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Editorial***Impact of Saivism, Saktism and Vainavism in the history of Assam***

The issue of the history of Saivism, Saktism and Vaisnavism of Assam in the Indian perspective is very pertinent. Let us begin with Saivism. Saivism is a very old religion in Assam. It goes back to the pre-Ahom age i.e. before thirteenth century A.D. It might be there from even pre-historical age, because it was predominantly a tribal religion. It consists in phallus worship that is connected with fertility cult.

That Saivism goes back to the pre-Ahom age may be confirmed by the existence of Siva temples, both present and worn out temples scattered here and there. A temple may be said to be of pre-Ahom age on the basis of the mode of its construction and the materials out of which it is made. The pre-Ahom temples were made of stones cut to the sizes. This culture belonged to the age of the Kacharis who ruled in most of the part of Assam before the advent of the Ahoms. We have a dilapidated temple known as Babathan at Numaligarh in the district of Golaghat situated in Upper Assam. It was on a hill. The decorated stones are lying here and there in the site of the temple. A new temple has been built in the foothills of the hill known as Deopahar. Similarly another temple known as MahabhairavMandir; Mahabhairav is there in Tezpur; the district headquarter of Sonitpur district, a historical place with ancient relics scattered here and there on the northern bank of the river Brahmaputra in the state of Assam. This temple is known as MahabhairavMandir because Mahabhairav is a form of lord Siva. (Tezpur is famous for the legend of Usha, daughter of king Bana and lover Aniruddha, grandson of Sri Krishna. Here the famous battle between Siva and Krishna took place. Siva fought with Krishna because king Bana was the disciple of lord Siva. In this battle Siva was defeated by Krishna and Usha was married to Aniruddha secretly without the knowledge of her father. Her father Bana was against this marriage although Usha loved Aniruddha. This battle is known as Hari-HaraYudha in the pre-historic Assam.

The Ahom kings also built Siva temples in Assam focusing the remarkable heritage of Ahom kingdom. The temples of the Ahom kings were made of brick. These temples are still standing in Assam. There is a big temple built on a hillock at Negheriting in Dergaon in the district of Golaghat. It is really a combined temple made of five temples of five gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses are Siva, Durga, Visnu, Ganesha and Surya. So it is known as the temple of five gods known in local language as

pancadevatadevalaya. However the main temple is of lord Siva which is in the centre. The other gods and goddesses are around it. These temples are not scattered but compact.

Similarly, Assam is famous for the Sakti cult. Its centre is Kamakhya near Guwahati, capital of Assam. It is one of famous religious places (monasteries) of India. It is on a hillock known as Nilachal. It is known as Yonipeeth. The concerned myth says that while Siva was wandering by taking on his shoulder the dead body of Sati, a form of Durga, who sacrificed her life at Dakshayajna. Daksha was her father and father-in-law of Siva Mahadeva. While roaming in this way the portion of her sacred vagina fell on this hillock while Visnu cut the body into pieces with his weapon sudarsonckakra to restrain Siva. The present temple was built at the site, where the secret part of Sati fell, by a famous king Narakasur of the pre-Ahom age. The Ahom kings also built many Devi temples in upper Assam and in lower Assam. Besides, many other temples are still standing today here and there in Assam of the pre-Ahom age.

Likewise Visnu is also worshipped in Assam. But Vaisnavism took the concrete shape only in the fifteenth century when Sankaradeva, one of the greatest saints of Assam, flourished. He discontinued the system of image worship. He converted the Visnu worship to Krishna devotion. His neo-Vaisnavism is based on the Bhagavata Purana. This Purana is not in favour of image worship. It emphasizes on Name, i.e. Naama. If one utters the very name of Lord Krishna then he might be liberated. It emphasizes sravana and kirtana, the two forms of Bhakti i.e. devotion.

Assam's Vaisnavism is known as Bhaktivaada, i.e., devotionism. It requires that one should be devoted to God only for Bhakti's sake. One should not ask anything from while praying. Actually it lays much more importance on devotion than on prayer, because in prayer we ask something from somebody, be it a man or a god. In other words, liberation from the present World and salvation of soul after death can be earned through devotion.

In Assam Vaisnavism, Visnu is however replaced by Krishna who is regarded as the primary, nay even ultimate God who is identified with Brahman. Visnu is simply one of the tri-murti i.e. three gods viz. Brahmaa, Visnu and Siva. These three gods have three functions respectively namely creation, preservation and destruction. Brahmaa stands for creation, Visnu for preservation and Siva for destruction. So Visnu simply functions one activity and that is preservation of the world. But Krishna stands for

almighty Brahman who is responsible for all the three functions. So Krishna may be deemed as Brahmeswara i.e. Absolute-God and the philosophy of Assam Vaisnavism may be known as Brahmeswsarvaad i.e. Absolutistic Theism. Vaisnavism does not admit of theism, because in theism there is a dualism between God and man, while in Absolutistic Theism this dualism is not there. Assam Vaisnavism does not admit of Absolutism also, because in that case God would be illusory or unreal. Sankaradeva does not accept this position, because for him God is equivalent with Brahman. He said, 'Sarba Bhutateasomoihari, sabakumaniba Vishnu buddhikori' (It means God is in the heart of every creature. He taught to regard every creature as a part of God). Likewise, he also advocated, 'Kukura Srigalaro Gadhara atmaram, jania kariba sabakopranam' (i.e. Ram is the incarnation of God. Sankaradeva says that Ram is in the heart even of a pig or fox. Hence, we have to regard them as Ram. Be it pig or fox, it does not matter).

If we return to the concept of Siva we have mentioned that he has a destructive role to perform i.e. he destroys the world of the evils. But he has another role to play i.e. the role of establishing goodness in the world. This is the positive side of his being. His destructive attitude is his negative role, although this negative role is also necessary for the go of the universe. Without negation progress, development and evolution do not take place. Until we negate the 'thesis' we cannot come to 'synthesis'. Thus the battle between good and evil is always there. So Siva plays both the destructive and constructive roles for the go of the universe. Until we destroy evil, the good cannot be established. The Bhagavdgita also says so when it avers that God comes to this world for the destruction of the wicked and for the preservation of the good.

Saivism, Saktism and Vaisnavism are prevalent in different places of India. Saivism, for example, is mostly prevalent in Karnataka and Jammu-Kashmir. Similarly Vaisnavism is mostly prevalent in Assam. In West Bengal Saktism is mostly prevalent. Although Chaitanyadev flourished contemporarily with Sankaradeva in West Bengal he could not root out the Sakti cult from the province.

A particular Purana eulogizes one of the above gods and he is regarded as the supreme God in that Purana, all other gods being thrown into nowhere. Thus the Siva Purana emphasizes on Siva, the Visnu Purana on Visnu, the Markandeya Purana on Sakti or Durga and the Bhagavata

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over India. A thorough knowledge of Assam is a matter of vital necessity to Indians in general and to the people of the Province in particular. ' But, so far the present situation is concerned, it seems, historical wisdom is yet to emerge. Let us pay heed to the famous remark of Radhakrishnan that national integration cannot be built by brick and mortar; it cannot be built by chisel and hammer; it has to grow silently in the minds and hearts of man.

Anyway, it is our seventh and humble approach to publish this volume of the Journal of history department of our College. This editorial does not claim any originality. Much of the thoughts expressed here have been picked up from numerous publications. It is not surely a perfect volume in many ways; neverthe less we feel that the completion of this volume, in a way, is redemption of our pledge to the subject of history. In this context, special expression of our gratefulness goes to our founder Principal Sjt. Ananda Saikia, who is also a devoted scholar in the field of historical research, Sjt. Durlav Chandra Mahanta, founder President, Governing Body of our college, Dr. Girish Baruah, one of the prolific philosophers of north eastern India and Dr. Jogen Chandra Kalita, Professor, Gauhati University. Their inspiration and guidance, in fact, has enabled us to sustain through all odds. We would forever remain grateful to all the contributors for their research papers and learned Advisory Board. Finally, we offer our sincere thanks to Mr. Latu Gogoi, L.G. Computer & Printing centre, Lichubari, Jorhat for taking up the computer work with much care and patience.

Expecting healthy criticism and encouragement from learned section,

With esteem regards,

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Editor

The shape of the touristic space around the beaches of an ayurvedic resort at Kovalam (Kerala, South India): «images and touristic contrasts?»

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Abstract

The south of Kerala state is the place of a ayurvedic tourism sharing the space and highlighting the tourist potential of this coast: the beach, and the ayurvedic center according to contrasting activities and complementary massage treatment and leisure activities of the beach. We have chosen here to approach this study according to the cross-eyed view between local populations and tourist visitors who have different territorial constructions and beach uses according to various categories and temporalities. This study tends to show that there is an Indian beach model imitating the European model (Kovalam) and a less delineated and more popular Indian beach model in Chowara. This article therefore point out the fact that the landscape perspective is important to address the thematic of the beach in Tourism studies, a perspective at first a little wild and quickly tamed by the waves of curists as the days run out at the touristic resort.

In the physical geography of the Kerala's coast, the hinterland is connected with the coastal plain where holidaymakers and tourists go from one area to another by crossing rural areas that are sometimes densely urbanized around Trivandrum (the capital of Kerala with a density of more than 2000 ha/km square, Guillermo 2005) before going to the hills of Western ghats mountains either by car-taxi or by bus.

In the Ghats, it is noted on a climatic point of view that the tea plantations in the hills where wild nature reserves (Neyardam reserve) are cooler than the coastline along which there are many places as flood plabers. It connects two complementary touristic areas of Kerala state, the sea and

the mountains, touristic movements oscillate between these two areas. These two contiguous areas also constitute different natural environments offering varied landscapes (warm coastal beach with or without monsoon rains and densely populated rice plain, mountain with receives monsoon forest) where live the *adivasis* populations that are more numerous in the mountains of Western ghats. Thus, this state therefore has a geographical variety exploited by tourism industry.

The bioclimatic relationship between the plain and the coast is shaped by a forest of rubber trees and palms trees lined with roads but also by the canals of the backwaters where Indian tourists travel along channels joining the sea formed by lagoons behind the coastal area where the villages are sheltered with hotels on stilts as in Poovar, a favorite place for Indian tourists.

The link between the hinterland and this eroded surface of the coastal zone is made by these forest's area up to the foothills of the Ghats (in Neyardam reserve) where the mountains with high-altitude stations such as the hills stations of Munnar, Ponnmoondi and Thekkady. Tourists come here to breathe the cool air sheltered from the sea air even if the region is received by monsoon rains from May until October (3000 pmm) with humid winds and from November to March by the monsoon back from Northeast that bring hot and dry winds (Aubaille-Sallenave, 2014).

This period is favorable to ayurveda and rest, where tourists practice slowness, synonymous of relaxation and holiday in a tropical climate near the ayurvedic center. Because in this plain, between ayurvedic cure and beach, the analogies are strong, '*the beach is to be considered as a place of ascetic cure*' (Lageiste, 2008, p. 14).

First of all, we would like to explain the research motivations that led us to study this site in family in order to analyze a category of elderly tourists as in our group who take the time to practice medical tourism each year while discovering the cultural sites of the South of the Malabar Coast. Previously, we had already visited, Kerala, as a tourist and researcher, at the end of the 90's and noticed that today this tourist image of an exotic Kerala paradise of tourism endures.

Our problematic is therefore based on the sharing of the space around an ayurvedic resort and the cross-examination of views between visiting culture and culture visited on places of tourist space. We also see the emergence of the sea bath and the complementarity relation between ayurvedic resort and

touristic beaches in Kerala, an important question to understand the meaning of this touristic development.

In this article, we would like to investigate firstly the space outside the resort, the beaches by trying to understand the geography of the Kovalam coastline organized around ayurvedic tourism, this experience is unusual to live for a researcher-tourist. The aim here is rather to describe the tourist images around our ayurvedic resort centre and to explain the sharing of the social space around the various touristic places from my geographical and mobility itineraries, wanderings along the beaches by recording the stories of the inhabitants and visitors in and outside the centre. What the tourists and locals share in common on this social space of the beach and the resort ?

The beach is indeed a place that brings fishermen to meet tourists, between permanent settlement of fishermen with their sea-food trade exploiting seafood and temporary holidaymakers in search of well-being and a certain exoticism (Staszack, 2008). The proximity of the tourist establishments to the seaside makes it easier to move from the beach area to the beaches's resorts protected by vegetation, edenic hostels and economic manner for some ayurvedic tourist structures settled along this coast of Kerala forming as a tourist area close to an heterotopic space outside the usual places of the world of tourism.

First, by drawing this geographical portrait of the region, we would like to take into account the geographical inequalities of regions opposing and distinguishing the plain, the coastline, and the mountainous hinterland of the Ghats and then build an analysis of the spatiality of tourism around the varied beaches of Kovalam and Chowara (place to the south of Kovalam).

This article is therefore based on a two-week fieldwork (end of 2017), on some readings in the field of Tourism studies (Doquet, 2010; Cousin: 2010, 2016, Gravari Barbas and Graburn 2012, 2002, 1977, 1983, 1989; Sacareau 2015; Jacquemet 2017, Taunay, Jaurand, Coëffé 2014; Chiron, 2017; Bidet and Devienne, 2017; Dejouhanet 2009, 2017; S. Singh, 2004, 2014, Bautès 2004) and on the geography of beaches (Lageiste, 2008; Bidet et Devienne, 2017) or Kerala geography (Guillerme, 2005; Aubaille-Sallenave, 2014, Dejouhanet 2009) as well as on the help provided by surveys in France with a Malayali from Trivandrum (Chowara) and a french woman who exchanged their views and spent more than 20 years of holidays together on these ayurvedic sites.

Problematic

According to a methodological point of view on these touristic areas very little developed by the french scientific literature in Tourism studies on Kerala (Dejouhanet, 2009, 2017, Sacareau, 2015). We would like after observing the field ground to distinguish outside of the resort (the beaches, the places frequented for commercial purposes such as the shops, the cities of Trivandrum and Kovalam in the touristic itineraries), from within the inside point of views of curists, belted by the protective wall of the ayurvedic center in this logics of spatial distinction between the protected resort inside and the surrounding world.

A first territorial demarcation can thus take place between the heaven of peace of the ayurvedic resort and the private and public beaches accessible to all and open to the world of tourism which is played as a social glue and leisure place for travelers along the sea shore for local permanent populations. The shaping of the space can also be done according to a time delimitation (within the day) and according to various touristic activities of the curists proposed and associated with various places, knowing that tourists leave on average at least once a day from the preserved enclosure of the resort.

Our scientific object analyses the tourist logics around the distribution of this space and its spatial and economic functions. Our point of view of tourist-investigator on the field ground, pushed us in particular to look at and study everything that was happened around the resort for tourists and locals (beach and sea baths already approached by Isabelle Sacareau, 2015) observing the interactions between economic activities around the resort and the tourists. This methodological paper focuses on an analysis of the sociological or geographical forms that we have observed in the everyday life between locals and tourists from the perspective of an anthropological approach between 'visiting culture' and 'visited culture' (Doquet 2010, 2016, Cousin, 2016).

How locals can talk about tourists they meet (« others »), visitors by saying 'they', « others » (usually the foreigners) or 'We' to categorize« themselves » ? Then, we will show, in the second part of this paper who are the actors and their territorialities according to the functions and limits that the beach took on (administrative, economic, playful and economic activities in relation to time) in order to delineate in the second part, the originality of the Indian beach in relation to the model of European beaches in the example of the two Indian beaches of Kovalam and Chowara

by examining another geographical delimitation through the different spatial and touristic practices. We will only briefly retrace the last part of the background work on this ayurvedic centre with the thematic of the body relating to massage and festive activities (dance, music).

Our analysis focuses in particular on the sometimes dichotomous relationships between locals and tourists, images and tourist imaginations that are produced when the tourist discover this coastal area knowing that the beach is an heuristic space (Lageiste, 2008) for the construction of imaginations and tourist practices (Gravari-Barbas and Graburn, 2012, Sacareau 2017) because the perception of this tourist area by locals can feed concretely the expectations of tourists and also the images that the locals have of these visitors.

What are the modes of spatial appropriations by the different classes (Chiron, 2017) of tourists knowing that the places have a tourist function that is also fixed by practices of mobility that give meaning to places which once again comes up to this question of otherness and sharing of space according to different tourist sensibilities by distinguishing this complementary categories between the inhabitant and the tourist. Thus, the beach is used for sunbathing, bathing by Europeans, and for Indians rather to play football or walking. The tourist function alternates between a commercial and touristic or recreational utility but also sportive depending on the actors where the body is highlighted during the football matches of the local's fishermen's teams.

Methodology and cross-cutting approach: the geographer and ethnologist in the touristic resort and on the beach in his links with tourists and locals populations

In this methodological survey, I find it more interesting to see how the locals inform Europeans on their beach because they have more observations or information to give than tourists themselves who know very few things about the historical places only explained to them in the touristic guides for travelers.

In their discourses, the Indians are viscerally attached to their cultural heritage widely described in the tourist guides (Guide du Routard, Lonely Planet), to their gods and to the land of their ancestors (*Bharat mata*) as evidenced by the strong interest in cultural tourism; these Indians will visit the rich Hindu temple of Padmanabhaswamy. This is the most for the Indian Diaspora like some Indian families usually residing in the United States and the United Kingdom living in the resort and making tourist tours in South Kerala in order to rediscover their Indian roots.

The Indians of Kerala openly inform the tourists on the beaches and even collaborate to interviews ; it is a closed space because near to the touristic resort, also a place of sociability.

In this research posture, what is the geographical relationship of these tourist societies to the poorer local societies established along the coast, taking into account two types of lifestyles and related to how to earn money. So far this study of the relationship to local populations and their survival in the world of tourism in India, on a beach and the ayurvedic are the places, privileged for our study with the ayurvedic resort because very little has been studied to understand the social space (Di Méo, Buléon, 2005) of tourism and its actors.

In this local/global relationship, visitor-visited one must wonder who possesses the beaches, who goes to them and according to what territorial delimitations of space? To sum up, what are the limits including this ubiquitous and underlying contact between locals, tourists and the tourist-geographer who is not exactly an ordinary tourist?

a) Notes of distance between visiting culture, culture visited, ‘sharing space’

Saskia Cousin (2010) notes the destabilization of societies by the arrival of tourists. It should also be added that the study of the gaze between the observed and the observer for anthropologists in Tourism Studies is of crucial importance (Doquet, 2016). On these beaches in Kerala, western tourists practice religious tourism and rather come to Christian places of worship but have a curiosity for the nearest Hindu temples. There is an interest to one culture towards the other through the relationship between the culture visited and the visiting culture.

For example, Anne Doquet (2010) in her article continues on the notion of visiting foreign culture and indigenous visited culture (tourist/host category) and questions the stereotyped formulas about the populations that are visited. With the guides, who are the pivots of the visitor-visit relationship (Doquet, 2009, 2010, 2016), how do locals also perceive tourists in search of authenticity? Similarly, the participating observer is also a tourist (Sagar Singh, 2014, p. 49). ‘In this way, the distance between the observed and the observer, the social scientist is also a tourist, the social scientist and the plain, ordinary human is also a tourist can be bridged’.

As a corollary, of this point of view, there is an aspect of formal distance between the observed and the observant that provides the first empirical field report for the geographer with the host cultures and visiting tourist cultures. Anne Doquet (2016) discusses of a necessary distance that has long remained in anthropology between the two actors in the world of tourism that tend to be shortened in the participatory patterns of the tourist and the anthropologist. On the other hand, this otherness encountered in contact with the world's tourist cultures (here Kazakhs, French, Germans, Indian diaspora or Indian tourists) temporarily settled on Indian soil are correlated with Western models, cultural appreciations where relations with money are different and dominant compared to poorer local Indian cultures.

In Chowara, the quest for the dollar or the euro is less strong than on other fieldgrounds where I went (Delhi, Tamil Nadu). On this enclave, we are not too heavily harassed by the sellers. Moreover, for these tourists, there are few incidents to be regretted on this beach because it is also guarded. There is a guard at the entrance and exit of the ayurvedic centre lifeguards on the beach.

Always through these notions of distance, I propose to address in the field of field Tourism studies in India, an observation on the gap between the field and the return home or laboratory, a kind of perpetual gymnastics to which the researcher used to do after returning from mission and having scrutinized these tourist studied. How the European area of the standard cancels out the effect of distance and how, on the contrary, through its multiple tourist experiences when contacting a more exotic Indian fieldground because diversified. The tourist enriches himself thanks to the geographical field in the course of this this tourist discovery. In this trajectory between India and France, the exotic space seems to quickly attenuate and fade thanks to the hectic and protected quality of life in the West when he returning to France.

For the geographer, Vincent Coeffé (Eso, 2015), the experience of space is significant, 'the distance is created by the experience of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1976) in so far as it is from the latter that space emerges, through the test of the gap' (Angers, Eso, 2015).

Back to Europe, the geographer is forced to gradually leave his spatial mobility from the outside to a fixed and delimited space inside; a confined space without too many crowds that could like an office, leaving the sphere of encounters, the unknown, the otherness experienced the field and the

fieldwork and of ethno-geographical analysis with other tourists and locals ; the European area is very standardized. Another difficulty encountered on the field ground that with Indian spatiality, body barriers or spatial boundaries would appear more blurred (one can move easily from one beach to another), and less restrictive. Indeed, Indians like to mix during ritual crowd baths as during sea baths (Figure 2) by a symbolic immersion in the ocean to celebrate the cycle of life (like during the Diwali festival, at the end of the month of October). However, casts banned certain attitudes dictated in particular by the criteria of the pure and the impure (see Louis Dumont, 2001) with socio-spatial segregations especially in the districts of Indian cities as Pondicherry, Chennai and not only in the country. In the relationship and the division of the space, we studied one aspect part of the geographic discipline. We also analyze the interest of the interaction between spatial settlements, forms of spatiality and territorial organizations (Anglo Saxon ‘theory of space and place’) and notably here the role of anchor for tourists or local communities that operate in a network pattern opposed tourist mobility (Debarbieux, Baggio, Small, 2008, 76).

Our concern as geographer is to promote tourism but also to allow local people to anchor with tourism into their life places or daily activities in the context of an appropriate management of sustainable tourism. Space is therefore used for both survival and leisure purposes by beach area dwellers that collect income from tourists offering beach games or furniture as the latter rest under sunshades (Figure 1) to read and relax after a massage walking along the coast or sea bath. It shows a delimitation and social sharing of space on the coveted beach between visitor populations (tourists) and local populations where distance also plays a part spatial relationship between tourists and locals. Thus, the tourist space is a contradictory space per excellence (Lefebvre 2000) and it also is the space of social inequalities and differentiations (Dit Chiot, 2017, p. 113).

It may therefore be questioned whether the economic activities of tourism and their effects functions complete with the artisanal or recreational activities of locals such as fishing or sport (football, swimming) in this mode of appropriation according to the population of visitors. Now in details, what are the actors of the beach, do they rub shoulders with each other, do they inhabit the place in the same way including tourists?

We have seen that the territories of the premises sometimes overlap the tourist territories but more often the appropriation and the different functions or uses of the space construct territoriality where the economic factor takes more importance in the territorial construction. The principle of economic self-sufficiency is strong on this beach where the nearby resort is a source of income not to be missed with its contingent of tourists for the merchant networks of poor fishermen visited by the pampered curists in their ayurvedic center, a kind of cocoon at a distance from the world, a heaven paradise for tourists.

b) On the beach, an easier approach to tourist-local contact (visiting culture/culture visited) who are the actors of the beach, and what are the uses and functions of the beach?

In the field of this research, along the seashore as for many other tourists, we got to know the types of local populations encountered and some social hierarchical relationships on the beach. Tourists mix easily with locals and exchange views on their heritage, their respective countries. India, a country of diversity and cultural uniqueness, the cultural geography of tourism also finds its way in India in contact with a varied cultural and natural heritage. Exchange taking a photo is a kind of mediator where the tongues so diverse in India are untied, make mutual in a selfie are taken between tourist and local permanent inhabitants.

The fishermen here seem poor, some never went to this Manaltheeram, the rich touristic resort near to beach because the space is closed and reserved for rich customers or middle class. The keeper filters the entrance. On Chowara beach (south of Kovalam), we often met christian missionaries from the fishermen's villages settled along the coast whose short stories express the inter-community harmony of the region which provides a favorable environment for tourism according to them.

Here is the story of a seminarian from Quilon (a city localized in the center of the Kerala state where live more than 350 000 inhabitants) collected on the beach by end of October 2017 and who worked in the United Arab Emirates like the majority of the inhabitants of these beaches,

'There are no religious problems in Kerala, communities mix and exchange with each other'. 'There are problems of tension elsewhere in India but not in Kerala. In Uttar Pradesh, it's more violent' (...), he advocates the unifying cement of communism and continues, 'There are few incidents here'. He says, 'Here are settled Hindu populations; yet this enclave is still Christian'.

The families of missionaries take a walk along the coast and question me about the tourist beaches of the French coast, the stories continue, 'How many beaches are there in France to compare them to the coast here'? He asked me. 'A lot' -I answer. 'Here less', says a missionary father. Then, evoking the places and religious heritage he visited in Europe, he said, 'I have never been to Goa, the little Rome of India'. He compares Goa to Rome probably because of their churches. In this intercultural exchange between tourists and Christian missionaries, we note the mutual curiosity and mutual respect between visitor population and visited population, which is not always the case for tourism on the most popular beaches of India.

On the beach of Chowara, many small merchants sometimes belonging to *adivasis* groups (mostly tribal communities from the mountains) sell silk sheets, mangoes whose price is more expensive because the presence of tourists showing the existence of an industry of survival and small informal trade mainly and among fishermen settled here in different villages behind the beach. Inside, the space of ayurvedic resort is shared between staff and tourists, young employees from North-east India (Meghalaya, Mizoram, Assam states) under the age of 30 are expected to be perfectly dressed in this hotel structure, wearing with their traditional Indian costume.

Outside the ayurvedic centre, the first function of the beach is therefore to be a place of work for the Christian populations who live there and rub shoulders with the tourists on everlasting holiday all during the day. Tourists enjoy watching the fishermen and are interested in their life conditions, mostly poor. They have an interest in discovering this other, strange and pious fisher man, who is Christians like them, testimony with a traditional and risky way of life, a way of life opposed to the protected tourism of the resort. In this crossing view of the researcher with these touristic places, temporary inhabitants frequent different places and sometimes the same places as the locals. The place is similar but the practices are different.

It is the poor, typical but above all authentic side of these fishing boats and their fishing nets that catch the eyes of the tourists on the beach with their brick houses and sometimes on a first floor adorned with portraits of holy Catholic Christian patrons, protectors (especially for O.b.c.: Other Backward Casts) of fishermen (Jacob, Jesus) facing a nourishing sea (Arabian sea) often reputedly dangerous because of the conditions of navigation that reigns over the sea. Thus, this part of the coastline is a place of walk that is appropriated

by all the Keralese Indians or other regions who like the maritime atmosphere of the waves where children are also present.

According to my research investigations, these Indians seem used to tourists, they do not mix too much but enough to exchange with them. Tourists easily talk to each other; it's their beach tip to them. It is practiced by groups of tourists of different nationalities including Russian-speaking groups of Mongolian origin or Kazakhs who travel in groups. According to my observations on the field ground of this touristic coastal area, this place is favorable to territorial delimitations with standards conveyed by the beach guards. They monitor this shared public space which escapes a little during the day to the local walkers. Tourists seem to be interested in the surrounding cultural place but remain somewhat inward-looking when they lie on their sand beach; the inhabitants of Chowara do not own this part of the beach belonging to the resort and tourism therefore influences this mode of appropriation. In the evening, the beach is empty of tourists because access is no longer allowed but remains guarded. The use of this public space according to a division of time shows that the coastline is more or less used depending on the time of day and its function is versatile with its various actors. It changes its use according to the daily weather: in the evening, it is used as a space for sport at the weekends a place for walking; in the week it's more like a beach for tourists. In this time sharing, it is on Sunday that the beach is full and not on Saturday because there are masses of christian local populations walking along the beach.

On Diwali day (Figure 2), a Malayalam walker showing his knowledge of the region quoted in his speech various tourist spots such as Ponmoodi, Varkala and Kanyakumari. To support his description, he showed great pictures of these places and in particular of the mountain resorts (or hills stations in India) of Ponmudi and Munnar. Indians love taking family photos in their sports gear on unusual sites on weekends: mountain tops, lakes and beaches. The beach is a place of exchange of views on travel and tourism. 'People say they bathe here because it's natural and there are colored fishing boats just near them'.

According to my tourist itineraries along our studied space, this division of time and space puts two apparently opposite but complementary societies in their economic exchanges: those of tourists and that of the premises maintained by different representations and uses of the body and space; the tourist imagination is differential. The beach is therefore very represented by

the local people and in the tourist's imaginations (Gravari Barbas and Graburn, 2012) by serving as a photographic image for the tourists, then as a place to walk among the boats washed up on the sand or become a beach sport in the late afternoon with the practice of football. The place is very popular with honeymooners or lovers on a stroll.

In this space, different social-spatial sharing and hierarchical roles exist. Indeed, the economic relations of fishermen with the resort in the background are not always very good; they are a little poorer and therefore financially dependent on it. The story with the beach keepers (two or three per beach) who often come from the surrounding fishing villages shows that they also earn *backshishs*. The richness of the habitat is reflected in the exterior of the house where some fishermen welcome Western tourists to their homes, which allows them to supplement their small incomes. They say they are also going into trade activities around the beach 'to live better'.

Football players like Vijay wear several costumes delineated by social roles; they are sometimes the local sellers of small informal goods (elephants, Buddhas and various Hindu gods or embroidered silk fabrics) and belong to lower castes, they chat together and often with the beach keepers. Their customary and familiar relationship with the latter is explained by the fact that they belong to the same community as them. In the local/global relationship, everyone rubs shoulders with everyone or about on this space but with certain social and geographical limits and distances according to the marks of the territoriality of various but complementary heterogeneous tourist actors: from the street merchant to the tourist or beach keeper who acts as the hierarchical leader and the regulator access to this place.

After considering the economic relationship of fishermen with tourists showing territorialities put at stake by different actors during their relations in contact with tourists on the beach, we must now delineate the appropriate spaces by these categories of actors to continue to decipher the codes that are played out on this social space according to temporalities and limits.

2) The beaches, administrative boundaries, other boundaries and shared sea bath space in Chowara and Kovalam (Kerala)

a) Administrative delimitations

In terms of boundaries and amenities, these beaches appear to be less equipped than Chinese beaches (Taunay, 2011, pp. 181-186), there are no paddle boats or scooters of the seas or U.l.m. (Taunay, 2011, p. 185). These limits are not strictly marked outside the beach guards, we rarely see the

police walking on this stretch of coastline facing the Arabian Sea. To show this time sharing, we cross-crossed the beach space at different times of the day.

b) Other delimitation of the beach by skin color and according to daily time: different territorialities

On the beach, you can therefore contrast two modes of spatial boundaries according to the skin color and the time of its use during the course of a day. According to our observations, there are few European of color at the ayurvedic resort. Indians come mainly from northern India regions (Rajasthan, Gurgaon and Gujarat in October) and this center mainly welcomes Europeans in Indian clothes who do not mix during meals with colored skin staff. Similarly, no one exceeds the symbolic boundary between the white European people and the fishermen-sellers with guards who monitor and filter the passage of populations, but on the whole, the beach is shared inter culturally by all according to a daily time.

c) On the waterfront in Kovalam: 'sharing the popular space between European beach and Indian beach'

Some French tourists have enough money of their usual itinerary to shorten the pace of their cure treatment in ayurveda with its reassuring tourist landmarks: the beach, the pool, the cozy room, the restaurant and the shops installed along the street that leads to the Kovalam-Trivandrum-Poovar road. Later and as every year, tourists from the same family stay in a very modern five-star luxury hotel for ten days outside Kovalam, the Taj Viventa located in a park far from the beach according to an elaborate comfort for the middle classes. They represent a rather well-off category of tourists just like the Indian middle classes of Bangalore who arrive with their children for Diwali holidays and who like to indulge in excursions outside the resort grounds to feast on Kovalam, a multi-budget beach along the waterfront. They will thus break with the cycle of the resort by leaving the protective enclosure but still reside in a protected hotel because they are over 65 years old. There are more merchants in Kovalam than in Chowara where there is no waterfront with a promenade arranged by a sidewalk overlooking the beach. There are, however, a few streets along which are located shops of wealthy merchants and very well intertwined to welcome tourists to Chowara. Kovalam beach was full on Diwali day of tourists (Figure 2), it is even more popular than Chowara place and open to tourism.

This is the beach of the Indians and North Indians; the white beach exists more or less like in Chowara. Only a few surfers and fishermen change the tone of the sea baths in Kovalam into a sea beach. Flags are set up for the no-swim areas that are there to delineate the space.

On the coast, the Indian outfits are the trousers and the swimsuit (Figure 1), it is a crowd bath despite a European here and thus lost sometimes in a swimsuit in the middle of the Indian beach, the beach is mostly Indian. The Indians reinvent the European beaches in India by mixing spiritual aspects with playful aspects and come to break with the everyday life, when they are not rural, the hyper-connected, hyper-fast rhythm of the city (Heloïse Lh  r  t  , June 28, 2018).

Modernity and light summer outfits rub shoulders on the beach with Northern Indians equipped with their mobile phones like some Gujaratis who will go further south to Kanyakumari on pilgrimage. The promenade of the beach waterfront is also invested by other actors who are not bathers but sellers of *dhol* (small drum) of Rajasthan who catch the tourists walking there.

3. Inside the beach and in the resort: Well-being and care; a well-oiled ritua ‘Indian society, whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian, has a very modest relationship to the body. It is a private matter, which excludes any public exhibition, especially of women’s legs and shoulders. (...) the tan of the skin is likened to black, a harmful color, which discriminates referred to low castes or peasants and is therefore not valued’ (Sacareau, 2015). Indeed, Indians are less likely to be massaged than those from the diaspora more numerous in hotels near Kovalam.

a) The tourists on the massage table

We now describe in this article what is happening in the center in terms of ayurvedic care and the attendance of the tourists site seen from the inside as a tourist. Few surveys have been carried out in this observer and tourist posture, although this region has already been massaged on these tourists and ayurvedic issues (Sacareau, 2015; Dejouhanet, 2009). Indeed on these centers, there is marketing around massage, but you have to pay a lot and the centers charge the Europeans for the extra massages.

The products (Manjishtadhi, Dhavatri, Himalayas, etc.) on sale in shops around or in centers provide a complement to tourists who bring in as many complementary ayurvedic products as possible thanks to prescriptions given by the competent doctors on the ayurvedic site. Water, sun, food and massage added to the medications are the basis of ayurvedic treatment, ‘The

methods of care are usually bathing, massages, oil anointings, and the practice of yoga, combined with a particular diet adapted to the climate, the season and the individual characteristics of the patient' (Sacareau, 2015, p. 8).

A female Hindu doctor over the age of 45 years old receives people at the reception in a well-established medical liturgy at the resort. The reception is done in the morning, we take off our shoes and then we consult the doctor gives a quick assessment after the pulse and blood pressure and then quickly frees you; it is a permanent rotation of patients. According to hotel records, the center is almost full in mid-October, while in November with the monsoon rains weakening, attendance is increasing. Through my observations and my testimony on massage treatments as I go through the days spent in this ayurvedic center, I wanted to show the daily life of masseurs and tourists in a long and repetitive time of body care that can be spread over more than 10 days in a row according to budgets and where some tourists practice the cure individually while staying long. A regular treatment of seven days that can be supplemented by one or two additional days, but of course is paying the supplement. Here nothing is free, it is a lucrative industry. This is prepared in a special building to which the tourists does not have access and the therapists who apply the oils explain to me that they have been practicing their art, one for eight years and the other for two years.

My Keralese masseurs are Hindu (Binu) and Christian (Tenjin), the work begins by squeezing rags filled with oil heated beforehand and soaked, it's *pizhichil/thadhara*, the starting treatment. The individual is pampered and therapists do their job little by little; they keep their distance. In terms of number of people in this renown and awarded establishment that we have attended, there are around twenty women from southern India working throughout the centre, the delimitation of massage is such that women or men can massage only women or men to avoid any problems of sex or taboos that are numerous in India about the female gender.

'Ayurveda is a body balance between balanced vegetarian food, massage, yoga and the climate of Kerala's sunny beaches'. 'What you eat is what you are' likes to repeat Dr. Gobkarna from Trivandrum University when talking about ayurveda. Some tourists come for the first time and discover India, like these two Alsations ladies who come this year and have seen only very little out of the ayurvedic center in a week and have fallen ill from the beginning of the stay.

Finally, it can be noted that there are more tourists and ayurvedic practices on the centre but a number of these practices are located outside the ayurvedic centre within the main tourist area, the beach and shopping street leading to Trivandrum where settled Kashmiris or rich Keralese merchants with their shops are for luxurious European tourists. On this beach of Chowara Europeanized by the resort, in terms of body standards, the body is more shown by Western women than Indian women.

b) Ayurveda day at the centre and shopping in the streets: ‘a parade for tourists’

Inside the centre, some days are used to celebrate the world and celebrate of course ayurveda as a traditional and universal Indian heritage. In one of the aisles of the Manaltheeram centre for this day of ayurveda with the director and manager of the center, all the curists are gathered in the company of the staff. National ayurveda day is dedicated to the deity of medicine Dhawanthari. Around the plants used as a pleasure, the site is balanced to welcome tourists. Ayurvedic cooking demonstrations are made by a chef after the grandiose morning parade for the beginning of the day of Ayurveda in the company of the director of the center and curists. Everything here is well orchestrated until the afternoon lectures followed by Doctor. Gobakumar of the University of Trivandrum and after of course the cooking master class.

Figure-1



An Indian family exchanging with Russian tourists on Chowara beach at the foot of the resort

Source: © author's photograph

Figure-2



Photo of the sea bath in Diwali on one of the main beaches of Kovalam (Kerala)

Source: © author's photograph.

Conclusion

The modes of appropriation of space by the different classes (Chiron, 2017) of tourists give the place a playful sense according to a sharing of space corresponding to different appropriations between locals (small street vendors, keepers), tourists or Indian walkers or European tourists; their living conditions are very different. This allowed us to see that there were some differences or even contradictions between the speeches and practices of the different actors depending on where we were, Kovalam or Chowara. The beach is a place used for sunbathing by Europeans and for Indians to play football or walk outside the lucrative activities of informal street traders. Nevertheless, on this part of the tourist area, everyone rubs shoulders with everyone but with certain social and geographical limits. The cure centre is closed to it, enclosed and guarded space, a resort for European and Indian tourists, the beach is open to the world, a tourist crossroads and a popular landscape for walks and sports activities (surfing, walking, football), (MIT, 2002).

In Kovalam, the opening to tourism is less selective, more popular, with more varied classes of Indian or international tourists who come not only for medical tourism but with a specific purpose like doing a ayurvedic cure and treating themselves. In Kovalam, on the large beach considered as a public space in Europe, we take crowd baths at the same time as sea baths, despite the presence of some Europeans here lost in the middle of the Indian beach. On the other hand, in Chowara bathers are more discrete, no crowd bathing; it is a private beach and with a greater number of European tourists. The limits of the beach are shaped according to an appropriation by skin color and according to the western or Indian type although the two can mix easily in the evening, this appropriation could also be shaped according to the period of occupation. The territories of the experience overlap on the beach, a place of tourism according to daily frequencies. During the day and in the morning, over a long time, the beach is private and it is the natural extension of the ayurvedic cure after the treatment. In the evening, the tourist area becomes occupied by the local people again for a short time and the beach becomes festive while in Kovalam, it remains lively according to a longer time, ie all day because the place is more densely frequented. Inside the centre, these are the activities of massage, yoga and the activities of the evenings during dinners that punctuate the life of a stay for European or Indian tourists.

This beach area in Kerala is nevertheless very social and open to the world, it is a place of ayurvedic world tourism, but the ayurvedic center, world enclosure and enclosed, is more centered on medical tourism and its practices are associated with more festive aspects like music and Indian arts in the evening.

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‘Indo-Islamic Learning’ and the Colonial State ‘Bengal Presidency’ under East India Company

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‘Colonization brought about not only political subjugation and economic exploitation, but also intellectual and cultural erasure. The colonizers imposed ‘their cultural and philosophical values’ on the colonizers, instilling in them a sense of inferiority about everything native and indigenous. The heritage of native literature and art was denigrated and dismissed by the colonizing masters. As a consequence the ‘colonized nations have gone through a period of cultural amnesia’.

Abstract

Every political order pre supposes a class of ideologues to push forward the agenda of the ruling class. It is often through the support of a ‘microscopic minority’ and the collaboration of the earlier elite, that the newly established dispensation establishes its sway. The member of previous bureaucracy, when accommodated in the new set-up , invariably assumes the role of ‘an apologist’ for the new rulers. Depending on the stability of the regime and the effectiveness of its armed power, the earlier landed and literary elite come to adjust with the changed circumstances. Instances for such an adjustment from India’s pre-colonial past are too numerous to be cited. However, there are always important exclusions and exceptions. These groups are soon excluded and marginalized from the newly established bureaucratic set-up and, ultimately deprived from State’s other favors, especially the financial concessions and other avenues of visibilities.

We come across the instances during India’s medieval past when the Arab, Turkish, Afghans and Mughal dynasties had carefully nurtured a class of the people who provided ideological and administrative support. This class of the ‘natural apologists’ was at the forefront for literary activities, developed the bureaucratic terminologies and also invented ‘new’ ideological support base for the emerging state apparatus. The revenue, judicial and administrative terms was evolved to match the growing needs of the emerging administrative apparatus: the experiences of the migrant families from Central Asia and Khurasan were of a great help at the initial stages. Side by side the local terms and concepts were also incorporated into the chancellery practices of the emerging State. Thus, a set up was evolved and managed by the literary elite over the millennium. The

State always acknowledged the efforts of this class. A structure of patronage, financial concessions and the official ways for providing them remuneration were devised. Thus, a long lasting relationship was established between the State and the civil society, which included the migrants as well as pre-existing members of this class.

Indian subcontinent had a substantial number of migrant families since the early medieval times. They were traders, merchants, artisans, soldiers, scholars and mystics. They developed a system of education to meet the requirements of their settlements, and at the later stages, to participate in the administrative functions of the governments. The system of education so evolved was comprehensive enough to include the Arbo-Persian elements along with the Indic studies. Besides, promoting the Muslim theological sciences they have translated the Sanskrit classics in Arabic and Persian and have also promoted the local dialects to emerge as full-fledged literary languages. Ismaili *da'is*, Chishti and Shattari Sufis wrote extensively in the local languages, created new literary genres and promoted spoken dialects to full-fledged languages. The 'Indo-Islamic' scholarship soon made its mark in the Islamic East: the Indian branches of knowledge like, *Ilm al-Hindsa*, the stories of *Panchtantra*, *the Yog Vashishth* and *Charak Samhita*, the theories and the treatises on Astronomy and Astrology were made popular in the Arab World [later to Europe in their Arabic garbs). Abu Rehan Al Beruni's *Kitab ul Tahqiq le ma'l Hind* (1030s) was in fact, recognition, at the highest level, of the Indian achievements in the fields of pure sciences, mathematics, literature, philosophy and other branches of knowledge. This tradition continued uninterruptedly under the Sultans of Delhi and Mughal emperors with individual efforts as well as under the State patronage.

The pre-colonial Indian State was conscience of these efforts and supported them fully. Initially these benefits were bestowed on the individuals in recognition of their familial background and the past connections; their individual merits and the recognition of the fact that they had large families/ establishments/students to support. The grantees also treated such awards as '*ariyat* [concession by the State] and used the substantial portion of the income for the dissemination of knowledge and sharing of their experiences and skills. Except some examples of State run institutions, we find that education was largely promoted through the individual efforts. No doubt state sponsored their activities through land and cash grants.

These concessions were invariably, renewed by the successive regimes, hence the continuity was ensured; though always under the custodianship of the families/extended families. Whenever state during the pre-colonial times refused the renewal of such benefits, the scholarly class was always in for the trouble. We have numerous instances, when due to financial constrains or simply on sectarian grounds, the State withheld the renewal of such grants, leading to hardship of the scholastic classes and also the eventual decline of the intellectual tradition in the particular regions.

However, there are examples from the pre-colonial times as well when these grants were not renewed or selectively released or stringent conditions were put with them. For example, Mulla ‘Abdul Qadir Badauni condemns the working of Mughal emperor Akbar’s *Sadar us Sudur* Sheikh ‘Abdul Nabi for misusing his authority and thus, putting the grantees at a huge disadvantage. Similarly, the Nawab-Wazirs of Awadh kingdom during the mid-eighteenth century by withdrawing/selectively renewing the familial grants ‘of the old establishment ‘created hardship for the class of the grantees, forcing them to shift ‘from scholarly pursuits to the soldiery’, a curious linkage between the two professions. Also we notice that a small grant of the family of noted theologian and scholar of Delhi, namely Shah Abdul ‘Aziz [d.1824] was resumed, possibly on the sectarian grounds. However, it was restored much later by the officials of East India Company.

Though solitary, yet important instances from the pre-colonial days, which sustains the argument that scholastic tradition always suffered whenever such patronage was withdrawn. Thus, the intellectual tradition was heavily dependent on the official patronage/s, it had yet to evolve an independent basis for itself. There was no permanent alienation in favour of the grantees; hence no *waqf* could emerge strictly in the legal terms. However, it needs to be pointed out that although *shi’te fiqh* has a provision for *sahem-I Imam* [a share for the *Imam* out of the income from every *shi’a*], which was appropriated by the theologians, yet in spite of having this independent base for themselves, they could hardly develop long lasting institutions of learning anywhere in the sub-continent. Incidentally, the *shi’a* seminaries at Qom, Mashhad and Najaf have sustained them , mainly out of these resources.

Colonial administration, *ma’afi* grants and *ina’amdars*

With the establishment of the Colonial rule in the Upper Gangetic Valley, there was a drastic change in the official policies, viz a viz such grants. The colonial vocabulary described these grants as *m’aafi* and the grantees as *ma’afidars* or the *Inam* holders. The colonial administration was often quite

reluctant to renew such grants: they insisted on the original deeds of grant, irrespective of the antiquity of such grants. It needs to be highlighted that apparently a mere procedural change was something against the basic framework of the pre-existing judicial system, which invariably accepted the certified copies, with the seal and certification of *Qazi* as good as the original, hence, the certified copies were treated perfectly as valid and legally admissible documents in the pre-colonial judicial system.

Therefore, most of the grantees, due to wear and tear of the original document, had the certified copies of the original grant deeds; now these certified copies were declared simply inadmissible as per new law of evidence under the rule of the East India Company. This single measure brought havoc and had quite devastating impact on the fortunes of the class of grantees. Thousands of *ma'afi* holders lost their claim, especially, during the [in famous Inam Commission of Bengal (1828-1846). To quote no less a person than W.W. Hunter, who has summed up the disastrous impact and the horrifying results thus, 'Hundreds of ancient families were ruined, and the educational system of the Musalmans which was almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants received its death blow. The scholastic classes of Muhammadans emerged from the eighteen years of harrying, absolutely ruined...

The paper focuses on a study of the colonial policies on the fortunes of the *ma'afi* holders during the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, the study is confined to the Bengal presidency, the areas which came under the administrative control of the East India Company from late eighteenth onwards. The study is based on the English archival records, the files of the civil and revenue litigation and the administrative reports from the various offices.

It is argued that the British intervention during the colonial administration had a devastating impact on the long standing institutions of learning; the migrant families of the scholastic and Sufic background were thoroughly marginalised. Not only the discipline of Indo-Islamic studies, but also the Arbo-Persian literary elite lost its relevance and it could survive only as an appendage of the English maintained institutions and colleges. The institutions of the *waqf* suffered irreversibly as the new legal system encouraged and entailed the disputes among the various branches of the family, thus providing a basis for an unending process of litigation. Another measure, with equally devastating impact was that now, the new British legal system seldom honored the arrangements and agreements formalized from the time of the

earlier regimes; this policy also resulted in the opening of the Pandora box by providing/encouraging new wave of civil disputes within the families.

The Presidency of Bengal during the 18th Century

The geographical limits of 'Bengal' included much larger area than the present day Bangladesh and West Bengal put together. After the Turkish rule was extended in this region during the thirteen century, the region was fully adjusted and well incorporated in the administrative set-up of Delhi Sultanate. Historians of Delhi sultanate like Minhaj-al Siraj Juzjani, Amir Khusru, and Ibn-e Batuta have visited the area, and have provided important first hand information about the land and the people. Numerous families of migrants from Central Asia and Khurasan have also settled in the region in spite of supposedly inhospitable 'ecological condition'. These families of the migrants have introduced the elements of 'Islamic culture' and have also established the centers for the dissemination of 'Islamic knowledge'. Going by the details provided by Muhammad Mohar Ali in, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*,¹ we come across numerous works of theology; law and literature were compiled in Arabic by some of these migrant members of the newly settled families.

It seems that the region has imbibed the elements of Islamic culture very fast in every manner. It is interesting to see that Bengal Sultans, often acknowledged the supremacy of the Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad by adopting the titles as *Yemeen khalifat –ullah* and *Nasir ul Amir Ul Mominin*.² Similarly, we notice that some names of the old administrative units/divisions and even the cities have undergone a total make over; now these units and the cities were re-Christened with new Arabic and Persian names. Whether, these new names found local acceptability over the period of time is a different matter, but in the official documentation, including in the village papers prepared by the hereditary local officials, some of these names survived well till the present times.³

As, the *suba* of Bengal was not under the *zabt* (measurement) during the 16th century hence, there is no statistic as to the area under cultivation or under the *Suyurgal* (revenue free grants). However, one can very well assume that large classes of the grantees have settled in almost all the regions of Bengal during the pre-colonial times. At least, simply by a look at the nomenclatures and the place names of the administrative and geographical units, this becomes quite clear. Apart from these aspects of political and administrative integration of the region in the new system of governance, we notice that the region was a home for the large section of the migrants' literary

elites. We notice that the majority of inscriptions are found from the pre-colonial time in the region are either in pure Arabic or mixed- Persian.⁴

The Colonial intervention and the Intellectual tradition of Bengal

Bengal was the region to have experienced the coming of the Europeans in the sixteenth century itself; in fact Abul Fazal takes a note of their presence in the port towns of Chittagong, Satgaon and Hoogly. Following the battle of Buxar in AD 1764, the English East India Company also acquired the *diwani* rights over the Mughal provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. In this way the revenue administration of the region passed on to them. After the ‘infamous’ Plassey plunder and Murshidabad ‘loot’, a new system of revenue administration was devised by the Company officials. Now, they worked for the ‘maximization’ of the land revenue demand and to ensure its continuous ‘collection’. It became a corner stone of their policy. Hence, they completely altered the earlier agrarian structure. In this scheme, the earlier revenue free grants were to become totally redundant and useless.

Having examined some data on the colonial policies vis-a-vis the Sufi *khanqah* of Awadh⁵ and other institutions of higher learning in eastern India, including the Bengal Presidency, gave me an opportunity to study the mindset of the colonial officials much prior to the witch hunt, which became a hallmark and the corner stone of the British policies towards the Muslims, especially after the Uprising of 1857.⁶ The data provided by W.W. Hunter is especially important to point out the early measures of the colonial officials, intended to exterminate the class of the *ma'afidars* during the infamous *In'am* Commission (1828-1846). This had ultimately reduced not only an important class of the Muslim elite, solely dependents on the revenue free grants, but also a class of the professional bureaucrats (mainly *kayasths*), who had developed their expertise in Persian, especially in the work of accountancy, letter writing (*insha'*) and maintaining of the official records. At least the legacy of this class continued to survive in the family surnames like Majumdar, Qanungo, Muqqadam [Mukadam] and Chaudhary etc., which points out to the fact that their ancestors were once Professor the holders of the bureaucratic positions during the pre-colonial regimes.

The other important and equally scandalous aspect which has been documented by W.W. Hunter relates to the embezzlement from the trust funds created by the Muslim elite for the specific religious purposes, for which they appointed the colonial administration as their trustee, to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of these institutions. The case of Hugli trust (as *waqf* of Haji Mohammad Mohsin was popularly known) was not an isolated event but we

notice exactly the same policies being pursued by the colonial authorities in Delhi. There is the case of one Syed Fazl‘Ali (d. 1829), who created a trust for the promotion of ‘theological sciences and the promotion of Arabic- Persian based studies’. The trustee died within a year of putting an amount of rupees one lakh and seventy thousands [1, 70,000/] for the purpose. We find, soon after, Syed Hamid Ali, son-in-law and the then trustee hauling the British administration for the misuse of the funds and spending the proceeds of the funds for purposes, other than the one for which the trust was created.⁷

This is an interesting aspect, and needs to be highlighted to show that when some philanthropic persons created endowments for specific purposes and have placed them under the custodianship of the English administration for better management, like the Hugli trust in Bengal and *Madrassa Ghaziuddin* at Delhi, often the very purpose was defeated. In both the cases, we find that the colonial administrators have blatantly belied the spirit of the trust. There have been complaints of misappropriation of the funds, breach of trust and a total diversion of the funds for the purposes other than the one indicated in the deed of the trust. The British administrators successfully blocked all the efforts of the descendants of the original donors to set the things right. This was a part of a deliberate ploy to make the older institutions of welfare redundant, perhaps to popularize such new institutions, which had come up, under British patronage.

It appears that the British colonial authorities were quite conscious of the far reaching impact of their policies on the fortunes of the erstwhile elite. Therefore, except perhaps for some references in W.W. Hunter, we seldom come across any records or files related to the massive exercise undertaken by the *Inam* Commission. Therefore, one does not come across any work in the recent past,⁸ taking any cognizance of this period which has been described by Hunter as the one which has destroyed the entire Muslim *ashrafiya* (Muslim upper middle class) of the Bengal Presidency in the first half of the 19th century.

Based on the limited data surviving in the official publications, one can undertake a study of some aspects of the cultural and intellectual life of the Muslims in pre-colonial Bengal. The massive collection of the manuscripts, the Buhar collection at the National Library Calcutta provides a glimpse into the type of institutions maintained in such a remote part of the then Burdwan district.⁹ Similarly, the *Baees Hazari* and *Shash Hazari* trusts at Pandua in the Malda division provide an idea of some of the vast *awqaf*/trusts that existed during the pre-colonial times. It should be readily acknowledged that these comments and observations are based on the limited, and even on inadequate

data coming mainly from the 2-3 districts of a vast region like Bengal. But the trends are quite obvious and point out the shift from pre-colonial to colonial times for the maintenance of Sufi shrines of Shaikh Noor Qutb Alam (d.1410 A.D.), and the *chillagah* of Shaikh Jalal uddin Tabrizi (d. 1225 A.D.), both located in close vicinity to each other at Pandua.

British Rule and the Muslims of Bengal

A larger question, which might be of some interest to us, is related to the immediate impact of British rule in Bengal and for whom it was beneficial and on whose behalf W.W. Hunter accused the colonial administration for the misappropriation of scholastic funds etc. The huge *waqf* estates which the Muslims created for the advancement of education of the Muslims were treated by the British officials in the most dishonest manner. He has cited the examples from the various districts of Bengal showing the casual manner in which the English colonial officers treated such noble acts of the Bengal Muhammadans.¹⁰ The example of Haji Mohammad Mohsin Trust is quoted by him with all necessary details. To quote him, 'In the district of Hughli way back in AD 1806 a wealthy Shia gentleman left a huge estate for the pious uses. These uses were specified in the will he left which were related to the maintenance of certain religious rites and ceremonies, repair and maintenance of the imambara, the burial ground pensions for the beneficiaries and some religious establishments. As a result of the litigation between the two branches of the family the government assumed the management of the estate appointing itself as a trustee. Huge amount of money was wasted in the process and adding insult to injury, was the attempt by the government to divert these funds for the establishment of an English college (while the will was quite specific for the college for the poor Muslims)...'¹¹ Hunter graphically describes further, 'at the moment (i.e. 1871) the head of the college is an English gentleman ignorant of a single word of Persian and Arabic who draws £1500 a year from Muhammadan religious endowment for teaching things hateful to every Musalman. It is not, of course, his fault, but the fault of government which placed him there, and which for thirty-five years has been deliberately misappropriating this great educational fund. In vain, it attempted to cloak so gross a breach of trust, by attaching a small Muhammadan school to the English college. Besides the misappropriation of the accumulated fund in building the College, it annually diverted £5000 to its maintenance. That is to say, out of an income of £5260, it devoted only £250 to the little Muhammadan school which alone remained to bear witness to the original character of the Trust...'¹²

Such multiple examples can be gleaned from the different districts of Bengal. In the other regions of the Upper Gangetic valley, during the colonial times, the scenario was not very different.

