

(PARUSHNI) A GODDESS OF HOPE WITH A HALF HANDFUL OF GRAINS IN TARRAR'S SORROWS OF SARASVATI: THE LOST RIVER

Khuram Shahzad¹, Alina Farrukh², Sana Ullah³, Sadaf Afreen^{*4}

^{1,2,3}M. Phil. Scholar, Department of English Language and Literature, The university of Lahore, Sargodha Campus

^{*4}Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature, The university of Lahore, Sargodha Campus

¹shaezipoet@95gmail.com, ²alinaahmad005@gmail.com, ³sanaullahenglisher@gmail.com,

^{*4}sadaf.afreen@ell.uol.edu.pk

Corresponding Author: *

Sadaf Afreen

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores the struggle of an individual sustaining life and traditions while resisting approaching decay caused due to environmental change and rerouting of the rivers in the backdrop of Indus valley culture as depicted in *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* (Awan, 2023). The study highlights the resilience of the Parushni, the female protagonist, fighting against natural calamities; deforestation, climate change and low water resources, a source that nurtures every living organism including human. The text is replete with all the customs, traditions and practices of the Indus valley civilization through the charismatic Paroushni, being a mirror to the human needs, advancement and survival altogether while bridging the past and present through the lens applied by the researcher. Belal's Model of Human Needs (2024), a critique of Maslow's Concept of Hierarchy of Needs (1943) is employed as theoretical framework to highlight that the human needs are in the form of clusters and interrelated, with varied chances of many things occurring side by side or maybe the last happening in the first place. An individual female protagonist's will to save the people of her community from the calamities is also at the last stage of fulfillment in the varied psychologically stages of human needs presented earlier while showing her creativity and responsibility at the same level. The study concludes that *Lost Sarasvati* is mourning over the plight of residents of Ghagra and serves as a threat to the existence of mankind in that particular region, emphasizing the role of an individual desperate for the basic physiological need, water, for the survival and yet achieving all other stages along with it. It also demands to preserve natural resources along with proving the fact the human needs are arbitrary and interrelated rather than hierarchical as depicted in the novel.

Keywords: Paroushni, Indus valley Civilization, Environmental change, Belal's Hierarchy of Needs, Resilience, deforestation, Survival, clustered needs.

Introduction

Indus valley civilization also known as Harappan civilization is a Bronze Age civilization in the northwestern parts of South Asia. It is considered to be the one of the oldest, enigmatic and advanced civilizations of the world

flourished between 3300 to 1300 BCE, famous for its splendid culture, traditions, and urban planning among its contemporary civilizations like Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and China (Tahseen et al., 2024). *Bahaa* is a famous Urdu novel written by Mustansar Hussain Tarar in

1992 and it was later translated in English by Dr. Safeer Awan as *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* in 2021. Tarar paints a realistic picture of the culture while showcasing resilience, passion, struggle, and commitment through the character of Paroushni. *Sorrows of Sarasvati* is a product of a thorough and minute observation with a sensitive, emotional and dedicated portrayal of characters in a dying village of Indus Valley Civilization along the bank of River “Ghaghra” (Rahman et al., 2024). The purpose of this study is to highlight the passion, efforts and the hope in the chaotic surroundings of the time period in the text through the reflection of survival instinct of a woman which holds the responsibility of providing water to every home in the village. Belal Dahiam Saif Ghaleb, in his paper “Towards A Dynamic Model of Human Needs: A critical analysis of Maslow’s Hierarchy” (2024), proposes a revised version of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943) with diverse nature of human needs including the factors like family dynamics, ethnic groups, cultural elements, peer influencing, political and economic circumstances, gender discrimination, physiological and sociological factors, modern developments, technological advancements and the impact of environment. The studies on *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* evaluate various aspects of Indus valley civilization like environmental degradation, colonial abuse, ecological perspective and human-nature but these studies ignore basic human struggle on an individual and collective level based on the clustered needs of the society and individual rather providing an hierarchy of needs. Encapsulated in the Ghagra’s community and resistance of Paroushni, the factors that affected the civilization recognizes that human needs are dynamic and interactive, with multiple interrelated clusters. It highlights that a person can desire self-actualization, social connectedness, and basic physiological demands like eating, breathing, and drinking water all at the same time. Human needs are complex and differ greatly among individuals, places, times, and circumstances. Therefore, these need clusters interact and have an impact on one

