala*, and what secret did it possibly hold that the Professor wanted to unearth, and not let anyone near or find it before himself?

Everything that happened on Thibet after Sherlock Holmes and party arrived was out of everyone's expectation – the biggest one was for Holmes himself. He was unable to divert his eye away and had to believe in something that was not factual – from the Professor's rescue to him being able to use mental powers to control inanimate objects freely – to him being the husk for the Dark One, a well-renowned scholar of great achievements yet someone who delved into the dark path, it was something that was out of Holmes's area of expertise, as he says so himself. But, as a true detective and sticking to his nature, he did not want any loose ends to a case that he took upon, and since he know that the perpetrator was the Professor, he made up his mind to find out the reason behind the Professor's obsession with the *Mandala* and possibly resolve this case. Now that his mind was made up, he needed every bit of information that he could gather about the *Mandala*. He asked the Lama Yonten about the travel the Grand Lama had to make in a few days to the ice-temple of Shambala, and about its importance and if there were any secrets to the temple. The Lama Yonten answered briefly by saying that it was a pilgrimage of great importance for every Grand Lama, but other than that there were no secrets in the temple. But there must be something in there, for the Professor will not be going into an empty temple for nothing. The first hint of there being

something in the temple came to Holmes's mind when they decrypted and read out the poem that was written in the *Mandala* that was stolen by the Professor:

*Om Svasti!*

Reverence to thee, Buddha of the Three Ages and Protector of all Creatures.

O, assembled gurus and Warriors of Shambala.

Out of your great compassion show us the true path. When wandering through the delusion of samsara guide us on to the true path.

Facing the sacred direction

Turning always in the Path of the Dharma Wheel

Circle thrice the Mountain of Fire

Twice the Adamantine Walls

Proceeding once around the Eight Cemeteries

And Once the Sacred Lotus Fence,

Stand before the Walls of the Celestial City.

Then from the Southern Gate turn to the East

Enter the inner-most palace from the Northern portals

And sit victorious on the Vajra throne. EE – TI! (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 206)

At a glance, this looked like directions, but some parts were ambiguous and not practical, as circling the mountain of fire thrice, which, even if they could, would waste potential time – time that they did not have the luxury of losing at this point. But all these verses came into

play once they entered the Ice Temple, for in the middle of the temple stood the Great *Mandala*, a structure that was about six feet high and the base stone was nearly seven feet in diameter. Upon close inspection, there were markings exact to the poem that was read out, and after following the instructions carefully, they were able to open a secret doorway that lead to the inner chambers of the temple – the place where the root of everything rested – a place where the final conclusion and resolution to the case rested within.

After they had entered the chamber, they came into contact with what was the hidden secret of the temple, which the lamas wanted to protect and the Professor wanted to get his hands on before anyone else:

Twenty minutes' walk brought us before a large column of ice... The strange sheen of the column's surface gave the illusion of not really being solid, but just an opening to deepest space. Little star-shaped specks of light reflected from the icy dome on its surface reinforced the illusion. But even more wonderful was what rested – or to be exact – what seemed to be suspended a few inches above the top of the column. A perfect crystal, about the size of a large coconut, blazed with an inner fire, its many, perfectly cut facets distributing the light in myriad magical patterns.

‘It is the Norbu Rimpoche!’ (Skt. *Chintamani*) whispered the Lama Yonten, obviously awe-struck. ‘The great Power Stone of Shambala.’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 233-234)

This was what the Professor was after. The Power Stone was something which ensured the rule of the Great Lama in Thibet, which also meant the grasp of the Chinese rule weakening in the land. The Professor wanted to get this, for it served him three purposes –

- The stone ensured the rule of the one who held it, and the Dark One wanted to rule over the land instead of the Grand Lama and this would have ensured his rule.



- Since he was in collusion with the Chinese, his rule over the land would also have ensured the Chinese still being in power and laying their hands on Thibet.
- The power that the Dark One hungered over would have been satisfied with this stone, for the stone contained miraculous power that rested within it.