W.W. Hunter in a detailed chapter titled: Wrongs of the Muhammadans under British Rule, has given a graphic description of the manner in which the colonial administration has wrecked havoc on the fortunes of the Muslim elite in Bengal and the manner in which the institutions imparting indigenous education were systematically made redundant, in one of the regions of the subcontinent with a sizeable Muslim presence. He says, 'a hundred and seventy years ago it was almost impossible for a well-born Musalman in Bengal to become poor; at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich...' for the 'army is now completely closed. No Muhammadan gentleman of birth can enter our regiments...' 'Our action has brought ruin upon Muhammadan houses of Bengal. We shut the Musalman aristocracy out of the army because we believe that their exclusion was necessary to our safety...their monopoly of judicial, political or in brief civil employ...' But as a result of the policies of the government a situation arose where, 'There is now scarcely a govt. office in Calcutta in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of the inkpots and mender of pens...' ¹³

In fact, Hunter has given complete statistics of the major departments of the government in Bengal for AD 1871 and has shown the negligible number of Muslim employees as against the European and Hindu employees. Similar was the situation in other secular professions like law where the numbers of pleaders of the High court and the attorneys have declined over a period of time; medicine which was never considered as a profession worthy of consideration by a high born Muslim, but even in that profession Muslims were to be found very rarely.¹⁴ It has been pointed out by Hunter that such exclusion had partially resulted due to the policy of discrimination practiced by the government against the Muslims. He quoted from a Gazette (the office of the Commissioner Sunderbans) which clearly stated that: 'the appointment would be given to none but the Hindus...' the situation has turned so grim for the Muslim elite of the province that Hunter finally says that, 'The Muhammadans have now sunk so low that even when qualified for government employ, they are studiously kept out of it by govt. notifications. Nobody takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities deign even to acknowledge their existence...' ¹⁵

Commenting on the intellectual scenario of the country prior to colonial intervention, Hunter quotes E C Bayley to the effect that, '(the Musalmans) ...possessed a system of education which however inferior to that which we

have established was yet by no means to be despised; was capable of affording a high degree of intellectual training and polish, was founded on principle not wholly unsound, though presented in an antiquated form; and which was infinitely superior to any other system of education then existing in India- a system which secured to them an intellectual as well as a material supremacy, and through the medium of which alone the Hindus could hope to fit themselves for the smallest share of authority in their native country'.¹⁶

Hunter goes on to argue that for the first seventy five years of the colonial rule the previous system was allowed to continue but after wards a new system of Public Instruction was enforced which, 'flung aside the old Muhammadan system, and the Musalman youth found every avenue of public life closed in their faces...'¹⁷

He is quite frank in admitting that the system of public instructions created by the British was quite unsuited to the Muslims and, 'we have also denuded their own system (of public instruction) of the funds by which it was formerly supported. Every great Musalman house in Bengal maintained a scholastic establishment in which its sons and its poorer neighbours received an education free of expense. As the Muhammadan families of the province declined, such private institutions dwindled in numbers and in efficiency...'¹⁸

The *ma'afis* and *ma'afidars* under the colonial regime

The Bengal Presidency at the time of colonial takeover had huge *ma'afi* grants, meant to support the religious institutions like the *Sufi khanqahs* as well as the institutions of indigenous learning. From the time of Warren Hastings in AD 1772 till AD 1828, it was deliberated in the official circles to start the resumption proceedings and finally in 1828 'the lands held free by Musalmans or by Muhammadan foundations, special courts were created, and during the next 18 years the whole province was overrun with informers, false witnesses, and stern pale faced Resumption Officials...' As a result this gigantic exercise 'an outlay of £ 800,000 upon resumption proceedings, additional revenue of £ 300,000 a year was permanently gained by the state... a large part...' ¹⁹The result of such policies was on the expected lines, 'hundreds of ancient families were ruined, and the educational system of the Musalmans which was almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants received its death blow. The scholastic classes of the Muhammadans emerged from the 18 years of harrying, absolutely ruined...'

The resumption proceedings were fiercest at the beginning and after languishing for some years were officially terminated by the government. But after a quarter century, Hunter recalls, 'the panic of those days is still remembered, and it has left to us a bitter legacy of hatred. Since then a

profession of man of learning, a dignified and lucrative calling under the native rulers has ceased to exist in Bengal...²⁰ He further observed that from the days of *Inam* commission, and consequent... 'Resumptions the decay of Muhammadan system of education dates. The officers now in charge of the Wahabi persecutions cite them as the second cause of the alienation of the Musalman community in Bengal...'

The foregoing discussion is intended for having an idea that the impact of the British rule in Bengal Presidency was definitely disastrous for the earlier ruling elite/class. They were thoroughly marginalized in every field of public life due to the massive resumptions of the *ma'afi* grants. By and large the Muslim *ashrafia* has lost the opportunity for education. An expertise in the traditional subjects was becoming quite redundant as far as the job prospects were concerned. The newly established educational institutions were offering possibilities and newer opportunities in the new setup. But unfortunately the erstwhile Muslim elite was quite slow in availing these opportunities, an aspect on which much has been written and perhaps the debate is still going on.²¹

Case Studies of some *maa'fi* establishments of Bengal

A general deterioration/decline in the fortunes of the Muslim landed elite and *maa'fidars* under the British rule has been discussed in modern scholarship. However, one needs to examine the impact of some of the colonial policies and the actual administrative measures of the authorities, in relation to certain institutions to understand the scale at which these policies were successful in rendering these institutions obsolete.

Let's examine the fortune of some of the large establishments, which existed since pre-colonial times and continued into the colonial period. This will give us an idea of the intellectual milieu existing of this region. I am conscious of the fact that the data base for this section is rather limited, as I have yet to lay my hands on the original records and family documents. I must admit the limitation of such a study, but even from the official data comprising of the English records, report of settlement officer and Abid Ali's *Memoirs* one can very well see the dominant trends in relation to the colonial policies and these institutions as being symptomatic of the larger colonial attitude towards the Muslims of Bengal.

A.Buhar Family: in the National Library of Calcutta, a huge collection of the manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Turkish exists in the Buhar Collections.²² The range of these works is multi-faceted having a large collection of works on the history of the Islamic East and many biographies. This is followed by the works on theology and law ,manuscripts of Islamic theology, prayer books and invocations, Sufism and mystic philosophy; manuscripts of scientific

subjects like arithmetic, astronomy, medicines, compendia of science and encyclopedias.

As per the catalogue details, one Munshi Syed Sadruddin of Buhar in Burdwan district has laid the foundation of a library at Buhar, during the time of the Mir Jafar the Nawab of Murshidabad. He had served as the *Mir Munshi* of the Nawab and Warren Hastings, as well. Mughal Emperor Shah Alam entrusted him the mutawalliship of the famous *Baees Hazari waqf* (the history of this *waqf* will follow later). In addition to this library, he founded the famous *Madrasa-e Jalalia* at Buhar. The importance of this seminary can be gauged from the fact that it was headed by no lesser person than Mulla Abdul Ali *Bahrul Uloom* (d. AD 1810), the son and the successor of Mulla Nizamuddin of Firangi Mahal (d. 1748), the founder of the famous curriculum for the Indian *madrasa* system known as *Dars-e Nizami*. It is of some interest to point out that when the conditions were not conducive for the continuation of the Firangi Mahal *Madrasa* at Lucknow under the Nawabi regime, *Bahrul Uloom* was forced to move out of Lucknow, went to Shahjahanpur, under the patronage of the Rohilla Chieftains. When Rohilkhand was finally annexed by the then nawab-wazir with the British support in A.D. 1774, he, along with his eleven hundred students was invited by the Buhar family and its Nawab to continue teaching at their *madrasa*. This *Madrasa e Jalalia* at Buhar, soon acquired fame far and wide, scholars and students started enrolling themselves at this seminary. We know for certain that the famous Chishti Sufi at Delhi Maulana Fakhruddin (A.H. 1199/1785 A.D.) was at this *madrasa* for about two years to study the texts like *Mussallam*, *Hashiya-e qadeema* and *Tafsir-e Baizawi* for which he could not find a person of the stature of *Bahrul Uloom* at Delhi. We are told that the entire expenditure of this *madrasa* and that of the library was met by of the revenue from the *Baees Hazari waqf*.²³

It appears that the members of Buhar family were also men of letters and the scholars as well. Also the last representative of the family (about whom we know from this catalogue, another Maulavi Sadruddin Ahmad d. 1905) was himself a scholar of some repute as numerous manuscripts in this collection bear out his comments and marginal notes, which show how attentively he was perusing these books. He has been credited to have written the biography of the Prophet, *Rawayat-e Mustafa* and has brought out a critical edition of Imam Nasai's *al-Khasais*. Last but not the least, as the publication of Allama Shibli Nomani's (d.1914) *Al-Farooq* (the history of the reign of the Second Caliph of the Rashidun period) led to some contestations among the

Muslim elite on the sectarian lines, perhaps Maulavi Sadruddin wrote *Al-Murtaza* in reply to this work (yet to be published).

Fortunately, for the scholars the holdings of this library were transferred to the National Library of Calcutta way back in 1905, but we know nothing about the fortunes of such an illustrious family who not only enjoyed a huge *maqfi* grant, but was also well connected during the *Nizamat* and early British period. What happened to the *madrasa* and the other institutions the family used to maintained out of the revenues from *Baees Hazari Waqf*? Perhaps a perusal of the family history (whether any of these survived?), government records and the files of *Inam* Commission could tell us about the colonial policies *Vis-a Vis* the institutions of higher learning during the pre-colonial times.

The *Baees Hazari* and *Shash Hazari waqf* at Pandua, Malda

The extensive and magnificent architectural remains of the earlier times in the present sub division of Pandua in the Malda district testify to the importance of the place during the pre-colonial times. It is the home of the massive structures of *Eklakhi Masjid*, *Sona Masjid* which are protected monuments of the State's Archeological Department. Pandua boasts of having two major Sufi institutions; the *dargah* of Shaikh Noor Qutbe Alam (d.1410) and his family, known as *Shash Hazari* Trust (popularly known as the *Choti Dargah*) and the *Chillahgah* of the legendary Shaikh Jalalud din Tabrizi (d.1225 A.D.), also known as the *Baees Hazari* Trust (popularly known as the *Badi Dargah*). It appears that these institutions were richly endowed by the rulers of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty, the Mughals and also during the *Nizamat* period. The extensive property enjoyed by the *mutawallis* of these *dargahs* continued till the 20th century. So much so, that during the final settlement operations of the district, the settlement officer M.O. Carter in 1928 has reported that the estate of the *Baees Hazari Dargah* was of an area of 16 and a half sq. miles, or approximately I lakh *bighas* of land. On the other hand, the estate of the *Shash Hazari* consisted of 47 villages in *pargana* Bhansari. The translated version of the two *Farmans* concerning with these grants are reproduced as Appendix A and B. A close reading of the text of the *Farmans* makes it very clear that these extensive grants were confirmed and continued by the later authorities (Mughal rulers and the Nazims of Bengal).

In the absence of the records from these institutions, any court proceedings of the litigations, revenue records or other connected histories, it is difficult to trace the gradual decline of these institutions and subsequent patronage for the education and other measures of welfare for the society. The Buhar family acted as the *mutawalli* of the trust of the *Baees Hazari* was

able to establish a magnificent library which now survives as an important section of the National Library of Calcutta. The family was also able to maintain a huge seminary in the form of *Madrassa e Jalalia*, which counted luminaries like Mullah Abdul Ali *Bahrul Uloom* among its professors and Maulana Shah Fakhrud din Dehlavi, the famous Chishti Sufi, among its pupils.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that pre-colonial Bengal displayed the aspects of the intellectual life which could put its scholarship 'at par' with the scholarship of the other parts of the Indian sub-continent. The pre-colonial state and society was quite liberal in supporting such institutions, which were engaged in the transmission of knowledge and carrying out the numerous activities, meeting the societal needs of the people. It will be interesting to look into the details of the colonial policies, actual administrative measures and the rift within the families and consequent litigations, all of which led to gradual irrelevance of their core activities. Needless to say, their memory still survives in the popular imagination of the region. Even now, thousands pay a visit to the annual celebrations at these *dargahs*. Now both these *dargah* complexes exist as the symbols of the shared past and composite culture in the region. Perhaps, the only remnant legacy from the rich and historical past!

The marginalization and the exclusion (and the ultimate demonization?) were the twin results of the Colonial policies on the Indo-Islamic scholastic elite which were nurturing the institutions of learning for the past hundreds of years. This disastrous impact not only ruined the institutions and the families associated with these centers: it had another far reaching impact, the rise of the radical tendencies' among the masses. At the initial stages, we noticed that the Faraizi and Wahabi movements derived their main strength and support base from the regions where the colonial administration marginalized the traditional elite and practically destroyed the earlier institutions of learning.

Appendix A

Translation of the Imperial *Farman* confirming the *pargana* of Shash Hazari by Shah Shuja, as a revenue-free property; reproduced from M O Carter's *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Malda: 1928-1935*: Auspicious imperial command has been received to the effect that by virtue of imperial command forty seven *mauzas* in *pargana* Bhansari and others in *Sarkar* Jinnatabad were granted as *Madad ma'ash* of Sharfuddin, son of Nizamuddin, and for the expenses of the sacred *Rauza* (shrine) of Makdum Hazrat Noor Qutbe Alam, and beggars and the indigent. Now, having appointed Shaikh Kabir the Sajjada Nashin of the said *parganas* as the *Madad ma'ash* of the aforesaid person and the children of Shaikh Noor Qutbe 'Alam and for the expenses of the shrine and the poor and indigent, from the beginning of the

kharif season of the year *taukoli*, so that having used the proceeds thereof as their means of livelihood along with the poor and indigent, they should keep themselves employed in praying for the empire.

It is required that the officials and servants and jagirdars and karories, both present and future of the said Sarkar, should do their best in perpetuating and maintaining this high command and should give up the said mauza as per schedule, and shall in no circumstance and in no way alter and change the same. They shall not interfere with the disputes, with records, to Zerat, orchards (illegible), kotwali, hazari, Sadi, Chowdhurai, salami, Dihdari, Shuqqa dari, Sabdai, jalkar, Banker, all civil rights, ghats, hats, Khash-kharid and Imperial (illegible). They should not demand a fresh sanad every year, and if they (illegible) kept anything, they should not give credence to the same, and considering insistency in this necessary and incumbent, they shall not act against and deviate from the command. Dated the 25th Shaban 1050 Hijri.

Schedule

In respect of *Madad ma'ash* of Shaikh Kabir and the children of Shaikh Noor Qutbe Alam and for the expense of the *Rauza* and the poor and indigent and according to the Memorandum, dated Tuesday, the 29th *Jamad us Sani* of the 23rd year of the auspicious reign in corresponding with the 1058 *Hijri* through the mission of His Excellency Mir Alaul Mulk and through the intelligence of my humble self, Dhanotar Das, is to the effect that in respect of Shaikh Kabir the *sajjadanashin* of the *Astana* of Makdum Hazrat Qutbe Alam, a command of his Imperial Highness Shah Shuja was received on the 21st *Jammad II* of the 22nd year of the sacred reign corresponding to 23rd (illegible) 1058 *Hijri* to the effect that in accordance with the imperial command forty seven villages in the *parganas* of Bhansari and others in the *Sarkar* of Jinnatabad had been fixed as the *Madad ma'ash* of Sharfuddin, son of Nizamuddin and for the expenses of the *rauza* and those of the poor: that whereas we have bestowed the *Sajjada* Nasheen of the said *Astana* now upon Shaikh Kabir, we have granted the *Madad ma'ash* of the said person and children of Qutbe Alam and for the expenses of the *rauza* and the poor, from the beginning of the *kharif* season of the *Taukoil* year, so that they may keep themselves engaged in praying for the victorious empire. Memorandum written according to the attestation of the personage who received the mission (Alaul Mulk)

Appendix B

Translation of the Imperial *Farman* by Emperor Shah Alam confirming the *pargana* of *Baees Hazari* as a revenue free property for religious and charitable purposes; reproduced from M O Carter's *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Malda 1928-1935*:

The Farman of Emperor Shah Alam of Delhi, dated 5th Muharram of the 13th Year of his reign : To the *Mutsuddis* of present and future important affairs, *Chowdhuries*, the *qanungoes*, tenants, cultivators, and all the inhabitants, the general public of the *waqf mahals* in *pargana Baees Hazari* take note. In obedience to the command of him who is the essence of the world, and which is bright as the sun's rays and who is exalted as the heavens, the *Tauliat* (trusteeship) of the sacred shrine of Qutub ul Aqtab Hazrat Makdoom Syed Jalal Tabrezi (may his secrets be sacred) together with the *waqf mahals* which from old times appertain to the sacred shrine aforesaid, is granted to the shelter of nobility, high in respectability and dignity Syed Sharfuddin. The said gentleman should, generation after generation and womb after womb, be the *Mutawalli* of the said Pandua shrine, and shall possess and occupy and appropriate all the *wakf mahals* together with all the jungles and rivers within the said *pargana*, and everything appertaining thereto . The high ministers, the great nobles and officials, *amils*, *mutassadis* having charge of the civil affairs, dignitaries of the political department and the present and future *Karories* should forever try to have this exalted command carried into effect and leave to him and his descendants, the administration of the said administration of the said *pargana* in *tauliat* forever and all times and considering him safe from change and alteration, they should not offer any interference with him on account of any kind of *peshkash*, such as *subadari*, *foujdari*, revenue, *sair*, expenses of the nature of *kilas*, *mahasilana*, *daroghona*, *shikar*, *begar*, *dah neme koka dammi sud doe* and *qanungoi* and should consider him absolutely free from all revenue and imperial demands and should not interfere there with. They shall not demand a fresh *sanad* every year and should consider any other person his co partner and co sharer and should consider him the fittest person and the permanent *mutawalli* of the holy shrine and shall not slight the good advice he may for their good. The duties of the said *mutawalli* are that he should spend the proceeds of the said *wakf mahals* in the performance of *Urs* anniversary ,the Illumination of the shrine and the repairs and building of the same and in giving to students according to his own discretion and should keep himself engaged in praying for the prosperity of this Government.

The said trustee is not competent to grant *Istimrari* or *Mokarari* or lease at a low *jama* to any person anything appertaining to the said *parganas*. They should consider this very pre emptory and act according to what is written above and should not act against this imperial command (Dated the 5th Muharram in the 13th *Julas* year of the reign).

Notes and References

¹Muhammad Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, (in two vols.), Imam Muhammad Ibn Sa'ud Islamic University, Riyadh, 1985.

²*ibid.*, Vol. II, see especially chapter xxxii (Literary activities) pp. 843-875; it is interesting to note that Bengali was also written in the Arabic scripts. See Plate No, X1, facing page 874, (for the reproduction of a manuscript of early Bengali in Arabic script).

³*ibid.*

⁴Mohar Ali, Muhammad, *History of the Muslim of Bengal*, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, p. 12-13.

⁵While examining some data related on Sufism and education in Awadh region, I have also looked at the Colonial policies *vis-a-vis* these institutions. I examined the fortunes of a large mystic establishment which was richly endowed by the Mughal rulers, the Nawab-wazirs of Awadh and by the local landed elites prior to the introduction of the British rule in the area. This particular institution having very strong mystic predilections enjoyed the reputation of being 'one of the best managed institutions' in the region. But once the kingdom of Awadh was annexed by the British in February 1856 the institution was subjected to the British laws, it had fallen to bad times and within a period of twenty years the same institution was pronounced to be most 'ill managed', 'debt-ridden' institution of the region. Gradually, through consistent interference and promoting the endless process of litigation between the members of the various branches of the family, the institution was reduced to a shadow of its former self. That was the fate of one of the most well managed Sufi institution with a commitment for the societal obligation in the pre-colonial period, which suffered tremendously under the colonial regime, See my, '*Madrassa and Khanqah, or Madrasa in Khanqah? Education and Sufi Establishment in northern India*', in *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity, Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11* in Jan Peter Hartung & Helmut Reifeld (eds.), Sage, Delhi 2006, pp.73-103.

⁶Some data relating to the colonial policies in relation to the Indo-Islamic learning has been used by me in 'Indo- Islamic Learning and the Colonial State' in *The Evolution of A Nation : Pre-colonial To Post-colonial (Essays in Memory of Professor R S Sharma)*, D N Jha(ed.), Manohar, Delhi, 2014, pp 429-49.

⁷Sana Aziz, in a recent study, 'Delhi College during 1824-1877: A study of disputes on the misuse of trust funds of Perso-Arabic Learning', presented at the 24th session of the U.P. History Congress, Varansi, 9-10th Nov. 2013, where she has examined some of these issues. It might look paradoxical that this Syed Hamid Ali is also mentioned as one of the spies for Major Hudson during 1857!

⁸By way of exception are, of course, Azizur Rahman Mallick's, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1857*, Bangla Academy Dhaka, 1977, which has taken some cognizance of the impact of the mass resumptions of the revenue grants during the Inam Commission, and its quite disastrous impact on the ultimate fortunes of the Muslims of Bengal, especially the *ashrafia*, who managed the institutions of learning and welfare.

⁹*ibid.*

¹⁰It should be added here that the data provided by Hunter was a huge embarrassment to the colonial authorities who always tried to belittle the importance of this data. However, this trend of questioning Hunter continues with the modern European scholars, who keep on

arguing that Hunter's writings should be examined in the light of 'adopting contemporary official caveats' However, in spite of such 'caveats' the data provided by Hunter is too important to be ignored as it is about the actual measures and the impact of these measures on the overall fortunes of the erstwhile governing class and the educational institutions they have maintained. See Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972,p.268.

¹¹*ibid.* p. 140.

¹²*ibid.* p. 141.

¹³The chapter suggestively titled as- 'The Wrongs of the Muhammadans under British Rule' between pp.108-162 provides the graphic details of the administrative lapses of the British officials; the policies the British govt. had adopted which ultimately resulted in the ruin of the Muslim elite in Bengal are discussed in a very loaded manner.

¹⁴*ibid.*

¹⁵*ibid.*,p. 131.

¹⁶*ibid.*

¹⁷*ibid.*

¹⁸*ibid.*, p. 137-8.

¹⁹*ibid.*,p. 139.

²⁰*ibid.*, p. 139.

²¹A British loyalist Sir Syed Ahmad Khan analyses the suspicious attitude of the Muslim elite of 19th century North India regarding the new institutions of learning. They saw them as 'centers of conversion to Christianity'. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, ed.by Francis Robinson, Karachi, OUP (Reprint of the 1873 edition).

²²I have not come across about the fortunes of this family in the large literature produce of the subject in the recent past. Only some details of *Baees hazari waqf* has been provided in Abid Ali's, *The Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, Calcutta 1931 (reprint. Calcutta 1986). But this doesn't have a single word on their family, library or *madrasa*. Some details of the family are available from the catalogue of *Persian Manuscripts in Buhar Collection, Volume I*, National Library Calcutta, 1982, pp. i-v. In the recent past Dr. Gitanjali Dey, (now Associate Professor of History, Laxmibai College for Women's, Delhi University) has submitted her M.Phil. Dissertation entitled, *Mystics, Masters and Rural Society: A Study of the two Sufi Dargahs in Pandua, West Bengal*, at the department of History, University of Delhi in 2005. Her visit to Paudua as well as to the District Collectorate, Malda has not proved very useful in locating the records for these huge '*maafi* estates'. Similarly, she was not able to trace the copy of the original *Farman* and other public records for the *shash hazari* estate from its present *mutawlli*.

²³Abdul Qaadir Rahmani, (trs.) *Nur-e Mutlaq :Sharah-e Kalimatul Haq*, Urdu Translation of the text by Syed Shah Abdul Rehman Mauhid Lucknawi, Fine Offset Works, Delhi, 2011. While describing the various journeys of the author, the translator mentions these facts as Shah Abdur Rehman himself has benefitted from the scholarship of Shah Fakhrud din Dehlavi, see pp.12-16).

Bhupen Hazarika: In the light of pan-cultural nationalism

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Abstract

Bhupen Hazarika, an artist from Assam, emerged as the conscience of the people. With an optimistic message he wanted to arouse the sleeping humanity to realize their role as the citizens of the world. Being a genius with extraordinary merit and caliber, he utilized the same for the welfare of the world as a whole. Being an uncompromising warrior he fought against injustice. A person with ethical responsibility he taught people how to be good. He was quite committed to solving social problems of any kind. His analysis of these problems showed great perception. He not only pursued his goals of life, but also attained them. He struggled in his whole life to live up to his cherished ideals. To realize these ideals he actively took part in politics. He adopted his art for people's sake, not for art's sake. He was especially inclined towards folk art. So he became a people's artist. His songs were marvelous, and they enthralled his audience. His films opened up new horizons. He developed the Assamese language with new vocabulary. In this way this great man of India has contributed a lot to the country and enriched people's culture to a great extent.

The Personal Life of Bhupen Hazarika

Bhupen Hazarika had to stay away from his wife Priyambada Patel as there were two separate worlds for them. His conjugal life was unfortunately torn apart. It so happened because Hazarika was less involved in his family. He had to leave his only son Tez with Priyambada. He was with them only for two or three years. The rest of his life he devoted to music, cinema and socio-political works. Sacrificing the family life Hazarika did all he could. But he felt that he could have done something more. But, we feel that what he has done for humanity and for his State is more than what he thought he could do something more. Hazarika could not make time to sum up his life and its activities. So we have had to gather facts from others. As you know different

biographers might explain his life in different ways. So a correct account of his personal life would be a far cry.

Another woman was there in Bhupen's life. She was Kalpana Lajmi. She was like his personal assistant. She was a staunch supporter of the artist. She gave sanctuary to this lonely man. She became Bhupen's confidant and mother figure. Her dedication to Hazarika's cause is well known. Losing his family, Hazarika has not lost so much, because the whole world has become his family. He has become the 'comrade' of every person in the world. He has become a world-man. He has become the friend and philosopher of every down-trodden person. He spent his life for the welfare of the human kind.

A socially committed person like him, Bhupen did not need the people of his blood relation. Society was his home, his family and his well-wisher. He dedicated his life to the members of the society he lived in. He was so a busy person that he had no time to think of his near and dear ones, his kith and kin.

Bhupen Hazarika's Personality

Hazarika was a very impressive person. On who came into his contact never forgot his companionship. His sensible nature made friend with anybody who came to meet him. He could draw absolute confidence from the people around him. His power to fascinate the people was unparalleled. Very few persons pose such a quality. His amiable nature made him likeable to all. People never felt boring talking or working with him. His personality amused everybody. Although, it was amiable, but was very strong and unimitable. Though he became very famous, his simplicity attracted the people to his side. He was a down to earth artist. Arrogance was unknown to him. People, therefore, thronged around him wherever he went.

Although he was familiar to all, yet for many he remained to be an enigmatic person, because he never revealed his inner personality. It was very difficult to discover the inner side of his personality. It was rather difficult to break the riddle of his life. It was like a nut which was very hard to break. Within him a volcano was burning, and it awaited eruption at any moment. This earned him a volcanic personality, although most often the volcano remained dormant. Hazarika had the capacity to understand the most difficult thing. He could unearth new facts of life and reality. His capability of doing everything he undertook to perform astonished everybody. He could express freely what he knew and understood. Hazarika liked to remain free. He was free to work, to think and to decide. He enjoyed complete freedom to do as

he liked. He gave freedom to others also, to his wife and his son. He allowed his wife to enjoy complete freedom.

The Conscience of the People

Hazarika stood as the conscience of the people. In this respect his role was like that of Krishna who guided Arjuna to fight the Kauravas. It was something like a fight against evil. Hazarika fought against social evil. A man of conscience can choose between what is right and what is wrong. Such a man is troubled mentally when he knows that he is doing something wrong. Hazarika was such a person and he had a strong sense of morality. He thought that to do a wrong thing meant to murder conscience. Conscience goes beyond self-love. While self-love is emotional, conscience is rational. It is a moral faculty. Philosopher Immanuel Kant calls it moral reason.¹ When moral faculty and rational faculty work together, one can become a man of conscience. In Hazarika both these faculties were synthesized. Hazarika tried to develop the conscience of the Assamese people. He tried to make the Assamese society conscientious. When men have higher moral ideal beyond their individual self, they can change and improve social environment.

A man of conscience can only be virtuous. A virtuous man does always what right is, because he knows the meaning of rightness. He always appeals to conscience. Hazarika was such a man. He always appealed to his conscience whatever he said or did. He knew what to do and what not to do in a particular situation. A man can become virtuous when he acquires wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Bhupen Hazarika believed that there could be no holidays of virtue, so he tried to make the whole of the Assamese society virtuous, so that it could be free from error and sin. When a man neglects his duty, he commits sin.

A Person with Optimism

Bhupen Hazarika thinks that evil is not without remedy. It can be removed and we can build a society without evil. He has drawn an excellent picture of the future in which all people – including high and low- will be able to live in peace and harmony. Hazarika thinks that it was possible to build the future individual with a personality qualified with value-based attributes. This can be done by evaluating the essence of man. He conceives of the right future with his aesthetic perceptions. Without being a scientific theoretician he has been to envisage the future of humanity.

Hazarika could envisage a future society as he could have a comprehensive study of the present society with its variegated social

phenomena in the process of their coherent development, of their upward becoming. He was very up and doing in ushering in a society bereft of social oppression and exploitation. The new pattern of life he envisaged would be the synthesis of all the contradictions prevailing in the social milieu. Hazarika has presented before us a very optimistic portrait of future society. He is of the opinion that with the inner contents of society that we have now may enable us to build a harmonious society.

His 'Saagar Sangamat'² is a famous song in which he says that the waves of the sea bring home immeasurable hopes. He expects that the conflicts will bring about new horizons of progress. Although he draws the pictures of the sorrowful world, yet he expects the smiles in the face of the downtrodden people. He is an incorrigible optimist. His approach is always positive. Negativity is not there in his dictionary. He has not seen emptiness, but fullness in everything. Along with thorns, he was also sees-flowers. He was wakeful until midnight not to see the year out, but the year in. Hazarika's optimism made him courageous. He was not daunted by any difficulty. He could face any hostile situation in order to establish a social pattern he deemed to be true. So he sang in order to express human life in forms of truth and beauty. Hazarika expected the end of the present conflicts and turmoil and a new era of peace, enlightenment and prosperity. He expected a form of new humanity to spring up with its new aspirations and happiness. He was, however, against the tyranny of any doctrinarism however progressive it might appear. According to Hazarika man has not fallen wholly, because man has not lacked wholly what is best in him. He believes that good will finally triumph over evil. Yes, society faces many problems, yet Hazarika is still optimistic of the future to come. He tried to infuse optimism in the hearts of the people in general. Hopefulness is the crux of Hazarika's personality. He was confident that something good would usher in a period of future society, as he took an optimistic view of events. He was very optimistic about the outcome of his works.

Every individual hankers after happiness. Everybody wants to avoid pain and suffering. Hazarika found happiness amidst people. He liked to live with them. He knew that nothing would come to an unprepared mind. When we have a desire for happiness, then only we may be happy.

A Genius Extraordinary

An extraordinary genius was born to us in the person of Bhupen Hazarika. He was so because he was capable of grasping the nettle. With this

grasping he created masterpieces of repute. Had he not been a genius, Hazarika would have not received so many admirers both at home and abroad. His genius is revealed in his lyrics, his songs and in his compositions. He had a marvelously developed brain and, therefore, had become a colossus in the musical field. We are amazed to see his capacity to perceive the details of life and reality. He had the genius to furnish answers to the intricate questions raised by the foremost minds of the world.

The genius of Bhupen Hazarika was very comprehensive and versatile. His unparalleled caliber has bestowed him with outstanding achievements in the field of art and literature. Hazarika was a genius, because he did what he must. He did what was impossible for other people. He had exceptionally great creative ability. At the same time of being a genius, he was also hard working. He had the capability of thinking and saying the right thing. He understood the genius of the Assamese language, because he himself was a genius. So he could exert strong influence on the people. He possessed a versatile mind. His versatility knew no bounds.

Bhupen Hazarika was at once the product and agent of the historical process. He was the representative of the social forces. He contributed to these forces and helped to change the shape of the society. His contributions have a great value. His lyrics and songs have, therefore, great demand among the people. We, the Assamese people, feel great today due to his contributions. His great deeds have uplifted the culture and language of the Assamese people to a great extent.

A Non-Violent Fighter

Bhupen Hazarika never chose the path of blood stained violence. He always fought against the aggressive spirit of nationalism and imperialism. He thought that these two forms of system might be the menace which would harm the democratic minded people. He seemed to support Radhakrishnan's view on nationalism, 'nationalism is a collective form of selfishness'.³ In his opinion the whole of humanity is the Nation. Hazarika repelled national narrowmindedness. He seemed to assert, 'Vasudhaiva kutumbakam'.⁴ Nationalism often leads to war. He was also against imperialism, because he understood that an imperial regime cannot tolerate criticism. It abhors critical intellectual outlooks. He was in favor of the liquidation of imperialism, because he thought that imperialists were the fools and detested parasites. Hazarika was against brute force, because it was barbaric. His fight was against the

unholy fire fed with human sacrifice. He derided the despotic intimidation of any kind. He wanted such a world in which terrible scenes of human massacre would not be present. He abhorred death and destruction of any type. Destruction leads to death. He, therefore, cautioned the people to guard themselves against the man with the gun.

Yes, Hazarika fought, but not with physical force. He was a soldier, but not with the gun. His fight was against poverty, against oppression, against ignorance. He felt that these fights were worth fighting, because poverty, oppression and ignorance were not trivial matters. He fought against poverty, because one who was poor could not be free. He also fought against crime. One of the Shakespearian characters in the *Romeo and Juliet* says, 'My poverty, but not will, consents'.⁵ It signifies the gravity of the situation of poverty. As poverty is the mother of all crimes, so Hazarika was at daggers drawn with poverty. Most people are often deprived of employment, food, clothes, shelter etc. Poor people are to fight for them. These were some of the reasons for which Hazarika fought against poverty. He also fought for freedom and human rights. He was a real fighter. He, however, did not fight with sword in hand, but with his invulnerable pen. What he wrote with his pen became his weapon of war. He used his pen as a dynamite which could level the mountains and melt the continents into seas. He did not remain simply as an idle votary, but a relentless fighter. He rose against the barbarous exploiters who were the most degenerate people in his eyes. He did not allow the humanity to be their prey. These monsters like persons were the enemy of the people, he believed.

A progressive minded man cannot remain at rest by seeing the atrocities committed on innocent people. Hazarika, therefore, could not desist himself from writing lyrics feeling for those innocent people who suffered from the atrocities committed by the exploiters. Fighting with non-violent means is necessary to solve social, political and economic problems. Violence is abhorred, because it leads to physical harm, death and destruction. Even Karl Marx, who is very often regarded as a violent monger of war and fighting, once said, 'An uprising would be a folly where peaceful agitation could lead to the achievement of the goal set in a quicker and surer way'.⁶ He again said, 'we must announce to the governments: we know that you are an armed force directed against the proletarians; we shall act in a peaceful way against you wherever we find it possible for us, and with arms in hand when it becomes necessary'.⁷ So only when necessity demands, he speaks of violence. Violent

methods cannot solve a problem permanently; and such methods often verge on terrorism. Violence may be our heritage, as the Geetaa speaks so; yet we cannot accept it. War is also not good, because it is nothing but mass murder. If we wish we can escape it. War is responsible for misery and disaster. It proves cruelty on the part of man. Oppressive and greedy people only engage in war like activities. Suffering will continue as long as war persists. So we will have to eradicate the causes that breed passion and greed, which give rise to war. Hazarika tried to root out the causes of these evil sentiments. He showed ruthless disregard to these sentiments. War is a bloody projection. We should desist ourselves from such a projection. Those who create war should be condemned in unequivocal terms. Although Hazarika wanted to wash out the tears of mankind; he did so without violence.

Why has man not been able to stop violence? Even religions have failed to do so. J. Krishnamurti, one of the greatest philosophers of India, said, 'no religion has stopped war; all of them, on the contrary, have encouraged it, blessed the weapons of war; they have divided the people'.⁸ The sentiment of Hazarika went against violence and war. Yes he thought for the proletariats; but he never incited them to engage in violent methods to ameliorate their miserable conditions.

Good and Evil: How Bhupen Hazarika Sees Them

Bhupen Hazarika admits the existence of evil in the world, as the Buddha admits the existence of suffering and misery. But evil or misery has a remedy. It can be removed and we can build a society without evil and suffering if we desire so. We can envisage such a world in which all people-irrespective of high and low- will be able to live in peace and harmony. Our duty is to evaluate the essence of man, so that he can develop such a personality that can appreciate human values. We cannot remain without expecting a bright future of man. With ethical and aesthetic sense man can make the world good and beautiful. It is possible to establish a coherent and harmonious world if we so desire. Conflicts, oppressions, injustice etc. bring about incoherence and disharmony. Unless we can synthesize them, it is impossible to usher in a congenial and harmonized society. Hazarika knew the grammar of establishing such a society, and he tried for it.

Can't we not expect the best in all things ? Can't good will prevail upon evil? Hazarika could expect so, as he was full of optimism for the future despite the evils prevailing in the present societies. The people of Assam desired for optimism and still desire so. So they expected something from

him, as if he was their messiah. His song ‘Saagar Sangamat’ carried us the message of optimism. Yes there are problems in present societies, yet we may entertain the sense of optimism in us; and Hazarika has infused in us such a sense in us. He never had a tendency to believe that the worst would happen in future. He never depressed us with a pessimistic message. We cannot say the evil will triumph over good for all time to come. He debarred us from taking a pessimistic view of the world.

Bhupen Hazarika’s Commitment to Social Problems

Bhupen Hazarika was not apathetic to social problems. He was not indifferent to any damned problem. He faced the problems boldly. Social reform was his motto. He however spoke of revolution; but not romantic nor violent. To solve social problems social consciousness is necessary. Hazarika was endowed with such a consciousness. With the help of this consciousness he could actively participate in solving social problems, and he knew how to solve them. To gain an idea of social problems we must have social consciousness. Social consciousness reflects social being. Social being means social life in general. Those who are conscious of social problems can go ahead of other people who have no interest in them. We can think of promoting social development only when we can solve social problems. Those who keenly think of social development have progressive ideas like those of Hazarika. Persons having progressive ideas can guide the society. To guide one needs to know social psychology, and also to know public opinion.

Man’s awareness of his social being endows him with social consciousness which ultimately helps to form progressive ideas. Hazarika was a committed person. He was at the same time a committed lyricist, and a devoted singer. After Shankardeva, Jyotiprasad and Bisnu Rabha people of Assam waited for another committed cultural leader, and they found it in Bhupen Hazarika. We have really received a dedicated cultural leader. Hazarika could understand the taste of the crowd. He made his literature and music have social function. He also made them people oriented. He understood that art was made for society. As fish live in water, man also lives in society. Fish cannot live out of water; similarly man also cannot live without society, as he is a social animal. Art is not made for art’s sake; it is made for society’s sake. It must fulfil the social needs. Hazarika was christened in these values, and therefore, he became a socially committed artist.

Hazarika's Perceptions

Bhupen Hazarika's perceptions were clear; they were not hazy and vague. What he perceived, other men did not. He perceived that in his days art was demoralized and was at the same time decaying. Was it so because of a dying culture? Definitely so; and therefore he wanted to do something. Rather he did more than what people wanted. With his creative energy he did whatever he wanted to do. He felt that something was to be done in such a moribund society like ours. He again felt that something was wrong. He wanted to say, 'There is something wrong in the State of Assam' as Shakespeare said, 'there is something rotten in the state of Denmark'⁹, *i.e.*, something was wrong with the contemporary culture. Was it really rotting? Yes, Hazarika felt so. The culture of his time became diseased, and Hazarika tried to diagnose the disease. He felt that the Devil was coming to devour the age-old culture of the State. Was it under the sway of corona virus? Hazarika not only perceived the things, but also he surveyed them. He wanted to find out the source of the infection. He also wanted to survey the mental climate of the epoch. He questioned: Why did men allow themselves to be swayed away by uncluture? Where lied the error? Had men become buyers and sellers of culture? Had culture become a selling and buying commodity? Had culture become a bourgeois one?

Hazarika lived in a culturally crisis ridden society. People were at cross roads. What to do and what not do they did not know. The age-old beliefs began to be shattered; they began to evaporate. The evil invaded the temple of art and culture. The believers had become non-believers. People began to feel disappointed. Illusions had become dearer to reality.

Under the above circumstances Hazarika had to run the ship on the rocks. With an analytical mind he began to examine things. With the unity of thinking he analyzed the situations with a critical mind. He was not however dreaming, but really assessed the things in their true nature. He plunged into the arena with a deep thought. So he seemed to say, 'let us first understand the things and then interpret; and then only we will be able to change the world'. With a philosophic mind he began to perceive things. His intensive perceptions definitely rewarded him. He went to the houses of hungry men, and observed their plight.

Perhaps Hazarika could see the things through his third eye. So he could go to the depth of the problems. With the vigilance of his third eye he could view the things in their true sense. In perceiving he kept something

before his mind. In observing he applied all his sense organs: eyes, nose, ears, skin and tongue. He used all his faculties: visual, auditory, olfactory, tactual and gustatory. His observations were well regulated, and he observed with a definite purpose and end in view. He did not suffer from blurred vision. Nothing could escape from his minute vision, because he had great breadth of the same. To speak in a nut-shell he was a visionary leader. He could foresee the things well ahead of time.

Hazarika's perceptions were tinged with intuition. Intuition means knowing by being. So while perceiving he could penetrate deep into the being of an event. Intuition is an inner faculty to which everything is revealed. Intuition however sometimes becomes super sensory. It may be regarded as the perception of the inward eye. Hazarika seemed to possess this eye. We the common people are not endowed with such an eye. So with an attitude of inward looking he observed everything. The perception of an artist is different from that of a common man. An artist perceives things in images. His perceptions are aesthetic and evaluative. So an artist does not simply describe things, but evaluate them. Being an artist Hazarika also did so.

Hazarika's Goal

Bhupen Hazarika's goal was to mobilize public consciousness and opinion against abominable state of affairs, against liberty threatened, against violence by blind forces and for freedom of press, freedom of opinion and freedom of thought. He never remained silent at the atrocity perpetrated against man. He was not in favor of allowing terror let loose on the innocent people, shocking misery to reign. He was against power-worship. He wanted to rescue people from abject obedience of slavery. He encouraged them to help establish democracy, to bring succor of civilization and culture, to resist the splitting of the people into different classes. The purpose of his art was to make people aware of their weaknesses that prevented them from carrying out the cause of their emancipation. Hazarika wanted to raise the general cultural standard of the masses. So dissemination of culture among the people was one of his goals. He undertook artistic activities with serious purpose. Dilettantism was unknown to him. It was alien to his nature. The main purpose of Hazarika was to establish a cultured society. He understood that only people noble in thought could establish such a society. A society becomes cultured when people can enjoy freedom. Enslavement of any type is a curse on the people. A welfare society was his dream.

Hazarika's Ideals

Hazarika had paramount ideals, and to arrive at these ideals he followed the foot prints of certain persons of his like. They were Salil Chaudhury, Balraj Sahni and Assamese personages like Bhabananda Dutta, Raghunath Chaudhary, Hemanga Biswas, Anandiram Das, Jyotiprasad Agarwala, Bisnu Rabha etc. who were involved in IPTA. He entertained the ideals of these persons in order to review and recreate people's art. He followed literally the motto of IPTA: 'People's theatre stars the people'. Hazarika followed humanistic ideals. He worked for universal brotherhood and for the establishment of an egalitarian society, a society believing in equal rights of all, equal opportunities for everybody.

Fight Against Injustice

Hazarika was a vehement fighter against injustice. His diatribe against injustice is well known. He could earmark the injustice meted out by the privileged section of society. Generally these people monopolize the canon of taste and culture, as they think, these things belong to them only. He never supported slavery of any type and obscurantism. He deemed social inequality as an injustice. The conditions that make man unequal are to be eradicated, he felt so. No doubt there are biological and intellectual inequalities, but thereby it does not mean that human beings should be divided into classes. He was against social stratification; because stratification would lead to complexes like superiority or inferiority. He was against Indian varnaashrama dharma. All these things bring in injustice and, therefore, it is necessary to fight against such practices; and Bhupen Hazarika did it.

His Participation in Politics

Bhupen Hazarika was not only an artist, but also a politician. He did so, so that cliques could not seize upon the legislature. In his opinion politics cannot be somebody's trade. Of course he was not a professional politician, nor was it his vocation. His motive was to educate people politically, so that they could liberate themselves from the huge legs of the colossus of exploitation. People suffer because there is no skilled political leadership. Hazarika took part in politics because he felt politics encircled man like the coils of a snake. We are all under the sway of politics, whether we want it or not. 'Politics', as V.G. Afanasayev says, 'is expressed and makes up the *main trend* in the activities of a state'.¹⁰ Art cannot be aloof from politics, and if it keeps itself aloof then it will be simply the sycophantic capitulation.

For a short while Hazarika took part in active politics. He was elected to the State Assembly in 1967 from Nowboicha Constituency, and took seat in opposition benches. He argued in the Assembly for the establishment of a film studio in the memory of Jyotiprasad Agarwala. This was concretized when Jyoti Chitran was founded in Guwahati. He formed a political party and named it Janaganatrantrik Asom of which Gaurishankar Bhattacharyya was made President. He himself became its Vice-President. He contested Assembly election in 1971 with the ticket of this party, but was defeated. In 2004 he contested the Parliamentary election with the Bharatiya Janata Party ticket, but was again defeated. He did it at the request of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He could not deny his request because Vajpayee was a friend of him.

Hazarika was a democrat. He was a vigilant person and understood the maxim, 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'. Citizens are not 'subjects', but are the 'masters' of society. He was in favor of the minority people living as second grade citizen, and so he sang, 'Samkhyaa laghu heno sampradaayar...niraapatta how'¹¹ i.e. 'Let me be the safeguard of the minority people'. He said, to serve sweet cakes to them was not enough. With a socialistic spirit he sang these songs. He denounced the fascist attitudes of the capitalist forces. Hazarika believed in liberty, equality and justice. According to him political freedom is not enough, people need economic freedom also. In this respect Hazarika has some Marxist leaning. Zia Haq writes in this context, 'in his own words, he was a Marxist'. Hazarika advised Haq to be a Marxist but not a Communist'.¹²

Art and Its Aims

While going to create art an artist has to struggle with the reality he faces - either natural or social. An artist lives in a society and the social problems touch him. He cannot remain indifferent to these problems. According to Hazarika it is incumbent on an artist to take social or other view-points into account and incorporate them into the creative process. Hazarika's artistic spirit has mainly reflected in his songs and he has sung admirably for a new dawn saving the culture of the nation. Bhupen Hazarika has used his art to challenge our traditional cultural beliefs. He has introduced his listeners to an entirely new perspective. His art has provided an atmosphere of a peaceful national life that people crave, people who are unable to create it by themselves.

Cultural and national uplift should be the aim of art. An artist cannot live in society and be free from it. He should be critical of existing social order. To usher in a new era we should demolish old pillars. Bhupen Hazarika

has been not only an artist, but also an astute thinker. He could think of a future society, what it should be. He was a friend of the working people, and thought and worked for their development. He tried to emancipate people from wage-slavery.

Bhupen Hazarika could develop such a style that could strike at the heart of the people. He could express his opinions through this style and they did not remain hidden. His appreciators could make high demand on his works. He did not allow himself to be subordinated by local narrowness; but thought of the whole nation and, of course, of the whole world at large. He entertained a skeptical attitude towards religious superstitions. He dared mocking religious men for their unwanted superstitions. He was against both feudalism and capitalism.

Art for People's Sake

Bhupen Hazarika did not believe in the maxim 'Art for art's sake', rather in 'Art for people's sake'. It is true that art is an autonomous subject; but its autonomy exists in and through its social conditioning, because art is a form of social consciousness. An artist must go with the people; he must go forward with them; but thereby he cannot negate his personal imagination, because if he does so his art would become infertile.

It will be wrong to think that man's aesthetic emotions are connected only with beauty. Although its main function is aesthetic, it has other functions also. Art is necessary to help the people's front. In Hazarika's songs we hear millions of voices crying 'halt' to the forces of reaction and anti-people slogans.

Hazarika used art to make people go forward. In it there is a message how they can make preparation to walk in the path of progress and national culture building. He understood that art was the best means to get closer to the people. As an artist, therefore, he did not keep himself aloof from them. He always kept contact with the social environment. He merged the lofty ideals of art with everyday concern. As philosophy's relation to social reality is intellectual, similarly art's relation is aesthetic. It is not enough to explain social and national life, it has also to reproduce it. While philosophy is necessary to understand society and its culture, art is necessary to reproduce the same.

An artist is a friend of the people. Being an artist Bhupen Hazarika was also so. He was so popular that he could lead the people towards profound thoughts and profound study. He knew what was to be done. With a socialistic spirit he wanted to usher in a new age in Assam. Not only of the Assamese

people alone, he stepped forward to the artistic development of humanity as a whole.

Bhupen's Attitude to Art

Bhupen Hazarika felt disgusted with manorial art. He did not create art for the empty amusement for idle people without work, for the chosen few. In his attitude we do not find the sense of pride and the praise of prurience. Being a Ph.D. in mass communication, Bhupen Hazarika regarded art to be the lent method of communication. Through art the truth of life and reality could be communicated very easily to the people. Its significance increases where it becomes more communicative.

Hazarika's art is not an idle pastime; it has a message of transforming the world in the line with the needs and requirements of the common people. Through art he wanted to mobilize the achievements of human culture in its universal import surpassing national and regional levels. There is a universal message in his art. With a prophetic zeal he wanted to build a new world. His progressive art encouraged the people to struggle against the exploiters. He was against divesting working people of their struggle. He wanted to assimilate the best from the progressive art of the past and adjust them to the new historical conditions. He looked to all progressive traditions of national and world culture. He spoke against the reactionary survivals of the past traditions. He flayed implacably everything that hindered the onward movement of society. He inspired the people to fresh exploits in the construction of a classless society, in the portrayal of all that is new and in the exposition of all that hinders the progress of society. A non-progressive and reactionary art is as good as dead. It simply becomes a thing for luxury. As Bhupen's art was progressive, it has cast an indelible impact on the musico-literary scenario of Assam.

Bhupen Hazarika as an Artist

Bhupen Hazarika had an artistic mind and saw in everything the beauty and its unique nature. He did not view things in their mercantile value. He, therefore, was able to form things in accordance with the laws of beauty. Any type of art, according to Christopher Caudwell, can be a condition for the development of society. He says, '... Art adapts the psyche to the environment and is therefore one of the conditions of the development of society'.¹³ It has the capacity to remold environment, and therefore, it becomes socially valuable. It can show people to the delights and pleasures of life. It makes life more interesting.

Hazarika understood this role of art and he acted accordingly. A culture can survive only when it contains art. Hazarika's universal significance as an artist and his universal fame as a thinker reflect the universal significance of human life and its finer points. He tried to draw the picture of this life through his innumerable lyrics and songs written and sung for more than half a century. He has combined his art with lofty ideals of life. His songs are replete with deft delineation and imagery of life. So his art is great, not petty and dull. No doubt from all aspects Hazarika is a successful artist. He has achieved many things during his very life time. He has risen to such heights of artistic power that his works could claim to occupy a place among the greatest in the world of literature and music. He has enchanted the people and recharged them for the rest of their life. He has awakened them and instructed them to face life boldly. Therefore he is known to even an infinitesimal minority.

Hazarika's art is realistic. He takes art as a means for social transformation. To make it so he tries to make art effective. He makes it extremely strong so that it can meet any type of challenge coming before it. His whole attempt lies in the artistic presentation of truth. His art is pregnant with philosophical truth and ethical value. Yet it has not lost its aesthetic value. Without truth art cannot be great. With his artistic creations Bhupen Hazarika has been able to convey with remarkable force the moods of the masses that are oppressed by the present socio-political system. He has very successfully revealed their sentiments and feelings of anger. His heated, passionate and sharp themes have aroused people's sentiment of protest and an urge for liberation from socio-economic bondage.

His art reflects the ardent imagination through which he conveys at ease the horror felt by the masses. His art is pregnant with philosophical truth. So his art has been able to go beyond the framework of his time. His uses of imagery, choice of word and metaphorical language have made his creations lucid and palatable. These qualities are attested by the apt expression, accurate composition with appropriate definition. He is so skillful in his expression that he cannot but attract audience. Sometimes however we find in his lyrics exaggerations and hyperboles; but these are necessary to exert especial effects on the people's minds.

The romantic elements that we find in his lyrics give a presentiment of changes to come. Their tenor and mood create a pleasant atmosphere and people enjoy them to their heart's content. He has enriched his lyrics with new expressive means making broad use of allegory. He has been opposed to

stunts and free from mannerism. He denounces sheer formalism. He has used forms so as to help listeners understand the content. He has avoided the form that makes his audience difficult to understand the content. But thereby he has not encouraged primitive taste. So that his audience might have lofty aesthetic feeling he took care of it.

Hazarika has created for him an aesthetic reality. An aesthetic reality is nothing but an affective reality; not a perceptual reality. Such a reality can rise above perceptual arena, not however without it. He has reflected in his art the characteristic conditions of his era. Music is also an art, and as we know, the word 'music' comes from 'muse'. When the word is used in plural number it means nine goddesses of Greek or Roman mythology. These nine goddesses are the daughters of Zeus or Jupiter. They protect and encourage poetry, music, dance and other forms of art. Bhupen Hazarika's 'muse' never forsook him until his death.

Art is produced in the struggle between phantasy and reality. There is always a conflict between phantasy and reality. Hazarika has opted for reality. Phantasy has no place in his artistic creations. His songs are not only of the cuckoo or nightingale, but are also of falcon. Being an artist he has a different mentality, a mentality of an artist. He is not a stranger to the cause of pan-cultural nationalism and internationalism. He has dedicated his talent to the service of both national and international culture.

Bhupen Hazarika and Folk Art

Folk art is ordinarily equated with tribal art. He loves folk art very much; but that does not mean that he is exclusively dealing with it avoiding other forms of art. It is true that he has collected materials for artistic productions from folk art and folk music. His songs are full of ethnographic descriptions in local parlances and dialects. We know that there is an intimate relation between folk art and folklore. Folklore is inherent in the life of the folk. Hazarika has tried to understand the folk around him. Again we know that folklore and folk art depend on popular beliefs. In folk art the mental and spiritual life of the people is reflected. Fairy tales are also included in folk art. Fairy tales are full of myths. Rituals are also involved. In these tales imagination plays a great role.

Literary art forms a greater part of folk art. Bhupen Hazarika is interested in this kind of literary art. Folk songs are also included in it. Folk songs may belong to narrative ballads. These songs are full of lyrics that are concerned with love. Work songs are also included here. Assam is mainly an

agricultural land. So lyrics concerning agricultural works are most prevalent here.

Folk literature has been orally transmitted to us. Ballads belong to folk literature. Ballads generally accompany dancing. They consist in collective refrains. They are composed of short stanzas. They narrate popular stories, so they are songs that tell a story. Stories are told through songs. They are adapted to singing. These impersonal songs have no individual composer. Many songs of Hazarika follow the theme of folk literature including ballads. He has no prejudice against folk literature.

People's Artist Bhupen Hazarika

Bhupen Hazarika is a people's artist. The term 'people' is known as 'gana' in Assamese. So he is generally known in Assamese as 'gana shilpee'. 'Gana' includes peasants and workers. Bhupen has sung for these people. He has a soft corner for tribal people also. He has, therefore, wrenched art from the grip of the bourgeoisie. The common people constitute the base of the social pyramid. He wanted to uplift these down trodden and despised people and bring them to the forefront. These people are stricken with poverty; so existence of poverty steals freedom not only from the have-nots but paradoxically also from the haves. Hazarika could understand these things and, therefore, he spoke against poverty.

Special Qualities of His Songs

Bhupen Hazarika had a deep resonant voice. It was fit for singing. When he sang the whole atmosphere became resonant with the vibrating sounds of his songs. His voice had a throbbing and tremulous effect on those who heard it. Both the sounds and the lyrics had the astounding affects. It was so because his lyrics reflected deep involvement, wide observation and maturity. He explored unconventional harmonies in his compositions. Apart from the tonal quality of his songs, he expressed a deep concern for culture both national and international.

Hazarika's lyrics have fine literary quality. In them a superb blend of art and thought, heart and intellect take place. His music has an elevating and sublimating effect on man. Of course his songs do not depict the serene contemplation of individualistic isolation but the din and bustle of social life. He has not kept himself aloof from the public. He has not kept himself confined to his home when the whole society was burning with the gravest problems. He was not like Nero who was playing his lute when the whole of Rome was burning.

Apart from being pregnant with deep ideas, his songs could present delightful melodies. He was a great joy to listen to. The theme and melody developed in his compositions were enjoyable. People obtained mental nourishment from his songs.