another. The flexibility and diversity of human wants highlight how a person’s quest for self-realization may coexist with their need for basic physiological necessities and social connections. Belal’s model acknowledges how these demands are shaped and prioritized by culture, technology advancements, and the larger human environment. This further highlights the careless attitude of the people with most advance technologies ever, yet they fail to take the responsibility as an individual, even ignorant of the future apprehensions caused by their insensitive attitude towards nature and their community which others communities failed to do also hence removed from the face of earth. They are no more connected to the land they are a part of and focused only on physiological and emotional needs oblivious of the interrelated importance of the human needs hence do not feel responsible to its degradation caused by their actions. Paroushni is an embodiment of the passion and dedication an individual should have while showing an array of dynamic facets of human needs working side by side; shaped by cultural settings, time and place. She was a water provider, hence a symbolic life giving force in the community. Her very presence works as unifying source for the community, hence expresses the expertise of the writer; narrating a historical, fictional rooted in the lost culture of “Sindhu”. The story captures human consciousness through an array of thematic and global concerns of the writer with the help of the protagonist disclosing human appetite engulfing his own environment while a single person observing can survive till a limited time. This whole backdrop provides the niche for the present study and explore the role of female protagonist, Paroushni.

Significance of the study

The study highlights interrelated growth of human psyche with respect to individual’s physiological, emotional, and spiritual needs; while being in a society it also focuses on creativity and need for implementation of modern technology side by side. Human needs are complex, varied, and arbitrary; ethnic groups,

family, school, and peer influences as well as cultures, economic and political circumstances, gender disparities, psychological, sociological, ideological, technological, contemporary advancements, social media, and the internet and the efficiency of the environment are all taken into consideration in this study which is a practical and most recent implication of the model of human psyche.

Research Objectives

- 1) To highlight the interrelated clusters of psychological needs according to the time, place and culture rather than a hierarchy of needs in the story through the female protagonist, Paroushni
- 2) To explore resilience of Paroushni as the last symbol of hope in the decaying Indus Village of the Haarrapan civilization due to environmental change

Literature Review

Sorrows of Sarasvati: The lost River (2021) is an enigmatic cultural and historical text written in Urdu by Mustansar Hussain Tarar and translated by Dr. Safeer Awan. Tarar is an eminent writer famous for his travelogues and also considered cultural biographer of Indus Valley civilization. Indus valley civilization is considered most advanced while being oldest civilization that flourished in the subcontinent mainly in the parts of present day Pakistan and India. 47% Indus river basin is in Pakistan (abbasi et al., 2021). Indus valley is also known for its advanced urban planning, water irrigation system, its technological and cultural innovation (Tahseen et al., 2024). However it declined with the passage of time due to several natural and unnatural reasons. *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The lost River* (2021) as evident from the title is a complex cultural tale of sorrow which narrates several causes of the demise of an unnamed village of Indus valley civilization that was on the verge of extinction (Rahman et al., 2024). English translation of *Bahaa* as *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The lost river* by Dr. Safeer Awan provides us an opportunity to revisit the Indus valley culture through the study of protagonist

of the novel Paroushni, and consequently to know the richness of the land thrived in the era. Indus valley civilization is spread over a huge area of South Asia but the valley of Sarasvati is the place from where the settled life started and all other parts of the Indus valley civilization borrowed its cultural traits from the valley of Sarasvati (Nawaz & Kumar, 2016). Abbasi et al. (2021) is of the view that mostly climate change caused vulnerabilities to women because the majority of women's livelihood is connected to agriculture. Biagi (2004) stated that abundance of ceramics found during the excavation of Indus valley sites represents the women which elaborate their style, ornaments used and clothing. It also elaborates that the people of the valley used to worship goddesses. According to Idrees (2024), the Aryans brought their own set of norms, social hierarchy and religious traditions that resulted in the presence of beliefs related to Hinduism. There was no currency at that time and people of Indus valley civilization mostly traded with each other through barter system (Iqbal et al., 2022). Javonillo (2011) stated that the Indo-Aryan theory of invasion was suggested by Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1966) but later he himself rejected this theory because the excavations of the site showed no signs of such dominance or invasion. Some other theorists including Pakistani archaeologist M.R. Mughal believed that flooding and rerouting of the river caused the downfall of the civilization. Culture is the best illustrator of any community which expresses human identity. It is evident that the social structure of the Indus valley civilization was mainly owned and control by the woman quite contrary to the modern world where man has a dominant role and they control maximum matters of life (Sameer et al., 2018). The religion of the people of Indus civilization was very unique as compared to their neighboring people of India and Persia. Their religion was close to Hinduism but the people of Indus valley developed new traditions, and the religion that belongs to them. The people were polytheistic and believe on more than one god. Their religion was made of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. People were very skillful

