

JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

Special Issue

Vol. LXVI, No. 1, 2024



THE ASIATIC SOCIETY
1 PARK STREET • KOLKATA 700 016

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JOURNAL
OF
THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

VOLUME LXVI No. 1 2024

Contributions of the
Research Fellows
of
The Asiatic Society



THE ASIATIC SOCIETY
1 PARK STREET □ KOLKATA

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ISSN 0368-3308

Edited and published by
Dr. Satyabrata Chakrabarti
General Secretary
The Asiatic Society
1 Park Street
Kolkata 700 016

Published in April 2024

Printed at
Desktop Printers
3A, Garstin Place, 4th Floor
Kolkata 700 001

Journal of the Asiatic Society is a quarterly peer reviewed international journal enlisted in UGC – CARE List

Price : ₹ 400 (Complete vol. of four nos.)

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Editorial Note

Research Fellowship programme at the Asiatic Society Kolkata was instituted way back in 1946 as one of the most sustained academic activities. The Programme started initially with four numbers of Research Fellowships. Over the years the number rose upto more than 30. The Fellowships were marked either in the names of eminent and distinguished academicians in various fields of cultivation of knowledge (e.g., Sir William Jones, James Princep, Mm Haraprasad Shastri, Rajendralala Mitra, Ishwar ChandraVidyasagar, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Meghnad Saha, Dr. Zakir Hussain and so on) or in the areas of some specializations (e.g., Language and Linguistics, Epigraphy, Archaeology, Anthropology and Folklore, History of Science, History of Medicine and so on).

The Final results thus produced by the Research Fellows were selectively published in our Quarterly Journal, Monthly Bulletin as well as occasional publication. By and large, the topics of researches got around the spectrum of the major thrust areas, later endorsed and recommended by the Peer Review Committee during 2011-12. Initiative was taken in the recent past to bring out the results of the Research Fellows separately in one place. But it was not followed up due to some reasons or the other.

However, we thought it afresh to introduce a space where occasionally the papers of the Research Fellows might be published putting them together based on their respective research projects or on a subject close to their work. This attempt will help them to be exposed to the wider academia on the one hand and will also help them feel encouraged and emboldened for their future endeavour in improving the quality of writing on the other.

In view of the above, it was decided to publish a Special Issue of the Journal of the Asiatic Society taking the selected papers of the

(vi)

Research Fellows which were first presented in a seminar in December, 2017. It took us a long time than usual to collect the papers after the editing and screening by the experts in various fields of specialization. Professor Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty and Sri Shyam Sundar Bhattacharya have kindly taken the trouble of not only overseeing the preparation of finalization of the manuscripts but also of writing a comprehensive Preface.

I personally thank all those engaged in this collective exercise finally seeing it through the fruition. I am particularly thankful to my colleagues of the Publication Section in general and Dr. Shakti Mukherji in particular, but for whose hard labour it would not have been possible to bring out this Special Issue during our 240th Annual General Meeting and the Award Giving Ceremony scheduled to be held on 6th of May, 2024.

Date : 29.04.2024
Kolkata

SATYABRATA CHAKRABARTI
General Secretary

Preface

The papers embodied in this volume in general take into consideration historiographical accounts of medicine, socio-political studies of medical treatment, archaeological investigations and documentation, practices in Buddhist tantrism, aspects of education, language /literary discourse, women education and identity, as well as co-variance of ethnicity and language. Broadly speaking, the volume contributes in the areas of Indology, Archaeology and History, North-East Studies/Women Studies, Linguistics, Bengali Literature, Folk Studies and Anthropology. The volume is an outcome of a conference on 'Multidisciplinary Approach Towards Studying India: Past, Present and Future' held during 14th to 17th December 2017. The Asiatic Society, Kolkata being a host to innumerable research projects specifically studying India from a multidisciplinary approach, the focal point of the conference was to (i) provide a comprehensive account of the current on-going research themes /subjects of internal research fellows of the Society; (ii) to help to draw a conclusion regarding the respective research investigations along with objectives and methodology and findings; (iii) to present an informative and analytical argument of particular issues relevant to respective research themes.

The system of surgical practices in ancient India under its founder *Suśruta* has been studied by Ankita Chakraborty in her paper entitled "The Ancient Surgical Tools of India, Greek and Rome: A Comparative Analysis". *Suśruta's* dedication to *śalya cikitsā* opened a new window in medicinal practices in ancient India. The author describes briefly the basic principles and procedures suggested and practised by *Suśruta* as detailed in the *Suśruta Samhitā*. The classification of surgical instruments has been fairly well delineated including the two major types of blunt instruments (*yantras*) and sharp instruments (*śastras*). Interestingly, the paper essays a comparative analysis of the procedures and instruments used in ancient Greece and Rome which is presented in tabular form.

A study of two bronze and five sand-stone images of Lokanātha (Avalokiteśvara) reportedly found in the south of the state of Tripura, especially places like Jolaibari and Pilak, has been carried out by Priyanku Chakraborty in his paper on “A Study of the Images of Lokanātha or Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) from Tripura”. The author feels that archaeological remains recovered from Tripura ‘testify that the region of present Tripura shared the same historical and artistic milieu of Bangladesh as well as eastern India. In fact, this area acted as an important corridor or “buffer zone” from Bihar to Arakan through Bangladesh’. The author delineates the iconographic details of the bronze and stone images of Lokanātha and, at the same time, examines relevant illustrated manuscript miniatures, to get an idea of popularity of the deity.

Smita Halder in her essay entitled “Exploring Junnar and its Early Buddhist Rock-Cut Caves: Glimpses from Epigraphs and Numismatics” revisits Junnar through numismatic and epigraphic lenses. A brief historiographical account on the archaeological remains found in the region have been incorporated. She concludes that the evidence analysed would suggest that the ‘region has its own socio-economic character and in spite of changes in ruling authority or tussles between ruling powers, Junnar, as an activity centre, was undisturbed and the productivity, the guilds and other factors along with the Buddhist circuit were probably the principal driving power of Junnar.’

In the paper on “Mahāmudrā: as Narrated by Maitripā in *Advayavajra Saṅgraha*” Sulagna Bhattacharya studies the change of dimensions of ‘Mahāmudrā’ of Buddhist tantrism, which is current in Tibetan Buddhism. The changed perspective of the concept and practice across time has been delineated in the article.

In her paper entitled “Cultivation of Geological Sciences in Calcutta through the endeavour of the Asiatic Society (1842-51)” Poulami Ray studies the role of The Asiatic Society in the development of the geological science in India. She has used the unpublished proceedings of the Asiatic Society from 1842 to 1851 to trace the beginning of the discipline in India. Ray shows the fine tension between economic motives of the government and the scientific enquiry of the specialists as seen in the setting up of a Scientific Section and an Economic Section in the Geological Survey of India, which was resolved when Holland was appointed as the Assistant Superintendent of the GSI in 1890.

In the paper entitled “Max-Müller on Indian Education” Pragnaparamita Biswas studies the contributions of Friedrich Max Müller regarding the oriental studies and highlights the importance of the Vedic literature and Buddhist studies in the realm of education.

The change in the structure of the Vedic legend Purūrava and Urvaśī has been considered in the paper entitled “Evolution of the Legend of Purūravas and Urvaśī” by Tista Biswas, where the evolution of the story has been examined in the light of time and the social demands. The significance of ancient Indian education as revealed in the Vedic texts is studied.

The socio-political and socio-cultural discourse of the Bengali narrative *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* is analysed from the historical view point in the paper entitled “Revisiting Some Areas of *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli*: The Magical Journey of Folk-Tales” by Sampan Chakrabarty. The change of dimensions in the language and literary discourse keeping in view the history of the socio-cultural and socio-political changes have been examined.

Imran Philip poses a few questions about the issue of Muslim women’s identity formation through western education during the colonial period in his article on the “Position of Muslim Women in Nineteenth Century Bengali Society and Efforts for Their Education”. The debate has been discussed very deftly with the use of contemporary periodicals and the ideas of women protagonists. Imran traces the beginning and progress of Muslim women’s education from the middle of the nineteenth century. He briefly notes the efforts of the missionaries and the Zenana Education system and discusses in some details the provenance of some of the leading schools and colleges. Even if the scope of ‘western education was limited, it gave the ladies a personal identity ... [and] was able to create a model for the Muslim community’.

Mary Vanlalthanpuii in her paper “Attitudes towards Mizo Women in Formal Political Institutions” traces the rights of women to inheritance of property in Mizo customary law of inheritance. The Mizo Hill District Inheritance of Property Act of 1956 opened the possibility of inheritance by women through a ‘will’, but it had little impact in reality as most people did not write a ‘will’. Mary argues that, though changes had been made over the decades by means of laws and acts, her survey found that not many women are aware of ‘their rights and indeed some women have difficulty in claiming their rights’. Even the impact of the

Act is not yet widely felt. The new Act of 2014 has not introduced true gender parity although it may have made a move towards reducing existing inequalities.

The socio-linguistic aspects of language maintenance and shift, language attitude and ethno-linguistic identity of Simte, a language belonging to Kuki-Chin group spoken in North-east India, have been studied by Manasi Dilip Nadkarni in the paper on "Simte Language and Ethnic Identity: An Outline". The ethnicity and language identity are viewed with due importance.

Amrita Das Gupta in her paper on "The Mundas of Kolkata: from Chhotanagpur Plateau to the Labyrinth of an Urban Megalopolis" takes into consideration the change in different aspects of life of the immigrant Munda people who migrated from Chotanagpur region to Kolkata. The impact of urbanisation, the socio-cultural change has been analysed while the study reveals the maintenance of ethnic identity of the community.

It is pertinent to mention here that only the papers of the Research Fellows of the Asiatic Society have been considered for this volume. The papers underwent a thorough review process by the experts and out of 22 papers only 12 papers have been selected for publication in this volume. A paper on the similar topic entitled "Institutionalisation of Technical Education in India in the Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of the B.E. College" by Sunayana Maity and Sujata Banerjee has already been published in the *Journal of The Asiatic Society*, Kolkata, so the paper has not been incorporated in this volume.

The publication of this volume is much delayed for completing the review and revision process and of course due to pandemic of COVID-19 about three years and some logistic issues. Hope the publication will enrich the readers and will contribute to the future research programmes.

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The Ancient Surgical Tools of India, Greek and Rome: A Comparative Analysis

Ankita Chakraborty

Abstract

In ancient India the healing practices followed Āyurveda, which has both medicinal as well as surgical methods to provide clue to sound mind and healthy body. Here Caraka in *kāyācikitsā* and Suśruta in *śalyācikitsā* are renowned names. Suśruta is called the father of surgery and he was the first one to introduce plastic surgery as well. The surgical system has two important components: (i) the procedural part and (ii) the appliance part. This paper will focus on the latter only. The great surgical textbook, *Suśruta Saṁhitā* described 20 sharp and 101 blunt surgical instruments to carry out different types of amputation, restoration and reconstruction surgeries.

Over time through foreign invasion and other channels of trade-flows there were cultural exchanges and the Indian surgical practices got exposed to those prevailing elsewhere. Special mention can be made of Greek and Roman traditions, which are recognised as the foundation of modern surgical practices in the Western world. This paper attempts a comparative analysis of the instruments used in ancient Greek, Rome and India to show the pioneering position of India in this regard.

Key Words: *Śalya cikitsā*, *Suśruta Saṁhitā*, Surgical Instruments of ancient India, Blunt and Sharp Instruments, Greek and Roman surgical Instruments.

Introduction

Indian healing tradition started from the ancient time of Indian civilisation. The process of treatment which was followed at that time is known as Āyurveda. In Āyurvedic study, the two names Caraka in *kāyācikitsā* and Suśruta in *śalyācikitsā* are very much renowned. Suśruta's dedication in *śalya cikitsā* opened a new window in

Āyurvedic study and made him the father of surgery. He was the first one to introduce plastic surgery as well. At that time surgery was not uncommon in Hindu society. It is documented that around 600 B.C. that was well prevailing among Hindus as well as Buddhists. In fact, the personal physician of the Lord Buddha, Jīvaka, was also a prominent person with strong surgical training.¹

The great surgical textbook, the *Suśruta Saṁhitā* described 20 sharp and 101 blunt surgical instruments. These instruments included forceps, pincers, trocars (sharp-pointed instruments fitted with a small tube), and cauteries (irons to heat and sear tissue). Most of these surgical tools were made of stone, metal and wood.² The ancient Hindus also used lancets to carry out cataract surgery, scalpels to restore amputated noses via plastic surgery and sharp knives to remove bladder stones. Rhinoplasty (plastic surgery of the nose) was first presented to the world medical community by Suśruta in his *Saṁhitā*, where a detailed method of transposition of a forehead flap to reconstruct a severed nose is given. Severed noses were common form of punishment. Torn ear lobes also were common due to heavy jewelry worn on ear lobes. Suśruta described a method of repair of the torn ear lobes. Fitting of prosthetics for severed limbs were also commonly performed feats.³

Through foreign invasion and other channels the Indian surgical practices got exposed to those prevailing in other countries and were mutually influenced each other. Special mention can be made of Greek and Roman traditions. Lots of similarities among the practices were discovered later by the researchers.⁴ The surgical system has two important components: (i) the procedural part and (ii) the appliance part. In this paper the focus would be on the comparison of the surgical tools only. The rest of the paper will be organised as follows: in the onset it will briefly describe the surgical procedures contained in *Suśruta Saṁhitā*; that will be followed by a description of other instruments of oriental tradition and here a comparison between the implements described in *Suśruta Saṁhitā* will be made with those recommended by other contemporaries like Vāgbhaṭṭa. After that we will talk about the surgical tools used in ancient civilization of

Gāndhara, Greek and Rome. Attempt will be made to compare, in terms of both similarities and contrasts, these instruments. Finally, the paper will present an overall assessment.

The *Suśruta Saṁhitā* : A Brief Introduction

In the discussion of surgical practices in ancient India the name of Suśruta, the father of surgery would definitely come to the fore. According to scholars he practiced during 600 BCE. He knew almost every section of surgery. When the ailments couldn't be cured through oral or external medicinal treatments, Suśruta introduced a very different way of treatment through internal or external excision, incision, scraping, puncturing- piercing, probing and extracting. These procedures had been combined under the theory of Surgery. Almost each and every major and minor surgical intervention was practiced by him but he was famous for Rhinoplasty, his greatest invention in surgical and medical world. His concept of surgical theory, procedure and teaching method was very scientific. His surgical procedure was pioneer of modern surgery and his book *Suśruta Saṁhitā* is one of the earliest Indian surgical texts.⁵

Both the variety and type of surgical procedures followed in ancient India deserves attention. Varieties of instrument indicate the span over which this method of treatment was applied to manage variety of diseases and the scope of applied research in instrumental applications too. Different types of instruments, their applications and detailed case by case documentation tell about the commonly accepted stand that some physical disorders were considered curable only through surgical interventions. Besides Suśruta, mention of other noted surgeons like Ātreya, Caraka, Jīvaka, Hārīta, Vāgbhaṭṭa, Vāgbhaṭṭa II, Bhāvamiśra etc. is available in documents.⁶ Their method of treatment and accessories were some time different from each other.

The Āyurveda scripture focuses on health and medicinal practices. According to tradition, the Āyurveda originally consisted of eight parts (*aṣṭāṅga*), in which major surgery (*śalya*), minor surgery (*śālakya*), treatment of diseases of the body (*kāyacikitsā*), demonology (teachings on the diseases caused by demons) (*bhūtavidyā*), healing of diseases of

children (*Kaumārabhṛtya*), toxicology (*agadatantra*), elixir (*rasāyaṇa*) and aphrodisiac (*vājikaraṇa*) were included.⁷

In Suśruta's work, it is evident that considerable thought was given to the study of anatomical structure and physiological function. Suśruta was a proponent of human dissection; his texts include a systematic method for the dissection of the human cadaver. Suśruta's description of anatomical specimens included over 300 bones, as well as types of joints, ligaments and muscles from various parts of the body.

The *Suśruta Samhitā* is divided into two parts, the Pūrva-tantra and the Uttara-tantra. The Pūrva-tantra is subdivided into five books: the *Sūtrasthāna*, *Nidānasthāna*, *Sārīrasthāna*, *Chikitsāsthāna* and the *Kalpasthāna*, totaling 120 chapters, collectively. At the approximate time of the *Suśruta Samhitā*, the healing arts were divided into five parts, which included the *Rogaharas* (physicians), *Śalyaharas* (surgeons), *Viśaharas* (poison healers), *Kṛtyaharas* (demon doctors), and *Bhīṣagatharvans* (magic doctors). The *Sūtrasthāna* deals with basic medical science and pharmacology; *Nidāna*, addresses disease processes; *Chikitsāsthāna* is the bulk of the text, 34 chapters on surgical procedures and post-operative management; and the *Kalpasthanam* is composed of eight chapters on toxicology.⁸

The *Suśruta Samhitā* is the first authentic text to describe methodology of plastic surgery, cosmetic and prosthetic surgery, Cesarean section and setting of compound fractures. Suśruta had in his possession an armamentarium of 125 surgical instruments made of stone, metal and wood. Forceps, scalpels, trocars, catheters, syringes, saws, needles and scissors were all available to the surgeon. Rhinoplasty (plastic surgery of the nose) was first presented to the world medical community by Suśruta in his *Samhitā*.

The tool-kit of the Hindu surgeons consisted of a good number of surgical instruments. They are used for different types of surgical operations⁹ like:

- i. *Chedana*: Excision or removal of a part of the body by operation as of piles.

- ii. *Bhedana*: Incision of a part, as of an abscess.
- iii. *Lekhana*: Scarification or dissection of a skin-flap or scraping as of surgical disease of throat.
- iv. *Vyadana or Vyādhana*: Puncturing as of veins to bleed patients by instruments having fine points.
- v. *Eṣaṇa*: Probing by a probe, as of sinus and fistula.
- vi. *Āharaṇa*: Extraction by spoon or hook, as of stone.
- vii. *Viśravana*: To let out pus as from a deep seated abscess.
- viii. *Sīvana*: Stitching by needles, as of the lips of a wound.

Though there is a common agreement among the practitioners regarding this division of procedures, a marginal difference across different proponents like Suśruta, Caraka and Vāgbhaṭṭa were noted. In fact, Vāgbhaṭṭa added three additional procedures and mentioned specific instruments for those like Churning, Fixing and Burning.

Classification of Surgical Instruments

There were various types, sizes, shapes and nomenclature of instruments according to their specific usage. They are broadly divided into two categories: blunt instruments (yantras) and sharp instruments (śastras). Related divisions for the minor accessories are upayantras (accessories) and anuśastras (minor instruments). Different schools proposed different varieties of instruments under this broad schematic structure. Suśruta proposed 101 blunt instruments and 20 sharp instruments whereas Hārīta's proposed numbers are 20 for blunt and 12 for sharp. Vāgbhaṭṭa had 115 blunt instruments and 10 sharp instruments.¹⁰ Of the one hundred and one varieties of the blunt instruments described in the *Suśruta Samhitā*, the surgeon's hand is rightly considered as the principal instrument, for without its help, no instrument can properly be used, and every surgical operation is under its control. They are recommended to be used for the extraction of *śalya* or foreign bodies, e.g., a dart, an arrow, a javelin, a spear, a peg, a pin, a bamboo rod, etc. which cause pain to the body and mind.

Suśruta subdivided the blunt instruments into six classes: (a) Svastika or cruciform instruments (24 kinds), (b) Saṁdamaṁsa or pincer-

like (2 kinds), (c) Tāla or picklock-like (2 kinds), (d) Nāḍī or tubular or hollow (20 kinds), (e) Śālākā or rod or pricker-like (28 kinds) and (f) Upayantra or accessories (25 kinds). Table 1 presents a typology of blunt instruments.

Table 1: Typology of Blunt Instruments

Instruments	Suśruta	Vāgbhaṭṭa	Usage
Svastika	24	24	Remove foreign bodies on the
Samdamsa	2	2	malignant growth of bones. Remove foreign bodies from skin, blood vessels, nerve, mussels, vain.
Tāla	2	2	Remove foreign bodies from inside the nose, ear.
Nāḍī	20	23	Remove foreign bodies from narrow tracks.
Śālākā	28	34	Probing, lifting, transforming, extracting.
Upayantra	25	19	
Total	101	104	

Source: Ray, Gupta & Roy (1980)

These instruments are advised to be made generally of iron, or of other suitable materials, when iron is not available. Their ends often resemble the faces of some ferocious beasts, or of deer's or birds. Hence the instruments should be so constructed as to have the likeness of their faces, following at the same time the directions of scientific treaties, or the instructions of teachers, or in imitation of other instruments, or in adaptation of the exigencies of the time. They should be of reasonable size, with their ends rough or smooth as required. They should be of strong make, good shape and capable of a firm grasp.¹¹ Table 2 presents a description of sharp instruments.

Table 2 : Sharp Instruments – Types and Usages

Chedana	Maṇḍalāgram, Karapatram
Lekhana	Maṇḍalāgram, Karapatram
Bhedana and Chedana	Vṛddhipatram, Nakṣatraśāstram, Mudrikām, Utpalapatram, Ardhadhāram
Viśravaṇa	Sūci, Kuśapatram, Atimukham, Antarmukham, Sarārimukham, Trikurcakam.
Vyadhana	Kuthārikā, Vṛhimukham, Arā, Vetaspatram, Sūci Vadisha, Dantaśaṅku, Eṣani
Stitching	Sūci

Source: Author's understanding on the basis of Mukhopadhyay (different volumes), Bhishagratna (2006)

The upayantra or accessory instruments are thread (rajju), twine (venikā), bandage (paṭṭa), leather (carma), bark of trees (valkala), creepers (latā), cloth (vastra), stone or pebble (asthilā), hammer (mudgara), palm of the hand and sole of the foot (pāṇipādātala), finger (anguli), tongue (jihvā), danta (tooth), nail (nakha), mouth (mukha), hair (vāla), the ring of a horse's bridle (aśvakaṭaka), branch of a tree (sākha), spittle (sthivana), fluxing the patient (pravahana), objects exciting happiness (harṣa), loadstone (ayaskāṇṭa), caustic (kṣāra), fire (agni) and medicines (bheṣaja).¹² Generally all these equipments were used for surgery at 600 BCE.

Surgical Tools Used in other Civilizations

The common features of surgical instruments of all civilisations were sharp and blunt, long and short. The Gāndhāra¹³ instruments were similar to Greek-Roman instruments and Greek-Roman instruments were similar with the modern one.

Gāndhāra: During the ancient period the territory of the present northern area of Pakistan and adjoining regions such as Afghanistan, part of eastern Turkistan was known as Gāndhāra. It is a fact that Gāndhāra was the only place in the world outside the Roman Empire where high surgical skill was acquired and put into practice. Gāndhāra was the birth place of Āyurvedic system and the word Āyurveda was

first used in the *Caraka Samhitā*, which is universally accepted to be written in Gāndhāra. From Bower Manuscripts we know about *Caraka Samhitā*.¹⁴ Taxila was then the capital of Gāndhāra and the centre of education from the Vedic times till the decline of Buddhist civilisation from where the scholars like Suśruta, Caraka, Jīvaka, Pāṇini, Ātreya and other scholars had flourished. Jīvaka was doctor of the Lord Buddha. A stone image of a box of surgical instruments is found at Taxila Museum. In the Taxila Museum there is a collection of surgical instruments of that period found in Gāndhāra. Despite the remoteness of the period and obliteration of the evidence over time, a few archaeological objects in the form of surgical implements have been unearthed in Taxila that are throwing intriguing light on the remarkable efforts of those who must have used these objects to perform surgical procedures. Except Greece and Rome, Gāndhāra is the only place from where in more than one sites the surgical instruments or related objects were excavated.¹⁵ From there both sharp and blunt instruments were found. The most commonly used materials comprised iron, steel, bronze and copper. Table 3 presents a description of different tools.

Table 3: Description of Surgical Instruments from Ancient Gāndhāra

Name	Length
Copper Probes	6.5cm. to 9cm.
Spatula	20cm. to 26cm.
Tongue Depressor	13cm.
Scalpels	8cm.

Source: Based on Naqvi (2011)

Greek and Rome : During the seventh century BCE to fourth century BCE there were many talented physicians who worked and wrote on medical science in Greek. Though after the downfall of Great Greek the Roman dynasty was established but till then Alexander was counted as the best emperor for education, science, arts, medicine etc. There was a great influence of Greek in Roman medicine and surgery. Roman medicine

and Roman physicians were very much influenced by Greek medicine and Greek physicians Roman dynasty during those days was also very much affected by the Greek Empire.

Table 4: Length of Different Instruments Used in Ancient Greek and Rome

Name of Instruments	Length
Scalpel	12cm. - 18cm.
Uvula Gushing Forceps	18cm. - 19cm.
Bone Drills	15cm. - 18cm.
Bone Forceps	21cm.
Catheters and Bladders Sound	15cm. - 26cm.
Vaginal Speculum	23cm.
Portable Medicine Chests	13cm. x 7cm.

Source: Based on Naqvi (2011)

That was the main reason of similarities both between the medical systems and that reflected on the surgical instruments also. Almost all the surgical instruments were common with the Greek surgical instruments barring a few exceptions. Besides steel and bronze in ancient Rome copper and lead were used as materials.¹⁶ Table 4 summarises information on the length difference of the instruments used in ancient Greek and Rome.

An Inter-civilisation Comparison of Surgical Instruments

While studying the medical science and the surgical instruments of these three civilisations we found that there are some remarkable similarities between surgical instruments of these civilizations relatively free from the influences of one on. For example the medical men in Gāndhāra never discovered Hippocrates, Herophilus or even the Roman surgeon Celsus or Galen who were in reality their contemporary (Naqvi, op.cit.). Āyurveda on the general healing practices and Suśruta on the surgical procedures are likely to have more compelling influences on Gāndhāra tradition. Though Alexander conquered Gāndhāra, he didn't disturb the prevailing Buddhist

practices in any significant way. Taxila continued as a centre for excellence for quite some time. The Indian surgical instruments were of two types sharp and blunt. However, we found some similar kinds of both sharp and blunt instruments used by the occidental (Ancient Greek- Roman) surgery and oriental (Ancient Indian – Gāndhāra) surgery. Some forceps used by them look exactly the same as the ancient Indian and modern surgical instruments. A further comparison of the instruments in terms of their (a) uniqueness in design, (b) material used and (c) application in surgical fields provide more convincing evidence of this independent growth.

(a) *Uniqueness in design*: The metal workers were perfectly capable to create tools of surgery at the order of the surgeons who wanted to use them. The design of spatula was made of beaten copper and carrying typical Buddhist icon at the end of its handle, which has been described as 'Nandimukha'. It shows that the instruments were locally made. Moreover, these tools were similar to the numerous household tools also found in Gāndhāra. In other words when on the count of design they are compared with Greek and Roman instruments the Gāndhāra surgical instruments are not copied but stand out as independently designed and crafted in Gāndhāra.