We have many progressive elements in his songs. The song 'Natun natun saah'¹⁴(ever new courage) composed in 1956 bears a progressive message. In it he declares, 'I will fill up the swamps of the land; I will bring flood to the dead rivers; I will remove the darkness of thousands of years; I will make the old dance with joy. In another song 'Mor marame maram bicaari yaay'¹⁵ (My love goes in search of love) he welcomes flood of the rainy season which ushers in a new age. He promises to make the earth heaven. Along with the flood, the storm also brings the message of a new age. His 'He dolaa, he dolaa'¹⁶ (O' palanquin, O' palanquin) was composed in 1953. The palanquin is a symbol of exploitation of the feudal age. He is sympathetic with the people who carry the palanquin where the big people travel with their aristocratic arrogance. His song 'Suraat magan bhayaal raati'¹⁷ (the dreaded night amused in wine) wants to bring down the stars and the moon so that they cannot be the witness of the sufferings of the people. The moon seems to laugh at these sufferings. His 'Maanuhe Manuhar Baabe'¹⁸ is marvelous song with a humanistic spirit.

Hazarika has written 'Agni yugar phiringati mai'¹⁹ (I am the spark of the age of fire) in his very early childhood in 1939. In it he himself regards as the spark of the age of fire. He promises to build a classless society, to bring back the wealth of the working people, to exterminate exploiters with swords made of the bones of man. In this song a spirit of romantic revolutionism is seen which he has abandoned later. It is very natural for a teenager (He was only 13 years old when he wrote the song). The new society he envisaged in the song we have many progressive ideas. 'Morning shows the day' – this maxim in his case was materialized afterwards. In the new society he envisaged, those who trade in the name of religion would not be tolerated, the arrogance of big nations would be lost, there would be no untouchability, no caste difference, and equality will rule everywhere. A song 'Sowarani kuwaliye'¹⁹ (the mist of memory) has also progressive elements. In this lyric he says that the old bids goodbye to the new. The old is wiped out by the storm of the new. He does not want to look back to the old. In his opinion we should learn from the past, but should not try to bring the past to the present. His 'Saagar Sangamat'²⁰ is also a famous song. He has been swimming in the

sea and has not become fatigued. His restless mind is still restless like the waves of the sea. Although the waves bring new hope, yet his mind is restless. A song namely 'Haaraadhan-Rangmanarkathaa' (The story of Haaraadhan and Rangman) was composed in 1960 at the time of language disturbance in Assam. This song was a duet and is a symbol of the unity of the Assamese and the Bengalis.

A lyrical poet par excellence, he is a singer of many moods. Certain moods even run counter to one another. His imagination breaks into hundreds of enchanted songs. His songs are not away from the high road of development of world culture. They are not simply emotional outbursts in support of some abstract desire for freedom. They are reasoned compositions supporting real concrete freedom. They give us the key to the treasure-trove of mystery.

Bhupen Hazarika has highlighted the problems of the modern culture through his songs. So his name has become dear to the people in general. The modern world suffers from the hard moments of problems. He has drawn big pictures of big problems.

The Message of Hazarika's Films

Bhupen Hazarika shot his films in a naturalistic way. He avoided the use of sophisticated editing. He did not simply record the events as they took place. He depicted with his films the contemporary tragedy of the people. He expressed through his films the hypocrisy and manipulation of the upper classes. The fascist atrocities were also depicted very vividly. He showed as to how fascism ruthlessly suppressed the freedom of expression. Hazarika's films bear the evidence of his keen observation of life's problems. This observation has imparted him a sense of class-consciousness, a truthful reproduction of typical characters under typical circumstances. The episodes of his films have been arranged in their narrative aspects.

Bhupen Hazarika was one of the most acclaimed directors. He was successful in his first venture as a director in 'Eraa baatar sur' (The Theme of the Road Trodden). It was released in 1956. He also directed the first classical film in Assamese 'Shakuntalaa' in 1961. He received national award for music as a music director of 'Caameli Memsab' (Madam Caameli) in 1975. All these achievements and others earned him the Dada Saheb Phalke Award in 1992. Hazarika's films give us an indication as to how we can have a new meaning of life. The very few cinemas he has edited prove his ability to handle difficult matters. While editing films he could trace out the new aspects

of society emerging every day. He had a mind to renovate, reorient and restructure everything.

Bhupen Hazarika and Assamese Language

Bhupen Hazarika has breathed new life to Assamese language and has imparted it a new standard previously unknown. With his not less than one thousand lyrics he has made this possible. Hazarika understands the meaning of the language spoken by common people. He has enriched the Assamese language with his multifarious vocabulary picked up from them. He has imported to Assamese language many tribal and Mongoloid words and phrases.

Hazarika has created a new style of Assamese language. He has been mainly a poet, and a poet expresses himself through language. His language is different from those who write simply to convey factual information. His poetry is a musical one. Through this musical language he has made Assamese language lively. His language is essentially bound up with his imagination. He has made the definite choice of words for his lyrical expressions. His language has tallied with his creative imagination. He has been a man always haunted by suitable words. He has played games with playful words of his choice. He has important things to say, and has said them with these melodious words. He has hung around words and listened attentively what people say and talk. With his magical words he has infused desirable emotions in man. He has made his lyrics rhythmic by importing the rhythmic elements from the language spoken by common people. Sometimes his words with paradoxical meanings bewilder us. So to understand his lyrics, we should have subtle reading between the lines. Unless we discover the ironical overtones, we cannot understand them properly. It is dangerous to make easy generalization of his paradoxical implications.

Bhupen Hazarika and His Audience

To appreciate an artist the audience must be literate enough; and an artist too has a duty to educate the audience. To appreciate music one should have musical ears; but the musician must also have the capacity to win over the hearts of the audience. Bhupen Hazarika had this capacity and he enraptured the audience with his splendid expressions; so he could expect a steady response from the listening audience. When a man came out of the hall where there was a musical performance by Hazarika could not forget it for a long time, nay for his whole life. It is not true that Hazarika could only enthrall the audience, but he could transmit profound thoughts to them through

his songs. He could arouse in them the serious desire to understand what the messages of his songs were. He could imbibe in them an aesthetic sense of high order. Hazarika was not only a singer, but also a psychologist. He could read the minds of his audience, and could understand their receptive psyche. His vigor, his gravity, his obstinate realism have made an explicit appeal to the deep instinct of the audience. His good sense of humor charmed the people who came into his contact. He appealed them not only emotionally but also intellectually.

A Great Critic and a Satirist

Hazarika was not only a literary critic, but a social critic also. He denounced those who posed themselves as masters and also those people who behaved in a superior or domineering way to others. He was critical of the present way of life in which discrimination was rampant. He was disturbed by the social evils like chaos, famines, exploitation etc. He thought that current social practices were responsible for these evils. Hazarika's socio-political protests edged with satire. He rebuked those who posed as the guardians of society, and who always tried to save their own skin. Most of his songs reflect his satirical ideas. By using metaphors and symbols he launched into a fierce polemic against social and political evils. He used satire as a corrective of human vice. In so doing he did not however entertain any malice. With his satire he presented ironic commentaries on human conditions. It was full of indignation, not however of contempt. He made fun of wicked behavior of man. His ironic remarks amused the people.

Conclusion

Bhupen Hazarika had to pass his time through trial and error, through pain and suffering. He even cared for odds and sods, bits and pieces of various sorts. He was very critical of the present order of things and events. Many questions arose in his mind as to the causes of these unwanted events and tried to find out the causes. For this he had to study the nature of social events and thought of the solutions of the problems given rise to by these events. He was keenly involved in social events and was not an escapist who would sit on an ivory tower without any concern. He was amongst the people, and loitered here and there enquiring into their conditions and problems. He opted for mass culture. He took culture in its universal spirit although he was not apathetic to national problems. He wanted to ascribe national (not however nationalistic) import to the universal spirit of culture. We cannot confine the universal phenomena to nationalist instincts alone, although we cannot avoid national

questions and problems. Hazarika did not want to confine his thoughts and actions to a particular place alone; he wanted to carry his message to the world at large. We cannot deny the universal message of culture, although it has regional characters. Hazarika understood all these problems, and therefore, worked accordingly. So to-day we remember him to be a great man.

In recognition of his life-long activities he earned Bharat Ratna posthumously in 2019. Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award presented by Indian Government. It is conferred on those who give society excellent service. Hazarika was selected for it in recognition of his performances of the highest order, of achievements in art and literature. Hazarika is the only recipient of this award from Assam. So, Assamese people are proud of him.

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- ¹⁴*BHR*, 'Natun Natun Saah', p. 1029.
- ¹⁵*BHR*, 'Mor Marame Maram Bicaari Yaay', p. 1008.
- ¹⁶*BHR*, 'He Dolaa He Dolaa', p. 1016.
- ¹⁷*BHR*, 'Suraat Magan Bhayaal Raati', p. 1091.
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From the *Wang Chhu* to the *Dudhkumar*: A History of the *Raidak* River *

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Abstract

Rivers are the essential organs of human civilization. Politics, economy, society, culture, religious beliefs, transports, national power and of course the 'national identity' of any state are closely linked with its river system. So rivers are considered to be 'sacred' and 'mother of civilization'. Naturally, rivers have received considerable attention of rulers and state organs, political thinkers, economists, religious preachers, laureates, musicians, naturalists and general people all across the world. Historians are also equally concerned about the role of rivers in the evolution of human civilization. How does a river influence its people? Why is a 'river' essential for societal evolution? How is a river being polluted for fulfilling the demands of the people of its basin? These questions on the rivers of South Asia have been addressed in this paper in the context of a small but a transnational river called the Raidak. After originating from Bhutan as the Wang Chhu, the Raidak is flowing through West Bengal (India) and enters to Bangladesh and eventually forms the Dudhkumar [a prominent river of Bangladesh]. This river is an essential part of the political, economic, religious, social and cultural lives of the people of its basin. This paper seeks to determine the location of this river in the national, regional and local lives of the people of Bhutan, India and Bangladesh with a broader perspective of 'history of rivers'.

The Raidak from the Wang Chhu to the Dudhkumar-Brahmaputra Confluence

The Raidak is a transnational river. It has its origin in the Himalayas in Bhutan. In the origin, it is called the Wang Chhu. ¹ The Wang Chhu and the Paro Chhu meets near Thimpu and together form the Raidak or Thimpu Chhu.

The Wang Chhu has received two more tributaries just above the Paro Dzong: Ta Chhu (from the east) and the Ha Chhu (from the west). The Wang Chhu is flowing from Thimpu to Chukha district as a very rapid stream.

The Wang Chhu enters to Alipurduar district of West Bengal (India) through Bhutanghat as a river called the Raidak. The Raidak is divided into two branches at Tiyamari (Raidak Forest): Raidak-I and Raidak-II. The Anglo-Bhutan Treaty (1774) and the Map of James Rennell (1742-1830) had depicted the Raidak I as the Saraidanga River.² However, it is now called the Raidak-I which is flowing through Alipurduar and Cooch Behar. Raidak-II, on the other hand, was referred as Mainagaon Nadi in the old records.³ It is flowing through two districts of West Bengal and empties its course to the Sankosh River at Baxirhat of Cooch Behar district.

The journey of the *Raidak-I* from the Raidak Forest is very much interesting. From Tiyamari to the Chhipra Beat, the *Raidak I* has been recorded as the *Dhowlajhora*. The *Dhowlajhora* meets a branch of the *Raidak I* at Chhipra Beat. It has also received another river at this point called the *Ultanadi*. So the collective courses of the *Dhowlajhora*, *Raidak I* and the *Ultanadi* have transformed into the proper *Raidak I*.

‘The *Dhowlajhora-Raidak I*’ from the Raidak Forest to the Chhipra Beat is full with deep forest. The Raidak Range of the Buxa Tiger Reserve (BTR) is located here. The BTR was created in 1983 comprising the entire forest area of erstwhile Buxa Tiger Division and some portions of Alipurduar Division. Later (in 1986), the Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary was constituted over 314.52 km² of the reserve forest. After 5 years, another 54.47 km² forest area has been added to the BTR (in 1992). The BTR is now extending from the Indo-Bhutan border in Alipurduar in the north to the National Highway 31C (NH31C) in the south and its eastern boundary touches the West Bengal–Assam border.

‘The Raidak Forest Range’ is one of the notable parts of the Buxa Tiger Reserve. ‘The Raidak Forest Range’ was established in 1900. Considering its importance, a rest house was constructed in 1909. Gradually it emerged as a hunting ground (of wild animals) for the British officials of India. Sir John Anderson [Governor of Bengal 1932-1937 CE] had visited this forest for hunting in 1933. His hunting camp was set up at Tiyamari. Since then, the Raidak Range as well as the Buxa Tiger Reserve region has appeared as a forest of attraction. On the other hand, the neighborhood of the *Raidak I* [from Tiyamari to the National Highway 31 C] has emerged the

suitable ground for tea plantation. Since the late 19th century to till date, several tea gardens have flourished in this region.

Next part of the *Raidak-I* [i.e. from Chhipra Beat to the Raidak I Bridge at NH31C] is fairly rich in terms of bio-diversity. Apart from the forest office at the Chhipra Beat, there is another Beat Office of the Raidak Range called Nararthali Beat. The left bank of the *Raidak-I* (i.e., eastern side) with deep forest is the host of different kinds of wild birds and animals, insects and wild plants as well as planted gardens of valuable of trees [including *teak*, *shal*, *sishu*, *gamars*], grass and medicinal herbs.⁴ In the middle of this forest, there is a very large floodplain lake (called *Bara Beel*). It is connected with the *Raidak I* and the *Ultanadi* through small channels. This lake is famous for availability of fish of large varieties as well as other aquatic animals.⁵

Photo 1A: A common stock (*Bak*) and an Indian Cormorant (*Pan Kauri*) at the *Raidak*; and 1B: An advertisement of the Buxa Tiger Project at Nararthali Beat.



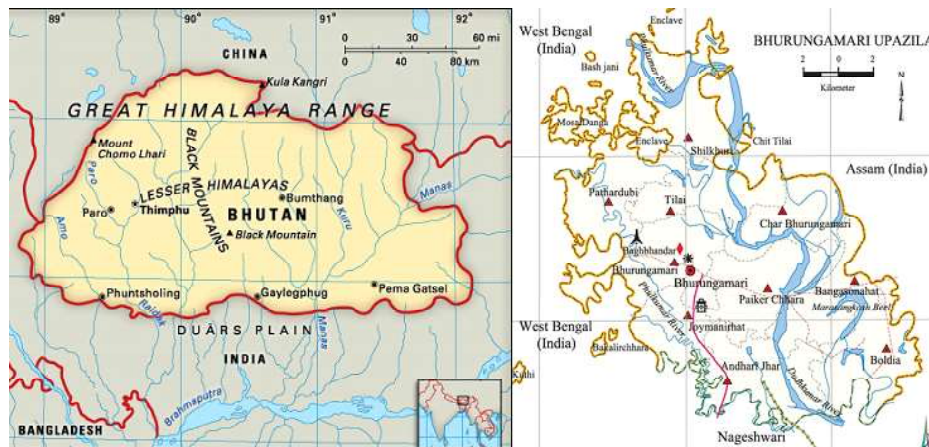
Source: Debasish Bhattacharya and Rup Kumar Barman.

There are two forest villages in that part of the *Raidak*—(a) Chhipra Beat Rabha Basti (village) at Chhipra Beat on the left bank of the *Dhowlajhora*, and (b) *Madasia* Basti (village) at the left bank of the *Raidak I*. The Rabha Basti was set up with the beginning of forest management

system by the colonial government. The Rabhas have hailed from the Mongoloid tribes of northeast India. They have main demographic concentration in Assam and Assam-Meghalaya border. In Alipurduar and Cooch Behar districts of West Bengal, there are a few more Rabha villages outside the forest.⁶

However, there is no forest in the right bank of the *Raidak-I* from the Chhipra Beat to the Raidak I Bridge at NH31C. Rather, there are a few villages like Chhoto Chowkir Bos, Baro Chowkir Bos, Bakla School Danga, Chhipra and Purba Chepani [from north to south direction]. These villages have a unique feature in their population composition [mixed population with natives and migrants from East Bengal/East Pakistan/Bangladesh]. Being a border district [between Bangladesh and India in West Bengal sector] Jalpaiguri district was seriously affected by the partition of Bengal of 1947. Like other parts of Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar subdivision (now district) including these villages had received the ‘forced’ and ‘voluntary migrants’ in large scale. Even, the East Bengalese have outnumbered the local people of these villages [particularly in Chhoto Chowkir Bos].⁷

Map 1: The Course of the *Raidak* from *Wang Chhu* (Bhutan) to the *Dudhkumar* (Bangladesh).



However, the native communities particularly the Meches (Bodos) and the Nepalese of these villages have still maintained their domination [in terms of educational attainment and engagement in the government

sector]. The Meches of this village have been living since the ancient past. Their early recorded history has been found in a Persian text of the thirteenth century. With the formation of the Koch Kingdom [C1500 to 1949], the Meches of Baro Chowkir Bos as well as other neighboring villages had become prominent. Along with the neighboring community called the Koches (now Rajbanshis), the Meches of Baro Chowkir Bos and Mahakalguri became active partner in the formation of the Koch kingdom. The surnames of the Meches (of these villages) like 'Karjee' and 'Mondal' are still bearing the testimony of their relationship with the formation of the Koch kingdom.⁸

The *Raidak-I* from the Raidak I Bridge [as located at Purba Chepani at 31C] and Raidak Railway Bridge [under the NF Railway] is flowing towards south. After crossing certain villages of both sides of its basin [like Dakshin Parokata, Dakshin Kamakshyaguri and Chikliguri in the left bank and Dakshin Chepani, Kshapsadanga, Bhatibari, etc. in the right side] of Alipurduar district, the *Raidak I* enters to Tufanganj subdivision of Cooch Behar district. The *Raidak I* [with prosperous villages in its both

Photo 2: The Raidak I Bridge at NH 31C.



Source: Rup Kumar Barman (2019).

From the NH31 to the Indo-Bangladesh border at Balabhut (Balabhut Bridge), the *Raidak I* is comparatively bigger in size and navigable almost throughout the year. It is because of its navigability, Tufanganj has emerged as a prosperous town since the late 16th century. It was actually during the time of the Koch King Naranarayan (1540-1587 CE), Phulbari or Tufanganj

got a strategic importance. The Koch military general named Chilarai [also called Sukladhvaj, brother of the king] had founded a fort in Phulbari [called the Chilarai Kote or Chilarai Garh] having its connection with the *Raidak I*. Incidentally under his commandship (1540-1571CE), the Koch kingdom emerged as a significant political power in the Sub-Himalayan Bengal and Assam extending from *Baranadi* in the east to the *Tista-Karotoya* in the west. Though after the death of king Naranarayan, the Koch kingdom was divided into two parts-(a) Koch kingdom proper (Cooch Behar/ Koch Bihar/ Nija Bihar), and (b) Koch-Hazo; but Phulbari continued to be an important center for the kingdom till its last days (1949). However, after the withdrawal of the British rule from India (1947), the Cooch Behar State had joined the Union of India and temporarily became a province (1949-August-December). On 1st January 1950; this State was merged with West Bengal as a district.

From Tufanganj, the *Raidak I* is flowing south-wards with densely populated villages in its both sides [like Nangalgram, Mechkoka, Begarkhata, Saurkhata, Boyalimohan Pratham Khanda, Debgram, etc. under Tufanganj Community Development Bloc- II and Kherbari, Jhaukuthi and Satrasal under the territorial limits of Assam in the left bank ; and Kamat Phulbari, Chamta-Baraitala, Dwiparpar, Balabhut and Char Balabhut in the right bank]. The Balabhut Bridge over the *Raidak* at Balabhut is very much significant for maintaining a link between West Bengal and Assam near the Indo-Bangladesh border. Again just below this bridge, the *Raidak* has received a tributary called the *Gadadhar River*.⁹ The joint flow of the *Raidak* and the *Gadadhar* falls in the *Torsha* and form the *Dudhkumar* at Char Balabhut village at the Indo-Bangladesh border.

The *Dudhkumar* is a very big river at the Indo-Bangladesh border. There are a few Indian villages in its left [like Char Balabhut (West Bengal), Jhaukuthi Jhapushabari (Part-III, Part-V), and Ramraikuthi and Satrasal (Dhubri district of Assam)]. At Jhaukuthi village, the *Dudhkumar* enters to Bangladesh. There is an extended tract of the river bed of the *Dudhkumar* in the right side called 'Chhit Tilai'. Chhit Tilai was recorded as an enclave (*chhitmahal*) of Bangladesh in India without population. It has been officially transferred to India in 2015 by the *Land Boundary Agreement (2015)*.¹⁰ From Char Balabhut (India) to the confluence of the *Dudhkumar* and the *Brahmaputra* near Nunkhaowa village [Nageswari, Bhurangamari, Kurigram, Bangladesh], the *Dudhkumar* is flowing steadily having densely populated

villages in its both sides. Among the villages of eastern side (left bank), the main villages of Bangladesh are Sonahat and Mahiganj. In the right bank, the villages are Kamataguri, Pachimchhat, Naleya, Char Naleya, Andharijhar, Rangalirbash, Ratanpur, Tutul, etc. Bangladesh has initiated the construction of 650 m long Sonahat Bridge over the Dudhkumar in 2019 at Sonahat.

Economy of the *Raidak* River

Like other prominent rivers of Bhutan, India and Bangladesh, the *Raidak* has its own economic features. It is perhaps the 'life line' of the national economy of Bhutan. As a hill stream with around 2,121 meters height from the sea level (6,959 ft.), the *Wang Chhu* is a source of water, boulders and stones. These natural resources have immense value in the Bhutanese economy. Just a few kilometers from the confluence of the *Ha Chhu* and the *Wang Chhu*, Bhutan has constructed a hydro-electric project (with India's financial and technical assistance) called the Chukha Hydro-Electric Project. Bhutan had started the project in 1974 and completed in 1986-88 with a capacity 336 MW hydro-electric generation. This project has marked the beginning of electrification in Bhutan with surplus capacity.¹¹ Bhutan had started the construction of another 'run of the river type hydro-electric project in 1997 at Tala, just 3km downwards from the Chukha Project.¹² It is generating electricity since 2007 with a capacity of 1020MW.

The power projects of Chukha district at the *Wang Chhu* have fostered the economic development of the district. Chukha (with its head quarter at Phuntsholing) having border with India has emerged as the commercial and financial capital of Bhutan. So Chukha as a district (*Dzongkhag*) with some of the old industrial companies of Bhutan [like Bhutan Carbide Chemical Limited (BCCL), Bhutan Boards Products Limited (BBPL) etc.] has been generating the most of the GDP of this 'land locked Himalayan country'.

The *Raidak* in the Indo-Bhutan border at Bhutanghat with bifurcated streams is a prominent river with natural resources like boulders, sands, forest and biodiversity. From the Raidak Forest to the Raidak I Bridge, the *Raidak I* has a unique economic feature with tea gardens. The growth of tea gardens (under the colonial rule) at the *Raidak I-Dhowlajhora-Chuniajhora-Turturi-Raidak II* drainage system [such as Raidak Tea Estate, Kartika Tea Estate, Dhowlajhora Tea Estate, Kohinoor Tea Estate, Turturi Tea Estate, Chunia Jhora Tea Estate, Hatipota Tea Estate, Sankosh Tea Garden, Kumargram Tea Garden, Phaskhaoya Tea Estate, Rohimabad Tea Garden, Newland Tea Estate, etc.] had attracted the low price workers (called *coolies*) in large scale from

the Chhotonagpur region. The workers of Santal, Munda, Malpaharia, Mahali, Lohar, Birhar, Asura, and other tribal communities (Scheduled Tribes of present day) were brought in this region for clearing the jungles and developing the tea plantation. Along with Assam and the tea gardens of other districts of West Bengal, the tea garden labourers have gradually emerged as notable tribal communities. Apart from the tea-gardens, many tribal communities [after their migration to Alipurduar] have established their settlement in the normal villages after retiring from the works of the tea gardens.¹³ So they gradually outnumbered the local tribal communities of the region [like the Meches (Bodos), Rabhas, Totos, etc.]. In fact, Alipurduar district [previously Alipurduar Sub-division of Jalpaiguri district] has emerged as a tribal-dominated region because of the tea garden labourers. Thus the Assembly Constituencies (like Kalchini and Kumargram) and the Parliamentary Constituency (like Alipurduar) have been transformed into 'Reserved' constituencies for the Scheduled Tribes.¹⁴

The tea-garden workers have gradually emerged as a traditional working force. Under the colonial rule, they were kept isolated from the general political society. The working class movement of Bengal could not touch them. Their life was confined within the boundary of gardens. They had to follow the whistle of the tea garden factories from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. Like other tea gardens of Assam and Bengal, the workers of the tea-gardens of the *Raidak I-Dhowlajhora -Raidak II* system could not escape from the curse of the traditional tribal society. Drinking of country liquor (called *Hadia*), witch hunting (*daini* system) and addiction to alcohol were/are major constraints for the upward mobility of their society.

However, the gardeners [the decedents of the *coolies*, *babus* (official and clerical staffs) and *sahebs* (managers)] had /have the opportunity of elementary and school education in the nearby schools mainly established by the Christian Missionaries. There were/are a few notable high schools near the tea-gardens of the *Raidak I* and the *Raidak II* river belt. Among such schools —Mahakalguri Mission High School (1921), Santalpur Mission High School (1962), Barobisha High School (1951), Majidkhana High School (1931), Kamakshyaguri High School (1948), Khoyardanga Jalaneswari High School (1960), Daldali High School (1968), were/are very much important. In the context of education of the *Raidak I-Dhowlajhora-Raidak II* system, Mahakalguri Mission High School was a matter of attraction till 1990 for all people of that locality including the gardeners.

There was/is a peculiar tradition of ‘morning school’ on every Friday in Mahakalguri Mission School and Santalpur Mission High School. It was basically introduced for the weekly *haat* at Samuktala. In fact, Samuktala was/is a very prominent market of this locality. Till the end of the twentieth century, the gardeners used to visit this market on every Friday for procuring their daily needs. The buses loaded with all kinds of marketable products used to come from nearby gardens in that weekly *haat*.

The *Friday-Haat* of Samuktala as well as other neighbouring weekly markets of the *Raidak-I-Raidak II* belt of the Kumargram Community Development Block [like Kamakshyaguri, Barobisha, Daldali, Khoyardanga, Kumargram, etc.] are very much significant for the economic lives of the people (both tribal and non-tribal) of the region. The non-tribal villagers of the locality are dependent on these markets for selling their agricultural products and buying the commodities of their needs [including chemical fertilizers, groceries, medicines, clothes and the items of daily use]. It is interesting to note that the non-tribal villagers particularly the migrants from East Bengal had introduced the advance techniques of agricultural production in the region since the late 1970s. Extensive use of chemical fertilizers, high yielding seeds, pesticides and ‘diesel-engine operated irrigation’ had contributed to the growth of an advanced agricultural practices in the Raidak-I and the Raidak II region. To some extent, the native communities of the region including the Meches, Nepalese, Rabhas and the Rajbanshis have also induced by this trend and gradually adopted this new technology.

However, the Rabhas of Chhipra Beat are mainly dependent on forest works of the Forest Department (of the Government of West Bengal). They are employed as forest guards as well as casual labourers. They also had/ have knowledge on traditional and shifting cultivation. However, since a couple of decades, they have adopted the modern agricultural practices from the nearby (non-tribal) villages especially from Chhoto Chowkir Bos. The dwellers of the Madasia Basti [the descendants of migrants from Jharkhand/ Bihar (Chhoto Nagpur region) who did not get job in the tea-gardens] were dependent on procuring food from the nearby forest, fishing, collecting fire woods till 2000. They were/are also working as hired agricultural labourers in the nearby non-tribal villages.¹⁵ However, at present they have developed themselves as settled agriculturists with cattle rearing.

Cattle rearing was/is another major occupation or a subsidiary part of economic lives of the villagers of the Raidak basin [at least villagers nearby the Raidak Forest including Chhoto Chowkir Bos, Baro Chowkir Bos, Chhipra,

Madhya Nararthali, Purba Nararthali, Paschim Nararthali, Khoyardanga, Dobasree, Marakhata, Daldali, Kumargram, etc.]. In fact, it was/is a tradition of the villagers to utilize the forest as the source of grazing. This trend was/is, however, not free from constraints. The cattle of the villagers often fell as pray of tigers. The young calves (of cows and buffalos) were/are most common targets of the tigers of the Buxa Tiger Reserve forest. The villagers of both Chhoto Chowkir Bos and Baro Chowkir Bos [with other forest villages and the nearby of villages of forest area of the Duars region] do frequently face the attacks of elephants. The elephants of the *Raidak* River frequently come out from jungle and destroy the crops [mainly rice, maize, wheat and potato] properties and lives of the villagers.¹⁶

Though the *Raidak* appears as a very big river during the rainy season, it becomes dry in the winter. So inspite of being a host of certain uncommon fish, fishing has not developed as a regular mode of occupation in the upstream at least till the Raidak I Bridge (in the course of the *Raidak I*) and Raidak II Bridge (over the course of the *Raidak II*) at Barobisha. So the Malos of Chhoto Chowkir Bos of the *Raidak I* basin inspite of hailed from the traditional fishermen were/are not interested on fishing. They along with the Namasudras and the Yoginaths of this village are wholly dependent on agricultural practices with modern techniques and technologies.

Photo 3: Fishermen and nets at the *Raidak II*.



Source: Shri Debasish Bhattacharya (Kamakshyaguri). Location: Barobisha.

However, there are certain other villages of the fishermen communities [like the Malos and the Jeliya Kaibartyas] from Chhoto Chowkir Bos to Balabhut who catch fish in the *Raidak* as well as other rivers of the region. The Malos of Paschim Nararthali, Dakshin Kamakshyaguri (Lalpool), Nangalgram and Dwiparpur villages have considerable presence in fishing

[especially in the *Raidak I* river in West Bengal part]. Many of them catch fish with different kinds of nets (like *Khepla Jal*, *Thela Jal*, *Khara Jal*, *Fashi Jal*, etc.). Even in the recent years, many non-fishermen communities [like the Rajbanshis, Kayasthas, Namasudras, and Biharis] are catching fish professionally in the *Raidak II* with different kinds of nets. The tribal communities of the *Raidak* basin in the Indian part [like the Rabhas, Meches and Madasias)] also catch fish for their own consumption. They do use bamboo-made implements called *jhakoi*. However, their catches are not marketable products. They often dry up their catch in traditional way for consuming throughout the year.

However, fishing has developed as a regular sustainable occupation of the *Raidak- Dudhkumar* in Bangladesh part. In fact, the *Dudhkumar* from Balabhut / Char Balabhut to Nunkhaoya [Kurigram district where it merges with the *Brahmaputra*] is a potential supplier of fish. Hence, fishing has developed as an important source of income particularly at the confluence of the *Dudhkumar* and the *Brahmaputra*.

In the recent years, the exploitation of stones and sands from the riverbed of the *Raidak* [from the *Raidak* forest to the *Raidak I* Bridge], has appeared a common trend. In the construction of the metal roads and highways, sand and stones of the *Raidak* are being used in large scales. The trend has also developed a localized economy. During our fieldwork, we have noticed the existing stone crushing units in the locality between the *Raidak I* and the *Raidak II* particularly at Tufanganj CD Block and Kumargram CD Block.

Cultural Lives of the Raidak River Basin

River has always been an important cultural marker of people all across the world. It is especially significant in the South Asian context. Here, religious, linguistic, ethnic and caste communities are closely attached with the rivers of their locality. In Bhutan, the *Kagyu* sect of the Tibetan Buddhism (Lamaism) has built up several monasteries (*Gumpha*) and *Dzongs* (monastery and fortress) at the *Wang Chhu* basin. Two Dzongs (like Rinpung Dzong and Tashichho Dzong) of the *Wang Chhu* basin are considerably influential among the followers of the Tibetan Buddhism of Drukpa lineage. The Rinpung Dzong (Paro Dzong) was originally built in the fifteenth century by Drung Drung Gyal. It was known as Hengrel Dzong. However, it was rebuilt in 1644-1646 and came to be known as Rinpung Dzong.¹⁷ The monastic body and the administrative offices of Paro district are located here.

The Tashichho Dzong is located in the northern edge of Thimpu. This Dzong was referred as Tassisudon in the old records of the British-Indian administrative reports.¹⁸ The original Dzong was established in 1216 CE by Lama Gyaa Lhanapa. It was rebuilt in 1641 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and renamed as Tashichho Dzong. However, the Dzong was damaged several times due to fire and earthquake. The present Dzong has been built by King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, the third king (1952-1972) of the Wangchuk dynasty. The Tashichho Dzong is the summer capital of Bhutan for a long time. It is also the seat of the Royal Government of Bhutan. There are several temples, chapels and shrines within this Dzong. The Dzongs at the *Wang Chhu* and its tributaries are closely linked the national religious and cultural lives of Bhutan. It is perhaps almost impossible for a Bhutanese of Kagyu sect to think about the religious life without the *Wang Chhu*.

Like Bhutan, the courses of the *Raidak I* and *Raidak II* are flowing with certain specific cultural traditions. It is because of geographical and cultural proximity with Bhutan, there are a few Buddhist families in the *Raidak-I-Dhowlajhora-Ultanadi* basin. However, the Christianity has appeared as a prominent religion among the indigenous people especially among the tea gardens workers. The Christians missionaries [mainly Scottish Missionaries] had showed their interest to convert the tribal communities of Santalpur [named after the Santal migrants from Bihar and Jharkhand at this region (both in the tea gardens and as new settlers outside the gardens)]¹⁹ Mahakalguri and Khoyardanga into Christianity since the late nineteenth century. Foundation of schools in Mahakalguri (in 1921) and Santalpur Christian Colony (1895) with several churches became a turning point for conversion of the Meches and other tribal communities. So most of the Meches of Baro Chowkir Bos, Mahakalguri, Uttar Mahakalguri and other nearby villages [located near the *Raidak* basin] have embraced Christianity.²⁰ On the other hand, the Santalpur Mission had converted the tea-garden workers. Along with the tea-tribes and the Meches, it has also been found that the Rabhas of Chhipra Beat Rabha Basti (a forest village) have embraced Christianity in the recent years (21st century).

Growth of Christianity in the *Raidak I* basin has appeared as a marker of cultural change more precisely as a tool for educational development of the people of the region [from the Raidak Forest to NH31]. Along with translation of the *Bible* into the Mech (Bodo) language, the Meches have also given up many traditions of their community. With their conversion to Christianity, they have discarded many evil practices and customs from their

society. On the other hand, they have come into contact with the western knowledge system.

However, the villages of the *Raidak I* basin from Chhoto Chowkir Bos to the border of India are full with the people of East Bengal origin who are the followers of Hinduism. The East Bengali migrants [after establishing their settlement in the post -1947 periods] have introduced several new cultural traditions relating to the rivers [worshiping the *Raidak* as the mother (*Ganga*)] as well as the traditions of worshiping *Kartik*, *Manasha*, *Swaraswati*, *Durga*, *Kali*, *Shani* and *Mangal Chandi* deity with East Bengali style.

Apart from the East Bengali Hindus, the Rajbanshis [both of East Bengali origin and native origin] are following Hinduism with several cultural features including language, religion and folk festivals. Among such cultural traditions, worshiping *Mahadeva* (Lord *Shiva*), *Bishahari* (Goddess *Manasha*/ Snake worship), *Bhandani* and many other local deities and spirits (called *Masan Deo*) with certain agriculture-based festivals are very much significant. At the same time, they often attempt to pacify certain spirits considered to be responsible for outbreak of different diseases. However, the Rajbanshis of the *Raidak* river basin have given up many of their own traditions due to the cultural influence of the contemporary trends.

The *Raidak* River has also experienced an alternative mode of religious life particularly with the introduction of the Vaishnavism by Sankardeva (1449-1568). Sankardeva had a prestigious position in the Koch Kingdom as a religious preacher. Along with his disciples, Srimanta Sankardeva had composed several Vaishnava texts in the vernacular. They had also founded several Vaishnava *Satras* (monasteries) in different places of the Koch kingdom. And the *Raidak* basin had emerged as the center of Vaishnava *satras*. In this context, we must mention the name of the Haripur Satra (Haripur, Nangalgram, Tufanganj), Ramraikuthi and Satrasal (located in Assam near the Indo-Bangladesh Border).

Haripur Satra was founded by Hari Madhavdeva (1489-1596), a notable disciple of Sankardeva. It is still in existence near the old course of the *Raidak* at Tufanganj (see photo 3A). It had a significant role in the conversion of the Koch and Rabha tribes of the locality into Vaishnavism.²¹ Other Vaishnava *Satras* of the *Raidak* basin have also immense influence among the followers of Sankardeva.

Another noticeable feature of religious life of the Hindus of the *Raidak* basin is the growth of the followers of the organized mission like the ISKCON [International Society for Krishna Consciousness founded in 1966 in USA by

AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada]. The preachers of *Krishnabhakti* (devotion to Lord Krishna) with certain religious practices have encouraged the villagers of Chhoto Chowkir Bos to embrace the religious features of the ISKCON since the 1980s. However, we have also noticed the popularity of certain other religious sects in the *Raidak* basin of the Indian part including Ramkrishna Mission, traditional Vaishnavism (with Vaishnava temples), followers of Anukul Thakur (Satsang Cult based on Deoghar, Jharkhand), and folk traditions of animism. However, the most common festival of the people of the *Raidak* river basin (from Raidak Forest to Balabhut) is the Durga festival in the autumn. The *Raidak* is used as the water source for emersion of the Durga and other idols.

Photo: 3A: Haripur Satra (Haripur Tufanganj, Cooch Behar), and 7B: Satsang Kendra (Barobisha, Alipurduar)



Source: Rup Kumar Barman.

Like the Buddhists, Christians and Hindus, the Muslims have also established their settlements along the course of the river from the *Raidak* to the *Dudhkumar*. In fact, first historical records of the conversion of the tribals of this region (particularly the Koches and Meches) has been recorded in the thirteenth century Persian text like *Tabaqat –I-Nashiri* of Minhasuddin .²² This text has recorded the conversion of a Mech chief of Mahakalguri named Ali Mech into the Islam. In fact, the descendants of the early Muslims of this locality are still living in Chepani, Dakshin Mahakalguri and Majidkhana (Masjitkhana) villages in the western side of the *Raidak* River. However, there are many other villages with Native Muslim population [mainly the converts from the Koches and Rajbanshis Alipurduar district of

West Bengal to Kurigram district of Bangladesh. The native Muslims [also called the Rajbanshi Muslims] are culturally and linguistically very much close to the Hindu Rajbanshis. However, the Islamic traditions have considerable presence on them. In the Bangladesh part of the *Raidak* or *Dudhkumar* [mainly under Bhurungamari sub-district (Total Population: 1,97,070; Muslims 1,93,636, Hindus 3390, Buddhists 10 and others 34)], the people of its bank are mostly the Rajbanshi Muslims. In this part, the Muslims are following the Islamic culture with certain localized traditions.

Linguistic Panorama of the *Raidak* Basin

Language is the heart of any community, region or a nation. The course of *Raidak* has experienced the origin and evolution of different regional and national languages (from Bhutan to Bangladesh). In the context of Bhutan, the Dzongkha is the national language. The constitution of Bhutan (as adopted on 18th July 2008) has accepted *Dzongkha* as the national language, knowledge on which is obligatory for the Bhutanese citizens.²³ Thimpu, Paro, Samtse and Chukha districts of Bhutan (on which the *Wang Chhu* and its tributaries are flowing) have also the speakers of other linguistic communities. Among them, the *Lhotshamphas* (Nepali-speaking Bhutanese) are prominent.²⁴ The *Lhotshamphas* had emerged in the late 20th century as a dominant linguistic ethnic group in the southern districts of Bhutan by their own efforts. Being threatened by the growing influence of the *Lhotshamphas* and their political aspirations, Bhutan has adopted a national cultural policy called *Driglam Namza* in 1989.²⁵ The *Citizenship Act of 1985* and the other state policies of Bhutan have eventually produced a chunk of ‘stateless people’ [who were expelled from Bhutan]. A large number of the *Lhotshamphas* took shelter in the refugee camps in Nepal and India and come to be designated as ‘*Bhupalese*’.²⁶ Through a constant struggle the Bhupalese had survived in the UNHCR-sponsored camps and eventually opted for the ‘third country settlements’. However, the *Lhotshamphas* as legitimate citizens of Bhutan with profound knowledge on the national culture and language are living in Bhutan in the course of the *Raidak* (*Wang Chhu*) river.

There are a few more linguistic communities in the *Wang Chhu* basin like the speakers of the Lhop language. The Lhop people (also called Doya) speak this language. Their population in Bhutan is roughly 2500-3000. The Lhops have similarity with the Lepchas as well as the Totos [of Alipurduar districts of West Bengal].

Like the course of Bhutan of the *Raidak*, the people of the Indian course of this river have wide variation in terms of linguistics features. Several

linguistic communities have established their settlement in the *Raidak I-Dhowlajhora-Raidak II* basin. Among them, the Nepalese, Meches (Bodos), Rabhas, etc. are the native people of this region. However, the labourers of the tea-gardens have hailed from different linguistics groups including Santali, Mundari, Malpaharias, etc. Their languages with other communities have led to the growth of a common *lingua franca* in the Duars tea-gardens called the *Sadri* or *Madasia*. The *Sadri* is now gradually emerging as an acceptable dialect in the Duars region.

On the other hand, the Meches of Uttar Mahakalguri, Mahakalguri and Baro Chowkir Bos, Khoyardanga, Daldali, Marakhata, Paschim Nararthali, Dakshin Nararthali, Uttar Kamakshyaguri, Telipara and other villages in between the *Raidak I* and the *Raidak II*; have shown their utmost interest on the growth of their language and literature since the 1980s. The All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) and Bodo Sahitya Sabha of Assam have considerable influence on the Meches of Alipurduar district. In fact, an Annual National Conference of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha was held in Mahakalguri Mission High School in 1984.²⁷

Like the Meches, the Nepalese of the *Raidak I* and *Raidak II* basin are also interested to cultivate their mother tongue (Nepali language). Since the 1980s, they have been showing moral support to the demand for recognition of the Nepali as a constitutional language of India. ‘Celebration of Birthday of poet Bhanubhakta Acharya (1814-1868)’ or ‘Bhanu Jayahti’ has been a matter of cultural marker for the Nepalese of these villages.

The Rabhas of the *Raidak* basin, on the other hand, have remained isolated from their linguistic consciousness. Through the Rabhas of Assam [particularly from the days of Bishnu Prasad Rabha (1909-1969)] have seen considerable progress, the Rabhas of the Chhipra Beat have remained beyond the review of this trend. However, the Rabhas of Dakshin Kamakshyaguri (of Alipurduar district) and Chengtimari, Rasilbil, Nagururhaat and Haripur villages between the *Raidak I* and the *Raidak II* (under Tufanganj Subdivision of Cooch Behar district) have experienced better linguistic progress.

However, the Rabhas, Meches, Nepalese, Rajbanshis and other native communities [from Chhoto Chowkir Bos to Balabhut along the course of the *Raidak I* –the *Raidak II*] have induced by the linguistics features of the East Bengali migrants after 1947. The East Bengalese mainly from Mymensingh, Dhaka, Rangpur and Rajshahi regions of East Bengal or Eastern Pakistan [present Mymensingh Division, Dhaka Division, Rangpur Division and

Rajshahi Division of Bangladesh] have considerable influence on the linguistic domain of the native people of the *Raidak* basin.

However, the main linguistic issue of the *Raidak* course of the Indo-Bangladesh part is the question of status of the Kamtapuri/ Rajbanshi. The Rajbanshis [both the Hindu Rajbanshis (Schedule Castes) and the Muslim Rajbanshis (Naishya Shaikhs or OBC-A)] from Chepani to Balabhut (in the course of the *Raidak I*) and from Kumargram to Baxirhaat (in the course of the *Raidak II*) have developed a consciousness of their “mother tongue”. Since the 1960s, they have founded several political and cultural organizations such as the Uttrakhand Dal (UKD, 1969), Koch-Rajbanshi Kshatriya Mahasabha (1984), Koch-Rajbanshi International (KRI, 1986), Bharatiya Kamata Rajya Parishad (BKRP, 1985), Uttarbanga Tapasili Jati O Adibashi Samity (UTJAS, 1979), Kamtapur Peoples’ Party (1995), The Greater Cooch Behar Peoples’ Association (1998), etc. These organizations have always spoken in favour of recognition of the “Rajbanshi/ Kamtapuri as a distinct language. The Rajbanshis have even popularized their linguistic issue as a primary causative factor for the demand of a ‘separate province’ in northern part of West Bengal called ‘Kamtapur or Uttarakhand’. In this context, Kumargram CD Block, Tufanganj and Baxirhaat towns [in the cause of *Raidak*] have a considerable contribution towards the development of a ‘sense of Rajbanshi belonging’. The UTJAS movement of the 1980s, compilation and circulation of the Kamtapuri/ Rajbanshi grammar and literary works from Tufanganj have drawn much attention of the scholars.²⁸

However, in the Bangladeshi part of the *Raidak* / *Dudhkumar* basin, Bengali language (*Bangla Bhasha*) has appeared as the main factor of integration of the people as ‘national community’ called the ‘Bangladeshis’. From the language movement of 1952 to till date the Bengali language has been the driving force of the people of the dwellers of the *Dudhkumar* course.

Environmental Disruption in *Raidak*

Human’s interaction with rivers is old as old the rivers are! In fact, since the beginning of the settled human civilization, rivers have been fulfilling the necessities of people of their basins. However, excessive exploitation of rivers as economic resources and the use of rivers as dumping grounds of the unwanted sewages/wastes without proper treatment have gradually poisoning the rivers. So many rivers have already dried up. Many of them have become the matters of literary specimen. However, the *Raidak* from the *Wang Chhu* to the *Dudhkumar* is not such river. It is still alive though not free from the unwanted side-effects of the modern day industrial and demographic pressures.

First visible side-effect of the modern civilization on the *Raidak* has been noticed in case of the industrial use of the *Raidak*. It has already been discussed that Bhutan has built up two hydro- electrical projects (Chukha Hydel Project and the Tala Hydroelectric Project) which are the main suppliers of electricity. Though Bhutan is less populated country with enough environmental consciousness, but the hydel projects have their inevitable disruptive impact on environment and the people of the (*Wang Chhu*) *Raidak* basin. It is been noticed that Bhutan restricts the flow of water in the winter season leading the downstream dry. This artificial drying up of the *Raidak* has disruptive impact on its aquatic diversity. So many species of fish of the *Raidak* are gradually disappearing and many of them have become endangered. Secondly, Bhutan often opens all sluiceways of its reservoirs without proper information particularly in the monsoons season. Sluiceways of the hydel projects on the *Wang Chhu* are very much disruptive for the people of the *Raidak* basin from Raidak forest to Raidak I Bridge.²⁹ The dried or semi-dried tributary channels of the *Raidak* [having connection between the *Dhowlajhora* and the *Raidak I*] often gets flooded in the monsoon (even without rain) due to the sudden release of water from Bhutan. This type of problem has become very much common since last three decades.³⁰

The *Raidak* is receiving a noticeable challenge from its tea-gardens (of both Alipurduar II and Kumargram CD Blocks). The tea-gardens of the *Raidak* basin have been using harmful chemicals particularly pesticides, fungicides, chemical fertilizers and herbicides (weed killers) for maintaining production in these century-old gardens. Again these chemicals are being used extensively by the cultivators of the *Raidak* basin. These chemicals have long-term impact on the riverine lives of the *Raidak*.

Apart from the fish-folk, the *Raidak* as a flowing river is being seriously disrupted by the exploitation of its sand and stones. The bed of the *Raidak* (attest till the Raidak I Bridge and the Raidak II Bridge) is full with sand and stones. So exploitation of these natural has developed a local business in the region.

Soil erosion is another major problem of the *Raidak* in the downstream. Due to heavy rainfall, the *Raidak* generates flood every year leading to the erosion of agricultural land near the bed. Homestead, gardens, kitchen gardens, houses and other immovable properties are often washes away by the floods of the *Raidak*. For instance, we can talk about Chhoto Chowkir Bos village. One third of this village has been washed away by the floods of 1993, 2000 and 2019. Soil erosion on the contrary, leads to the rise of the riverbed and

often creates dry *charland*. These new *char lands* are, however, no way suitable for cultivation. It means the erosion of fine agricultural soil of the *Raidak* basin is generating a slow process of outmigration.

Conclusion

In the discourse of environmental history, ‘human-river interaction’ has a prominent place. Rivers are not only being accepted in economic terms, they are equally important for cultural manifestation. In many civilizations, a particular river is personified as sacred, mother, host, patron and as the symbol of culture. In the context of the *Raidak*, all these features are equally noticeable. While the upper course (called *Wang Chhu*) is a symbol of national culture, language and identity of Bhutan, the same in the extreme downstream is one of the determinants of the Indo-Bangladesh relationship.

However, like other rivers of the Indian sub-continent, the *Raidak* is receiving challenges and threats from the contemporary developments as well as for human intercourse. As its inevitable outcome, the people of the *Raidak* bank are regularly facing floods and soil erosion in the monsoon leading to the generation of force of ‘crisis migration’.³¹ On the other hand, the aquatic lives of the *Raidak* particularly fish of local varieties are facing skin ulcer (particularly in the winter). It is considered to be an indicator of pollution of water bodies.³² Skin disease of fish in return affecting the consumers of fish of the *Raidak*.

At the cost of pollution, the *Raidak* is still being used for hydro-electrical power generation, drainage system for industrial wastes and harmful chemicals and as a source of supply of water, sand and stones. In spite of the negative outcomes due to the human intercourse with the *Raidak*, the dependent communities of the *Raidak* are still utilizing the *Raidak* river for

Notes and References

¹*Chhu* means river in the Dzongkha language, the national language of Bhutan.

²See Rup Kumar Barman, *The Origin and Evolution of the Enclaves of India and Bangladesh: A Historical Study*, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2019. Also see, Shoven Sanyal, ‘Saraidanga Nadir Atit O Bartaman’, *Uttar Prasanga 13 years*, No1, 2019, p.85.

³Abani Mohan Kusari (et.al.), *Jalpaiguri*, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1981, p.15.

⁴The tribal communities of Chhotonagpur region [including the Santals, Mundas, Khariyas, Malpaharias, Birhors, Mahalis, Asuras, etc.] after their migration and settlement in the Duars region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts of West Bengal have emerged as a

common community. They are called the 'Madasias' by the Native people as well the non-tribal migrants of the Duars region.

⁵The main Rabha villages of Alipurduar district are: (a) Chhipra Beat Rabha Basti, (b) Kodal Basti, (c) Poro Rabha Basti, and (d) Dakshin Kamakshyaguri. The Rabha villages of Cooch Behar district are: (a) Chengtimari, (b) Bochamari, (c) Nagururihaat, (d) Shalbari, and (e) Baxihaat.

⁶In spite of prohibition of fishing the villagers of Madhya Nararthali, Paschim Narathali and Khoyardanga often catches fish in the Bara Beel with their hand made fishing impalements.

⁷The Nepali society of Chhoto Chowkir Bos and Baro Chowkir Bos is composed of different caste and ethnic groups such as the Brahmins (Sharma), Kshatriyas (Chhetri), Scheduled Castes (Sharkis, Damai and Kamais), Scheduled Tribes (Mongar, Dorji, Limbu, Tamang), etc. They have been living here since the days of Bhutanese rule in this region (1765-1769).

⁸The Koch chiefdom was founded by a Mech tribal chief named Haria Mech [or Haria Mondal]. He had two wives (named Hira and Jira) from the Koch tribe. The sons of Haria Mech like Bishu and Sisu had founded the Koch kingdom. Bishu declared himself as King Biswasimha (c. 1515 to 1540 CE) while his brother Sishu (Siswasimha) was entrusted the charge of the protection of the kingdom called *Raikat*. Biswasimha was succeeded by his son Nara Narayan (1540-1587 as the Koch King) who transformed the small kingdom into a consolidated kingdom comprising present Alipurduar and Cooch Behar districts of West Bengal and entire Lower Assam. The close relationship between the Koch kingdom and the Meches of Baro Chowkir Bos and Mahakalguri is still noticeable from the surnames of the Meches like 'Karjee' and 'Mondal'. For more details see, Rup Kumar Barman: *From Tribalism to State*, Abhijeet Publications, Delhi, 2007.

⁹The *Gadadhar* is an important river having its origin in the Indo-Bhutan border near the Buxa Fort. This hill stream is flowing as the *Jayanti* River. This river comes down to the plains of Alipurduar II CD Block and passes through Salsalabari where it is called the *Gadadhar*. The *Gadadhar* other flowing through Bhatibari (of Alipurduar) and Natabari (of Cooch Behar district) crosses the NH31 near Ghogarkuti village. This river eventually meets the *Raidak* at Balabhut.

¹⁰For see- Rup Kumar Barman, *The Origin and Evolution of the Enclaves of India and Bangladesh*, Abhijeet Publications, 2019, New Delhi, pp.148-252.

¹¹The capital for the construction of this hydel project was invested by India: 60% as direct investment and 40% as loan. India got the right to import electricity from this project at concessional rate.

¹²'Run of the river type project' has no water storage capacity.

¹³John F. Grunning: *Jalpaiguri*, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1911, pp.44-45.

¹⁴For details about the social composition, see Rup Kumar Barman, *Contested Regionalism: A New Look on the History and Cultural Change of North Bengal and Lower Assam*, Abhijeet Publications, Delhi, 2007, pp. 12-19.

¹⁵The Madasias of this forest village were very poor. They had a tradition of collecting wild potatoes and roots from the forest particularly in winter. They used to cut them into slice pieces and keep them under the water of the *Raidak* for two days. Then they used to dry them in sunlight for preservation and future consumption.

¹⁶Since the late 1970s, the High Yielding Varieties (HYV) with considerable amount of chemical fertilizers and well- irrigation, the villagers of Chhoto Chowkir Bos had initiated the advance agricultural practices in the bank of the *Dhowlajhora-Raidak*. Shri Phani Bhusan Barman of Chhoto Chowkir Bos along with a few other villagers had initiated this process.

¹⁷For details see, Sangay Dorji, *The Biography of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, Pal Drukpa Rinpoche*, KMT Publication, Thimpu, 2008.

¹⁸For details see: Rup Kumar Barman, *The Origin and Evolution of the Enclaves of India and Bangladesh: A Historical Study*, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2019, pp.149-252.

¹⁹The prominent villages with Madasia concentration of the *Raidak* basin are Bania Dabri, Samuktala, Chhoto Chowkir Bos, Baro Chowkir Bos, Bakla School Danga, Chhipra, Paschim Nararthali, etc.

²⁰The Meches of Alipurduar district are mainly concentrated at Baro Chowkir Bos, Mahakalguri, Uttar Mahakalguri, Taleswarguri, Khoyardanga, Marakhata, Daldali, Purba Nararthali, Paschim Nararthali, Madhya Nararthali, Uttar Kamakshyaguri, and a few other villages.

²¹For details see: Rup Kumar Barman, *From Tribalism to State: Reflections on the Emergence of the Koch Kingdom*, Abhijeet Publications, Delhi 2007.

²²For details see, Minhas-ud-din Shiraj, *Tabaqat -I-Nashiri*, Translated into English by H.G. Raverty, reprint edition, Orient Books, New Delhi, 1970.

²³Article 1.8 and Article 6.3 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan (as adopted on 18th July 2008). Also see the *Bhutan Citizenship Act, 1985, Article 4.3*.

²⁴The Lhotshampas are the descendants of the Nepali-speaking people who migrated to Bhutan in the 20th century mainly as agriculturists, labourers and service providers to Bhutan.

²⁵*Driglam Namza* means 'One Dress, One Language and One Culture'.

²⁶For details see, Rup Kumar Barman, 'Ethnic Mosaic and Cultural Nationalism of Bhutan in Erich Kolig', Vivienne SM. Angeles and Sam Wong (eds.), *Identity in Crossroad Civilizations : Ethnicity, Nationalism and Globalism in Asia*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2009, pp.55-64.

²⁷From the days of the Brahma movement among the Bodos of Lower Assam (1920-1947), the Meches have always showed their utmost interest on the growth of Bodo literature. Kalicharan Brahma, Rupnath Brahma and many other thinkers have played a significant role in the growth of Bodo literature. The Bodo Sahitya Sabha was founded in 1952 by the Bodo intellectuals of Assam along with the Bodos of West Bengal, Meghalaya and other states of Northeast India.

²⁸During our fieldwork, we have collected several works of notable scholars who have written from Tufanganj. Among them we must mention the names of Shri Dharma Narayan Barma, Ramendra Nath Adhikary and Binod Bihari Barma.

²⁹The rivers of Bhutan are serious threats for several districts of West Bengal and Assam especially in the rainy season. Due to the construction of several power projects and ongoing development project, the rivers of this kingdom often discharge high amount of water causing serious floods in the India parts.

³⁰The author has come across the experience of the villagers of Chhoto Chowkir Bos and Baro Chowkir Bos regarding the sudden floods even in the dried channels. They expressed that the floods of 1993, 2000 and 2019 were very serious for them.