and hardworking. They have mastered the art of seal carving, sculpture and ceramics. They artistically carved pictures of people, animals and different symbols on sand stones. They used seals in administrative purposes. The famous brown monument of a dancing girl found in Mohenjodaro is an example of their artistic brilliance. The society deteriorated when they face colonial abuse. They lost their identity and are compelled to migrate from their homeland because of colonial powers (Akram et al., 2023). The current study focuses on the role of protagonist as a symbol of hope and resilience whereas all the previous studies on *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* (2021) emphasize on colonial abuse, environmental degradation under the lens of Eco critical theory. Hence this section of the study shows the empirical, theoretical and research gap of the current paper.

Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature and the close textual analysis technique has been utilized to extract the relevant text from the primary source whereas articles, online magazines and scholarly papers are also a part of the study as the secondary sources for references.

Theoretical Framework

The novel is evaluated under the theoretical lens of Belal Dahiam Saif Ghaleb proposed in his paper “*Towards A Dynamic Model of Human Needs: A critical analysis of Maslow’s Hierarchy*” (2024). This theoretical model is a revised version of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory which he proposed in 1943 which acknowledges diverse nature of human needs including the factors like family dynamics, ethnic groups, cultural elements, peer influencing, political and economic circumstances, gender discrimination, physiological and sociological factors, modern developments, technological advancements and the impact of environment (Ghaleb, 2024). The basics of both of them is quite same but we can say that Belal’s model is the updated version of Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs theory which recognizes the influence of culture, that is more

adaptable and acknowledge the diverse human needs which focuses more on the family dynamics, ethnic groups, social, political and sociological aspects as well as the impact of the environment.

The model comprised of interconnected clusters rather than the rigid hierarchical structure of pyramid which helps us to understand the culture and society of Indus Valley Civilization. He (2024) explained Physiological, Safety, spiritual and esteem needs of human which is important to understand the human nature, its culture and society. Physiological needs are basic human needs which are necessary for life includes air, water, food, clothes, shelter, sleep and sexual satisfaction. Security is also the core of basic needs as explained in the model of human needs, which emphasized not only on security and protection from harm but it also seeks security of health, stability and employment. Esteem needs includes having respect, recognition, appreciation within ourselves and others, self-worth and personal value. When these needs are met, we feel satisfaction and sense of accomplishment and also believes that to achieve the transcendence in life, one has to connect with a higher power and greater whole (Ghaleb, 2024). Belal also highlighted the importance of social connections, culture and relationships, freedom and creativity, love and belonging for the growth of human beings and the society. All these concepts and terms are important to understand the character of Paroushni which reflects the role of an empowered protagonist in the Indus community while presenting the development of human psyche on various levels .

Analysis

Security, Stability and Paroushni’s Resistance

Stable and predictable environment promotes a sense of security among people, well-being contribute a sense of security (Ghaleb, 2024). Paroushni’s resistance speaks the volume of courage she had throughout the novel. She witnessed things deteriorating quite drastically and rapidly. People of the valley start leaving the