(b) *Material used*: Another important aspect for making a comparison of the Gāndhāra instruments with the majority of Greek and Roman ones is the selection of metal. The surgical instruments found in Gāndhāra mostly made of pure copper. The reason may be the maker's preference or their predilection to use copper might be due to its rust-free-property as opposed to iron and thus lesser chance of decay. Most probably the availability of copper was certain and plenty, and their prolonged experience in working with copper was the prime source of confidence.

The Greek traditionally preferred bronze which contains about 5 - 10% tin and copper. The bronze was not only used in manufacturing the surgical instruments or other medical artifacts but also the objects of art and utensils of daily use. It was natural to use bronze

in Greek-Roman tradition. The copper was abundantly available within the Roman Empire. The archaeological finds from Pompeii and Herculaneum, the two major cities that were destroyed in 79 CE and buried under the ash of Vesuvius exploration are of great interest due to their better preservation because they were made of bronze. The Roman also used iron to make instruments; especially those that required sharp edges for cutting such as scales, knives, etc. However, even here the handles were made of bronze.

Greek and Roman instrument-makers using bronze were able to create more complex and far better quality surgical implements than their counterparts in Gāndhāra. The Gāndhāra instruments are of simple, straight, single piece designs except for a pair of forceps. In Gāndhāra no instruments were found that can match the complexity of that Roman instruments having a controlled mechanism such as opening and closing of the vaginal speculums or others that can be assembled using a number of components. Although in Gāndhāra a pair of scissors, grasping tongues and a saw all made of iron were also discovered but these along with many more similar objects that have been described as trade tools or for domestic usages.

(c) *Application of instruments in surgical fields:* Indian surgical instruments are of two types, sharp and blunt. A selective comparison can be made.

A direct comparison of the tools of ancient Greek-Roman and Indian tradition will be attempted next.

(i) *Comparison between Bone Forceps and Svastika Yantra:*

The ancient Greek-Roman 'Bone Forceps' which was used to extract the small fragments of bone which could not be grasped by the fingers, looks like ancient Indian surgical instrument Svastika Yantra¹⁷ which used to remove the foreign bodies or the malignant growths on bones. Therefore their purposes are also the same (see Figure: 1 (a) & (b) for depiction).¹⁸

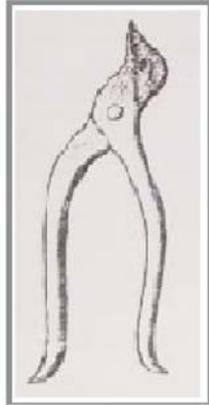


Figure: 1(a)

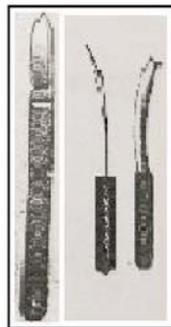


Figure: 1(b)

(ii) *Comparison of Scalpels:*

Majority of Roman surgical artifacts, recovered well preserved because they remained protected under the ash of Vesuvius. One iron knife from Taxila, 8 cm in length that is heavily rusted with fair amount of deterioration can be comfortably compared with similar but slightly bigger Roman surgical knife from Pompeii. Both had wooden handles which have been perished and both demonstrate a rounded front edge that was sharp.

Scalpels could be used to make a variety of incision like to make deep or long cuts or insertions between Ribs. Here are two pictures of scalpels [see Figures: 2(a) & (b)].¹⁹



Ancient Indian Scalpel

Figures: 2(a)

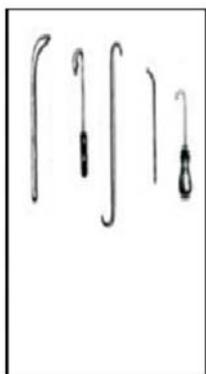


Ancient Greek-Roman scalpel

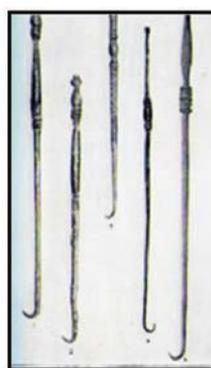
Figures: 2(b)

(iii) *Comparison between Hooks and Śalākāyantra:*

Another comparison might be possible between two surgical instruments i.e. Hook and Śalākāyantra.²⁰ Śalākāyantra was used by Suśruta. Hooks were another common instrument used regularly by Greek and Roman doctors. These are found in both sharp and blunt categories. Both of these types of hooks are still used by modern surgeons for many of the same purposes for which the ancient doctors first used them. For example, blunt hooks were primarily used as probes for dissection and for raising blood vessels. Sharp hooks, were used to hold and lift small pieces of tissue so that they could be extracted and to retract the edges of wounds. Usages of Śalākāyantra is also the same as hook. These are used for extract foreign bodies, probing, lifting and transferring. Figure: 3(a) and (b) present the similarities claimed above.²¹



Ancient Indian Hook
Śalākāyantra
Figure: 3(a)



Ancient Greek-Roman Hook
Figure: 3(b)

According to all primary and secondary evidences the similarities of surgical instruments between Roman and Greek civilisation are very clear. If we see the ancient Indian surgical instruments there are also so many similarities with that of theirs. Modern equipments are almost taken from the ancient one. Only their physical getup have changed somewhere due to handling.

The Overall Assessment

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that the development of surgical practices in ancient India under the leadership of Suśruta was both pioneering as well as scientific, at least in terms of the instruments used in the procedure. There was definite influence of these practices on those followed in other civilisations of the West. So, the moot question is why and how did India lose her prominent position? The answer lies in the path in which the social and religious history of India travelled.

When Vedanta Philosophy and Manu's cast-division took over, it had its associated implications for the healing practice as well. Since the upper caste people were more inclined to protect their body "as is" without any sign of incision and they did not touch or touched by the lower cast people, hence, the prevalence of surgical practices got severely impaired just because, it was mostly a team operation involving people from different strata of the social ladder. Suśruta considered the dissection of dead bodies as an extremely important practice to train the students of surgery and gave particular stress on knowledge gained from experiment and observation. But Manu discouraged both as the very touch of a corpse would be considered sufficient to bring contamination to the sacred person of a Brāhmin. Thus, shortly after the time of Vāgbhaṭṭa, the handling of a lancet was discouraged, and anatomy and surgery fell into disuse. Thus surgery was very much affected and it is better to say that the dissection practices were almost gone to the dark.²²

Gradually the treatment procedures in India got influenced by the Buddhist values, Persian and Arab healing practices and other external cultures. There was a coexistence of ūnāni (Arab), Rasaśāstra (metal like mercury and gold are used in treatment following yogic and tāntric practices), Siddha (South Indian system specially developed in Tamil speaking region) and Sa-Rigpa (practiced in Tibet and Himalayan region under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism) traditions. Most of these practices concentrated on medicinal intervention and the scientific progress of oriental surgical practices was almost thwarted.

Notes

- ¹ Zysk (1982).
- ² Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006).
- ³ Singal and Patterson (1993), www.kimayaayurveda.com
- ⁴ Narayanswamy (1981).
- ⁵ Sankaran, Prasad and Udupā (1976).
- ⁶ Sukla Kaviraj Vagishwar (1977).
- ⁷ Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006).
- ⁸ Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006).
- ⁹ Mukhopadhyay, Vol II & III (1922-29), Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006).
- ¹⁰ Bhisagratna Kavirajkunjalal (2006).
- ¹¹ Mukhopadhyaya (1913).
- ¹² Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006).
- ¹³ The influence of Suśruta on Gandhara is almost undeniable.
- ¹⁴ Naqvi (2011).
- ¹⁵ Naqvi (2011).
- ¹⁶ Mukhopadhyay (1994).
- ¹⁷ These types of instruments are made with two arms, moveable on a pin placed nearer to one end than the other, by which they are fastened, and on which they act crosswise like scissors. Chap. VII. 4, (Su. Sū), Hoernle, 1897
- ¹⁸ Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006), Naqvi (2011).
- ¹⁹ Naqvi (2011), Wikipedia.org on Modern Scalpel;
- ²⁰ Śalākā Yantra is Pricker like instruments or probs. It has some varieties, used for various purposes and made of various diameters and lengths according to the purpose in hand.
- ²¹ Bhisagratna Kaviraj Kunjalal (2006), Naqvi (2011), www.google.co.in/search?q=image+of+modern+hook+for+surgery&tbm
- ²² Banerjee (2011).

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*A Study of the Images of Lokanātha or Lokeśvara
(Avalokiteśvara) from Tripura*

Priyanku Chakraborty

Abstract

In this paper an attempt has been made to delineate the iconographic details of Lokanātha or Avalokiteśvara images (both metal and stone) of the early-medieval period reported from Tripura. In spite of the same artistic milieu of the eastern Indian Subcontinent, these images exhibit some different local iconographic characteristics too. Some of the images were reported previously by other scholars, and some are newly reported here. In case of the earlier reported images, we would try to justify or re-evaluate the iconic identification, wherever it is required. In connection with that we also focused on the artistic and cultic features of the Bodhisattva Lokanātha of the region of Tripura (previously the terminal part of southeast Bengal) on the basis of the mentioned images as well as some manuscript illuminations.

Key words: Southeast Bengal, Samatāṭa, Harikela, Lokanātha, Avalokiteśvara, Buddhism, Iconography, Tantra, Early-medieval period.

1. Tripura (23.9408°N, 91.9882°E), a north-eastern state of India, geographically, is a continuation of the present plains of the south-eastern part of Trans Meghna delta (which includes the present territories of Noakhali, Comilla and Chittagong in Bangladesh and Tripura in India) with the exception of hilly patches towards the north and east. The present land of Tripura, especially the southern part, was associated with the early territories of Samatāṭa and Harikela in the early-medieval Bengal (Chudhury & Alam: 2019, 15ff). Like other

parts of eastern India, this region also witnessed the flourishing stage of Buddhism. The archaeological remains discovered from a large portion of this state clearly testify that the region of present Tripura shared the similar historical and artistic tradition (of course with some artistic variations) with Bangladesh as well as the eastern India. In fact, before gaining a political entity under the Mānikya rulers in c. fourteenth century CE, this area acted as an important corridor from Bihar to Arakan through present Bangladesh.

A number of images of Buddhist divinities have been reported mostly from the southern part (Jolaibari, Pilak etc.) of modern Tripura. Among the reported images of Avalokiteśvara or Lokanātha, both metal and stone, are numerically greater than the images of other Bodhisattvas like Mañjuśrī, Tārā and so on from this area until now.

1.1. Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, is embodiment of the universal compassion (*karuṇā*). According to the Mahāyāna tradition, he is caring for all sentient beings, and helping them to cross the ocean of life. This very aspect displayed in his basic representations, like the body postures, attributes and so on.

Avalokiteśvara holds a prominent position in the universe of the Bodhisattvas. Sometimes he is depicted as an attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni or Vajrāsana Bhaṭṭāraka. He is one of the main Bodhisattvas of aṣṭa-bodhisattvas¹. Avalokiteśvara is often regarded as Lokanātha or Lokeśvara². For instance, we may refer *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (c. seventh century CE) of Śāntideva, which states : '*taṁ cāvalokitaṁ nāthaṁ kṛpāvyākulacāriṇaṁ*' (2.51. Poussin, 1901-14 : 66). The *Medinikośa* refers: '*avalokito nā lokanāthe tṛṣṇu nirīkṣite*' (16. 230b. Sastri, 1940 : 71). In tantric contexts, his various forms and iconographies belonged to different traditions or āmnāyas are depicted in the texts, such as the *Sādhanamālā* (SM), *Āryāmoghapāśa-nāma-hṛdayaṁ-mahāyāna-sūtraṁ*; in various stotras etc., and in artistic representations, like images, paintings, manuscript illuminations and so on. Some of the texts or sādhanās depict Lokanātha as a form of Avalokiteśvara. However, the epithets Lokanātha or Lokeśvara is also used as an alternative proper name Avalokiteśvara in SM, *sādhana* nos. 6, 7, 15, 16, 19, 24, 36-38, 41 and vice versa.

The cult of Avalokiteśvara was prominent in the eastern Indian Subcontinent in early-medieval era. The spread of various forms and aspects of Avalokiteśvara images in the area of Bengal is also remarkable (Haque, 2008: 116-17). We can refer here the Mallasarul (in Burdwan dist., West Bengal) copper-plate inscription of Vijayasena of the time of Gopacandra's regnal year 3 (c. sixth cen. CE) which started with the salutation-verse of Lokanātha in ārya metre (Mukherjee & Maiti, 1967: 87). In case of Samataṭa, the early mention of Ārya-Avalokiteśvara can be traced from Gunaighar copperplate of Vainyagupta (c. 507-08 CE), where the Āśrama-vihāra of Śāntideva was dedicated to Ārya-Avalokiteśvara (Bhattacharyya, 1930 : 54). So, it is evident that the cult of Avalokiteśvara or Lokanātha was spread over this area at least from c. sixth century CE. Further, the images of Avalokiteśvara, and some illustrated manuscript miniatures with captions regarding their places of veneration, are presumed that the popularity of the cult of this Bodhisattva was continued till eleventh-twelfth centuries CE.

2. Here at first we would like to discuss the bronze and stone images of Lokanātha reported from modern Tripura, and later on we would concentrate on the relevant manuscript illuminations of Lokanātha or Lokeśvara to get an idea of popularity of this Bodhisattva in the then region of Samataṭa and Harikela.

Description of the metal and stone images of Lokanātha from Tripura are as follows :

2.1. Metal Images

i. A bronze image of Lokanātha, measuring 15.8cm. × 8.5 cm., housed in the display gallery (no. 2) of the Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala, which has been discovered from Pilak, South Tripura, shows the deity with a little-broad face, standing with a slight flexion on the pericarp of a lotus resting above a plain pedestal. He is embellished with *valayas* or armlets, a short *hāra* or neckpiece, ear ornaments and a high *jaṭāmukuṭa*. His right palm is in *varada-mudrā*, while the slightly raised left arm holds the stalk of a lotus. With an abraded border

edged by tongues of flames at intervals, the long halo with a semi-circular top is crowned by an ornate triangular motif. The image was earlier reported as 'Avalokiteśvara' (Mitra, 1976 : 58), whereas in the display board of the museum it is referred as 'Lokanātha'. The figure could be dated to *c.* ninth century CE. **(Plate 1)**

ii. Another hitherto unreported mutilated bronze image of Lokanātha is kept in the display gallery (No. 2) of the Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala. This image has been exposed from Pilak, South Tripura. It measures 5.4 cm. × 11 cm. The deity is standing in *samapada* posture on the pericarp of a double-petalled lotus resting on a two-tiered pedestal. He is embellished with *valayas*, armlets, two *kaṅṭha-*



Plate 1 Lokanātha, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala

hāras, *upavīta*, ear ornaments and *jaṭāmukuṭa*. The figure is dressed with transparent lower garment reaching up to the feet and tied at the waist. His left palm is in *varada-mudrā*, while the slightly raised broken right palm holds a stalk of a lotus. The slightly tapering stele is designed with floral scrolls, the lower part of which is broken. The figure could be dated to c. ninth-tenth century CE. **(Plate 2)**

iii. A bronze image measuring 4.5 cm. × 2 cm. × 3.5 cm, has been recorded in the inventory of Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala, without any photograph. The record also mentions that, this image was



Plate 2 Lokanātha, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala



Plate 3 Avalokiteśvara, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala. After Lee 2009.

displayed in the gallery once upon a time, however now it is possibly missing (as known from the then museum authority in 2009). This image has been recovered from Pilak. Dipak Bhattacharya reported the image in 1999, and Lee in 2009 without providing any description of the same. Rather Bhattacharya just captioned the image as 'Tārā, ninth century, bronze' (Bhattacharya, 1999: 62. Lee: 2009 : Fig. 159) (Plate 3).

However, the image above could be undoubtedly identified as the pensive Avalokiteśvara, where he is seated in *rājalīlāsana* or *sukhāsana* pose (a special gesture that implies the pensive or thoughtful mood, or, special compassion of Avalokiteśvara for all sentient beings) with his left leg resting on the pedestal in usual pose, and the right leg

raised upward is crossing the left leg placed beside the left thigh. His right hand is fully supported on the pedestal, while the elbow of the left hand is on his right knee. His slightly bent head is inclined towards left and resting on the palm of his left hand. Possibly he is adorned with *jaṭāmukuṭa*, and *valayas* in hand, however defaced now. A round-shaped big halo with double rimmed edges is found behind him.

The figure is placed on a rectangular-shaped pedestal with slanting beaded line in the edge. This seat is possibly situated on a single-petalled lotus (now mutilated) which is finally supported by another rectangular-shaped basement. The basement has two *khurā*-shaped mouldings with a recess in between at the base.

2.1.1. The *sādhana* no. 8 of the *SM* (c. eleventh-twelfth centuries CE) (Bhattacharyya, vol. 1, 1968: 31) reads:

*śrīmallokanātham jaṭāmukuṭadharam śāntam candrāsumiva nirmalam
sarvālaṅkārabhūṣitam vāmena padmadharam dakṣiṇe varadam
padmacandrāsastham bhāvayet* (Lokanātha wears the *jaṭāmukuṭa*.
With peaceful appearance he is resplendent like the moon and
decked in all sorts of ornaments. He holds the lotus in left hand
and the right exhibits the *varada-mudrā*. He is situated in the moon
over a lotus.)

The iconographic description of Lokanātha is similar to our above mentioned two mentioned-images (Plates 1, 2). However, this *sādhana* doesn't specify any posture (standing or seated) of the deity.

In context of pensive Avalokiteśvara (Plate 3) it is to be noted that a considerable number of images of the deity have been reported from eastern India including Mainamati, Comilla, Bangladesh. There is a probability that Mainamati was flourished as a centre of the cult of this type of Avalokiteśvara during the above mentioned period (Bhattacharya, 2002 : 128).

These metal images show relatively simple figures cast against a solid *prabhāmaṇḍala*, which is fringed with a row of bead motifs. These examples fall into a common stylistic milieu defined by the images of Comilla, Dhaka and so on (*cf.* Lee, 2009: figs. 140, 141, 148, 162;

Chakraborty & Bandyopadhyay, 2021: Plates 36.4, 36.10, 36.13, 36.15, 36. 24-6).

2.2. b. Stone Images

i. A mostly mutilated sand-stone image of Lokanātha has been stored in the Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala. It measures 216 cm. × 79 cm. × 19 cm. This newly reported image stylistically could be dated to *c.* ninth century CE. But, since it is broken and abraded, it restrains us to determine its detail iconographic features. The tall and slim bodied main deity is standing in *samapada* posture. His broken right hand might have been *varada-mudrā*, while the left hand might have hold the stalk of a lotus. Over the elongated halo is an umbrella, while on the left side of the head there is a flying *vidyādhara*. By the sides of the legs of the main deity are possibly Tārā on the right and



Plate 4 Lokanātha, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala.



Plate 5 Lokanātha, Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala.

Hayagrīva on the left in standing position. Tārā Keeps her right hand rear akimbo, she carries a stalk of an *utpala* in her left hand. The two main hands of the pot-bellied four-armed Hayagrīva are possibly in *añjali* gesture and the upper left *vandanābhinayī* is quite visible. Tārā and Hayagrīva both have their individual semi-circular slab. (Plate 4)

ii. A stone image of Lokanātha was collected from the slope of the mound Shyamsundar Tila, Pilak (Mitra, 1976 : 60). This image has been presently stored in the Tripura Govt. Museum, Agartala. The image measures 176 cm.×95 cm. ×21 cm. The deity is standing in samapada posture on a *viśvapadma*. His right palm is in *varada-mudrā*, while the broken left palm holds the stalk of a full-blown lotus. On the right of the deity, near his right leg, is possibly Tārā (bust exfoliated) standing with an inconspicuous flexion on a *viśvapadma* and holding the stalk of an *utpala* with the left hand, while the right palm is on the waist. The corresponding figure by the side of the left leg of the main figure represents the pot-bellied Hayagrīva standing also with flexion. His right hand is *vandanābhinayī*, while the left being on the waist. There appear to be two more arms. On the both side of the head are *stūpas*. Stylistically, the figure could be dated to c. ninth century CE. (Plate 5)

iii. A sandstone image of two armed deity, measuring 288 cm.×137 cm.×20 cm, lies in the excavated mound of Shyamsundar Tila, Pilak. This image is identified as Avalokiteśvara (Mitra, 1976 : 59). Here the deity is standing in samapada posture on a *viśvapadma* above a plain pedestal. His damaged right hand was probably in *varada-mudrā*, while the broken left hand holds a stalk of a lotus which is in a damaged state. The features of the face of the deity are also damaged. Against the *stūpa*-shaped coiffure is possibly the figure of a Tathāgata (Amitābha) among the five Buddhas. Tārā and Hayagrīva are situated in the right and left side respectively of the main deity. They are standing on double-pedalled lotus rising above the pedestal. Tārā and Hayagrīva both have their individual semi-circular back-slab. Tārā displaying *varada-mudrā* in her right hand and carries a stalk of an *utpala* in left hand. Hayagrīva is four-armed, pot-bellied. The main pair of his hands is folded in *añjali* mudra, the upper right is

vandanābhinayī, but the object in the corresponding left being uncertain. On both sides of the head are *stūpas* with a cylindrical drum. Debala Mitra reported that above each of those two *stūpas* is *vidyādhara* flying through clouds (Mitra, 1976: 59). But at present they are completely mutilated. Over the head of the main deity, there is an umbrella. Stylistically, the figure could be dated to *c.* ninth century CE. **(Plate 6)**

iv. A sand-stone image of Avalokiteśvara (Mitra, 1976: 69) has been stored in the Basudev-Bari temple of Jolaibari, South Tripura. This image measures 170 cm.×70 cm.×20 cm. This image stylistically could be dated to *c.* ninth century CE. The tall and slim bodied main deity is standing on a lotus in *samapada* posture. His right hand holds



Plate 6 Lokanātha, Shyamsundartila, Pilak, Jolaibari

varada-mudrā, while the left hand holds a stalk of a lotus. The deity is ornamented with *jaṭāmukuta*, long ear-rings and *kaṇṭha-hāra*. Over the elongated halo is an umbrella, while on either side of the head are two *stūpas* possibly resting on a lotus, the stalks of which descend down. By the sides of the legs of the main deity are Tārā on the left and Hayagrīva on the right. Both of them are standing on the lotuses with stalks rising from the lotus-stand of the main deity. The two armed Tārā displays *varada-mudrā* with her right palm and her left hand bears a stalk of an *utpala*. The two main hands of the pot-bellied four-armed Hayagrīva are in *añjali* pose and the upper left *vandanābhīnayī*, the object in the upper right appears indistinct. Tārā



Plate 7 Lokanātha, now worshipped as Viṣṇu in Basudevbari temple, Jolaibari



Plate 8 Lokanātha, Colony Bazar, Paschim Pilak, Tripura

and Hayagrīva both having their individual halo with a semi-circular top carved out of back-slab. (Plate 7)

v. An image of Avalokiteśvara has been made of sandstone of poor quality, measures 118×55×22 cm, reported by Debala Mitra (Mitra, 1976 : 68). At present, this sculpture lies on a Śiva temple, Colony Bazar, Paschim Pilak, Belonia. The face of the deity is completely destroyed. He is standing with an inconspicuous flexion on a small viśvapadma above a pedestal. His right arm is entirely missing, while the left held lotus-stalk, most of which has disappeared. From the pedestal have issued two small lotuses each supporting a standing figure. The left-one on sinister is a pot-bellied Hayagrīva with hair rising upwards. With his left palm resting on the thigh, he holds in his right hand a staff. Another figure is preferably Tārā(?) in the right side of the main deity. This image could be dated to c. ninth century CE. (Plate 8)

2.3. The *sādhana*, no. 18 of *SM* (Bhattacharyya, vol. 1, 1968: 49) describes the *dhyāna* or instruction to visualise Lokanātha as follows:

lokanāthaṃ śaśiprabhaṃ |
hrīḥkāṛākṣarasambhūtaṃ jaṭāmukuṭamaṇḍitaṃ | | ...
varadaṃ dakṣiṇe haste vāme padmadharaṃ tathā | |
lalitākṣepasaṃsthaṃ tu mahāsaumyaṃ prabhāsvaram |
varadotpalakarā saumyā Tārā dakṣiṇataḥ sthitā | |
vandanādaṇḍa-hastastu Hayagrīvo'tha vāmataḥ |
raktavarṇomahāraudro vyāghracarmāmbapriyaḥ | |

(..Lokanātha, resplendent like the moon, as springing from the sacred syllable Hrīḥ and wearing Jaṭāmukuṭa. He ... exhibits Varada mudrā in the right hand and carries the lotus in the left. He sits in the Lalita attitude, is peaceful and resplendent. To his right is Tārā, who has a peaceful appearance, exhibits the Varada mudrā and carries the lotus. To the left is Hayagrīva, who displays the gesture of bowing and carries the staff in his two hands. He is red in colour, appears terrible and is clad in the garment of tiger-skin.) (Bhattacharyya, 1958 : 130-31)

So, the iconographical compositions of the images (Plates 4, 5, 6, 8) are more or less almost similar to the description of the said *sādhana* no. 18. In all the concerned images, the deity is situated in *samapada* posture, while the *sādhana* no. 18 refers 'lalitāsana'. However, we already have noticed that *sādhana* no. 8 has not given any specification regarding the posture of Lokanātha. In general the simple form viz. two-armed and one faced Avalokiteśvara with a lotus and the wish fulfilling gesture, and sometimes with two accompanied deities viz. Tārā and Hayagrīva is described as Lokanātha in the *SM*. Therefore, by following the *SM*, it is preferable to identify the figures (both metal and stone. see Table 1 in Appendix 1) as Lokanātha or Lokeśvara. Though there is no water-tight iconographic discriminations between Avalokiteśvara and Lokanātha or Lokeśvara, the cause of different proper names and forms of the same deity is developed due to the different *āmnāyas* or Tantric traditions of various *ācāryas* (masters).³

3. In the context of cultic flourishment of Lokanātha or Lokeśvara as well as the artistic milieu of southeast Bengal with present Tripura, mention of some manuscript illuminations are noteworthy. Hence, almost the same forms of Lokanātha; as discussed above, are also exhibited (some of them are with captions too) in these early-medieval manuscripts. These are as follows—

- a. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* (*ASP*) (Ms. No. 1643; dated to 1015 CE; copied at Lhām Vihāra, Nepal. Bendall, 1883: 152. Now preserved in the University Library, Cambridge).
- b. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* (*ASP*) (Ms. No. A15; dated to 1071 CE; copied in Nepal; now preserved in the Asiatic Society, Kolkata).
- c. *Pañcaviṃśati-sāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* (*PSP*) (completed in the eighth year of Harivarmadeva c. 1081-1082, or c. 1092, or c. 1100; now preserved in the Baroda State Museum, Vadodara, and some folios are outside India. Bautze-Picron, 1999: 160).
- d. *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* (*KVS*) (completed in the reign of Harivarmadeva; dated to c. 1100-1125. preserved in British Library, London, inv. Or. 13940. Losty, 1989: 1-21).

