



## OF FORMALITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Humanity is a philosophy. It is the mission and vision of a Good Samaritan. But formality has destroyed the essence of goodness of this concept. This noble sentiment has been vitiated by the so-called social tyrants. Now in this world humanity has become a fossil and as if very soon it will be an object of the museum. In the article the foolishness and absurdities of the activities done in the name of so-called formality have been ridiculed. Formality is quite useless in the present day of crisis where men have become self-centred. Humanity is antonym of formality. To construct society means to construct humanity. To give delicious and costly food to a guest means formality. But to offer food to a hungry person means humanity hence it has been welcomed in the appeal of the article. The paper is an interdisciplinary approach in the light of philosophy, psychology and sociology.*

**Keywords:** Formality, Religious-Type, Non-Religious-Type, Official-Type, Non-Official-Type, Guest-Type, Host-Type.

### INTRODUCTION

Creative writing is based more on manifestation rather than on expression. It does not inform rather it reveals, so it bears no reference. The best creative writing is critical, and the best critical writing is creative. The present article is the outcome of creative writing meant for lay readers. As such free style is the methodology adopted so that the pleasure of reading can be enjoyed by the common people. As you know well that Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the immortal writer, wrote many essays, and notably "Of Love", "Of Friendship", "Of Ambition", "Of Studies", etc. The myriad-minded genius rightly pointed out that all the words of the dictionary can be the themes of essays one can write. But little has been done, in this regard since his death, in order to finish his unfinished monumental works. In fact Bacon's way of presentation and his unique style kindled imagination and inspired me to write essays, in the light of creative writing, thus to get relief through Catharsis.

### ARTICLE

Unfortunately, formality has been diverted from its prime object and has lost its original meaning. Really it has become an irresistible fascination to the modern society. We like formality. We anticipate formality. We enjoy formality. So we praise a formalist and laugh at a less formal or non-formalist who is also called an unsocial or uncultured fellow. In true sense, nobody is absolutely free from the addiction of this so-called social custom. So an individual of any caste, creed, religion or nationality is more or less formalist, and thus he acquires a peculiar character which varies from individual to individual, society to society, etc. Also it changes with time. Human being, therefore, may be described as a born formalist. But this innocent customary behavior has, by the so-called social tyrants, been converted simply into a torture only.

An individual shows formality in different degrees to

different people. It is, obviously, highest to the dearest and lowest to the distant one. Again, highest attention is also shown to a stranger who is a V.I.P and by whom personal interest of the host can be fulfilled. Here formality has lost its good and innocent meaning and has become shameless sycophancy. Further here formality is shown simply to blackmail the emotion of the guest just to fulfill the interest of the host. Since formality has no uniform dimension and man becomes partial or biased towards another man of his choice, he may further be described as a born partial or biased one.

It seems, the concept of formality was a brain-child of a philanthropist in ancient time. In those days an individual, generally, would offer some gift to his beloved or relative being driven by tender feelings. It is obvious that he would offer as per his capacity. But in course of time formality lost its prime object. At present it has become a forceful matter.

And naturally man is afraid of it and always tries to avoid it in vain. What we notice today, the gift that was offered spontaneously has been converted into a matter of right of the donee. In practice an individual spends beyond his capacity lest he should be criticized. And this very phobia of criticism compels a person to offer costly gift just to keep up his status. Otherwise, he would be considered as a laughing stock of the society.

Now let us discuss different types of formalities according to the belief of the present author.

#### 1. **RELIGIOUS / RIOTOUS FORMALITY :**

The formality which is observed in case of an occasion directly related with the religion may be called religious formality. In fact, religious formality has become so severe in the hand of so-called social tyrants, some humorous people again call it riotous formality. As a matter of fact, those who control the way of observance of formality of

any type actually are not fit for regulating the same for their rude behavior. So it is all the same a monkey with a dagger and religious formality in the hand of the so-called unsocial people. Both are equally dangerous and unfortunately it happens so in our society.

A religious formalist is very ceremonious as well as over-attentive to external forms only. His way of thinking is only agreeable to the established mode. He always pays attention to exact observance of outward rites and customs, especially in religious matter. All of his thoughts and deeds are quite mechanical only. In fact he is a warm worshipper of customary words, gesture, posture, etc. in a religious service viz., marriage ceremony, burial rites, ceremony thus observed to show adequate respect to the departed soul, etc. He thinks that this is the right path to achieve the blessings of the Almighty. But he knows not that he is absolutely wrong. To him only custom is important but not man. Formal ceremony ie something that is required by custom is liked by him very much. He is very fond of the form in which a ceremony or observance is carried out. Thus formality ie observance of forms or ceremonies controls the movement of a formalist. He is always guided by the conventions or customs. He sincerely believes that to disobey religious formality is to disobey God.