village when 'Ghaghra' dries up and sand encroaches all over the river and village. She was persistent and hopeful that it will rain and the life returns to normality. She was very optimistic even in the worse circumstances and gloomy situations. "“What!” Samroo was confused, “What would you do with the half handful of grains? Even the half handful of grains is not enough for one bread.” “I’ve told you when the river bursts its banks, we’ll use it as a seed...” she said” (p. 343). This shows that she was hopeful and optimistic even in adverse circumstances. Ghaleb’s model of human needs also advocates the struggle and resistance of human beings in terms of the continuity of life; he argues that security of food and shelter are among basic human needs and people continuously struggle for food and security. Majority of people leave the village and few died due to adverse heat and absence of food but Paroushni was not ready to leave the village. “Get up... Get up, let us go,” he said, gathering his breath to speak. “Where?” her voice was as faint as the buzzing of a fly” (p. 370). When Virchan and Dorga insisted her to leave the village and go to some other place as this heat could take their souls away and were of the opinion that they should move to some other place where environment is conducive for life but she was not ready to leave the village as she thinks that she had a “half handful” of wheat and remains optimistic that one day it will rain and she will be able to cultivate these seeds. “By tomorrow, we will be lying dead, and insect and ants would eat us up... Get up, we must go,” again he paused and sighed deeply. “I have been looking upto you for your decision; but now, my eyes are leaving me, and I cannot see you proper.” “No...,” Paroushni spoke as if her voice were coming from the bottom of some waterless well” (p. 370). Everyone left but Paroushni decides to resist, resist till her last breath and were hopeful that it will rain someday and she had “half handful” of wheat to cultivate. It was a place where everyone lived happily, enjoyed and celebrated events and worked together. The peacock, the bulls and the birds lived happily. The splendid water roared which flooded the streams and rivers. Everything

perished and destroyed but Paroushni and her resistance lived forever.

Water, A Physiological Need

Water is being considered one of the most important requirements for life. One cannot survive without it. Tarar’s *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* (2021) is a story of fall of an unknown village of Indus valley civilization. The village use to thrive because of its agriculture, water resources, beautiful weather and the skillful people. People depend on water and floods of Indus River and rain water. “Of all the seven streams... Sindhu is the most splendid...” (p. 114). People have assigned some collective and some individual works in Indus valley. Paroushni loves Sarasvati River, she often visit the river and talk to it. Her duty was to fetch the water from the well and distribute it in whole village. She has been assigned with the work of taking out water from the well and provides it to the doorstep of every house of the village. “It was Paroushni’s communal duty to fetch water for all the households in the village as they had divided daily chores among them” (p. 58). Ghaleb (2024) advocates that water is basic human need and one cannot survive without it and this life source was assigned to Paroushni, a symbol of life and hope as her duty reflects it. “As an independent adult, she was now a part of the village’s communal life and her responsibilities includes managing the drinking water for all, tilling the land of her share and sowing seeds for crops” (p. 61). Lowering of the water level in the well caused the distress in Paroushni and she was worried thinking about decreasing water. The villagers seemed very concerned by witnessing this drastic change. “One day. Paroushni lowered the bucket into the well and felt that the water level had plunged a bit lower...” (p. 199). Decreasing level of water in the river and absence of rain cause the whole civilization to deteriorate and they could not resist the change. Paroushni was also worried about less rainfall and decreasing water in Sarasvati River because she knew “this year it is getting too late. It has neither rained nor flooded yet” (p. 49). This study highlights that every drop of water is important; Paroushni knows they need to

preserve water and use natural resources with care to avoid the potential downfall which can affect the lives of people in Indus civilization. Life flourished with the water, its absence caused the downfall and death for people, animals and deteriorated their environment. People of Indus valley lived alongside the bank of river Sarasvati and used water for agriculture and for maritime trade with other comparative civilizations. Ghaleb (2024) states that our unmet needs can have negative consequences on our mental and physical growth. Her loss caused her distress and she separated herself from Virchan and Samroo. The women gave birth to dead children at so many instances which is a direct result of drying water resources. Parushni, the hope, also suffered with this loss as *"her baby didn't cry at birth"*. The struggles *"to console her and make her understand that a woman can give birth many times"* were of no use as *"she was not ready to listen to anything; she detached herself from me, as if it was my fault, and also from Samroo"* narrated by Virchan (p. 238). The loss of stability and consistency increased the vulnerability among individuals which led to the demise of sense of security and stability. Bio archaeological evidence shows the spread of infection and infectious diseases during this time period (Schug et al., 2013).

Basic Security and Infrastructure

Everyone seeks to live in a safe and secure place and it is a physiological need of human to protect themselves from harm and threats to their existence (Ghaleb, 2024). The community of Indus valley was also divided in upper class and lower class people. Parushni belongs to lower class family that lives in simple muddy houses and she used to work in fields with other villagers. The majority of the people of Indus valley civilization lived in remote areas are deprived of modern facilities. They had a simple life style and simple houses which they called thatches made of mud. *"Like the other thatched houses of the village, it was also made of mud and dried foliage"* (p. 58). Indus civilization was a peaceful society having sophisticated infrastructure great drainage and bathing system.