Among these, *ASP* manuscripts of Nepal comprises seventy-seven and thirty-seven miniature paintings or *āriṣa* (*ālekhyā*)⁴ respectively of the deities, and *stūpas* respectively with the captions indicating the places or regions of veneration. Bautze-Picron states :

As a matter of fact, the illuminations reproduce almost always 'real' images which were venerated in specific places or regions and their proper name is thus enlarged with the mention of this location. (1999: 188)

Furthermore, the manuscripts of southeast Bangladesh viz. *KVS*, and two *PSP* also reflect the same tradition of illustrating 'famous images', a tradition known at an earlier date in Central Asia. Sometimes the proper names of the Buddhas, Bodhisttvas or deities have been tagged with the particular veneration places. For example, we can refer Vajrāsana-bhaṭṭāraka (the form of Śākyamuni Buddha with earth-touching gesture venerated in the main *gandhola* or temple of Vajrāsana viz. Bodhgaya, Bihar), Campitalā-Lokanātha (*ASP*, MS. No. 1643, folio 86r; also in Ms. No. A 15, folio. 129v).

3.1. The *ASP* manuscripts record four places in captions where Lokanātha or Lokeśvara were venerated in Samataṭa and Harikela. These are as follows:

- i. '*Campitalā-lokanāthaḥ* | | samataṭe | | ' (Ms. no. 1643, folio. 86r). In this miniature painting, Lokanātha with his attendant deities, situated in a temple (in Campitalā⁵) flanked by two trees. Here Lokanātha of white complexion standing in *ābhaṅga* pose. His right hand displays in *varada-mudrā* and a lotus with a long stalk is held his the left palm. Two-armed Green Tārā stands to his right side with similar attributes, and in the right side there is a four-armed Bhṛkuṭī of yellow complexion⁶. Two *vidyādhara*s are represented in the sky on the two sides of the head of Lokanātha. The deity is situated in a temple with flat triangular roof surmounted by a *stūpa* supported with two floral decorative pillars on both sides. Two pipal trees are illustrated on each side of the temple. (Plate 9)

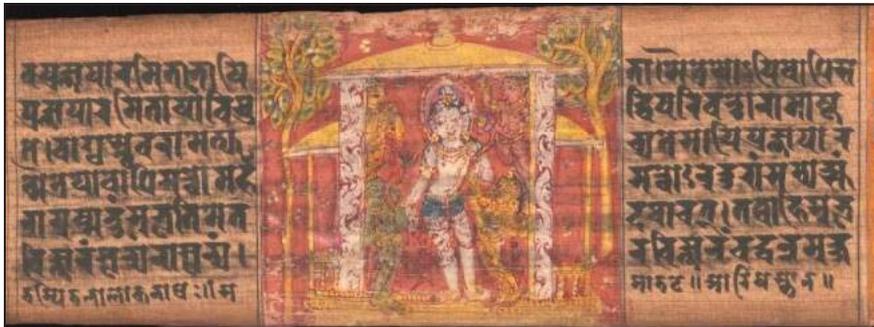


Plate 9 'Campitalā-lokanāthaḥ || samataṭe || 'Ms. no. 1643, folio. 86r.
 Courtesy (plates 9-12): Digital Library, University of Cambridge



Plate 10 'Harikelladeśe śīla [sita?] Lokanāthaḥ |' Ms. No. 1643, folio. 184r

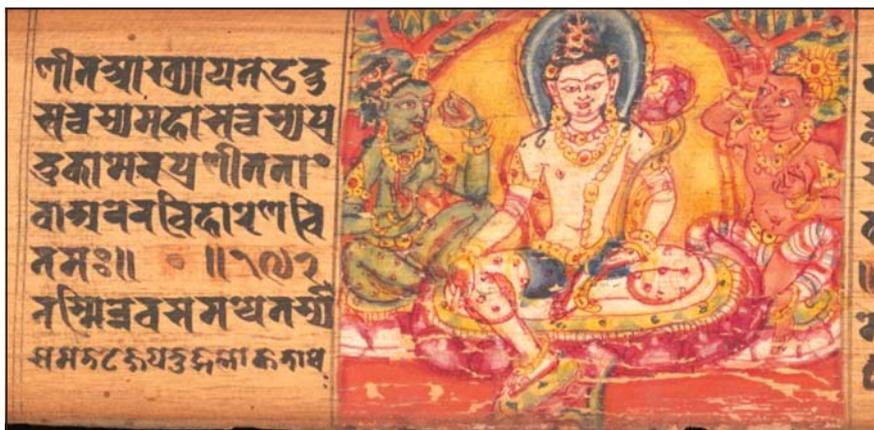


Plate 11 'Samataṭe Jayatuṅga Lokanāthaḥ |' Ms. No. 1643, folio, 193r



Plate 12 'Harikelladeśe śīla [sita?] Lokanāthaḥ |' Ms. No. 1643, folio. 184r



Plate 13 Lokanātha. (Plates 13-18, 20, 21 After Bautze-Picron 1999)



Plate 14 Lokanātha



Plate 15 Lokanātha



Plate 16 Lokanātha



Plate 17 Lokanātha



Plate 18 Lokanātha



Plate 19 Lokanātha, Courtesy:
Himalayan Art Resources



Plate 20 Lokanātha

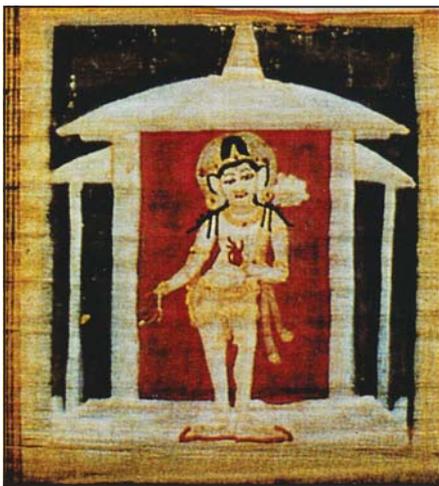


Plate 21 Lokanātha



Plate 22 Lokanātha,
Mainamati Museum,
Comilla, Bangladesh

- ii. 'Harikelladeśe śīla⁷ Lokanāthaḥ ||' (Ms. No. 1643, folio. 184r). Here the white complexion Lokanātha is six armed, standing in *samapada* posture. His right hand bears *akṣamālā*, full-bloomed lotus and in the left hands book —(indistinct), each of the pair of his main hand in *varada-mudrā*. There are four attendants of him— (on his right) two-armed Green Tārā, whose left hand bears an *utpala* and right hand is in *varada-mudrā*; a *preta* named Sūcīmukha⁸, who has a large belly, and very thin and needlenose. He is receiving the nectar falling from the right hand of Lokanātha; on his left there is four-armed yellow Bhṛkuṭī, two-armed pot-bellied Hayagrīva. **(Plate 10)**
- iii. 'Samataṭe Jayatuṅga Lokanāthaḥ |' (Ms. No. 1643, folio, 193r). The white complexion Lokanātha sits on a lotus-seat in *lalitāsana* with the right leg pedant. The right hand holds *varada-mudrā*, the left bears a lotus with stalk. Two-armed Green-Tārā and two-armed Hayagrīva of red complexion sit on the right and the left respectively. **(Plate 11)**
- iv. 'Campita Lokanātha bhṛṭṭārakaḥ |' (Ms. No. A 15, folio. 129v). Here the white complexion deity Lokanātha standing in *ābhaṅga* position. Two-armed Tārā and two-armed Bhṛkuṭī (?) are seated on the right and left side respectively of the deity. Two *vidyādhara*s are represented in the sky on the two sides of the head of Lokanātha. This appears to be quite the same (except the attendant deities in seated position) image as *Campitala* (*campita* > *campitalā*?) Lokanātha of Ms. 1643. **(Plate 12)**

The above mentioned illustrations more or less attest the textual depictions of Lokanātha, while the Śīla Lokanātha of Harikela partly follows the description of Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara, *sādhana* no. 24 of the tradition of Sthavira Anupamarakṣita of the *SM* **(Plate 10)**. The 'Jayatuṅga Lokanātha' **(Plate 11)** exactly exhibits the *sādhana* of Lokanātha no. 18 of the *SM*.

3.2. There are thirty-two (twenty-two in Baroda Mss. and ten from USA) illustrations in total in the *PSP* from which twelve are of Lokanātha and other forms of Avalokiteśvara (twelve-armed

Avalokiteśvara, Rakta-lokeśvara etc.). The two-armed Lokanātha images are as follows:

- i. Inv. E.G. 116 — displays two-armed Lokanātha in *vajraparyāṅkāsana*; with lotus and *varadamudrā*; within a shrine, and accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva.⁹ **(Plate 13)**
- ii. Inv. E.G. 117 — depicts two-armed Lokanātha seated within a *caitya*, with lotus and *varadamudrā*. **(Plate 14)**
- iii. Inv. E.G. 118 — two-armed Lokanātha with lotus and *varadamudrā*; accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva. **(Plate 15)**
- iv. Inv. E.G. 119 — two-armed Lokanātha in *lalitāsana*, with lotus and *varadamudrā*; accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva. **(Plate 16)**
- v. Inv. E.G. 124 — standing Lokanātha in a shrine, with lotus and *varadamudrā*; accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva. **(Plate 17)**

(USA folios)

- vi. Lokanātha seated in a dark blue shrine within a mountain; with lotus and *varadamudrā*. **(Plates 18, 19)**
- vii. Two-armed Lokanātha in *vajraparyāṅkāsana* with lotus and *varadamudrā*; accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva; seated in a temple. **(Plate 20)**
- viii. Standing Lokanātha with lotus and *varadamudrā*, in a shrine. **(Plate 21)**

3.3. The *KVS*, the sacred Mahāyāna text which describes the glorious deeds of Avalokiteśvara, was copied in southeast Bangladesh with one-hundred-five illustrations among which the most of them are of Avalokiteśvara or Lokanātha quite obviously. The folios 2a, 28b, 35a, 38b, 42b, 45b, 48a, 49b, 50b, 51b, 52b (Losty, 1989 : Figs. 6, 43, 52, 56, 59, 62, 66, 69, 71, 73, 75) and folio 11a (Losty, 1989 : Fig.17) of the *KVS* has close resemblances to the plates no. 16, 17 (Inv. E.G. 119, 124 respectively). Also **Plates 18, 19** have the same milieu with *KVS* 35b (Losty, 1989: Fig. 53).

The coping of the text between 1100-1125 *c.* attests the popularity of the cult of Lokanātha or Avalokiteśvara in this region.

3.4. We have observed that the referred manuscript illuminations

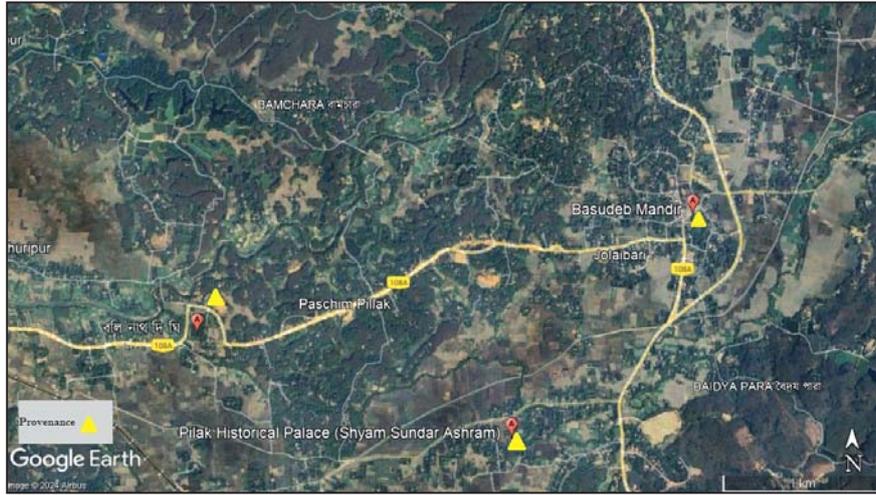


Plate 23 Provinces of Lokanātha images of Tripura

copied in the region of southeast Bengal mostly depicts Avalokiteśvara as two-armed (except six-armed 'Śīla' Lokanātha of Harikela; accompanied by Tārā, Bhṛkuṭī, Hayagrīva and Sūcīmukha. **Plate 10**) Lokanātha, holding lotus and showing *varada-mudrā* in respective hands; he is seated in *lalitāsana* or *sattoaparyāñkāśana*, and also standing in *samapadasthānaka* mostly in a shrine or in a caitya; accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva, or Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī. As per the *sādhanas* collected in the published *SM* text, these forms can be presumed as Lokanātha or Lokeśvara.

Moreover, the manuscripts of *ASP* of Nepal mention the deities and their places of veneration in this region as the same. On the other hand, stylistically the manuscript illuminations especially of the *PSB* and *KVS* exhibit the deities in a simple way in comparison to the manuscript illuminations of northern Bengal or Bihar (Bautze-Picron, 1999: 188). This simplified characteristics are eventually noticed in the stone and metal images reported from Tripura too as we mentioned earlier.

4. The images of Lokanātha of *c.* eighth-tenth century CE, reported from the southern part of Tripura indicates the popularity of the cult of this Bodhisattva in this region in the early-medieval period. These images exhibit Lokanātha mainly in two-armed forms, both in the metal and stone images, in case of stone figures the main deity is accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva. It is hardly possible to reveal

the all iconographic features in detail of these images (both stone and metal) as the images of soft black sand-stone are in a very poor condition. In general, it can be assumed that the simple images of Tripura are shared the same characteristic features of the images discovered from the southeast Bengal, and the manuscript illuminations of the *PSP* and *KVS* both in subject matter and casting modes. The plane background, importance of outer line delineating the volumes etc. are considerable milieu in this regard (see **Plates 1, 3, 5-7, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22**). It is also notable that stylistically these images of Tripura are exhibiting simplified form in compare to other Avalokiteśvara images from Comilla (not in case of metal images of the same), Vikrampur etc. of Bangladesh, and northern part of Bengal in India. So, it can be presumed that in terminal portion of south-eastern Bengal viz. present Tripura, the form of two-armed Lokanātha (sometimes accompanied by Tārā and Hayagrīva) was popular in the early medieval era, which can be considered as a cultic feature of this region. Regarding the metal images of Tripura, their stylistic milieu and differences in comparison with other eastern Indian metal specimens have already mentioned (2.1.1).

Most of the Lokanātha images of Tripura are reported from the adjacent places of the archaeological sites of Pilak, Jolaibari situated in the southern region of the present state (**Plate 23**). It is a noteworthy that many numismatic evidences found from that indicates its political as well as commercial importance. A pillar inscription of Ānandacandra, now at the Shithaung pagoda, Mrohaungin Myanmar records the testimonies of some constructions made by the king himself at 'Pilakkavanaka' (Johnston, 1944: 378), which can be identified with the modern day Pilak. So, there is possibility that the popularity of Lokanātha cult in southeast Bengal may also flourished in the Arakan region of Myanmar during the same period.¹⁰ The area of present Tripura might have been clearly connected through the trade and pilgrimage routes in the early medieval period. Therefore this region has evidently constituted the outer eastern frontier of the Indian Buddhist art, and as such was not only an artistic transitory zone between India and Myanmar, but also a cultural and political unit.

Acknowledgement : I convey my deep gratitude to Prof. Aiswarya Biswas, Dept. of Buddhist Studies, University of Calcutta for her kind

academic guidance. I express my thanks to Dr KumKum Bandyopadhyay, Dr. Anindita Adhikari, Sukumar Debnath for their kind help. I am grateful to Sri Bijoy Krishna Das, who had captured the photographs of the bronze images of Tripura State Govt. Museum, Agartala. I am thankful to the Asiatic Society, Kolkata for providing financial support for the field study.

Appendix 1

Table 1	
Lokanātha Images of Tripura (At a Glance)	
<p>1. (Plate 1) Lokanātha. Bronze (15.8 cm. × 8.5 cm). Two-armed. Right hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>, and left hand with lotus. Posture : <i>samapada</i> with slight flexion.</p> <p>2. (Plate 2) Lokanātha. Bronze (5.4 cm. × 11 cm). Two-armed. Right hand with lotus and left hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>.</p> <p>3. (Plate 3) Avalokiteśvara. Bronze (4.5 cm. × 2 cm. × 3.5 cm.). Two armed. Posture: Pensive Bodhisattva.</p> <p>4. (Plate 4) Lokanātha. Sand-stone (216 cm. × 79 cm. × 19 cm). Two-armed. Right hand with lotus, and left hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>. Attendant deities : Tārā (on the right hand), Hayagrīva (on the left).</p> <p>5. (Plate 5) Lokanātha. Sand-stone (176cm.×95cm.×21cm.).Two-armed. right hand with lotus</p>	<p>and left hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>. Attendant deities : Tārā (on the right), Hayagrīva (on the left).</p> <p>6. (Plate 6) Lokanātha. Sand-stone (288cm.×137cm.×20cm).Two-armed. right hand holding lotus and left hand <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>. Attendant deities : Tārā (on the right), Hayagrīva (on the left).</p> <p>7. (Plate 7) Lokanātha. Sand-stone (170cm.×70cm.×20 cm). Two-armed. right hand holding and left hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>. Attendant deities : Hayagrīva (on the right), Tārā (on the left).</p> <p>8. (Plate 8) Lokanātha. Sand-stone (118cm.× 55cm.×22cm). Two-armed. right hand not distinct and left hand in <i>varada mudrā</i>. Posture : <i>samapada</i>. Attendant deities : Tārā (on the right), Hayagrīva (on the left).</p>

Notes

- ¹ The eight great Bodhisattvas are Kṣitigarbha, Ākāśagarbha, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Maitreya, Sarvanīvaraṇa-viśkambhīn, Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī. However *Dharmasaṃgraha* replaces Avalokiteśvara with Gaganagaṇja. (cf. Chakraborty, 2024: 107, 209)
- ² Actually there are no major discriminations lexicographically, theologically or ideologically among Avalokiteśvara [Avalokit-eśvara = 'Lord who Looks Down (in Empathy)' (Princeton, 2014 : 239); 'Lord of what we see', 'Lord of compassionate glances' (Malalasekera, 1966 : 407)] , Lokeśvara (= lokānām īśvara, 'Lord of the world' (Princeton, 2014: 1192) and Lokanātha (= lokānām nātha, Lord of the world).
- ³ See note 1.
- ⁴ The word (Ms. 1643) 'ariṣasthāṇa' or 'āriṣa' stands for ālekyasthāna or ālekhya. (Foucher, 1900 : 211).
- ⁵ 'There is a village in the Tippera district, Campitala, famous for its learning. This image of Lokanātha appears to have belonged to this village or to a village of similar name.' (Bhattachali, 2008 reprint [1929, 1st pub.] : 12).
- ⁶ N.K. Bhattachali has wrongly identified her as Hayagrīva (Bhattachali, 2008 rept. Of 1929, 1st pub.): 12-13).
- ⁷ The correct reading may be *sita* (white).
- ⁸ Here his complexion is brush yellow, while the *Sādhanamālā* describes him as dark blue : 'ati-śītivarṇaṁ sūcīmukham' (Bhattacharyya, vol. 1, 1968: 40).
- ⁹ The same sculptural representation is reported from Bengal, possibly from Dhaka, dated mid. eleventh century CE. preserved in Virginia Museum. See Lee: 2009: 397, figure 31.
- ¹⁰ In this context we should refer here the observation of N.R. Ray (Ray, 1936 : 48):
The Bodhisattva Lokanātha seems to have been more popular than other *Mahāyāna* deities which are only incidentally known and were once worshipped in Burma; and his images are more numerous than those of any other god of the same pantheon.

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*Exploring Junnar and its Early Buddhist Rock-Cut Caves:
Glimpses from Epigraphs and Numismatics*

Smita Halder

Abstract

Among the early historic sites of Deccan, Junnar was one of the most vibrant localities. It is situated in Pune district of present state of Maharashtra. The place, surrounded by hills, lies in a broad valley of Western Ghats about 2000 ft. above the sea-level in the basin of the river Kukadi. More than two hundred caves were excavated at Junnar and its vicinity. The ancient trade routes, connecting the port settlements like Kalyan, Sopara, Chaul with the market towns like Ujjain, Paithan and Ter, used to run through Junnar. The region was politically and economically vibrant and Buddhism was in a flourishing state in this region during post-Mauryan times. Archaeological excavations in the vicinity of the area reveal its continuous habitation since the Stone age, though proper extensive excavation at Junnar could not be carried out due to its present settlement. Its fertile land, good quality of agricultural products and its forest resources led Junnar to develop as a production centre as well as architectural activities and place of mass-interactions. In this article a critical analysis of its epigraphic and numismatic data has been carried out to understand the socio-political activities which used to happen centering the Buddhist monasteries of Junnar.

Key Words: Early historic period, Junnar, Sātavāhanas, Kumāras, Śakas, Epigraphy, Numismatic, *gahapatis*, *śreṇis*, Buddhist cave temples

Junnar and its Early Buddhist Rock-Cut Caves: from Epigraphs and Numismatics

There are three major passes connecting the Konkan coast and the mainland Deccan – the Thalghat that ascends to Nasik (ancient



Fig. 1 – Naneghat as a connector between Konkan Coast and Deccan Plateau (Courtesy: Google Earth)



Fig. 2 – A. The coastal land and Naneghat pass (Courtesy: Google Earth)
B. Konkan from Naneghat Cave Site

Govardhan area) and connect Deccan with both the ports of Sopara (ancient Surpāraka) and Kalyan (ancient Kaliana); the Naneghat that connects Kalyan with Deccan and ascends to Junnar [fig. 1 and 2] and then the route goes further to Paithan (ancient Pratiṣṭhāṇa); and the Bhorghat ascending to Karle and then to Pune connecting Ter (ancient Tagara) in the mainland Deccan and the port of Chaul (ancient Semylla) in the western seaboard.¹ Junnar (19° 12' N and 73° 63' E) is, thus, strategically located about 150 km south to the cave sites of Nasik and 106 km north to the cave site of Karle, while the pass of Naneghat is only 34 km away from the town of Junnar and Kalyan is further 60 km to the west from the pass. Hence, the ancient route that comes from the coastal land of western India via Kalyan enters Junnar, the

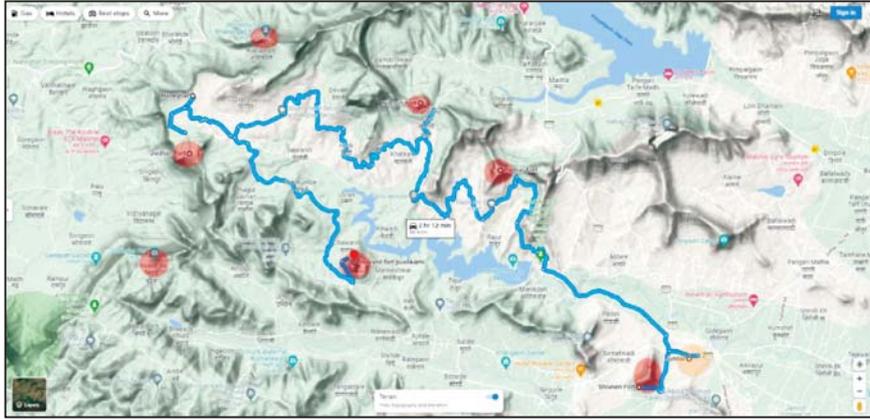


Fig. 3: Route to Junnar from Naneghat (Map from Google)



Fig.4 – Jivdhan fort and Naneghat from Hadsar fort (Photo courtesy: Mr. Atul Arun Kajale)

first major activity centre of the mainland Deccan through two major routes from Naneghat– one passing via Nimgiri and Hadsar forts and another through the Jivdhan and Chavand forts [fig. 3 and 4] and then the route further goes upto Paithan, another important market town in early historic times. The town of Junnar lies in a broad valley of Western Ghats about 2000 ft. above the sea-level in the basin of the river Kukadi, a tributary of the river Ghod [fig. 5 and 6]. Besides Kukadi, the water of the rivers Mina, Pushpavati, Ada, Mandavi and Kalu make Junnar and its surroundings fertile. The ancient trade routes which connected the port-cities of Kalyan, Sopara, Chaul or Bharuch with the market towns of Ujjain, Paithan or Ter used to run



Fig. 5 – Junnar: Aerial View (Photo courtesy: Google earth, 2018)



Fig. 6 – River Kukadi: View from right bank

through Junnar. This made the region politically and economically vibrant and the communication led to flourish Buddhism in the vicinity of the region which caused to be excavated more than two hundred caves in Junnar on the ancient route to Paithan from Kalyan. Besides, the oldest statue gallery in India has been reported from Naneghat



Fig. 7 – Huge Stone-Jar at the commencement of Naneghat



Fig. 8 – Coin of Siri Sātakarṇi and Nāgaṇikā (Photo courtesy: Shobhana Gokhale 2008, p. 110)

which is only about 34 km away from Junnar. It is the only early historic rock-cut cave site in western India that bears the references to land donations only by common people and not by any royal members. It is also believed that there was an ancient toll plaza situated on the head of Naneghat as there is a huge stone jar present *in situ*. [Fig. 7] Junnar also yielded coins bearing the name of a queen (Nāgaṇikā) for the first time in Indian History [Fig. 8]. All these made Junnar a unique site in early historic phase.

Junnar and its vicinity witnessed all the features of early historic period like flourishing trade, architectural activities, coinage,

inscriptions, presence of monarchy, etc. from c. 1st century BCE onwards, if not earlier. Archaeological excavations in the vicinity of the area reveal its continuous habitation since the Stone age. However, a proper and extensive excavation at Junnar could not be made out as the modern settlement has been built up over the old site. So, the scope of a systematic archaeological excavation is limited in this region. Hence, the process through which Junnar had been developed in an early historical activity centre is still shrouded in obscurity, but the site yielded a number of inscriptional evidences as donative records bearing interesting data on the socio-economic condition of the area. At the same time, the site is silent while the ruling authorities are concerned, however, coins issued by the Sātavāhanas, the Kṣaharātas and the Kumāras have been reported from Junnar with the region-specific symbol of the site which indicates all these three powers controlled Junnar at some point of time. However, reporting various early Sātavāhana coins including the Nāgaṇikā type indicates it was principally a Sātavāhana settlement that had been occupied by the Śakas and the Kumāras for at least a brief period. In this article we have tried to analyse the available epigraphs and coins to understand Junnar in the early historic context. As the pass of Naneghat is about 34 km far from Junnar, we have excluded the inscriptions from Naneghat² but the influence of Naneghat on the development of Junnar as a politico-economic centre is of beyond doubt. Thus, the site of Naneghat will be considered in the article as a site situated in the broader Junnar complex. The rock-cut caves and the inscriptions *in situ*, presence of numerous coins and especially a particular lion type coins issued by different powers, forts on the way to Junnar from Naneghat, a royal portrait gallery at Naneghat – all reflect that Junnar was emerging as a centre of attraction in the early historic Deccan both politically and socio-economically.