³¹For details about the concept of 'crisis migration', see, Rup Kumar Barman, *Nature Communities and State : An environmental History of Bengal and Assam*, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2019.

³²Edward J. Noga, Skin Ulcer in Fish, *Toxicological Pathology*, Vol. 28, No 6, 2000, pp-807-823. *Globalism in Asia*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2009, pp.55-64. Acknowledgement: This research paper is the outcome of ICSSR sponsored Project entitled *Historical Legacy and Regionalism in India: A Study on the Regionalism of postcolonial North Bengal* [Vide Letter no File No. 02/134/SC/2019-2020/MJ/RP Dated 23 December 2019]. The author is indebted to the ICSSR for its financial assistance.

Significance of Environmental Archaeology in Reconstructing the History of Past Occupation: A Factual Investigation

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Abstract

Before describing the summary of the paper, I have to submit that since last two decades I am working on various aspects of application of scientific and analytical techniques in archaeology to reconstruct the history of palaeodiet and palaeoenvironment. Based on the results obtained from our analyses, we have been able to reconstruct the history of past occupations, especially about the palaeodiet, palaeoclimatic, and palaeoenvironmental conditions of the ancient and modern settlements. The results obtained by us also suggested that to reconstruct the realistic history of any past settlement, it would be essential to apply the advanced modern scientific and analytical techniques, along with the traditional methods of archaeology, for analyzing the archaeological remains. This discipline of study is generally known as environmental archaeology. Here I have described in detail on various sub disciplines of environmental archaeology. In present paper I have also described about the importance, utility and scope of scientific and analytical techniques in archaeological investigation such as, morphological analysis of faunal (animal) and floral (plant) remains; major and trace element analysis in archaeological materials (soil, ceramics, bones, metals, charcoal etc.); estimation of isotopic ratios of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, strontium etc. and geomorphologic analysis. All these factors are termed as the elements of environmental archaeology. Different type of studies carried out in this discipline by us as well as by a number of scholars is also included here in references section. Besides this, I have described some case studies in this regard, so that everyone can understand the significance of this latest branch of archaeology. Based on the previous works, finally at the last

but not least, it is realized that in any archaeological investigation the latest scientific and analytical methods of environmental archaeology must be applied along with traditional technique, so that the truthful information about ancient occupation may be reconstructed.

Introduction and review of literature

As I have considered the topic of paper on the Significance of Environmental Archaeology in Reconstructing the History of Past Occupation: A Factual Investigation, but before moving forward it is necessary to describe the concept, definition as well as meaning of environmental Archaeology, and how environmental archaeology can be helpful in understanding or reconstructing the history of past settlement or occupation?. So the initial question in the mind of general peoples will be what is environmental archaeology?

Meanwhile, it is also important to know the basis or elements of environmental archaeology and a number of investigations have already proved that these elements have positive correlations with environmental science. So such type of correlations has also clarified that this field of archaeology (Environmental Archaeology) has been emerged as the basic fundamentals of Environmental Sciences, and at this point it is also important to know the comprehensive meaning of environmental science. Bintliff et al. (1988) reported that the usual emphasis in environmental archaeological research was towards reconstruction of palaeoenvironments with former diets and economies also being proposed from the study of seeds, bones and pollen. According to their studies the results of environmental research were often presented in separate chapters, or worse still in appendices to excavation reports. They have also realised that the environmental analysis was perceived as being separate from the principal archaeological objectives in excavations. But with the development of advanced scientific techniques and their application ultimately bounded archaeologists to carry environmental archaeological study along with the main principle of archaeology and a number of archaeologists carried out meaningful researches worldwide in this regard.

Ye Yincan et. al., (2017) described that ‘Environmental science is the science that explores environmental evolution law in the global scope, reveals the relationship between human activities and natural ecology, and explores the effects of environmental changes on human survival, and researches the technical measures and management measures for the comprehensive prevention and control of regional environmental pollution’. In general sense

it is also defined as, the study of the effects of natural and unnatural processes, and interactions of the physical components of the planet on the environment; however, in broad way Environmental Science is defined as the interdisciplinary field which focused on ecology, geology, meteorology, biology, chemistry, engineering, and physics, to study environmental problems and human impacts on the environment. Under environmental science we study about the different activities takes place in the universe at present scenario.

It is also evident that environmental science is a quantitative discipline with both applied and theoretical aspects and has been influential in informing the policies of governments around the world. Environmental science is considered separate from environmental studies, which emphasizes the human relationship with the environment and the social and political dimensions thereof. For example, whereas a researcher in environmental studies might focus on the economic and political dimensions of international climate-change protocols, an environmental scientist would seek to understand climate, change by quantifying its effects with models and evaluating means of mitigation. Though the study of the environment is as old as any human endeavour, the modern field of environmental science developed from the growing public awareness and concern about environmental problems in the 1960s and 70s. The published books such as, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and Paul R. Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* (1968), together with nuclear proliferation and growing concerns over the anthropogenic release of toxins and chemicals, raised awareness about the need to study the effects of human actions on the environment.

According to O'Connor (2019), in archaeology in the 1960s, the environment was seen as having a 'passive' interaction with humans. With the inclusion of Darwinism and ecological principles, however, this paradigm began to shift. Prominent theories and principles of the time (oasis theory, catastrophism, and *longue duree*) emphasized this philosophy. Catastrophism, for instance, discussed how catastrophes like natural disaster could be the determining factor in a society's survival (Evans 2003). The environment could have social, political, and economic impacts on human communities. It became more important for researchers to look at the direct influence the environment could have on a society. This gave rise to middle range theory and the major questions asked by environmental archaeology in the 20th and 21st centuries. Research has since led environmental archaeology to two major conclusions: humanity originated in Africa and agriculture originated in south-west Asia. Another important shift in thinking is within the field centred on the notion of cost-affectivity. Before, archaeologists thought that humans usually acted to

maximize their use of resources, but have since come to believe that this is not the case. Subsequent theories/principles include sociality and agency and the focus on relationships between archaeological sites (Evans 2003), Government research audits and the 'commercialisation' of environmental archaeology (Elizabeth 2019) have also shaped the sub-discipline in more recent times (Howard (2019).

The growing field of environmental science took on the task of quantifying the effects of disasters such as the 1979. Three Mile Island accident or the impact of atmospheric sulphur dioxide and other emissions were on acid rain. Environmental scientists analyze a wide variety of environmental problems and potential solutions, including alternative energy systems, pollution control, and natural resource management, and may be employed by government, industry, Universities, or non-profit organizations.

The notable pioneer of environmental archaeology has been Karl W. Butzer (1934-2016), who was a German borne American Geographer, ecologist and archaeologist. He regularly offered a course on Pleistocene environments including Geoarchaeology at the University of Wisconsin, USA (1960-1966) and he taught courses like, physical geography, geomorphology and environmental archaeology at the University of Chicago (1966-1984). He has made a strong case for ecological approach to archaeology (1982) and discussed varying ecological relationships at different spatial and temporal scales (Bintliff, 1988). Bintliff, (1988) edited a book *Conceptual Issues in Environmental Archaeology* in this book various aspects of environmental archaeology has been explained through more than 22 research papers. In this book articles are categorized in three main sections which include viz. conceptual issues at the site and micro region Scale, from Micro to Macro Region and conceptual Issues Associated with Environmental and Population Change.

However, Louis Leakey also contributed to a vast amount of research in this field. Leakey and his wife Mary Leakey are most known for their work in on human origins in Africa. Louis Binford developed the middle range theory. Under this theory, researchers study the relationship between humans and the environment, which can be depicted in models. Eric Higgs researched the development of agriculture in Asia and the method of 'site catchment analysis', which looks at the exploitation of land based on the land's potential (Evans 2003).

Keeping in view of the studies carried out in the field of environmental sciences, archaeologists also applied its reliability in reconstructing the history of ancient settlement. To know the reliability of this field, it is also important to be

familiar about the actual meaning/definition of this branch of archaeology, therefore various researchers and scientists defined it in different ways.

Shackley (1981) described a detailed approach of this field through the book *Environmental Archaeology* and in this book he has provided an excellent account of *Sediments & Soils; Microorganisms; Ferns & Mosses; Pollen Analysis; Wood & Charcoal; Seeds Fruits & Nuts; Molluscs & Insects; Parasites & Animal Bones; Fish Remains & Marine Mammals; and Birds*. He has defined this branch that, *environmental archaeology is an integral part of archaeological science with Archaeologists acting as co-ordinators for the products of a large number of different disciplines*. Albarella 2001; Bintliff et al. 1988; Branch et al. 2005; Butzer 1971, 1982; Dimpleby 1965, Evans 1978, 2003; Evans and O'Connor 2001; Luff and Rowley-Conwy 1994; O'Connor 1998; Shackley, 1981; Wilkinson and Stevens, 2003 have reported that environmental archaeology is an eclectic field directed toward understanding the ecology of human communities. According to Elizabeth J. Reitz, Lee A. Newsom, Sylvia J. Scudder, and C. Margaret Scarry (1998) that environmental researchers apply information and techniques from the earth and biological sciences to study relationships among peoples and their environments using organic and inorganic evidence from archaeological sites.

It is also mentioned in the brochure of Florida History Museum (2017) that the primary focus of the Environmental Archaeology Program is research into the ancient relationship between people and their environments, including all aspects of that relationship, from the biotic to the abiotic, and from the physical to the symbolic. They are basically carrying out research work seeking to reconstruct ancient environments associated with archaeological sites and the use of plants, animals, and landscapes by the people who once inhabited these sites and main aim of their study is to see the impact of people on the world around them during ancient time and defined it as, environmental archaeology is the interdisciplinary study of past human interactions with the natural world - a world that encompasses plants, animals, and landscapes.

It has been reported by O'Connor (2019) that environmental archaeology is a sub-field of archaeology which emerged in 1970s and this field represents an archaeological-palaeoecological approach to studying the palaeo-environment through the methods of human palaeoecology. Reconstructing past environments and past peoples' relationships and interactions with the landscapes they inhabited provides archaeologists with insights into the origin and evolution of anthropogenic environments, and prehistoric adaptations and economic practices (Wilkinson, 2003 & Branch 2014). Based on these assumptions environmental archaeology was defined

as ‘the science of reconstructing the relationships between past societies and the environments they lived in’. After going through all the relevant aspects of archaeology as well as studies carried so far in the field of environmental archaeology by different archaeologists/scientists, it is evident that this discipline of archaeology is basically deals with the interaction of ancient human to their environment, for their survival, therefore, in normal sense the environmental archaeology is defined as; ‘the study of relationship in between ancient human and their existed environment is termed as environmental archaeology, and for studying such study various elements of environmental archaeology play their significant role’. Therefore, these elements must be considered in the investigation of environmental archaeology.

It is clarified through the history obtained from the Environmental archaeology programme of Florida Museum (2017) that environmental archaeology has emerged as a distinct discipline in the course of the last fifty years, however, at present it is grown rapidly in significance and established a major component of the excavation projects. Evans (1981) in his book *Introduction to Environmental Archaeology* described that the objective of the environmental archaeology not to merely learn about the changes in the palaeoenvironment, but to find out how people of the past adapt to the surrounding natural environment, how they obtained various resources from the natural environment and how they altered the natural environment. The literarily data on various aspects of environmental archaeology includes the studies carried out by, *Rapp (1930)*, Evans (1978), Birks and Birks (1980), Evans (1981), Butzer (1982), Keeley (1984), Griffen (1988), Paine (1988), Lawton and Warren (1988), Thomas (1989), Boyd (1990), Vincent (1990), Evans (1991), Kiister (1991), Harris and Thomas (1991), Jones (1992), Bell (1992), Bell and Boardman (1992), Colinvaux (1993), O’Connor (1993), Goudie (1993), Foster and Smout (1994), Lyman (1995), Preece (1995), Reitz et.al. (1996), Simmons (1997), Brown (1997), O’Connor (1998) *Grayson (2001)*, *Wilkinson, (2003)*, *Evans (2003)*, *Van Der Veen (2007)*, *Butzer (2012)*, *Branch (2014)*, *Natural History Museum Florida (2017)*, Ye Yincan et. al. (2017), *O’Connor (2019)*, *Pearson (2019)*, *Howard. (2019)*, *Richer et.al (2019)*, etc.

Not only this various studies on phosphate, major & trace element analysis, estimation of isotopic ratios of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, strontium etc. in archaeological soil and bones has also been carried out by different researchers in various parts of world including India, some of these are; Ambrose (1987); Ambrose et.al (1989); Antoine et.al (1988); Aufderheide (1989), Badam (1991); Bintliff et.al (1990); Borgognini (1989); Brown (1973); Burton and Price (1990); Burton and Price (1991); Byrne and Paris (1987);

Chisholm et.al (1982); Conway (1983); Currey (1984); Davies et. al (1988); Deotare (1990); Dietz (1957); Ezzo (1991), Ezzo (1994), Farswan and Nautiyal (1997); Farswan and Nautiyal (1997); Farswan et.al (2001), Farswan and Price (2002); Farswan (2002, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013); Farswan and Jaibir (2005); Farswan and Jaibir (2005); Farswan and Jaibir (2009); Farswan and Pharswan (2009, 2013, 2015, 2019); Farswan and Singh (2012); Farswan et. al (2014, 2015); Singh and Farswan (2014); Farswan and Singh (2015); Francalacci (1989), Gilbert (1985); Gilbert et. al (1994), Hare (1980), Hegde and Pande (1972), Heidenreich and Navratil (1973), Heidenreich and Konard (1973); Heidenreich et.al (1971), Iyer (1971); Iyer et.al (1973); Joshi et.al (1978); Joshi and Deotare (1982), Katzenberg and Schwarcz (1984); Khanduri et.al (1998-99), Klepinger (1984, 1990), Konard et.al (1983), Lambert and Weydert-Homeyer (1993), Lavy (1980), Morgan and Schoeninger (1989), Nautiyal et.al (1993), Nautiyal et.al (1992, 1995); Parker and Toots (1980); Parsonset.al (1962), Pate (1994), Pharswan and Farswan (2011, 2012); Price et.al (1985a, 1985b), Provan (1971), Proudfoot (1976), Robinson (1963), Rottlander (1976), Runia (1987a), Schoeninger (1981, 1989), Schoeninger et.al (1983), Schutkowski and Herrmann (1999), Schwarcz et.al (1985), Sealy and Van Der Merwe (1986), Sillen and Kavanaugh (1982), Sillen (1988), Singh and Farswan (2015), Tieszen et.al (1979), Toots and Voorheis (1965), Van Der Merwe (1989, 1991), Walker and De Niro (1986), Woods (1984), etc.

These studies revealed that we can get meaningful information from any archaeological site in relation to the cultures inhabited at that site during ancient periods (i.e. palaeo environment, palaeodiet, palaeo-climatic conditions, fauna, flora, developmental processes, process of domestication of plants and animals, development of technology etc.). Though, a number of studies on morphological analysis of faunal remains recovered from various archaeological site of India has already been carried out by various workers and some latest work among are done by Abhayan (2016); Deshpande et.al (2005- 2006); Driesch (1976); Haraniya et.al. (2016); Joglekar (2000-2001); Joglekar (2007-2008); Joglekar, et.al. (2008); Joglekar (2010-2012); Joglekar (2015); Joglekar et.al. (2009-2010); Joglekar et.al. (2010-2011); Joglekar et.al. (1994); Pawankar and Thomas (2001); Prummel and Frisch (1986); Schmid (1972); Singh and Singh (2004); Tripathi and Upadhyay (2006-2007); Upadhyay (2008-2009); Singh et.al. (2013), Mishra, et.al. (1999); Joglekar et.al. (2017).

An advanced study has also carried out by Harney et.al. (2019) on ancient DNA in skeletons of Roopkund Lake, Uttarakhand and revealed from

Mediterranean migrants in India. It is also clarified that a lot of studies on archaeological faunal remains and soils has been done by Farswan & Pharswan; and Farswan et.al. during last two decades; a brief results of some of them are described in next pages. But a lot of studies have to be carried out yet in the context of Indian Archaeology, especially in different sub disciplines of environmental archaeology. Therefore, keeping view of the same I am presenting this paper for the circulation of researchers as well as students of history, archaeology and anthropology as well, so that much-more studies in this branch may be carried out by various researchers.

Scope of Environmental

For considering any type of study under the discipline Environmental archaeology, it is also necessary that we should have a general knowledge of various subfields as well as elements of this branch, and these are described below. In detail:-

Subfields of Environmental archaeology

Traditionally Environmental archaeology is divided into three main subfields such as *viz.* Zooarchaeology (Archaeozoology), Archaeobotany (Palaeobotany) and Geoarchaeology.

Zooarchaeology (Achaea-zoology)

This branch is also known as Archaeozoology or Palaeo-zoology or palaeontoarchaeology or osteoarchaeology. Under this branch, generally we study the faunal or animal remains, both vertebrate and invertebrate, recovered from various archaeological sites. However, the main techniques in analyses of faunal remains are morphological analysis and based on this analysis we can describe about various animal species inhabited by ancient peoples during different cultural periods of past occupation. Meanwhile, morphological analysis also revealed a quantitative number of different animal species in various cultural phases, as well as information about the number of domestic and wild species of animals. After morphological analysis, Chemical analysis and estimation of isotopic ratios are also carried out in faunal and human remains of different cultural periods. These analyses are helpful in providing the information about palaeodiet and palaeoclimatic conditions of the site. These studies also helpful in providing information for understanding the past life system, human diets, changed landscapes, management of animals, impact of human exploitation on other animal populations, and other interactions between animals and humans. Animal remains can provide evidence of predation by humans (or vice versa) or domestication. Despite revealing the specific relationships between animals and humans, discovery of animal bones,

hides, or DNA in a certain area can describe the location's past landscape or climate.

Archaeobotany (Palaeobotany)

This branch is also known as palaeobotany and under this branch we generally study or interpret the plant or floral remains that are preserved at archaeological sites including macro remains such as wood, seeds, nuts, etc. Because these are fragile, they are only preserved in special conditions (desiccated, charred, frozen, waterlogged, or preserved as impressions in baked clay or daub). Archaeobotanists also study micro remains such as pollen, phytoliths, and spores, often found in the soils, as residues in pottery vessels, or in the sediments of stable water bodies around archaeological sites. By determining the uses of plants in historical contexts, researchers can reconstruct the diets of past humans, as well as determine their subsistence strategies and plant economy. Analysis of specimen like wood charcoal, for example, can reveal the source of fuel or construction for a society. Archaeobotanists also often study seed and fruit remains, along with pollen and starch. Plants can be preserved in a variety of ways, but the most common are carbonization, water logging, mineralization, and desiccation. A field within Archaeobotany is ethno-botany, which looks more specifically at the relationship between plants and humans, and the cultural impacts plants have had and continue to have on human societies.

Geoarchaeology

Geoarchaeology is the study of landscape and of geological processes or we can say that the study of geological processes and their relationship to the archaeological record. It looks at environments within the human timeline to determine how past societies may have influenced or been influenced by the environment. Sediment and soil are often studied because this is where the majority of artifacts are found, but also because natural processes and human behaviour can alter the soil and reveal its history. Apart from visual observation, computer programming and satellite imaging are often employed to reconstruct past landscapes or architecture.

Other related fields include: Landscape archaeology

Landscape archaeology is the study of the ways in which people in the past constructed and used the environment around them. Landscape archaeology is inherently multidisciplinary in its approach to the study of culture, and is used by pre-historical, classic, and historic archaeologists. The key feature that distinguishes landscape archaeology from other archaeological approaches to sites is that there is an explicit emphasis on the

sites' relationships between material culture, human alteration of land/cultural modifications to landscape, and the natural environment. The study of landscape archaeology (also sometimes referred to as the archaeology of the cultural landscape) has evolved to include how landscapes were used to create and reinforce social inequality and to announce one's social status to the community at large.

Analysis of landscapes

Many methods used to analyze archaeological sites are relevant to the analysis of landscapes. The archaeology of landscapes incorporates multiple research methods into its analysis in order to ensure that multiple sources of information are gathered; allowing for a sound interpretation of the site in question. These methods are View shed Analysis, Archaeological Geophysics or Geophysical Survey, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning System (GPS), Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Remote Sensing, Electrical resistance meters, Lidar (Light Radar), Electromagnetic (EM) conductivity, Magnetometers, Metal Detectors, Total station, Archaeological Excavation, Soil sampling, Pollen or Floral analyses, Faunal analysis, Data collection, Data processing and imaging, Archival Data Analysis, Data processing and imaging Climatology and Archival data (including maps and census data).

Viewshed Analysis

Viewshed Analysis has aided in the archaeologists ability to study behavioural relationships between humans, their landscape, and material culture, in order to study migration, settlement patterns, and agency. Viewshed analysis also provides means with which archaeologists can recreate through an ability to recreate the line of sights possible from one point on a landscape and to situate a person within a defined landscape.

Archaeological Geophysics or Geophysical Survey

In archaeology, geophysical survey is ground-based physical sensing techniques used for archaeological imaging or mapping. Remote sensing and marine surveys are also used in archaeology, but are generally considered separate disciplines. Other terms, are such as 'geophysical prospection' and 'archaeological geophysics' are generally synonymous. Geophysical methods used in archaeology are largely adapted from those used in mineral exploration, engineering, and geology. Archaeological mapping presents unique challenges, however, which have spurred a separate development of methods and equipment. Most commonly applied to archaeology are magnetometers, electrical resistance meters, ground penetrating radar (GPR) and electromagnetic (EM) conductivity meters. These methods can resolve many types of archaeological features, are capable of high sample

density surveys of very large areas, and of operating under a wide range of conditions. Other established and emerging technologies are also helpful in archaeological applications.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Geographic Information Systems, commonly referred to as GIS, provides a way in which archaeologists can visually represent archaeological data, and can be done in two ways: data visualization and representative visualization.

Global Positioning System (GPS)

The Global Positioning System (GPS), originally known as NAVSTAR GPS, is a satellite-based radio navigation system owned by the United States Government and operated by the United States Space Force. It is one of the global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) that provides geolocation and time information to a GPS receiver anywhere on or near the Earth where there is an unobstructed line of sight to four or more GPS satellites. Obstacles such as mountains and buildings block the relatively weak GPS signals.

Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR)

This is perhaps the best known of these methods (although it is not the most widely applied in archaeology). The concept of radar is familiar to most people. In this instance, the radar signal, an electromagnetic pulse, is directed into the ground. Subsurface objects and stratigraphy (layering) will cause reflections that are picked up by a receiver. The travel time of the reflected signal indicates the depth. Data may be plotted as profiles, or as plan view maps isolating specific depths. GPR can be a powerful tool in favourable conditions (uniform sandy soils are ideal). It is unique both in its ability to detect some spatially small objects at relatively great depths and in its ability to distinguish the depth of anomaly sources.

Remote Sensing

Remote sensing is the acquisition of information about an object or phenomenon without making physical contact with the object and thus in contrast to on-site observation, especially the Earth. Remote sensing is used in numerous fields, including geography, land surveying and most Earth science disciplines (for example, hydrology, ecology, meteorology, oceanography, glaciology, geology); it also has military, intelligence, commercial, economic, planning, and humanitarian applications. In current usage, the term 'remote sensing' generally refers to the use of satellite or aircraft-based sensor technologies to detect and classify objects on Earth. It includes the surface and the atmosphere and oceans, based on propagated signals (e.g. electromagnetic radiation). It may be split into 'active' remote

sensing (when a signal is emitted by a satellite or aircraft to the object and its reflection detected by the sensor) and ‘passive’ remote sensing (when the reflection of sunlight is detected by the sensor).

Electrical Resistance Meters

It can be thought of as similar to the Ohmmeters used to test electrical circuits. In most systems, metal probes are inserted into the ground to obtain a reading of the local electrical resistance. A variety of probe configurations are used, most having four probes, often mounted on a rigid frame. Capacitive coupled systems that do not require direct physical contact with the soil have also been developed. Archaeological features can be mapped when they are of higher or lower resistivity than their surroundings. A stone foundation might impede the flow of electricity, while the organic deposits within a maiden might conduct electricity more easily than surrounding soils.

Lidar (Light Radar)

It is an optical remote sensing technology that can measure the distance to a target by illuminating the target with light, often using pulses from a laser. Lidar has many applications in the field of archaeology including aiding in the planning of field campaigns, mapping features beneath forest canopy, and providing an overview of broad, continuous features that may be indistinguishable on the ground. Lidar can also provide archaeologists with the ability to create high-resolution digital elevation models (DEMs) of archaeological sites that can reveal micro-topography that are otherwise hidden by vegetation. Lidar-derived products can be easily integrated into a Geographic Information System (GIS) for analysis and interpretation.

Electromagnetic (EM) Conductivity

This instrument has a response that is comparable to that of resistance meters (conductivity is the inverse of resistance). Underground archaeological features are detected by creating a magnetic field underground by applying an electric current that has a known frequency and magnitude through a sending coil. The currents spur a secondary current in underground conductors that is picked up by a receiving coil. Changes in the underground conductivity can indicate buried features. Some EM conductivity instruments are also capable of measuring magnetic susceptibility, a property that is becoming increasingly important in archaeological studies.

Magnetometers

It is used in geophysical survey and may use a single sensor to measure the total magnetic field strength, or may use two (sometimes more) spatially separated sensors to measure the gradient of the magnetic field (the difference between the sensors). In most archaeological applications the latter

(gradiometer) configuration is preferred because it provides better resolution of small, near-surface phenomena. Magnetometers may also use a variety of different sensor types. Every kind of material has unique magnetic properties, even those that we do not think of as being 'magnetic'. Different materials below the ground can cause local disturbances in the Earth's magnetic field that are detectable with sensitive magnetometers. Magnetometers react very strongly to iron and steel, brick, burned soil, and many types of rock, and archaeological features composed of these materials are very detectable.

Metal Detectors

It is used for electromagnetic induction to detect metal. Although other types of instruments (notably magnetometers and electromagnetic conductivity meters) have some sensitivity to metal, specialized metal detectors are much more effective. Common hand-held metal detectors are widely used by archaeologists. Although not as commonly used in archaeology, sophisticated metal detectors are available having much greater sensitivity than hand-held models. These instruments are capable of data logging and sophisticated target discrimination. They can be mounted on wheeled carts for survey data collection.

Total Station

A total station (TS) or total station theodolite (TST) is an electronic/optical instrument used for surveying and building construction. It is an electronic transit theodolite integrated with electronic distance measurement (EDM) to measure both vertical and horizontal angles and the slope distance from the instrument to a particular point, and an on-board computer to collect data and perform triangulation calculation.

Archaeological Excavation

We know that site excavation has the potential to uncover building methods, such as the findings of postholes (which can mark the previous existence of fence lines or other site boundaries), timber, stones, and/or brick that marks the existence of man-made structures. Archaeological features often leave earthworks, signs of some type of modification to the natural environment that often appear as crop marks, soil marks, or even as plough marks in fields that, if historical, can indicate cultivation methods of the past, or, particularly if more recent, can lift archaeological material to the surface and, therefore, ruin the stratigraphy layering of materials from youngest to oldest. Features can be discovered by archaeologists both through excavation and through field survey or exploration.

Soil Sampling

Soil sampling is an important task in archaeological study and spatially under Archaeometry *i.e.* chemical analysis of archaeological remains. Soil

samples from archaeological habitation sites are generally collected on the basis of grid techniques at different depths of excavation, which is to be set up at initial stage of excavation. In other type of sites samples are collected randomly along with the reference samples from the external periphery of the site.

Pollen or Floral analysis

Pollen analysis has allowed archaeologists to analyze vegetation selectively cultivated by area residents, the 'ative vegetation' of a particular area, and allow archaeologists to map out land use over time (which can be ascertained from weeds). But collecting a suitable sample is not all that easy. Failure to collect a suitable sample can be due in part to not sampling from areas where suitable pollen samples can be gathered (e.g. lakes and bogs, sites that were sufficiently exposed to air-borne pollen, sites that had both a long exposure to air and are deeply buried into the ground), or because pollen is vulnerable to destruction by the oxidation process or soil microbes such as bacteria and fungi, it negatively impacts an archaeologist's ability to collect a suitable pollen sample. The pollen and seed samples are collected by floating methods. Based on the pollen and seed analysis we can say that how much type of plant species were used by ancient people. Floral analysis will also be significantly useful in the reconstruction of agricultural history.

Faunal Analysis

Faunal analysis is based on morphological analysis of animal and human remains. In this analysis bones are analyzed up to the species level morphologically, to know the presence of various animal species or minimum number of identified species (MNISP) present in different cultural phases of past occupation and also to estimate the minimum number of individual (MNI) used by a particular group of past occupants. For the purpose of morphological analysis, stage microscope, research microscope, magnifying glasses and calipers are some important instruments, which are used under the valuable guidance of zoo-archaeologist. Faunal analysis also helps us in reconstructing the food habit, cultural contacts, activity areas, and process of domestication, pathological disease in ancient animal and human population and environment of the past occupation.

The aforesaid information such as, Pollen, soil, faunal, and floral analysis allows the archaeologist to understand the natural vegetation of an area, vegetation that was actively grown by area settlers, and the animal life that also lived in the area. An understanding of the plant and animal life specific to an area can lead to, for example, an analysis of the types of food available to members of the community, an understanding of the actual diet typical for a subset of a population, and site and skeletal dating. If landscape

reconstruction and preservation, in particular, is a goal of an archaeological research project, pollen and soil analysis can aid in landscape archaeology to accurately interpret and reconstruct landscapes of the past.

Data Collection

It is broadly similar regardless of the particular sensing instrument. Survey usually involves walking with the instrument along closely spaced parallel traverses, taking readings at regular intervals. In most cases, the area to be surveyed is staked into a series of square or rectangular survey 'grids' (terminology can vary). With the corners of the grids as known reference points, the instrument operator uses tapes or marked ropes as a guide when collecting data. In this way, positioning error can be kept to within a few centimetres for high-resolution mapping.

Survey systems with integrated global positioning systems (GPS) have been developed, but under field conditions, currently available systems lack sufficient precision for high-resolution archaeological mapping. Geophysical instruments (notably metal detectors) may also be used for less formally 'scanning' areas of interest.

Data Processing and Imaging

To convert raw numeric data into interpretable maps, data processing usually involves the removal of statistical outliers and noise, and interpolation of data points. Statistical filters may be designed to enhance features of interest (based on size, strength, orientation, or other criteria), or suppress obscuring modern or natural phenomena. Inverse modelling of archaeological features from observed data is becoming increasingly important. Processed data are typically rendered as images, as contour maps, or in false relief. When geophysical data are rendered graphically, the interpreter can more intuitively recognize cultural and natural patterns and visualize the physical phenomena causing the detected anomalies.

Climatology

Climatology means 'place, zone'; or climate science is the scientific study of climate, scientifically defined as weather conditions averaged over a period of time. This modern field of study is regarded as a branch of the atmospheric sciences and a subfield of physical geography, which is one of the Earth sciences. Climatology now includes aspects of oceanography and biogeochemistry. The main methods employed by climatologists are the analysis of observations and modelling the physical laws that determine the climate. The main topics of research are the study of climate variability, mechanisms of climate changes and modern climate change.

Archival Data including Maps and Census Data)

Archival Data is used by any archaeologists that have any written texts available to them and is used in a multiple number of ways, depending on the research project and objective of the research and the data available in the archives. Archives are often employed to confirm archaeological findings, to understand the construction of a site, settlement patterns.

Bio-archaeology

The term bio-archaeology was first coined by British archaeologist Grahame Clark in 1972 as a reference to Zoo-archaeology, or the study of animal bones from archaeological sites. Redefined in 1977 by Jane Buikstra, bio-archaeology in the United States now refers to the scientific study of human remains from archaeological sites, a discipline known in other countries as osteo-archaeology or palaeo-osteology. In England and other European countries, the term 'bio-archaeology' is borrowed to cover all biological remains from sites.

Bioarchaeology was largely born from the practices of New Archaeology, which developed in the United States in the 1970s, as a reaction to a mainly cultural-historical approach to understanding the past. Proponents of New Archaeology advocated using processual methods to test hypotheses about the interaction between culture and biology, or a bio-cultural approach. Some archaeologists advocate a more holistic approach to bio-archaeology that incorporates critical theory and is more relevant to modern descent populations. It is now possible, human remains from archaeological sites are analyzed to determine sex, age, and health.

Paleo-demography

Bioarchaeologists sometimes create life tables, a type of cohort analysis, to understand the demographic characteristics (such as risk of death or sex ratio) of a given age cohort within a population. Age and sex are crucial variables in the construction of a life table, although this information is often not available to bioarchaeologists. Therefore, it is often necessary to estimate the age and sex of individuals based on specific morphological characteristics of the skeleton.

Age estimation

The estimation of age in bioarchaeology and osteology actually refers to an approximation of skeletal or biological age-at-death. The primary assumption in age estimation is that an individual's skeletal age is closely associated with their chronological age. Age estimation can be based on patterns of growth and development or degenerative changes in the skeleton. Many methods tracking these types of changes have been developed using a variety of skeletal series. For instance, in children age is typically estimated by assessing their dental development, ossification and fusion of specific

skeletal elements, or long bone length. In adults, degenerative changes to the pubic symphysis, the auricular surface of the ilium, the sternal end of the 4th rib, and dental attrition are commonly used to estimate skeletal age.

Sex Determination

Differences in male and female skeletal anatomy are used by bioarchaeologists to determine the biological sex of human skeletons. Humans are sexually dimorphic, although overlap in body shape and sexual characteristics is possible. Not all skeletons can be assigned a sex, and some may be wrongly identified as male or female. Sexing skeletons is based on the observation that biological males and biological females differ most in the skull and pelvis; bioarchaeologists focus on these parts of the body when determining sex, although other body parts can also be used. The female pelvis is generally broader than the male pelvis, and the angle between the two inferior pubic rami (the sub-pubic angle) is wider and more U-shaped, while the sub-pubic angle of the male are more V-shaped and less than 90 degrees. Phenice details numerous visual differences between the male and female pelvis. Pelvic and cranial features are considered to be more reliable indicators of biological sex.

Non-Specific Indicators

(a) Dental Non-Specific Stress Indicators

Enamel hypoplasia

Enamel hypoplasia refers to transverse furrows or pits that form in the enamel surface of teeth when the normal process of tooth growth stops, resulting in a deficit of enamel. Enamel hypoplasias generally form due to disease and/or poor nutrition. By examining the spacing of perikymata grooves (horizontal growth lines), the duration of the stressor can be estimated, and although Mays argues that the width of the hypoplasia bears only an indirect relationship to the duration of the stressor. Studies of dental enamel hypoplasia are used to study child health. Unlike bone, teeth are not remodeled, so they can provide a more reliable indicator of past health events as long as the enamel remains intact. Dental hypoplasias provide an indicator of health status during the time in childhood when the enamel of the tooth crown is being formed. So it is now a day's used by archaeologists.

(b) Skeletal Non-Specific Stress Indicators

There are so many indicators found in the animal and human remains which are non-specific those are:-

1. Porotic Hyperostosis/Cribra Orbitalia

It was long assumed that iron deficiency anaemia has marked effects on the flat bones of the cranium of infants and young children. That as the

body attempts to compensate for low iron levels by increasing red blood cell production in the young, sieve-like lesions develop in the cranial vaults (termed porotic hyperostosis) and/or the orbits (termed *cribra orbitalia*). This bone is spongy and soft. It is however; highly unlikely that iron deficiency anaemia is a cause of either porotic hyperostosis or *cribra orbitalia*. These are more likely the result of vascular activity in these areas and are unlikely to be pathological. The development of *cribra orbitalia* and porotic hyperostosis could also be attributed to other causes besides an iron deficiency in the diet, such as nutrients lost to intestinal parasites. However, dietary deficiencies are the most probable cause. Anaemia incidence may be a result of inequalities within society, and/or indicative of different work patterns and activities among different groups within society. Higher rates of *cribra orbitalia* among females may indicate lesser health status, or greater survival of young females with *cribra orbitalia* into adulthood.

2. Harris Hines

Harris lines form before adulthood, when bone growth is temporarily halted or slowed down due to some sort of stress (either disease or malnutrition). During this time, bone mineralization continues, but growth does not, nor does so at much reduced levels. If and when the stressor is overcome, bone growth will resume, resulting in a line of increased mineral density that will be visible in a radiograph. If there is not recovery from the stressor, no line will be formed.

3. Hair

The stress hormone cortisol is deposited in hair as it grows. This has been used successfully to detect fluctuating levels of stress in the later lifespan of mummies.

4. Mechanical Stress and Activity Indicators

Examining the effects that activities and workload has upon the skeleton allows the archaeologist to examine who was doing what kinds of labour, and how activities were structured within society. The division of labour within the household may be divided according to gender and age, or be based on other hierarchical social structures. Human remains can allow archaeologists to uncover patterns in the division of labour.

Living bones are subject to Wolff's law, which states that bones are physically affected and remodelled by physical activity or inactivity. Increases in mechanical stress tend to produce bones that are thicker and stronger. Disruptions in homeostasis caused by nutritional deficiency or disease or profound inactivity/disuse/disability can lead to bone loss. While the acquisition of bipedal locomotion and body mass appear to determine the

size and shape of children's bones, activity during the adolescent growth period seems to exert a greater influence on the size and shape of adult bones than exercise later in life.

Markers of occupational stress, which include morphological changes to the skeleton and dentition as well as joint changes at specific locations have also been widely used to infer specific (rather than general) activities. Such markers are often based on single cases described in clinical literature in the late nineteenth century. One such marker has been found to be a reliable indicator of lifestyle: the external auditory exostosis also called surfer's ear, which is a small bony protuberance in the ear canal which occurs in those working in proximity to cold water.

5. Injury and Workload

Fractures to bones during or after excavation will appear relatively fresh, with broken surfaces appearing white and un-weathered. Distinguishing between fractures around the time of death and post-depositional fractures in bone is difficult, as both types of fractures will show signs of weathering. Unless evidence of bone healing or other factors are present, researchers may choose to regard all weathered fractures as post-depositional.

Evidence of perimortal fractures (or fractures inflicted on a fresh corpse) can be distinguished in unhealed metal blade injuries to the bones. Living or freshly dead bones are somewhat resilient, so metal blade injuries to bone will generate a linear cut with relatively clean edges rather than irregular shattering.^[6] Archaeologists have tried using the microscopic parallel scratch marks on cut bones in order to estimate the trajectory of the blade that caused the injury.

(c) Diet and Dental Health

1. Caries

Dental caries, commonly referred to as cavities or tooth decay, are caused by localized destruction of tooth enamel, as a result of acids produced by bacteria feeding upon and fermenting carbohydrates in the mouth. Subsistence based upon agriculture is strongly associated with a higher rate of caries than subsistence based upon foraging, because of the higher levels of carbohydrates in diets based upon agriculture. For example, bioarchaeologists have used caries in skeletons to correlate a diet of rice and agriculture with the disease. Females may be more vulnerable to caries compared to men, due to lower saliva flow than males, the positive correlation of estrogens with increased caries rates, and because of physiological changes associated with pregnancy, such as suppression of the immune system and a possible concomitant decrease in antimicrobial activity in the oral cavity.

2. Stable Isotope Analysis

Stable isotope analysis of carbon and nitrogen in human bone collagen allows bioarchaeologists to carry out dietary reconstruction and to make nutritional inferences. These chemical signatures reflect long-term dietary patterns, rather than a single meal or feast. Stable isotope analysis monitors the ratio of carbon 13 to carbon 12 ($^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$), which is expressed as parts per mile (per thousand) using delta notation ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$). The ratio of carbon isotopes varies according to the types of plants consumed with different photosynthesis pathways. The three photosynthesis pathways are C3 carbon fixation, C4 carbon fixation and Crassulacean acid metabolism. C4 plants are mainly grasses from tropical and subtropical regions, and are adapted to higher levels of radiation than C3 plants. Corn, millet and sugar cane are some well-known C4 domesticates, while all trees and shrubs use the C3 pathway. C3 plants are more common and numerous than C4 plants. Both types of plants occur in tropical areas, but only C3 plants occur naturally in colder areas. ^{12}C and ^{13}C occur in a ratio of approximately 98.9 to 1.1.

Isotope ratios in food, especially plant food, are directly and predictably reflected in bone chemistry, allowing researchers to partially reconstruct recent diet using stable isotopes as tracers. Nitrogen isotopes (^{14}N and ^{15}N) have been used to estimate the relative contributions of legumes versus no legumes, as well as terrestrial versus marine resources to the diet.

Stable isotope analysis of strontium and oxygen can also be carried out. The amounts of these isotopes vary in different geological locations. Because bone is a dynamic tissue that is remodelled over time, and because different parts of the skeleton are laid down at particular times over the course of a human life, stable isotope analysis can be used to investigate population movements in the past and indicate where people lived at various points of their lives. By the estimation of the aforesaid isotopes in the organic materials from archaeological sites we may be able to reconstruct the diet and dietary substances as well as climatic information of past settlement.

3. Archaeological Uses of DNA

DNA analysis of past populations is used by archaeology to genetically determine the sex of individuals, determine genetic relatedness, understand marriage patterns, and investigate prehistoric population movements.

(d) Bioarchaeological Treatments of Equality and Inequality

Aspects of the relationship between the physical body and socio-cultural conditions and practices can be recognized through the study of human remains. This is most often emphasized in a 'biocultural bioarchaeology' model. It has often been the case that bioarchaeology has been regarded as

a positivist, science-based discipline, while theories of the living body in the social sciences have been viewed as constructivist in nature. Archaeologists have argued that scientific or forensic treatments of human remains from archaeological sites construct a view of the past that is neither cultural nor historic, and has suggested that a biocultural version of bioarchaeology will be able to construct a more meaningful and nuanced history that is more relevant to modern populations, especially descent populations.

(e) Archaeological Ethics

There are ethical issues with bioarchaeology that revolve around treatment and respect for the dead. So to study the faunal remains and collecting the animal and faunal remains we should have a proper permission as well proper ways of chemical analysis without discouraging the feelings of peoples of the society.

For the benefit of students as well as researchers and being an environmental archaeologist some of the reliable information of above techniques or methods are being mentioned in this paper which are parts of the studies of various researchers mentioned in review of literature as well as contents of Encyclopaedia Wikipedia.

Meanwhile, I would also like to add that for conducting environmental archaeological invention there are some other archaeological techniques or methods which are equally important along with the above subfields.

1. Dendrochronology

It is an absolute dating method, which exploits the relationship between the earth's climate and the growth rate of trees. In American southwest initially it was used a chronological tool as a means of reconstructing palaeo-climate. It is a simple method of dating. In living trees, the number of rings from bark to the pith can be calculated to give an accurate age of the tree. But in archaeological wood samples, only patterns of ring remain intact and each of them represents a calendar year of growth, but of unknown age. The patterns of present and ancient sample are compared to achieve a cross match. By counting the number of rings from a tree ring of unknown age back to the cross match series of ancient sample, an absolute date of a site is determined. Sections of the tree are cut through woodcutter, which are examined in calibrated ocular.

2. Radiocarbon Dating

It is most widely used absolute dating method in archaeology. Materials used in this method are bone, charcoal, lithic etc. and the instrument used is Accelerator Mass Spectrometer (AMS), Carbon Accelerator. It can date the

samples of organic materials ranging in age to 60,000 years B.P., which is based on the half-life of ^{14}C of carbon (i.e. 5,569 years).

3. Thermo-Luminescence (TL) Dating

In this absolute dating method ceramics, lithic and metal objects can be used for dating, which can be date the ceramic material back to 2, 00,000 years with an accuracy of 10 percent. It is particularly useful in authentication of pottery. In this technique ceramic samples are heated above the 750-degree Celsius for emitting the light, and through the emitted light the date of the site is calculated.

4. Potassium Argon Dating

This method of dating is also just like to the radiocarbon dating which is based on the analysis of radioactive element of potassium (K). This is an important method for dating the oldest archaeological sites. The upper limit of this method is 30 billion years, because its half-life is 13 billion years. The radioactive of potassium is K^{40} , which is degraded in to Calcium-40 and Argon-40.

5. Electron Spin Resonance (ESR)

It is an instrumental technique, which can dates archaeological specimens by assessing the amount of radiation damaged from soil radioactivity and cosmic rays. Which has accumulated at the time of object making? Soil is generally suitable sample for this technique.

6. Amino Acid Racemization

In this method the instrument used is gas chromatograph and materials used are bones. With help of Amino Acid Racemization we can date the samples of 5000 to 1, 00,000 years B. P., as the half-life of aspartic acid, the amino acid used in AAR dating of bone, is about 15,000 years at 20 degree Celsius.

7. Microstructure Analysis

General Microscopy

The hand lens and optical microscope are used laboratories to assist in visual examination of artifacts in archaeological.

Metallography: Metallography is a form of microscopy, which employs light reflected from the polished and etched surface of a sample fragment of a metal object. The metal is made up of many molecules, or development of small grains. The size and shape of these individual grains are studied by using the Metallography, which gives information about the thermo-mechanical history of the object.

Petrography: It refers to the microscopic examination of non-metallic substances to identify their mineral constituents, which is done with the aid of polarizing and analyzer optical microscope. Actually each mineral has a

unique set of optical properties. By using polarizing and analyzer optical microscopy it is therefore, possible to identify what mineral or crystal phases are present? It is also useful in identifying the source of the used clay in ceramic making.

Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM): Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) is particularly useful in the detailed examination of surface texture and it is applied to ceramics, metal, stone artifacts, organic materials such as wood and bone. In SEM a small artifact is placed in an evacuated column then is bombarded with a beam of electrons, and secondary electron emitted by the sample are then collected and amplified by the instrument. In this process the entire surface must be scanned in order to produce a complete image. Resulting picture is displayed on a cathode ray tube, which can be photographed.

Phase Analysis (X-Ray Diffraction, XRD): XRD is used to identify minerals and other crystalline phases found in archaeological samples. It is especially useful in study of ceramics. This technique is a valuable tool on provenience studies of pottery, because some time the XRD results can associate raw minerals with the finished products. It has also been used to study the mineral phases in bone, stone and metal artifacts. Power camera or a diffractometer is usually used in XRD analysis.

8. Elemental Analysis

Spectroscopy and Spectrophotometry: Instruments utilized in this method are Spectrophotometer and Flame Photometer. It is useful for estimating the concentration level of different elements in various types of archaeological objects.

X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF): This is also a method for analyzing the clay profile in which X-Ray fluorescent Spectrometer is used as an instrument. This method is significantly useful in tracing out the elemental composition in pottery and ceramics.

Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA): This method is used for the estimation of elemental composition in the metal and lithic objects. The instrument used is Neutron activation analyzer.

Mass Spectrophotometry (MS): Due to the use of mass spectrophotometer this method is known as mass spectrometry that is used in radiocarbon dating as well as estimation of isotopic ratios of different elements such as Carbon, Nitrogen, Strontium, Oxygen etc. in various types of organic materials.

Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry (AAS) and Inductively Coupled Plasma Emission Spectrophotometry (ICPES): Both of these techniques are helpful in estimating the concentration level of different major and minor

elements in archaeological faunal remains, soils, ceramics etc. Due to deficiency of time it is impossible to talk about the detailed methodology of every technique. Therefore, I would like to describe about the importance of elemental analysis in archaeology as I am working on this discipline since last few years.

9. Trace Element Analysis in Archaeological Soil and Faunal Remains: Reflections on Habitational intensity and Palaeodietary Behaviour: Based on the trace element analysis in faunal remains and archaeological soils we can not only get the information about the palaeodiet, palaeoclimate but also can locate various activity areas of ancient occupation.

Case Studies on Trace element and Isotopic Ratios of Carbon and Nitrogen carried by the Author on various Archaeological and Modern Samples: We have carried out a number of studies on trace element analysis and isotopic ratios of carbon, nitrogen in archaeological faunal remains and soils from various archaeological sites of mid-Central Garhwal Himalayas, excavated by the department of history and archaeology, HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar Garhwal Uttarakhand. Besides analysis of archaeological soils and faunal remains, studies on the analysis of modern soils and bone remains are also conducted accordingly. Summary of some of our investigations are described below:-

1. Reconstruction of Palaeodiet and Environmental Condition of Ancient Population of Mid-Central Garhwal Himalayas through the Estimation of Trace Elements and Isotopic Ratios of Carbon & Nitrogen: This investigation was based on the analysis of human and faunal remains recovered from different archaeological sites of Mid-central Garhwal Himalayas dated to c. 1000 B.C. to 1000 A.D. i.e. from Malari, Purola, Ranihat, Thapli, Banderkhet and Mordhwaj, Roopkund (16500 feet above from main sea level). For this purpose, the long and compact part of the limb bones of various animal species and human was collected from these archaeological sites during the excavation, which was carried out by the department of History and Archaeology, H.N.B. Garhwal University during the last 10 years.

The collected faunal remains or bone samples were cleaned and pretreated in the laboratory through different established techniques, digested chemically and finally trace elements were analysed through Atomic Absorption and Inductively coupled Plasma Emission Spectrophotometer, while isotopic ratios of carbon were estimated through Atomic Mass Spectrophotometer.

The results obtained from trace elements and isotopic ratios indicated that all the animal species recovered from different archaeological sites of

Mid-Central Garhwal Himalaya belonged to terrestrial herbivore group and majority of these animals were domesticated. The estimated values of carbon isotope also indicated about the intake of C4 plants by the majority of these animals. Though the analytical values from the faunal remains of few animals are indicating a rich intake of C3 diet. Besides this, analysis of human remains from Roopkund Lake (16500, feet from main sea level, dated to 9th century A.D.) indicated a rich amount of omnivorous food in their diet with the consumption of C4 plants and some meat consuming peoples were also noticed.

Estimated results of isotopic ratios of carbon and trace element analysis of faunal remains recovered from different archaeological sites of Mid-Central Garhwal Himalaya and adjoining areas also clearly indicated that the cattle and goats used by ancient occupants of this region, belong to the domestic herbivore group, whereas the pig belong to domestic omnivore group. The isotopic ratios estimated from the same faunal remains also indicated that the ancient people of this region had good knowledge of agriculture, as the domestic animals were nourished by such type of food. The significant animal species mainly used by these peoples were Cattle (cow, bull, ox, buffalo), sheep, goat, pig, ass, fowl, deer and fishes.

It has also been confirmed that majority of these animals were used for their food purpose, as the majority of faunal remains were having a number of cut marks. Besides this, the ancient people of Mid-Central Himalaya had also used some of the wild animals (deer and rabbit) and aquatic animals (fishes) for their food purpose, because deep cut marks were also found on these faunal remains. At the same time, it is interesting to note that more than 80 % of these animals were from young group, which also revealed that the ancient people of this region had a good knowledge of the nutritional value of meat. Therefore, they had sloughed young animals for their food purpose (Farswan & Nautiyal, 1997; Farswan & Price, 2002; Farswan & Singh, 2007 and Farswan & Pharswan, 2009).

2. Investigation of Phosphorus Enrichment in the Burials of Kumaun, mid-Central Himalaya, India: In this study we have conducted soil analysis of archaeological soil samples collected from the megalithic burial sites of Sanana and Baseri, Ram Ganga valley, Almora district of Uttarakhand, to see the phosphate enrichment. It is also well-known that phosphate analysis is basically used an archaeological techniques to see the activity areas in the ancient or past occupational site, and it is usually the percentage of anthropogenic (organic) phosphate. The enrichment of anthropogenic (organic) phosphate means phosphate generated by human occupation through different activities.

But it is well known that in burial sites no any habitation activities is conducted, so we cannot see any enrichment of the anthropogenic (organic) phosphate, but our results obtained from elemental analysis of archaeological soils from Sanana and Basera clearly revealed that in both these burial sites enrichment of inorganic phosphate is noticed in place of organic phosphate (Farswan & Nautiyal, 1997).

3. Comparative Study of Occupational Intensity in modern Settlement of Alaknanda and Nandakini Valley of Chamoli, Uttarakhand, India: These studies were carried out in the modern settlement of Nandakini and Alaknanda valley, district Chamoli (Uttarakhand), India. The goal of these studies was mainly to reconstruct the intensity of occupation in different locations of modern settlements through elemental analysis of anthropogenic soil. For this purpose, more than 500 soil samples were collected from different villages of the Nandakini and Alaknanda Valley. Trace element analysis was conducted using the inductively coupled plasma emission spectrometer (ICP).

The chemical analysis revealed that anthropogenic soils from hearth and cooking areas (HCAs), refuse deposition areas (RDAs), cow dung deposition areas (CDAs) and toilet areas (TLAs) are capable for holding rich compositions of calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), sodium (Na), potassium (K) and phosphorus (P), while anthropogenic soils from sleeping areas (SLAs), agricultural areas (AGAs) and barren land areas (BLAs) show a lower concentration of these elements, indicating that these soils are less capable for holding access composition of the said elements. These both investigation provided valuable information about the trace element analysis which is significantly useful in identifying activity-rich areas and non-activity areas in the past settlement (Pharswan and Farswan 2012; Farswan, 2013).

4. Effects of Buried Environment on the Bones of a Modern Ox (*Bos indicus*) Study of Isotopic Analysis & Trace Element Analysis : These two analytical studies were carried out mainly to see the effects of buried environment on the trace element profile and isotopic ratios carbon and nitrogen of an old Ox (*Bos indicus*) which was buried in April 2006 by the local villagers of Chauras after the death. Bone samples of Ox were recovered after excavation of the buried area of Chauras in the month of May 2010. This village is located in the right bank of river Alaknanda in Tehri district of Uttarakhand. The collected bone samples were cleaned and pretreated as per authentic scientific methods, later on examined morphologically to see the pre and post mortem changes, ash of the bones were made which were followed the chemical digestion. The final solutions obtained from different samples were passed through Inductively Coupled Plasma Emission Spectrometer

(ICP) for estimating the concentration of trace elements i.e. Ca, Ba, Sr, Mg, P and Zn.

Results obtained from the study of trace element profile in various bone samples indicated that buried environmental conditions of Chauras have not affected the original profile of the elements in the bones of Ox which has also been confirmed by the hydrogen ion concentration (pH) estimated in different levels of buried ground and ratio of Ca/P as well. However, the morphological examination of bones indicated that a number of cavities were evolved in left femur. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that the trace element profile of left femur of ox has been changed adversely as compared to reference samples. Therefore, it is believed that the adverse changes in the concentration of trace elements occurred due to the cavities evolved in the femur bone during the life span of Ox and these cavities may be developed due to some bone disease which could be the ultimate cause of death of Ox.

The estimated values of isotopic ratios of carbon and nitrogen from the bones of ox also revealed that the environmental preservative condition of Chauras have not affected the original condition of bone of ox, because ratios of these both element were similar to reference samples except in case of left femur. These studies clearly revealed that such type of scientific analysis is significant for reconstructing the environmental conditions and their effects (Farswan & Singh, 2012 and Farswan, 2012).

5. Study of Preservation Status and Dietary Reconstruction in the Human Remains recovered from Roopkund Lake, through Chemical Analysis: This study was carried out in the bone remains collected from Roopkund Lake in district Chamoli Garhwal, Uttarakhand which is located at 5029 meters from main sea level in between Nanda Ghunghti and Trishuli peak. This historical site belongs to 9th century A.D. The bone remains after pretreatment and digestion were followed through established scientific methods, i.e. chemical analysis, for the estimation of concentration of different elements such as, calcium, strontium, barium, magnesium and zinc. The isotopic ratios of Carbon and Nitrogen were also estimated in the same samples of bone. Both these analyses were carried out through Inductively Coupled Plasma Spectroscopy (ICP) and Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS).

Results obtained from the estimation of isotopic ratios of Carbon, Nitrogen and trace element analysis of faunal remains recovered from Roopkund Lake, Central Garhwal Himalaya revealed that the faunal remains of peoples buries around 9th century are well preserved till the date. It is also evident from the trace elements and isotopic ratios that these peoples belonged to omnivore group with rich C4 and meat consuming group as it is noticed in

their diet. This information's clearly indicated that there were two groups of peoples which were buried at Roopkund.

6. Effects of Buried Environment on Trace Element Profile and Isotopic Ratios of Carbon of Bones from Experimental Himalayan Domestic Goat (*Capra jharal*) :This study was conducted in the bone remains of experimental goats, as they were fed by various types of induced diet sometimes eight years back. It was aimed to establish a base-line data of different elements in the bone remains of Himalayan domestic goats (*Capra jharal*) relation to different buried levels of depth. Trace elements were analyses from those faunal remains through inductively coupled Plasma Emission (ICPE) Spectrophotometer. The results obtained are significant and it is observed that the preservation status play an important role in altering the concentration level of trace elements, and it is seen that the alteration is directly proportional to the buried level. Meanwhile it was also noticed that the lowest level i.e. 1.80 meter of depth was found suitable for the preservation of skeletal remains, as the value of pH and concentration of different trace elements analyses in the bone remains of goat buried at this level were unchanged up to eight years (Farswan et.al. 2015).