Tarar also highlighted that the people of the valley were aware of the difference among their life style and facilities. *"Our pottery and farming methods also reached there from these small villages. The seed we plant here, grow into large trees there. But Parushni, people of these towns are not like us. The large boats that move up and down in the river "Sindhu" come from far off place. They come from places where the sun goes to sit in. The inhabitants of Mohenjo have things that are unthinkable for us here"* (p. 52). Contrary to them, people living in Mohenjodaro and Harapa enjoy better life and they had baked brick infrastructure for houses. Ghaleb (2024) states that for success and productivity in life, it is important that our esteem needs are met. It adds confidence and courage to move forward and achieve something extraordinary. Javonillo (2011) stated that the drainage system of the cities of Indus valley civilization were impressive among all other comparative civilizations. Tahseen et al. (2024) believes that modern infrastructure, drainage system, and water management systems in modern Pakistan is greatly influenced by the system of Indus valley civilization and they can address their urban planning and population growth problems from the heritage of Indus valley civilization.

Devi (2022) states about the architecture of Indus people, *"A visitor to the ruins of Mohenjodaro is struck by the remarkable skill in town planning and sanitation displayed by the ancients, and as an English writer has observed, feels himself surrounded by ruins of some present-day working town in Lancashire"*. Ghaleb (2024) state that shelter is an important need of life, human seeks protection from heat, cold and other calamities. The other thing that is common among this divide is that the people of the whole Indus valley lived peacefully whether they are living in big settlements or small thatches.

Cultural Diversity

Freedom and creativity are important for the preservation and celebration of cultural heritage as it enriches the whole society with diversity, foster understanding and promotes social cohesion (Ghaleb, 2024). Parushni loves to wear

different ornaments and jewelry. The people of the valley were famous for producing gems and jewelry. The men and women of Indus valley civilization use to wear different ornaments to look attractive and beautiful. Women of the Indus valley are presented to be found of dresses, makeup and beautification. *"Lying on her mat, Parushni lifted her arm and the bangles fell on her elbow with a light clinking sound"* (p. 71). Parushni's best friend Pakli painted her body with beautiful designs at the occasion of her marriage. *"I am painting all the images on your body that I know and have ever depicted on my ewers, vessels, pitcher and plates"* (p. 171). The women used to wear bangles, jewels and gems to look beautiful. Women use to wear gems made of stone, silver and gold crafted by Samroo. *"What are these images that I portray on the gems, clay tablets and square stamps of stone, silver and gold"* (p. 47). Biagi, (2004) explained that the clay figurines found during the excavation of Indus valley shows the women wearing different ornaments, necklaces and pendants. Abbasi et al. (2021) says that 74.2 % working women in modern Pakistani society work in the fields. People of the Indus valley culture adorn themselves with different dresses, ornaments and jewelry but they make special arrangements on the occasion of marriages where the groom and the bride are adorned by colorful dresses, makeup and jewelry. *"Ravishing young girls were busy preening and embellishing themselves for the next morning..."* (p. 170). Stones were carved and were used as ornaments and it signifies religious customs (Sundaram, 2017). Woman use different ornaments to look better. These ornaments include bangles, nose studs, rings, necklace, armlets and anklet. *"You may do rest of adornment by yourself. Everything is there on the platform: nose stud, anklet, bangles, rings, necklace and stone studded armlets..."* (p. 173). Belal's model advocates appreciation, affection, and termed attachment important for the growth of the society (Ghaleb, 2024). Making gems and jewelry by cutting the stone rock used to be a great skill and Samroo is certainly mastered this art. He worked hard to break stones to make gems and Jewelry. Parushni loves

Samroo and he use to prepare jewelry for her. *"He used to make different ornaments that the men and women like to wear. He prepared and gifted one to his beloved Parushni"* (p. 53). Belal's model advocates appreciation, affection, and attachment and considered it important for the growth of the individual and society (Ghaleb, 2024).