Survey of Literature

Study of early historic Deccan is mainly confined into the study of the Sātavāhanas till date. The study of the region was started by Col.

Sykes in 1837 by the reporting of the cave inscriptions of Naneghat. In course of time Junnar has made its place in historical studies mainly in the study of the rock-cut cave architecture of western India and Buddhism. Though Junnar was a centre of attraction since the early period, a few works have been done on Junnar particularly. Pandit Bhagawanlal Indraji and Jas Burgess have done extensive explorations in western India and *Archaeological Survey of Western India* published detailed description of these cave temples along with its inscriptions and their translation.³ In the year 1874 a Memorandum on the Buddhist Caves at Junnar was also published by Burgess.⁴ Other important works are *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, Vol. V, 1877-80; V. V. Mirashi, 'Naneghat Inscription of the so-called Chatrapana Satakarni', in A.V. Narasimha Murthy ed., *Archaeological Studies*, Vol. III, Mysore, University of Mysore, 1978; Vidya Dehejia, *Early Buddhist Rock Temples: A Chronological Study*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1972; Ph.D. thesis entitled *Rock-cut Cave Temples at Junnar: An Integrated Study* by Suresh Vasant Jadhav, submitted in the Dept of Archaeology, Deccan Collage, Pune, in 1980. Then the study has been enriched with the research works done by S. Nagaraju⁵, Shailendra Bhandare⁶, Shobhana Gokhale⁷, M.K. Dhavalikar⁸, V. Shinde⁹, Pia Brancaccio¹⁰ and so on.

Junnar and its name

There are different opinions regarding the ancient name of Junnar. According to Suresh Jadhav Omenagara of Ptolemy's *Geography* can be identified with Junnar.¹¹ Laeuchli¹² has also identified Omenagara (or Umehanakata of Karle inscription)¹³ with Junnar. Scholars like R. G. Bhandarkar and Mitchiner are keen to identify Junnar as Minnagar, the capital city of Nahapāna mentioned in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (henceforth *Periplus*). The argument of considering Junnar as Minnagara by them was principally based on the fact that there is a river named Mina and its valley is known as Minner near Junnar but Suresh Jadhav rightly mentioned that the name of Junnar cannot be identified with Minnagar as the main river which is running through the region is Kukadi and its valley is known as Kukudner and the

region is enclosed by hill ranges.¹⁴ Besides, the river Mina and its valley is about 6 km far from the town. The first confirmed citation of the place comes late in the medieval time. The Russian traveler Nikitin mentioned Junnar as Jooneer in his narrative (1470 CE). There are some more travelers who have mentioned Junnar in their writings.¹⁵ Vasant Shinde mentions that the large inscription of Naneghat refers to 'Junna Nagari' (Old capital) and he identifies the name with Junnar.¹⁶ But there is no reference of such name in the Naneghat inscription and it is also not clear on what ground Junna-nagari has been taken as old capital by him. However, an incomplete copperplate grant of Sinda king *Mahāsāmanta Ādityavarman* (Śaka era 887 i.e. 965 CE) refers to a name Junni-nagara from where the grant was issued by the king.¹⁷ Sures Vasant, however, suggests that the name Junnar is derived from Yavananagara as the place was inhabited by Yavana-Greek merchants.¹⁸ Here it must be mentioned that the inscriptions from Junnar bear the presence of the Yavanas but we do not know if they were the Greeks. By that time the term *yavana* was no longer denoting to the Greeks only. We find the mention of the *Yavanarāja* Tuṣāspha, who served Aśoka, mentioned in the Junagarh inscription of Rudradaman. Ranabir Chakravarti has shown the Iranian origin of the name of Tuṣāspha.¹⁹ However, presence of the foreigners or the Yavanas in Junnar is no doubt significant but we do not have any other corroborative data to name Junnar as Yavananagara. According to Shobhana Gokhale the name of Junnar may have been derived from Yajña-nagara – the city where many sacrifices were performed. She took the Naneghat inscription as supportive evidence as it talks about a number of sacrifices performed in large scale. Gokhale also mentioned that an inscription from Junnar bears a name *Krami* Yajña. According to her, the adjective *Krami* indicates not only 'extraordinary quality' of the person but it is unique evidence of the 'Vedic environ' in which Naneghat and Junnar were developed.²⁰ Here it is not clear what she meant by extraordinary quality; even, identifying Junnar as Vedic environ is also difficult as all the inscriptions found from Junnar

are categorically Buddhist in nature. Besides, we do not get a single royal inscription from Junnar and hence, performance of sacrifices by the royal houses is not evident from the site. She also suggested that the *Krami* Brahmin was a resident of Junnar and possibly some sacrifices might have been performed at Junnar instead of Paithan. This claim seems too farfetched to consider Junnar as a place of performing sacrifices in such a large number to get the name Yajñanagara. On the basis of the available data, it seems that the Junninagara of tenth century CE (if the place can be identified as Junnar at all) and Jooneer of fifteenth century eventually named the place as Junnar of present day. Its ancient name could have been Umehanakata as suggested by Laeuchli but we need further references to conclude the same.

Archaeological Remains from Junnar

Junnar is famous for the fort of Shivneri – the birthplace of Śivājī Mahārāja. Archaeological excavations in the vicinity of Junnar unearthed archaeological remains from lower palaeolithic phase. The palaeolithic (Acheulian) site of Bori lies on the basin of the river Kukadi.²¹ An extensive exploration had been done by Suresh Jadhav in the 2nd half of 1970 and reported in his PhD thesis. It is already mentioned above that the major part of Junnar is not available for archaeological excavation as the present town has covered the ancient settlement. However, the village of Agar, the north-eastern periphery of Junnar was available for excavation. The State Department of Archaeology had carried out a small excavation at the site of Agar and then under the supervision of Vasant Shinde another excavation has been accomplished to complete the previous scenario of the excavation at Agar. A few remains of early historical structures have been unearthed during this excavation along with twenty five highly corroded coins, terracotta beads, black and red ware (exclusively Sātavāhana pottery), red polished ware, terracotta figurines and other materials. According to the excavators, the successive periods of the region are as follows (Chart 1):

Chart 1

Layers	Period
1	Muslim – Maratha
2	Muslim – Maratha
3	Mixed materials
4	Mixed materials
5	Mixed materials
6	Mixed materials
7	Mixed materials
8	Sātavāhana Phase II
9	Sātavāhana Phase I
10	Sātavāhana Phase I
11	Sātavāhana Phase I
12	Sātavāhana Phase I
13	Sātavāhana Phase I
14	Sātavāhana Phase I
15	Sātavāhana Phase I

There should be pre-Sātavāhana phase too in Junnar but the excavation did not reach the virgin level.

Being surrounded by hills of basalt along with a prosperous habitational area, Junnar became an ideal place for excavating caves for the monastic settlements. There are four major hills surrounding the city – Shivneri in the west of the city, Tuljai Hills in further west,



Fig. 9 – Hilly tract of the region

Ganesh Pahar or Lenyadri in north, and Manmodi in south. These Sahyadri ranges create defensive walls around the city [Fig. 9]. The rock-cut caves in Junnar are scattered in the hills in four major groups

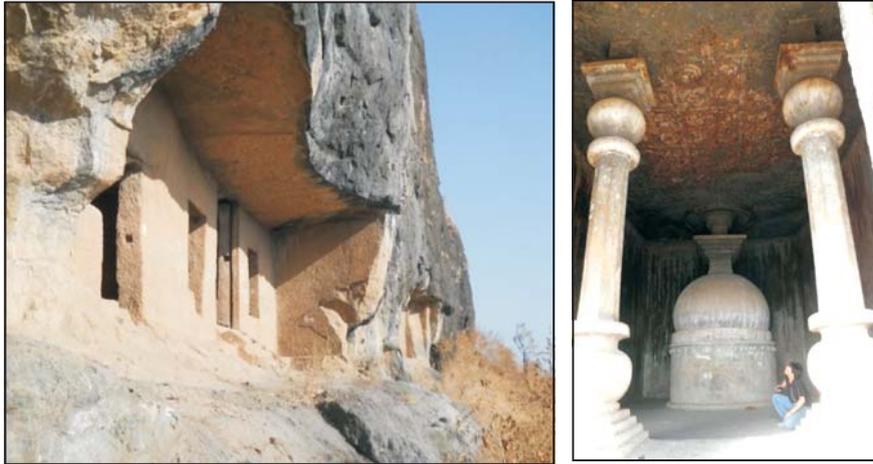


Fig. 10. Shivneri

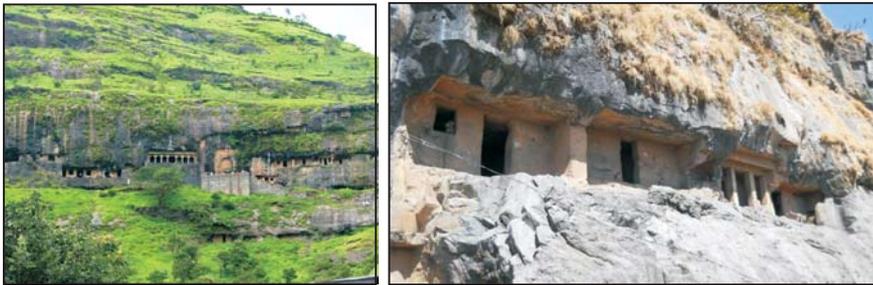


Fig. 11: Lenyadri

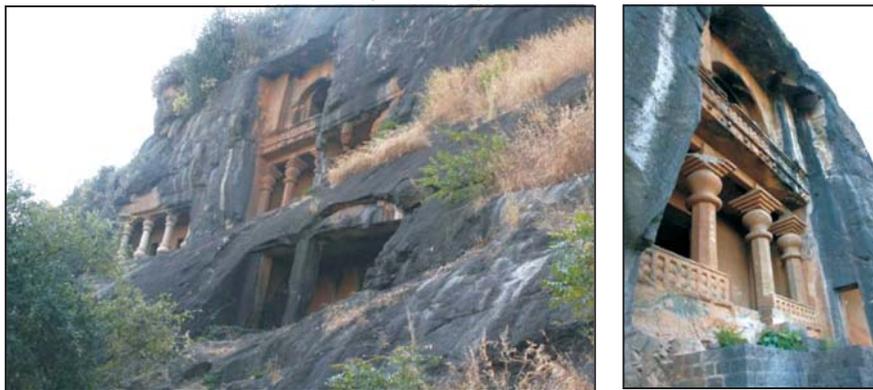


Fig. 12: Manmodi (Bhima Shankara)

viz. Shivneri (fig. 10), Lenyadri (Fig. 11), Manmodi (in three groups - Bhima Shankara (fig. 12) facing to east, Amba-Ambika (fig. 13) facing to north and Bhutleni (fig. 14) facing to north-west), Tulja Leni (fig. 15) and one isolated group. Among which only first three groups bear inscriptions. The caves are representing only *Hīnayāna* phase of Buddhism²². Interestingly, all the cave sites are facing towards the



Fig. 13: Manmodi (Amba-Ambika)

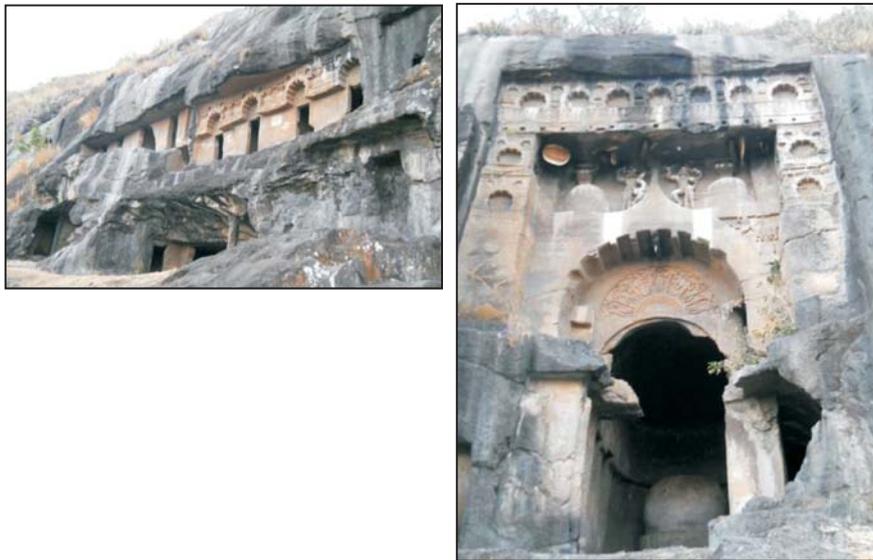


Fig. 14 Manmodi (Bhutleni)

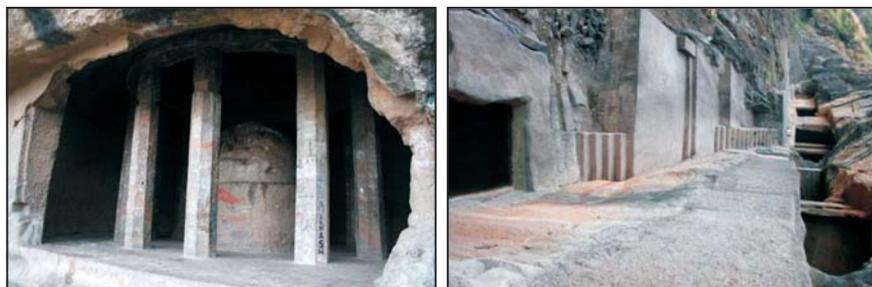


Fig. 15: Tuljaleni

ancient settlements: the southern group of Shivneri is facing towards the village of Kusur, the western group towards Nirgude, the Tuljaleni towards Padali and rest of the cave sites towards Junnar itself.

Epigraphs

Around thirty-seven inscriptions have been reported from different cave temples of Junnar, among which one is of much later period and dates back to AD 1580. All the inscriptions are donative in nature and related to the Buddhist rock-cut *vihāras* of the region except that later one. Though Junnar did not get proper patronisation from the royal houses unlike Nasik and Karle etc., it has enjoyed the maximum number of land donations and all the lands were donated by common people. Besides lands, donation of *leṇas*, *poḍhis*, perpetual endowments (*akcayanivi*) etc. also recorded in Junnar. An attempt has been made here to understand the donation pattern of the cave sites on the basis of the inscriptions. The following chart shows the donation pattern in Junnar rock-cut cave temples in brief.

Chart 2

Junnar Group : Donation Pattern

Donation of	Shivneri	Manmodi (Bhimashankara, Amba-Ambika, Bhutleni)	Lenyadri	Total No.
<i>Caityagrha</i> (<i>Cetiya</i>)	√(2) By Virasena, a Gahapati-pa mugha of Dhammanigama Isipālita, son of		√(2) By Sulasādata, Son of Heraṇika of Kalyan By Ananda, son of Upāsaka	4

	Ugaha, with his family		Tāpasa and grands of Upāsaka Kapila	
Cell (<i>gabho/lena</i>)	–	√(1) 2 cells By two Brothers - Buddhamitra and Buddharakshita, lankudiyas, sons of Asasama, from Bhṛgukachcha	–	1
Cell and cistern (<i>lena</i> and <i>poḍhi</i>)	√(2) A cistern and probably a cave by ...thbhuṭinaka By Patibadhaka Giribhūti, son of the Apaguriyas with his wife Sivapālanikā	–	√(1) by Sivabhūti, son of Upāsaka Sāmara for the saṅgha of Kapicita	3
Cash for Cell, cistern and Nunnery	√(1) Some Kārṣāṇas by Patibadhaka Giribhūti sakhuyā, son of Savagiriya of the Apaguriyas for a cave and a cistern and a nunnery in the town	–	–	1
<i>Upaṭhaṇa</i> (Reception room)	√(1) By Mudhakiya Mala and Golakiya Ānada	–	—	1
Cistern (<i>poḍhi</i>)	√(2) Two cisterns by Yavana Iṛila of the Gatā country	√(3) By Sivabhūti, son of Sivasama By Kumiyā, mother of Sulasā	√(2) By Saghaka, a suvarṇakāra, son of Kūlira of Kalyan By Lachinika, wife of Torika and	7

		By Sulasā, daughter of Kumiya ²⁴	Naḍabālika Nādika, wife of Isimullasāmi	
Façade (<i>gharamukha/ gharamugha/ Gabhodara</i>)	–	√(1) By Yavana Chaṇḍa		1
Land or Village		√(13) In the village of Mahāveja 26 <i>nivartanas</i> to the assembly of Apājita; In front of the hill Mānamukūḍa 3 <i>nivartanas</i> ...; The Town in front of mountain <i>nivartanas</i> ²⁵ 12 <i>nivatana</i> in Valahaka village and <i>nivatanas</i> in Seuraka village For Karajabhati ²⁶ By The guild of bamboo-workers (<i>Vasakara</i>) and The guild of the braziers (<i>Kasakara</i>) 20 <i>nivatanas</i> in Vadalika near karanja tree, 9 <i>nivatanas</i> in Kataputaka near banyan tree By Aduthuma An upāsaka of the guild of Koñcikas ²⁷ 2 <i>nivartanas</i> with a row of mango trees, donated by a two wheel cart owner (<i>Vacheduka</i>) ²⁸		13

		<p>By Palapa 15 nivartanas in Puvānada village in the hand of Payogoka of Aparajita Sect²⁹</p> <p>By Sārasavaṇṇa, the dyer (<i>Vaṇakara</i>) 4 <i>hala</i> land to the Ḡḍhravihāra for the sake of a pānasālā hailing from Kāka</p> <p>By a <i>suvarṇakāraseṇi</i> 16 <i>nivartanas</i> of land in the village <i>Danagra</i> of coarse land along with grazing land and the king's share of grains.</p> <p>Half <i>karṣa</i> land in the village Paṇakavaṇya to the Sāṃmitiya sect to meet the expenses of sandals.</p> <p>A field in the village Madahata to the Ḡḍhravihāra The artisans of the cave have 5% share in the meritorious <i>gift</i></p> <p>A trader of Dāmaṇadeśa - 8 <i>nivartanas</i> of land to meet the rice and beans to the assemblage of Kākaputiyas</p> <p>4 <i>nivartanas</i> in Upper Vasarikhaḍa;... <i>Nivartanas</i></p>		
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		in ..., 8 nivartanas in Upper Jipu..., 12 nivartanas in the village of Koḍaka ³⁰		
Oil for lamps		In the same inscriptions of land donation in Madahata village		
Multiple celled cave		√(1) One 5-celled cave by ...	√(1) Seven celled cave and <i>poḍhi</i> by Dhamñikaseni ³¹	2
<i>Poḍhi</i> and <i>Mandapa</i>		√(1) One <i>poḍhi</i> and a <i>Mandapa</i> by Ayama of Vacca <i>gotra</i> , <i>Āmātya</i> of <i>Raño Mahākhata</i> <i>pāsa Sāmi Nahapāṇa</i>		1
<i>Bhojaṇamatapa</i> (Refectory)	√(1) Yavana Chīṭa of the Gatā country	X		1
Pillar	–	√(2) By the son of Kesu, a Copper-smith (<i>tabake</i>) A Nun of Rathi family, a Highest bidder, hailing from Aarānta	–	2
Uncertain Donations	–	√(4) Virabhuti, of negama of <i>Upāsaka</i> , son of Satamala ? <i>Gahapati</i> Sivadāsa, son of Sayitigahapati, with his wife (<i>bitiyikāya</i>) with his family? (Cave?) <i>Gahapati</i> Nanda and his family? Isipālita, son of <i>Upāsaka</i> Ugāha, with his son	–	4

The chart above displays some unique features in the donation pattern at the cave temples of Junnar. There are at least 13 instances of land

donations. As most of the records are corroded, actual number is not known. All the donated lands are measured in the unit of *nivatana* (i.e. *nivartana*), while there are two examples where the land was measured in *Karca and hala* respectively.³² Besides individual donors, some lands were donated by the guilds as well. In this context one inscription from Manmodi hill is noteworthy. The inscription bears the information of donation of sixteen *nivartanas* of land by a *suvarṇakara-seṇi*. According to Shobhana Gokhale the donation comprises coarse land along with grazing land in the village of Danagara and the king's share of grains. It is still obscure how the king's share of grains could be donated to the monastery by the guild or what was the procedure of such donation; but if a land donation by a guild includes king's share, that probably suggests an involvement of royal court in that donation. However, we do not know who the king was or how much was his share. It is also noteworthy that all the land donations were made to the monastery of Manmodi groups (mainly at Ambha-Ambika group). The donation pattern also suggests that caves of Manmodi have received much attention from the visitors. A comparatively comfortable stay nearby the town with large courtyard and easy access to the caves might have attracted the traders to Manmodi hill.

The epigraphs from Junnar bear references of involvement of more than forty people in the Buddhist cave temples. Sometimes, occupation and native place of the donors are mentioned but the donors never mentioned their *varṇa-jāti* status during the donation in a Buddhist *vihāra*. However, we find mention of the *Gahapatis* in Junnar and position of the *Gahapatis* in the Buddhist context was somehow related to the social stratification. In Buddhism, importance of the *Gahapatis* is well known as they are considered as the third division of the society (the *khattiyas* representing king and his officials, *brāhmaṇas* in the religious domain and the *gahapatis* in the domain of economy).³³

Interestingly, most of the individual donors have hailed from western Indian coastal land. It also shows the close connection between the coastal land and Junnar. The following chart shows the donor who have hailed from different places to Junnar.

Chart 3

Hailing from	No. of Inscriptions	People hailed
Kalyan	2	Heraṇīkaputa Sulasadata and Kuḷiraputa Saghaka
Bhṛgukaccha	1	Asasamaputa Budhamitra and Buddharakshita
Gatā (A <i>Yavana</i> country?)	2	Yavana Irila Yavana Ciṭa
Aparānta	1	A Nun of Raṭhi family
Kākaputa	1	
Dāmanadeśa ³³	1	

Kaliana is identified with present day Kalyan. Being directly connected with Kalyan by the pass of Naneghat, Junnar was easily accessible to the people of Kalyan. Bhṛgukaccha or Bharukaccha or Barygaza is identified unanimously with present Broach of Gujarat. Presence of traders from Bhṛgukaccha in Junnar is interesting as Bhṛgukaccha was the principal port of the Western Kṣatrapas and Junnar earlier was a part of the Sātavāhana territory and then occupied by the Śaka-Kṣatrapa ruler Nahapāna as evident both from coins and inscriptions. Presence of the Laṅkuḍiyas in Junnar from Bhṛgukaccha suggests Junnar at that time was an active hinterland of Bhṛgukaccha as well. The place named Gatā has not been identified yet, but references to the two *yavana* donors hailing from Gatā area is interesting and it seems that the place was situated somewhere in the western India. But what is interesting here to note is the donation by the foreigners in the Buddhist *vihāras* which also indicates Junnar as a multicultural activity centre at that time. Generally, Aparānta is being identified by the scholars with the Konkan coast, while Kākaputa can be identified with Sanchi area but according to Shobhana Gokhale Kākaputa should be situated nearby Junnar.³⁴ Dāmaṇadeśa of Junnar inscription is probably the earliest reference to Dāman, another locality from western coast. One of the inscriptions from Manmodi hill bears the ancient name of the hill as Mānamukuḍa³⁵ and the Buddhist *vihāra*

on the hill was known as Gṛidha Vihāra, while the name of the *saṅgha* at Lenyadri was Kapicita. The inscriptions of Junnar mention many place-names.³⁶ Among these places, the Aparānta, Kātaputaka, Bharukaccha and Kalyan etc. are the localities situated outside of Junnar from where people hailed and donated at the Buddhist *vihāras* of Junnar and the rest of the places were probably located in and around Junnar.

As Junnar is situated on the trade routes, we get a number of guilds as donor along with the wealthy people belonging to different professional groups. It is also noteworthy that a five-celled cave, a seven-celled cave, *maṇḍapa*, *bhojanaśālā* etc. were the unique donations by the donors in Junnar. Interestingly, these large caves with multiple cells were donated either by guilds or by important persons. For example, the seven-celled cave at Lenyadri was donated by the guild of the corn-dealers (*Dhamṇīkaseni*), *maṇḍapa* by the minister of Nahapāna. Besides, we also have the references to *Gahapati-pramukha*, *Prativadhaka*, *Amaca*, etc. which suggests Junnar received patronisation from the rich elites of that time. In this context it is also noteworthy that early historic Buddhist sites including Junnar received number of donations from women. However, the sources of money are not clear as the women are generally not mentioned as professionals but as mother or wife of someone in most of the cases. Hence, this becomes a problematic issue in the historical discourse when the women took active parts in the donation and a further study is needed to understand the nature and sources of their resources. In this context one inscription needs to be mentioned where a nun is referred to as a highest bidder. Though we do not know the nature of the bidding but it was somehow related with trading activities and involvement of a nun in such activity is quite unique. There is also an inscription referring to a nunnery in the city (*nagara*)³⁷ suggesting as well-established institutionalised involvement of the women in the Buddhist *saṅghas* of Junnar. The following chart displays the involvement of men and women as well as different communities (including families) in Junnar.