7. Effects of Buried Environment on the Morphology and Trace Element Profile of Faunal Remains: An Experimental Study:This study was carried out mainly to know the effects of buried environment on morphology as well as elemental profile of the faunal remains. For this purpose we have collected 50 modern bone samples of goat, sheep and ox from different locations of the Garhwal region and these samples were buried in the ground in various places, at different levels of depth with the measurement of pH at different buried levels. After four years all the buried bone samples were recovered; pretreated sequentially in the laboratory, examined morphologically and processed for getting the ash of each sample. Trace elements were estimated through spectrometry methods in Laboratory for archaeological chemistry, Wisconsin University, Madison, USA.

The morphological examination revealed that the bones buried in highly acidic and alkaline soil and at the level of 50 cm to 75 cm were proceeding towards the disintegration as they were recovered in bad condition, while other faunal remains which were buried in normal acidic and alkaline soil and beyond the level of 100 cm recovered in well preserved condition. However, elemental analysis also revealed that no any major changes in trace element profile has been observed among the faunal remains recovered in good conditions but in morphologically disintegrated faunal remains a significant change in the concentration level of different elements have been noticed. It clearly showed

that both these factors are positively responsible for disintegration of archaeological remains (Farswan & Pharswan, 2019).

8. Utility of Trace element Analysis in Reconstructing the Intensity of Occupation in an Ancient Harappan Archaeological Site Dholavira: Trace element analysis was carried out in the soil samples from an important archaeological site Dholavira, to see the intensity of occupation in different cultural phases of occupation. It is evident from the archaeological remains recovered from Dholavira excavation that there were seven cultural phases in the settlement; it was excavated by Archaeological Survey of India, under the Directorship of Dr. R.S. Bisht. The results obtained from trace element analysis of soils from different cultural phases revealed that a gradual increase in these elements was observed up to fifth phase which was the peak/mature phase of the occupation. However, after fifth phase a gradual decrease in the values of trace elements were observed up to seventh phase which was the late cultural phase of the habitation (Farswan et.al. 2001). Our results were positively relative to the chronological sequence established by ASI.

The archaeological studies mentioned above significantly revealed that such type of study *i.e.* various aspects environmental archaeology is a major part of the archaeology for reconstructing a real history of past occupation. Therefore, for establishing the base-line data, chemical analyses and isotopic ratios of modern human and animal bone from various species, various categories of food stuffs of these of animals, will be helpful to assess the relative utilization of food from different ecosystems, climatic zones, discrete geochemical environments, tropic levels and different photosynthetic categories of Indian biosphere, *i.e.* marine VS terrestrial, arid land VS humid, local catchments with sediments of different geological age, primary producers VS herbivore VS carnivore and C3 VS C4 VS CAM (Crassulacean Acid Metabolism) categories of photosynthetic plants (Farswan, 2007).

At the end of this article I have to state that a lot of scope is there in Indian archaeological context to analyze various archaeological faunal remains chemically (Elemental analysis, estimation of isotopic ratios of calcium, nitrogen, oxygen, strontium et.), for getting fruitful information about various prehistoric and historic ancient cultures, as a lot of sites has already been excavated by various Universities and archaeologists, but the faunal remains are still not analysed chemically at the large scale.

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Oral History and the Partition of Punjab

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Abstract

The 1947 Partition of India witnessed one of the largest forced migrations in the human history that was based on ethnic grounds. It was estimated that more than ten million refugees crossed the border in Punjab where Muslims went towards Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs moved towards India. People panicked with fear and uncertainty hastened to cross the borders through buses, carts, trains, and most of all on foot in the shape of large kafilas. It was accompanied by mass violence in which more than one million people lost their lives. In this paper, an initiative has been taken to explore the Partition and its legacy with the use of oral histories from the survivors of Partition, to fetch the untold suffering, trauma and pain related to the violence upon women and, to ascertain as how could such richly knitted different communities in Punjab accustomed to centuries old relative peace and harmony took to violent recourse and inflicted so much injury and shame upon each other.

After a long-drawn struggle against the British rule, India finally attained independence on 15 August 1947, but before the Indians could fully realize and enjoy the sense of liberation and victory, they woke up to find that a great tragedy had accompanied the freedom in the shape of partition of the country on religious identities. It resulted into the Partition of Punjab into Western Punjab and Eastern Punjab. This partition of the country made people in Punjab homeless, those people, who felt safer

while crossing that 'line', the 'line' that was neither drawn by them nor have they ever imagined of creating it.¹

The exchange of people 'from unsafe and vulnerable places to safer havens' during the partition of Punjab witnessed the slaughter, barbarism and mass violence in the name of 'ethnic cleansing'² in which 'nearly a million died and seventy-five thousand women are said to have been abducted and raped'.³ There was a wide-spread looting of properties on both sides and numerous homes were destroyed. We cannot find any other such kind of instance in entire world where people have left their homelands on such a large scale due to the partition of the country.⁴ The entire Punjab was becoming a graveyard of destruction.⁵ The horror and brutality of the time can better be traced by looking into those memories of Partition that the survivors had narrated from time to time. The oral histories gathered through the witnesses give us the true picture of the magnitude of the calamity and provide us an opportunity to deeply explore the 'human dimensions' of this part of the Indian freedom struggle where the rich province of Punjab dealt with a different reality of the independence of the nation.

The most distinguishable contribution of oral history is to discover such experiences and perspectives of people which otherwise remain 'hidden from history'.⁶ The term 'oral history' is new, but it does not mean that it had no roots in the past. In fact, oral history is as old as history itself.⁷ Oral history was established in 1948 as a modern technique for historical documentation when the Columbia University historian Allan Nevins began recording the memories of persons significant in American Life. In the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, United States of America, Louis M. Starr (1917-1980 A.D.) who worked with Prof. Allan Nevins and subsequently succeeded him in 1958 as Director of the Oral History Project in the Columbia University has defined Oral History as 'Primary source material obtained by recording the spoken words - generally by means of planned tape recorded interviews of persons deemed to harbour hitherto available information worth preserving, it is more than a tool and less than a discipline'.⁸ Oral tradition predominated in the pre-literate societies before the dawn of the civilizations. John Malcolm significantly wrote in every research that into general history of mankind, it is of utmost essential importance to hear what a nation has to say of

itself and knowledge obtained from such sources has a value independent of its historical utility. It aids the promotion of intercourse and leads to the establishment of friendship between the nations.⁹ The essence of oral history has been very beautifully explained by Alessandro Portelli in these words, ‘the task and theme of oral history - an art dealing with the individual in social and historical context- is to explore this distance and this bond [between ‘history’ and personal experience], to search out the memories in the private, enclosed space of houses and – without violating that space, without cracking the uniqueness of each spore with an arrogant need to scrutinize – to connect them with ‘history’- and in turn force history to listen to them’.¹⁰

A lot of literature and history related to partition has been written so far. While writing history based on facts, many times writers and historians miserably failed to record the troubles and mental conditions of the people at that time. Oral sources try to understand why, how, and what happened to people at that time by talking to them and peeping into their state of mind and feeling the stress involved with the events related to the partition. The facts and reasons that have not come before us in writing and the gaps that have remained in ‘partition history’ can be filled and better understood with the help of such oral histories.¹¹ Several aspects of Partition as to how families were separated, loss of age-old ties and friendships, how people went through the trauma and rebuilt their lives at new places, how the journey through dislocation and trauma shaped their future lives and many other things can better be understood by way of exploring the oral histories. The Partition still exists in the families specifically in Punjab where the incidents related to partition are being repeatedly narrated now and then. Such memories tend to bring forward somewhat the ‘underside’ of the partition history. It is quite noticeable that ‘the author of a written document is usually no longer living when the document is used by a historian. In contrast, oral documents are derived from living persons; at least the initial recording of any such document on tape or paper is a product of living persons in conversation. Thus, whereas written documents are often referred to as dead letters, oral documents are generally styled as living testimonies’.¹² We can better acknowledge the Partition events by getting into the memories of the survivors, the way they remember the Partition is the most authentic source apart from other official records. The British historian, Paul Thompson writes, ‘oral sources

have an equal potential for exploring the political attitudes and personal lives of the more typical unknown activists, and equally of the unorganized, quiescent majority of the population'.¹³

Almost every section of the society got severely affected by the decision of the Partition of Punjab, but the oppression of women was extremely painful and unbearable. The division of Punjab had forced the women survivors of Partition to endure such hardships of which the wounds are still fresh in their minds and had left a permanent mark on their souls. When they were asked to recall those events, they become numb with the memories of that time and their tears refuse to stop remembering the pains involved with those times. The pain involved with the decision of the Partition of Punjab was equally borne by the Hindus and the Sikhs as well as the Muslims, but the women from both sides have paid very hefty price of this Partition. There were instances when the women were abducted and raped and then forcibly kept in the homes to inflict other inhumane tortures upon them. Such miserable conditions forced them to take extreme steps, such as suicide. It can be said that two new nations came into being by deceiving the body and soul of the women. It was the mutual hatred and enmity based on different religious inclinations among communities that killed and sacrificed the women physically as well as spiritually. It is quite true that during Partition, the women had seen many deaths even still being alive. As they witnessed killings of their siblings in front of their eyes, forcible conversions to other religion, forcibly made pregnant to bear the offspring of the other community, clothes torn apart with mutilated bodies and names like '*Jai Hind*' or '*Jai Pakistan*' were engraved on their skins that put permanent curse upon their bodies as well as their souls. Women were made the victims as they were being treated as territory to be won in egocentric communal strife in the name of nationalism. During the partition process, women had become the 'chief sufferers'¹⁴ that faced worst kind of humiliation in human history. Violent communal riots, murders and heinous crimes against women have eroded the moral and fundamental values among the people.¹⁵

The oral history interviews conducted with the survivors of the partition of Punjab provide an insight into the tremendously miserable conditions that prevailed at that time. In one of such interviews, Dr.Gurbachan Singh Rah narrated the condition at the time of partition of Punjab that there were rehabilitation camps in almost every major city.

The kind-hearted people used to give donations but there were some persons who used to visit camps only to harass and manhandle the young girls. The camps were arranged by the government as well as by some NGOs. There was an instance that a woman had given birth to a child and she was roaming and begging in the streets of Amritsar, her clothes were torn apart and soaked in blood and nobody was bothered about her pitiful condition.¹⁶ Another eye-witness account to such indifferent attitude towards the plight of women was given by a retired professor in his seventies that he was young at the time of partition and was residing at Patiala. He heard the screams of a Muslim woman who was being raped and mutilated in the nearby wholesale market but at that time he felt nothing about her. He said that 'at the time, we were not allowed to feel for 'them'. But, after nearly fifty years of that incident, he repented for his indifferent attitude for that Muslim woman at that moment.¹⁷ The innocent women were nowhere near to the reality of the future outcome of the prevailing communal hatred. We can also find similar instances in the contemporary English novels that were written on the theme of partition. The renowned English novelist Bapsi Sidhwa very remarkably produced the feminine aspects in the novel *Ice-Candy Man* through the character of *Ayah* around whom the entire storyline revolves. All the ambiguities related with the condition of women – during the dark and treacherous times of communal violence that triggered during the Partition – were cleared in the novel. The author had very beautifully portrayed the collapse of trust and relationship and, that was done no other than by the person to whom the victim trusted most.¹⁸ The horrific act of abduction was shown in these lines of the novel, 'Her lips are drawn away from her teeth, and the resisting curve of her throat opens her mouth like the dead child's screamless mouth.... Four men stand pressed against her, propping her body upright, their lips stretched in triumphant grimaces... her mouth slack and piteously gaping.... staring at us with wide-open terrified eyes',¹⁹

Such horrible conditions provoked many Hindu-Sikh families to kill their women and young girls with their own hands to save them from such grave humiliation. Many women sacrificed their lives by jumping into the wells to save themselves from such inhumane acts of violence.²⁰ The women not only faced 'brutal violation of their bodies' during Partition of Punjab but such women also experienced betrayal of relationships in later years by their own family members.²¹

After receiving number of complaints from the relatives of ‘missing’ women, both the governments of India and Pakistan passed an Inter-Dominion Agreement in November 1947 for the recovery of such reported missing cases. As per official figures, from December 1947 till the end of July 1948, the number of recovered women in both countries was 9,362 in India and 5,510 in Pakistan and a sharp decline was observed in the number of recoveries after this period.²² Perhaps, the reason behind the sharp decline in the recoveries after July 1948 was that a lot of women had settled in changed conditions at new places. Also, they have no idea about their lost families. It was observed by the Liaison officer posted at Gujranwala that when Muslim women were sent back after the partition, they returned after some time because many had lost their families back there and there were also some instances when the families of such women refused to accept them as they were coming back after staying with some person of ‘other’ religion.²³ Such an instance where the difficulties were faced in the rehabilitation process due to the rejection of abducted woman by her own family was very clearly shown by the author in the novel *Ice-Candy-Man* in these lines, ‘Hamida was kidnapped by the Sikhs...she was taken away to Amritsar. Once that happens, sometimes, the husband-or his family -won’t take her back...they can’t stand their women being touched by other men’.²⁴

In an interview with Bibi Jangir Kaur of *Landran* (now in Rupnagar district, Punjab), it was observed that earlier her name was Pakeez and she was a Muslim but at the time of Partition, she was saved by someone with whom she later married and have children as well. She refused to go back to Pakistan as she has no knowledge about the whereabouts of her family. Though she felt contented now, but still sometimes, the memories of her lost family members made her feel depressed and uncomfortable.²⁵ In another such interview, Bibi Kartar Kaur narrated about the hardships that she had suffered after Partition and told that she took to the task of sewing clothes at meagre rates and almost every day she used to listen sarcastic remarks from different persons in the society. She had to bear those lewd remarks as she was not left with any other alternative, but still she managed to procure means for the upbringing of her small children at that time.²⁶

It has been observed by looking into these ‘oral histories’ that the development of communal ideology in Punjab was not the outcome of some sudden change of mindset among its inhabitants, rather it was a

slow process that has developed in many centuries through the rule of different communities in the form of Aryans, Persians, Alexander and his followers, the long period of Muslim rule, the Sikh rule, and then finally the British came on the scene who vigorously promoted 'Divide and Rule' policy. The geographical location of the Punjab as the frontier province also added to it. The foreign invaders proliferated in it that resulted into the growth of mixed communities in Punjab especially the Hindus and the Muslims. It was observed that before the partition of Punjab the Hindus and the Sikhs used to live at same place (*mohalla*) whereas the Muslims used to live in separate areas (*mohallas*). It is quite questionable that why the living places was also distributed as per religious allegiance. In one of the interviews, Malwinder Singh Waraich, the survivor of the partition of Punjab, pointed out that there was a feeling of untouchability in the hearts of Hindus towards the Muslims. Separate glasses were kept on Hindu confectionary shops. If a Muslim or a Harijan came to the shop, they will have to use that separate glass only. During her childhood, once Amrita Pritam, the noted Punjabi poet and novelist, visited her native place Gujranwala with her mother to attend the annual fair of Sultan Sahi Sarvar. She noticed that at the railway station, the hawkers were selling the water separately as Hindu *pani* (water) and Muslim *pani* (water) and on seeing that she innocently asked her mother, 'Is water also Hindu-Muslim?'²⁷ In the similar fashion, Hindu shopkeepers usually did not take money directly from the hands of the Muslims and the Harijans, instead the money was kept separately, later it was washed (cleansed) with water and then mixed with other currency, but this was not the trend in Muslim shops.²⁸

It is worthwhile to mention that there was a sharp contrast in the occupations of the Hindus and the Muslims in Punjab. Though the population of Muslims (50.6%) was greater as compared to the Hindus (35.7%) and the Sikhs (12.1%)²⁹, but economically the Muslims were weaker in comparison to the Hindus and the Sikhs. The chief occupations in Punjab were agriculture, trade, and money lending. Majority of the Muslims were in agriculture whereas the Hindus and the Sikhs were in trade and money lending. The Muslims lagged behind in terms of wealth, jobs and education in comparison to the Hindus, thus the Muslims wanted communal representation in government services.³⁰ There was an instance in September 1922 in Multan that due to the spread of plague, many Hindu

moneylenders left the place and went far away. In their absence, the Muslim debtors got an opportunity that looted their shops and go downs and also lit their records, so that they would get freedom from the debt.³¹ The economic superiority of the non-Muslims over the Muslim community created a sense of fear among the Muslims that they were in constant danger of exploitation by the Hindus and the Sikhs, that ultimately gave rise to Hindu-Muslim antagonism.³² Dr. Harkirat Singh, told in an interview that Rawalpindi division was dominated by Sikh moneylenders who had captured the lands of the Muslims by levying hefty interest on the loan amounts. So, at the time of partition, the Muslims took revenge from such Sikh moneylenders who were forced to leave the place, and when those Sikhs told their plight to their brethren in Eastern Punjab, the riots broke out and the Muslims were treated in the same manner.³³ Amrita Pritam, the renowned Punjabi poet and novelist said that, 'until the eruption of violence I had not known that religion could be such a potent weapon to spread hate and to use ill-will for hatching political conspiracies.... What sort of shadowy tree was this, which was being infected with termites till its roots'?'³⁴

To sum up, we can say that Oral histories can 'sensualize the past' by taking historians outside the text and into the lives of people.³⁵ The knowledge of the past helps 'to refute myths, half-truths, fabrications and faulty perspectives and validates the story of the lived experiences'.³⁶

It can be said that if properly done, an oral history helps to illuminate and demarcate the official records and proves beneficial to fully evaluate the previous decisions taken by the governments at the time of Partition of Punjab, so that we can improve and make better future of our nation. As the events related to Partition were recounted through oral histories, we can unveil the centuries-old cultural development of Punjab. It further helps us to get better understanding and insight into the caliginous past of the Partition of Punjab.

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Tablighi Jamaat and Islamic Revivalism: A Historical and Contemporary Perspective

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Abstract

Movements for reformation inside Islam in India primarily meant to let the people stick to the fundamentals of the basic tenets of Islam as preached by Prophet Muhammad. Wahabi and Deobandi movements in 18th and 19th century aimed for the same. Tablighi Jamaat emerged from Deobandi movement also aimed to create a band of preachers to preach the true Islam to the followers. The paper seeks to address the issues as how this movement emerged and what were its methodology and early activities. It also tends to narrate how it attacked on the syncretic tradition of Indian society. The paper also looks into whether this organisation has any link with the extremists and terror groups? The author has also attempted to look into the overseas network of the organisation with a brief introduction of its philosophical and theological beliefs. The recent COVID-19 pandemic brought this little known organisation in the limelight however in a negative note. However the movement by itself despite conservative and orthodox is not divisive in the character.

Background

Eighteenth and Nineteenth century India witnessed several Muslim revivalist currents such as Wahabi and Deobandi movement. These movements aimed to reform Islam from within. Tablighi Jamaat literary means a society of preachers was established in 1926 at Mewat, south of Haryana, by an Islamic Deobandi scholar Muhammad Ilyas who was inspired from the Hanafi Sunni School of jurisprudence. The aim of this society was to create a band of preachers to preach the true Islam to the followers. He

coined the slogan for this society as ‘Oh Muslims, Become True Muslims’. Its focus was not to convert people from other faith into Islam but rather purifying the faith within. Currently Tablighi Jamaat has presence in more than 150 countries while the largest group is in Bangladesh.¹

Attack on Synergetic Tradition

Muhammad Ilyas during his visit to Mewat region witnessed meo muslims, who were a Rajput ethnic group following a more pluralistic and syncretic tradition rather than conservative Islam. Before the Tablighi Jamaat gained ground the Muslims of Mewat practised dual religious rituals. Muslims here practiced *nikah* (Islamic wedding) as well the *saptapadi* (an important ritual associated to Hindu marriages). There was also a practice to pray to lord Shiva to receive blessings before pious occasion among Muslims. The Meo Muslims residing here had a very different identity than a typical Muslim. They used to wear *dhoti-kurta* and did not keep beards. They did not even know how to offer *namaz*, and local mosques were used as warehouses for cattle fodder. While digging wells in their fields, the Meos would first install a brick in the name of Bhairav *baba* and many were staunch devotees of Lord Shiva. The Muslims here used to worship the cow. The Govardhan festival was also celebrated.² Muslims in several places across Mewat still engage in age-old rituals like *kuan puja* (worshipping of village well).

According to Professor and sociologist Shail Mayaram, ‘Several Muslims had names like Balbir Singh or Rameshwar. In some ways, mixed culture has always prevailed in this region. Meo Muslims had a kinship system like the Hindu castes of Haryana. Tablighi Jamaat didn’t have much influence in Mewat before the Partition. But during the Partition, the Meo Muslims were slaughtered in Alwar and Bharatpur regions (Rajasthan) even though they followed a mixed culture’.³ The wounds of the Meo Muslims gave space to the Tablighi Jamaat. The Jamaat told Meo Muslims that these wounds were a punishment from Allah. ‘So, after the Partition, the Meo Muslims felt that it is better if they stay on one side’.⁴

Maulana Maududi’s description of the Mewatis, with their Hindu names, their ignorance of prayer, their idols and tufts of hair, has been absorbed into Tabligh legend. “It seemed as if that very spirit, with which at the beginning of Islam the Arab Bedouin rose up for the tabligh of the straight path, now had been born in these people.” If this were the time of jahiliyya, there had to be Bedouins.⁵

Early Activities

In 1932, Maulana Illias convened a large panchayat that was attended by 107 *chaudharis* (eminent persons) from the Mewat region. Fifteen resolutions were passed during this meet, dealing with subjects like teaching people how to offer *namaz*, foundation of new mosques alongside the older ones, not emphasising too much for change in local style of dressing, and further expansion of Islamic education. The first-ever *jamaat* (congregation) was convened in 1939 at Kandhla, Shamli in present Uttar Pradesh.

Communal but Apolitical approach

Since its beginning the Tablighi had declared themselves as a non political outfit and shun violence in the name of religion. Tablighi Jamaat has been banned in some Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, whose governments see its puritanical preaching as extremist. Members of the group visit mosques, schools, colleges in different parts of India as well as the world to preach. However the Jamaat seeks to work for the sole benefit of the Sunni Muslim community and thus have a communal or community centric approach.

Tablighi Jamaat asserts an avowedly apolitical stance. The group focuses on transforming the individual. This approach allows the group to remain adaptable to diverse socio-political contexts and has facilitated its expansion. By remaining apolitical Tablighi Jamaat avoids political confrontation, allowing it to exist in countries from Latin America to Africa to the Middle East without fear of proscription.

Tablighi Jamaat remains neutral on various extremist and terrorist groups, neither condemning nor supporting their actions. Militant groups may try to infiltrate the Tablighi Jamaat in order to gain a cover for obtaining visas and travelling abroad. The movement's neutrality allows cordial relations with authorities, or at least keeps them from incurring official harassment. The membership of Jamaat today approximates Eighty-million and spreads in 150 countries from Bangladesh to Kenya to Eire.⁶

Movement of Encapsulation and Sufi influence

Barbara Metcalf terms this as a movement of encapsulation and aimed to serve communal interest. Tablighi Jama'at began a worldwide program, particularly from the 1960s, with the spread of immigrant populations to America and Europe and beyond.⁷ Typical of the Deobandi 'ulama, they were also part of Sufi networks, devoted to their sheikhs from whom they received initiation and charismatic blessing, engaged in sufi disciplines and inner

purification, cherishing the genealogy of holy men whose links passed back to the Prophet Muhammad himself.⁸

Activities and Structure of the Movement

A central theme of the movement is the absolute focus on individual moral behaviour in contrast to social and economic program. The following description of the current center of Tabligh work in Pakistan in a recent autobiography of a person involved in Tablighi Jama'at is worth mention:

‘They arrange ijtimas [convocations], go out to different countries for a year or seven months and remain busy in the local mosques inviting people to participate in the missionary work among Muslims, who have become Muslims in name only and abandoned all religious practices. East.... Jamaats would go on foot to the remotest areas of Pakistan and suffer hardships to win the pleasure of Allah subhanahu Taala. A majority of our people do not understand the meaning of Kalama [the attestation of faith]; prayers do not regulate our lives; and we fail to discharge our duties. Our rich do not pay zakat [obligatory alms] and accumulate wealth in safe deposits’.⁹

There is no formal bureaucratic structure to this decentralized movement; there are no offices and no archives; and even if there were, would not be open for public. According to Tabligh worker who resides in Raiwind, accounts once read are not kept.¹⁰ Yoginder Sikand, author of a well-researched history of Tablighi Jama'at, assured that accounts are kept in the Delhi headquarters at Nizamuddin, although he was yet to see them.¹¹ Maulana Muhammad Yusuf around 1965, overall amir of Tablighi Jama'at at the center at Nizamuddin, New Delhi, posed of accounts of the experience of the first generations of Tablighis beyond the subcontinent.

The core of the organization is comprised of “full-time” Tablighis who comprise the *shura* (council) and who are usually the elders of the mosques affiliated with the group. In addition to this core, there are the travelling Tablighis who undertake proselytizing missions over varying durations.¹² Formed into *jamaats* of approximately ten people, these Tablighis’ missions last three days, forty days (*chilla*), four months, or one year. The jamaat’s destination and desired area of focus generally determines the length of these missions. Those who go for three days concentrate on a local city, while a jamaat travelling for a month will do so throughout their country. The longer tours of four months to one year generally take the Tablighis abroad.

During these tours, the jamaat-under the leadership of its emir-stays at a local mosque, which serves as its base for the duration. Four or five

members of the group conduct daily *ghast*, during which they visit neighborhoods and homes, asking the men of the household to attend mosque for *Maghrib* (sunset) prayers. Those who attend are offered the *dawa* (invitation) as the Tablighis outline their six principles and encourage attendees to form their own jamaat. Members voluntarily work for the organization and there is no registration process in the group. Participants are free to leave the movement at any time. Consequently, Tablighi Jamaat has a loose, informal recruitment process and attracts members of varying commitment. For example, some members only engage in group activities episodically, while others will do so annually. All of these factors contribute to the uncertainty regarding Tablighi Jamaat's membership numbers. Tablighis in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have competing claims as to which comprise the movement's international headquarters.

Overseas Network and Activities

Tablighis have developed a sophisticated understanding of how to engage and work the levers of local political power. In France, for example, local Muslim groups were unable to build a mosque in the southern port city of Marseille until the Tablighis succeeded in partnering with the city's conservative mayor, Jean-Claude Gaudin, who publicly backed the initiative. This helped clear a path for the mosque's construction in 2007.

On the other hand, when Tablighis in Britain bought a large tract of land in London and began planning for an enormous new mosque complex – which would have been the largest religious building in Britain – near the site of the 2012 Olympic facilities, opposition quickly developed. Members of the public raised concerns about having the presence of a Muslim structure in proximity to the Olympic Games site, as well as about the movement's possible ties to extremism. Despite retaining a public relations firm to address these concerns, the Tablighis were forced to scrap their plans for the mosque in early 2010. In the United States, the FBI believes some 50,000 people are associated with TJ missions, while Tablighi mosques currently operate in several U.S. states, including California, Texas and New York.¹³ West Yorkshire is the group's European headquarters. The Al-Falah Mosque in New York apparently is the group's North American headquarters.

Maintaining state control over clerics is also the reason Saudi Arabia does not allow the Tablighi Jamaat to operate in the kingdom. A transnational Islamist movement headquartered in a non-Muslim country runs counter to the Saudi policy of keeping the religious establishment under strict control and using it to bankroll fundamentalist groups elsewhere.

Perception and Liaison with Extremists

There have been perceptions among some strategic thinkers that the Tablighi Jamaat represents a fusion of religious obscurantism, missionary zeal and an enduring commitment to global jihad—a toxic cocktail that holds long-term implications for international security and for modern democracies. Basically, the Tablighi Jamaat shuns the modern world and urges its followers to replicate the life of Muhammad and work towards creating a rule of Islam on earth.¹⁴

Alex Alexiev, the late American counter terrorism expert, described the Tablighi Jamaat in an essay as ‘wolf in sheep’s clothing’.¹⁵ The hardcore jihadists the Tablighi Jamaat spawns in its ranks are later recruited by terrorist organisations as replacements for slain warriors. From Morocco and France to Indonesia and the Philippines, intelligence agencies and prosecutors have viewed the Tablighi Jamaat training as a stepping stone to membership in terrorist outfits. French intelligence officers, for example, called the Tablighi Jamaat the ‘antechamber’ of violent extremism, according to a 2002 report in *Le Monde*.¹⁶

In Britain, France, and the United States, the Tablighi Jamaat has appeared on the fringes of several terrorism investigations, leading some to speculate that its apolitical stance simply masks ‘fertile ground for breeding terrorism’.¹⁷ According to Brahma Chellany, the Tablighi Jamaat, by not recognising national borders, also challenges the nation-state system.¹⁸

‘Shoe bomber’ Richard Reid, who in 2001 tried to set off a bomb on a commercial aircraft, and John Walker Lindh, the American citizen captured by U.S. forces with Taliban soldiers in Afghanistan in 2001, both spent time in Tablighi congregations. The Tablighi Jamaat came under intense scrutiny in the US after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. ‘We have a significant presence of Tablighi Jamaat in the United States’, the deputy chief of the FBI’s international terrorism section said in 2003. ‘And we have found that Al Qaeda used them for recruiting now and in the past’.¹⁹

The Tablighi Jamaat itself does not abet terrorism, despite some individual acts of terror by its associates. However, the ideological indoctrination it imparts to the largely illiterate and semiliterate youths it enlists helps to create recruits for militant and terrorist outfits. It has long served as a recruiting ground for terrorist groups, ranging from Al Qaeda and the Taliban to two of its spinoffs—the Harakat ul-Mujahideen and the Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami. The Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami has proved a security challenge for

India in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and in states like Gujarat where it has taken over mosques from moderate Muslims and installed radical clerics.

Some Islamist militants accuse the Tablighis of being a tool of the Jews and Hindus because they deny the need for a physical jihad and focus on the 'greater jihad', which is the inner struggle for faith and piety.²⁰

Theological and Ideological Undercurrent

Muhammad Ilyas was concerned that Muslims were 'Hinduizing'. Ilyas believed reinvigorated religious practice would usher in the eventual establishment of a society based on the *sharia*. Six Principles of the Tablighi Jamaat are- *Kalimah*-an article of faith in which the *tabligh* accepts that there is no god but Allah and the Prophet Muhammad is His messenger. *Salaat*-Five daily prayers that is essential to spiritual elevation, piety, and a life free from the ills of the material world. *Ilm* and *Dhikr*-the knowledge and remembrance of Allah conducted in sessions in which the congregation listens to preaching by the *emir*, performs prayers, recites the Quran and reads *Hadith*. The congregation will also use these sessions to eat meals together, thus fostering a sense of community and identity. *Ikram-i-Muslim*-The treatment of fellow Muslims with honor and deference. *Ikhlās-i-Niyat*- Reforming one's life in supplication to Allah by performing every human action for the sake of Allah and toward the goal of self-transformation. *Tafrigh-i-Waqt*- The sparing of time to live a life based on faith and learning its virtues, following in the footsteps of the Prophet, and taking His message door-to-door for the sake of faith.

Tabligh draws two boundaries, one between Muslims and an alien cultural world of non-Muslims and a second between the faithful and the vast majority of Muslims who, however pious they may think themselves, are Muslims only in name.

They found the Chinese Muslims using toilets with no modesty or concern for the qibla direction of Mecca; they also used toilet paper; they ate left hand or even with chopsticks; they were wholly oblivious of the Prophetic practice of using the miswak twig for teeth cleaning. Men and women, moreover, mixed in public life. Muslims allowed photography. These failures were interestingly attributed to Muslims' being 'in the grip of the West'²¹ But however much they had gone astray, the Chinese Muslims were also victims in a way that could only intensify opposition to the Chinese state. Muhammad Hanif attributed the local imams to cooperate with the Tablighis to their fear of Chinese reprisals.²²

Conclusion

The recent COVID-19 pandemic brought this little known organisation in the highlights however in a negative note. Their open disdain for hygiene and commonsense can endanger public health and the larger social good. The Nizamuddin markaz which housed these hundreds of Tablighis soon became a destination of notoriety when it was found that several of the Jamaatis were Corona positive but they refused to compliance for social distancing and several of them also went for hiding due to which the spread of the epidemic became more evident. Despite these media focus there is no doubt that Tablighi Jamaat can't be compared with fundamentalist groups and organisation like Jamaat e Islami or with any extremist or terror groups. It is an organisation and movement meant to reform Islam from inside. It is a jihad for inner purification and reform. However it can't be denied that the movement is essentially based on medievalism, orthodoxy, obscurantism, and conservatism. Mewat's female literacy rate, where the movement began, is just five percent today.²³ The Jamaat remains indifferent to western liberalism. They are 'scornful of secular democracy and Western values and espouse voluntary apartheid as not merely beneficial, but crucial.'²⁴

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The Emergence of Suppressed Class Uprising in Madras Presidency: An Outlook

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Abstract

All the suppressed communities in south India appearing as homogeneous because of the common disability of untouchability imposed on them. The leaders of the marginalized groups showed from the beginning a tendency to maintain the separate identity of the group, although keen at the same time on ensuring an egalitarian society without social barriers. The suppressed communities have their own organizations to fight for their social rights and champion its causes and its constitutional remedies. Through their continuous struggles against the oppression the suppressed classes were getting class-consciousness and endeavoring to establish themselves as a social group with distinct political interests entitled to special considerations by the government.

The emergence of suppressed class uprising in the nineteenth century led to the enormous social changes in the history of India. The introduction of western education and spread of liberal and radical ideas awakened the suppressed class with the effort of social change, which had taken in Tamil society by different intellectuals from the suppressed community in the belonging of the twentieth century. During the colonial regime the suppressed class leaders in Tamil Nadu strongly resisted against the caste oppression and tried to reform the social system to solve the problem of untouchability. They also tried to create an alternative socio-cultural structure by conversion to some other religion or by acquiring education, economic status and political power. The expectation of net result of their protest was the social change, which involved a transformation in social, political and economic organizations.

There are several causes for the birth of suppressed class uprising in India in general and Tamil Nadu in particular. S.Manickam, a renowned historian notices that the establishment of British rule, spread of liberal and revolutionary ideas such as individual freedom, social justice, equality before law and equality of opportunity, humanitarianism, dignity of human person, respect for labour, etc., and the increasing awareness among the suppressed castes mainly due to the missionary activities and education, created a conducive atmosphere for these movements to spring up.¹ The domination of the Brahmanical values and caste rigidities also account for the birth of the non-Brahmin movements such as anti-caste movements, self-respect movement, temple entry movement, upper-cloth movement and movements against the practice of untouchability in different parts of India especially in south India.

In colonial and post-colonial periods the anti-caste movements upraised against the Hindu social structure which comprised strong non-Brahmin agitation in whole of south India. Historian identified these movements in different names. Gail Omvedt in her work *Dalits and Democratic Revolution: Dr.Ambedkar and Dalit Movements in Colonial India* states that, 'the Dalit and non-Brahmin anti-caste movements can be classified as anti-systemic movements in the frame work of such Marxist theorists and value-oriented movements in the language of functionalist sociological theory. That is, they challenged and sought to transform the basic structure of the Indian social system, replacing caste and accompanying social oppression, economic exploitation and political domination by an egalitarian society'.² Formerly the anti-caste uprising of the suppressed community originated in the nineteenth century from Maharashtra by social reformer Mahatma Jotiba Phule (1827-1890), who spent his entire life in the eradication of untouchability, emancipation and empowerment of women, reforming of Hindu family life. He started the social reform movements to bring radical social change in the caste based Indian society. The movements have spread all across the country in the early twentieth century. These have also acquired a global dimension and have been successful in enlisting the support of the overseas social activists and non-Indian sympathizers. Over the years marginalized groups have been vocal against their economic exploitation and marginalized political participation of the erstwhile untouchable communities in post-Colonial India.³

Mobilizing the marginalized communities and creating caste consciousness among them are very complicated one. Caste discrimination in the name of Hindu tradition, economic inability, political powerless and

illiteracy were the important restrictions, backward them in all developments. When the missionary introduced the equal opportunity of education to all, slowly the depressed community with the able guidance of their leaders entered in to the education field. Even though 'unfortunate people', as termed by B.R.Ambedkar, have suffered by a number of civil disabilities at the hands of dominant caste groups. The so-called caste-Hindus were dead against to the marginalized people, and they restricted the depressed class even to wearing the costly or new clothes. The males were not allowed to wear shirts and the female of the depressed community were forbidden to cover their bodies with jackets called ravikais (blouse). S.Manickam gives example of this kind of ill-treatment imposed on the suppressed community. He says that in some villages the dominant caste groups did not like to see the downtrodden riding bicycle or sitting on the top of a bullock cart, or a married couple passing through the main street of the village accompanied by a musical party. The practices have not yet ceased in some places in spite of the Untouchability Offence Act which came to force since 1st June 1955.⁴ Individually the poor suppressed community could not fight against these kinds of discrimination, and they needed a mass protest, for which they formed their own organizations to mobilize them in the early twentieth century.

The leaders of the suppressed groups since the late nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century had strongly complained about the oppression meted out to these communities by the dominant rural social groups. The leaders of the suppressed community opined that illiteracy and ignorance of the poor people had enabled the oppressive sections of the society to hold them in a position of subordination. They requested the colonial government to introduce special concessions for the socio-economic improvement of suppressed classes.⁵ They tried to create caste consciousness among their fellow people, struggled against the social subjugation in the different parts of the Madras Presidency. The Paraiyas of the northern districts of the presidency opened up several fronts for negotiating the power structure. Among the intellectuals of the Paraiya community Pandit Ayothidas and Rettamalai Srinivasan are remembered leaders, who spent their intellectual energies in the liberation of the depressed community from the age old caste discrimination, through their strong initiatives of organizing the people to fight for the equality and attain social justice.

Pandit Ayothidas (1845-1914) better known as Iyothee Thass was one of the leaders of the depressed class and worked for their upliftment. He was a Tamil Siddha physician, the pioneers of the Tamil depressed class

movements in Tamil Nadu. He was a great scholar and his writings reveal that he was a person well acquainted with Sanskrit, Pali, English, and of course Tamil.⁶ Most of his writings extensively about Aryans and Dravidians.⁷ He argues that the Aryan came from outside and so they are foreigner's and Dravidian are son of soils. He was in fact very similar to Jotiba Phule not only in his interpretation of Aryan conquests, and the origin of the caste system, but in his critique of Brahmin nationalism and his insistence on education, openness.⁸ Ayothidas was a fierce critic of the *Swadeshi* movement, which took on a strong organized form in agitations in the early twentieth century. According to him the inner spirit of *Swadeshi* and *Swaraj* was based on four sorts of pride namely caste pride, religious pride, knowledge pride and wealth pride. His primary objection to *Swadeshi* and *Swaraj* was directed against the conduct of the Brahmin proponents of nationalism. He identified the movement as the Brahmanical core of *Swadeshi* ideology.⁹ He preceded the idea of 'boycott' not to the boycott of foreign cloth but caste hatred. He was among the earliest *Adi-Dravida* scholar, who presented a systematic and sharp critique of Brahmanical power, the role of the Brahmins in the modern society and polity, and above all, the Brahmins adoption of the problematic nationalism.¹⁰

Ayothidas Pandithar founded many societies in course of his struggle, particularly he founded the *Advaithananda Sabha* in 1870 in Nilgris, the *Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha* in 1881 and *Sakya Buddhist Society* also known as the South Indian Buddhist Association in 1898 in Madras. He argues that the Scheduled Caste people of Tamil Nadu were originally Buddhist, and he identified them as original inhabitant with non-Aryan or Dravidian, seeing Buddhism as their ancient religion. To spread his revolutionary ideas he established a weekly magazine called *Oru Paisa Tamilan* (one rupee *Tamilan*) in Chennai in 1907, which served as a newsletter linking all the new branches of the *Sakya Buddhist Society*. The magazine discussed the traditions and practices of Tamil Buddhism, new developments of Buddhist world and the history of the Indian subcontinent from the Buddhist point of view.¹¹ The ideas and activities of Ayothidas were far ahead of his time and appear strikingly modern even today.

Ayothidas took several initiatives for the reconstruction of the history and culture of the *Adi-Dravidas*, through intensive research and study. His research findings made him convinced that the Paraiyas of Tamilnadu were the original inhabitants of this region and that their ancestral religion was the 'compassionate, rational and egalitarian creed of the Buddha', and that the

historical defeat of Buddhism had created the society of Paraiyas.¹² The view of Ayothidas, attested by Raj Sekher Basu, a social historian from Kolkata university. He says that 'Ayothidas shared the belief that the Paraiyas were the original *Tamilan*, whose religion had been Buddhism. The Aryan invaders, it was argued, systematically destroyed the religious beliefs of the Paraiyas and reduced them to a degraded status'.¹³ Ayothidas believed that Buddhism alone could restore the untouchables to their former glory and status. Subsequently, it was opined that the untouchables or *Panchamas* should not depend upon nationalist reformers advocating depressed class upliftment and instead they needed to sincerely involve themselves in efforts aimed at resurrecting their glorious past and original identity.¹⁴

He had a good knowledge of Saiva Siddhanta and Vaishnavism and in 1902 he embraced Buddhism in Sri Lanka.¹⁵ Ayothidas noble example was emulated by a host of equally well-known leaders from suppressed class like Rettamalai Srinivasan, M.C.Raja, G.Appaduraiar, Periyasamy Pulavar, Masillamani and others. They supported Ayothidas criticism of caste and Brahmanism. Periyasamy Pulavar, an *Adi-Dravida* intellectual, utilized mouth pieces like *Tamilan* to explore the past centuries of Paraiya's history. At the same time T.C.Narayanasamy Pillai, a member of a Paraiya community wrote several articles in the *Tamilan* in support of the arguments that had been put forth by Ayothidas. Masillamani, a prominent neo- Buddhist intellectual in the twentieth century,¹⁶ argue that the Aryan-Brahmin supremacy had resulted in the political and cultural subjugation of the conquered people. He states that the Aryans had deliberately obliterated the histories of the pre-Aryan ruling groups to strengthen their hold over the society and polity. It was also pointed out that the four-fold division of caste was unjust and arbitrary.¹⁷ All together the leaders from the suppressed community worked with determination for the promotion of their self respect and self-consciousness long before the establishment of Justice Party and Self-Respect Movement. Unfortunately the elitist historians hailing from caste-Hindu background have conveniently left out the contributions made by the suppressed class leaders in the upliftment of the unprivileged section of society.

Like Ayothidas Pandithar, Diwan Bahadur R. Srinivasan (1859-1945), popularly known as Rettamalai Srinivasan was a Dalit and social activist, politician and freedom fighter from the state of Tamil Nadu struggled against the caste oppression. He was a dalit icon and Mahatma Gandhi's close associate, remembered today as one of the pioneers of the depressed class movement in India. In 1923, he was appointed as a member of Legislative

Assembly and performed excellent public service as its member for more than fifteen years. In remembrance of his vital service, he was given the titles of Rao Sahib, Rao Bahadur and Diwan Bahadur by the then British government. Upon this occasion, the Chengelpet Collector P. Seetharamaiah Panthalakaru in the Legislative Assembly calls attention to the commendable service of Rettamalai Srinivasan. When Collector honour him in assembly gathering he states that 'the one who has the blessing of receiving this honour next is Sri Rettamalai Srinivasan, who currently resides in Poonamallee. He is now a great elderly man of 65 years of age and a hero who struggled for the Adi Dravidar. He received education at the school of arts in Coimbatore and acquired great skill in keeping accounts. It was his principal ideal to perform as much service as he was able to the people of the clan into which he was born. In 1891, he entered public service and established the Chennai (*Parayar Mahajana Sabha*) *Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha*. In 1893, he took *Paraiyan*, that hated name that had put many generations to great hardship, and with the aim to develop people of his caste, he began to publish a magazine called *Paraiyan*.¹⁸

Until Rettamalai Srinivasan went to England in 1900, the magazine *Paraiyan* was in regular issue. He then went to South Africa and started working with the Union Government in 1904. After sixteen years of working faithfully for them, he spent two years in East Africa and left his job and returned to India in 1921. He believed that his people would not develop unless they develop the virtues of self-confidence, abstinence from alcohol and economic expenditure. He had thought and arrived at the realization that unless the *Adi-Dravida* works with belief in the King, they would lose the sympathy of their governing officers. By being a wise man, a guide and a friend to those of his community, he has gained their respect,¹⁹ working with tireless motivation and keenness for the progress of the clan into which he was born. As the fruit of such dedicated and unpretentious service, he has received the trust and respect of his community. For his virtue of not indulging in caste-based stirs, he has been felicitated by public servants from various communities.²⁰

Another towering personality from the suppressed community was Rao Bahadur Mylai Chinna Thambi Pillai Rajah popularly known as M.C.Rajah (1882-1947), was a politician, social activist and one of the great champions of suppressed class in Madras Presidency. M.C. Rajah along with Dr.Ambedkar and Rettamalai Srinivasan, represented the depressed class at the Second Round Table Conference (in 1930) in London. He fought for thirty present reservations for the Scheduled Caste communities. In 1916, he became

the secretary of *Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha*, established by Pandit Ayothidas. M.C.Rajah was one of the founding members of the South Indian Liberal Federation. He was the first member of the Dalit community to be elected to the Madras Legislative Council. He took active part in organizing and uplifting the depressed class people.²¹ Gabriel Appaduraiyar (1890-1961), a Tamil Pandit, was another intellectual from the suppressed community, worked for the advancement of the marginalized community. He served as a high school teacher in Tamil at Kolar Gold field till his retirement in 1940. He edited a Tamil weekly *Tamilan* in 1928 for bringing out a social change among the depressed community.²²

A dominant agricultural community of Tamil Nadu, the Pallar, considered as the descendants of Lord Devendran, formed their caste organization called *Tamil Nadu Devendrakula Vellalar Sangam*, with the main objectives to strive for educational development as well as for the economic progress of the community by forming unity among the caste people all over the state. Majority of the Palla community were involved in agriculture. Tilling of the soil and cultivation of paddy has been dawn the ages mainly in the hands of the Palla community. Their age old customs, festivals and day to day life activities support their claim to be the first cultivator of paddy in Tamil land. So they prefer to call them as Devendrakula Vellar.²³ Originally in historic past the Pallar castes were once the ruling community, but reduced to be lower status later. On the basis of the reliable evidences they are claiming that they were the descendants of the Pandya kingdom. They were defeated and degraded later by the Telugu speaking Nayak rulers after fourteenth century A.D.²⁴

The emergence of the Pallar as a militant caste group and increasing unity to secure a rightful place in the state polity as well as social identity has been unique nature. They formed their own organization to create self-consciousness among their community members and also to escape from the caste discrimination and many of them started converting to the Christian religion. In the course of their unity they organized many associations; *Bhuvaishya Indira Kula Sangam* was the first organized effort of such awakened Pallar, which was founded by Perumal Peter, who was an eminent school teacher served in Rangoon. At the outbreak of the First World War Perumal Peter returned to his native village Peraiyur and settled down as a practitioner in indigenous medicine. He organized the first conference of the Pallars at Sengottaipatti in 1922, many representatives from the nearby villages of Ramanathapuram district participated in the conference. In the conference they under took many resolution, stressed the need to get education for male

and female children of the Pallar community. The conference urged the caste people to give up the caste based commitment such as drum beating, involving in funeral ceremony of the higher castes. The conference also called for abandoning the practice of tattooing, child marriage and polygamy among the Pallars.²⁵

Besides the conferences, Perumal Peter continued his community service in establishing unions and league. In 1954 he started a union called 'Tamilnadu Evangelical Lutheran Christian Union' to demand the state for reservation in jobs and representation in policy making bodies for his caste people. He stressed the importance of education for the upliftment of their community people and he took steps to establish a high school in his native village Peraiyur in 1956.²⁶ The Pallars of the region who rallied behind Perumal Peter, later people joined behind Immanuel Sekaran when he organized the 'Depressed Class League' in Mudukulathur, Paramakudi Taluk, Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.

Very prominent personality among the Pallar community was Immanuel Sekaran (1924-1957), a prominent social reformer and freedom fighter, fought against the caste discrimination and the practice of untouchability in southern districts of Tamil Nadu in the middle of twentieth century. A contemporary of B.R.Ambedkar Immanuel Sekaran, was martyred at the very young age of 33, has attained demigod like status among the Pallar community of Tamil Nadu. Immanuel Sekaran, Pallar caste by birth, founder of *Devendrakula Vellalar Sangam* on October 9, 1924 in Sellur village in Mudukulathur region of Ramanathapuram district. At the age of 18 he participated in the Quit India Movement and he was imprisoned for three months by the British government. In 1945, at the age of 21 he joined the Indian Army as Havildar Major. After serving in army for a few years he returned to Paramakudi to become a youth congress leader. He tried hard to unite the depressed community under one roof and worked for the development of the community people of the Ramanathapuram region. He organized 'Annihilation of Caste Conference' in Madurai, which was presided over by social revolutionary B.R.Ambedkar.²⁷ Immanuel Sekaran was very actively involved in the 'depressed class movement' in and around Paramakudi region and propagated the importance of education among the depressed community and asked them to fight against the oppression. Immanuel Sekaran sacrificed his life for the upliftment of suppressed community in Tamil Nadu.

In the mid of the twentieth century there were several caste riots in Muthukulathur region of Ramanathapuram district, which was known to be tarnished for its brutal caste based prejudice. The suppressed communities

were systematically denied even the basic human rights. In 1957 there was caste riots upraised between the Pallar and Maravar community in Muthukulathur region. In the riots, in order to offer sacrifice to the Badrakali temple, the Maravar community kidnapped few Dalit men from a village and few Dalits were slain in the caste unrest, which is considered as one of the worst caste clash in the post-Colonial period, it marked a new phase in the struggle against caste based oppression, in which the Pallar community started to question their subjective position. To suppress the tension of the clash the then District Collector of Ramanathapuram district arranged for a peace conference between the Pallar and Maravar castes. Perumal Peter and Immanuel Sekaran represented the suppressed community and the Tamil Nadu Forward Bloc Leader Muthuramalingam represented the Maravar community.²⁸ While Thirumavalavan describe about the tension situation of the peace meeting of the riot he write in his book *Uproot Hindutva: the Fiery Voice of the Liberation Panthers* that the Dalit representatives feared that Muthuramalingam, could use of the meeting to create further tension, suggested that all the leaders sign an agreement, which could be distributed among the people. When Maravar community leader Muthuramalingam had entered the meeting hall, everybody including the Collector stood up except Immanuel Sekaran. As a consequence, the peace meeting came to an abrupt end without any solution in sight. After the meeting when Immanuel Sekaran was returning to Peraiyur on 11th September 1957, was attacked by the Maravars and murdered Immanuel on the spot.²⁹ A brave leader, who lost his life as victim to the caste cruelty. In his communal life he co-ordinated many village level meetings and worked strenuously for the promotion of social justice and equality of the downtrodden community, until being murdered during the 1957 Muthukulathur riots.

The first real suppressed community consolidation happened after the murder of their leader Immanuel Sekaran in the Muthukulathur riots in 1960s. But it was the murder that stimulated the then fledgling depressed class movements. At the same time, there was a growing realization among the youth of the suppressed group that education and employment alone could lead to their emancipation.³⁰ The leaders and activists from the suppressed community such Pandit Ayothidas, Rettamalai Srinivasan and M.C.Raja were at the forefront of the struggle against the birth based discrimination.³¹

After Perumal Peter there were many regions wise organization emerged in different district of Tamil Nadu. In Tirunelveli district, the Pallars organized their caste organization in the name of '*Indira Kulathiba Vellalar*

Aikya Sangam’ in 1933. The main objectives of the *Sangam* as stated in its by-laws were: to protect their kinsmen from caste oppression; to create awareness amongst them to take to education; to motivate them to take to trade and business and; to lobby for demanding basic needs for the villages of the Pallar community.³² Similarly Marianathan, a school teacher from Nannilam village of Thanjavur district attempted to unite the Pallars and Paraiyas and organized an association known as *Palankudi Makkal Munnetra Sangam* (Scheduled Caste Development organization) in the late 1940s. However the caste-class nexus was so overt in Thanjavur that the communists had no difficulties in mobilizing the suppressed communities on class line. The *Vivasaya Tholilalar Sangam* (Agricultural Labourers Association) formed in 1939 succeeded in getting the bonded labour system abolished and enhancing the wages of the landless labourers who belonged to the Pallar community.³³ Through their organizations and continues struggle the Pallas gained economic stability and social mobilization.

However there was no state wide organization to work for the betterment of the Pallar community until 1967, when the *Tamilnadu Devendrakula Vellalar Sangam* established with the headquarters at Madurai. It proclaimed objectives were to struggle for educational development as well as for the economic progress of the community by creating unity among the community people all over the state.³⁴ The emergence of John Pandian of Tirunelveli district and his *All India Devendrakula Vellalar Munnetra Sangam* at this juncture in 1983 led to the mobilization of the Pallar community youth in Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli districts. Similarly K.Krishnasamy, another popular leader among the Pallar community founded an organization called *Puthiya Tamilagam* in 1997 with prime objectives of protecting the social rights of the Devendrakula Vellalar community in the state. He has been struggling for the removal of the Pallar community from the list of Scheduled Caste of the government of Tamil Nadu, claiming that this is an ‘imposed identity’. Several organizations of the Pallar community demanding the government to change the present name Pallar as *Devendrakula Vellalar* which claimed themselves as their traditional name.

In contemporary period the emergence of Thol.Thirumavalavan as a popular Dalit leader rose to prominence in the 1990s as a leader of suppressed community, who has been struggling against the caste discrimination and social oppression. He was an Indian politician and Tamil social activist and elected leader of the Dalit Panthers of India (DPI). His political platforms centres on ending the caste based oppression of the Dalit. He emerged as one of the

major Dalit leaders in Tamil Nadu, with large base of grassroots support particularly in the southern district of Tamil Nadu.³⁵ Thol.Thirumavalavan is a strong critic of the Hindu nationalism and in particular *Hindutva* ideology. His views on the importance of the Tamil identity have also led him to strongly support Tamil secessionist groups in Sri Lanka including the Liberation of Tiger of Tamil Elam.

These political movements initiated by the suppressed class leaders, have provided an organized platform for growing resistance to the still prevalent norms of untouchability and social oppression in the Tamil society. The suppressed community people demanded equal treatments in temple festivals, have demanded access to public water sources, and have claimed an equal share of public goods and village properties.³⁶ In this respect, the mobilization that took place in involving the depressed class in electoral politics. Apart from these communities there are many castes in Tamil Nadu formed their own caste association for claiming the higher social status and to create self consciousness among their social groups. However, a broad based unity among the various suppressed communities in desideratum for forcing the state to pull them out of the morning of misery, ignorance and idleness.

The democratic organizations of the suppressed class battled against the domination and emerged as a mass movement throughout the Tamil Nadu. While the individual struggles are painful, the mass movements are heroic; the former struggle is unnoticed while the latter attracted the public eye. Caste individuals can join more easily their caste based organizations than the political parties. Similarly, the suppressed class organizations and movement can be building more easily with homogeneous groups than the political parties with heterogeneous groups. Initially these depressed class organizations addressed themselves to social reform within the caste and sought to secure a better position for their castes in the wider society. They fostered competition in education and jobs, created status consciousness and brought advancement of their castes equal to the advancement of the higher castes.

The emergence of suppressed class and their movements in different parts of India is a modern trend particularly in the last few decades. The mushroom growth of the caste based organizations, in recent past has made the democratic polity get congested. These organizations are mainly organized to change their social identity through claiming the up gradation of their social rank. They also tried to attain the social equality. They are evidently not interested in abolition of caste system as they argue that caste-abolition is not

possible. The caste groups demanded for their social changes can be treated equally and can be claimed upper social status and thus equalization and social changes of castes is a practical approach has become the ideological viewpoint of these suppressed class movements. According to some scholars such movements were the result of the economic prosperity and social changes of certain upwardly mobile communities that were merely looking for higher ritual position in keeping with their newly improved secular status.

It may be concluded from the above discussions that the caste oppression and exploitative situation are the main causes for the emergence of the suppressed class agitation in whole of south India. As a part of the wider socio-religious reform and revivalist movements of the nineteenth century the suppressed class movements sought to reform and liberate their own people. The leaders of the depressed community struggled against the social discrimination and economic exploitation of the upper caste-Hindus and firmly warned them of its evil consequences. They were opposed to the Brahmanism and Brahmanical form of Hinduism, which they considered to be the prime cause for the over-all decadence of the suppressed communities. The leaders of the community also challenged the 'Hindu-Nationalism' which was emerging as a consequence of the elite organizing from nineteenth century onwards to define Indian society. They asserted that the Hinduism had not been the religion and culture of the majority but rather was an imposed religion; and that escaping exploitation today required the depressed castes to reject this imposition to define themselves as 'non-Hindu' and take a new religious identity. In fact the suppressed class uprising in Madras Presidency is a vivid expression of a just desire of the suppressed communities for human rights and social justice denied to them for ages.