Food and Basic needs of People

The food of Indus valley people was simple and healthy. They eat bread of wheat grains in daily routine. When it does not rained for long period, Parushni seemed concerned for their agricultural products and food. *"What would they eat if they run out of wheat; what would they eat then?"* (p. 302). The archaeological evidences of the valley shows the availability of different food items for humans and animals. According to the Kumar et al. (2020), people use meat of sheep, goat and cattle and make the bread by using the flour of wheat and millet. Mustansar Hussain Tarar at many instances in *Bahaa* wrote about the food of Indus people. There are evidences of people growing vegetables and fruits. People also use to catch fish as the majority of the population resides near the bank of Sarasvati River and its tributaries. People of Indus valley civilization used to hunt birds to eat meat. According to Kumar et al. (2020) the archaeological evidences showed the presence of many agricultural products and their potential use. He elaborated that wheat and barley were used to make bread, porridge and beer. Lentils, peas and chickpeas used for cooking, cotton were used to make clothes, mustard, sesame, dates, grapes, millet and rice were also used as food and cooking items. Belal also termed that food is necessary for the growth and sustainability of the human beings. It is a physiological need which is necessary for human survival.

Agriculture and Employment

Having a stable source of income provides security and enables individuals to focus on their personal and social development (Ghaleb, 2024). Tahseen et al. (2024) stated that the

fertile agricultural communities were also part of Indus valley which has the best food producing land. Agriculture has been the main source of livelihood for the people of Indus valley civilization, the majority of its population work in the field to grow crops and vegetables. They have developed world best irrigation system to support their farmers. The water of Indus River along with its tributaries provides water for drinking and irrigation to the people of Indus valley civilization. The land of Indus valley civilization has been very fertile and suitable for cultivation of crops including fruits and vegetables. The land around the Ghaghra River was arable and suitable for crops of millet, wheat, vetchling and kasumba crops. They rely on the floods of River Sarasvati so that the soil get enough moisture to germinate the seeds. The agriculture enables them to develop the cities like Harappa and Mohenjodaro as they used to market their surplus agricultural commodities (Jan & Khan, 2017). Parushni worked in field with other villagers for cultivation of wheat crop. She seemed to be worried the most when it does not rained ““If flood water doesn’t arrive, what would happen then?” “I don’t know,” she replied. But it has to arrive; because it has never happened that the floods didn’t come”” (p. 49). The lives of people living on the bank of Sarasvati River revolved around wheat crop. Wheat crop is not only used to make bread but it is used to barter different other commodities necessary for life. When people need to buy pitcher and ewers, they gave bowl full of wheat to Pakli and barter things with it. When they want to eat the meat of Bhookar Bird, they request Gagri, the hunter to hunt it and offer wheat in response. Samroo prepared things related to agriculture that is being used for hoeing of seeds in mud. Parushni loves cultivating wheat; she loves her village and does not relocate from the village when it does not rain for long time. She remains faithful that she had half handful of wheat and one day it would rain and she would be able to cultivate these seeds to grow wheat crop. “It is never the end of everything... If we have half handful of wheat, fields will be green again...put it back into the pitcher” (p. 343). Agriculture provides employment,

security, food and stability which are the essence of Belal’s model of human needs 2024.

Spirituality and Superstitious Beliefs

Whenever there is a problem, we seek guidance and try to connect ourselves with higher spiritual power (Ghaleb, 2024). When the flood does not arrive in Ghaghra (River Sarasvati), people of the valley were very anxious because their livelihood and agriculture were dependent on the water of river. They get together to find out that why floods does not arrived. “When a child is Annoyed, we appease him with food and clay toys, When a wife is angry, we give her bangle and beads... What if the river is angry? What do the waters demand from us?” (p. 288). Indus valley people use to worship goddess (Biagi, 2004). People of the Indus valley civilization believed that they had to put offering in the river to please the river hoping that if they put dearest things to Sarasvati, the floods will arrive. “Some of them cast all of their belonging to Ghaghra... In the darkness of night, their offering could not be seen; only they knew what they threw into the river... Some of their offering sank and some drifted with flow... But one of the offering let out a cry... Parushni was frozen for a while, Virchan the baby weeps...” (p. 289). Umer (2017) stated that the people of the valley believed on supernatural elements, animal, plants, gods and Goddesses (Umer, 2017). People of the valley including Parushni use to practice traditional believes. It was the custom in Indus valley culture that they threw grains of wheat and millet over dead after burying them in the mud. The purpose of doing this is to save their dead bodies from the crows and other birds as they think that by doing so, they will eat the grains instead of eating the dead. When Parushni gave birth to a dead baby, she said, “I will put grains so that the crows may eat grains and not him” (p. 223). Emotional well-being is given great importance in Belal’s model. Such offerings satisfy their emotional and cultural needs. It showed that people were so much occupied with their superstitious believes that they do not resist offering of their child to make the river happy. Belal highlighted that people need to connect to a greater whole to have a

sense of meaning and transcendence in life (Ghaleb, 2024).