So it is a sin. This is why he is always afraid lest any harm should attack him. But this type of apprehension has no scientific background at all. Further he criticizes one who is not formal. He is ready to take any kind of risk about health, wealth just to establish his so-called sincere adherence to the conventions of the society lest he should be criticized. Also he gets recognition of being a devotee thus obeying these unnecessary formality. It is unnecessary because of the national wastage of health, wealth and time – the three precious elements of human life.

In fact planning for social reforms is beyond the dream of such a lunatic formalist. On the contrary, he is a warm worshipper of age-old conventions. He is a coward more than a devotee. It seems, fear caused by disobedience of customs kills his clarity of thought. He may claim appreciation of being a lover of God, but not an intelligent person. He is unwilling to take the risk of social reform. So he is not a patriot. Rather, he is merely a self-centered opportunist. He is not dynamic. So he does not like change. Also he apprehends that in the changed situation his existence would be endangered. Hence, modernization of the society is not welcome by this type of orthodox tyrant, lest he should lose his social status as well as permanent source of income evolved there from. He is a cheat of emotion of the soft-hearted people. Also he blackmails the pious people in the name of religion. He pleads for the pleasure of God. But so-called religious formality is observed just to enrich him. So he runs for his own interest. Had his self interest not been fulfilled, he would have seldom shown so much devotion to the religion. But a true pious man always keeps safe distance from this type of religious formality. To him devotion is first and

formality has no utility at all.

True religion in true sense is based on the theme of welfare of the world. Since religious formality is far from the good conception of religion and simultaneously due to its riotous characteristic nature it is rightly nomenclatured as riotous formality.

## **2. NON-RELIGIOUS FORMALITY :**

The formality that has no link with the religion may be called non-religious formality. It is of two types viz., official and non-official formality.

## **3. OFFICIAL / OFFERING / OFFENSIVE FORMALITY :**

The rules those are observed in an office is called official formality. But in practice common people face trouble. They are harassed in the name of official formality. It is reported that many officers accept bribe. Since to serve the purpose one is compelled to offer cash or kind, official formality again is called offering formality.

Further, acceptance of bribe is an offence. So official formality, out of anger and hatred, is also called offensive formality. In religious formality the priest claims this and that in the name of God raising lame excuse. Similarly, in an office, bribe is claimed and accepted by some corrupted officers. So this type of officer may again be called official or non-religious priest and the real priest may be called religious priest.

## **4. NON-OFFICIAL / DOMESTIC / DEFENSIVE FORMALITY :**

The formality which is observed outside the office or in the house may be called non-official or domestic formality. Since a house-holder has to defend the torture of domestic formality, it may again be called defensive formality. Non-official formality according to their nature may again be sub-divided into two groups viz., guest-type and host-type formality.

## **5. GUEST-TYPE / GHOST-TYPE FORMALITY :**

The guest-type formality is that type of formality expected by a guest. Sometimes the guests, for better service, torture the host. So some people, humorously, call a guest a ghost. Thus ghost-type formality is beyond the capacity of a host. It is more expensive than guest-type. Yet the host observes it with a smiling face.

## **6. HOST-TYPE / HORROR-TYPE FORMALITY :**

Host type of domestic formality is that formality that is observed by a host just to show adequate respect to a guest. A host spends beyond his capacity for the guest and later on mourns for his foolish deed. For this unwanted horror effect of this type of formality, some witty people again call it as a horror-type of formality. But such repentance is not observed in case of guest-type of formality. However, both guest and host types of formality should be within limit. It should be as per the capacity of the host but never the guest. But in practice it may not happen so always.

The proverb, 'cut your coat according to your cloth', is ignored today in this age of fashion or formality. A poor man kills a day observing a poor life style. But he is compelled to spend beyond his capacity when his friends or relatives come to his house. Also his friends or relatives expect that their reception will not only be cordial but also in a grand style full of so-called social formalities. They seldom think about the ability of the host. Generally, most of the guests become so shameless that they don't know what is courtesy. So addressing of guest as ghost seems to be justified.

In practice if the guest does not get much reception then the poor host is ill-famed and it is announced to all that he has little sense of courtesy. Actually, so-called formality can only be maintained by the rich but seldom by the poor to whom after meat comes mustard.