With this, the missing links of the case was found, and the whole picture was formed for both Holmes and the readers. The stone held absolute power, and the parties involved in this – the detective, his trusty aide, the victims, and the antagonist – everyone was present in the room and the final confrontation was made. But the stone held immense power, and the Professor, who knew about it, displays its power in full glory:

Holding the Stone in both hands Moriarty raised it high above his head, till his entire body was bathed in its myriad flashes of light. It seemed that he was burning in a fierce pyre, but these flames did not consume – they healed, they restored! (237)

A brief current of light flashed from Moriarty's eyes to the Stone of Power. Suddenly a ball of fire shot forth from the Stone. It struck me full in the chest and threw me violently backwards. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 241)

Faced with great adversity, the Lama Yonten called out to Holmes and was trying to remind him of something – something that could help them out of this adversity and let Holmes know about something that had been repressed:

‘Mr Holmes, Mr Holmes. Listen to me. You are not Sherlock Holmes! You are the renowned Gangsar *trulku*, former abbot of the White Garuda Monastery, one of the greatest adepts of the occult sciences. The Dark One slew you eighteen years ago, but just before your life-force left your body we were able to transfer it – by the yoga of *Pho-wa* – to another body far away.’ (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 242)

After Holmes gained his memories and his abilities back, a great battle ensued. Mental prowess against mental prowess, the two individuals who were their greatest adversary in the life and before – the Dark One and Moriarty against Gangsar *trulku* and Holmes – a rivalry that went beyond the rift of time. But due to the overwhelming power of the stone, Moriarty had the upper hand, that it, until Hurrie, in his dying moments, turned the tables in their favour:

‘Goodbye, Holmes, everybody. Forever!’

Moriarty stepped forward. I clenched the end of my umbrella firmly and, whipping it forward, hooked the curved handle around his right ankle... His arms instinctively extended forwards to break his fall – and he inadvertently released his hold on the Stone of Power.

‘NOOO ...’ the echoes of Moriarty’s last desperate wail finally receded, and there was silence, and, at last, peace. (Norbu, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, 248-249)

In a similar way, in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, when the antagonist was identified and his identity revealed, the final confrontation took place. While chasing Stapleton through the Grimpen Mire, Holmes and party were unable to find Stapleton and finally came to a conclusion:

“It was worth a mud bath,” said he. “It is our friend Sir Henry’s missing boot.”

“Thrown here by Stapleton in his flight.”

“Exactly. He retained it in his hand after using it to set the hound upon the track. He fled when he knew the game was up, still clutching it. And he hurled it away at this point of his flight. We know at least that he came so far in safety.”

But more than that we were never destined to know, though there was much which we might surmise. There was no chance of finding footsteps in the mire, for the rising mud oozed swiftly in upon them, but as we at last reached firmer ground beyond the morass we all looked eagerly for them. But no slightest sign of them every met our eyes. If the earth told a true story, then Stapleton never reached that island of refuge towards which he struggled through the fog upon that last night. Somewhere in the heart of the great Grimpen Mire, down in the foul slime of the huge morass which had sucked him in, this cold and cruel hearted man is forever buried. (Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 208)

With this, the resolution was found for the case. From the very beginning – from the assassination attempt on Holmes’s hotel room, to Colonel Moran’s relentless attacks on him and his troupe, to travelling to Thibet and finally confronting the puppeteer behind the atrocities – Professor Moriarty/The Dark One – Holmes and party finally came to the end of their tiresome and dangerous journey, and resolved everything. For all the questions, mysteries, any unclear and mysterious notions or connections that was hidden in the beginning of the journey, everything was now answered and revealed. Holmes and Hurrie were introduced to a new world – a world of the supernatural, a world that existed outside logic and understanding, a world that they came into contact with and accepted it – the journey broadened their horizon even further.