Chart 4

Junnar Group : Donations by Men and Women and Communities

Site	Men	Women	Unidentified/ uncertain	Communities	Total
Shivneri	11	2	-	1 (<i>sapariivāra</i>)	14 Total 9 donations among which 1 donation by two men, donations together by a man and woman, 1 donation by a man and his whole family, 1 donation by two men (Irla and his son whose name is not mentioned)
Manmodi	14	4	6	3 (<i>sahāparivāra</i> , guild of bamboo workers, guild of braziers)	26 In one inscription number of donor is uncertain except one male, one inscription records donation, a man, woman and a family together, one donation by two guilds.
Lenyadri	4	2	-	1 (<i>Dhamñikaseṇiy</i>)	7 Total 6 among which one donation by two women
Total	29	8	6	5	47

Interestingly, Junnar at least for two cases mentioned two different professions related to one raw material. For example, there are references to *kasakāras* (braziers) and *tabake* (coppersmith) – both are associated with the same raw material i.e. copper. Similarly, *vāsakāra* (bamboo worker) and *koñcika*³⁸ (reed-maker) used the same raw materials for their artisanal works i.e. bamboo. Therefore, it seems that Junnar in the 1st and 2nd century CE had been developed as a production area of different specialised crafts. On the other hand,

presence of the guilds of different artisanal and agricultural products indicates towards a systematic market policy. The following chart bears different professions mentioned in the inscriptions

Chart 5
Different Professions from Junnar Inscriptions

Site	Professions
Shivneri	<i>Patibadhaka</i> ³⁹ , <i>gahapati-pamugha</i>
Manmodi	<i>gahapati</i> , <i>lamkuḍiya</i> ⁴⁰ , <i>Tāvaka</i> , <i>vaceḍukasa</i> ⁴¹ , <i>Vannakāra</i> , <i>Suvarṇakāra</i> ,
Lenyadri	<i>Suvarṇakāra</i> , <i>Nāḍaka</i>

One inscription interestingly mentions a village of *Mahāveja* or *Mahāvaidya*. Hence, definitely there was a particular living space for the *vaidya* community in Junnar. However, there is no evidence whether all the professionals had their own particular living territory or not. The term *mahā* with the word *Vaidya* also suggests that there was hierarchy within this community. Presence of Jamun tree near the *mahāveja* village is also significant as Jamun has a medicinal quality.⁴² According to Shobhana Gokhale the juice of Jamun fruits was exported to Roman world as there was a demand of plant-products in drugs and medicine. Similarly, presence of *Gahapati-pamugha* i.e. the head of the *Gahapatis* is also a clue to this stratified hierarchy within the professionals. The *Gahapatis* were taken as householders by the scholars like Burgess and Indrajī but Uma Chakravarti rightly pointed out that the *Gahapatis* were not a mere householder group but they were the super wealthy land owner community who also travelled in order to transact business connected with management and control of their property.⁴³ They were associated with possession of large assets like land, orchards, coins, corns, cattle, gold etc.⁴⁴ Chakravarti also opines that the term *gahapatiputta* represents status and eventual succession to the position of a *gahapati*.⁴⁵ Hence, it has no hereditary relationship with a *gahapati*. But in Junnar interestingly we get a *gahapati* who was also a son of a *gahapati*. Presence of a family of *gahapati* in Junnar is important unique reference. The importance and wealth of that *gahapati*

family would be immense at that time. Presence of corn-dealers' guild is interesting in this context.

Numismatic Issues from Junnar

Even being a small territory, Junnar unearthed number of coins with large varieties which also indicate a flourishing economic activity in the area. It is already mentioned above that the region under consideration does not bear a single Sātavāhana inscription except the label inscriptions at Naneghat statue gallery but a number of Sātavāhana coins have been reported from Junnar and its surrounding area. Besides, the Junnar lion type coins, a good number of other coins of the early Sātavāhanas have also been found from Junnar. Among the early Sātavāhanas, coins of Kanha, Sātavāhana and Sātakarṇi or Nāgaṇikā-Sātakarṇi have been reported from Junnar and then after a gap again coins of the later Sātavāhanas (i.e. *Gautamīputra Śiva Sātakarṇi*, and Puḷumā VI) have been reported. Apart from these Sātavāhana issues, coins of Kṣaharāta king Nahapāna (both as *Kṣatrāpa* and *Mahākṣatrāpa*), Kumāra king Isimula (both as Kumāra and *Mahākṣatrāpa*) and Isamaḥiṣa have been found from Junnar. The numismatic evidences from Junnar can be classified into several groups on the basis of its devices.

Chart 5

Table : Coin types from Junnar

Sl. No.	Coin Type	Issued by
1.	Junnar Lion Type	1. Coins of Sātavāhana king Krishna 2. Coins of Sātavāhana king Siri Sātakarṇi ⁴⁶ 3. Coins of Sātavāhana king Siri Sātavāhana 4. Coins of Sātavāhana king Gautamīputra Śiva Sātakarṇi 5. Coins of Sātavāhana king Siri Puḷumā VI 6. Coins of Sātavāhana king Vāśiṣṭhīputra Puḷumā VI 7. Coins of Kṣaharāta king Nahapāna as Kṣatrāpa 8. Coins of Kṣaharāta king Nahapāna as Mahākṣatrāpa

		9. Coins of Kumāra Isimula 10. Coins of Vāśiṣṭhīputra Isimula Mahākṣatrapa 11. Coins of Isamahisa
2.	Svastika Type	1. Coins of Sātavāhana king Siri Sata (Sātakarṇi?) 2. Un-attributed
3.	With Gaja-Lakṣmī Motif	1. Coins of Sātavāhana king Sātakarṇi
4.	Miscellaneous type	1. Coins of Sātavāhana king Sātakarṇi and queen Nāgaṇikā
5.	Re-struck Coins	1. Svastika and Elephant : Ujjain type coin re-struck by Sātakarṇi-Nāgaṇikā coin device 2. Junnar lion type coin of Nāgaṇikā re-struck by <i>raño</i> Siri ...(Vedisiri?) 3. Coin of uncertain type re-struck by the device of Sātakarṇi and Nāgaṇikā 4. Coin of uncertain type (Ujjain symbol with Svastika in each orb and <i>nandipada</i> in quadrants - probably reverse device of original coin) re-struck by the device of Sātakarṇi and Nāgaṇikā - Reverse corroded

Junnar-lion coins were issued by all three dynasties - the Sātavāhanas, the Śakas, and the Kumāras. As irrespective of dynasties and issuers, a typical lion-type coin issued in Junnar, numismatists identified the lion as the region-specific symbol of Junnar. But as the chart above shows that besides the lion type coins, a few more types are also found from the region and what is interesting here to note is that all these types were issued by the early Sātavāhanas. Hence, it could be inferred that the other types like the Svastika type, Gaja-Lakṣmī type or the re-struck coins can be considered as earlier issues than most of the lion type coins. It seems that in a later period the lion motif became the locality symbol and that is why Śakas or the Kumāras also copied the

same type for Junnar along with the later Sātavāhanas. So, it can be inferred again that the Junnar lion type was introduced by the Sātavāhanas during their early days, then the coin type imitated by Nahapāna as a *kṣatrapa*. After occupying Junnar he became *Mahākṣatrapa* and issued coins with his new epithet. Using the same title by Kumāra



Fig. 8 – Coin of Siri Sātakarṇi and Nāgaṇikā (Photo courtesy: Shobhana Gokhale 2008, 110)

Isimula also suggests that he succeeded Nahapāna in Junnar region. However, development and change can be seen on the device over the period. Besides the lion type coins, the most interesting coins of the Sātavāhanas are the Nāgaṇikā type coins bearing the name of queen Nāgaṇikā along with her husband Siri Sātakarṇi (Fig:8)⁴⁷. This type is the earliest reference to a queen's name on a coin in the subcontinent. Besides this coin type, presence of Nāgaṇikā's portrait in the Naneghat gallery is also imperative to note.

In this context it is noteworthy to mention that coin of the second Sātavāhana king Kanha has been found from Junnar but his absence in the Naneghat gallery is notable. Besides, as the data of the above chart shows – all the restriking was done during the time of Nāgaṇikā-Sātakarṇi. Very interestingly, most of the restruck coins were also originally Sātavāhana issues. Hence, it is clear that there were some sorts of struggle of power within the Sātavāhana family and that probably displayed in the statue gallery where Kanha did not acquire a place. From the available numismatic data, it seems that Sātakarṇi occupied Junnar region with the help of the family of Nāgaṇikā, and

hence, her importance could be seen through the statue gallery and the coins as well. However, from the Naneghat inscription of Kumāra Vediśrī⁴⁸ as well as the restruck coin by Vediśrī suggests that the Sātavāhanas probably lost the territory to the Kumāras soon. Then the region went under the Śakas and again under the Kumāras as suggested by the numismatic evidences from Junnar. However, we do not know whether the Kumāra family of Vediśrī and the Kumāra family of Isimula anyhow was linked with each one.

The coins issued by Nahapāna bear a bow and arrow motif on its reverse along with his royal emblem. The representation of same motif is also visible on the coins of *Mahākṣatrapa* Isamula, *Mahākṣatrapa* Isamahisha and Vasisthiputra Isamulananda in Junnar. It is interesting to note that the coins Kumāra Isamula issued in Karhad region have a bow and arrow motif. The same is present on the devices of the Kumaras as royal emblem and also on some Ānanda coins. The use of the symbol is significant and it shows a political alliance between these powers. The epithet used by Kumāra Isimula⁴⁹ on his coins also clearly suggests that the Śakas and the Kumāras tied some sort of political or social knots which probably helped the Śakas to occupy Junnar region from the Sātavāhanas. In this context it is worthwhile that an inscription from Junnar bears the last known date of Nahapāna as 46th regnal year and interestingly it is evident from numismatic issues that Nahapāna's political career has been uplifted after the occupation of Junnar area and his epithet *Kṣatrapa* was elevated to *Mahākṣatrapa*. So, we can assume that the event happened almost at the end of his political career.

Conclusion

Shobhana Gokhale opines that the Sātavāhanas made a systematic effort to develop Junnar as a trade centre which had the linkage with the port of Kalyan. But the discussion above suggests that Junnar was under at least three ruling powers and the architectural activities were not patronised by any of them in particular. All the inscriptions indicate to private and community patronage to the monasteries. A critical analysis of the epigraphical and numismatic data suggests that the

society of Junnar was influenced by the interaction with the outsiders which led the place to develop its architectural monuments, trade and religious practices. The place had been chosen for interaction with the local people and the outsiders because of its strategic location, fertile land, good quality of agricultural products and its forest resources. Presence of the Śakas and Yavanas at Junnar also indicates to the interactions and amalgamation of people from different areas and backgrounds. Therefore, Junnar can be situated as the first important town and exchange centre from Konkan coast and the last important centre in the hinterlands of the port of Kalyan and Bhṛgukaccha during early historic Deccan.⁵⁰ At the same time, being situated on the strategic location with superb connectivity with the Konkan coast and being on trade route leading to other urban principal exchange centres like Ter, Paithan in south and Nasik, Ujjain in north made Junnar so vibrant. Presence of private property, several specialised craft productions, monastic development in large scale and representation of several trading communities indicate towards a prosperous city life in Junnar. The inscriptions from Junnar also indicate presence of a composite territorial unit consisting of both *nagara* and *grāma*. Presence of several guilds in Junnar indicates that it was a production hub and to produce plentiful products the territory must had strong agricultural backbones. Presence of several guilds also shows that there was a systematic market policy to control the products and trades in Junnar and it became the production hub for the traders.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to my friend Mr. Sandip Pan for providing me a plate of an inscription from the library of IIRNS, Nasik. My sincere thanks are due to my friend from Junnar Mr. Atul Arun Kajale for his constant support like an elder brother during my field visit at Junnar. I am thankful to The Asiatic Society, Kolkata for providing me the best infrastructure it could serve for study and research, and also for giving me the opportunity to present the paper in the First Research Fellow's Seminar in February, 2018. My sincere gratitude to Professor Ranabir Chakravarti for his comments and suggestions that helped me to shape up the article. Last but not the least I am indebted to my supervisor Prof. Susmita Basu Majumdar for all her support during this endeavour.

Notes

- ¹ Palmer: 1946, p. 166.
- ² The inscriptions from Naneghat have been studied separately in an article (See Halder: 2016, pp. 156ff).
- ³ Burgess: 1994.
- ⁴ Burgess: 1874.
- ⁵ Nagaraju: 1981.
- ⁶ Bhandare: 1998.
- ⁷ Gokhale, S: 1987, pp. 30-33; Gokhale: 2004-2005; Gokhale: 2008.
- ⁸ Dhavalikar: 2004.
- ⁹ Shinde: 2005-2007, Shinde: 2006-2007; Shinde: 2013.
- ¹⁰ Brancaccio: 2013.
- ¹¹ Jadhav: 1980, p. 61.
- ¹² Laeuchli: 1986, pp. 207-217.
- ¹³ Vats: 1925-26, p. 325.
- ¹⁴ Jadhav: 1980.
- ¹⁵ Jadhav: 1980.
- ¹⁶ Shinde: 2013, p. 31.
- ¹⁷ Dikshit and Mirashi: 1939-40, p. 164.
- ¹⁸ Vasant: 1987, pp.31-33
- ¹⁹ Chakravarti: 2010, p. 141.
- ²⁰ Gokhale: 1987, pp. 30-33.
- ²¹ Shinde, : 2013, p. 31.
- ²² Nagaraju: 1981, p. 331.
- ²³ Though both the term *hiranya* and *suvarṇa* stand for gold, the character of the professions of a *heraṇika* and a *suvarṇakāra* must be different.
- ²⁴ The inscription was published by Shobhana Gokhale (Gokhale: 1987, pp. 31-33). She has opined that the inscription mentions a *Krami* Yajñaputra who has donated a cistern to the Āryasaṁgha. But again, in the same Bulletin (Gokhale: 2004-2005, p. 119), she has contextually discussed the inscription mentioning another name Yajñala along with *Krami* Yajña. It is difficult to understand why she has added a new name in the inscription which originally is absent in the referred article. Here it should be mentioned that Gokhale has emphasised on the term *krami* in several works done by her to establish Junnar as a hub of Brāhmanical activities. The inscription was reported in IAR 1960-61 for the first time and then again in 1962-62. S. Nagaraju has read the inscription as – *Kumiyāduhittuya Sulasāya deydharīma poḍhi* (Nagaraju: year, p. 331). We would like to only add a note here that there is no semi vowel *i* in the word *duhituya* but it is *u* i.e. *duhutuya*. (Photo courtesy: IAR 1962-63, pl. XCVI)



- ²⁵ No. 25, Burgess:1994.
- ²⁶ No. 27, *ibid.*
- ²⁷ No. 24, *ibid.*
- ²⁸ No. 26, *ibid.*
- ²⁹ No. 20, *ibid.*
- ³⁰ No. 29, *ibid.*
- ³¹ *Dharmīkaseṇi* stands for corn-dealers.
- ³² Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency, Pune, 1885.
- ³³ Chakravarti: 1996, p. 66.
- ³⁴ Gokhale: year, p.
- ³⁵ Burges and Indrajī: 1881.
- ³⁶ Like Puvanada village, Aparanta, Vadalika, Kataputaka, Village of Mahaveja, a town (the name has been destroyed), Bharukaccha, Valahaka, Seuraka, Sirikadaka, Kadaka, Kapicita and Kalyana etc.
- ³⁷ Burgess:1874.
- ³⁸ It is a Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word *Kaṅcika* meaning twigs of bamboo.
- ³⁹ The meaning of the term *pativadhaka* is not clear. It seems that it is Prakrit form of *prativandhaka* or it could be a corrupt form of *prativedaka* means a reporter or a spy.
- ⁴⁰ The term *lankudiyā* has been taken as wooden tick by the historians. It is interesting to note that there is temple near the Daryaghat in Junnar where a good number of fine quality wooden dolls are being kept. None of the local people knows any history of the dolls. Though the time of the dolls is not certain, presence of the wooden doll suggests a tradition of the wooden work of Junnar.
- ⁴¹ According to Shobhana Gokhale the *vaceḍukasa* was a two wheeled cartowner, who was taking people to and fro (Gokhale, 2019).
- ⁴² In this context the medicinal connection with the Buddhist *vihāras* may be highlighted. We may also cite that the other vegetations mentioned in the inscriptions were mango tree, karanja tree and banyan tree. Mentions of trees in the inscriptions were intended mainly to give direction of land. Thus, it seems during early historic time in Junnar the big trees were used as the landmark.
- ⁴³ Chakravarti: 1996, p. 69.
- ⁴⁴ Chakravarti: 1996, p. 69.
- ⁴⁵ Chakravarti: 1996, p. 80.
- ⁴⁶ Recently Vasant Shinde has published a coin found from Junnar excavation. According to Shinde the coin is of Nahapāna but the illustration clearly shows an Ujjain symbol on reverse which he has wrongly described as three-arched symbol. The lion of the coin is similar to those of the early Sātavāhana coinage especially the one which has a seated lion on the coins of Sātakarṇi. The corroded coin is difficult to attribute to any particular ruler but it is undoubtedly a Sātavāhana issue. [See Brancaccio, Pia, 2013, p.33].
- ⁴⁷ Gokhale: 2008, Plate III, p. 110.
- ⁴⁸ Halder: 2016.
- ⁴⁹ Kumāra Isimula used his epithet *Mahākhatapa* on his coins issued for Junnar following Nahapāna.
- ⁵⁰ See Palmer: 1946, pp. 165-73.

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*Mahāmudrā: as Narrated by Maitripā in
Advayavajra Saṅgraha*

Sulagna Bhattacharya

Abstract

The yogic practices which have been described in the chapter *Caturmudrā*, Mahāmudrā or great seal has been described here as the greatest among the four mudrās. Mahāmudrā is the most notable part of yogatantra. Maitripā shaped up Mahāmudrā in a new container which is now a quintessential part of Tibetan Buddhism.

Key word : Mahāmudrā, Maitripā, Tibetan Buddhism, Yogatantra, Nirvāṇa.

Mahāmudrā or great seal is the radical part of Tāntrik Buddhism. Tāntrik Sādhanā is based on the traditional system of ‘guru-śiṣya paramparā’, which was the oral tradition.

Maitripā or Advayavajra builds a new dimension in the teachings of Mahāmudrā. When he was in Nalandā, he heard many precepts (upadeśa), such as* A-ma-na-si class, the dohā and the cycle of Mahāmudrā are known as the texts of Maitripā. These are actually the precepts of Hevajra system.

Maitripā learned father tantra popularly known as Guhyasamāja tantra, mother tantra and kriyā tantra from Paṇḍita Guṇarakṣita of Vikramśīla, ** and obtained many doctrines of Madhyamaka which are drafted in *Sādhanāsamuccaya* (*sgrub-thabs-bsdus-pa*). He acquired the knowledge of sādhanās from Paṇḍita Sarahṇa of Somapuri mahāvihāra. *** From Paṇḍita Sudhangupta and Abhayakargupta, he learned *Mañjuśrī tantra* and *Vajraḍāka tantra* (*Herukanāma*) respectively. Moreover, Maitripā learned and obtained all Buddhist and non-buddhist theories from his childhood, even he learned from heretics also.

As a result, it can be noticed that Maitripā was the first person who drafted the system of Mahāmudrā in a consecutive form which was classified in the esoteric practices.

Sometimes Mahāmudrā have been defined as a separate tāntrik sect. According to *Deb-ther-sñon-po* or *Blue Annals*, it has a long lineage from Siddha Sarahapā. Practice of Mahāmudrā popularised through the Siddhācāryas. Maitripā owed the teaching of Mahāmudrā from Sabaripā, the Indian Master. According to *Blue Annals*, Maitripā was born in the sheep year (lug lo 1007 A.D.) but according to the lineage of Milarepā of Mahāmudrā, he was born in the dog year (khyi lo 1010 A.D.) and passed into Nirvāṇa at the age of 78. ****

Perhaps, there are too many controversies about his date of birth, but, all the chronicles prove him to be the most famous advocate of Mahāmudrā.

Mahāmudrā is depicted as an individual tāntrik system in *Deb-ther-sñon-po* (*Blue Annals*). But it is such kind of practice which follows both way of including and excluding itself in the tāntrik system.

Background of Mahāmudrā

According to the colophon *Tattvaratnāvalī* of the text *Advayavajra Saṅgraha*, the practice of Mantrayāna is impossible without the sense of caturmudrā and among caturmudrā or four seals, ... Mahāmudrā holds an important part of sādhanā.

“Mantranayastu asmadvi [dhei] rihātigambhīratvād gambhīranayā-dhimuktikapuruṣaviṣayatvāt caturmudrādisādhanaprakāśanavistaratvājva na vyākriyate|”¹

The colophon *Tattvaratnāvalī* is the third chapter of the text *Advayavajra Saṅgraha*. This chapter describes the sectarian divisions of Buddhist Schools of thoughts. It is focused mainly on the sectarian division under the Mahayana system. Again, it coined the thought for the establishment of all 'ism'. By supporting the thought of *Saddharma Puṇḍarika* it also said that upāyakaśalya is the utmost point of sādhanā, pragmatics or sādhanā of sādhanā can execute by many means. But the practice of caturmudrā is the important part of Mantranaya or Mantrayāna.

The text *Advayavajra Saṁgraha* was discovered by Mm. Haraprasad Shastri from Nepal Darbar Library in 1907. This text belongs to circa 10th and 11th century A.D. Sahajayāna was the most dominated thought of that era which influenced the mass from higher intellect to lower intellect.

Advayavajra Saṁgraha is such a text which compiled the nature and background of Sahajayāna. Maitripā was the bearer of Avadhuta lineage. He specially stretched his work on the pragmatics of Sahajayāna.

It has been quoted earlier that without the sense of caturmudrā one cannot practice Mantrayāna. Those caturmudrā or four seals are Dharma mudrā, Karma mudrā, Mahāmudrā and Samaya mudrā. The sixth chapter of the text *Advayavajra Saṁgraha* elaborates the concept of caturmudrā.

This chapter was named by Mm. Haraprasad Shastri, because there was no particular name for this colophon; even the colophon is silent about its authorship. According to Shastriji it has a Tibetan translation attributed to Upādhyāya Vajrapāṇi and Lo. B. Tshul-Khrims rgyal-ba (Jayaśīla) as the translators.

Karma mudrā relates to bodily actions and intentions, of mind and speech. Four joys —Ānanda, Paramānanda, Sahajānanda and Virāmānanda— are aroused by the practice of Karma mudrā. Four joys are the four moments. Karma mudrā is svalakṣaṇa, which is real.

Dharma mudrā is related to prajñā or wisdom. It cannot be achieved by any artificial method. It is 'akṛtrim'. On achieving the success in Dharma mudra, one can receive the knowledge of Mahāmudrā. Dharma mudrā is the knowledge of dhātu which is to be learned from a guru or teacher.

Mahāmudrā is the sense of devoid of being and it dwells the non-dualistic view.

The last mudrā, Samaya mudrā is the fruit of Mahāmudrā. Samaya mudrā has the aspects of Sambhoga kāya. It is very specific in fruiting, as it is persuasive only through the proper execution of the previous mudrās.

Maitripā identified these four mudrās as the means of bliss. But among these four mudrās, there are a lot of controversies about the position and activities of Mahāmudrā.

Difference between Mudrā & Mahāmudrā

Mudrā is a very important factor in Indic religions. Especially, in tāntrik sādhanā, mudrā plays the key role to express the mystic thoughts. It is generally forms by posing the hand and fingers. There are many explanations and definitions of mudrā. In short, it can be said that mudrā is the delightful symbolic hand gestures which involves the entire body and connect it with the cosmos.

Mudrā is a notable part of iconography. Mudrā with āsana, is the static state of meditation. These mudrās are perceivable.

Mahāmudra is the highest and major part of Yogatantra. It is the part of Haṭhayoga. Control of limbs, muscles, nerves and vital breath is the main part of this practice. Nyāsa or release of energy is the major part of tāntrik rites which is the mystical deed to sanctify the body of yogī, where mantra is the resonant part and by Mahāmudrā it is executed.

According to Mahāyāna Buddhist thought, Mahāmudrā has been described as the mundane nirvāṇa. And it has multiple meaning including recitation which is conducted by body, mind and speech.

According to Buddhism, practice of Mahāmudrā is to achieve bliss through yoga. Dharma, the law or religious law is actually the 'dhamma' or natural phenomena in Buddhism. So, Buddhist philosophy enchanted the theory of nirvāṇa by practicing Mahāmudrā.

Mahāmudrā in non-Buddhist Yogic texts

Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā and *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā*, are two important non-Buddhist texts which explained Mahāmudrā as Haṭhayoga. *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā* describes ten mudrās and *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā* mentioned twenty five mudrās. The major point is that, both the texts showed Mahāmudrā as just a bodily posture and as a method to curb diseases. Diseases like leprosy, prolapsus ani, colic, diseases due to indigestion, fever, obstructions of the bowel, enlargement of spleen, etc. can be cured by regular practice of Mahāmudrā.

Both the texts explained Mahāmudrā as a beneficial process to keep body (yogī's body) free from toxins and boost up the immune system.

Besides, both the texts described Mahāmudrā to be helpful in achieving great success or siddhi. As this is the sādhanā mārga or the way to execute the tāntrik sādhanā, it is not to be disclosed to the ignorant one or before lower intellects. But, these two texts elaborated the different processes to execute Mahāmudrā.

According to *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā*, the execution process of Mahāmudrā is -

*“Pādamūlena vāmena yonim sampīḍya dakṣiṇām
Prasāritam padam kṛtvā karābhyām dhārayeddr̥ḍham | |*

Pressing the Yoni (perineum) with the heel of the left foot, and stretching forth the right foot, its toe should be grasped by the thumb and first finger.

*Kaṅṭhe bandham samāropya dhārayedvāyūmūrdhvataḥ
Yathā daṇḍahataḥ sarpo daṇḍākāraḥ prajāyate | |
R̥jvibhūtā tathā śaktiḥ kuṇḍalī sahasā bhavet
Tadā sā maraṇāvasthā jāyate dvipuṭāśrayā | |*

By stopping the throat (by Jālandhara Bandha) the air is drawn in from the outside and carried down. Just as a snake struck with a stick becomes straight like a stick, in the same way, śakti (suṣumnā) becomes straight at once. Then the Kuṇḍalinī, becoming as it were dead, and, leaving both the Iḍā and the Piṅgalā, enters the suṣumnā (the middle passage).

*Tataḥ śanaiḥ śanairēva rechayennaiva vaghataḥ
Mahāmudrām ca tenaiva vadanti vibudhottamāḥ | |*

It should be expelled then, slowly only and not violently. For this very reason, the best of the wise men call it the Mahā Mudrā. This Mahā Mudrā has been propounded by great masters.”²

From these descriptions it can be noticed, that practice of Mahāmudrā according to *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā*, it stretches for female practitioner. By the word ‘yoni’ (female genital) it refers that the practice is female oriented.

On the other hand *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā* describes the practice of Mahāmudrā, as follows:

“Pāyumulam vāmagulphe saṁpidya dṛḍhayatnataḥ |
yāmyapādam prasāryārtha kare dhṛtapadāṅgulaḥ | |
kaṅṭhasaṁkocanam kṛtvā bhruvormadhyam nirikṣayet |
mahāmudrābhidhā mudrā kathyale caiva suribhiḥ | |

Pressing carefully the anus by the left heel, stretch the right leg, and take hold of the great toe by the hand; contract the throat (not expelling the breath), and fix the gaze between the eye-brows. This is called Mahāmudrā by the wise.”³

In *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā* it has not been clarified that if there is any gender biasness in practicing Mahāmudrā. Only some common factors can be specified in these two texts, that the practicing of Mahāmudrā should be kept secret and it is the door to attain siddhi.

Mahāmudrā: narrated by Maitripā

Here Mahāmudrā is being explained according to Maitripā as it is described in the text *Advayaovajra Saṁgraha*. This text had been discovered from Tibetan *Tan-gyur*, so it is very natural that practice and philosophy of Mahāmudrā points towards Tibetan Buddhism.

The realisation of emptiness up to infinity is the highest ideals. The non-dualistic view is known as Mahāmudrā which is connected with body, mind and speech.