Formality has got its dreadful dimension in dowry system thus being nurtured by the society. Here formality insists the father of a bride to spend beyond his capacity even accepting loan that causes permanent suffering. And for dowry many times he is drowned in debt and dies at the premature stage of life. Such death of the father is nothing but a bolt from the blue to an unfortunate daughter who again is called unlucky identifying her as the cause of death.

Festivals render man emotional. Further in marriage ceremony heavy arrangement is observed for enjoyment, food and drinks for invitees. As such the guests are served so lavishly causing much wastage. Again taking much means torture to the stomach.

Because having taken palatable dishes recklessly many guests become ill. But there are thousands of people who die unfed, whereas the rich waste so much of food in the name of formality. It is really a cruelty against humanity. It is a crime against civilization. Also it is not the true formality. Further, since the rich controls our society, they indirectly compel the poor to observe formality. Thus the poor following that avenue, ultimately faces financial hardship.

In a marriage ceremony the groomsmen pretend that they have hailed from heaven.

So they should be honored and served like deity. Generally, the groomsmen are so prodigal that the poor father of the bride always remains in a trembling state of mind, lest they should create any critical condition.

So far we have described the evil effect and torture in the name of so-called formality.

It is a fact that in the society the necessity of formality is a must. Also one must confess its utility as well as its legality. Then what is that legal or minimum formality? Here one may plead for innocent formality the other name of minimum formality. And a host seldom faces trouble especially financial hardship to observe it.

Though formality should be avoided, yet for the sake of social mobility, innocent formality is most welcome for its earnestness and economy.

In fact, formality in its limited range is good, but it is more than dangerous when it crosses that limit. Now since formality becomes the root of suffering of man, an individual who does not like to suffer should avoid formality. There is a person who neither accepts nor does he offer gift. So he seldom is afraid of any invitation. But the poor people are always afraid of any invitation.

Further, instead of expending much for formality, it is judicious and noble deed as well to spend for the ailing humanity thus to enjoy intense heavenly delight.

## CONCLUSIONS

However, to offer food to a hungry man is not so-called formality but humanity which is very essential for society's benefit and hence it is cordially welcomed.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pal, Dibakar is a Retired Executive Magistrate in India and PhD Student. Though he is a Civil Servant yet he is genuinely interested in diversified academic fields. As such, he holds master degrees in M.Sc(Math), M.A(English), M.A(Bengali), M.B.A(HRD), M.C.A, P.G.D.M(Marketing), L.L.B, D.C.E(Creative Writing), M. Phil (Business Management), UGC- NET(Management)-2008. He attended an International Conference at IIT, Mumbai, India and five International Conferences at U.S.A; though he gets invitation to present papers in many International Conferences at home and abroad round the year. He presents papers on Computer Science, Management, English Literature, Linguistic, Philosophy, Philology, Psychology, Sociology, Humanities and Poems. He presented a paper on Computer Science and Chaired in 2007 IEEE Conference at Richmond, Virginia, U.S.A. Also another paper on Fuzzy Logic was accepted by IEEE Conference 2010 at USA. He serves as Session Chair, Presider and Reviewer. He serves as reviewer of American Marketing Association, Journal of Common Ground; Australia, IEEE Transactions, IJEAPS, AJHC, Journal of Supercomputing.

He has more than two hundred (200) publications and among these one is as Monograph in International Journal on Management Science, one Monograph is in Journal of the World Universities Forum, one is in Consumer Behavior, two are in Computer Science, one is in Neuroscience, one is in Linguistic and rests are Creative Writing of English Literature. In Creative Writing two papers have been incorporated in SSRN's Top Ten Download List three times in November, December 2010 and April 2011. In ResearchGate his papers have reached a milestone through more than 51000 reads. Scholars' Press and Lambert Academic Publishing House, Germany have published twelve books between the months July to December, 2016. New Texas, A Journal of Literature and Culture, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, USA has published ten essays in February 2018. International Educational Scientific Research Journal (E-ISSN : 2455-295X) publishes Creative Nonfictions every month regularly. Now he is pursuing his PhD thesis in Business Management in University of Calcutta, India. Also he is

currently focussed on the Extension Works of Huffman Code i.e., Coding Theory and Pattern Recognition through Fuzzy Logic (Pattern Recognition, Image Processing, etc) of Computer Science.

His hobby is Creative Writing (Nonfiction). He says:

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## **REFERENCES**

*No references, since the present article is the outcome of Creative Writing.*