In case of Sarat’s travelogue, the notion of resolution is not found. In his travelogue, we find the excerpts of his journey, the path/route he took towards Tibet, his understanding of the terrain and the language, as well as his guise – everything he planned for the journey alongside his companions, is recorded and is presented to the readers. As such, there are no antagonists in the novel, and we don’t see any confrontation between the detective and the antagonist anywhere. Although we do see the aftermath of his voyage and findings, it cannot

be simply defined as a resolution, for however brutal the aftermath was, he was unable to neither oppose it nor resolve it:

But there was a dark aftermath. Soon after Sarat Chandra returned to India, his true identity and the purpose of his mission came to light in Tibet. The people who had hosted him and assisted him inadvertently during his stay were charged with sedition. They were arrested, mutilated and thrown into dungeons. Sengchen Dorjechen was drowned alive in the river Tsangpo in a public spectacle of capital punishment. Such brutality was wired into the Tibetan culture, and Sarat had witnessed it during his stay there. In this book there are descriptions of petty criminals begging on the streets of Shigatse—manacled, mutilated and their eyes gouged out.

The lucidity and precision in describing a little-known land by Sarat Chandra Das helped Francis Younghusband lead a military expedition there in 1903. Tibet was prised open like an oyster. Thousands of Tibetans defending their land with crude weapons were killed, the temples and lamaseries were sacked. And yes, a few of the still-surviving prisoners who had befriended Sarat Chandra were freed after thirty years of incarceration. This also ended the Great Game and drew a curtain on a fascinating chapter of espionage that had continued for most of the nineteenth century. Overnight, men like Sarat Chandra became redundant, forgotten, a relic from the past. We find him making an appearance in the caricature of an English-educated Bengali spy in the figure of Hurree Chunder Mukherjee in Rudyard Kipling's famous novel *Kim*. (Das, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, Introduction by Parimal Bhattacharya)

So here we see that his travelogue had a very deep and negative aftermath, but Sarat, who did not hold a great or grand position and his only accomplishment was his two successful travels

to Tibet and mapping the entire land, he was slowly forgotten and even when he raised his voice, he was unheard. Unlike Holmes or Hurrie, Sarat did not find with himself a powerful figure or a good companion to help him fight back against these atrocities, and unfortunately, everyone who aided Sarat were punished, incarcerated and met with grim endings.

The justice factor cannot be found on both these novels, as we can see that Professor Moriarty is finally defeated for good by Sherlock Holmes towards the end of *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, and justice and peace was restored throughout the land. The culprit was identified, their motives and schemes were unearthed and after the resolution justice and peace was restored. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Sarat Chandra Das. Albeit he tried his best to raise his voice, to tell the people what had actually happened and conspired, in an effort to reconcile with the spirits of his fallen comrades, his voice was unheard. His words fell into deaf ears, and even after publishing his writings, the response was the same – no changes were made. Looking at this, the resolution and justice elements are absent from the second novel, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*. But due to the novel containing the traditional elements of the detective fiction genre, the novel can still be counted in the ranks of legitimate detective-fiction written by a canonical-outsider.

The readership response in the canonical detective fiction and the native-detective sub-genre is mixed. On the one hand, we have the traditional canonical writings where we see the cases being handled by the detective and using their prowess and skills they solve it. But in the case of native-detective, the focus is not only just on the case, but the readers are also introduced to the indigenous detective's world. We, the readers, are introduced and immersed vividly into this new world, yet the authors make sure to not diverge from the elements of detective fiction. It is still there, the only difference is the introduction of the native element. So, the native detective fiction can be seen as a new read/perspective to the detective fiction genre, and while new, readers might have a tough time adjusting to the new elements – especially

readers who are more used to the traditional detective fiction novels. The native detective fiction also works as an agent of introduction to the native world, which introduces pan-readers to their world. So, reading a native-detective text makes the readers realise that it not only deals with the main case-in-hand, but introduces the readers to the native-detective and their world.

## CHAPTER - V

### Conclusion

This dissertation has focused on the two primary novels – Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902) – and how these two novels are non-canonical, outsiders in the detective fiction genre, and whether or not they can be called 'legitimate' detective fiction novels.