Custom of dying in Jungle

Ghaleb (2024) highlighted the importance of culture and customs for social progress. People of Indus valley used to follow all the customs, values and traditions of the society as they detached themselves from the community and move to the forests for dying as it were custom of the Indus society. People of Indus valley left their village and go to the jungle to die there. Only those are buried in clay vessels that choose to die in the village. *“Long ago, Virchan parents had also left for the woods to die there. Once Parushni had seen them, rather their skeletons. It was customary for all the decrepit old inhabitants of the village to leave for the woods upon realizing that they were too weak to work, their deaths were lurking around and they had lived out their days (p. 62). The above passage showed that it was also customary that people use to leave the villages and go to the woods to die there. Belal were also of the view that following all the customs and values of the society adds to the satisfaction of the people and the people of the valley used to follow the norms relating to their deaths (Ghaleb, 2024).*

Marriages, Culture and Relationships

Belal's model highlighted the importance of culture which includes different customs of the society, their religion, language and other traditions (Ghaleb, 2024). *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River* is also full of culture, traditions, relationships and acknowledgement of cultural traits. Marriages are integral part of any society and culture. Tarar highlighted Indus culture and relationships of Indus civilization by writing about the marriage of Protagonist character Parushni. Virchan and Parushni are two important characters of the novel *Sorrows of Sarasvati: The Lost River*. Tarar showed how marriages are celebrated in ancient Indus valley culture. *“On the riverbank, oil lamps were flickering. The halo around them was not extending that wide on the surface of the river. Beyond the lamp-lit part of the river, nets were cast to catch fish. The next morning, Virchan and Parushni were getting married” (p.*

170). Satisfying needs were important part of Belal's model. He argued that it is important to satisfy our belonging and love needs for our well-being (Ghaleb, 2024). Marriages are among the basic human need that affects the development and growth of individual and the society. Maslow's Hierarchy of need theory divided human needs into five stages known as Maslow's pyramid of Human needs in which he termed the most basic needs of the human beings as physiological needs which includes basic needs like food, clothing, rest, air, water, shelter, sleep and sex (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019). For Ghaleb (2024) satisfying needs includes building relationships and friendships are important for human development. The people of the valley used to catch fish from the river for food. *“Children were scouring the shallow water near the banks for tortoise as their meat was used to prepare gravy” (p. 170).* It is the custom since the ages that we present food to the guest invited to attend the marriage ceremonies. Self-esteem is integral part of Belal's model; it advocates respect, recognition and appreciation for each other (Ghaleb, 2024). Presenting food to the guest adds respect, value and appreciation among the people which shows parallel cluster of developing human Psyche while prioritizing self-esteem over other necessities for basic life are not met properly. Weddings are traditionally and thoroughly celebrated and enjoyed especially in the subcontinent. People of the Indus valley civilization also seek pleasure in celebrating the marriages. This has been a ritual which is also still followed in modern day culture of the subcontinent. *“Three of them were beating a drum that was skirted with a festoon made of peacock feathers” (p. 170).* People of the Indus valley civilization wear special dress to celebrate marriage ceremonies. The bride and groom wear new dresses and different other ornaments to look beautiful on this particular day. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, acknowledgments and appreciation by other people is important for any person and it is known as esteem needs (Dar & Sakthivel, 2022). On the day of marriage, both the bride and the groom want to look beautiful. *“Tomorrow was her*

wedding day. Pakli was preparing Parushni for it as she used to adorn all the maidens of the village on the day of their wedding” (p. 171). Pakli were the women that were well versed in engraving different designs on pots and ceramics and she also do the job of beautician as she prepared the brides on the day of their wedding. Like other physiological needs, human beings also develop creative interests and exercise them where needed as Pakli’s character is a symbol of lacking basic needs yet displaying traits of creativity and uniqueness of skills which is individual and time specific according to Belal’s model of Needs. According to Belal, Love, intimacy and friendships are important factors that lead to the development of human beings (Ghaleb, 2024).