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The Juxtaposition of NRC and CAA: A Socio-Legal Analysis with Reference to the People of Assam

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Abstract

Assam's anti-CAA protest does not follow the Hindu-Muslim narrative that dominates the discourse across India, rather the protest is an outright rejection of citizenship to all immigrants post 1971, irrespective of religion, caste or community. When Indian citizenship was determined by the 1951 census, Assam agreed to take the additional burden of twenty years, till 1971 to accommodate Bangladeshi immigrants. The CAA pushed the cut off to 31st Dec 2014 imposing the burden of illegal Bangladeshi Hindu migrant of 43 years from 1971. This makes the Assam Accord and the NRC infructuous. Assamese people fear of becoming a minority in their own state and this fear could take shape if more Bengali speaking Bangladeshi immigrants are allowed to settle in Assam as Indian citizens.

Introduction

It is important not to trivialize the seriousness of large scale immigration into Assam, which not only threaten to alter the state's demographic composition but also its culture and language. From an electoral perspective, the ethnic Assamese population is not as much worthy as the migrant population as the political outcome is determined by the migrant vote rather than the ethnic vote.¹ This strategy of the Congress allowed them to maintain its grip in the state till the birth of Assam students' revolution of 1980's which raked up the rights of 'son of soil' in a violent manner in a bid to stop the immigration issue.

Two major waves of migration came after the British rule, *first* after Partition from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) *second* in the aftermath of the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. This unabated migration eventually led to chronicles of violence and terror during Assam Movement (1979-85) led by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram

Parishad (AAGSP) which lasted for six long years until it was brought to an end by signing the Assam Accord in a tripartite agreement between the AASU, AAGSP, the Centre and the State Government. The official Government of Assam website refers to the Assam movement as being ‘one of the famous movements in post-colonial India mainly led by students of Assam.’² The 1983 Nellie massacre that took place after the Assam agitation between Assamese (Tiwas) and the Bengali Muslim Settlers speaks in volumes about the seriousness of the sentiments of the native of Assam of their land, language and identity.

The Assam Accord

The Assam Movement was brought to an end by the signing of the official memorandum of settlement with the Government of India on 15th August 1985 which came to be known as the Assam Accord. According to the Accord, all residents who entered the state until January 1, 1966, would be deemed citizens. Those who came between 1966 and March 25, 1971, are to be disenfranchised for 10 years, but would enjoy all other rights of citizenship. Those who came after March 25, 1971 would be deported. Clause 5 of the Accord reads as, ‘foreigners who came to Assam on or after March 25, 1971 shall continue to be detected, deleted and expelled in accordance with law. Immediate and practical steps shall be taken to expel such foreigners’ [clause 5]. Clause 6 of the Accord reads as, ‘constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people’ [clause 6].

Therefore under clause 6 of the Accord, Assam agreed to take burden of ‘illegal Bangladeshi migrants, both Hindus and Muslims’ for 20 years from 1951 to 1971.³ This cutoff date is not something arbitrary but based on real considerations and was unanimously accepted by all the communities of Assam, whether the original or later immigrants. Cancelling it now will trigger tensions among different communities in Assam.⁴

Need of an NRC

During 1980 and 90’s the Assam Legislative Assembly debated on issues of immigration from Bangladesh, demographic change and the threat to the Assamese identity. The Assamese mind in 1940 was dominated by the fear of being included in the larger Bengal and in 1980’s and 90s, the fear of becoming a part of Bangladesh dominated the social discourse.⁵ There were

violent protests in Assam since the 1970s over the issue of illegal migrants, for cheap labours. NRC in the state is carried out in response to protests over alleged unabated illegal immigration from Bangladesh (earlier east Pakistan) and after the 1971 Bangladesh war the influx was a big surge.

The first NRC was published in 1951 to determine who is a genuine citizen and who is an undocumented immigrant. In 1978, during a by-poll to the Mangoldoi LS constituency, which was necessitated due to the sudden demise of Hiralal Patwarit he detection of 45,000 illegal names in the electoral rolls triggered the popular consensus to tackle mass infiltration in the state. There was a demand of revision of the electorate rolls before the election. The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) demanded that election be postponed and the names of the foreign nationals be deleted from the electoral rolls.

The NRC is now updated only in Assam, to comply with the demands in the Assam Accord. To update the NRC, it was decided in 2005 at a tripartite meeting between the Centre, Assam Government and AASU. To apply for inclusion in the NRC, one's name or one's ancestor's name must be in the 1951 NRC or in any voter list up to the midnight of March 24, 1971, the cut-off date agreed upon in the Assam Accord. If the applicant's name is not on any of these lists, he can produce any of the 12 other documents dated up to March 24, 1971, like land or tenancy record, citizenship certificate or permanent residential certificate or passport or court records or refugee registration certificate. If the applicant's ancestor's name is on any of these lists, the applicant will have to prove his relationship to his ancestor by producing his board or university certificate, ration card or any other legally acceptable document. But the exercise to update the NRC on the basis of the 1951 electoral rolls in the revenue circles of Chaygoan in Kamrup district and Barpeta in Barpeta district was stiffly resisted by the All Assam Minority Students' Union. And the exercise was abandoned after violence erupted in the two districts killing four persons in police firing and left many injured.⁶

The current process of updating the NRC is the consequence of a 2009 PIL filed in the SC by the NGO, Assam Public Works, which claimed that 4.1 million illegal Bangladeshis had found their way into Assam's voter list. In 2017, an interim report of the Brahma committee for the protection of land rights of the indigenous people of Assam, headed by

ex-CEC H.S Brahma said that illegal Bangladeshis dominated in as many as 15 of the State's 33 districts.

On 14th July, 2004, in response to an unstarred question pertaining to deportation of illegal Bangladeshi migrants, the Minister of State, Home Affairs, submitted a statement to Parliament indicating therein that the estimated number of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants into India as on 31st December, 2001 was 1.20 crores, out of which 50 lakhs were in Assam.⁷ Such a huge influx of illegal immigrants is bound to change the demographic structure of the state which will reduce the indigenous Assamese population to a minority in their own land, not to mention the loss of opportunity that they will have to face because of such a huge influx of illegal migrants.

National Register of Citizens (NRC)

National Register of Citizens (NRC) as the name suggests is the register containing the names of all the Indian Citizens. Until now there has been only one NRC in 1951 which was based on the data that was collected during the 1951 census. Now the process of up-gradation of NRC has been put in place by the Supreme Court in Assam. Such up-gradation will be based on the data of NRC 1951, or Electoral Rolls up to the midnight of 24th March, 1971 or any one of the other admissible documents issued up to mid-night of 24th March, 1971, which would prove their presence in Assam or in any part of India on or before 24th March, 1971.⁸ Thus there are two aspects to getting one's name on NRC, they are *viz.* existence of a person's name in the pre-1971 period⁹ and proving linkage with such person to get their names included in NRC(legacy data).

In Assam, one had to apply for inclusion. An applicant had to pick any one of the documents under two heads i.e. list A and list B. The documents could not be from a date later than the cut-off date of March 24, 1971 (Midnight).¹⁰ There are 14 documents in List A.¹¹

Those who did not have any 1971 documents that mention their name, can show any one of the documents named in List A if it mentions their parents/grandparents along with one more document from List B (with 8 options)¹² to establish a connection.

For women married to other places, and with no documents to pick from list B to establish a family link, the State allowed circle officer or gaon panchayat secretary certificate that need not be on or before the 1971 date and a ration card issued on or before the 1971 date.

The process of updation of NRC was effectively put in motion by the Supreme Court in *Asom Sanmilitia Mahasangh v. Union of India*,¹³ where it mentioned that NRC process must be completed by 2016. And this led to a number of orders being issued by the apex court in order to realize the completion of the NRC process by 2016.

The final draft of the NRC was published in Assam on 30 July, 2018 with 41.07 lakh people ineligible for inclusion.¹⁴ On July 26, 2019 additional exclusion list was published with 1.02 lakh names. The additional exclusion list includes persons who were found ineligible on grounds of being DF (declared foreigner) or DV (doubtful voter) or PFT (persons with cases pending at foreigners' tribunals).¹⁵ Despite the number being so large, the publication of NRC's final draft has not created any law and order problems rather people have accepted with grace. The final version of NRC was published on 31st August 2019 excluded only 19 lakhs people or roughly 6 percent of the state's population.¹⁶

This final version of NRC upset the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders as it has belied their hopes of netting a huge number of immigrant Muslims in a dragnet as the majority of those left out are Bengali Hindus. They demanded to reject the current NRC, as the present NRC contains a large number of illegal Bangladeshi nationals while the names of a large number of genuine citizens are left behind.¹⁷

The Demand of the Assamese: Question of Immigration, Land and Identity

The British colonial state during the first two decades of the twentieth century encouraged large numbers of Bengali Muslim peasants from the over-populated districts of Eastern Bengal, where land had reached the limits of cultivation, to migrate and settle in the uncultivated stretches of the Brahmaputra Valley.¹⁸ The immigrants started encroaching on land cultivated by the indigenous and soon arose the possibility of social tension. Therefore, a line system was adopted in 1920 as an administrative measure by the British colonialists in the districts of Kamrup and Nagoan with the aim of protecting the lands of the autochthons from Bengali Muslim.

The 1921 census report referred to the large scale migration into Assam of Muslim peasants from East Bengal. A resolution was therefore moved in the legislative council in 1925 to discuss amendments to the Assam Land and Revenue Regulations of 1886 so as to protect the transfer of land cultivated by the indigenous Assamese peasants to immigrants.¹⁹

This move failed and something opposite took place when the British Administrator in 1928 put into effect the 'Colonization Scheme' which further opened up large areas of the Nagaon district and Barpeta and Mangoldoi subdivisions for settlement by immigrants.²⁰

While releasing the 1931 census figures, the then census commissioner S.C Mullan stated that the nature and dimension of the immigration was likely to alter permanently the whole structure of Assamese culture and civilization as a whole, made the situation worse, turning anxiety into panic. The British set off an alarm among native Assamese people about their lands being 'seized' and their culture 'buried'. The 1931, the Census report showed that the minority population of the state had risen to 27% of Assam due to migration from East Bengal; in Mymensingh district in particular which rose to 41 percent by the time of the 1941 Census.²¹

This policy of colonization of Assam by the people of Bengal was continued under the joint auspices of the Muslim League ministries of Saadullah in Assam and Nazimuddin in Bengal. The Bengal government communique published in the last week of October 1944 quotes the Census report of 1941 as 'The Government of Assam in their resolution dated 21 June 1940 prohibited settlement of land with persons coming from outside the province after January 1938. The Bengal Legislative Council went on to appeal to the Governor to ask for the Viceroy's intervention in Assam'.²²

Further evidence of how immigration kept gnawing at the identity and ethos of Assam is to be found in the report of S.P Desai, an ICS officer wrote in the Hindustan Standard (December 1944):

'Everyday, new Bamboo sheds and temporary huts are springing up in the reserves. I found that the immigrants absolutely ignore the local officers. The few Nepali graziers and Assamese Pamuas, finding no protection from anywhere give doha in the name of the king-emperor. Verily, the cup of humiliation for the Assamese was full'.

Again the Assamese people fear that Bangla language might get imposed as the official language. The Bangla-speakers convinced the British administration that Assamese was a distorted form of Bangla and eventually got Bangla imposed as the official language of Assam.²³ The linguistic data of the Census 2011 has also widened the already existing fault lines between the Assamese and Bengalis. According to it, the

percentage of people speaking Assamese decreased from 58 per cent in 1991 to 48 per cent in 2011, while Bengali speakers in the state went up from 22 per cent to 30 per cent in the same period.²⁴

The State Assembly in 1960 passed the Assam Official Language Act, making Assamese the official language. But provisions too were made for the Bengali language ‘for administrative and other official purposes’ in the Cachar belt following protests. The Act says people in Cachar could adopt Assamese as the official language if ‘a majority of not less than two-thirds of members’ of Mahkuma Parishads and Municipal boards vote in favour’. But that did not happen and Assamese could not become the state language.²⁵ This spreads not only hatred but the insecurity of the Assamese people over the dominance of the Bangla language lingered.

Influx of Bangladesh Nationals illegally into Assam: Assam for Assamese

The British colonial rulers, after fleecing poor East Bengal peasants for more than a century, apprehended a massive peasant revolt and promoted the latter’s migration to Assam. The relocation, which began as a trickle in the early decades of the 20th century, turned into a deluge in the 1930’s and 40’s.²⁶ India’s Independence in 1947 brought no significant relief in Assam. The Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act which was enacted to expel illegal foreigners from East Pakistan was repealed seven years later because of the inherent flaws to check the influx.

Successive Congress Government continued to ignore immigration from East Bengal, for the Congress, the immigrants were a potent and growing vote bank, too precious to be dispensed with. Indira Gandhi’s regime, in collaboration with Assam’s Chief Minister during the early eighties, Hiteswar Saikia, actually suppressed the people of Assam and their sentiments, their protest being of no avail. To rub salt into Assam’s wounds her government passed the IMDT Act, 1983 which provided special protections against undue harassment to the ‘minorities’ affected by Assam agitation as the Act placed the onus on the prosecution or the person who claims that one is not a citizen of India.²⁷ As a result of this provision of the IMDT Act, it became difficult to detect and identify an illegal migrant resulting lakhs of illegal Bangladesh immigrants entering Assam making the indigenous people of Assam being reduced to a minority in their own home state.

In *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India*²⁸ a three Judge Bench, comprising (C.J. R.C Lahoti, G.P Mathur and P.K Balasubramanyan, JJ) held that the IMDT Act, which is applicable only to the State of Assam and not the other States similarly situated is discriminatory as the classification is based on 'geographical basis' and contains provisions and prescribes procedures that it virtually becomes impossible to detect and deport foreigners. Instead of achieving the object of detecting and deporting foreigners it defeats the purpose. The presence of large number of illegal migrants²⁹ from Bangladesh which runs into millions is in fact an 'aggression' on the state of Assam and has also contributed significantly in causing serious 'internal disturbances' in the shape of insurgency of alarming proportion making the life of the people of Assam wholly insecure and thereby has created a fear psychosis. The IMDT Act through Sec 4 has superseded the Foreigners Act and divested the Central Government's power to remove migrants from Bangladesh. Thus the IMDT Act also violates Article 355 of the Constitution under which it is duty of the Central Government to protect the State from external aggression and internal disturbances. Therefore Supreme Court in 2005 held the IMDT Act as unconstitutional and directed the Tribunals under the IMDT Act to transfer to the Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners Act, 1946.

The Definition of an Assamese and the process of Assimilation

The fundamental question, who can be considered an 'Assamese' in the State of Assam who can enjoy constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards under clause 6 of the Accord. A consensus on this has been elusive since the signing of the accord in 1985.

The Asom Sahitya Sabha, the State's prime Assamese literary organization has declared that 'all Indian citizen who live in Assam and speak the Assamese language as the mother tongue or either as their second or third language, irrespective of their origin, ethnicity, caste or religion, are an inseparable part of the greater Assamese society and hence are Assamese'.³⁰

On the other hand, the speaker of the Assam Assembly in March 2015 put forward the definition of Assamese as provided in the 1951 census that stated anyone speaking Assamese or tribal dialects and Bengali in Cachar, could be called Assamese.³¹

Yet, none of these definitions have been acceptable to the different ethnic organizations and the impasse over an acceptable definition

continues. Meanwhile, with the parameters of nationality having expanded over the years to include all those initially Bengali speaking Muslims who have been returning Assamese as their mother tongue through the different censuses, the elusive question remains as to whether they too would naturally come within the definition of ‘Assamese’ when it comes to constitutional safeguards relating to land, representation and culture.

Social scientists have opined that Bengalis both Hindus and Muslims who concentrate in pockets to communicate in Assamese, their integration with Assamese society is far less today. Even though the number of Assamese speakers showed remarkable increase post-independence, there is a general agreement that it was a ‘political call’ of the Muslim settlers to list their language as Assamese while continuing to restrict its usage to a bazar language. Recent evidence has shown parallel trends. Today, while Muslim settlers have indeed accepted the Assamese language, there is also a distinct trend to carve a new literary space within Miya boundaries.³²

The term *Miya* is used as a slur to brand Assamese Muslims of Bengali heritage as migrants from West Bengal, or worse, illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.³³ A wave of Miya Poetry by Bengal-origin Muslims³⁴ which painted a picture of stigma and humiliation embedded in their *Miya* identity triggered not only fierce online debate but even police cases.³⁵ The poem were written in the native dialect, spoke about the alleged discrimination towards Bengali speaking Muslims in Assam over the years and especially during the updating process of the NRC. Hiren Gohain, one of the noted Assamese intellectuals, publicly criticized the Bengal-origin Muslim community’s dialect, claiming that its usage in poetry was an affront to the Assamese language.³⁶

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2016: A threat to Assamese language, culture and Identity

The Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2016 seeks to modify certain provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 so as to make illegal immigrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, eligible for citizenship. It seeks to reduce the requirement for citizenship by naturalization from eleven years to six years for persons belonging to the same six religion and three countries.³⁷ And the proposed bill seeks to introduce amendments such that this definition excludes ‘minority-religious individuals’, specifically

Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhist, Jains, Parsis and Christians from 'Muslim dominated countries' specifically Afghanistan Bangladesh and Pakistan.

This attempt of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill to grant citizenship to post-1971 Hindu Bangladeshi immigrants excluding the Muslims, also pose a threat to the Assamese language and its speakers. The language data of the 2001 Census in which Assamese speakers were found to have declined to 48.80 per cent of the population from 57.81 per cent recorded in 1991 even as the number of Bengali speakers had increased from 21.67 per cent to 27.54 per cent in the same period. Non-publication of the language data of 2011 Census has triggered speculation that the percentage of Assamese speakers in the State has dipped further.³⁸

Assamese people do not want immigrants of any hue after the cut off date fixed by the Assam Accord as they are already over burdened with huge influx of Bangladeshis, both Hindus and Muslims for twenty years from 1951- 1971. Imposing more burdens of illegal Bangladeshi Hindu migrants of 43 years from 1971 to 2014 will definitely pose a threat to their identity and culture and their rights on land, resources and political power. Surprisingly Bengalis were considered as the cultural other and the Muslims became a political threat to the state.

Interlocking position of CAB and the NRC

The NDA government waived the requirement of the Cabinet approval to introduce the Citizenship Amendment Bill³⁹ when the exercise of updating the NRC was on full swing. This threatened to make updated NRC infructuous as far as the expulsion of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants is concerned. This is the interlocking position of NRC with the Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016 and Sec 6A of the Citizenship Act 1955. The ruling BJP Government should not forget the cutoff date in the Accord of 1985. The cutoff date was not something arbitrary but was unanimously accepted by all the communities of Assam, whether the original residents or later immigrants. Even though the binding nature of the Assam Accord has never been put under question and was sacrosanct till the process of NRC but this Bill seems to bring the view that the Assam Accord has been forged only to bring an end to the Assam Movement. Cancelling the Accord now will trigger tensions among different communities.⁴⁰

Mass Resistance and changes to the CAB 2019

The Lok-Sabha passed the Citizenship Amendment Bill in 2019, on Monday, December 10. The passage of the CAB in Lok-Sabha revived

the anti foreigners agitation in the state of Assam in a more intensified form. The situation went completely out of control in Guwahati on December 12 as support for the agitation grew exponentially. The protesters vowed to make any sacrifice to resist the implementation of the CAB in Assam despite tough measures adopted by the state government such as imposition of an indefinite curfew, suspension of internet services, promulgation of sec 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and resort to firing of rubber bullets and tear gas and baton charge. They accused the Chief Minister of the State, SarbanandaSonowal of pushing the Assamese and other indigenous people of the North Eastern region into the danger of being swamped by illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. Internet services were initially suspended in ten districts of the Brahmaputra valley from the night of December 12 for 48 hours, which was extended until December 16.⁴¹ Over 30,000 students, youth, men and women, including singers, actors, lawyers, writers, artists, editors, teachers and government employees came out in December 12, 2019 in response to an appeal by the AASU and leading artistes of the State led by the music sensation and youth icon, Zubeen Garg to protest unitedly in a peaceful and democratic manner until the Bill was rolled back.⁴²

The said Bill before it was passed in Lok Sabha has been placed with certain changes, where in it exempts certain areas of the North East from its effect. They are exempted when they are not in certain tribal areas of Assam (KarbiAnglong, Dima Hasao and Bodoland), Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura which are included in the Sixth Schedule⁴³ to the Constitution, or areas under the 'Inner Line Permit' system, notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 (i.e Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland, recently Manipur) from the application of the Act.⁴⁴ The north eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland are protected under ILP system and require visitors to obtain permits to enter them. They cannot settle in such areas even with ILP. This ILP system is now being used to protect certain areas from the purview of CAB. This results in hardening the boundaries within the North Eastern Region and imposing restriction on the movement of people and goods within the region. On the contrary it results in softening its international boundaries with its ASEAN neighbours, Bangladesh and Bhutan, to facilitate trade, commerce and people's movement under the Act East and Neighborhood First policies.

The Bill also makes amendment to the provision related to OCI card holders. A foreigner may register as an OC under the 1955 Act, if he/she is of Indian origin (*e.g.* former citizen of India or their descendants) or the spouse of a person of Indian origin. This will entitle them to benefits such as the right to travel to India, and to work and study in the country. The Bill amends the Act to allow cancellation of OCI registration, if the person violates any law notified by the Central Government.

This bill puts the entire process of the Assam NRC in jeopardy as it will have a direct bearing on the 1.9 million people excluded from NRC in Assam, the non-Muslims among the excluded will become eligible to seek citizenship. The other big problem that exists in this bill is not that it makes the rules relating to Indian citizenship easier but, with respect to its narrow applicability of the rules purely on the basis of religion.⁴⁵ This bill is now an Act.⁴⁶

Position of Assam: Assam's Anger to Citizenship Amendment Act

People from other parts of the country may appear puzzled at the emotional response of the Assamese people to the question of identity and demographic change. Outsiders may even mark the Assamese people of having an insular mindset. But, in case of Assam as an immediate aftermath of the amendment to the Act, five lakhs Hindu Bengalis living in the state whose names had been rejected by the just completed NRC exercise will qualify for citizenship. Also apparent is the fact that the floodgates for fresh Hindu Bengali exodus into Assam have been opened and the years ahead will see a very danger to the Assamese majority status in their homeland. The protest in Assam against the Citizenship Amendment Act has nothing against Hindu Bengalis who had entered Assam before the cutoff date of 1971 and therefore are bonafide Indian citizens. The fact remains that under no circumstances Assam should be coerced into accepting any more burdens of illegal migrants, Hindus as well as Muslims. But, unfortunately, the CAA seeks to do precisely that by burdening Assam with a large number of Hindu migrants. As for the constitutional safeguards to be provided to the Assamese, that had been mandated under the Assam Accord four decades back in view of the grave danger faced by the locals due to infiltration. The Centre's assertions that Assam will be given the safeguards for accepting the CAA are ridiculous and serve only to trivialize the issue of infiltration. The divide and rule policy of the Centre has also become apparent with Manipur welcoming the CAA after it has come

under the ILP regime. The exemption from the Act granted to the sixth Schedule areas in Assam and their public representatives supporting the Act is likely to create a tribal-non-tribal rift while Brahmaputra-Barak divide is bound to worsen.⁴⁷

Conclusion

Assam's anti-CAA protest does not follow the Hindu-Muslim narrative that dominates the discourse across India; rather the protest is an outright rejection of citizenship to all immigrants' post 1971, irrespective of religion, caste or community. When Indian citizenship was determined by the 1951 census, Assam agreed to take the additional burden of twenty years, till 1971 to accommodate Bangladeshi immigrants. The CAA pushed the cut off to 31st Dec 2014 imposing the burden of illegal Bangladeshi Hindu migrant of 43 years from 1971. This makes the Assam Accord and the NRC infructuous. Assamese people fear of becoming a minority in their own state and this fear could take shape if more Bengali speaking Bangladeshi immigrants are allowed to settle in Assam as Indian citizens. Bangladesh has 11.37 million Hindus according to the 2001 census and the CAA made it easy for them to apply for Indian citizenship. Why should the Brahmaputra Valley be over burdened with more foreigners. Barak valley is already a Bengali majority and the tribal autonomous areas are protected by the Constitution's Sixth Schedule which were exempted from CAA. If the CAA is bad for ILP and Sixth Schedule areas, how can it be good for Assam? If it is bad for seven districts of Assam, how can it be good for the remaining 26 districts of the State. A change in the demography in Assam will affect the entire region and that ILP and Sixth Schedule areas will not be immune to influx for long.

Notes and References

¹For years, the Congress in Assam adopted the slogan Ali-Coolie-Bengali formula of winning the elections. Coolie implied the tea garden workers and their families. Ali and Bengali is self explanatory. The tea garden workers were Adivasis brought from Jharkhand and neighbouring areas. To this day, it is difficult to find an original Assamese who is a plucker in a tea garden.

²Government of Assam, 'Assam Accord and it Clauses' or click <<https://assamaccord.assam.gov.in/information-services/martyrs-of-assam-agitation>> accessed on 15 January 2019.

³For the rest of the states in India, the cut-off for determining citizenship is July 19, 1948.

⁴H. Gohain, 'It is important to contextualize the NRC', *The Hindu*, September 5, 2019 or click <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/it-is-important-to-contextualise-the-nrc/article29334764.ece> last accessed on Jan 2010.

⁵U. Misra, *Burden of History: Assam and the Partition-Unresolved Issues*, Oxford University Press, 2017 p.4.

⁶U. Misra, Why the NRC has been greeted with calm in Assam and not widespread violence as was feared, Scroll, in August, 14, 2018 or click at <https://scroll.in/article/890038/why-the-nrc-has-been-greeted-with-calm-in-assam-and-not-widespread-violence-as-was-feared>.

⁷Assam Sanmilitia Mahasangha & Ors v. Union of India & Ors. 3 SCC 1, 2015.

⁸Government of Assam, 'National Register of Citizens' or click <https://assam.gov.in/en/main/NRC> as accessed on 22, January, 2019.

⁹Infra note 13. If the applicant's name is not on any of the voter lists till 1971, he can produce any of the 12 other documents dated up-to March 24 1971.

¹⁰'Understanding NRC: What it is and if it can be implemented across the country', *The Economic Times Online*, December 19, 2019 or click at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/et-explains/is-a-pan-india-nrc-possible-the-lesson-from-assam/articleshow/72454225.cms?from=mdr>.

¹¹List A: 1951 NRC : Electoral roll(s) up to 24 March (midnight), 1971, Land and tenancy records, Citizenship certificate, Permanent residential certificate, Refugee registration certificate, Any government issued license/certificate, Government service/employment certificate, Bank or post office accounts, Birth certificate, State educational board or University educational certificate, Court records/processes, Passport & Any LIC policy.

¹²List B: Birth certificate, Land document, Board/university certificate, Bank/LIC/post office records, Circle officer/ gaon Panchayat secretary certificate in case of married women, Electoral roll, Ration card and Any other legally acceptable document.

¹³3 SCC 1, 2015.

¹⁴Assam Public Works v. Union of India ,9 SCC 229, 2018.

¹⁵Press Trust of India, Additional Exclusion List to Draft NRC published in Assam, June 26, 2019 or click <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/additional-exclusion-list-to-draft-nrc-published-in-assam/article28143342.ece> last accessed on Feb 2020.

¹⁶Sanchit Baruah, 'The NRC unappreciated and Questioned', *The Hill Times*, September 13, 2019 or click <https://www.thehillstimes.in/featured/nrc-unappreciated-and-questioned/> last accessed on Feb 2020.

²Government of Assam, 'Assam Accord and its Clauses' or click <<https://assamaccord.assam.gov.in/information-services/martyrs-of-assam-agitation>> accessed on 15 January 2019.

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⁷Assam Sanmilitia Mahasangha & Ors v. Union of India & Ors. 3 SCC 1, 2015.

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¹¹List A: 1951 NRC : Electoral roll(s) up to 24 March (midnight), 1971, Land and tenancy records, Citizenship certificate, Permanent residential certificate, Refugee registration certificate, Any government issued license/certificate, Government service/employment certificate, Bank or post office accounts, Birth certificate, State educational board or University educational certificate, Court records/processes, Passport & Any LIC policy.

¹²List B: Birth certificate, Land document, Board/university certificate, Bank/LIC/post office records, Circle officer/ gaon Panchayat secretary certificate in case of married women, Electoral roll, Ration card and Any other legally acceptable document.

¹³3 SCC 1, 2015.

¹⁴Assam Public Works v. Union of India ,9 SCC 229, 2018.

¹⁵Press Trust of India, Additional Exclusion List to Draft NRC published in Assam, June 26, 2019 or click <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/additional-exclusion-list-to-draft-nrc-published-in-assam/article28143342.ece> last accessed on Feb 2020.

¹⁶Sanchit Baruah, 'The NRC unappreciated and Questioned', *The Hill Times*, September 13, 2019 or click <https://www.thehilltimes.in/featured/nrc-unappreciated-and-questioned/> last accessed on Feb 2020.

¹⁷Supra note 5.

¹⁸Udayon Mishra, The Wire, Why Many in Assam see the NRC as Lifeline, August 24, 2018 or click <https://thewire.in/history/history-nrc-assam> last accessed on Dec 2019.

¹⁹*ibid.*

²⁰*ibid.*

²¹Prafull Goradia, 'Assam and the NRC', The Statesman, September 18, 2019 or click <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/assam-and-the-nrc-1502801364.html> last accessed on Jan 2020.

²²*ibid.*

²³K. Deka, India Today, 'Why Assam is protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Bill', India Today, December 9, 2019 or click <https://www.indiatoday.in/india-today-insight/story/why-assam-is-protesting-against-the-citizenship-amendment-bill-1626656-2019-12-09> last accessed on Feb Feb 2020.

²⁴*ibid.*

²⁵*ibid.*

²⁶Supra note 18.

²⁷This Act was applicable only to the state of Assam where as in the rest of India, detection of foreigners is done under the Foreigners Act, 1946 where under section 9 of the Act, the burden to prove that such person is not a foreigner lies upon such persons.

²⁸AIR, SC 3920, 2015.

²⁹J.N. Pandey, *The Constitutional Law of India*, 45th Edition, Central Law Agency, p.110

³⁰Supra note 21.

³¹*ibid.*

³²I.S. Garg, 'Revisiting the Nationality Question in Assam', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 53(22), 13, 2018.

³³S. Amrita, The Caravan, Assam Against itself, August 2, 2019 or click <https://caravanmagazine.in/communities/assam-against-itself-miya-poets-asserting-identity-intimidation-fir> last accessed on Jan 2010.

³⁴Miya Poem was first circulated online in 2016 by Hafiz Ahmed, 'write down I am Miya' in their own dialect, went viral which defamed the Assamese people as Xenophobic in the world.

³⁵Supra note 34.

³⁶*ibid.*

³⁷PRS Legislative Research, 'The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016' or click

<http://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-citizenship-amendment-bill,2016-4348>> last accessed on 12 January 2019.

³⁸S.Talukdar, 'Question of Belonging', The Frontline, February 16, 2018 or click https://frontline.thehindu.com/the_nation/the-question-of-belonging/article10057663.ece last assessed on Jan 2020.

³⁹Before the introduction of the Bill Before the introduction of the Bill, the NDA government issued two gazette notifications on September 7, 2015, the Foreigners (Amendment) Order, 2015, and the Pass Port (Entry into India) Amendment Rules, 2015 to exempt these six non- Muslim minority communities in Bangladesh who were compelled to seek shelter in India due to religious persecution or fear of religious persecution and entered India upto Dec 31, 2014 and came without valid travel documents or with valid travel document but validity expired from the application of Foreigners Act, 1946 and orders made there under in respect of their stay in India without such documents, or after expiry of those documents and prohibition under Pass Port (Entry into India) Rules, 1920.

⁴⁰H. Gohain, 'CAB serves the agenda of Hindu Rashtra', Frontline, January 3, 2020 or click <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article30327480.ece> last accessed on Jan 2020.

⁴¹S.Talukdar, 'Assam's Anger', Front line, January 3, 2020 or click <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article30327443.ece> last accessed on Jan 2020.

⁴²*ibid.*

⁴³The Sixth Schedule was enacted to facilitate the progress of tribal areas through autonomous councils, while preserving the distinct social customs of the indigenous populations in these areas, and to protect the people living there from exploitation.

⁴⁴S. Chamaria, 'CAB Questions Galore', The Assam Tribune, December 13, 2019.

⁴⁵L. Garg, 'If India Wants to Remain Secular, the New Citizenship Bill Isn't the Way to Go', The Wire September 21, 2016 or click <<https://thewire.in/communalism/citizenship-amendment-bill-2016>> accessed 14 January 2019.

⁴⁶The President gave his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, on December 12, 2019 a day after it was passed by the Rajya Sabha. The Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) is now a law.

⁴⁷'Editorial', CAB Aftermath, *The Assam Tribune*, Dec 13, 2019.

Impact of the first World War : Awards, Casualties and relief of the Jind State

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Abstract

The Jind State made tremendous contribution in the First World War. The State sent its Imperial Service Troops to East Africa where it served the British forces with loyalty and courage. The Maharaja, the officials and the subjects of the State also helped the British in this War. The British government highly applauded the services of the soldiers and subjects of the Jind State in the War. The soldiers were decorated with prestigious War medals by the British government. They were also honoured by the governments of France and Russia. The Maharaja of the Jind State and the British government also bestowed upon many awards, gifts and concessions to the soldiers and the subjects. The State suffered many casualties in the First World War.

With the beginning of the First World War the Jind State dispatched its Imperial Service Infantry to serve in East Africa. The State also provided huge assistance to the British Government in the form of men, money and material. The soldiers and subjects of the State were awarded by the British Government as well as by Ranbir Singh the then Maharaja of the Jind State for their invaluable contribution in the War. The British Government was very impressed with the services rendered by Maharaja Ranbir Singh. So he was admitted to the rank of Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army and was also given the honorific title of 'Rajendra Bahadur' His permanent salute of guns was increased from 11 to 13 guns. His personal salute was increased to 17 guns.¹ He was also created a G.C.I.E. and K.C.S.I.² Shamsheer Singh, C.I.E. the Chief Minister of the Jind State was granted the title of K.C.I.E. due to his efforts to maintain Imperial Service Troops in the field.³ The Jind Imperial Service Infantry served in East Africa for three and a half

years and earned a lot of appreciation of the General Officer Commanding the Forces in East Africa.⁴ Lt. General Smuts, General Officer Commanding the Forces in East Africa expressed his high appreciation of the soldierly qualities and gallant conduct of the Jind Infantry.⁵ The Regiment won following

1.	Military Cross	-	1
2.	Order of British India, Ist Class	-	1
3.	Order of British India, IInd Class	-	1
4.	Indian Order of Merit	-	5
5.	Indian Distinguished Service Medal	-	8
6.	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	-	16
7.	Croix de Guerre (French Order)	-	1
8.	Cross of St. George (Russian Order)	-	3
	Total Honours	-	36

The Jind Infantry won 42 Honours and Distinctions and 10 mentions in Despatches.⁷ The detail of these awards was as under:-⁸

Military Cross	-	1
C.I.E.	-	1
I st Class Order of British India with the title of Sardar Bahadur	-	1
2 nd Class Order of British India with the title of Bahadur	-	1
Indian Orders of Merit, 2 nd Class	-	5
Indian Distinguished Service Medals	-	9
Croix-de-Guerre (French Order)	-	1
St. George Medal, 2 nd Class (Russian Order)	-	1
St. George Medal, 4 th Class (Russian Order)	-	1
Cross of St. George, 4 th Class (Russian Order)	-	1
Meritorious Service Medal	-	15
Mention in Despatches	-	10
Total Honours	-	47

Major-General R. Wapshare highly eulogized Major-General Natha Singh for his conspicuous good work ever since the battalion landed in East Africa since October 1914 A.D. and also recommended his name for some suitable reward. Major-General Wapshare recommended following men of Jind Infantry for Indian Order of Merit for their action at Jasin on January 18:- Subedar Harnam Singh, Havildar Gujar Singh, Lance-Naik Kehar Singh (Bugler), 2287 Sepoy Lakha Singh, 2276 Sepoy Sadhu Singh, 2355 Sepoy Sham Singh, 2568 Sepoy Garib Singh, 1681 Sepoy Ram Singh, 2587 Sepoy Mal Singh. So Subedar Harnam Singh was admitted to the Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class. No. 1367 Havildar Gujar Singh, No. 2296 Sepoy Sadhu Singh and No. 2287 Sepoy Lakha Singh were awarded Indian Distinguished Service Medal. Major-General Natha Singh, Bahadur was awarded 'Order of British India', 1st Class with the title of 'Sardar Bahadur'.⁹ Many officers and men were also given allowances for life as:-¹⁰

S. No.	Name	Allowance Allowed per Month		Remarks
		By Government	By State	
1.	Major General Natha Singh	Nil	Rs. 60 and Rs 50	Rs. 60/- fixed by the Government for this Order and Rs. 50 extra as allowed to other officers and men.
2.	Subedar Harnam Singh	17-5-4	20/-	
3.	1367 Havildar Gujar Singh	Nil	6/-	Killed in action at Jassin. ¹¹
4.	2296 Sepoy Sadhu Singh	Nil	4/-	
5.	2287 Sepoy Lakha Singh	Nil	4/-	

In June 1916 A.D. Major Bihra Singh and No. 2030. Sepoy Jagat Singh were rewarded with Indian Distinguished Service Medal for the gallantry shown at Umba and Msambweni respectively.¹² The Czar of Russia also conferred certain Russian Decorations on Officers and men of the Jind Infantry as Cross of Saint George Fourth Class to No. 1880, Naik Sucha Singh, Medal of Saint George Second Class to No. 1564, Havildar Anokh Singh and Medal of Saint George Third Class to No. 2399 Bugler Babu Singh.

Captain E.V. Jones who was attached to Jind Infantry brought the names of No. 1907, Lance Naik Sawan Singh, No. 2377 Naik Bahal Singh and Colonel Baldev Singh to the notice of the Government for their good work. Many men of the Jind Infantry were mentioned in despatches for their valuable services for the period from March to October 1916 A.D. as:- Lt.

Col. Baldev Singh, Subedar Bhagwan Singh, Subedar Sarmukh Singh, Havildar Ghulam Haider, Lance Naik Lehr Singh, Sepoy Sadda Singh and Sepoy Khiwan Singh.¹³ Major J.C. Philips highly praised the Regiment for its action at Kissangiri. He further wrote that Captain Niamat Ali Khan and Captain Sunder Singh had proved themselves to be really efficient double company commanders.¹⁴ In 1918 A.D. following awards were granted:-

1.	Subedar Bahal Singh	-	Indian Distinguished Service Medal
2.	Subedar Bishan Singh	-	Indian Distinguished Service Medal
3.	Havildar Bachan Singh	-	Indian Meritorious Service Medal
4.	Sepoy Bader-ud-Din	-	Indian Meritorious Service Medal ¹⁵
5.	Subedar Pahal Bakhshi	-	Mentioned in Despatches
6.	Subedar Thaman Singh	-	Mentioned in Despatches
7.	Sepoy Chanan Singh	-	Mentioned in Despatches

Captain E.V. Jones also mentioned Senior Sub-Assistant Surgeon Dr. B.C. Dass who after action at Fulwa attended single handed to the wounded under fire. He was ably supported by Dr. Munshi Ram.¹⁶ No. 2238 Sepoy Sadda Singh was admitted to the Order of Merit, 2nd Class.¹⁷ Captain Sunder Singh was awarded Croix de Guerre.¹⁸

Along with them many other officers, N.C.Os and men of the Jind Imperial Service Infantry were awarded Titles, Distinctions, and medals in recognition of their War Services as:-

		Honours and Distinction	Authority
1.	Major R.J. MacBrayne Special Service Officer ¹⁹	Military Cross ²⁰	
2.	937 Subedar Bhagwan Singh	Indian Order of Merit, 2 nd Class	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 5, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 676 dated May 4, 1917. ²¹
3.	1927 Havildar Ghulam Haider	Indian Distinguished Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 5, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 676 dated May 4, 1917.
4.	Major Niamat Ali Khan	Indian Order of Merit, 2 nd Class	Government Gazette of India No. 29 dated May 21, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1151 dated July 20, 1917.

5.	Havildar Major Kehar Singh	Indian Order of Merit, 2 nd Class	Government Gazette of India No. 29 dated July 21, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1151 dated July 20, 1917.
6.	1492 Sepoy Khiwan Singh	Indian Distinguished Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 29 dated July 21, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1151 dated July 20, 1917.
7.	Major General Natha Singh	C.I.E.	Government Gazette of India No. 40 dated October 6, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1693 dated October 5, 1917.
8.	1523 Subedar Prem Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 926 dated May 3, 1918.
9.	1501 Jemadar Vishambhar Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 226 dated May 3, 1918.
10.	Major Niamat Ali Khan	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 29 dated July 21, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1151 dated July 20, 1917.
11.	2343 Major Kehar Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 29 dated July 21, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 1151 dated July 20, 1917.
12.	1504 Jemadar Sarmukh Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 926 dated May 3, 1918.
13.	1037 Jemadar Sadda Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 926 dated May 3, 1918.
14.	1849 Havildar Kartar Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 926 dated May 3, 1918.
15.	2036 Havildar Hussain Bux	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	Government Gazette of India No. 18 dated May 4, 1918 Army Department Notification No. 926 dated May 3, 1918.
16.	Lt. Col. (later Brig. General) Baldev Singh –	2 nd Class Order of British India, with the title of Bahadur ²²	Government Gazette of India No. 17 dated April 28, 1917 Army Department Notification No. 638 dated April 27, 1917.
17.	894 Sepoy Ram Singh ²³	Long Service and Good Conduct Medal	
18.	1242 Sepoy Ramzan	Long Service and Good Conduct Medal	
19.	937 Subedar Bhagwan Singh	Indian Distinguished Service Medal ²⁴	
20.	1907 Naik Sawan Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal. ²⁵	

21.	2365 Sepoy Sawai Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
22.	2652 Sepoy Chet Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
23.	2377 Naik Bahal Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
24.	1958 Naik Besant Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
25.	1992 Havildar Isher Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
26.	2175 Sepoy Hari Singh	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	
27.	No. 2378 Naik Maima Singh ²⁶	Meritorious Service Medal (Without Annuity)	
28.	No. 1616 Jemadar Nand Singh	Meritorious Service Medal (Without Annuity)	
29.	No. 2684 Lance Naik Shah Nawaz	Meritorious Service Medal (Without Annuity)	

1992 Naik Isher Singh and 1927 Havildar Ghulam Haider were mentioned in despatches dated May 4, 1917.²⁷ Lt. General Natha Singh was also granted the honorary rank of Captain in the British Army.²⁸ So total 53 Military Honours and Distinctions were won by the Regiment as under:-

1.	Military Cross	-	1
2.	C.I.F.	-	1
3.	1 st Class Order of British India, with the title of Sardar Bahadur	-	1
4.	2 nd Class Order of British India, with the title of Bahadur	-	1
5.	Indian Orders of Merit, 2 nd Class	-	5
6.	Indian Distinguished Service Medals	-	11
7.	Croix-de-Guerre (French Order)	-	1
8.	St. George Medal, 2 nd Class (Russian Order)	-	1
9.	St. George Medal, 4 th Class (Russian Order)	-	1
10.	Cross of St. George, 4 th Class (Russian Order)	-	1
11.	Meritorious Service Medal	-	17
12.	Mention in Despatches	-	10
13.	Meritorious Service Medal without Annuity	-	3
	Total	-	53

In February 1918 A.D. the Maharaja sanctioned an allowance of Rs. 24/- per annum for life to those Non-Commissioned Officers and men of Jind Regiment who were the recipients of Meritorious Service Medal.²⁹ The Governor-General-in-Council decided in 1917 A.D. to grant certificates to non-officials who rendered important services in connection with the War loan. The Maharaja of Jind recommended for such certificates the names of Lala Ram Gopal, Accountant General and Lala Charanjilal, Superintendent of Excise.³⁰

The Maharaja also bestowed upon Khillat on Miss Margery Burn in appreciation of her valuable services rendered to Subedar Harnam Singh when he was a prisoner of War with the Germans in East Africa.³¹ Lala Ram Gopal, Accountant-General was admitted to O.B.E.³² The Jind Infantry was the first among the Imperial Service Troops to face the enemy and sacrificed their lives for the Empire. The State received a message from Foreign and Political Department on October 14, 1914 intimating that one officer Captain Achhra Singh and six namely No. 2698 Sepoy Nar Singh, No. 2612 Sepoy Lahora Singh, No. 2555 Sepoy Basant Singh, No. 2571 Sepoy Sarwan Singh, No. 2040 Sepoy Hussain Bakhsh and No. 2597 Sepoy Mal Singh had received injuries at Gazi. In the relieve of Jassin on January 12, 1915 following men of the Regiment were wounded:- Captain MacBrayne, Major General Natha Singh, Captain Niamat Ali, Subedar Kishan Singh, 1452 Havildar Indar Singh, 1309 Sepoy Sunder Singh, 2074 Sepoy Ratan Singh.³³ Another sepoy 2394 Ratan Singh was killed in this action.³⁴ The detail of the casualties suffered by the Regiment in the action fought in East Africa on October 9, 1916 was as:-³⁵

1.	Killed in action (Subedar Sarmukh Singh)	-	1
2.	Died of wounds (ranks)	-	2
3.	Missing believed killed (ranks)	-	8
4.	Wounded and missing (ranks)	-	5
5.	Dangerously wounded (rank)	-	1
6.	Severally wounded:- (i) Subedar Baghwan Singh	-	1
	(ii) Other ranks	-	15
7.	Slightly wounded (ranks)	-	8
	Total	-	41

Till May 6, 1915 number of men and officers who were invalided to India was as:-³⁶

1.	Number of wounded	16
2.	Invalided due to disease	39

The men of Jind Infantry who were killed in action in the Umba Valley operations on January 18, 1915 were:-³⁷ Jamadar Partap Singh, 1257 Havildar Kishen Singh, 1367, Havildar Gujar Singh, 1074 Havildar Sunder Singh, 1296 Naik Basant Singh, 1371 Amar Singh, 1990 Lance Naik Keha Singh, 2013 Ram Singh, 1960 Wazir Singh (Signaller), 2597 Sepoy Mal Singh, 2584 Sepoy Mastan Singh, 2523 Sepoy Nidhan Singh, 2571 Sepoy Sarwan Singh, 2532 Sepoy Sant Singh, 2608 Sepoy Kishan Singh, 2505 Sepoy Hardit Singh, 2558 Sepoy Chanda Singh, 1682 Sepoy Ram Singh, 2317 Sepoy Lal Singh, 2622 Sepoy Salabat Khan, 2596 Sepoy Bachan Singh, 2366 Sepoy Arjan Singh (Signaller), 2172 Sepoy Basant Singh, 2143 Sepoy Rur Singh, 2648 Sepoy Telu Singh, 1917 Sepoy Nikka Singh, 2103 Sepoy Rulia Singh, 2578 Sepoy Kehr Singh, 2221 Sepoy Pirthi Singh, 2484 Sepoy Rala Singh, 2516 Sepoy Mukand Singh, 2394 Sepoy Ratan Singh, 2679 Sepoy Inder Singh, 2302 Sepoy Sawan Singh, 2223 Sepoy Varyam Singh, 2762 Sepoy Kahn Singh, 2626 Sepoy Jiwan Singh. Total number of casualties was 37. No. 772 Subedar Sarmukh Singh was killed in action on October 9, 1916 at Kisangeri.³⁸ The casualties in action near Masanga on December 16, 1916 were:- 2675 Sepoy Mehar Singh (killed in action) and 2862 Sepoy Badan Singh (died of wounds).³⁹ Total number of casualties in Jind Infantry upto March 1, 1917 was as under:-⁴⁰

Year	Wounded	Killed in Action	Died of Disease	Died of Wounds	Missing
1914-15	37	38	4	2	-
1915-16	3	1	7	-	-
1916-17	36	12	18	7	7
Total	76	51	29	9	7

Till October 11, 1917 twelve more men were killed in action in East Africa.⁴¹ Subedar Harnam Singh was captured by the Germans in the action on January 18, 1915 and was taken as a prisoner of War.⁴² Along with him two more men of the Jind Infantry were taken as prisoners of War. They were No. 2299 Lance Naik Rup Singh and No. 2622 Sepoy Salabat Khan.⁴³

During the Commencement of the War, the Maharaja continued to provide relief to his soldiers at the Front. The sick and wounded men who returned from East Africa were presented gold and silver coins. The cash presents were also given on their proceeding on sick leave. These presents were neither a gratuity nor any reward but were given to cover the daily expenses of the soldiers for the time being.⁴⁴ On February 5, 1915 the Maharaja of Jind announced that relief would be afforded from the State treasury to the dependents of those men of Imperial Service Infantry who had proceeded on active service.⁴⁵ On September 20, 1915 he issued regulations regarding the issue of pay and payment of family allotments and pensions of persons of Jind Imperial Service Regiment who were reported as missing. The pension to the family of the missing person was granted.⁴⁶ The Jind Darbar had adopted the War pension regulations for its troops on the same lines as that of India Army Order dated January 18, 1915. The War Pension Regulation for the Jind Imperial Service Regiment was as under:-

	Ist Degree		IInd Degree		3 rd Degree	
	Wound	Injury	Wound	Injury	Wound	Injury
Subedar	Rs. 60	Rs. 50	Rs. 50	Rs. 40	Rs. 40	Rs. 30
Jemadar	Rs. 40	Rs. 35	Rs. 35	Rs. 30	Rs. 30	Rs. 25

But these were inclusive of any ordinary pension which means that no peace time pension or any other pension was given in addition except the allowances connected with the Title or Distinction. In case of wound or injury of Ist degree, 1 year's pay was given in advance. In case of wound or injury of 2nd degree, 9 month's pay was given in advance. In case of wounds or injury of 3rd degree, 6 month's pay was given in advance.⁴⁷ The family pension was also admissible to real minor brother who was dependent on the deceased for his maintenance in case when none of the relations (son, widow, daughter, father, mother) of the deceased was alive.⁴⁸ The Farman No. 20 of November 12, 1917 laid down that in case of temporary public followers who were killed in action or died of wounds within one year of their return from active service their heirs were entitled to a pension at the rate of Rs. 3 per mensam.⁴⁹ The Maharaja provided following concessions to his Imperial Service Troops on April 21, 1917:-⁵⁰

1. All the combatants except the mounted officers given free rations from June 1, 1917.

2. In addition to their pay and free rations the N.C.Os and men also received good conduct allowance are as Rs. 1 after 3 years service Rs. 2 after 6 years service and Rs. 3 after 10 years service

3. The mounted officers were mounted free from June 1, 1917 as all the maintenance expenses were borne by the State. The Jind Darbar contributed Rs. 25,000 towards Imperial Indian Relief Fund in 1919 A.D. to afford relief to the various classes who had suffered through the War.⁵¹ The officers and men of the Jind Infantry were granted leave calculated at the rate of two months per year of their service in the field and were given free railway passes by the Government.⁵² In the year 1916-17 A.D. thirty eight sick and wounded officers and men invalided from the front were awarded War pensions and 34 family pensions were granted in accordance with the War Pension Regulations of the State to the heirs of those who had been killed on active service.⁵³ On the return of the Imperial Service Troops after three and a half years of active service, the Maharaja announced the award of life allowance to those who had received Government distinctions. He also announced an increase in the rate of pensions of the unit in peace time and the grant of two month's pay for every year of war service. General Natha Singh was also granted a Khillat of Rs. 10000/- and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and was also granted a Jagir of Rs. 1000/- tenable for three generations.⁵⁴

So overall 53 Awards and Honours were won by the Imperial Service Regiment. The State granted 15 Jagirs, 170 Khillats and 166 Sanads to its officials and subjects.⁵⁵ The total number of casualties was 143 killed and wounded in addition to 28 who died of disease out of 380 fighting strength.⁵⁶ The Jind State also provided relief to soldiers of the Imperial Service Troops and the British Government also rewarded the soldiers and subjects of the Jind State.

Notes and References

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²Behari Lal Dhingra (Compl. & Ed.), *Jind State: A Brief Historical and Administrative Sketch*, p. 4.

³Foreign and Political Department, Internal-B, July 1917, Nos. 215-216, p. 3. NAI also see *The Khalsa Advocate*, Amritsar, Saturday, June 9, 1917, p. 2.

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- ⁶Major General Sir Harry Watson (Compl.), *A Short History of the Services Rendered by the Imperial Service Troops during the Great War 1914-18*, Calcutta, 1930, p. 30.
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- ¹¹*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 5, File No. 500, p. 8. PSA.*
- ¹²*Jind State Records, Head:- First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 5, File No. 498, p. 9. PSA.*
- ¹³*Jind State Records, Head:- First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 19, File No. 1722, pp. 32, 35, 48, 49, 63, 67, 73. PSA, also see Jind State Records, Head:- First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 21, File No. 1928, p. 5. PSA.*
- ¹⁴*Jind State Records, Head:- First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 5, File No. 497, pp. 230-231. PSA also see Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 21, File No. 1915, p. 25. PSA.*
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- ¹⁶*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 19, File No. 1723, pp. 18, 20. PSA.*
- ¹⁷*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 19, File No. 1720, p. 7. PSA also see Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 14, File No. 1381, p. 24. PSA.*
- ¹⁸*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 14, File No. 1400, p. 7. PSA.*
- ¹⁹*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 23, File No. 1973, p. 4. PSA.*
- ²⁰*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 22, File No. 1938, pp. 69-71. PSA also see Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War, Basta No. 25, File No. 2085, pp. 39, 43, 45, 47. PSA.*
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³⁶*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War*, Basta No. 1, File No. 113, pp. 13, 15, 17, 19. PSA.

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³⁸*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War*, Basta No. 3, File No. 421, p. 7. PSA.

³⁹*Jind State Records, Head: First Anglo-German War*, Basta No. 19, File No. 1719, p. 13. PSA.

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Blended learning: A practical approach for better learning experience

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Abstract

Technology has brought inevitable changes in education all over the world with opportunities and challenges. Unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has almost compelled the world to grab the opportunity provided by technology in all walks of life. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) which was once treated inferior to traditional face-to-face mode of education has got a new phase shift and has grown by leaps and bound with innovations in transactional strategy. Traditional face - to-face mode of education has also been shifted to various technological interfaces to support knowledge delivery. Blended learning approach, a blending of face-to-face instructional approach with technological interventions, has not only provided quantum shift to the ODL but also substituted a large portion of the traditional face-to-face mode of education. This paper examines the use of blended instructional approach in ODL, perception of learners in blended learning and effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing the learning process. Desk Research technique has been conducted for this study which basically involving collecting data from the existing online sources. The paper will make re-analysis of the previous literature and generate new insights from the previous studies. Number of previous researches, explored in this desk research, reveals that blended learning has had positive impacts on improving learning of students. However, some studies reveal that the blending of face-to-face mode with multimedia should be balanced so that learners can cope up with the blended learning for construction of knowledge. The analysis in this paper suggests that higher educational institutions have to pay more attention to the individual learning needs of learners, particularly ODL learners and their views on blended learning. ODL Institutions may consider offering students choices of transactional approaches suitable for them. Course designers must integrate different multiple means of transactional approaches to scaffold and support students. The blending of face-to-face classes and technology intervention has to increase motivation and satisfaction of learners.

Introduction

The world has seen very drastic changes in almost all domains in last few decades with faster pace with time. Education being an integral part of the society has been going through these changes with opportunities and challenges. In the present world, education is not bounded in a particular locus as it was seen in earlier. With innovations in transactional approaches, now higher education is available on the doorsteps, with flexibility instead of rigidity in pace, age and place of learning. Rapid globalization due to development in communication technology has helped the growth and innovations in education. It is the globalization which empowers people to think in a rational and wider way, to see for larger benefits, to use technology to do their task more efficiently, effectively, comfortable, and quickly (Sethy, 2008). The fast growing communication technology has broken the hitherto concept of higher education for only selected privileged group of people and has open the window for all to acquire higher education. The widespread use of the Internet has resulted in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the world going through rapid changes as they adapt to the new realities of the knowledge society (Macfadyen and Dawson, 2010). It has become inevitable for the Institute of higher education to comply with the growing expectations of students for effective use of technology in transacting content. Advancements in technology have brought both opportunities and challenges to education and training (Muthuraman, 2020). Technology mediated instructional approaches have yielded new educational terminologies such as online learning, e-learning or web-based learning specifically (Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008; Güzer & Caner, 2014).

Blended learning, a combination of face-to-face instruction and computer mediated instruction, has substituted a large portion of the traditional face-to-face instructional time (Owston, York & Murtha, 2013). It has given tremendous freedom to learners, particularly to those who used to be bored in traditional confinement within four walls of face – to – face transactional approach. Blended learning is often credited to encourage students' creativity, analytical and critical thinking skills, creating social interaction and good relationships between writer and reader and supporting the learning

community (Gyamfi & Gyaase, 2015). Learners can access the facility provided by blended learning anytime and anywhere, and therefore learners enjoy the learning which results a better quality supportive and constructive learning experience. But there has been always an active debate to whether students can truly learn better in a blended learning environment compared to traditional face-to-face classroom environment (Güzer & Caner, 2014). In recent time there have been many research undertaken pertaining to blended learning, its dimensions, variables and impact most of which prove that blended learning is helpful, constructive and supportive and can attract learners besides expanding education to all.