In chapter 1, titled **Introduction**, the chapter gives an introduction to crime fiction, detective fiction and the two novels in question, Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902). The definition of native is also given and the importance of the native element is discussed in regards to the two primary novels and this dissertation. Crime fiction is a literary genre that fictionalizes crimes, their investigation, the criminals and their motives. Crime fiction has multiple sub-genres, such as detective fiction, court-room drama, hard-boiled fiction, etc. Most crime drama focuses on crime detection and does not feature the court room. Crime fiction came to be recognized as a distinct literary genre, with specialist writers and a devoted readership, in the 19th century. Earlier novels and stories were devoid of systematic attempts at investigation: there was present a detective, police not being involved trying to solve a case; and there were no discussion on motives, alibis, the modus operandi, or any other elements which make up the modern crime writing. Detective fiction is a sub-genre of crime fiction and mystery fiction in which an investigator or a detective, professional, amateur or retired, investigates a crime. The detective genre began around the same time as speculative fiction and other genre fiction in the midnineteenth century and has remained extremely popular, particularly in novels.

Native, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, means relating to or describing someone's country or place of birth or someone who was born in a particular country or place. This acts as a perfect justification for using the two primary novels, Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* (1902) as the primary texts for this research, as the two novels have one important thing in common – the characters in the two novels are natives of a common place, India. While the former mentioned novel is a pastiche novel, authored through the recollection of the adventures of the character through his letters, the latter is an autobiography, for the author himself was a spy, who was sent on a mission to a place which is also a common factor in the two novels: Tibet.

The Research Gap pointed out after the Literature Review carried out in Chapter 1 of this dissertation titled **Introduction** is that the topic which has been selected for this proposed research has not been so far explored. The present researcher deals with the native as a detective, described in a detective fiction which is written by a canonical outsider. Few critics and researchers have discussed the primary texts, Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902) from different perspectives such as historical, globalised literary studies. Nevertheless, the native as a detective has not been explored yet. This research will bring into focus the native as detective, the differences between the canonical and non-canonical detective fiction, and the legitimacy and illegitimacy of non-canonical detective fiction.

The major premise of Chapter 2 titled **Native Detective as Canonical Outsider: An Examination through Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902)** is to look at the traditional elements of the detective story: the seemingly perfect crime; the wrongly accused suspect at whom circumstantial evidence points; the bungling of dim-witted police; the



greater powers of observation and superior mind of the detective; and the startling and unexpected denouement, in which the detective reveals how the identity of the culprit was ascertained, and whether the two novels in question, which are considered to be canonical outsiders, here do fulfil these criteria and in what ways in the novels with examples and to ascertain their legitimacy in the canon of detective fiction. Throughout the chapter, ample textual evidences are given in accordance to the respective traditional elements. The findings in this chapter was that the two novels, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a spy* (1902) are indeed non-canonical texts, and through the thorough analysis of the two novels we find the elements of canonical detective fiction to be present, with ample examples provided from the two novels in accordance to these elements, which does prove their legitimacy. And while the element of nativity is ever-present throughout the narration, the authors have not completely ruled out the traditional elements that make up a detective fiction, as such, even after being a canonical-outsider in this field, their legitimacy as a detective fiction is still kept intact.

The primary proposition of Chapter 3 titled **Re-reading the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study between the Narrative Genres in Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902)** is to look into the two novels to see all the native, historical, socio-cultural elements that are used. Also, if the positionality of the characters as a native in the novel gives them an advantage or disadvantage throughout the novel, with prior examples, are explained in the chapter. But whether any of these elements, when introduced to the detective fiction genre, still works in the favour of the canonical outsiders, or whether it breaks away from the canonical path, and how these elements are also used to bridge the gap between native and pan-readers, is thoroughly gone through and explained in the chapter. The findings in the chapter was that the native, religious, historical, socio-cultural elements