Unpredictable Climate of Indus Valley

Ghaleb (2024) states that predictable environment promotes a sense of security among people. Unusual environmental circumstances always lead to destruction. The climate of the Indus valley civilization used to be ideal in the beginning. It was the time when Indus civilization flourished in the world. There used to be rivers, streams, forest, wild animals and sufficient rains which ultimately helped Indus civilization to grow. Parushni always feel pride on having great forests, streams, river and the sweet voice of peacock. The rain water and water of river helped the agriculture sector to grow which changed the fate of people. Parushni seems to have great bond with the nature, at many occasion, she is concerned and worried to see the environmental deterioration (Rizwan et al., 2024). Indus valley civilization was spread over a huge area from north to south which includes mountain ranges, had glaciers in the north and deserts in the south. The climate varies in different areas but it was conducive for life. The water of melting glaciers also helped people for cultivation of different food items. The perfect climate of the Indus valley brings prosperity for the people and helped it to become great civilization among all ancient comparative civilizations like Mesopotamia and Egypt. There were a time when the peacock shivered because of cold that lived in the forest

near the unnamed village on the bank of Ghaghra. Soon after people start damaging the natural environment and deforestation of natural resources especially trees to bake bricks in the kiln caused the downfall. “The Mohenjo that you see now is different from the one it was a thousand years ago; it is turning into dust now” (p. 94). The situation got worsening in the larger settlements first and then the situation got out of control in the remote villages too with less rainfalls and dried weather. Deforestation led the change in climate which affects the agriculture which was the backbone of Indus economy and it could not recover after that. Global warming causes more devastation and the climate of the valley dried up and it becomes unbearable for the inhabitants of the valley. Sand encroached the fields and the river. “On the dry bed of Ghaghra, only hot wind was blazing the scattered potsherds of Pakli’s pitchers” (p. 375). Parushni was worried about the change in weather and climate but she was hopeful that it will rain again that brings prosperity. Rizwan et al. (2024) termed the relationship of natural world and human beings a reciprocal relationship because they depend on each other where the survival of nature is attached with the activities of humans and they have a profound bond between them. People were dying of heat and many left the place but Parushni remains there with half handful of wheat and she never gives up. She becomes the symbol of resistance. The novel is no doubt a wake up call for all the people living in modern era to protect the natural environment otherwise things are deteriorating quite quickly which is a direct impact of human needs that is reflecting their psyche as they are least concerned with the changes. Ghaleb (2024) also emphasized on the environmental protection because it creates a sense of security and stability among people. Climate, economic and social changes lead to the disintegration of the civilization after 1900 B.C.

Conclusion

This paper examines the culture of Indus valley civilization by analyzing the life of protagonist Parushni in Tarar’s novel *Sorrows of Sarasvati*:

The Lost River through the lens of Belal Dahiam Saif Ghaleb's dynamic Model of Human Needs (2024). This research revisits every aspect of Parushni's life that depicts ancient culture of Indus valley civilization and the growth of human psyche on various levels in spite of deprivation on any of the given stages proposed by Maslow. The study highlights how social and economic conditions prioritize demands and suggests that Maslow ignored sociocultural elements that impact motivation. It supports theoretical evolution by promoting the recognition that needs are not strictly staged but rather circulate dynamically across interpersonal networks. There are multiple clusters that make a clustered set of needs. These clusters interact and have an impact on one another. In other words, human needs vary from person to person, according to their place, time, and situation, even for the same individual. A person can self-actualize and experience the essential feature of social belonging while he satisfies his basic urge. Similarly one can be responsible, selfless and creative at the same time while being from a different culture, ethnic group and gender as Parushni, providing hope and a selfless individual striving for the survival of the community. Most importantly, the modern world is on the verge of same calamities where global warming and environmental degradation could also lead us to the same destruction and devastation which resulted in Indus valley after depletion of natural resources. Hence climate change, rerouting of the rivers and deforestation collectively brought "Ghagra" back to their physiological needs where life revolves around "seed" and survival of the community hence moving the wheel back to the initial level. Though every one left the land yet Paroushni's final words are "My body needs only that what is present in my waters, fields and forest. I don't want to know anything else, because knowing the other will disrupt my roots" as a symbol of hope, life and human potential showcasing the connected cluster of human needs.

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