Methodology

This study uses desk research techniques. It is a review of research already carried out by researchers. Research papers are viewed from the existing online library which covered several academic databases. The search has been carried out in such a way that the output yields are relevant. Desk research technique, if carried out carefully, gives new deep understanding of the previous studies. Some of the keywords used to search different relevant studies were blended learning, distance learning, computer assisted learning, and learning management system. All the available research works yielded in the search with above keywords criteria were re-analyzed.

Blended learning: A practical approach

Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for online interaction with traditional place-based classroom methods. The face-to-face mode requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with very small elements of student control over time, place, path, or pace. While students still attend ‘brick-and-mortar’ schools with a teacher present, face-to-face classroom practices are combined with computer-mediated activities regarding content and delivery. Blended learning is also used in professional development and training settings. Blended learning has become a familiar term now and practice in the education. There have been many definitions of blended learning put forward in the literature. Over the years, factors such as twenty first century skills, information explosion and demands of

workplaces have strengthened and encouraged moves to adopt technologies into classrooms and learning settings (Muthuraman, 2020). The rapid growth in the use of learning technologies has led to a growing need to explore efficient program delivery methodologies and provided teachers and students with many more opportunities to mix of teaching and learning styles for a given task (Uđur, Akkoyunlu & Kurbanođlu, 2009).

Thorne (2003) defined blended learning as a way of meeting the challenges of customizing learning and development to the needs of individuals by incorporating the innovative and technological advances offered by online learning with the interaction and participation offered in the best of traditional learning. Blended learning is the most logical and natural evolution of our learning agenda and does indeed provide a real opportunity to create learning experiences that can deliver the right learning at the right time and in the right place for each and every individual, not only from an academic perspective but also from the workplace and home (Thorne, 2003). Blended learning has often been referred to as the “third generation” learning approach and characterized as maximizing the best advantages of face-to-face learning and a variety of technologies to deliver learning through combinations of learning delivery methods, such as face-to-face instruction with either synchronously or asynchronously computer mediated technologies (Akyüz & Samsa, 2009).

Blended learning focuses on optimizing the achievement of learning objectives by applying the right personal learning technologies to watch the right personal learning style to transfer the right skills to the right person at the right time (Singh, 2003). Blended learning is a feasible and effective approach to deliver up-to-date, high-quality, on-demand learning solutions that combines various delivery methods, such as collaboration software, Web-based courses, Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS), and knowledge management practices (Thorne, 2003; Bansal, 2014). Blended learning combines various event-based activities such as face-to-face classrooms, self-paced instruction and lives e-learning, which has resulted in the creation of new opportunities for students and learners alike to interact with their academic content both inside and outside the classroom, peers and

faculty (Bansal, 2014). According to Olitsky and Cosgrove, blended learning should be regarded as a pedagogical approach that integrates the effectiveness and socialization opportunities of the technologically enhanced active learning possibilities of the online environment with the class room (Olitsky & Cosgrove, 2014)). Thus, Blended learning is an approached which redesigns of the instructional model with a quantum a shift from teacher centred to student-cantered instruction, where students become active and interactive learners even during the face-to-face sessions. It yields with an increase in interactions between student-content, student-instructor, student-student and student-outside resources. Blended learning is an integrated summative and formative mechanism for students and instructors (Olitsky & Cosgrove, 2014).

Many researchers have found that students believed they received instructor feedback, their grades faster and the rated the quality of teaching assistants significantly better in blended courses in comparison with traditional face-to-face learning environment (Korr, Derwin, Greene, & Sokoloff, 2012). In a study carried out by Lin and Wang revealed that students were able to balance their study to achieve their educational goals, along with multiple commitments they faced with in their daily lives such as juggling work with family obligations, commuting and financial challenges because of the flexibility in managing their blended courses, (Lin & Wang, 2012). Students appreciate the opportunity to be able to regulate their own study, such as work with course materials and participate in online discussions (Lin & Wang, 2012; Poon, 2012). As blended learning is a synthesis of face-to-face and online learning environments, students can benefit from increased time and spatial flexibility for their study, wider and easier access to learning resources, and a higher level of autonomy in regulating their learning (Poon, 2012).

Designing of an efficient blended learning environment with appropriate balance between face to face and e-learning components is very important. Different student learning styles, learning experiences, the context and content of online resources and the experience of instructor play an important role in designing an efficient blended learning

environment and to establish the balance between face to face and e – learning environment (Osguthorpe and Graham, 2003). Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) suggested blended learning as a mixture, beyond the simple combination of face-to-face and online instruction, of learning activities, students, and instructors. Blended learning environments may vary widely according to different goals, viz. pedagogical richness, social interaction, access to knowledge, personal agency, the ease of revision and cost effectiveness (Osguthorpe and Graham, 2003).

Bansal (2014) have shown that blended learning often do not live up to the potential of the approach and at times, could fail to produce expected results because instructors, administrators and learners could lack the relevant technical, methodological or organisational knowledge and experience (Bansal, 2014). Therefore there is need for training of the instructors and administrators in the relevant fields. Some other documented hindrances are students' struggle with time management, responsibility for their own learning, difficulty in using new technology, inadequate professional development support and difficulties in establishing a supportive culture for blended learning (Vaughan, 2007). Blended learning inherently is about rethinking and redesigning the teaching and learning relationship (Muthuraman, 2020). The challenge is to designing a learning environment that ensures effective, efficient and flexible learning for all learners. Views of learners are essentially crucial in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of a blended learning environment. Since every learner is unique, no single technology-mediated instruction is best for all learners. Thus, the specific preferences, weakness and strengths of the learners should be considered when planning the blending of learning media to present the content to the learners for to be received and processed by them.

Learning Management System (LMS)

With the innovations in computer mediated technologies, traditional face to face mode of learning has been supplemented to a measurable extent by e-learning (Fathi and Wilson, 2009). As a result, Open and Distance Education is becoming more popular where one can learn in his/her own

pace, time and place. Colleges and universities worldwide are employing a diverse form of electronic distance media to deliver educational courses to students without the limitations of location or time (Zacharis, 2015). The Learning Management Systems (LMS) are technological learning environments that support students' learning by providing content, assignments, presentations online using different techniques such as screencasts, quizzes and other forums (Filippidi, Tselios & Komis, 2010; Conijn et al., 2017).

The main objectives of a LMS system are to bridge the distance between the learner and the learning material and to embed social interactions within the same environment (Filippidi, Tselios & Komis, 2010). And as a result LMS deliver learners the opportunity to become active participants and not mere receivers of information. The adoption of LMSs have further assisted online, onsite and hybrid courses through their functionalities for communication, content creation, assessment and administration (Piña, 2010). This has opened the window of construction of new knowledge by learners. A majority of LMSs are web-based and employ synchronous and asynchronous technologies to promote anywhere, anytime access to the course content and administration (Black et al., 2007). And therefore LMSs have provided freedom to learners in terms of place, pace and time of learning which has increased the participation of working population in education through ODL. There is an emphasis on learning management rather than course management by LMSs. Learning management systems have the ability to store educational content so that it can be referenced by many courses, and thus LMSs streamline a distance or e-learning, instructor's tasks (Ceraulo, 2005).

Students can access different learning materials such as documents, spreadsheets PowerPoint presentations, audio or video of lectures, hyperlinks, assignments, track their progress and interact with tutors and peers in LMS platforms (Zacharis, 2015). LMS platforms also provide collaborative learning and can take place in the asynchronous and synchronous LMS tools (Zacharis, 2015). Asynchronous tools, which can be access at any time, consist of email, threaded discussion boards, course

announcements blogs, wikis, calendars, and file sharing (Zacharis, 2015). Synchronous tools, which are accessed in real time, include text chat, whiteboard, web-conferencing tools and others which may be available only after installing additional plug-ins or integration packs (Zacharis, 2015). So and Brush (2008) have reported that students' satisfaction with blended learning course delivery is very high, given the ease, convenience and accessibility of online resources available through an LMS (So & Brush, 2008). The integration of human interaction with online learning yields a balanced combination of self-paced learning experience. Team activities, a mix of spoken, written and interactive media have been proven to be effective in supporting learning for all types of learners including visual, auditory and kinesthetic (Zacharis, 2015).

Most blended learning programs are combined with in-class activities with the support of an LMS, student activities can easily be tracked by processing the digital trails left by every online interaction in the system's log file (Zacharis, 2015). Student grades are found to have significant relationship with all LMS activities of learners in a pilot study conducted by Macfadyen and Dawson (2010) to assess the usefulness of LMSs in tracking data and predicting student success where the underpinning research question was to determine if the data collected from the LMS log file was enough to predict grades in a hybrid learning environment. Taking into account all LMS activities related to blended learning were treated equally in a search for significant correlations with student grade and from these activities/variables, 14 were found having significant relationship with final course grade and were included in a multiple regression analysis, in order to develop a predictive model of outcomes in blended learning settings (Macfadyen and Dawson, 2010). They have also noted that some integrated online activities are likely to translate into effective learning strategies but 'more time spent on online activities' does not simply predict higher achievement (Macfadyen and Dawson, 2010). An important finding, they stated is that the instructor's intentions and knowledge of actual course design is crucial in order to

determine which LMS variables can meaningfully represent student effort or activity (Macfadyen and Dawson, 2010).

Al-Busaidi (2012) has opined that LMS allows students to interact with each others, develop critical thinking skills, and control their own learning and a sense of community with other learners. A study conducted by Al-Busaidi (2012) reveals that learners' e-characteristics such as computer anxiety, personal innovativeness and technology experience are significant factors for student's perceived ease of use of LMS. Significant factors for student's perceived ease of use of LMS are instructors' attitude towards LMS and their control over LMS, system quality, information quality, and service quality in blended learning environment and its continuous use (Al-Busaidi, 2012). The success of adopting LMS in blended learning have positive impacts on learners' intention for continued use, learner's perceived satisfaction and acceptance of LMS as an important element for its survival (Al-Busaidi 2012). The study by Al-Busaidi (2012) has also confirmed that all major entities of LMS adoption such as the learners, course, instructors, classmates, and organization are crucial to the success and survival of LMS (Al-Busaidi, 2012). Different LMS data variables such as hit frequency, time spent online, and the numbers of discussion messages read or posted have strong relationship with student achievement in the context of a blended learning programming course. Zacharis (2015) revealed that 52% of the variance in the final student grade was envisaged by just four variables: Reading and posting messages, Content creation contribution, Quiz efforts and number of Files viewed by reviewing the log files generated by the Moodle LMS that hosted a blended learning course (Zacharis, 2015).

In a study conducted by Gecer & Dag (2012) aimed to analyse the views of the students towards a course where blending of face to face and e-learning methods which included LMS revealed that students found LMS as useful in several ways such as information about the courses independent of time and place, following the course content online, exchange of ideas and opinions between tutor-student and student-student (Gecer & Dag, 2012). Since the use of LMS is an important factor in a blended learning

environment, greater attention should necessarily be given in designing academic courses with the use of LMS (Filippidi, Tselios & Komis, 2010). The factors that affect students' interaction practices while engaging with a LMS, such as system's usability and usefulness are to be simplified in order to further promote and motivate the learners to achieve deeper understanding (Filippidi, Tselios & Komis, 2010).

Learners' acceptance of Blended Learning

In last few decades the face to face teaching-learning practice has been intervened by information and communication technology. Most of the technology interventions have been designed by teachers keeping in view the needs of learners. The perception of learners about such blending needs to be understood to make a learner centric ecosystem of learning. Many educational institutions are implementing blended learning as a way to increase enrolment, to improve student learning, to provide greater convenience to its commuter students and to engage students more in their courses.

Research shows relationship between satisfaction with the blended course format and achievement. The highest achievers were most satisfied with their blended course and they prefer blended format over fully face-to-face or online (Owston, York & Murtha, 2013). On the other hand the lowest achievers were found to be least satisfied, preferred face-to-face instruction and least likely to want to take another blended course (Owston, York & Murtha, 2013). Therefore, one can argue that low achievers may need the structure that comes from traditional regular face-to-face classes as they may lack the independent study skills that blended learning demands (Owston, York & Murtha, 2013). Whether academic subjects that are difficult for students to master are appropriate for delivering using the blended format or if other methods can be used in organizing and designing blended courses in ways that will better support these students (Owston, York & Murtha, 2013).

Akkoyunlu & Soylu (2008) observed significant differences in students' views on blended learning regarding their learning styles. On the other hand there is no significant difference on students' achievement with

respect to their learning styles, however online courses must be developed well in order to assist learning to occur (Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008).

Though face to face interaction is a must for students, the provision of the blended learning is highly appreciated by learners and students' reflective reports exhibit that blended learning is felt to have enhanced learning opportunities (Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008). While designing a blended learning environment, adequate support strategies must be embedded to accommodate different learning styles which eventually could result in higher retention in blended learning environment (Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008).

The perceived levels of student satisfaction are positively related to student ages which imply that older students are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels than the younger students (So & Brush, 2008). Students who have previously taken more distance courses are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels than those who have taken fewer distance courses (So & Brush, 2008). Moreover, learners who favoured to work individually rather than working in a group perceived lower levels of social presence than those who reported a preference for group learning (So & Brush, 2008).

When learners are assigned with multiple formats of learning materials in blended learning environment it could sustain the students' interest and therefore aid their cognitive engagement (Gyamfi & Gyaase, 2015).

It is also reported by Gyamfi and Gyaase (2015) that the activity logs on course materials are found to be higher when the students are asked to take assignment on the topics which are available in portal indicating that ease of access to the course materials. Any adoption of the blended learning environment would require investment in internet infrastructure to make it successful. When learners were provided with adequate and appropriate communication tools in blended learning environments it enhanced interaction and collaboration with their peers and tutors and thereby enhance their development of knowledge and skills in the course (Gyamfi & Gyaase, 2015). On line communication opportunity creates an avenue for the students to

frequently exhibit their knowledge and writing skills in the course. Gyamfi & Gyaase (2015) reported that more than 70% of the students taking blended course found the feedback/answers they received on the tasks and quizzes are very helpful in the course.

Discussion and Conclusion

Most of the researchers have found that blended learning influences student's performance, understanding of the course in question, enhance and support the learning process.

Educational institutions must look beyond the traditional boundaries of classroom instruction and engage in new advances in learning technologies and opportunity for collaboration to provide learners with meaningful model of learning development and social interaction.

An appropriate LMS incorporating diverse activities like resources, lecture notes, group works, quiz, wikis, discussion forums and assignment submission in the best possible way can result in better learning of learners. Therefore educational institutions need to develop a feasible LMS contextualizing the local needs.

Self-directed, self-regulated, self-determined and self motivated learners can engage and develop their skills. However, all student may not be able to function in blended learning environment and therefore, planners have to consider offering students a choice of whether to enrol in blended or fully face-to-face programme. Academic programmes have to be developed with multiple means of expression and engagement, representation, to scaffold and support students in the creation of their own individualized blend. Turning classroom into blended formats without proper planning will not provide students with more interactive and flexible learning experiences and could result in increased the extraneous or ineffective cognitive load in learning processes. Moreover, courses have to be designed in such a way that addresses those who are not able to cope well with the blended learning environment.

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Domesticity and Everyday Life of Women in Late Colonial Assam: A Reading of Two Women's Autobiographical Narratives

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Abstract

The paper studies the representation of the domestic and everyday life of women in late colonial Assam in two women's autobiographies from Assam Tinikuri Dah Basarar Smriti by Rajabala Das and Eri Aha Dinbor by Nalinibala Devi. Domesticity and everyday life have always contested zones in studying the community of women across the globe. The patriarchal projection of women as subjects of home and the structuring of their familial duties have been debated at large. It is much more interesting when women themselves offer images of these sites as participants and at times as resisting agents. The texts chosen for study conform to such a picture where the speakers besides providing a glimpse of the collective everyday life of women in late colonial Assam argue that access to education have brought a drastic change to the practice of these sites.

Women's autobiographies throughout the world have been analysed time and again as narratives of the 'home' while contrasting it with the loci of men's autobiographies, i.e the 'world'. This categorization of self-narratives in accordance with a generalised notion of narrative focus determined by social roles of women and men, can be an interesting way of understanding how these socially designated spaces determine notions of 'self' and 'identity' on the one hand and also present a picture of these spaces in a particular time. The aim of this paper is to understand the representation of the domestic and everyday life of women in late colonial Assam in some of the personal narratives of women. It is also argued that the representation exhilarates a notion of 'resistance' in the speaker's voice in attempting to project women's lives beyond the domestic space. The texts chosen for study are *Tinikuri Dah*

Basarar Smriti(1971) by Rajabala Das and *Eri Aha Dinbor* (1976) by Nalinibala Devi.

As stories of lives lived and remembered, these two texts bring into notice not just personal accounts of life but very often transcending the private record a public account of the Assamese society from the 1890s till the 1970s. The fact that both Das and Devi were born in colonial Assam and lived till the later decades of the twentieth century provide us an opportunity to read their autobiographies as archives of memories of some crucial junctures of the twentieth century Assamese society. As exceptional women of their time, both Rajabala Das and Nalinibala Devi have touched upon some of the important issues related to women such as women's education, women's participation in the national freedom struggle and the women's movement in Assam with the birth of organisations like Assam Mahila Samiti. Their collective consciousness of being 'women' in a patriarchal society very often dominates their narrative in such a way that more than narrating private accounts of life, they portray the society of their time to a great extent. It is in this context that one can observe a very vivid picture of the domestic and the everyday life of women in late Colonial Assam. The primary places around which their observations of the domestic and the everyday world of women have been recorded are Dibrugarh and Guwahati. However, their accounts record a lot of similarities regarding the kind of homebound, confined lives women were living at that time and through their self-narrations they not only present the general status of women but also attempt to identify themselves as resisting to the prevailing norms of the society to an extent. The prominent factor that is seen playing a crucial role in their respective narrations is the issue of caste. Rajabala Das through a brief account of a girl belonging to a Brahmin family of Dibrugarh takes a position while narrating the impositions of social customs on Brahmin girls especially that of early marriage and widowhood. In contrast to such impositions she narrates her own life as relatively free as she as a non-Brahmin girl could continue her studies even after attaining puberty. Nalinibala Devi, on the other hand, had to embrace these customs as a Brahmin girl and her presentation of the domestic space. Both Das' and Devi's representation of the general status of women becomes inextricably linked with the question of caste. Nevertheless, in order to get a glimpse of the everyday life of women in late colonial Assam, we can go

through some interesting observations made by them in their autobiographies. Rajabala Das in the beginning of her autobiography mentions, 'most houses generally had two courtyards- the front yard and the backyard. The yard in front, which the sitting room faced, was called the front yard. The other yard faced by the bedrooms, kitchen and the *naamghar* (the prayer hall) was called the backyard. Bamboo fences demarcated the front and the back yard. The women in such houses were not allowed to go to the front yard and outsiders could not enter the backyard.'¹

Moreover, personalising this demarcation of 'space' in terms of 'gender' she narrates one episode from her life. One day a big rally where people played all the musical instruments like *dhol*, *pepa*, *mridanga* etc. went past our house. We, the small children of the family, rushed out to the gate to watch the rally. Our elder sister also came running with us and our elder brother took her back to the bamboo fences demarcating the front and the back yard and told her to watch it from there. She was around ten to eleven years old at that time and unfortunately she was considered as an adult. She was very ashamed and hurt at the same time. The girls, thus, had no other way but to passively except the customs imposed on them.²

It can be assumed that the inclusion of this incident in her autobiography prepares the ground for a resistance against these restrictions imposed on women, whereby she devices a narrative focus for her text, where the 'public' realm as opposed to the 'home' or the domestic world becomes the arena where she locates herself as an individual. She states that very early in her life after witnessing the plight of the Brahmin girls of their neighbourhood in Dibrugarh, she decided to do something for improving the status of women.

Anindita Ghosh comments that a reading of the everyday acts of resistance in analysing women's lives in India can be immensely rewarding, where, '...given the disruptive trappings, even close readings of the historical and archival evidence do not offer much beyond hegemonic narratives of power relations. What has been systematically excluded from accounts of women's struggles is the everyday realm of social relations in which power is constantly and relentlessly negotiated'.³

Antoinette Burton in her book *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India* (2003) studies the memoirs of three Indian women- Janaki Majumdar (1886-1963), Cornelia Sorabji (1886-1954) and Attia Hosain (1913-1997) as memories of home. She mentions in

her introduction to the book that ‘all three used domestic space as an archival source from which to construct their own histories and through which to record the contradictions of living as Indian women in the context of colonial modernity’.⁴ Burton’s emphasis on the importance of home as both as a historical archive and a very real political figure in a moment of historical crisis through the representation of home in these three women’s memoirs enterprises the readers with the way Indian women narrated the difficulty of dwelling comfortably at ‘home’ in late colonial India. However, while establishing the centrality of home and the domestic in their narratives, she also mentions the fact that not ‘every single personal narrative inscribes home at its heart or even consistently evokes domestic interiors as constituents of identity or family history’.⁵ She records that autobiographies like *Himself*(1910) by Ramabai Ranade and *Autobiography* (1964) by Muthulakshmi Reddy do not privilege the space of home except some passing references. Home and its interiors and the domestic space do not dominate these works or give structure to their narrative form. Contemporary to the three Indian women mentioned by Burton, we have in Assam Rajabala Das (1893-1985), Nalinibala Devi(1898-1977) and Indira Miri(1910-2004) writing their personal narratives where ‘home’ as a space does not offer an exclusive understanding of the speaking personas or dominates the speaker’s act of ‘remembrance’ but even then, domesticity and everyday life as a site for self-realisation becomes very crucial when these women contrast ‘home’ with that of the ‘world’.

Nevertheless, both Burton and Ghosh, while reading the domestic, and the everyday acts of resistance and subversion by women in colonial South Asia have also pointed out the problematic of attempts to recover women as ‘subject’ in South Asian context. Apart from the dangers of homogenising women as a group ignoring the trappings of power that come with wealth and status, they have pointed out the precocity of considering certain acts as ‘subversion’ and ‘resistance’ given the context in which women operate. Anindita Ghosh has mentioned how very often while, ‘...uncovering outstanding opposition to gendered regime of power...., the underlying complexities that frame these structures are ignored. In fact... the lines of battle are much more ambiguous than we would like to imagine. Women who dissent do not always emerge only as ‘victims’, but often as ‘perpetrators’ in

upholding repressive orders. And as such, their compliance with patriarchy must be placed alongside their resistance in order for us to fully grasp these struggles. This is a contradiction that lies at the heart of women's experiences in India'.⁶

Any study of the everyday life of women in India, be it historical or from the perspective of life-writing, then, demands an understanding of this complex position of women in India as both resisting agent and collaborator.

Commenting on the customary practices performed by women as a community find mention in *Tinikuri Das Basarar Smriti*. Rajabala Das presents a very elaborate description of the rituals observed by women as part of the celebration of attaining puberty. 'The attainment of puberty calls for a celebration which is almost similar to that of an actual marriage. The girl is kept hidden and isolated from the male members of the family for the first four days. She is offered a diet of fruits, sprouts and milk for the first half of the day and boiled vegetarian meal is offered in the evening. The girl is not allowed to go outside during these days. On the fourth day, the women of the neighbourhood are invited to apply a paste of turmeric and black lentil on the girl followed by a proper bath. Only the female relatives of the family and the neighbouring women are invited again on the seventh day to observe the final rites and the day is celebrated in a grand manner. A lavish meal is served to the guests. The women give the girl a good bath following this with some rituals like making her a banana tree planted in front of the bathing place to be an imaginary groom. The ladies make her dress up elaborately for the occasion and an imaginary child, called '*konai*' made out of a *gamosa* is placed on her lap. All the ladies gathered, thus, show their affection to the *konai* and offer money as blessing'.⁷

A description of these rites observed only by women, thus, refers to Rajabala Das' close observation of the women community and their everyday life, which is well demarcated from that of men. These rites especially observed by women where even the presence of men is not allowed, makes her notice how the lives of women were centred on this notions of 'difference' and 'seclusion' from the lives of men. Every day practices like these, further, in the course of narration, have been mentioned with emphasis on the fact that access to education opened for these women the outside world otherwise not designated for them.

She records how the domestic lives of girls under the close supervision of the elders, demanded the knowledge of certain skills like weaving, knitting and culinary skills. She also mentions that these skills were required to make a girl eligible for marriage because it was difficult for an untrained girl to find a suitable match and hence the mothers always took the responsibility of training the daughters. The restrictions imposed on the girls thus compelled them to spend their time before marriage in household chores, weaving and knitting. She records that she also took the training of the aforementioned skills after coming back from Calcutta after studying there for nine months. While recording this, however, she mentions how her knowledge of the alphabets helped her read the texts like the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Kirtan*. She narrates, 'as the days of my childhood came to an end I learnt the skill of weaving clothes from my mother. She taught us all the household chores. From then onward we were not even allowed to roam in the front yard. However, with the help of my earlier knowledge of letters I could read the holy texts like the *Mahbharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Kirtan*. Every residence had the provision of a *naamghar*. The female members of the house took turns to regularly clean and mop the place and lightened the earthen lamps. Time and again the ladies from the family offered prayers at the *naamghar* and sang devotional songs'.⁸

This perfunctory engagement of the women community with the domestic space suffices for a record of their everyday lives when their lives were separated from the public space and occasional visits to the outside world had to be done under the veil. She further mentions in the text, 'I remember that we occasionally visited the relatives' place or went to the wedding ceremonies by the shuttered bullock carts or closed horse carriages. The women of those days did not walk openly on the main roads. If the elderly women had to go to the neighbours' house, they walked by the side of the road while a trusted man carried a *bar japi* (a big bamboo hat) covering her. The ladies always walked in groups of two to three, but never alone'.⁹

These narrations of the confined and segregated lives of women, on the one hand, help the readers imagine the collective lives of women, and yet on the other hand, this collective identity of women is what these autobiographers have tried to shed through their self-narrations. This very transcendence of the domestic and the everyday in order to construct an

individual identity outside it can be understood as an act of resistance against the nationalist projection of women as waiting to be rescued by men from the shackles of confinement. Similar to that of the pan-Indian picture, a few Assamese men projected a picture of ideal Assamese women in periodicals like *Asam-Bandhu*¹⁰ (1885-86) and *Mou*¹¹ (1886-87). A woman who would be learned in all domestic skills and perform her duties as caregiver while maintaining their 'purity' from being defiled like that of the educated memsahibs. These men like Ratneswar Mahanta, Balinarayan Bora and others advocated against women's education as they believed that access to education would make Assamese women inattentive towards their household duties and their claims to equality would disturb the social order. It is against these recommendations of men that women like Rajabala Das and Nalinibala Devi responded in their personal narratives and defined themselves in terms of their presence in the public realm.

If Rajabala Das' narrative mostly concentrates on portraying a general picture of Assamese women confined to the house, in the autobiography of Nalinibala Devi, on the other hand, we find some personal references to the practice of the everyday. Through an account of the days spent at her husband's home at Sivasagar, Nalinibala Devi portrays her image as a wife and daughter-in-law, roles that are traditionally attached to women and thereby provides a glimpse of her domestic life. Her marriage with Jibeswar Changkakoti from Sivasagar, at the age of eleven, has been narrated elaborately in the text and a glimpse of her private life has been provided. The performance of these roles, however, seems embedded with a sense of achievement as she as an educated woman could transcend the assigned roles with the support of her family. She narrates, 'my father-in-law late Krishanpran Changkakoti's residence at Sivasagar was known as the residence of *Barbabu*. The family was especially known for their strict observation of various rites and rituals. My paternal family was worried for me as I would be staying in a far off place and moreover with a family that is very strict about cleanliness and propriety in the name of rituals. They were worried that I might have to take bath every now and then for the sake of observing these rituals. In order to minimise the hardships of this new life, two female servants were sent with me... I brought with myself a framed painting of lord Krishna that I made when I was young. Another framed drawing of lord Ganesha which I made on the carpet also was with me. My father advised me to gift these paintings

to my father-in-law. I did accordingly and my father-in-law was so pleased to have an educated daughter-in-law that he blessed me with a gold pleated pen... He told me, I give you this pen that is very dear to me and I hope you will keep its value intact'.¹²

On another occasion she narrates how she at a very early age had to participate in the rituals performed after childbirth (Similar accounts of such rituals can be found in Nirmalprabha Bordoloi's *Jiban Jiban Bar Anupam*).¹³ She records the first experience of attaining motherhood, 'my first child Upendra was born when I was fourteen years old...His birth brought for me the experience of motherhood at a very early age and a new sense of responsibility came to my life...On the sixth day of his birth, a ritual called *Sasthi Jagaran* has been observed. The mother is not allowed to sleep on that day as it is believed that destiny itself comes to write the newborn's fate. Some people accompany the mother and another person keeps reciting from the Holy Scriptures in an adjacent room. On the eastern side of the bed a piece of white paper and a pen are kept on a wooden lowered chair (*pira*) covered by a white *gamosa*. It is believed that destiny (who is a male) comes and writes the newborn's fate on that paper and later it is kept for writing the *sonwarani* (an astrological record of the birth and the entire life cycle of the newborn). The mother is expected to keep awake the whole night and sit with her baby on the lap. The baby is covered with a torn fishing net. It is difficult for me to forget that night spent amidst the fatigue and weakness of childbirth and sleeplessness just after six days of delivery. At the same time I was worried that if I fall asleep, destiny might get upset and harm the boy. Somehow the night came to an end and being extremely tired I fell asleep'.¹⁴

This description of the ritual that a fourteen year old girl had to observe on the attainment of motherhood, thus, offers the reader a glimpse of the domestic space meant for women and the speaker's participation in the same. Apart from such personal performances of identity, she also portrays a picture of the everyday life of women. She talks about the custom of *purdah* and how all the women of the elite class had to stay under the veil whereas the women of the lower class enjoyed a relatively free life. Through the *smritikatha* mode adopted for narration, she, similar to that of Rajabala Das, makes a comparative study of the general status of women in her time with that of the women in the

1970s (that is the time of their writing the texts). They comment that the later group of women seem to enjoy a better life by dint of their access to education. She recalls that the women had very less freedom and their everyday life was confined to the household. The young girls would be playing around inside the house and the elders were busy in the household chores. She narrates, 'if a woman had to go somewhere, she would be escorted by two men carrying two big *japis* to cover her and on top of that she had to hide her face inside the veil. If one travels by horse carriage, the doors had to be kept shut. The women of our time were unseen even by the sun and moon. When a group of women go out to perform some particular wedding rituals in a river, they had to wal inside a large moving room with walls made of cotton clothes called *choudhuli*. The group of women would enter inside and walk to the river singing wedding songs'.¹⁵

Another integral part of the domestic and everyday life of women that finds expression in these autobiographies is the presence of the domestic helps in the households. The fact that both of them mention the presence of male servants who carried the large bamboo hats covering the elite ladies walking in the roads, a strong presence of this servant class both male and female can be assumed as dominating the domestic space of the elite women. At several places in her autobiography Nalinibala Devi mentions how the servants of her family escorted the children and the women of the family in their public visits, the two maids sent with her to make her stay at Sivasagar comfortable, whereas Rajabala Das mentions the servant who 'carried her shoes to the horse carriage'¹⁶ and 'fetched water from the river in brig drums'¹⁷ for her father in law at Guwahati, and another servant accompanying their family to Calcutta in 1932. It can be assumed that the presence of these servants in their houses made their domestic life convenient and offered them the time and space for public engagement. At one point Rajabala Das even remarks that Dibrugarh was more progressive than Guwahati in terms of the kind of social restrictions imposed on women. She records her first experience as a newlywed, who reaches her husband Doctor Jyotish Chandra Das' home at Guwahati and was asked by Tarunram Phukan, to leave her shoes outside before entering the house as the ladies of Doctor Das' family were not allowed to wear sandals inside the home. They were also not encouraged for social visits. Observations like these in terms of differences of practice in different

places of Assam also provide an occasion to study these autobiographies as records of the way women's everyday life was determined by the patriarchal society in late colonial Assam.

Autobiographical narrative, thus, adds to an understanding of the larger society and time when the lives recorded were lived. It becomes much more vital when the speaker happens to be a woman living in a crucial time of history and through the acts of self-formation offers a collective picture of women. The shades of the collective and the individual lives of women, thus, help one locate the ramifications of historical changes and transitions.

Notes and references

¹Rajabala.as, *Tinikuri Doh Bosoror Smriti*, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati 1971, p.1 (Translation mine).

²*ibid.*, p.3.

³Anindita Ghosh(ed.), *Behind the Veil: Resistance, Women and the Everyday in Colonial South Asia*, New Delhi, Permanent Black, 2007, p.6.

⁴Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India*, OUP, New Delhi, 2003, p.5.

⁵*ibid.*, p.18.

⁶Anindita Ghosh (ed.), *Behind the Veil: Resistance, Women and the Everyday in Colonial South Asia*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2007, p.7.

⁷Rajabala Das, *Tinikuri Doh Bosoror Smriti*, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati, 1971, p.2 (Translation mine).

⁸*ibid.*, p.10.

⁹*ibid.*, P.4.

¹⁰Nagen Saikia(ed.), *Asam-Bandhu* (1885-1886), Publication Board Assam, Guwahati, 1984.

¹¹S.N. Sharma(ed.), *Mou* (1886-1887), Publication Board Assam, Guwahati, 1980.

¹²Nalinibala Devi, *Eri Aha Dinbor*, Lawyer's Book Stall, Guwahati, 1976. pp.51-53 (Translation mine).

¹³Nirmalprabha Bordoloi, *Jiban Jiban Bar Anupam*, Jyoti Prakashan, Guwahati, 2004.

¹⁴Nalinibala Devi, *Eri Aha Dinbor*, Lawyer's Book Stall, Guwahati, 1976. p.55 (Translation mine).

¹⁵*ibid.*, p.12

¹⁶RajabalaDas, *Tinikuri Doh Bosoror Smriti*, Publication Board Assam, Guwahati , 1971, p.52 (Translation mine).

¹⁷*ibid.*, p.53.

The repressive and punitive mechanism of the colonial administration: a case study of Punjab Province

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Abstract

The Punjab took a prominent part in the national movement of India. The land of five rivers has been a land of struggle since ancient period. With the expansion of British rule in this part of India in 1849, one can see a continuous struggle between the people of Punjab and the British Empire. With the beginning of 20th century the moderate politics was transformed into the militant and the revolutionary politics. During this period Punjab became a major centre of national movement. Every people's movement was faced by repressive and punitive measures. This policy of British government reached its height during Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Introduction

The land of five Rivers,¹ Punjab has been the place of warriors since time immemorial. Through battle of Plassey (1757) and battle of Buxar (1764) the British hold was strengthened in Bengal. To expand its power and hold in different parts of India the Colonial government followed different policies and measures.² By 1849 Punjab also came under the British rule. Punjab's heroic struggle for freedom goes farther back than Punjab's annexation to the British Empire in 1849. The people of Punjab bravely resisted the British expansion during Anglo-Sikh war. Sardar Shyam Singh Attariwala, Bhai Maharaj Singh, Rani Jind Kaur (Jindan), Sardar chattr Singh Attariwala and Dewan Mul Raj were important names who mobilized the people against the Britishers in the beginning. Bhai Maharaj Singh with the help of Rani Jind Kaur tried to arouse the national feeling among the people of Punjab. After the Punjab annexation we see the great uprising of 1857 and its echoes in Punjab as well. Just after the 1857 revolt a popular movement commonly known as KUKA movement under the leadership of Baba Ram Singh³ started in Punjab. The struggle for freedom in Punjab entered a new phase with the

beginning of 20th Century. The seeds for this beginning were sown by the Land Alienation Act of 1901 and the Canal Colonies Act. Sardar Ajit Singh⁴ and Lala Lajpat Rai tried to mobilize the people against the British rule. As early as 1904, some young man of Saharanpur district presently in Uttar Pradesh and very adjacent to Punjab had formed a secret revolutionary society and took a pledge to lay down their lives if necessary for the emancipation of their mother land. These people were soon joined by three men- Lala Hardayal, Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad, who later played a very important part in revolutionary activities within and outside India. The Swadeshi movement (1905-08) in Bengal gave a great impetus to the activities of the revolutionaries in Punjab and the latter kept themselves in close touch with Bengali revolutionaries. The growing agrarian discontent in Punjab also helped to spread revolutionary ideas. The peasants of Punjab were greatly agitated by the government's proposal to introduce a new system of land tenure in the Canal Colony of Punjab. Taking advantage of this agrarian discontent, the revolutionary leaders tried to inflame the passions of the people of Punjab. In 1907 on the eve of 50th anniversary of the great revolt of 1857, the nationalist leader like- Lala Lajpat Rai addressed large meeting of Punjabi people. Through these meetings he sought to popularize the ideas of Swadeshi and Swaraj among the people of Punjab province. After this it is said that some European residents of Lahore were beaten up in public streets and riots soon broke out in Lahore, Rawalpindi and other places. The British government blamed Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh for these riots. These two leaders were deported from the province to suppress the revolutionary activities in Punjab. By 1909 many revolutionary literatures were brought to Punjab from outside India. Bhai Parmanand, another revolutionary leader of Punjab was arrested and persecuted because the CID found in his possession two letters written by Lala Lajpat Rai. A copy of the bomb manual related to Bengali revolutionaries was also found in his possession. Lala Hardayal went to United States and established the Ghadar⁵ party in collaboration with Tarak Nath Das and others. This party played a very constructive role in the history of revolutionary movements in India in general and Punjab in particular.

The First World War: repressive and punitive mechanism

Lala Lajpat Rai declared that 'agitation is the soul of democracy'.⁶ All the great leaders of the world led agitation at one time or another in their lives. The agitation continued in Punjab making a tough task for the British government. The atrocities committed on the Ghadar revolutionaries had left

deep impact on the people of Punjab. The situation further worsened when the world war started in 1914. In the same year occurred the unfortunate Kamagata Maru episode.⁷ The Britishers used the severest modes of repression to crush the movements between 1900 and 1916. When the First World War broke out in 1914, the British government declared India an ally and belligerent. Indian people and Indian resources were used for fighting the war. The strength of Indian army was raised to 1,500,000 and compulsory recruitment of Indians was resorted to. Millions of pounds were taken from India to be used by the British government for its war expenditure. Indian soldiers were sent to fight in far off lands. During 1st World War Sir Michael O'Dwyer⁸ the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab had pressed into service his entire administration including 'judicial processes' to collect money and recruit men for the war.⁹ By the end of 1916, the Punjab had supplied 1,10,000 recruits out of 1,92,000 fighting men raised in India. Out of a total of 6,83,149 combatant troops recruited in India between August 1914 and November 1918, 3, 49,688 (about sixty percent) came from the Punjab.¹⁰ Also indicating the province's centrality in India's war role was the fact that its governor, Michael O'Dwyer, was the only provincial officer on the committee organizing recruitment in India as a whole.¹¹ During the war, the Ghadar revolutionaries had tried to mobilize people in Punjab against forced military recruitment, and had worked to overthrow British rule through a mutiny. The plan for the mutiny failed, as it was bound to, given the vast resources at the disposal of the colonial state.¹² The Ghadrite resistance was a major reason for imposing the draconian Defence of India Act of 1915.

A large number of Muslims were drawn into the anti-British struggle during the First World War. British imperialism was inimical to the Turkish Empire which was ruled by the Caliph (Khalifa). The defence of the Caliphate (Khilafat) became an important question for Muslims in many countries. Muslims in India were also drawn into the movement in defence of Turkey and against the British. Tilak was released in 1914 and in 1916, he formed the Home Rule League. Annie Besant formed another Home Rule League a few months later. Both the 'moderates' and the 'extremists' were united in the Lucknow session of Congress held in 1916. Equally significant was the unity between the Congress and the Muslim League achieved at Lucknow in 1916. Many 'moderate' leaders like Moti Lal Nehru and C.R. Das came out in support of Home Rule. Repressive measures followed. Many papers like Al Hilal, Comrade and Hamdard, were banned. Annie Besant was interned, and her paper, New India, was forfeited. In spite of all this, many nationalist

leaders, including Gandhiji was supporting the British War Campaign in the hope of attaining self government after the war.

Punjab not only provided men and money for the war but the valour and heroism that the punjabi's displayed during the fighting, won them spontaneous and glowing tributes from the British. They were also appreciated for their loyalty and sacrifice.¹³ The year 1918-19 was one of the severe distresses in the country. There was a steep rise in taxation which caused hardship to the people during the war. The outbreak of natural calamities like famine, plague and influenza during the year aggravated the distress caused by economic factors. Between July 1917 and June 1918 over 800,000 people died in the country from plague which had taken a virulent form.¹⁴ One can see a stupendous rise in the prices in the country. The position was made much worse by speculation, black marketing and hoarding. The hardship caused by the dislocation of the economic life and by scarcity and high prices of the commodities of daily use had a great impact on the political life in the country. Strikes by the workers in the industrial centre became common and there were reports of looting of markets from various parts of the country.

The people in the Punjab had suffered the most from the unsettling effects of the war, unemployment and rising prices. The people were disgusted with the tactics adopted by Sir Michael O'Dwyer who tried to divide the people in Punjab by setting the land owning classes against the urban middle classes in the province. The British government tried to exploit every situation for their advantage.¹⁵ The acute discontent was aggravated manifold by the political causes. The publication of the Islington Commission Report on public services and the Montford Report on Constitutional Reforms further increased the unrest. During the Great War 1914-18, the British had instituted censorship of the press and permitted detention without trial. Action was taken against a large number of revolutionaries in the Punjab and Bengal areas under different repressive measures. The revolutionaries were subjected to inhuman treatment and suffered under insanitary conditions and solitary confinements in jails. All these evoked strong protest in the country. This was an emergency measures during the war period which was intended to be withdrawn after the war. But the government was not willing to do so. In 1917 government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of a British judge, Sir Sidney Rowlatt,¹⁶ popularly known as the Sedition Committee. Sir Basil Scott (chief Justice of Bombay), Sir Verney Lovett (Member of the Board of Revenue U.P), C.V.Kumarswami Sastri (Judge of the High Court of Madras) and Mr.

Probbhash Chandra Mitter (Vakil of the High Court of Calcutta) were other members of the committee.¹⁷ This committee was to enquire into the extent and nature of subversive activity in India and suggest legislation if any, necessary to enable the government to deal with them effectively. The committee submitted its report on 30 April, 1918, which was accepted by the British government without question. It recommended trial of the political offenders by judges without juries, internment of persons suspected of subversive aims and suspension of many of the safeguards of the law in respect of the defendants; and control of press. The Governor General was vested with extra ordinary powers to suppress any movement believed to be anarchical or revolutionary. This act was passed in spite of being opposed by all Indian members of the legislative council. The act authorized the government to imprison people without trial and conviction in a court of law. The act would thus also enable the government to suspend the right of Habeas Corpus which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain. Three Indian members- Madan Mohan Malviya, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Mazhar-ul-Haque- resigned from the council in protest. The committee feared that return of a large number of soldiers after the 1st world war was likely to create a difficult situation. It therefore recommended special repressive legislation to meet any such eventuality. This was not what Indian soldiers expected on their return. The Punjabi's who had taken part in the war were disappointed at the political and economic condition in the country. The soldiers found the situation exactly opposite to those which they were led to believe by the speeches of allied statesman during the war.

The bill became the law on 21 March, 1919, under the title of the 'Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919'. In order to stem the tide of popular discontent the British government brought this Act. It was condemned by the Indian as a black act designed to suppress popular liberties and political life in India. Regarding this act a cryptic phrase- *na appeal, na dalil, na vakeel*, became popular.¹⁸ Coming after the war and on the eve of Montague Chelmsford Reforms, the Act shocked the people and raised a storm of opposition. Mahatma Gandhi described the Act as an 'Unmistakable system of a deep rooted disease in the governing body'.¹⁹ The Rowlatt Act came like a sudden blow. To the people of India promised extension of democracy during the war, the government step appeared to be a cruel joke. It was like a hungry man expecting bread, being offered stones. Instead of democratic progress, had come further restrictions of civil liberties. Unrest spread in the country and a powerful agitation against the act arose. During

this agitation, a new leader, Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi, took command of the nationalist movement.²⁰ Now he joined the political struggle in a big way. He took this act as an open challenge to the Indians. It has been passed despite the total opposition of the Indians. Their opposition was based on the ground that the Rowlatt Act was simply designed to empower the police to keep in detention any Indian on any pretext for two years, curb the Indians' civil rights and check the struggle for self-rule.

The pinnacle of repressive and punitive mechanism: a case of Amritsar

The economic situation, political discontent, the Khilafat and the Rowlatt Act created an explosive situation in the country in general and Punjab in particular. Mahatma Gandhi who had become a leading mass leader of the country considered it proper now to give a call for Satyagraha on 25 February, 1919, which received India-wide support. The people of Punjab who were fed up with the 'vigorous' rule of Michael O'Dwyer wanted to get rid of the British thralldom. They came forward for the support of Mahatma's movement. Dr Satyapal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew took a Satyagraha oath and formed a local committee at Amritsar in support of the movement. They addressed a number of meetings.²¹ By their concerted efforts, the movement soon caught the imagination of the people. A meeting held on 30th March was attended by as many as 30,000 people. The authorities were unnerved. Irving, the deputy Commissioner of Amritsar warned Dr Kitchlew against the participation in the movement, but the latter paid no heed.²² On 30th March and during subsequent days hartal was observed in several towns of Punjab. At Delhi the police fired on the passive resisters, when they insisted upon the closing of a railway refreshment stall. As a result, 8 persons were killed. The government was determined to suppress the mass agitation. It repeatedly Lathi-Charged and fired upon unarmed demonstration at many places such as Bombay, Ahmadabad, Calcutta, Delhi and other Cities. Gandhi Ji gave a call 'for Mighty hartal on 6 April, 1919. The people responded with unprecedented enthusiasm. Mass meetings were held and on 6th April, reports of hartal were received from 45 towns. On 6th April hartal that followed was very successful in Delhi and Amritsar. Three prominent leaders of the Punjab, Lala Dhuni Chand, Ram Bhaj Dutt and Gokul chand Narang were arrested.²³ Meetings were held and protest committees were formed. On 8th April, a Hindu-Muslim unity conference was held at Rewari, which was considered to be "the most sinister development of all" by the authorities.²⁴ Irving immediately asked Mr. A.J.W. Kitchin, the commissioner of Lahore

for reinforcement of troops. The anti-British combination of the three communities alarmed Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He termed these meetings as a conspiracy against the British and attempts at waging war against the crown.

Mahatma Gandhi, on hearing about the Punjab development, left for Delhi on 8th April to direct the Satyagraha movement. He was, however, served with a notice on the 9th April that he could not enter the Punjab. The government sensing danger strengthened their garrison at Amritsar and decided on 9th April to remove Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew from the scene. The day coincided with Hindu festival, Ram Navmi when a 20,000- strong procession, which a 'substantial' number of Muslims also choose to join was taken out in the city.²⁵ Fazl-i-Husain's son, Azim Husain, would later recall that on this occasion 'members of both the communities drank water from the same cups and exchanged head-gears'.²⁶ "Irving got apprehended with the joining of Muslims in the festival procession. This could only mean one thing that it had taken a political significance."²⁷ Irving called Dr. Satyapal and Kitchlew to his bungalow at 10'O Clock on 10th April and served them the orders of deportation from Amritsar.²⁸ Within half an hour the news spread in the town like wild fire. Immediately all the shops in the city were closed. People gathered near hall gate, to go to deputy commissioner and plead for the release of their leaders. This was the time when crowd came to know about Gandhi's arrest²⁹ while moving towards Punjab. The Irving had posted military guards on all points of entry to the city.³⁰ The unarmed crowd was stopped near the railway crossing by the mounted infantry and the police. When the men advanced, the military opened fire killing and wounding some of them. This incident infuriated the people in Punjab in general and Amritsar in particular. This unwarranted act of brutal violence maddened a section of the people who got entirely out of hand. 'Five Europeans were killed and several buildings such as telephone exchange, banks, the town hall, the church etc were attacked, fired and destroyed. Three of those killed were officials of the National Bank and the Chartered Bank. A lady missionary doctor, Miss. Sherwood, was set upon by the mob, struck with sticks and fists, and left unconscious in the street. She was subsequently rescued by some Indians. Later, the crowd again attempted to pass the Hall Gate Bridge, and was fired upon, with 20-30 causality. The telegraph wires were cut and two Railway stations outside the city were attacked'.³¹ Things seem to have settled down on the 11th. A big funeral procession carrying the dead bodies of the victims of the police firing passed off smoothly, and no untoward incident happened in course of the

day. But things took a bad turn with the arrival, on the evening of the same day (11th April), of Brigadier General R.E.H Dyer who immediately established de facto Martial Law, though it was not officially proclaimed before 15 April.

Dyer began his regime on the 12th by indiscriminate arrests and the issue of a proclamation prohibiting all meetings and gatherings. The news of the proclamation was not spread among the masses. This omission, deliberate or accidental, was very unfortunate, as it was announced on the 12th evening that a public meeting would be held at Jallianwala Bagh³² on the 13th April (Baisakhi day)³³ at 04:30 PM. Although Dyer was fully aware of it, he took no steps to warn the people about its illegality, or prevent it being held by stationing troops at the entrance of the Bagh. But soon after the meeting had begun, Dyer arrived on the spot with armoured cars and troops (50 Rifles). At this time Durga Das was interacting with the masses in the Bagh. Dyer stationed himself and his troops on a rising ground at the entrance of the Bagh and then without issuing any warning, ordered the troops to fire, at about 100 yards' range upon a dense crowd, estimated by him at 6,000 and by others at 10,000 and more, but practically unarmed, and all quiet defenseless. The soldiers were ordered to direct their fire where the crowd densest. The people were trapped and no matter which way they ran there was no escape from the firing.³⁴ The firing continued for 10 minutes. When the soldiers had almost expended their ammunition, Dyer ordered them to withdraw. By that time 1,650 rounds of .303 Mark VI ammunitions had been fired into the crowd.³⁵ Dyer 'was glad that some had escaped for they would serve as messengers to warn others of the dire consequences of rebellion'³⁶ The inhuman Act of General Dyer resulted in the death of thousands of Indian. According to an official report 379 people were shot dead and 1200 wounded. But the Congress Enquiry Committee letter reported that at least 2,000 were killed or wounded. General Dyer left the Bagh at 05:30 pm leaving behind a pool of blood of Indians.³⁷ Michael O'Dwyer, greeted General Dyer by sending his congratulatory message to Dyer: 'your action correct and Lt. Governor approves'.³⁸ The British authorities were not satisfied and they imposed the Marshall Law in Punjab, followed by Press censorship, mass arrest, aerial attacks and shooting and public flogging over the unarmed people of Punjab.³⁹ The Punjab government extended full cooperation to their superior authorities and Punjab pleaded in a similar vein before the Hunter Committee constituted to enquire into the shooting.⁴⁰ This incident evoked strong reaction from the public and the press. The press held government responsible for this gruesome massacre. There was a spate of publication in the form of pamphlets, books,

newspapers, journals, tracts, pictures, cartoons etc. which condemned the barbarous attitude of General Dyer and his under links.⁴¹ Gandhi called this incident as ‘an unexampled act of barbarity’⁴² and as a protest returned his Kaiser-i-Hind title. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his Knighthood.

Conclusion

The repressive and punitive measures were adopted by the colonial administration since the beginning of its rule. Such measures took serious forms in the first half of 20th century when different political movements whether it is in Bengal or in Punjab were suppressed through different administrative measures. For Britishers Punjab province was of strategic importance and the Martial tradition of its inhabitants, the British treated this region as one of the most vulnerable and crucial area of the Raj, ever since its annexation in 1849. British government always appointed specially tough and merciless type officers. These officers were often called Punjab School of British Administrator. Dyer was very frank in his evidence before the Hunter Committee. He admitted that his act was deliberate and he had fully made up his mind while marching his men to Jallianwala, and would not have flinched from still greater slaughter if the narrowness of the approaches had not compelled him to leave his machine-guns behind. By this act he wanted to strike terror into the whole of the Punjab where nationalist movement was surging. The Jallianwala Bagh outrage gave a powerful impetus to the course of Indian national movement. It sharpened the minds of national leaders and acted as the source of inspiration for them, for the cause of India’s liberty from the British imperialism. Through repressive and punitive measures the colonial state wanted to hegemonies their position in India. Their each repressive and punitive action united the Indian people and strengthened the national movement. The unity of Indian masses soon resulted in the Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation movement which broke out just after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Notes and References

¹The name Punjab means the land of five rivers such as- Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas.

²Dual administration, Policy of Ring Fence, Subsidiary Alliance, Doctrine of Lapse, different land revenue settlements such as- Quinquennial, Permanent, Ryotwari and Mahalwari.

³Baba Ram Singh hails from Bhaini, District of Ludhiana. He was disciple and successor of Baba Balak Singh.

⁴Sardar Ajit Singh was Bhagat Singh’s real uncle and was born at village Khatkar Kalan in Jullundhur district.

⁵In 1913 Ghadar party was founded by Lala Har Dayal and Sohan Singh Bhakna at San Francisco. This party through its weekly paper Hindustan Ghadar aroused anti-British sentiments among the Indian settlers in America. The leaders of Ghadar party propagated that the British government in India was the worst government on the face of earth.

⁶Lajpat Rai, *Political Struggle of India*, New York, 1919, p.187.

⁷Gurdip Singh, an Indian contractor living in Singapore, chartered a Japanese ship the Kamagata Maru, to sail for Vancouver (Canada) with its 376 Indian passengers. These passengers came under the influence of Ghadar party and were not allowed by Canadian Government. This ship could not reach Japan due to the beginning of 1st World War. The ship reached Budge-Budge near Calcutta where it faced an open clash with the police in which 18 passengers were killed.

⁸Michael O'Dwyer was one of the 14 children of an Irish landowner. His tenure of office as Lt. Governor of Punjab (913-1919) almost coincided with the period of First World war.

⁹*The Congress Punjab Enquiry, 1919-1920*, Vol-I, Bombay 1920, p.17.

¹⁰Tan Tai Yong, *Garrison state: Military, Government & Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947*, New Delhi, 2005, p.98.

¹¹Rajmohan Gandhi, *Punjab A History From Aurangzeb to Mountbatten*, New Delhi, 2015, P-274.

¹²Kishwar Desai, *Jallianwala Bagh: The Real Story*, Chennai, 2018.

¹³Michael O'Dwyer, *India as I Knew it*, London, 1920, p.231.

¹⁴G.N. Singh, *Landmarks in India Constitutional and National Development*, Vol-I, 1800-1919, Delhi, p.323.

¹⁵Satyapal and Prabodh Chandra, *Sixty Years of Congress-India lost; India Regained*, Lahore 1946, p.234.

¹⁶Mr. Justice Rowlatt was judge of the King's Bench Division of His Majesty's High Court of Justice.

¹⁷E.S.Montagu, *An Indian Diary*, Heineman, London, 1930, p.156.

²⁸Satya M. Rai, *Punjabi Heroic Tradition (1900-1947)*, Patiala, 1995, p.110.

¹⁹Michael O'Dwyer, *op.cit.*

²⁰Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, New Delhi, 2009, pp.279-80.

²¹Athur Swinson, *Six Minute to Sunset*, London, 1964, p.14.

²²*ibid.*, p.16.

²³Shiv Kumar Gupta (ed), *Jallianwala Bagh and the Raj* (select contemporary writings and evidence), Centenary Commemoration Volume, Chandigarh, 2019, p.20.

²⁴In his letter to his son, General Dyer wrote about the Hindu- Muslim unity.

²⁵Ravinder Kumar, 'Urban Society and Urban Politics', Lahore in 1919, in Indu Banga (ed), *Five Punjabi Centuries, Polity, Economy and Culture*, New Delhi, 1997, p.204.

²⁶Rajmohangandhi, *op. cit.*, p.282.

²⁷*Disorders Enquiry Committee*, Calcutta, 1920, p.99.

²⁸They were deported to Dharamsala, presently in Himachal Pradesh.

²⁹Gandhi was arrested at Palwal station (presently in Haryana), just south of Delhi.

³⁰Swinson, *op.cit.*, p.18.

³¹B.G. Horniman, *Amritsar and Our Duty to India*, T. Fisher Unwin, 1920.

³²The Jallianwala Bagh is situated very close to Golden Temple. The word Bagh is a misnomer. Jalla is the caste name of the original owner. Wala is the genitive termination, and the Bagh meaning a garden is in fact an open piece of waste land surrounded by houses.

³³It was a Holiday on which Hindus celebrate the New Year and the Sikhs the founding of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh.

³⁴Alfred Draper, Amritsar, *The Massacre that Ended the Raj*, Delhi, 1981, p.88.

³⁵V.N.Datta, *Jallainwala Bagh*, Ludhiana, 1969, pp.104-05.

³⁶*ibid.*, p.90.