Guhyasamāja Tantra explained Mahāmudrā as the part of pragmatics, which is the knowledge sporting by the Tathāgatas. In the eighteenth chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* two kinds of siddhis has been stated, those are sāmānya or ordinary and uttama or excellent.

Miraculous activities come under the sāmānya kind of siddhi, attainment of Buddhahood also comes under this segment. The second kind of siddhi which is uttama can only be attained by practice of yoga with its six limbs. The six limbs of yoga are - Pratyahāra: by which all the sense organs or *indriyas* can be controlled; Dhyāna: the conception of five Dhyānī Buddhas each of whom embodies one of the five wisdoms that antidote the five deadly poisons; which are of

ultimate danger to man's spiritual progress; Prānāyāma: is the control over breathing process; Dhāraṇā: meditation of mantra; Anusmṛti: the constant meditation; Samādhi: is the transcendental knowledge.****

Yoga is a major and an intensive part of tāntrik activity; if a deity is not present before the practitioner, only by Haṭhayoga he or she can commence sādhanā first by visualising the omnipresent deity.

Tilopā the great siddhayogī instructed his disciple Naropā, that *"Mind with no objective is Mahāmudrā - And, with practice perfected, supreme enlightenment is gained. The clear light of Mahāmudrā cannot be revealed by the canonical scriptures or metaphysical treatises of the mantravāda, the pāramitās or the Tripitaka; the clear light is veiled by concepts and ideals."*⁴

As the impact of practicing Mahāmudrā Tilopā again said, that one who is absorbed in the practice of Mahāmudrā, he is free from the mundane saṃsāra; consumed guilt, negativity would be removed by the practice of Mahāmudrā.

Maitripā the doyen of Mahāmudrā and siddha lineage codified Mahāmudrā by technical points. In the sixth chapter *Caturmudrā*, Maitripā explained the nature and characteristics of Mahāmudrā.

Here, it is said that Mahāmudrā directly look into the mind. Its dhamma or phenomena that is amanasikāra by character when it is being practiced. It is kuśala in dhamma which is skillful. When it comes to discourse it is akuśala in dhamma or phenomena.

Here comes the inner meaning of amanasikāra; it means pondering over śūnyatā, which does not stick to the mind. On the other hand, amanasikāra is meditation before the deity, but incorporated the deity-less meditation and use of mātṛkā or alphabet 'A'. In the Tibetan yogic system the letter 'A' is defined as the ultimate deity of meditation, because the vīja mantra 'A' is simple and pure and one can utter it without any trouble or in any posture and position.

Thus, Mahāmudrā is stated as the great among the four mudrās. It is the mundane state of nirvāṇa. It is the highest point of bliss. When the concept mahāsukha or bliss comes, automatically the

concept of yuganaddha comes. Yuganaddha is the union of female and male entities, where female entity is prajñā and male entity is upāya. Prajñā is the wisdom and upāya is the media to acquire wisdom. It endorses the sexo-yogic practice from which Bodhicitta or phenomena of perfect mind arise which is not the discriminated one. One cannot manipulate this Bodhicitta.

Eleventh verse of *Tattvavimsikā*, the fifteenth chapter of the text *Advayavajra Saṅgraha* says, that the practitioner of Mahāmudrā who achieved the highest bliss can move anywhere without any clinging. He succeeded all the mundane faculties which illusion create.

“Dṛṣṭatattoḥ punaryogī mahāmudrāparāyaṇaḥ |
Sarvabhāvasvabhāvena vihareṭ uttamendriyaḥ ||”⁵

Non-Buddhist texts coined Mahāmudrā as physio-anatomical process but Maitripā located Mahāmudrā as psycho-anatomical process.

Fifth chapter *Sekanirṇaya* is the description of abhiṣeka or initiation process. Here, it has been said that Mahāmudrā is the highest seal of practice because after that samaya mudrā can proceed. Samaya mudrā is the fruit of Mahāmudrā accomplish its projection.

“Karmamudrām samāsādhya dharmamudrām vibhāvayet |
Tasyā urdhvaṁ mahāmudrā yasyāḥ samayasambhavaḥ ||”⁶

Again, *Sekanirṇaya* describes the power of Mahāmudrā, by saying that it is more powerful than miraculous power of gāndharva. Bliss acquire from Karma mudrā is momentary, Samaya mudrā is the blessings of Vajrācārya or the teacher which is the fruit of Mahāmudrā. Karma mudrā and Dharma mudrā can be executed by the perfect knowledge of Mahāmudrā.

Conclusion

Mahāmudrā was developed under a new school of tantra after the post religious period of Guru Padmasambhava, but, the system cannot be identified by any name of its originator. So, the period of its origin and its end cannot be identified.

In all the colophons, it has been said that the nature of Mahāmudrā

is inexpressible, because, being a procedure of Haṭhayoga, it has never been included under the Śaḍaṅga yoga of Naropā. Though, Naropā was one of the lineage bearers of Mahāmudrā, but, it was not identified by the terminology. Maitripā codified Mahāmudrā in a concrete shape as the path shower of Sahajayāna. Teachings and learnings of Mahāmudrā are finely weaved with the thoughts and practices of Sahajayāna.

Gradually, Mahāmudrā diffused as a process of meditation which is free from any kind of religious discrimination. Practice of Tibetan 'chod' is also identified as a part of Mahāmudrā.

Yoginī Machig Labdron was the major advocate of this practice, which is much popular in Ladakh cult of Buddhism. ***** Chod means 'to cut'; the central focus of the practice is to cut attachment to the body, so that one can perceive knowledge from a neutral position.

'Chod' unifies the teaching of *Prajñāpāramitā* with tāntrik pragmatics, where is no substance like 'self sustains', it is all about to understand the emptiness and stretch this mindfulness to the path of transcendental wisdom.

These all practices are centralised under the name of Mahāmudrā, but, it has different names according to its genre. The term Mahāmudrā was coined by Maitripā.

If the term Māhamudrā is divided then according to *Lalitavistara*, the letter 'm' means destruction of pride and arrogance, 'a' means all uttered sacraments are momentary; 'h' means destruction of worldly pain and hatred, 'a' means the welfare of soul, 'u' denotes the troubles of the world, 'u' conjunct with 'm' defines the continuous process of arousing trouble in the world generated from pride and arrogance. Letter 'da' denotes charity and control, and conjunct with 'r'; and again 'a'. 'r' means supreme or unconditioned love.

Finally, Mahāmudrā means destruction of pride and arrogance from world, which is gained by charitable nature and reaches up to unconditional love, which is impermanent according to Buddhist philosophy; as this philosophy believes everything is momentary. So, Mahāmudrā is a regular and continuous practice.

Bauddha gāna o dohā, termed Mahāmudrā as Mahāmuderī; from the aspect of Sahajayāna, the letter ‘m’ means self, ‘u’ means that, ‘da’ signifies the dhātu or root ‘dṛs’ which means sight or seeing, ‘ra’ signifies both night and jewel. The final meaning thus stands, seeing within self which is black as night but finally one can perceive the knowledge which is precious as jewel.

Notes

- * *The Blue Annals*, G.N. Roerich; pp. 844-845.
- ** *ibid.* p. 845.
- *** *ibid.* p. 845.
- **** *ibid.* p. 842.
- ¹ *Advayavajra Saṅgraha*, GOS, pp. 21.
- ² *Haṭha yoga Pradīpikā*, Yogi Svātmārāma; pp. 99-100.
- ³ *Gheraṇḍa Samhitā: A Treatise on Hatha yoga*, Srisa Chandra Vasu; pp. 20-21.
- ***** *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, B. Bhattacharya; Pgs. xiv-xv.
- ⁴ *Encyclopedia of Buddhist Tantra*, Vol.2, Ed. Sadhu Santideva, pp. 318.
- ⁵ *Advayavajrasaṅgraha*, GOS; pp. 53.
- ⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 30.
- ***** *The Yogins of Ladakh*, John Crook & James Low, pp. 293.
- + *Lalitavistara*, Bijoya Goswami (Trans.).

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Cultivation of Geological Sciences in Calcutta through the endeavour of the Asiatic Society (1842-51)

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Abstract

From the very early days of its foundation the main objective of the Asiatic Society was to explore the various facets of the culture, history and natural sciences of the Orient. From the late eighteenth to nineteenth century onwards, there was serious investigations on various natural sciences in order to understand the natural resources of the colonized world which was taken up for scientific enquiry as well as with the motive of control and governance. One such discipline that gained momentum was the Geological Science that was yet to be institutionalised but the journey of scientific enquiry had already set in under the banner of the Asiatic Society.

In this article attempt has been made to study the development of geological science through the endeavour of the Asiatic Society. For this purpose we are mainly focusing on the unpublished proceedings of the Asiatic Society to trace its development from the time of its inception i.e. the day from when the geological science was cultivated under the banner of the Museum of Economic Geology. Engineers played a pivotal role in the development of this kind of scientific investigation through the process of data collection. The journey of the geological science till it was institutionalised is addressed here and the question is raised how far it was developed with a purpose of pure scientific inquiry or was it another endeavour of the colonial masters to exploit the rich flora fauna of the Orient to fulfill their economic interests.

Key words : The Asiatic Society, Geology, Scientific Enquiry and Economic Interests

Introduction

The Asiatic Society from the time of its inception was involved in the grand project of coming to terms with the Orient, both geographically and culturally. Part of this project entailed in scientific examination and graphic reproduction of the natural world of the colony as well as searching for the exotic, socially unfamiliar customs, rituals and the practices of the natives. These were subsequently codified in a particular language of power and legitimation. There was an attempt to link the cultural and social aspects of scientific research with the question of the Orientalists' knowledge, particularly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It was under the Asiatic Society that the research on India's culture and nature was carried out.

In order to explain the development of the modern western science the epoch making paper that had triggered great controversy in the scholarly circle profounding the three stage model of evolutionary progress proposed by George Basalla is cited frequently.¹ In order to explain the development of geological science we are trying to fit it within this model. For this, it is essential to highlight the basic features of this model. According to Basalla, in the first stage emphasis was mainly given on the issue of exploration, where non-European societies served as a passive reservoir of data.

In the next stage, the European scientific institutions encourage western scientific activity outside Europe by the European colonists or settlers or else by acculturated indigenes. In the last stage, according to him, the national scientific traditions appeared as the colonised society gained maturity.² Following this model, we will try to analyse the way geological science showed signs of development in Calcutta in the early nineteenth century. Another crucial issue attached with this kind of study is regarding the motivating factor.

To trace the origin of this kind of cultivation of Geological science it is necessary to go back to one of the institutions the Asiatic Society. In order to analyse the development of geological science in the light

of Basalla's model, the proceedings of the Asiatic Society are extremely helpful. The proceedings of the years 1842 and 1843³ are extremely important sources as we know that the Museum of Economic Geology was established in the year 1842. The proceedings of the year from 1842 to 1851 throw light on how the imperial science changed its contour and was ultimately institutionalised with the formation of the Geological Survey of India. Though geological science itself in England was in its nascent form but strikingly enough that it was geology that first broke away from the Asiatic Society.

However, the exploration of mineral resources of India had begun under the supervision of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In the year 1814, Dr. Wallach offered specimens from his own collections in order to form the nucleus of a museum. Before developing as a separate institution, it was mainly through the Museum of Economic Geology that was formed as a wing of the Asiatic Society where the seeds for cultivating geological and meteorological knowledge were sown. It was during this phase when emphasis was given mainly on the collection of data related to the vast mineral resources of the country (especially in the eastern zone) and reports were prepared on different kinds of soil along with any natural calamity that had happened in the recent past. It was under the orders of the Court of Directors that the objectives of the Museum of Economic Geology were codified in the year 1842. The objectives were as follows :

- a. to get a complete knowledge of geology, mineralogy and statistics related to the mineral resources of India and to make them publicly known;
- b. to get a complete set of specimens, models and drawings related to mining operations and metallurgical process and mineral manufactures of all kinds of India;
- c. to furnish engineers and architects for proper utilization of these resources;
- d. to collect for the agriculturists, specimen of all kinds of soils;
- e. to collect for the medical men, the specimens of water of the mineral springs and mineral drugs.⁴

Numerous evidences relating to the collection of data are available during the initial years. The engineers who were experts in dealing with this kind of survey and specimen collections came from England. Mr. Mornay, a renowned engineer presented fifteen specimens collected from the coal fields of Burdwan.

From the Rajmahal district C. P. Gatefield collected specimens that were presented to the Asiatic Society. Kuttarbugga iron ore situated 20 miles north-east of Sumbulpore was identified as the hub of high quality iron ore by Major Fitzgerald, the Superintending Engineer of the south-east province. It is noteworthy to mention here that the opening of the Raniganj coalfield and the reports of Dr. Helfer and other scientific officers helped in enriching this Museum of Economic Geology.⁵

As we had mentioned earlier that it was the geological science that first got separated from the Asiatic Society and was institutionalised. Data collection and preservation of the specimens no longer remained the goal of the imperial authorities. This was mainly because of three reasons :

- i. growing popularity of the doctrine of utilitarianism.
- ii. change in the economic policy of the rulers, who were now eager to make practical application of the researches and survey done so far.
- iii. geology as a discipline was gaining prominence in the European discourse.

The growing popularity of doctrine of utilitarianism the doctrine among the policy makers played a pivotal role in influencing the government's views. Science as defined by the utilitarians had to be useful, specialised and directly applied to the interests of the state. James Mill⁶ advocated the application of western science and technology for the material development of India. Dalhousie, a staunch Tory and utilitarian administrator played an important role in organising the Geological Survey of India.⁷ The most vital factor that led to a change in the way the scientific studies were conducted in India was the economic compulsions of the colonial state.⁸ In order to

materialise this kind of goal, the commercial role of science was manifested in various ways. Apart from publication of the information gathered from various mines, exploitation of the vast resources of minerals especially coal with the aid of machineries that were supplied from Britain became the major area of interest for the geologists working in India. Robert A. Stafford⁹ viewed that the metropolitan geologists played the role of sub-imperialists in their efforts to extend mineralogical research to the colonies, through their desire for new data, careers, fresh satisfactory conquests, a more dominant voice in the administrative affairs – meshing with the needs of the imperial government. Murchison who was in charge of the Royal Geological Society of London was a crucial exponent of the nineteenth century British imperialism who added a new dimension to the study of the geological sciences by linking it with the military interests of the British imperialists. This kind of psychology of the rulers showed that the cultivation was changing its direction when the knowledge gathering was no longer amateurish, rather it was driven by specific purpose. The romanticised orientalism which had developed to explore the Indian nature faded away soon with the establishment of the Geological Survey of India. With the institutionalisation of the discipline the study became more 'applied' in nature as a drastic change was noticeable in the perception of the geologists towards the resources of the colonial country.¹⁰ This change was because of the new developments in the economic trend as scientific researches were vigorously linked with industrialisation in Britain. However, the importance of coal had been understood by the colonial rulers. It was in the year 1839 that the Government of Bengal had begun correspondence with Charles Lyell and Roderick Murchison of the Geological Society of London on the matter of conducting a survey to ascertain the Bengal Presidency's coal reserves for use in the streamers on the Ganges.¹¹ It was through the efforts of D. H. Williams, who was appointed to the post of Geological Surveyor to the East India Company, that the coal mines lying in and around Calcutta were identified. This era of identification and evaluating the quality of the minerals ended soon with the foundation of the Geological Survey of India in the year 1851.

Thomas Oldham was appointed as the first director of this institution. Thus the colonial study of the geological science enters into the second phase as advocated by Basalla in his three phase model.¹² It was in this phase that the light of the pure scientific research would be dimmed by strokes of commercialism. The Secretary to the Government of India, E.C. Buck, accordingly asked the GSI to form two sections within this institution.¹³

These two sections were controlled by different people and they were entrusted to fulfill two different motives of the colonial authority. These two sections were :

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| <p>a. THE SCIENTIFIC SECTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. C.L.Griesbach 2. P.N. Bose 3. P.N. Datta. 4. F.H. Smith. 5. W.B.D. Edwards. 6. T. H. Holland. | <p>b. THE ECONOMIC SECTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. T. D. LaTouche 2. F. Noetling 3. C. S. Middlemiss. |
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This kind of separation between the interest in the purely scientific enquiry with that of the economic interests hints that the colonial rulers were eager to channelise the scientific inquiry into avenues of commerce. The geologists paid due attention to both the quality and quantity of coal. In terms of quantity Oldham did not consider India as "either largely or widely supplied with this essential source of motive power."¹⁴ Valentine Ball who surveyed the Raniganj coalfields, said that compared with the ordinary English coal they were much inferior so far as the working power is concerned. Apart from coal another important mineral that drew much attention was the copper. The copper mines found in Kemaon, Gurhwal, Nepal, Ajmere, Nellore and Ramree were considered to be highly valuable and seventy two specimens were collected from those places for further investigation.¹⁵ Geologists like H. F. Blandford, H.B. Medlicott were engaged in scientific study of the geological and meteorological data collected from the different parts of India as seen in the case of Medlicott who

was studying the Himalayan glaciers and urged the European residents to pay attention to the Kangra valley region and its vast resources instead of driving all attention to the production of tea.¹⁶

In the initial years the goal of Oldham became difficult to materialise because the geologists still remained adhere to their own scientific interest overshadowing the economic motive of the imperial authorities.

However, this dilemma was ultimately resolved when Thomas Holland was appointed as the Assistant Superintendent in the GSI in the 1890. This was also the time when the New Industrial Policy of the Government of India was formulated and consequently a major shift in the way GSI functioned would be noticed from this time onwards. Moreover, as a result of the impact of 'inherent momentum of bureaucracy' (the term is coined by Clive Dewey)¹⁷ the top echelons of the Indian bureaucracy gained power and freedom to review the activities of the state apparatus. It was under Holland that the Indian geology was redefined and he was able to establish link between industrialism and geological studies. Instead of emphasising knowledge based pursuits and mere application of the knowledge in relatively narrower goals (like utilization of coal for running steam engines on the Ganges)¹⁸ or allowing the men of science to pursue their respective hobby, Holland stressed on applied research in accordance with the metropolitan view that India should leave pure science to Britain and concentrate on its application to develop new industries that would be dependent on mining operations. But unlike Murchison he was not an imperialist but a peripheral scientist who understood the need to combine geology and mining industry. He played the dual role of a peripheral scientist and that of a statesman at the centre. The shift in the policy was mainly developed when the second wave of industrialisation hit Europe and the nations like Germany and the United States emerged as powerful industrialised nation. During the period leading up to the First World War the use of minerals gained importance and therefore, the policy advocated by Holland slowly gained ground in the official circle. The unique factor in his policy was that he, keeping in mind the metropolitan desire

tried to merge geology with those industries in the colony which would be really benefitted from such merger.¹⁹ However, in this scenario a tussle between the Indian Advisory Committee and the Board of the Scientific Advice became prominent. Holland was vocal against the policy that were followed by GSI in the initial years. He severely criticised the two major stand points of the GSI:

- a. Focusing on scientific enquiry and utilising mineral resources to feed the growing industries in Britain.
- b. The geologists were too much concerned with the coal reserves of India while completely neglecting other mineral resources available in the country and also not showing any concern to develop machineries for the purpose of processing the mineral resources.

In order to establish his own policy he, firstly, rejected the view put forward by Alfred Chatterton.²⁰ The latter viewed that the Western model of industrialisation was not suitable for India because the situation in India was completely different from that of the West. The trend that had developed in the West after the second wave of industrialisation was to replace men by machines, but in India cheap human labour was available in abundance.²¹ But Holland believed that the European model was absolutely suitable even in India. In order to industrialise India, he stressed on the fact that the minerals of the periphery should not be exported; and instead of drawing all concern towards coal he took interest in developing those materials like cement which were needed for the purpose of construction related works. He believed that these were the best guides to the industrial development of the country. It was from this time onwards that the focus shifted more towards manufacturing of steel.²² This change was mainly happened for another important reason: Britain from 1899 onwards received serious threat from Belgium and was not able to reconstruct the domestic steel industry. The lack of interest exhibited by the European capitalists cleared the path for forming Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO). The establishment of TISCO was essential; otherwise the Indian market would have been completely engulfed by the exported German steel. Apart from steel, manufacturing of aluminum and manganese also

became an area of interest for the colonial authorities. So, Holland was in favour of stopping the export of manganese to US, Germany and Britain, but admitted that the major hindrance to industrialising India was of the fact that most of the minerals found in abundance were exported.²³

Holland thus made a serious effort to blur the gap that existed between the interest of the metropole with that of the requirements of the colony. It was the effect of his policy that led to the establishment of the steel manufacturing industry that later on flourished magnificently. This study from the phase of mere data collection to the time when the cultivation of geological science was merged with the process of setting up industries in the colony triggers only one specific question: was it really 'economic compulsion' that motivated the colonial rulers. The answer can never be a simple 'yes' rather the way geological science changed its contours, in fact, compel press us to revisit the question. No doubt the 'economic compulsion'²⁴ had always been the major factor, but the way geological study was carried out hints that the geologists were not imperialists in the true sense of the term rather they had the vision of developing their own discipline and making it more 'applied' so that it instead of only extracting resources from the colonies would help it in strengthening its industrial base. But no doubt even the slightest of development in the industrial sector that happened in the early twentieth century because of the cumulative effects of Holland's policy and changing economic scenario of the West had an underlying imperialist intention. But the process of redefining the geological science slowly overshadowed the economic compulsion and bridged the gap between the interests of the coloniser and colonized or in the words of Pratik Chakrabarti²⁵ the interest between the metropole and the periphery.

Notes

¹ David Arnold, *The New Cambridge History of India : Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 44-46.

² Pratik Chakrabarti, *Western Science in Modern India : Metropolitan Methods, Colonial Practices*, Delhi, 2006, pp. 91-92.

³ Unpublished Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, (Calcutta, 1942 and 1943).

- ⁴ Unpublished Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, (Calcutta, 1942 and 1943).
- ⁵ Michael Adas , *Machine as the measure of Man : Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1989, pp. 141-43.
- ⁶ David Arnold, *The New Cambridge History of India : Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000 pp. 46-47.
- ⁷ B.V. Subbarayappa, 'Western Science in India upto the End of the Nineteenth Century A.D.', in D.N. Bose, S.N Sen, and B.V. Subbarayappa (eds) *A Concise History of Science in India*, New delhi, 1921 pp.
- ⁸ Deepak Kumar, 'Economic Compulsions and the Geological Survey of India', *Indian Journal of History*, vol. 17(2) pp. 289-91.
- ⁹ Robert A. Stafford, 'Geological Surveys, Mineral Discoveries, and British Expansion, (1835-71), *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. XII, No. 3, May 1984, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989 pp. 16-19.
- ¹⁰ Robert A. Stafford, *ibid*.
- ¹¹ A.N. Pearson, *The Development of the Mineral Resources of India*, Byculle. Bombay, Education Society Press, 1883, pp. 2-4.
- ¹² Deepak Kumar, 'Science Resources and the Raj', *Indian Historical Review*, vol. 10, 1983-84, p. 32.
- ¹³ Thomas Oldham, *The Coal Resources and Production of India: Being a Return Called for by the Secretary of State for India* Appenix v, Calcutta, 1867, p. 24.
- ¹⁴ Valentine Ball, *Jungle life in India: Or, The journeys and journals of an Indian Geologist*, London, Thos De La Reu and Co., 1880, p. 6.
- ¹⁵ George Watt, *A Dictionary of the Economic products of India*, Superintendent of Government Printing, vol-1, 1889, p.vii
- ¹⁶ George Watt, *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, Superintendent of Government Printing, vol-1, 1889, p. vii.
- ¹⁷ Clive Dewey, 'The Government of India's "New Industrial Policy", 1900-1925 : Formation and Failure' K. N Chaudhuri and Clive Dewey (eds), *Economy and Society Essays in Indian Economic and Social History*, Delhi, Oxford Univesity Press, 1975, pp. 215-250.
- ¹⁸ Pratik Chakrabarti, *Western Science in Modern India : Metropolitan Methods, Colonial Practices*, Delhi, 2006 pp. 122-23.
- ¹⁹ Pratik Chakrabarti, *Western Science in Modern India : Metropolitan Methods, Colonial Practices*, Delhi, 2006 pp. 123-24.
- ²⁰ Pratik Chakrabarti, *Western Science in Modern India : Metropolitan Methods, Colonial Practices*, Delhi, 2006 pp. 126-28.
- ²¹ Alfred Chatterton, *Agricultural and Industrial Problems in India*, Esplanade, Madras, G. A. Natesan and Co., 1963, pp. 22.
- ²² Thomas Hollard, 'General report of GSI', vol.32, Calcutta, 1905, p.159.
- ²³ Sunil Kumar, *The House of Tata, 1839-1939*, Calcutta, Progressive Publishers, 1975, p. 43.
- ²⁴ Deepak Kumar, 'Economic Compulsions and the Geological Survey of India', *Indian Journal of History*, vol. 17 (2) pp. 291-93.
- ²⁵ Pratik Chakrabarti, *Western Science in Modern India: Metropolitan Method, Colonial Practices*, 2010, pp. 36-38.

Max-Müller on Indian Education

Praggnaparamita Biswas

Abstract

This paper intends to analyse the views of the renowned Indologist Friedrich Max-Müller on Indian education through his explorations of the ancient Indian religious texts and writings. Though the doctrine of Macaulay's Minutes (1835) almost distracts the West to estimate the valuation of ancient Indian civilisation along with its sacred texts and literatures, but Max-Müller's benign intervention in Vedic literatures and its subsequent translated publications open up new avenues for Oriental studies which highlight the ancient Sanskrit literature and Buddhist Studies to the West. In this process, his meeting with Swami Vivekananda also turns into bliss for the amelioration of Vedic studies to the world.

Key words: Orientalism, Vedantism, Indian Education, Indology, Macaulay's Minutes (1835).

Introduction

India has a rich tradition of learning and education right from the distant past. These were channelised from generation to generation either through oral or written medium. The ancient Indian polity was based on the principles of love, honour and good behaviour. The educational evolution in ancient India was founded upon this ideal module. It is also to be understood as being ultimately the outcome of the Indian theory of knowledge as part of the corresponding scheme of life and values. Ancient education system repeatedly put emphasis on achieving self-fulfilment, not just acquiring mere objective knowledge. The prehistoric Indian education system was pervaded with the desire to bring salvation and final beatitude along with full

physical development of individual in the same manner as philosophy of life was shot through by the spirit of religion. This system was developed in terms of the needs of the individual and that of the society and so, its efflorescence was natural. It had a definite ideal and definite mission. Most of the primordial educational centers were situated amidst fauna and flora, and the beauties of nature were the perennial and inexhaustible fountainheads of Indian civilisation and culture. Ancient Indian teachers evolved a special form of education whereby harmony was established between materialism and spiritualism, and that's why human life was thus headed towards greater perfection.