present in the novels gives the readers a vibrant display of the indigenous detective's homeland, while also helping in the plot of the novel. These elements do not make the plot diverge away, but rather shows the author's viewpoint of making it more informative for pan-readers, by including all these elements and not just diving right into the main plot. The two novels have differences in them – one being a pastiche novel while the other being an autobiography – but it does not change the fact that it was also an introduction to the non-white detective. And without any formal training of sorts for this, they still did an amazing job, and did not get overshadowed or just became a side-character, but actually took part as the main roles in the two novels. Because we have native detectives in the novels, their ethnic identity also provides them with advantages as well as disadvantages at certain points in the novels. Their positionality is looked upon more in details in this chapter, and provided examples to the advantages and disadvantages. Alongside with the native elements, the use of crime and detective fiction element combined with historical context helps understand and make connections with the plot. There are many historical references given in both novels, and these references are helpful as it informs the readers about the events that happened at that particular time in history, and how it is related to the novel as well.

Chapter 4 titled **Situating the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study between Canonical and Non-Canonical Texts**, the fundamental premise of this chapter which the chapter proves through the analysis of textual evidences is whether the two novels have a definite resolution towards the end, and if justice and peace was restored or not, as compared to the canonical detective fiction novels, or if the ending to the novels are open ended. In the one hand, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* gives the readers a definite ending with the resolution and answering every question there is, while *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* does not have or follow this convention. There is no final confrontation against the antagonist nor there is a final resolution to the case, due to which the ending, after reading the

whole novel, is open ended. No resolution does not necessarily deem the novel not legitimate, for it does contain every other element that a traditional, canonical detective fiction text has. The findings in the chapter are that due to the inclusion of the historical, native and socio-cultural elements in the two novels, these elements go hand in hand and not sway the novels away from the subject matter, while also working as an informative agent to the readers about the world of the indigenous detective. These elements makes the native detective work an interesting and distinct sub-genre. Also, the plot of the two novels are not simple – simple as in it does not just revolve around the ‘whodunnit’ aspect, but is rather explorative and informative about the world of the native detective. The focus is there on the case, yet the authors do not just remove everything else in the pursuit of the case in hand, but rather includes the native elements which becomes a bridge the gap between the native and the pan-readers. The resolution element is not present in both novels, but because the novel has every other basic elements of canonical detective fiction, which has been proved with examples from the text in accordance to the elements present in the canonical detective fiction, it can still be considered a legitimate detective fiction authored by a canonical-outsider.

Research Question and their answers:

To the questions posed to this dissertation in chapter 1 titled **Introduction**, the chapters have answered them accordingly. To the question of whether the native detective texts are text driven or plot driven, the answer is yes to both. Jamyang Norbu’s *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* is written through a collection of letters and recollection of Hurrie’s travels with Sherlock Holmes, so the text was already set without the author having any control over the happenings in the novel. From the very beginning of the novel, we see that whatever happened, we, the readers had a third person perspective – third as in it was experienced and

recorded by Hurrie, brought to the readers in the form of a novel by Jamyang Norbu, and we see the adventures of Hurrie and Holmes through that. So, the novel is clearly text-driven, as the whole premise was already set, and because the cues in the text guides the analysis, for we already know from the get-go that we have with us a world renowned detective with us, and there is bound to be a crime/mystery that he will eventually solve. However, for Hurrie, we are given a direct view of what he went through. Not just what, but how, when, and where – a read where we were being led by Hurrie throughout his journey. And all his decisions were taken according to what he thought was in his and his mission's best interest and the whole narration was purely upon his own decisions. His guise, attire, his whole demeanour – everything was for the safe and sound completion of his mission, and until the very end the cues that were in the text did not guide the analysis, for it was everything that Sarat saw and experienced, and how he, according to a given situation, reacted to it. Hence, we can say that the second novel, *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, is a plot-driven novel.