³⁷K.L.Tuteja, 'Jallainwala Bagh: A Critical Juncture in the Indian National Movement', *Social Scientist*, Vol-25, Nos. 1-2, Jan-Feb, 1997.

³⁸Rajaram, *Jallaiwala Bagh Massacre*, Chandigarh, 1978, p.XII.

³⁹Swinson, *op.cit.*, pp.52-58.

⁴⁰Home (pol) Dept. File No.4, Part-B, 1921, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

⁴¹Home (Military), Dept., File No. 139, Part B, 1921, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

⁴²S.C. Mittal, *Freedom movement in Punjab*, 1905-1929, Delhi, 1977, p.143.

Ethnicity and the Gaze Beyond Borders: A Reading of *Borphukanor Geet* and Hem Barua's *Mekong Noi Dekhilo*

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Abstract

*The theory of 'the gaze' has been used to explore various forms of literal and metaphorical looking. John Berger asserts that we see things the way we want to see them, or we believe or on the basis of the information we have. Looking or seeing has been considered frequently interactive, cumulative and invariably political process where there are no 'neutral' observers. Theorists of the gaze have opined that whatever we see is not always there, but we see that which we have been led to expect or believe to be there. This paper proposes to examine instances of the gaze operating in both orature and literature grounded in the 'ethnic Assamese identity'. *Borphukonor Geet*, a historic ballad written during the colonial rule by an unknown balladeer narrates the events in Assam during the Burmese invasion between 1815 and 1824. Here the Māns (Burmese) are the 'other', envisioned as devilish and effeminate by the Assamese subject. It can be argued that the Assamese balladeer tries to construct an ethnic and cultural identity of his people through the stereotype of the 'other'.*

Mekong Noi Dekhilo (1966), a travelogue by Hem Barua written after the colonial rule spans, transgresses and blurs borders. There is a striking contrast between the colonial balladeer and the post colonial writer in the ways they see and know their neighbours beyond the borders. In this paper an attempt shall be made to analyse the two narrators' ways of gazing at the 'other', emphasizing their underlying ideological, historical and ethnic baggage.

Introduction

The theory of 'the gaze' has been used to explore various forms of literal and metaphorical looking. John Berger (77) asserts that we see things the way we want to see them, or we believe or on the basis of the information

we have. Looking or seeing has been considered frequently interactive, cumulative and invariably political process where there are no 'neutral' observers. Theorists of the gaze have opined that whatever we see is not always there, but we see that which we have been led to expect or believe to be there. This paper proposes to examine instances of the gaze operating in both orature and literature grounded in the 'ethnic Assamese identity'.

In this paper an attempt shall be made to analyse the balladeer's and the travel writer's ways of *gazing* at the 'other', emphasizing their underlying ideological, historical and ethnic baggage; while developing on this an attempt shall also be made on the exchange of looks between individuals of two cultures which is a two-way process of gathering information about others and revealing things about oneself and identity respectively.

Borphukanor Geet(Lay of Borphukan, a high ranking military officer in the Ahom Kingdom)

The historical orature Borphukanor Geet was recovered by Surya Kumar Bhuyan from a balladeer Bhakat Ram Mistri of North Lakhimpur. It was edited by Lata Bhuyan and published in the form of a book in 1924. This ballad narrates events that took place in Assam between 1815 and 1824. The events centre round Badan Chandra Borphukan, Viceroy of lower Assam who was instrumental in inviting the *Mān* (Burmese/Myanmarese) to invade Assam. This ballad has 819 lines which depicts the historical, ethnic and cultural issues of Assam and Myanmar through the lens of the balladeer. The invasion of the *Mān* has been recognized as a historic reign of terror which was in fact so terrible that it has since become proverbial for times of barbarism and atrocity.

In the ballad the discourse emanates from the representation of the *other* (the *Mān*). The balladeer unleashes the look of distrust and contempt for the *Mān* who does not have any emotions of love, like or wishing somebody well. 'This idea of facing the other, of acknowledging differences, and with them the diverse inscriptions that inhabit and constitute our world, is not merely a geographical encounter typical of the metropolitan intellectual. It is also a rendezvous to be found within the internal territories of our own cultures- on the 'other' side of the city, culture and languages we inhabit' (Wolfreys 618). The Borphukan reaches the kingdom of the *Mān* to persuade the king to invade Assam. When he moors his boat at the *ghāt* of the king of Burma he gazes at the Assamese princess, queen of the *Mān* king, having her bath in a

river. The Borphukan accosts her, ‘What dress are you in? Whose land, madam, is this? The queen replies, ‘You have come by the river, This, my son, the Man land they call’ (Goswami 22).

The queen is an Assamese princess Rongili, who was sent to the Burmese king in her early life by the Burhagohain and therefore she has cultivated a revengeful attitude towards the Ahom kingdom. It is true that the queen has no option but to adapt in an alien environment and is in a state of denial, primarily denial of loss. She meets the Borphukan and gazes at him as a substitute for the thing desired, an object to fill the gap. It is possible to argue that the exile from family and people makes the queen crave for revenge against Purnananda Burhagohain, the person she holds responsible for her plight, but also against all her estranged countrymen who have caused the Borphukan equally dispossessed. At this juncture Borphukan is the ‘other’ who can help her to regain her lost self. She looks at the other as the truth-the reality which suddenly appears before her commanding her attention. The queen on the one hand reveals her congealed thoughts through her gaze and Borphukan on the other hand exchanges the look of which he is unaware.

The Borphukan has not seen in his life a woman dressing in the Myanmar way. Therefore his first question when he encounters Rongili is “what dress are you in?” It can be argued that the gaze of Borphukan has to do with ethnic identity and its spatial expression. “Ethnic identity is about the distinctive values and norms that distinguish a community with other communities.” (Essed 470) The woman Rongili plays an important role in the constitution of a new ethnic identity and spatiality for herself as the *Mān* queen. The spirit and the root of an ethnic group are frequently symbolized through the clothing of a woman. Rongili is a dispossessed Assamese woman but now she upholds the principle of oneness to prove that she is a Myanmar woman. To quote Tovi Fenster, ‘the geographical and environmental context of this complicated situation is perhaps expressed in the notion of ‘spaces of citizenship’ (Essed *et.al* 471).

At the request of the queen, the *Mān* king promises the Borphukan an army of three lakh soldiers to invade Assam. The king assures Borphukan, ‘I shall make them (Assamese) pass water, I shall feed sons on their father’s flesh’ (Goswami 22).

Borphukan in return promises the king the share of gold and silver and also the ‘fair girls’ of the Ahom kingdom. It can be argued that gaze operates here in terms of politics and power. The *Mān* king has the imperial

gaze with a colonizer's wish of empowering himself to take over Assam and unfold an era of atrocity and oppression. The Borphukan also has his gaze on the political economy of Assam which he aspires to be divided between him and the *Mān* king. Unfortunately before he succeeds in his evil plan, he is murdered by the Queen Mother with the help of Rup Singh Bongāl (The Assamese word *Bongāl* is used as a general term for an outsider, and not specifically a person from Bengal. Rup Singh Subedar was a North Indian mercenary soldier in the Ahom army, hence the appellation). The balladeer addresses the Queen Mother as notorious and the Borphukan as a corrupt traitor. However, the balladeer's gaze betrays a male disgust at the aggressive attitude of the queen mother who effectively interferes with the masculine world of politics. The Queen Mother could not tolerate the destruction caused by the Myanmarese in Assam and the betrayal of the Borphukan. So she uses her exalted social position and kills Borphukan. Her involvement in the murderous scheme can be seen not only as usurping the king's authority but also as challenging the stereotype of the woman as a passive and tolerant maternal figure.

'Women are generally seen as sexual objects. It has been stated that men look and women are looked at'. The Myanmarese king is the owner of a gaze which reflects patriarchy and also is a way of reinforcing male dominance. The fair looking girls are the sexual objects to lure the *Mān* king which will definitely provoke and satisfy his voyeuristic and fetishistic needs. In the ballad the balladeer narrates about the physicality and attire of the *Mān* the way he sees and the way he believes, '*Gaat kola sola, Agoloi, khopa bondha.....tolkans naikiya tirotar bhau*', 'Clad in black Topknot hanging in brow Effeminate in their skirt like dress' (translation mine).

The gaze moves slowly to the physicality of the *Mān* acting and experiencing in an alien socio-cultural context. Toril Moi refers this as body-in-situation. The other's body is interacted in the context of the 'look' of the balladeer which is an act of choice. The *Mān* tying the bun in front of his forehead and wearing a dress similar to a mekhela(women's traditional dress in Assam)makes him effeminate in the eyes of the balladeer who has never encountered a Myanmarese man's way of dressing. Masculinity disappears in the eyes of the balladeer as the *Mān* does not wear the dress like a dhoti. 'Yet, although every image embodies a way of seeing, our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own ways of seeing' (Berger 5). 'Situation' from the point of view of existentialist theory also works in

this connection. This ballad has been set in the colonial Assam during which the Assamese people did not have exposure to the wide world. The people of Assam lacked cultural communication with the South-east Asian countries so the balladeer gazes at the *Mān* as a monster as the cultural artefacts and the icon of *Mān* establish them as an alien ethnic group. In the words of Pramod K. Nayar, ‘when people (the audience) use and identify with particular symbols and artefacts, they express their cultural identities’ (Nayar 45).

***Mekong Noi Dekhilo* and the variation in gaze**

This is a post colonial travel book by the noted Assamese writer and politician Hem Barua. The writer was a member of a peer team sent by the government of India to five South-east Asian countries to make the heads of these nations aware of the Indo-Pak relationship. Though this travelogue excises political dimension, yet Barua has given it the shape of a documentary which reveals his immense urge to know people, see places beyond the borders having cultural affinity with his motherland. It seems that Barua has not travelled for only adventure or to serve some political purpose. His quest is to fill in the gaps of incomplete stories and insufficient knowledge about places and events as we have already seen in the balladeer’s way of looking beyond the borders. The colonial and post-colonial writers have represented worlds the way they have understood. ‘Representation is the process of signifying (meaning generation), and includes the word/sign and its concept/meaning. That is representation is the alphabet of a culture’(Nayar 21).

The context in which the balladeer sees Myanmar is a period of turbulent relationship between two nations. He sees things from the historical context which becomes the backdrop for the exploration of a complex array of human emotions: patriotism, pride, humiliation, anger, retribution, betrayal and violence. The gaze of the *other* in the ballad may be argued from the theoretical perspective of Jeremy Bentham and Michel Foucault. For these two thinkers ‘the gaze is unambiguously a means of control’(Waugh 512). Ironically the *Mān* who is the ‘other’ in the ballad is the owner of the gaze. This gaze is associated with the exertion of control over the people of Assam. The expression of terror is a predominant feature in the ballad which shows that the Myanmarese is murderers and extortionists who exercise brutal power on innocent victims. On the other hand the gaze in the travelogue is calm, unaggressive and bears a shared look. The post colonial narrator tries to assert the ethnic identification of his nation with the bordering countries by reducing ethnic cleavage and replacing the parochial sentiments with fellow feeling.

Barua travels to the five bordering countries...Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia and Singapore. He opines in the page 1 of *Mekong Noi Dekhilo*, 'eibor amar osorsuburia dex. Ei osorsuburia dexboror kotha nojonato onyayor kotha, bixekoi axomia manuhor karone. Axomor buronji aru xonskritir bixoye bhalkoi janiboloi hole dokhin-pub Asiar ei dex xomuhor xoite, ghaikoi Thailand aru Laosor xoite, xombondho sthapon koribo parile bhal'. (Barua 1). These are our neighbouring countries. It is a crime not to know these countries specifically for the Assamese people. In order to know the history and culture of Assam it is good to establish relationship with these South-east Asian Countries basically with Thailand and Laos (translation mine).

The narrator asserts that it is churlish and ungracious to look towards the west which has no resemblance with us. Instead the North-easterners of India should look at the interculturalism and set up an 'inter-Asian civilizational dialogue' to fight the cultural hegemony of the west. The exchange among cultures of the South-east Asia is the need of the hour. The global gaze has been trying its utmost to control our *selves* and lives. The narrator seems to put forth that it is time to avert this gaze and lean/assimilate to South-east Asia so as to see, feel and experience culture. So it is important for us to know where we stand, what grounds us to embark on the journey of optimism, hope and progress. In the words of Antonio L. Rappa, this can be termed as 'symbiosis of location'. This symbiosis urges sharing and disseminating cultural resemblances between ethnic groups of nations. *Mekong Noi Dekhilo* is a narrative which endeavours such type of cultural mixing. 'The symbiosis of location takes place across time and space and involves the marked definition and redefinition of cultural boundaries that change over each generation' (Rappa 208). Hence we observe the difference in seeing things in the ballad and in the travelogue. The travelogue may be understood as a showcase of ethnic pride in which the narrator is keen on looking at the plural cultural activities giving and taking 'upon which the symbiosis of location can settle and take deeper root'.

Barua looks at the synthesis of Manipuri, Assamese and Thai cultures when he enjoys a dance performance by a group of Thai women and examines their traditional handloom products. He thinks of the Assamese women who can weave equally beautiful patterns on clothes. The customs and folklore of the Thais are very much in affinity with the Ahoms of Assam. Ceremonies and rites performed during harvest are very much similar to one another. The narrator continues his exploration of these countries and gazes at the major areas which add to the construction and defence of ethnic collective identities

such as smoking opium which is a common convention for many people of the North- east India and the South-east Asian Countries. Barua is fascinated by the gracious behaviour of the Thai people specifically the beauty of the women waiting at the airport to welcome them with attractive attire and charming demeanour. According to Laura Mulvey, the man can be ascribed as the active bearer of the look and the woman its passive object. At this point the narrator is *the active bearer of the look* and the Thai women are *the passive objects*, '*Dhunia bostu dekhi kar bhal nalage*'?(Barua 5). 'Who is not happy to look at beautiful object'?(translation mine).

Here the author has placed himself in an unavoidable voyeuristic position. 'Men act and women appear'(Berger, 5). Women are beautiful objects surveyed by men. In the narrative the woman is compared to a bottle of Champaign to be tasted and enjoyed. The fantasy of a female figure is projected through the male gaze, termed by Mulvey as *to-be-looked-at-ness*. The *male gaze* is expressed in certain moments of the text when the narrator visits Cambodia. He is stupefied by the beauty of Fu Ong—a Cambodian girl who invites him to smoke opium. Barua accompanies the girl to the bank of the river Mekong. Both of them exchange looks and cordiality is established. This exchange of looks may also appropriate values from simple societies by preaching interdependence and collectivism. The mutual gaze of the male and the female in the narrative imply some sort of warm feeling devoid of any ideological or political implications.

In the travelogue the narrator sets his eye on the popularity of Ramayana in the South-east Asian countries. The Ramayana exists in a homogenous stage not only in Cambodia but also in countries like Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Indonesia, '*Brahmadex, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Balidwip, dokhin-pub Asiar Konkhon dexot Ramayanar probhab noporakoi ase*'? (Barua 75). The narrator looks at the excellent dancers of Cambodia who present the Ramayana in a traditional rhapsodic dance form specially the episode of the abduction of Sita by Ravana. Alois Wurm rightly says, 'The Ramayana is a work that is unrivalled in its unfolding of the human heart, in its expounding of the loftiest ideals and deepest aspirations of man, a work that has been the source of edification and inspiration to millions and millions of people for more than two millennia— like perhaps no other work in the world'(Wurm ix, xx). It can be argued that the narrator's way of looking is to gather information, which motivates, inspires and stimulates him and the readers more about cultures and values, their exchange and circulation.

Again the narrator looks at the cultural artefacts of these countries which unite us with them. He observes the sarong worn by the girls of Laos which is much similar to the *mekhela* worn by the Assamese women. He thinks that the Assamese women can make their *mekhela chador* more attractive by imitating the intricate designs of the sarong. When he mentions this there is a hint that cultural artefacts can be exchanged. It can be argued that the gaze is at the ethnic communities of the South-east Asian countries, which are cultural groups united by feelings of belonging to common descent, religion and language. The narrator views the Thai society as a sort of pyramid in which the king and the royal family lie at the top. They are considered to be sacred by the common people and are supremely respected when issues of politics arise. *Thailandor manuh otyonto dhormopran. Mortyolokot nripotibhogobanor avatar—enedhoronor bishaxeimanuhok adhikbhabe nripotipran kori tulise* (Barua 25). The people of Thailand are extremely devout. The king is the incarnation of God on earth—this sort of belief has made the people very monarchical (translation mine). The elite Thai people are in the second tier who are mostly of Chinese descent and the peasant workers are in the third position of the pyramid who are mostly engaged in agricultural sector. In this connection the narrator cites the example of *Maharshi Yagnavalkya* of Mahabharata who gifted a thousand cows to the king and composed *slokas* in his praise. Thus apart from male/female gaze, the gaze of the ruler and those ruled implies that the ruler's gaze is the empowered gaze imposing on the disempowered (the subjects) to treat him as the supreme God and ensures non-resistance from the ruled. Silencing the voice of the people and the monarch transforming himself to a god like figure are the common features to be seen in a monarchy.

Rapid spreads of information and modernization have immensely helped us to identify ourselves with the people of South-east Asia. Two norms work here- accessibility and uniqueness. Accessibility refers to the ease with which the activity and its supporting infrastructure may be accessed so that there may be large number of participants. Uniqueness is about standing out from other styles forms and activities. The narrator looks at these two norms operating in the South-east Asian countries which make them different from the rest of the world. Cultural Studies is more interested in the way meanings are made and the discourses within which these are made. 'This involves a study of the processes of representation and 'texts' seeing these as instrumental in the construction of identity' (Nayar 16). The narrator is amazed at the fast

development in Singapore in construction, transport, health care and security. Unlike India Singapore is far more secure for women. Gender discrimination and gender inequality can be also traced in the Singaporean society but the narrator finds out that the Singaporean women have a more open sexual intimacy in Asia.

The visual engagement of the narrator with the South-east Asian countries encourages a particular way of considering travel which relates to a broader socio-political and friendly interaction and relation between these countries. During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, Malaysia supported India as a result of which the bi-lateral relation between Pakistan and Malaysia deteriorated. Again in 1962 when China attacked India the Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman supported India and offered rupees fifty lakhs to India which turned out to be of immense help in the process of rebuilding India. The gesture shown by Rahman reflects the common ancient faith, truth and solidarity which bear the eloquent testimony of a common cultural heritage.

Conclusion

In *Mekong Noi Dekhilo* the narrator sees travel as a seductive power to see, to evaluate, to interpret, to classify and categorize and to enjoy. The travel experience greatly depends on who is the traveller and how he/she is interpellated. Travelling is an individualistic endeavour which influences one's 'understanding of community, empire, nation and world' (Bhattacharji, 110). A control of power is seen on both sides when the looks of the citizens of two nations are exchanged. But in the orature a paranoia can be seen induced by political pressure on either sides of the border. Here the *Māns* (Burmese) are the 'other', envisioned as devilish and effeminate by the Assamese subject. It can be argued that the Assamese balladeer tries to construct an ethnic and cultural identity of his people through the stereotype of the 'other'. On the other hand the sudden quickening of the travel nerve for various purposes began to flourish as a major genre in the post independence period in India and the travel writers position themselves differently on issues pertaining culture to commerce, politics, migration, class, race etc. Barua has attempted to look onto a collective ethnic identity beyond the borders drawing attention to principles of sameness which can be achieved by *sharing* the meaning through a process of negotiation and exchange.

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Bamboo as a Versatile Material for Socio-Economic Sustainability in North-East

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Abstract

Bamboo also regarded as 'green gold' has significant role in the socio-economic development of North Eastern Region as the region grows about two third of the bamboo resources of the country. A large variety of bamboo species grows in the region. Due to its versatile nature and multiple uses bamboo has wide and varied scope for income and employment generation in North East. Bamboo is a way of life for tribal of the region and the basis of handicraft and cottage industries. It is also used in construction activities and it is a major source of raw material for paper and pulp industries. Presently it is fast emerging as a substitute of wood. Bamboo is also identified as strategic resources to tackle climate change and environment degradation. Despite great potential bamboo sector has not gained desired momentum in the region due to various constraints such as regulatory restrictions, poor market linkage, poor technology application etc. To overcome such constraints various interventions are required specially on the part of govt. to achieve socio economic sustainability in the region.

Bamboo which is also regarded as the 'Green Gold' of the 21st century played a significant role in human society since time immemorial and today it contributes to the subsistence need of over a billion people worldwide. Due to its versatile nature and multiple uses, it is also called 'poor man's timber'.¹ Traditionally it has been used as material for housing and shelter, fencing, fuel, food and to make material for agriculture and other purposes. In modern days, it is being used as raw material for various industries such as paper and pulp, construction and engineering material etc. Though bamboo grows tall like a tree, it belongs to the family of grass. Bamboo can be grown easily and grows much faster than any tree. It is very eco-friendly and now it is becoming a good substitute of wood.

The north eastern region consisting of eight states covering an area of 2.62 lakh sq. km which is around 8 percent of the total geographical area of the country with a population of about 39.04 million is a region which is abundant in bamboo resources. The region grows about two third of the bamboo resources of the country spreading about 3.10 million hectare.² Bamboo is integral to life and culture of all the ethnic groups of north eastern region. Its multipurpose uses have made it an indispensable resource for the rural people of the region. However, sustainable and economic utilization of bamboo will throw open a plethora of opportunities especially for rural population of North Eastern Region. Technological advancement has put bamboo into more and more uses and as raw material for several industries. With such a strategic importance of bamboo resources in the region this paper is designed to study bamboo as a versatile material for socio-economic sustainability in North East.

Bamboo Species in North East India

North East recognized as one of the largest bamboo reserve of India spreading over an area of about 3.10 million hectares grows about 89 bamboo species either naturally in different types of forest or cultivated across the region.³ Some of the major species used for commercial purposes are-

Bamboosa Bakooa (*Bhaluka Banh*)⁴

This bamboo species is grown throughout the state of Assam and other parts of North East and is highly preferred in construction activities, especially house construction and construction of small bridges. It is also used for incense sticks making. A large quantity of this bamboo species is used in paper and pulp industries. Moreover, the shoots of this bamboo species are edible and hence of great demand.

Bambusa Tulda (*Jati banh*)⁵

This bamboo species is also grown throughout the state of Assam and is highly preferred for handicrafts. Moreover, it is also used in paper industries and structural purposes and fencing.

Bambusa Bambos (*Kotoha*)⁶

This species is very useful. It is used as raw material in paper and pulp industries, house constructions, panel and fencing. It is also used for handicrafts. Its shoot is edible and leaves are of medicinal quality.

Bambusa Nutans (*Mokal Banh*)⁷

It is mainly used for house construction, fencing and poles.

Bambusa Pallida (*Bijuli*)⁸

This bamboo species is used for house construction, basket, mats, screen and different types of decorative items.

Dendrocalamus Hamiltoni (*Kako Banh*)⁹

This species is largely used in paper and pulp industries. It is also used in house construction, making of basket, mat etc.

Dendrocalamus Strictus (*Shaal Banh*)¹⁰

It is particularly suitable for fertile tracts of ravine lands. It is used for constructional purposes and paper industries. It is also used for making furniture.

Melocanna Baccifera (*Muli*)

This species is mostly used for making prefabricated wall 'Tarja' which is used for roofing and walls of huts.

These bamboo species are commonly found and commercially used in North East. Along with scientific name, the name given in the brackets are the commonly used name of the species in Assam.

Bamboo Economics

Bamboo and bamboo based activities has opened a wide and varied scope for income and employment generation in North East. A large section of the people in north east depends on bamboo for livelihood. Large resources of bamboo in the region are mainly utilized for domestic, handicrafts and in paper and pulp industries. Some of the economic utilization of bamboo in the region is as follows:-

Way of life for tribal communities

The vast areas of the land in the NE region are predominantly owned or occupied by tribal communities. The tribal communities heavily rely on forest resources for their subsistence and among the forest resources the most important is the bamboo resources. The tribal communities use bamboo to construct their house, to make agriculture tools, for handicrafts, as food items and also need as fuel for cooking and other purposes.

Handicrafts and cottage industries

The North Eastern Region has a rich heritage of traditional skill in weaving, canes and bamboo crafts. Traditionally almost every rural household in north east has skill in cane and bamboo crafts. The rural people of the region make various items such as basket, furniture,

agriculture implements and decorative item from bamboo. So bamboo craft is an alternative source of income generation in the rural areas of North East, However, presently the bamboo crafts of region is facing unhealthy competition from machine made plastic items . In North East a large amount of bamboo are utilized in different type of cottage industries such ‘agarbatti’, cracker, ice crème, furniture etc. Every year a large quantity of bamboo is exported from Tripura and other North Eastern states to Karnataka for *agarbatti* industry.

Construction Activities

In rural areas, specially in tribal areas of hills and plains still large number of house are constructed by bamboo. On the other hand, in bricks and mortar houses bamboo are used for shuttering and other purposes. Now- a- days bamboo are also vastly used to make windows, flush doors and ceiling in the modern concrete houses.

Paper and Pulp

The major use of bamboo in India and North East is the paper and pulp industry which consumes about 68 percent of the total annual production from government forest. The consumption pattern of bamboo in India indicates that 55 percent of bamboo is being used by paper and pulp industries.¹¹ The Nagaon Paper Mill and Cachar Paper Mill in Assam were established on the basis of the vast bamboo resource of North East. But only due to mismanagement and corruption at all level these mills one now in the verge of closure.

Substitute of Wood

Bamboo is regarded as substitute of wood. Now a days it is increasingly used as wood substitute in some industrial products like bamboo ply board, bamboo roofing, bamboo mat board, door shutters etc. Some other industries are also using bamboo as wood substitute to produce products like pencil, match boxes, match etc.

Future Source of Energy

We know that the conventional sources of energy like oil, gas and coal are declining at a faster rate because of its of its heavy utilization. To overcome this problem we can use the conventional renewable resources as a source of energy. Bamboo is a faster growing renewable resource. The natural condition of North East is very suitable to produce bamboo in a very large extent. Bamboo is a very viable source of biomass for

generating electricity. Energy production at small scale through bamboo gasification creates a clean gas on one hand and charcoals as a byproduct on the other, thus providing two fuels from single effort. Now- a- day much studies and researchers are going on to use bamboo as an ingredient in bio-fuel. In fact we can say that if bamboo can be efficiently converted to energy then the sustainability problem in case of no-renewable source of energy can be solved to a great extent.

Bamboo to tackle climate change

There is no issue more pressing as climate change all over the world today. Bamboo has been identified as strategic resources to address the adverse effects of climate change. Bamboo has the potential to contribute towards achieving sustainable development goals, especially for countries like India. Being the second highest bamboo growing country in the world it is more particular for North East which is the largest bamboo growing region in India. So far as protection of planet from climate change is concerned, bamboo has the potential to provide us the much needed solution. Bamboo releases 35 percent more oxygen than other plants to the environment and sequesters 20 percent carbon dioxide from the environment.¹² Scientific plantation of bamboo could dramatically improve air quality with the release of more oxygen and sequestering more carbon dioxide. Frequent flood and soil erosion is a major environmental problem of North East. Bamboo has already proved to be highly effective in soil erosion control and to improve the quality of soil. Bamboo being a versatile material could help us to reduce our dependence on hardwood and plastic in much bigger way and thereby help save the trees and eradicate plastic from our living space.

The Constraints

Despite great potential for development of bamboo sector it has not gained the desired momentum in the region due to various constraints.

Regulatory restriction

The Indian Forest Act defines bamboo to be a tree and therefore it was treated at par with timber and forest products for last 90 years.¹³ So there are lots of regulatory restrictions on the felling and transit of bamboo under forest rule which was one of the biggest impediments to the growth

of bamboo based industries. However, very recently in 2018, bamboo was struck off the list of trees by amending the Indian Forest Act.

Poor Market Linkages

Another constraint on the path of realizing the potential of bamboo is the poor market linkage. Bamboo producers and the bamboo craft man do not get easy access to the market for their produce, due to which most of them do not get fair price of their produce. Moreover, they do not get up to date information about existing bamboo market. They are usually unaware of prevailing market price and rely upon traders to determine their price for bamboo.

Poor Technology Application

There is lack of technology applications for new product design along with testing, certifying of products in the bamboo sector. New technology and product option must be developed which will encourage the establishment of new manufacturing units. The sector cannot thrive by making just handicraft items. There has to be movement towards life style product and utility products.

Barriers in Bamboo Plantation

The Land Ceiling Acts is one of the deterrent factors for the entrepreneur interested in undertaking large scale plantation of bamboo.¹⁴ Plantation crop like tea, coffee and rubber are exempted from land ceiling act. Similar exemptions are also required for bamboo plantation. Again in India a large portion of available wastelands which could be profitably use for bamboo plantation, are under the control of revenue department. Such lands are neither used by government nor leased out to interested entrepreneur for bamboo plantation.

Competition from Chinese Product

Now-a-days the product of bamboo crafts produced by our artisans is facing several competitions from the cheap Chinese synthetic products. The normal household items used in rural area for domestic and agricultural purposes and even the decorative items which were earlier made from bamboo are now being substituted by cheap plastic products imported from China.

Required Interventions

To overcome the above constraints it is required that bamboo plantation should be relaxed from Land Ceiling Act like tea, coffee and

rubber plantation, Revenue wasteland should be leased out to the interested farmers/entrepreneurs for raising bamboo plantation for industrial use and for concerted effort and better planning and to overcome constraints there should be a permanent board for the development of the bamboo sector in India in lines of the 'Coffee Board' and the 'Tea Board'.

Conclusion

Bamboo and bamboo based economy has great potential in North Eastern Region as the region grows about two third of the bamboo resources of the country. There is opportunity to promote bamboo and bamboo based product as an alternative to wood and plastic product. Hence, bamboo has great potential to tackle environmental degradation of the region. Increasing production and use of bamboo and bamboo product will bring prosperity in the region and its efficient utilization will develop bamboo based industries and crafts in the region. This will create employment opportunities and raise level income which would bring economic sustainability to the region. However, to harness full potential of bamboo resources effective intervention is required especially on the part of government.

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²*ibid.*

³U.K. Bora, 'Bamboo for Economic Prosperity and Sustainable Development with Special Reference to North East', pp.67-78.

⁴*ibid.*

⁵*ibid.*

⁶P. Sharma et al, 'Diversity, Uses and Inverto Propagation of different bamboos of Sonitpur District Assam', pp.3-4.

⁷*ibid.*

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Power, Politics and Legitimization: An Epigraphical study of Early India

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Abstract

Rule based on naked force can't sustain for a longer period; to sustain longer one need ideological and moral base. Prevailing social and moral ideas prepare ground for a legitimate rule, which could be patronizing certain ideology or belief system, institutions, symbols, ideas or rituals. However, these tools to gain legitimacy are not same in each society but decided by culture and historical processes. Even in the same society at different point of time they are not same, but transform according the socio-political structure of the society.

Introduction

Power is the coercive use of force upon those who have no right to resist against the same. Louis Althusser called power 'repressive state apparatuses' which ultimately functions through violence. However, state can't sustain purely on coercive methods for a longer period; to sustain longer it needs a legitimate authority woven around a legal social behavior. Althusser called this legal social behavior as 'ideological state apparatus' which is based on the ideology of ruling class.¹ Rousseau points out that to maintain a political authority the ruler needs to transform power into right and obedience into duty.² Authority cultivate and establishes the justification for rule through incorporating certain religion, cult, institutions, symbols, and ideas.

Max Weber points that legitimacy could be based on rational, traditional and charismatic ground.³ Legitimacy work at three levels-confirmation to establish it, rules which could be justified by beliefs, and last one is share power relations with subordinates.⁴ B.D. Chattopadhyay emphasizes that this need for validation is not only limited to pre-state societies facing the process of state formation but appear in fully developed state societies as well.⁵ Legitimization of power and shaping dominant ideology is not a static process but dynamic and absorptive one,

and is very much specific to a particular culture and society.⁶ The present piece of writing is an attempt to explore the relationship between power and legitimacy in a wider political discourse of early India. Here, the term “early India” means the ‘early historical period’ when earliest deciphered inscriptions found to the end of ‘early medieval period’. This is a purely inscription based study.

Inscription as a source for historical reconstruction

Inscription is any piece of writing engraved on hard surface. It is an important source for historical reconstruction. Inscriptions have advantage of durability. They tell us about contemporary time and space. On the other hand, texts have problem of dating. They can exist in chronological vacuum, and most of times, they come to us after implorations. However, there can be technical errors in inscriptions like damaged content, unclear depiction., which lead to different interpretation and difficulty in historical reconstruction. But still, importance of inscriptions can be understood by the fact that eighty percent of history before 1000 C.E has been derived from inscriptions.⁷ There is hardly any area which escapes from the inscriptions. Inscriptions can be categorized on the basis of surface (stone or copper) on which they have been inscribed; language in which they have been written; issuing authority; contents (*Praśasti* or commemorative, or land grant records).

The inscriptions chosen for the present study belong to different categories, different time-period, different languages, and thus dealing with large no. of issues. Aśoka’s 11th, 12th and 13th major rock edicts; *Khāravela’s Hathīgumphā*; *Kanicka’s Rābatak*; Mora Well from *Mathurā*; *Rūdradāman’s Jūnāgarh*; *Nāsik Cave*; and *Kottam Syrian Copper-plate* are taken here for study. Inscriptions are dated in many numbers of ways, ranging from a simple regnal- year- date to detailed specifications of the year, month, lunar day or other calendrical and astronomical data.⁸ Initial inscriptions like Ashokan inscriptions to *Sātvāhana* simply connects the event with the coronation of the king, which shows that appointment of new king itself symbolize the beginning of new calendar, new life. The very idea of time was limited to the ruling king. Steadily when we move towards Early Medieval period, they started to date the event in lunar dating form. In this paper we will try to understand the changing nature of legitimacy and kingship from Ashokan period to initial years of Sultanate period. To seek legitimacy kings compared themselves with divine features, made donations, propagating the idea of welfare state etc.

Dhamma as political ideology

The earliest inscriptions from subcontinent belongs to Harappan period but they are yet not deciphered. Earliest deciphered inscriptions are Ashokan inscription belonging to c. 200 BCE and largely deals with his policy of *dhamma*. These inscriptions help us to understand socio-political and economic aspects of Mauryan society. The idea of divine right of kingship has started preparing its base from Mauryan period onwards. Aśoka adopted the title of ‘devānaCpiyapiyadasi’ i.e. ‘beloved of god’⁹ which shows intervention of divinity in transcended authority. To hold the power for a longer period state needs hegemony over ideological apparatuses.¹⁰ Aśoka used policy of dhamma to strengthen his empire. The 13th major rock edict¹¹ commemorate the event of Kalinga war which caused a huge slaughter, misery, displacement on people. King distressed by the misery and realized that real victory is possible only through dhamma. In major rock edict 11¹² king defines dhamma as the good behavior to all human beings and animals. In the 12th major rock edict¹³ he appeals for religious tolerance among all sects. One’s good attitude towards others is the only way to promote his religion. He propagated this idea within his state’s boundaries and existing parallel authorizes outside his domain. Through his inscriptions the king addressed the present as well as the future generations. King adopted the paternalistic behaviour towards his subject and says that it’s the duty of state to do economic and spiritual upliftment of his subject. Liberation and reach to the heaven is possible by good deeds and dhamma.¹⁴ To ensure the reach of dhamma to the masses he appointed the officers of dhamma. 1st separate rock edict¹⁵ at Dhaulī and Gaugad contains the instructions for officials and magistrates that the edicts were to be read on certain occasions like eighth day of star Ticya. Every 4th month on the day of Tisya these messages should read aloud. A tour of officials will check it every 5 years. The 2nd separate edict sends a message for unconquered people in border land that king wishes for their well-being. Ashoka was trying to win the people through love that means moral conquest. Romila Thapar points that the policy of peace and *dhamma* in place of violent means and brute force was meant to weld and consolidate his huge empire. King used *dhamma* as moral binding force to strengthen kinship.¹⁶ Ideology of *dhamma* and appointment of royal officials to ensure its applicability at ground level shows that although ideological state apparatuses predominantly function by ideology, but they secondarily work through repression, if not in real sense then in symbolic form.¹⁷

However, violence and authoritarianism were integral part of administration. In 13th rock edict, while dealing with *Attavī* people there are evidences of persuasion as well as threat of force. It suggests that forest people pose a challenge to the authority of the king. When full fledged empire came into existence the state's dependence on the forest has been increased and they couldn't ignore the potential of the forest. *Kautilya* in *Arthśāstra* talk about the categories of *Vana* like *Dravyavana*, *Hastivana* and he suggests the diplomatic use of forest and forest people. *Kautilya* advises the king to initiate the establishment of the new agrarian settlement, which would include the forest clearance and destruction of forest inhabitants. *Kautilya* visualizes the wilderness as space into which the state aggressively extends its administrative and fiscal activity.¹⁸ Thomas. R. Trautmann¹⁹ highlighting the importance of peripheral region to get animals for warfare. Due to highly importance of forest animals only royal persons were allowed to keep horses and elephants. Either association of these animals with royalty or their scarcity and use for war purpose limited the access of these animals. *Samundragupta's* *Praśastī* mention *Attavī* people in a more respectable manner, which shows the states' assimilative tactics to control over forest resources. Ranbir Chakrabarti²⁰ on 'Moriya' and 'Piprahawa' titles suggested the emergence of Maurya dynasty itself from non-monarchical clan associated with a forest tract. On the basis of these edicts G. Fussman²¹ says that, the nature of Mauryan administration was not only decentralized, but the control over outlying provinces was asymmetrical. There was a clear difference between core and peripheral area. These inscriptions also give information about regional states, parallel government in neighboring state, expansion of state and prevailing tensions within state that means nature of relationship between ruler and ruled, core and periphery etc.

Khārvela inscription²² is a royal panegyric written in prose form which records the biographical achievements of king and royal donation. Apart from divine intervention secular attempts like personal Valour and bravery of kings was discussed to strengthen kingship. *Khārvela* claims to defeat *ŚatkarGī* of west, *Yavana* king *Dimita*, *Bharatvasa*, *Pithumda*, *Tamirakings*, and the king of *Uttarāpatha*. He defeated the king of *Magdha*, *Bahasatimita* and brought the images of jina which were taken away by the Nanda rulers. However, on the one hand the king claiming himself a devotee of Jain but on the other hand he is continuously waging wars, which was against the core idea of Jainism. He adopted the policy of violence and non-violence at the same time. The king was performing *Rajasuyayajña* and following ashram system, remitting

taxes of Brahmanas shows his attempts to pacify Brahmanical heterodox sect as well.²³

In *Khārvela* inscription for the first time there are references of public entertainment, community dance, music and *Utsav* were organized by state. King is spending huge money on public welfare activities like renovation of old buildings, canals. Every where the inscription mentioned the large amount of money spend by king but Romila Thapar points that *Khārvela* didn't issued the coins and continued with the punch mark coins.²⁴ *Khārvela* call himself a great conqueror, establisher of peace, Dharma and welfare king.

Kanicka's Rābatak inscription from Afghanistan belongs to 2C.E. primarily records the genealogical account of Kushana rulers. Kanishka gives a complete genealogical list of KucāGa rulers- *Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takuta, Vima Kadphises, and Kanicka*. He connects his lineage with divine figures like *Umma, Nāna, Aurmuzd, Sroshard, Narasa, Mihr* etc. and put the statues of KucāGa rulers in *Deva kulikā* with the above-mentioned gods and goddesses. This KucāGa practice attempts to equalize the status of ruler with god. B.D. Chattopadhyay²⁵ point that religious institutions were a material space for temporal power and sacred domain. Identification with divinity enshrined in temple and surrender of temporal power to divinity. It is working with an ideology where temporal power is reaching out of temporal zone. Every time political discourses much available to be shaped by divine presence and care for world. A part from connection with divinity, Kanicka opted some secular titles like 'king of the kings' *Mahākatrapa* which become a common practice during the early medieval period.²⁶ *Rabatak* inscription of Bactrian records the conquest of Indica and defeat of kshatriyas and how he extended his victories up to *Sāket, Katsambī, Pātliputra, and Shri Champā*. Romila Thapar points that these terms are Hellenistic and Achaemenid usage. Their usage shows an attempt to incorporation of nomadic rule into imperial structure.²⁷

Epic imagination as political discourse

Epic Imagination was widely used in inscriptions for articulating political discourse. As Sheldon Pollock²⁸ points that the penetration of specific narratives or personalities into the realm of public discourse of post epic India help us to understand the historical circumstances under which these epics deployed in political imagination. More well inscriptions²⁹ from Mathura mention *Rajula Mahākatrapa* and his son name *Swama*, erected a well. They dedicated the inscription to five Vasudeva, who are the heroes of *Mahābhārta*. *Khārvela* king connects his genealogy with epic characters; *Sātvāhana* king

Śri Pulwāmi Vasicma putra compared themselves with *PurāṅGic* figures. Pollock points that the reason behind this practice of enactment and re-enactment and revival of cultural past is that such conceptualization of divine political order automatically condemned and demonized the other side. Other point is that it providing imaginations for royal sovereignty, royal divinity.³⁰

Rudradāman inscription³¹ records the renovation of lake *Sudarśana*, which was devastated by storm. He gives his genealogy and victories over *Akaravanti*, *Anupa*, *Anarta*, *Surastra*, *Svabhara*, *Maru*, *Kachchha*, *Sindhu-Sauvira*, *Kukura*, *Aparata*, *Nicada*, *Yaudheyas*, *Śatkarni* the lord of *DakshiGāpatha*. This shows that attempts to gain legitimacy through victories was not limited to *Khārvela* only. *Rudradāman* in the act of construction of lake memorizing the previous construction and repairing work of lake *Sudarśna* and put himself equivalent to Chandra gupta and *Aśoka*. Through historical memory attempts were made to seek legitimacy.

Language itself was a way to gain legitimacy. Ashokan inscriptions are written in Brahmi script, while *Rudradāman*'s is in Sanskrit. Mora well inscription was written in a peculiar language which was neither Sanskrit not even Prākṛit. Dam steegt coined the term 'Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit' while D.C. Sircar used the term 'Prakrit influenced by Sanskrit'.³² City of Mathura was the earliest center for EHS inscriptions and then these spread out in north east and south west. Mora well inscription comprised the portion in hybrid and standard Sanskrit. Hybridism was controlled by taste and judgement of composer. *Rudradāman*'s inscription is written in classical Sanskrit. Mora well to *Rudradāman* shows a shift where Sanskrit is beginning to establish itself as an epigraphical language, especially in Brahmanical circle.³³ During this time 'foreign' origin rulers from central Asia were trying to establish their hold on an alien land. In this effort to establish their hold they adopted culture and belief system of the conquered land. *Rudradāman* depicting themselves as the protector of Brahmins, Sanskrit and the upholder of Dharma norms. However, *Kcatrapas* themselves were of 'foreign' origin and thus difficult to put themselves in *VarGa* order. B.D. Chattopadhyay³⁴ points that temporal and sacred authorities are interdependent, where temporal power need protection of social order to sustain itself for a longer time. The ideal social order was defined through dharma rule and for protection idea of *daGa* was formulated by guardian of sacred authority. Ambiguity in the meaning of dharma provides its manipulative use by authority. Romila Thapar called *Rudradāman*'s association with Brahmanism was not merely an act of patronage or affiliation to a religion but to an ideology. The person whose

varna can easily be questioned represented himself as the upholder of dharma. This was an attempt to pacify orthodox feelings to establish his legitimacy as a ruler.³⁵

Legitimacy through land grants and donations

Rulers seek legitimacy to make donation and patronage to religious institutions. Romila Thapar³⁶ defines that Patronage is an act of support and exchange between tangible materials like wealth and intangible materials like legitimacy, merit, social status etc. in *dātā* and *pratigrahitā*. *Dāna* and *Dakṣiṇā* constitute important aspects of patronage. *Dāna* was a major social, economic, and religious activity which was prevalent in ancient societies. The concept of *dāna* had gained prominence from the *Ṛgvedic* period onwards, and by the early medieval period it became formalized with rules and regulations. It had become a prominent feature in *śmṛiti* sources, especially in *Dharmaśāstras* and *Purāṇas*. Here it mentions six elements of *dāna* the seare *dātā*, *pratigrahitā*, *śraddhā*, appropriateness of gift, time and place. Manu points that just as *tapa* was the trait of the *Kṛtāyuga*, similarly *dāna* was a feature of the *Kali yuga*. The idea of *dāna* was well demonstrated in the epigraphical sources. Besides containing *prāśastis*, recording gifts was the core objective of the inscriptions.

Dāna items in the early medieval period, as seen from the epigraphical records, included land, wells, gardens, construction of temples etc. of which the land grant records form the majority of the inscriptions. It was one of the processes through which new dynasties were claiming legitimacy and ritual sanction. Various temples and religious institutions have been coming into existence which given lot of donations from time to time, in different forms and by different patrons. These donations become an important source to understand the social, political, religious, economic and cultural history of that time period. These religious institutions became closer to all the sections of society and grew as a focal point of various religious and secular activities. That's why construction and restoration of temple is counted as one among the six acts of merit and community service.

Nasik cave inscription³⁷ was made during *Siri Pulwami Vaśiṭhaputra*'s reign and it was made by *Gautmī Bālāshri*. Along with the qualities of rulers the inscription records the personal qualities of *Gautmī Balashrī*, like truth, charity, patience and respect for life. Which shows the qualities of an ideal women represented in Brahmanical scriptures. The inscription gives information about geographical expansion which was up to *Asika*, *Asaka*, *Mulaka*, *Suratha*, *Kukura*, *Aparanta*, *Anupa*, *Vidabha*, *Akravanti*. He claimed

to crushed down the pride of kshatriyas, who destroyed *Śaka*, *Yavanas* and *Palhavas*. Nasik cave inscription records that on *Tirhānu* mountain a cave was made by queen and given to Sangha of monks. To serve the cave the king made a donation of village *Pisajipadaka*, situated on the south west of mount *Tirānhu*. B.P.Sahu³⁸ points that Patronage and foregoing of authority is interlinked formula, where rulers participated in the act of patronage to create a bond of interdependence and to uphold its socio-economic order. The act of patronage also influenced the popular perception.

Inscriptions on copper plates recording land grant donations made by chief and kings to Brahmins. D.C.Sirkar points that these earliest found in 4th century C.E. These donative inscriptions record mainly invocation (auspicious words), place of issue, grantor's name with genealogy and epithets, king's command to respect the donation, date, name of officers and functionaries who officially needs to be informed about the transaction.³⁹ In Kottayam Syrian copper plates⁴⁰ of Sthanu Ravi, a land grant made during 5th year of Kulashekhra. Governor of Venatu Ayyam Atikal Tiruvatikal in the presence of officials, chief citizens, corporation of Jewish and Christian merchants made the grant to church of *Tarso*. It naming the founding members of church. Freedom to do business was given to them. The grant defined the boundaries of donated land, where some privileges in taxes were given. Land grants were the necessity for temporal power to maintain their authority. Formation and mobilization of lineage power is directly linked with the extending authority to new captured areas. Where original identities were left or old identity with new upgradation was a common practice.⁴¹

Conclusion

Despite the large number of limitations, inscriptions are very important source for historical reconstruction. They deal with all aspects of society. Study of these inscriptions shows that the nature of legitimacy and kingship were not stagnant or same at each point of time, but there is continuous evolution in the ideologies of rule according to the need and demand of time. This process of legitimacy was not limited to ancient period only but very much integral to modern politics as well. In ancient period it was mostly monarchical system of government so the rulers associated themselves with divine figures but in modern democratic setup the rulers seek legitimacy from people itself. Rulers associate themselves with masses and put claims of being one among them. The ruling ideas of each age are the ideas of its ruling class. According to needs the ruler opted religious and secular modes of legitimacy that means horizontal and vertical claims for legitimacy were put to strengthen the political base.

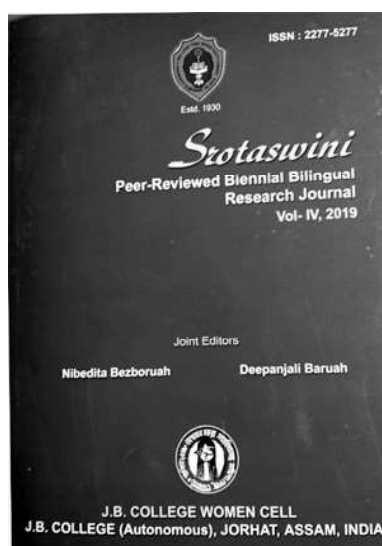
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A review of *Srotaswini* : Peer-Reviewed Biennial Bilingual Research Journal, Vol-IV, 2019

Srotaswini is a peer reviewed biennial bilingual research journal of the Women Cell of Jagannath Barooah College, Jorhat, Assam. The present issue is its fourth volume published in 2019. Its editors are Nibedita Bezbaruah of the Department of Philosophy and Deepanjali Baruah of Department of English. Its ISSN Articles/Papers are published in both English and Assamese languages. In this volume there are twenty one English articles and eleven Assamese articles. The first article in English is by Anindita Neogy serving as the Media Coordinator of Indus Fox Valley, Appleton. She is at the same time the Secretary of the Wisconsin Dance Council, USA. She delineates, in her article, the plight of women in a multicultural society become victim racially, ethnically, politically and professionally in such a society. Women Dr. Girish Baruah, a retired teacher of philosophy, discusses the position of women in different religions of the world. Dr. Shakuntala Bora, Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Gauhati University, writes on Indian womanhood in the Ramayana. Jyotimanjuri Kalita, Research Scholar, Dept. of History, Dibrugarh University, describes the practice of weaving among Assamese women in colonial times. Aousree Dowara, M.Phil. Research Scholar, Sociology Department, Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva Viswavidyalaya, Nagaon and Dr. Karabi Konch, Associate Professor, Dept. of Sociology, M.S.S. Viswavidyalaya, write on women police, their employment status and issues of concern in Nagaon and Golaghat districts. Jogesh Changmai, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education, D.C.B. Girls' College, Jorhat, writes on women in higher education of Assam



with special reference to Dibrugarh University. Banajyotsna Baruah, Manager, Confederation of Indian Industries (C.I.I.), Delhi and Lopamudra Baruah, Principal Researcher at Gartner Inc., Gurgaon, write on how women are on the road to achieving sustainable development goals. Nazma Yasin, Asst. Teacher, Rangajan Girls' High School, Titabar, analyses Sudha Murty's life and her selected literary works. Madhuchanda Kaushik, Lecturer, Dept. of Philosophy, J.B. College, Jorhat, writes on women entrepreneurship in North-East Region. Pranjuri Goswami, Asst. Prof., Dept. of Social Work, Dibrugarh University, writes on menstruation and how we can conquer myth and misconception related with this problem. Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami, Asst. Prof., Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication, Indira Gandhi Tribal University, Amarkantak (MP), writes on tattoo culture of Baiga women. Dr. Manorama Sharma, Retired Professor of History, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, discusses on the need for a gender sensitive window. Mitra Phukan, writer, translator and columnist, discusses women fashioning women characters. Sukanta Ghosh, Asst. Prof., Dept. of Philosophy, DKD College, Dergaon, discusses the poems of Mira Bai and Kamala Das with a feminist approach. Rosemin Akhtara, Ph. D. Research Scholar, Dept. of Philosophy, Centre for Studies in Philosophy, Dibrugarh University, writes on Pandita Ramabai. Anindita Kar, Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English, Gauhati University, writes on Jahn timer Barua's 'Rebirth'. Reetuparna Dey, M.Phil. Research Scholar, Department of English, Dibrugarh University, writes on coloured women of YouTube. Ritushmita Sharma, Counselor, Department of Distance Learning, Dibrugarh University writes on women's migration on the basis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'Americanah'. Raginee Mahanta, M.Phil. Research Scholar, Department of English, Dibrugarh University, interprets the multicultural through the women in Mamang Dai's 'Stupid Cupid'. Himakhi Phukan, M.Phil. Research Scholar, Department of English, Dibrugarh University, writes how women are represented in Bhaskar Hazarika's feature film 'Kothanodi'. Ratnasree Borthakur, Ph.D. Research Scholar, Dept. of English, M.S.S. Viswavidyalaya, discusses on the character Kaberi in Jahn timer Barua's 'Rebirth'.

It has been already stated that there are eleven Assamese articles in the Journal. The first article is by Dr. Devabrata Sarma, Principal, Jorhat College. He writes on the roles women like Radha, Rukmini, Ramali, Rangali, Chandramala etc. in the Moamoriya Revolution. According to him they constituted the first women squad. Dr. Papori Borah, Ph.D. Research Scholar,

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such a brilliant volume and hope readers of all disciplines will find something they need in this respect.

It is seen that the condemnation of women all over the world is rampant. Even in a developed country like the U.S.A. women do not enjoy equal rights with men. Up till now not a single woman has been able to be the President of that State. Up till no woman has been able to be the Pope, Head of the Roman Catholic Church. We do not find any woman priest in India. So an astute thinker like Frederick Engels said, "Religious independence of mind is an awkward matter for women." (Quoted, Marx and Engels, 'Art and Literature', p. 56) The Old Bible says, "...thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Genesis, 3/16) St. Paul said, "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home." (New Bible, Epistles of Paul I) Again the Old Bible says, "Unto the woman (Eve) he (God) said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow thou shall bring forth children; ..." (Genesis, 3/16) In Islam also there is a custom of fatwa i.e. religious edict in which a divorced woman is compelled to marry her husband's cousin. In Nigeria a teen age mother has to receive 100 lashes. These things are done in the name of religion. In Hindu religion sometimes a girl child is married to an animal like a dog. Such things are done due to the prevalence of religious edict. We come across a passage in Dan Brown's 'The da Vinci Code' as follows: "She had been shocked to learn that female numeraries were forced to clean the men's residence halls for no pay while the men were at mass; women slept on hardwood floors, while the men had straw mats; and women were forced to endure additional requirements of corporal mortification... all as added penance for original sin." (p.46, 2003)

Society reinforces, legitimizes and normalizes gendered practices. Bertrand Russell, in his 'Unpopular Essays' refers to a proverb like this: "A dog, a wife, and a walnut tree,/The more you beat them the better they be." (p. 163) In this way in many societies women are regarded as slaves. They can be sold and bought. Female infanticide still persists in almost all sections of people. This devilish practice is still going on unabated. Violence against women is also increasing day by day. In many societies honour killing of women is in vogue. A female child is deemed to be a burden, not an asset. Dowry is still prevalent and many women become the victims of dowry related violence. In almost all societies women remain economically subordinate to man.

Up till now female empowerment has remained a myth. It has not become a reality. Since the year 2001 which was declared as the International

Year of Women Empowerment, we have not seen any development in this respect. Though people from different fields are engaged in the pursuits of empowering women, but in reality most of the women globally are still marginalized. There are still problems as regards the development of the girl child. Even literature depicts unreal and fantasized image of women. Shakespeare has also not forgotten to say like this, "Frailty, thy name is woman." ('Hamlet', Act.I, Sc. 2, 'The Complete Works of Shakespeare', p. 1032) Up till now there is no proper study of gender and reproductive behaviour, that is, how gender roles affect reproductive behavior. Nobody has come forward to decrease the infant mortality rate especially in the third world countries. Child marriage is still going on unabated.

At present, women have learnt how to protest. We hear the echo of such protests in some lines of a poem written by Thomas More. This is a poem on rape, and we mention some of its lines, 'Now I warn you', he said, 'if you do not shut up and lie down at once, I am off. Cowed by this fearful threat, the girl immediately lay down. 'All right, go ahead', she said, 'but remember, You forced me into it.'

We must say that the persistence of the problems mentioned above is due to the persistence of unreason. We are now living in the twenty-first century. If torture on women goes on unabated we cannot say that we are civilized people. If a woman cannot be safe at home, at office, in the street, in buses, in trains, in cinema halls, in play grounds etc. how can we say we are civilized people? Let Journals like the *Srotaswini* play the role of a path finder in order to find new ways and means to solve the problems concerning women. It is not enough to raise problems alone; we are to search for solutions also. I hope the concerned Journal will do these things in future, and I expect its long life so that it can do something in order to ameliorate the present conditions of women. The journal is in a very young stage only four years old if I am not wrong. In the coming years it will certainly play the vital role in bringing women to the standard of man, if not higher. Long live *Srotaswini*! Long live J.B. College Women Cell.

Dr. Girish Baruah

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D.K.D. College, Dergaon, Assam

It has presented different articles on History, Geography, Religion and Society from ancient history to actual societies in the Mirror. The Journal presents the struggles of the people of the river basin, Tista through novelists (first article of Dr. Rup Kumar Barman, the work of oral in recording history and selecting interviews (second article of Dr. Daljit Singh). The third article deals with Gandhi's ideas through occident with the questions of untouchability and the perception of non-violent action (Dr. Om Prakash).

Dr. Olivier Chiron
Bordeaux University III, France

I have gone through the journal and I find it one of the best research journals covering different dimensions of history and its allied disciplines.

Dr. Suresh Kumar
Assistant Director (Research)
Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi



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