The ancient history of the Indian pedagogy traces the grand presence of the world's oldest universities like Takshashila, Nalada, Vikramshila, Odantapuri etc. and also marks the sabbatical tours of the international erudite scholars for studying there the primordial Indian culture, Sanskrit and Buddhist studies, astrology, medicinal science etc. This documentation therefore, not only clarifies the ancestral but indigenous pedagogical dexterity of Indian education system but also establishes the fact about the country's glorious educational past in the pre-colonial India. Education in India has always been valued more than just a means of mere earning to a good living. Right from the pre-historic days, education, especially higher education, has been given a predominant position in the Indian society. Indian education had always been of a classical and spiritual rather a practical nature. In ancient India, the practice of learning was performed in *Gurukulas*, and *Viharas* throughout the country. The great universities flourished in India when most of the Western world was groping in the dark. Those were the days when India led the world in scientific knowledge and philosophical speculations.

Education has always been considered as the measuring index for any progressive civilisation. The ancient Indian civilisation was also flourished on the base of education which revolved around the contemporary learning of Sanskrit and Prakrit languages that chiefly focused on the religious pedagogy of Vedānta and *Upaniṣad*. Due to

the tradition of *Śruti* (hearing) and aristocratic legacy of Sanskrit language, education was not open to all and rather was confined strictly within Brāhmanical hierarchy. Through the advent of the British in India though marks its colonial status but the 'rediscovery' of Sanskrit language and ancient Indian culture at their hands not only happens to be an eye-opening phenomenon for the then learned Indians but also questions about the historic antiquity of Indian people. During the tenure of Warren Hastings, it was decided by the East India Company that the people of India must be governed through their own Hindu and Muslim rules as the previous evangelical agitations related to the spreading of English education among them stymied the process. However, Hastings patronised numerous Hindu pundits and Muslim *maulavies* to work with the Europeans for studying the Oriental languages like Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit. An aspect of this programme was the resultant in the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. But the withdrawal of government patronage of Oriental studies early in the nineteenth century somehow enabled the German and French scholars to replace the scholarly position of the British in Sanskrit studies. In such transitional moment, the renowned German Indologist Friedrich Max-Müller's (1823-1900) mettle to announce the glorious past of Indian art and culture along with the authenticity of linguistic dominance of Sanskrit in Vedic and popular literature puts an temporary end to the debate which was ignited by the 1835 haranguing report of Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Idea and Methodology of Education in Vedic Period

The Vedas occupy a significant position in the Indian life and culture. Veda means knowledge; therefore the study of Veda will enable one to get a thorough knowledge, the philosophy of life and the whole fabric of ancient Indian culture. The Upanishads, the Smritis and the Puranas all acknowledge the superiority of Vedas. The fundamentality of Indian culture lies in the Vedas which have their own characteristic features. Through them, we are able to know about the culture, civilisation, life and philosophy of people in early India.

Among the four Vedas, the *Ṛgveda* itself exhibits an evolution and the history of *Ṛgveda* is a history of the culture of that age. Higher education discussed in *Ṛgveda* was usually related itself to priesthood and the ritualistic aspect of religion. The curriculum of *Ṛgveda* was more or less the same for all, i.e. education was free from caste policy. The relation between teachers and students was well established in *Ṛgveda*, but the methods of education naturally varied with the learning capacity of the pupils. The Vedic knowledge was propagated by the Gurus or the teachers to the students through regulated and prescribed pronunciation, which the pupils would commit to memorise, having listened to it alternatively. Only that knowledge, which was received from the lips of teachers, was regarded as purely Vedic. Thus, the teaching was oral. Various subjects like grammar, rhetoric, Astrology, logic and nirukti (etymological interpretation of words) were incorporated in the curriculum of the Vedic education. The study of logic occupied a special place as knowledge of any other subject was tested on its basis. Therefore, a picture of secular, social and practical form of education was reflected during the *Ṛgvedic* era.

The system of education, which evolved in the *Ṛgveda* concerns itself with the acquisition of Supreme knowledge, religion and Brahma. The aim of the Veda was achieving the knowledge of the ultimate Truth and realisation of the Supreme. Two methods of teaching were being practiced during the Vedic period: orality and thinking. While the Vedic hymns and verses from *Ṛgveda* were to memorise, the thinking method was opted for reserving the previous one. The training of mind and the process of thinking were considered to be essential for the acquisition of knowledge in ancient education system of India. Knowledge must and should result into realisation. In the *Ṛgvedic* period occupations were not dependent on Varna system. Nature of education was religious which encouraged attaining spiritual heights by educating oneself. The ideal of Vedic education was lofty. The educational system of Vedic period achieved a pronounced success in connection with character formation, development of personality, and contribution to knowledge in all branches of learning as well as

social wellbeing and material prosperity. The Vedic education was essentially spiritual and religious in nature, yet it did not ignore the material aspect.

Right from the beginning, the nature of education in India was not only limited to the livelihood for people, rather it stood as a parameter for structuring the inner growth of mankind. Dr. R.K. Mukherjee in his book *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (1947) tries to divide the Vedic tutorials into few different periods: Ṛgvedic Education, Education in other Vedas, Later Vedic Education and so on. The perception of education in *Ṛgveda* "Education is something, which makes a man self-reliant and self-less" summarises the aims, ideas and objectives of ancient Vedic education which meant to be connected to the ideals of society. The main motto of education is awakening the self-reliance and self-less feelings of a person. In this context, Max Müller's remarks; "Vedic education is a mirror of all education" seems pertinent. Ancient Indians believed that education should prepare an individual to attain the objective of liberation, i.e. to be one with the Almighty and to be free from the mundane cycles of births and deaths. Ultimate objective of education is *Moksha* i.e. Liberation or self-realization. The infusion of piety and religiousness in ancient Indian education aided the students to withstand the temptations of life. Education would prepare men for present life in order to be true to his duty. It also forms characters and teaches that 'Dharma' i.e. morality of a man enriches the value of obedience, honesty and temperance. Educating a person therefore is to expect the development of an all-round personality. Actually passing throughout the '*Chaturashram*' system in ancient India in which the first stage i.e. *Brahmacharya*, was the getaway of Ashram and related with childhood of a person. This programme allocated for taking education from Guru or teacher. The *Gurukul* or teacher's house was the first formal educational institute in Indian history. Therefore Max-Müller's views on Indian education clearly indicate towards the Vedic tutelage which instructed to grasp three-folded qualitative approaches of self-resistant, self-confidence and self-respect for a perfect educated person.

The ideology of education is not easy to interpret from a single point of view, as the perception of education defines on various approaches. India being a multilingual, multi racial and multi ethnical country, witness different educational ambiance for different people. So, ancient Indian education also varied in terms of ethnical, geographical, social and religious factors from time to time. It must be noted that uniformity in Indian education from ancient time has least possibility because of its *Varna* or caste system that eventually forced to confine the expansion of religious based Sanskrit literature within a few orthodox Brahmin families throughout India, while the relaxation of caste facilitated to preach or popularise the Buddhist literature among the majority. The reigns of Mughals and the other Muslim rulers more or less affected the Indian culture and education, instead it cultivated and expanded the architectural domains enthusiastically, but it can't be said that they forced to annihilate the domain of education in India. Subsequently, the advent of British mercantile and their gradual obnoxious promotion to the 'British Raj' somehow created a chaotic propaganda about the dearth of 'historical consciousness' in the realm of Indian education. Though, the contemporary ruler initially tried to deny the glorious existence of Indian ancient Sanskrit literature and its influence upon Indian education, but interference of some of their own people who had proper knowledge to rescue and rediscover the 'golden bough' of ancient culture and civilisations, helped them to look into the great past of this country. So, neither we could entirely reject the colonial intervention in rediscovering of our glorious past nor we could accept the colonial allegation about ancient India's academic lacunas.

In this respect, the implantation of numerous missionary societies played a formative role in the emergence of modern India as well as the spread of English education. A new era in Christian endeavour began in the wake of the Evangelical Revival during the closing years of 18th century spearheaded the process of religious awakening and the formations of new ethno-religious communities. English education was mainly in the hand of the missionaries. While the Catholic

missionaries emphasised the spread of Christian literature, reversely, the Protestant missionaries undertook the project of spreading education as a means to disseminate the Gospel. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries hailed from Europe exalted in their missions to open educational institutions in urban and rural areas of British India. Their proselytisation campaign and educational activities through establishment of Anglo-vernacular schools throughout the country had continued simultaneously as literacy programme was an appendage to their evangelical aims. However, this progress was propelled by the Charter Act of 1813 that relaxed the rule of non-entry of the missionaries into India. Hayden J.A. Bellenoit observes that :

education was politically and imperially speaking crucial for the British during the tenure of Maculay and after to fill the lower tiers of a rapidly spawning out colonial bureaucracy. Most of these clerk jobs were either undesired by the British or could only have been filled by Indians with bilingual abilities (Bellenoit, 1, 2007).

The appointment of Maculay and his subsequent recommendation for English language showed how education functioned on the locale and its relation to wider Indian social and political developments. But the Macaulay's Minute is still considered as an experimental and a matter of contradiction in the education policy of India under the company rule.

Controversy of Macaulay's Minute (1835) and its Impact upon Indian Education

The development of education system under the British Empire was determined by the requirements of the colonial powers. Historian Arthur Howell in his book *Education in British India* (1872) criticised the British education policies in India by saying that: "Education in India under the British Government was first ignored, then violently and successfully opposed, then conducted on a system now universally admitted to be erroneous and finally placed on its present footing" (Howell. 3). Earlier few attempts were made for the education of the

native people in oriental languages namely Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian show little success. But this was purely for running the administrative machinery and judiciary purposes as the lack of knowledge in vernaculars already created a linguistic distance and confusion among the masses. However, the Charter Act of 1813 was introduced to make it obligatory on the part of the East India Company to spread education in India. This Act was not only the first legislative recognition of the right for education in India, but it also determined the relaxation of controls over missionary activities in India as it clearly mentioned whether the missionaries should be given a free hand in the educational practices or should the Company itself shoulder the entire responsibilities. The Clause 43 of the Act intensified the Oriental and Occidental controversy in British India. The Orientalist group wanted the endorsement of Indian education through the oriental languages, while the Anglicists supported the development of Western education through the medium of English. But the dominance of the first group only elongated the Orientalists-Anglicists difference and did not lend itself any solution which ultimately resulted into the commencement of the infamous Minute of Lord Maculay in 1835.

Maculay in his Minute wrote: "We must at present do our best to form a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Chand, 5). Maculay outwardly discarded the idea of Oriental languages and considered English over these languages as English was the key to modern knowledge as well as the mother tongue of the ruling class, so it becomes the merchandised language throughout the seas of the East. The Minute clearly stated that the chief aim of the British Govt. was to broaden the scope of European literature and science among the Indians and the money granted for that purpose education must be in English medium. This Minute ultimately decided the policy, medium, means and aims of education in India that carry a far-fetched impact upon Indian education for its coming generation as well. It has instituted an education policy in support of the British Raj that denigrated Indian languages and knowledge and established the

hegemonic influence of English as medium of colonial instruction to produce a clerical class for thriving the empirical trade. This proclamation promised to supply the ruling class with English educated cheap but capable Indian servants for them. So, the analysis of various scholars reveals that in the history of education in India this proclamation marks a turning point that not only brought about the dawn of a cultural renaissance but also simultaneously procreates a new rift between the English-knowing clerical oriented middle class and the non-English mass.

T.B. Macaulay and his iniquitous "Minute on Indian Education" (1835) represent the pinnacle of controversy surrounding Indian education in 1820s - 1830s. Though ostensibly, merely a debate on the use of public funds within the general committee of Public Instruction, this controversy makes a valuable case study besides providing insight into the colonial policy making and the relationship between imperial government and its subjects, it also exemplifies both the shift in the role of the East India Company and the ideological shift that was taking place through the British empire. This commentary analyses the rising rift caused by the position taken by the missionaries- the Anglicists who somehow determined to introduce English education and the Christianity for the better governance and the Orientalists who intended to popularise the indigenous culture in and out of the country. The question of the government supported education in India, had far greater implications, as behind this issue lay serious questions concerning the attitude of the British towards the Indian society, Indian education and the modes of British imperialism. The older faction was that of the Orientalists who argued that government should be used to support the colleges for teaching Arabic and Sanskrit, to pay stipends to the students at these colleges and translate the works into native languages.

Max-Müller's Defense in Favour of Indian Education

The report of Macaulay (1835) regarding the Indian education almost deprecated the Indian people's engagement with education in

pre-colonial era, was somehow defended by Max- Müller in favour of Indian culture, but his intervention was not purely impartial. Many European Orientalists thought that though the Indian higher education structure could be traced back to the institutions like Nalanda and Takshashila, still the foundation for modern education was laid by the British. They set up a network of schools to impart western education in English medium. At first such a college to impart western education was founded in 1818 at Serampore near Calcutta. Essentially, therefore, this doctrine wiped off the faith of Indians in their own culture and changed the basic philosophy of Indian people against the Indian nature and outlook. But a feast of European Indian lovers who considered Indian civilisation as a mine for education and culture, the German Indologist Friedrich Max-Müller was one of them. His memorable sayings:

“If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions to some of them which well deserve the attention of even those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India” (Mookerjee, 32) obviously encouraged the studies of ancient Indian works to the world. At a crucial stage of national awakening in India, Max-Müller himself took upon the task of publishing ancient books of India and glorifying her past by writing books. This considerably helped the national awakening as it was brought home to the Indian people that they were heirs to a great civilisation and culture. Therefore, it could be said that his writings had given a great impetus to the cause of national awakening by dignifying India’s past heritage.

Considering the multiple factors of Indian education, Max-Müller views that “in India there was no history to call forth a historian ... all the greater is the India’s place in the intellectual history of mankind” (Rosen, 45). Again, he believed that the history of religion was more important than the history of language and that the true history of mankind is the history of religion. His realisation about religious

oriented upbringing and spiritual education of Indian people actually helped to reach to the etymology of Indian education. If we try to notice the fact, that, his plethora of writings and books on Indian religious texts serve as a moral in comprehending the undercurrent of contemporary socio-political milieu both for India and England. Being an Indologist, Max-Müller had to delve deeper into the Indian past which ultimately resulted into series of publications of *Ṛgveda* with Sayana's commentary, *Sacred Books of the East (SBE)*, *Six System of Hindu Philosophy*, *India: What Can It Teach Us?* during his life span. In spite of his employment agreement with the East India Company, he never retreated from appreciating India for its religious scholarship of Vedantism, *Upaniṣad* and other Sanskrit literature. By editing and publishing the English translations of religion oriented texts of the entire Eastern world, he made available to the Christian world quintessence of all other major religions of the world. Actually by this mammoth attempt, he in turn questioned the suitability of converting such highly spiritual Indian people to Christianity by European missionaries. His aim of publish *SBE* was entirely academic and for the purpose of public welfare. The primary aim behind writing this book was to preach the message of tolerance in the West. He had paved the way for understanding the East by the Western people by planning the *SBE* series. Again *Ṛgveda* helped to disclose the mystic aura of Orientalism from Indian society. While publishing his work on *Six System of Hindu Philosophy*, his discussion on the origin and development of Indian philosophical thinking, finally revealed to him that how far these teachings had influenced and moulded the mind of the Indian people. In a nutshell, it may not be exaggerated to say that Max-Müller was a linking correspondent for comprehending the cultural gap between two nations. His intense observations on ancient Indian culture and arts gave him a realisation that the study of Vedanta and *Upaniṣhad* should not be confined only to religious study but should be moulded in accordance with current need of education. His opposition to Lord Macaulay's education policy of the then British ruler thus reflects his benevolence for pedagogical concerns for

common men and women of this country. In connection with this, his association with the contemporary Indian scholars with whom he exchanged his thoughts either in epistolary form or in direct conversation, had a lifelong impact upon his writings. He emphasised that not only Sanskrit language, Indian philosophy but also regional languages and current topics, mathematics and other subjects should be included in the curriculum of Indian education for school going children.

Max-Müller's Meeting with Swami Vivekananda: Their Exchange of Thoughts on Vedanta and its Consequence on Education

In order to explore the reality of Indian education, Max-Müller's forte to communicate with his contemporary Indian correspondents seems to be benevolent. His meeting with Swami Vivekananda at Oxford gave him immense pleasure for discussing the socio-cultural background of Hindu Philosophy and Indian people. Max-Müller expressed his deep satisfaction when he came to know about Vivekananda's mission of preaching the Vedantic ideas throughout the world. Vivekananda's views on this aspect "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man" also reflects the tune of Vedic education which emphasises upon the self confidence and conscience while forming a character. He explains that education is the primary means and instrument to have command over the multilayered existing problems of the society and will gradually eradicate them outwardly and from within as well, because education imparts the feeling of liberty and liberal thinking in an individual, and liberty is the stepping-stone of growth and civilisation. Swamiji actually proposed the simultaneous learning of vernacular and English languages in the curriculum for Indians. He didn't make any distinction in terms of education while elucidating the process of character building of men and women. He believed that independent, empowered women will be strong enough to decide their own decisions in crucial time. Women, enriched with proper education, do not lag behind physically, intellectually or spiritually.

Swami Vivekananda vowed to make religion as a social force. His teaching regarding education or religion, two being inseparable, bears clear anthropocentric note because of human's endowment with the faculty of contemplation and speech make him divine and powerful. In doing so, he decorated his preaching on the core of Vedanta philosophy which helps to learn the pragmatic education for all. Practical Vedanta is the application of human values in life in developing goodness, divinity, truthfulness, selfless service and non-dualism in human existence and society (Basu, 353). Inspired by the Vedantic scholarship, Vivekananda realised that only education has the ability to infuse a character with energy.

Wrapping Up

While summing up the paper, we may conclude that Max-Müller and Vivekananda, though different by race, ethnicity and colour, but the affinity they share, is the influence of Vedantic studies of ancient India in structuring the academic aesthetics. Both of them wished to ameliorate the social situation of contemporary Indian by learning and practicing spiritualism. Actually, each of Max-Müller's works directly or indirectly tries to highlight the advantage of Vedic learning both for India and the West. His views on Indian education can be plucked from his books written upon India and her people. Examining the hypothesis obtained from the respective erudite writings of the Indian monk and German Indologist, it may be claimed that ancient Indian education has already set a phenomenon through its Vedic lore for schematising the pedagogical guidelines for the rest of the world. Contextualising the Vedanta as Indian people's primordial and essential formation, both of these scholars intend to enhance the current education for social welfare.

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Evolution of the Legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī

Tista Biswas

Abstract

Since most of the true connoisseurs of Vedic and post-Vedic literature are in the opinion that history and Purāṇas are the vertible and equitable expounder of the Vedas and as this significant view had aptly and evidently been approved in the excerption, “*itihāsapurāṇābhyām vedam samupavṛṇhayet*” (The *Mahābhārata*, I.1.204), I deliberately propound to substantiate it by means of critically analysing the legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī which had certainly originated from ṚV X.95 wherein it had been recorded dramatically in the form of a dialogue and because of such amazing diction it was entitled *Samvāda-Sūkta*. Though it was originally an allegorical story in the ṚV, later it changed into a heavenly love-story between the king Purūravā and a nymph named Urvaśī in the ŚB and in the subsequent post-Vedic literature.

Thus the archetype of the legend in the ṚV (X.95) has directly dominated the legend depicted in the ŚB (XI.5.1) wherein it has been represented on the whole in a reasonable shape with agreeable perfection. It is usually found that the component parts of most of the other legends are generally collected from various Ṛgvedic hymns; but this legend has been formed of only a single Ṛgvedic hymn. This is due to its dramatic structure in the form of a dialogue. Afterwards it has achieved perfection in the ŚB, as it has fulfilled all the deficiencies of the story and has overcome the weakness of proper linkage of events in it. With the advancement of time the legend has been reshaped in the subsequent puranic literature by way of reformation, augmentation, additions and alterations of events with a view to keeping harmony with the social demands of the puranic era and enhancing the quality of the legend.

Owing to limited scope it seems very difficult to discuss this legend in detail from each and every Purāṇa; so being selective, I have chosen

only four *Mahāpurāṇas*, viz. the *ViṣP* (IV.6.20 – 46), the *BhāgP* (IX.14.15 – 49), the *AgP* (CCLXXIII.7 & 9) and the *SkP* (III.1.28) for discussion, as these are chronologically representative ones of different ages. Except these four *Mahāpurāṇas* which have been chosen here for discussion there are a few other *Purāṇas* which have also dealt with this legend. Those are: the *BḍP* (II.14 – 25), the *MārP* (CXI.6 – 18), the *VāP* (LXXXV.18 & 23), the *MatP* (XXIV.9 – 33), the *KūrP* (Pūrvabhāga XXII.1 & 2), the *VāmP* (LXXIX.84), the *BrP* (X.1 – 12) and the *GḍP* (Pūrvakhaṇḍa CXLII.3 & CXLIII.2 & 3). The main objective of this article is to represent the gradual evolution of this legend which attained its perfection in the *Purāṇas* through additions and alterations of various episodes.

Key Words : *Agni Purāṇa, Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Legend, Purāṇa / Mahāpurāṇa, Purūravā, Ṛgveda, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Saṁvāda-Sūkta, Skanda Purāṇa, Urvaśī, Viṣṇu Purāṇa.*

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AgP</i>	<i>Agni Purāṇa</i>
<i>BḍP</i>	<i>Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa</i>
<i>BhāgP</i>	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i>
<i>BrP</i>	<i>Brahma Purāṇa</i>
<i>GḍP</i>	<i>Garuḍa Purāṇa</i>
<i>KūrP</i>	<i>Kūrma Purāṇa</i>
<i>MārP</i>	<i>Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa</i>
<i>MatP</i>	<i>Matsya Purāṇa</i>
<i>MLBD</i>	<i>Motilal Banarsi Dass</i>
<i>ṚV</i>	<i>Ṛgveda</i>
<i>ŚB</i>	<i>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i>
<i>SkP</i>	<i>Skanda Purāṇa</i>
<i>VāP</i>	<i>Vāyu Purāṇa</i>
<i>VāmP</i>	<i>Vāmana Purāṇa</i>
<i>ViṣP</i>	<i>Viṣṇu Purāṇa</i>

Introduction

The legend of Purūravā¹ and Urvaśī is one of the most antiquated Vedic legends, since the primeval source of it is *ṚV. X.95* where the legend has been collocated in the form of a systematic dialogue which

is undoubtedly and unprecedentedly an amazing diction. That is why it is popularly known as *Sarivāda-Sūkta*. This legend in conversation gradually flourished in the subsequent Brāhmaṇas and later on in the Purāṇas. It was not confined within the boundaries of the Vedic literature. It has developed its structure even in the post-Vedic literature, such as the Purāṇas, by gradual and continuous insertion and assemblage of various episodes in it; though the basic structure of the legend remained almost the same. Naturally, considerable differences are traced in some events and episodes of different Purāṇas, such as the *ViṣṭP*, the *BhāḡP*, the *SkP* and the *AgP*. In order to substantiate the chronological development of this legend these four Mahāpurāṇas have been taken here for discussion. According to Prof. R. C. Hazra and Prof. S. C. Banerji, the *ViṣṭP* was composed approximately during 1st to 6th cent. A.D. and the *BhāḡP* was composed approximately during 500 A.D. to 650 A.D., whereas the *SkP* was composed during 700 A.D. to 1050 A.D. The *AgP*, on the other hand, is comparatively a later text as its composition started during the 9th cent. A. D. and continued long afterwards.² In order to review the legend critically we have to justify the archetype of it found in *ṚV. X.95* and have to review further how it flourished later on and how far it was moderated by dint of additions and alterations in the subsequent Vedic and post-Vedic literature. With a view to justifying all these vital points we must study the chronological development of the legend through the ages; therefore the *Ṛgvedic legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī* is at first brought forward for discussion and next to it the others will be discussed and reviewed.

Ṛgvedic form of this legend

As the wife of Purūravā Urvaśī accompanied him every night continuously for four years;³ but then she left Purūravā because of his infringement of previous agreement. Estranged from his beloved wife Purūravā, the jilted husband, was so depressed and melancholic that he earnestly and repeatedly implored her to return to the royal palace, when he came across her. He repeatedly reminded her of their happy

conjugal life of the past and of their beloved son in order that she might agree to return home; but Urvaśī who jilted him on trivial ground (of breach of agreement) strictly adhered to her firm resolution and turned a deaf ear to his earnest request. She rather advised him to go back to his kingdom to perform his royal duties in peace. Being so rudely refused by her Purūravā thought of committing suicide out of dejection and despondency, but Urvaśī counselled him to desist from self-destruction and persuaded him that the heart of women is as merciless as the atrocious hyenas and feminine amour is always transient.⁴ In this context she reminded him that in her transformed figure she had spent every night with him for four autumns (i.e. four years) in this mortal and transient world. She further reminded that then he used to embrace her thrice a day and she would take only a little *Ghṛta* (i.e. clarified butter) once a day as her diet.⁵ Addressing her as the sky-filling dulcinea of the firmament Purūravā said that he would like to get back that amorous sweetheart whom he used to embrace. Then having addressed him as Aila (as Purūravā was the son of Ilā) Urvaśī assured him that if he would worship gods with his own sacrificial oblations, he would be able to attain heavenly bliss and immortality with perpetual delight.⁶

This legend in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa

An explicit depiction of the Ṛgvedic *legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī* is found in the ŚB.⁷ This legend has been delineated here in connection with a discussion on the use of *Aśvattha* tree (i.e. *ficus religiosa*) as flint-stick (i.e. *Araṇi*). The legend in ŚB XI.5.1 is to some extent as the following:

An *Apsarā* named Urvaśī agreed to be married to Purūravā, son of Idā, on condition that he would never lie with her against her will, would embrace her not more than thrice a day and would never show her his naked body.⁸ Thus Urvaśī spent a long time (i.e. 4 years) with Purūravā and his son.⁹ Then *Gandharvas* planned to bring her back to paradise among them. Accordingly they stole at night both of her cossets which were fastened to her bed as those were like her sons. Having lost her son-like cossets she began to wail; so Purūravā at

once attempted to go out in search of them without putting on any dress. No sooner had he stepped forward to rescue those cossets than the *Gandharvas* flashed lightning on him in order to show Urvaśī his bare body. On seeing his nude figure Urvaśī vanished immediately owing to breach of her precondition.¹⁰ When he did not find her on his return, he became so depressed and melancholic that he began to roam about Kurukṣetra in search of her. One day he arrived at the shore of a lake named Anyataḥplakṣā which was full of lotuses.¹¹ He sat there for a while and came across Urvaśī who was there among the other *Apsarās* in the guise of geese. Purūravā requested her to converse with him, but she refused and advised him to go back home, as it was quite impossible for him to detain her. When Urvaśī refused him so rudely and cruelly, Purūravā intimidated her out of amour-propre that he wouldn't go back home, he would rather commit suicide. Then Urvaśī persuaded him that he should not court his death in that way by surrendering himself to the ferocious hyena. She explained that the heart of women was as much atrocious as hyenas; so there could be no amity and cordiality with them; hence he should return home and elude such wrong steps.¹² Urvaśī added further that when her figure was transmogrified, she had to spend four autumns with him and had to live only on a little *Ghr̥ta* once a day.¹³ Then she directed him to return to that very place again at night just after one year. She also assured him that she would cohabit with him that night and by that time a son would be born of them.¹⁴ According to her assurance when Purūravā returned to that place on the preordained night just after one year, he noticed there a golden palace where *Gandharvas* cordially welcomed him to that palace and directed Urvaśī to meet his wishes. Next morning when the *Gandharvas* wanted to grant him a boon, he prayed to be considered as one of them as he was advised by Urvaśī the previous night. Then the *Gandharvas* gave him the sacred sacrificial-fire in a fire-pan and asked him to offer oblation into it in order to fulfil his desire. Then Purūravā left for home with his son and the sacred fire-pan which he had preserved in the forest before he entered his village with his son. Afterwards when he returned to that forest to retrieve that sacred fire-pan, he found

neither the sacred fire nor the fire-pan. He saw an *Aśvattha* (*ficus religiosa*) and a *Śamī* (*mimosa suma*) tree standing there. He realised that both the sacred fire and the fire-pan were transformed into an *Aśvattha* tree and a *Śamī* tree respectively.¹⁵ So he went back to those *Gandharvas* and told them the problem. They imparted him the arcane and recondite knowledge to produce the sacred sacrificial fire. Incidentally the *Gandharvas* advised him to cook four square meals daily throughout the whole year; to take each time three logs of *Aśvattha*, to anoint them with the blobs of *Ghr̥ta* and to offer that oblation into the sacrificial fire while uttering the words, 'Samidha' and 'Ghr̥ta'. Besides this *Gandharvas* taught him how to generate sacred sacrificial fire out of friction between two sticks of *Aśvattha* and *Śamī* as the upper and lower flint-sticks respectively. They also gave him furthermore tips to produce the sacred fire by manipulating only the sticks of *Aśvattha* as both the upper and lower flint-log. By dint of the latter procedure Purūravā generated the sacred fire and having sacrificed oblations into that fire he was transmogrified into a *Gandharva*.¹⁶

Though the legend depicted in *ṚV.* X.95 has been elucidated in *ŚB.* XI.5.1, it has attained its full nutrition and perfection in the *Purāṇas*. In order to show the gradual development of the legend it is necessary to have a chronological discussion of all those *Purāṇas* in which this legend has been dealt with. But that will be too vast to deal with. That is why only four *Mahāpurāṇas*, viz. the *ViṣP*, the *BhāḡP*, the *SkP* and the *AgP* will mainly be discussed here to substantiate the gradual development of this legend in a chronological order. Sections of the other *Purāṇas* wherein this legend has been depicted will only be mentioned. With the advancement of time how this legend developed in various *Purāṇas* by way of additions and alterations of events and how this legend has been represented in these four *Mahāpurāṇas* will be discussed below chronologically.