For the second question, whether or not the native detectives have a socio-cultural agenda. The basic meaning of an agenda is a list of things to be done, discussed, matters to be acted upon. According to this meaning, the novels have native detectives who introduce the readers to the world of the ethnic-detective, their religious beliefs, their way of life, their history, culture, and informs the readers about their lives. The best example for this is in chapter 3 titled **Re-reading the Native Detective Fiction: A Comparative Study between the Narrative Genres in Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) and Sarat Chandra Das' *Journey to Lhasa: the Diary of a Spy* (1902)**, because the whole chapter is dedicated to the native elements present in the novels. The authors as well as the characters, in case of Sarat he was both, we see that they have introduced native elements throughout the novel. But the introduction of these elements do not make the novel lose sight

of the detective genre, and we can say, after reading the chapter and the findings in the chapter, that the native detectives indeed have a socio-cultural agenda.

For the third question, how are native detective texts different from those authored by canonical writers of the West? The answer to this mainly sits on the native elements of the two novels. As seen in chapter 3, we do not see that authors diving right into the case but taking their time and giving the readers a vivid representation of the world of the native detective. The canonical texts usually delve in the ‘whodunnit’ aspect of the novel, make their investigations and question the people around for more information, and finally, after all the dots are connected, reveal who the antagonist is and apprehends them. But in the native detective fiction, we are given the historical, cultural, social background of the land and the native detective where native and pan-readers are introduced to this world. The ‘whodunnit’ is still present, yet the sole focus is not in that aspect only, but the authors and the characters delve into the ethnic and cultural aspect as well, while keeping the traditional elements intact.

For the fourth question, how legitimate or illegitimate are these texts written by canonical outsiders; on what grounds are the ‘legitimacy’ or ‘illegitimacy’ defined? The entirety of the chapters – 2, 3 and 4 – have gone into proving this. From chapter 2, where the traditional elements of the canonical detective fiction is talked about and whether the two novels in question, *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* and *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy*, fulfil these criteria. The findings of the chapter proves that the two novels do indeed have these elements, with ample textual references. Chapter 3 deals with the traditional elements in the two novels which is just to show how the native detective fiction is different from the canonical texts authored by canonical writers, yet still retaining the elements of detective fiction. The premise of the whole chapter was to show that even with all these elements introduced in the texts, it does not make the native detective text deviate from the elements of the canonical detective fiction. Chapter 4 talks about the resolution element, something that

the detective fiction deals with towards the end. For every case, mystery, crime, the detective through meticulous research and studying the case, understanding the events that occurred and finally revealing who the antagonist is to the readers, their motives and their heinous ways, and apprehend them. This is usually done in a setting where all parties included in the case are gathered together and the detective makes their final deduction and apprehends the culprit. From the findings in chapter 4, it is clear that the resolution is element is not present in the two novels. While in Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*, the detective, towards the end, does finally apprehend the culprit and brings them to justice and peace is restored, Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa: The Diary of a Spy* does not have this in the novel. The one element that is missing in the novel is the resolution and the justice factor, but in accordance to the novel keeping up with almost every traditional elements that a canonical detective fiction has, it is safe to include this novel as a legitimate detective fiction. The whole premise of this particular question was how these two non-canonical texts, authored by canonical outsiders, were deemed legitimate and in what grounds – the grounds of legitimacy were in the traditional elements of the canonical detective fiction which these two novels have in them, which were proved in the chapters and how, even with the inclusion of the native elements, these novels still hold true to the detective fiction genre and fulfil every criteria there is to be recognised and 'legitimate' detective fiction novels.

#### Future Scope of Research:

Little work has been conducted upon native detective fiction writing. As a fresh new topic, the mystery of this sub-genre can provide opportunity to know about not just history and culture, but also about contemporary issues, laws and even geography. The historical elements that are present in the novels can work as a waypoint from where to begin from, as it gives us details about the events that occurred and how it impacts the plot of the novels. Native detective stories can be used to study indigenous histories and cultures, and provides

rich, unexplored areas for potential future research, and can be used for the purpose of cultural studies. This is an uncharted area, and there is a whole unknown field/uncharted territory that can be explored upon with the inclusion of these elements. For the native detective fiction also includes native history, culture, traditions, this can be used as a cornerstone for future research and to explore further and in more depth in the subject matter.

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