Evolution of this legend in Purāṇas

The primordial source of the legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī which is found in *ViṣP* IV.6.20 - 46, *Bhāḡp* IX.14.15 - 49, *SkP* III.1.28 and *AgP*

CCLXXIII. 7 and 9 and CCLXXIV.12- 15, is the conversation given in *ṚV. X. 95* which is popularly known as *Samvāda-Sūkta*. Of course no well-collocated sequence of events is available here in this conversation. Naturally it fails to represent a well-connected compact story. It seems rather an imperfect episode, as if it has been extracted from the middle of a certain dramatic episode. Since *ṚV. X.95* is considered as the most antiquated and primary source of this legend, the content of *ŚB. XI.5.1* may be justified as the secondary source of it: because the version of the *ŚB.* has paved its way to perfection in the subsequent Purāṇas. The rough sketch of the legend in the form of a *Samvāda-Sūkta* in *ṚV. X.95* has gradually developed its structure in the subsequent literature by inserting relevant varieties in the archetype. How the archetype has been converted into an attractive legend in the subsequent Purāṇas is analysed in the following discussion.

It seems to be the primary necessity to discuss the proper identity of Purūravā and Urvaśī, the main dramatis personae of this legend. Both the *ṚV* and the *ŚB* have introduced Purūravā as the son of Ilā, whereas he has been represented only as a king as mighty as Indra in *SkP III.1.28.13* and *17* without any reference to Ilā. He was familiar as a king too even in the *ṚV* and the *ŚB*. It has been evidently expressed in *ViṣP IV.1.9 & IV.6.20*, *BhāgP IX.14.15* and *AgP CCLXXIII. 7* and *CCLXXIV.12* that Ilā gave birth to Purūravā by dint of the semen of Budha. This puranic identity of Purūravā has been first pointed out in *ṚV. X.95.18* wherein the word *Āhuraila* is sufficiently indicative of his identity as the son of Ilā.¹⁷ The phrase *purūravasamaīdañcakame*, found in *ŚB. XI.5. 1.1*, is also supportive of the datum furnished in *ṚV. X.95.18*. En passant it may be noted that Iḍā and Ilā are identical names of the same person. As the way or manner of pronouncing this word was slightly different in the Vedic age in comparison with that in the puranic one, the discrimination took place. Though Purūravā has been introduced as the son of Iḍā in the Vedic literature, he was never represented there as the son of Budha. It has been found in the *legend of Iḍā* as depicted in the *ŚB* that there is no reference to any such incident in it as has indicated that Iḍā conceived Purūravā of the semen of Budha. The episode which depicts Purūravā as the son of

Budha as it is found in different *Purāṇas* is no doubt a puranic addition which is neither found in the *ṚV* nor in the *ŚB*. It has been mentioned in *ṚV* X.95.4 that Urvaśī would serve victuals to her father-in-law who would dwell in the adjacent chamber (i.e. antechamber). This proves that father of Purūravā, would live in the same royal mansion with Purūravā and Urvaśī: but as per puranic legends Budha would dwell at a grove in the forest. Some of the *Purāṇas* have mentioned that Ilā was transmogrified into a male being named Sudyumna who would reside in a royal palace;¹⁸ whereas the *AgP* has admitted separate and independent existence of Sudyumna who married Ilā.¹⁹ Thus the authors of different *Purāṇas* have made a mess of this episode according to their whims and fancy. Since the *ṚV* didn't refer to any name or role of the father of Purūravā, the mythologists in the post-Vedic period have arbitrarily and haphazardly narrated this episode. However the *Purāṇas* have admitted and followed at least two Vedic data that Purūravā is the son of Ilā and he is a king; but none of these two Vedic facts proves the identity of Purūravā's father. Data regarding his father's identity are totally independent additions of some puranic literature.

Urvaśī has been introduced as an *Apsarī* of heaven in *ŚB* XI.5.1.1,²⁰ the influence of which on *ViṣP* IV.6.20 - 35, *BhāgP* IX.14.17, *SkP* III.1.28.19 and *AgP* CCLXXIV.12 is so apparent and dominant that the same identity of Urvaśī as found in the *ŚB* has been found in those *Purāṇas*. The term *Apsarī* has directly been used in *ŚB* XI.5.1.1 to refer to Urvaśī, whereas only the name of Urvaśī has been used in *ṚV* X.95.17 without referring to her identity as an *Apsarī*. She has rather been portrayed here as the dulcinea of the sky.²¹

What attracts our attention next to the identity of Purūravā and Urvaśī is the landing of Urvaśī on the mortal world in a transformed figure. The causes of Urvaśī's arrival at this mortal world and her accepting Purūravā as her husband have been furnished neither in *ṚV* X.95 nor in *ŚB* XI.5.1.10 wherein an identical phrasal expression of *ṚV* X.95.16²² has rather been reflected and reverberated. These two Vedic sources have only referred to her landing and travelling on the earth without showing any causes for these; whereas the *Purāṇas*,

especially the *ViṣP*, the *BhāgP* and the *SkP* among the four Purāṇas chosen here for discussion, have furnished a detailed explanation for her arrival at and roaming about the mortal world. It has been said in *ViṣP* IV.6.20 that Urvaśī had to come to this world as she had been imprecated by Mitrāvaruṇa. Thereafter being enamoured of Purūravā's veracity and handsome figure Urvaśī accepted him as her husband.²³ A resonance or echo of the same content expressed in different wording is found in *BhāgP* IX.14.17.²⁴ It has been depicted in *SkP* III.1.28.19 -23 that Urvaśī, having been anathematized by Mitrāvaruṇa, had to come down to the mortal world. Thereafter she was playing on the lyre while walking in the royal grove near the palace of Purūravā. At that time Purūravā met her and was so charmed at her divine beauty that he wanted to marry her. Out of libidinousness or amorousness Urvaśī too agreed to his nuptial proposal. Neither the *ṚV* nor the *ŚB* has any reference to this event.²⁵ It is noticeable that the *AgP* has referred neither to any cause for her coming into this mortal world nor to any reason for accepting Purūravā as her husband. Here the episode is so abridged that it seems the author of this *Purāṇa* thought it unnecessary to furnish the details inasmuch as the episode became universally known and admitted by means of the anterior *Purāṇas*.

What is to be justified next is the episode of three pre-conditions for marriage laid by Urvaśī. This episode has vitalised the legend and accelerated the progress of the story so as to reach an attractive and reasonable denouement. Reference to these three provisos which have attained maturity in the Purāṇas has first come into view in the *ŚB*. It has not been directly mentioned in *ṚV* X.95 that Urvaśī laid any provisos for their marriage, though it may be assumed from the speech of Urvaśī in the *ṚV* that she was reluctant to bear his (Purūravā's) baby in her womb and that she expressed this desire in some previous occasion when she told him (Purūravā) what he should and should not do to detain her in this mortal world.²⁶ As Purūravā afterwards impregnated her with his sperm against her will in order to achieve a son worthy of protecting and ruling the world, she left him forever. It may be noted on the contrary that there is an evident reference to three preconditions for marriage laid by Urvaśī in *ŚB* XI.5.1.1 where

the provisos are totally about their copulation and connubial life. These are - (a) Purūravā will be allowed to embrace her (Urvaśī) only thrice a day, (b) he will not be allowed to lie with her against her will and (c) he will never show her his bare body.²⁷ However, a slight influence of ṚV X.95 is realised in the ŚB. The first proviso mentioned in ŚB XI.5.1.1 wherein Urvaśī speaks of allowing him to embrace her only thrice a day has also been mentioned indirectly in ṚV X. 95.5, though it is not found in the form of a proviso. En passant Urvaśī speaks here to Purūravā that he used to embrace her thrice a day²⁸ but the influence of this proviso mentioned in the ŚB is not found in the Purāṇas. It has been said in the 2nd proviso of the ŚB that Purūravā will not be allowed to lie with her against her will.²⁹ It actually speaks that he will not be allowed to copulate with her against her will. Though no identical proviso is found in ṚV X.95.11, there is a reference to the fact in it that Purūravā impregnated her against her will and as a result of which she left Purūravā forever. This event of impregnation against her will mentioned in ṚV X.95.11 seems to influence the 2nd proviso mentioned in ŚB XI.5.1.1.³⁰ This too, however, has not been included in the Purāṇas as a proviso.

The 3rd or the last proviso mentioned in ŚB XI.5.1.1 which indicates that Urvaśī will never see him (Purūravā) nude has rather influenced the subsequent Purāṇas.³¹ This has been included as the 2nd proviso in the ViṣP wherein it has been said that Urvaśī will never see him unclad. Here the version is as the following: *bhavāṁśca mayā nagno na draṣṭavyaḥ*.³² Though the wording is different from that of ŚB XI.5.1.1 the theme is identical. Again it may be noted that the same proviso has been accepted and mentioned as the 3rd one in BhāgP IX. 14.22, though a little amendment has been made with a view to making it reasonable and befitting the practical situation. It has been amended here to a new form that Urvaśī will never see Purūravā nude except during the coital period. The actual wording of the 3rd proviso found in the BhāgP is as the following: ... *syāṁnekṣe tvānyatra maithunāt*³² *vivāsasaṁ tat tatheti pratipede mahāmanāḥ*.³³ It has been delineated in SkP III.1.28.26 too that he would never show her his nude body.³⁴ Though there is no such reference to it in ṚV X.95, the ŚB has

introduced it as the 3rd or the last proviso which had played an important role in the subsequent Purāṇas. It has been said in *ṚV* X.95.11 that Urvaśī left Purūravā, as he impregnated her against her will, whereas the Purāṇas, being influenced by the 3rd proviso of the *ŚB*, have expressed that she left Purūravā, as he showed her his naked body. It is, therefore, proved that the *ŚB* has exerted its influence on the Purāṇas more than the *ṚV*.

What has been delineated in *ŚB* XI.5.1.2 about how and when Urvaśī noticed Purūravā unclad or nude and how *Gandharvas* abducted both the cossets and flashed lightning in order to show her the bare body of Purūravā, has dominated the puranic episodes too with a little alteration. It has been expressed in the *ViṣP* and the *SkP* that Viśvāvasu along with the other *Gandharvas* stole both the pet-lambs of Urvaśī and showed Urvaśī the unclad physique of Purūravā by flashing lightning while he was pursuing them for rescuing those cossets.³⁵ Though the sequence of events here is almost the same as depicted in *ŚB* XI.5.1.2, the inclusion of the role of Viśvāvasu is undoubtedly a redundant addition. A perspicuous and elaborate delineation of almost the same episode is found in the *BhāgP*; but there is no reference to Viśvāvasu.³⁶ It has rather been mentioned here that having been directed by Indra *Gandharvas* performed this task. The author of this Purāṇa has introduced Indra as an instigator who employs *Gandharvas* with the assignment of bringing Urvaśī back to paradise. Despite the insertion of such new addition the impact of *ŚB* XI.5.1.2 on this portion cannot be denied. The episode of abducting a couple of cossets of Urvaśī by the *Gandharvas* depicted in *SkP* III.1.28.30 - 42 has sufficient consistency and similarity with the same episode of abduction of Urvaśī's pet lambs depicted in *ŚB* XI.5.1.2 - 4. One additional event has been annexed to this episode in the *SkP* III. 1.28.31 - 33 wherein it is found that Viśvāvasu decided to bring Urvaśī back to heaven, because without her presence heaven seemed unpleasant. Since the tenure of Urvaśī's dwelling with Purūravā on the mortal world came to an end, he conspired with the other *Gandharvas* and conjointly abducted both the pet lambs of Urvaśī in the darkness of night. Reference to Viśvāvasu is found neither in the

ṚV nor in the *ŚB*. The rest of the episode is identical, though the language of its presentation in the *SkP* is somewhat different.³⁷

It had been said in the *ViṣP* that the two pet-lambs of *Urvaśī* would be kept beside her bed whereas the *BhāgP* and the *SkP* mentioned that *Purūravā* would have to protect them.³⁸ It may, therefore, be resolved that *ViṣP* IV.6.28 has exerted its influence on *BhāgP* IX.14.21 and *SkP* III.1.28.25; but reference to such proviso was found neither in the *ṚV* X.95 nor in the *ŚB* XI.5.1. It is totally a novel and unique addition incorporated by the mythologists. Though the episode of abducting those cosses has been depicted in *ŚB* XI.5.1.2 - 4, it was not represented there as a proviso laid by *Urvaśī*. Mythologists have perhaps changed this event to a proviso in the puranic literature. Thus it may be concluded that all these three *Purāṇas* have been influenced by the *ŚB*.³⁹

Let's now justify the ultimate or residual proviso depicted in these *Purāṇas*. A reflection of the content depicted in *ṚV* X.95.16⁴⁰ and *ŚB* XI.5.1.10 is found in both *ViṣP* IV.6.29 and *BhāgP* IX.14.22 wherein *Urvaśī* laid her 3rd or ultimate proviso that she would take only a little *Ghṛta* once a day as her meal. The same proviso has been depicted in *SkP* III.1.28.27 wherein *Urvaśī* laid it as her 4th or ultimate proviso. Though the taking of *Ghṛta* as her meal has been depicted in the Vedic literature just as a mere means of her sustenance and not as a proviso of her marriage, it has been represented as the final proviso laid by *Urvaśī* in all these three *Purāṇas*. En passant it may be pointed out that the wording of the verse in *ŚB* XI.5.1.10 is a verbatim copy of the *Ṛgvedic* verse given in *ṚV* X.95.16 wherefrom the *Purāṇas* derived the final proviso regarding the diet of *Urvaśī*. Although the theme of this final proviso is identical in all these *Purāṇas*, the wording, mode of expression and its representation are to some extent different from those of one another. In spite of this the Vedic impact on these *Purāṇas* cannot be denied. Besides this a point of minor difference between the Vedic and the puranic content regarding the meal of *Urvaśī* may be noted. Both the *ṚV* and the *ŚB* have referred to her taking *Ghṛta* once a day as her meal; whereas these three *Purāṇas* (i.e. the *ViṣP*, the *BhāgP* and the *SkP*) have merely mentioned that she would take only *Ghṛta* as her meal without pointing out how many times she would take it per day.

Except those provisos, there was another proviso laid by Urvaśī in the *SkP* that he would never feed her on orts.⁴¹ But reference to it is found neither in the *ṚV*, nor in the *ŚB*, nor even in the other three Purāṇas.

Both the aforesaid identical verses of *ṚV* X.95.16 and *ŚB* XI.5.1.10 have mentioned that Urvaśī dwelt four years with Purūravā among the mortals, which has been denoted by the phrase, *rātrīḥ śaradaścatasrah;* but the mythologists have altered and exaggerated this Vedic datum in the Purāṇas.⁴² According to the information recorded in the *ViṣP* Urvaśī spent with Purūravā a very long happy conjugal life of sixty thousand years with extreme amusement and rapture.⁴³ The content of the verse given in *BhāgP* IX.14.25 indicates that they lived a very long life in this mortal world,⁴⁴ but as per the *AgP* Purūravā and Urvaśī spent a very happy connubial life of 59 years.⁴⁵ On the other hand, it is found in *SkP* III.1.28.29 that they enjoyed a long joyful conjugal life of 61 years.⁴⁶ It indicates that the authors of these Purāṇas were more dependent on their whims and fancy than on the Vedic data while depicting these episodes.

It is found that a good many episodes of this puranic legend have been influenced more by the *ŚB* than by the *ṚV*. For instance the episode depicted in *ViṣP* IV.6.33, *BhāgP* IX.14.33 and *SkP* III.1.28.43 may be compared. It has been said in the *ViṣP* that when Purūravā was suffering from depression and dejection out of pangs of estrangement from Urvaśī and frantically wandering all around in search of her, he suddenly came across her in the Ambhoja Sarovara of Kurukṣetra where she was sporting in water surrounded by four of her confidantes.⁴⁷ On the other hand it is said in the *BhāgP* that Purūravā found Urvaśī on the bank of the Sarasvati in Kurukṣetra while she was surrounded by five confidantes.⁴⁸ It is to be noted that the place where he found her was Ambhoja Sarovara of Kurukṣetra in the *ViṣP* and the bank of the Sarasvati in Kurukṣetra in the *BhāgP*. Furthermore a slight disparity is also found in the number of her confidantes. They were only four in both the *ViṣP* and the *SkP*; whereas they were five in the *BhāgP*. It has been expressed in *SkP* III.1.28.43 that Urvaśī was

then sporting with four *Apsaris* on the bank of a lake full of lotus in Kurukṣetra. There is considerable discrepancy between the versions of *ŚB* XI.5.1.4 and that of *SkP* III.1.28.43. The latter has not mentioned the name of the lotus-lake and has clearly expressed that Urvaśī was sporting with her four confidantes on the shore, not in the water of the lake as stated in *ŚB* XI.5.1.4. Although no reference to this episode is found in the *ṚV*, there is a vivid delineation of this episode even in the *ŚB* wherein it has been said that Urvaśī saw Purūravā while she was sporting in water with her confidantes in the form of a goose in a lake full of lotus-clump named Anyataḥplakṣā in Kurukṣetra.⁴⁹ Then inspired and advised by her confidantes she herself appeared before Purūravā in her real figure. It is quite evident that the mythologists were so strongly influenced by the depiction of this episode of the *ŚB* that they referred to Kurukṣetra as the tryst for their reconciliation in these Purāṇas. While depicting the residual portion of this episode the authors of the Purāṇas have not resorted to verbal copying of the *ŚB*; they rather diversified some events and nomenclature by altering them as per their whims and fancy.

It is found in *ViṣP* IV.6.34, *BhāgP* IX.14.35- 40 and *SkP* III. 1.28.45-47 that Urvaśī informed Purūravā of her pregnancy, but she refused to return with him. Then she advised Purūravā to return to that very place again just after one year. She further added that then she would return him their son and again cohabit with him that night. Almost an identical episode is found even in *ŚB* XI.5.1.11. The immediately subsequent episode depicted in the *ŚB* does not agree with what has been depicted in the *SkP*. The *ViṣP*, the *BhāgP* and the *SkP* indicate that Urvaśī handed over an extremely pious son named Āyu to him when he returned to that place just after one year and reunited with her. Then she conceived five other sons as a result of her further cohabitation with Purūravā that night; but what has been stated in *ViṣP* IV.6.36 and *SkP* III.1.28.52 and 53 is not found in the *ŚB*. It is found in *BhāgP* IX.14.39 and 40 that just after one year he went again to the rendezvous on the bank of the Sarasvati in Kurukṣetra and gained his son. Then he cohabited with her once more that night and

as per her advice he sang hymns to propitiate the *Gandharvas* and thus achieved a sacred fire-pan from them.

The events narrated in *ViṣP* IV.6.37-42, *BhāgP* IX.14.41-45 and *SkP* III.1.28.54-65 seem to have been composed after the course of incidents delineated in *ŚB* XI.5.1.12 and 13; though there is considerable difference in its language and style of presentation. The same hackneyed and tedious tale as found in *ŚB* XI.5.1.12 and 13 has been renewed in the aforesaid portion of the *VṣP*, the *BhāgP* and the *SkP*. As per Urvaśī's counsel Purūravā prayed to *Gandharvas* to grant him a boon so that he might attain the same *loka* (world) as the *Gandharvas* existed in. Then having been propitiated the *Gandharvas* too offered him a sacred fire-pan. While returning home both with his son and the fire-pan, he considered it useless to carry the fire-pan instead of Urvaśī. He, therefore, abandoned the fire-pan in the forest and went home back only with his son. It is found in *ViṣP* IV.6.42 and *SkP* III.1.28.61 that Purūravā, having realised his blunder, returned at midnight to that very spot of the deep forest where he left the fire-pan; but no such definite time of his return to the forest for fetching the fire-pan has been mentioned in the *ŚB*. Except this slight difference the whole episode is almost the same as it has been depicted in the *ŚB*. The subsequent part of this episode is identical in both these texts. The *ViṣP* IV.6.42 and the *SkP* III.1.28.63-65 too indicate that Purūravā noticed an *Aśvattha* tree (*ficus religiosa*) inside the *Śamī* tree (*mimosa suma*), when he returned to that place, just as it has been found in the *ŚB*.

The *BhāgP* and the *AgP*, on the contrary, represent the episode with remarkable alteration. As per *BhāgP* IX.14.42-46 Purūravā was so lustful and libidinous that out of aberration he erroneously took the fire-pan for his fiancée (Urvaśī) and carrying it in his lap he roamed about hither and thither through the forest.⁵⁰ When he came to his innate sentience, he left the fire-pan in the forest and returned home. Then he used to contemplate his fiancée every night.⁵¹ When the sense and inspiration of bounden duties and the three *Vedas* awoke in him with the advent of *Tretā-Yuga*, he went to that forest in search of the deserted fire-pan. There he found an *Aśvattha* tree growing inside the trunk of a *Śamī* tree. He collected two pieces of *Aśvattha* sticks from it and

uttering incantations he derived the sacred fire called *Jātavedā* by the friction between those two logs.⁵² By virtue of knowledge of the three *Vedas* the emperor (Purūravā) divided that fire into three qualitative categories, viz. *Gārhapatyāgni*, *Āhavanīyāgni* and *Dakṣināgni* and considered those kinds of fire as his sons.

According to the *ŚB* XI.5.1.13-17 the sacred fire and the fire-pan were transformed into an *Aśvattha* tree and a *Śamī* tree respectively. The same yarn has been spun in the *ViṣP*, the *BhāgP* and the *SkP* in different style and language. It has been depicted in the *ŚB* XI.5.1.14-17 that Purūravā went back to *Gandharvas* with the flint-sticks of both *Aśvattha* and *Śamī* and learnt from them how to produce the sacred sacrificial fire. On the other hand, it is found in *ViṣP* IV.6.43- 46 and *SkP* III.1.28.66 - 71 that he brought home back that *Aśvattha* tree with which he prepared finger-sized flint-sticks (*Araṇī*) while he was reciting *Gāyatrī-Mantra*.⁵³ Then he derived three kinds of sacrificial fire by manipulating those pieces of *Araṇīs*. Having performed Vedic sacrifices therewith he attained *Gandharvaloka*. What the *Gandharvas* taught Purūravā about the 3rd method of producing fire by using only the *Aśvattha* sticks as depicted in *ŚB* XI.5.1.16 and what has been stated next to it in *ŚB* XI.5.1.17 about how he attained *Gandharvaloka* by producing the sacred fire and offering sacrifices therewith have certainly influenced the episode depicted both in *ViṣP* IV.6.43-46 and *SkP* III.1.28.66-71. All these little events have been depicted more elaborately in *BhāgP* IX.14.41-49. Moreover, it has been seen in the *BhāgP* that by dint of this sacred fire he performed *Yajñas* in which he offered sacrifices to Śrīhari, the Supreme God.⁵⁴ It has been said in all these *Purāṇas* that Purūravā performed *Yajñas* by virtue of that sacred fire which he himself derived by dint of the aforesaid flint-sticks. As a reward of such religious performances and piety he was entitled to attain *Gandharvaloka*.

The episodes delineated in *BhāgP* XI.26 and *SkP* III 1.28.72-92 are totally novel additions. It is found in *BhāgP* XI.26 that Purūravā afterwards left *Gandharvaloka* when he became free from all passions and when stoicism or apathy towards worldly interests awakened in him. It has also been found in the *BhāgP* that Śrīkrṣṇa referred to this

awakening of apathy in Purūravā while he was preaching to Uddhava about religious and philosophical knowledge.⁵⁵ He also referred to the fact that Purūravā experienced the nature of the Supreme God by virtue of self-introspection. The reference to Purūravā's worshipping Śrīhari and the episode of Śrīkṛṣṇa's preaching to Uddhava is totally a new addition to this legend in the *BhāgP*.

The *ŚB* has concluded the legend with Purūravā's attainment of *Gandharvaloka*, which is certainly indicative of his happy reunion or reconciliation with Urvaśī in the *Gandharvaloka*. The *SkP*, however, has annexed further episodes to this legend and thus augmented it. According to the *SkP* III.1.28.72-92 Purūravā and Urvaśī were again separated from each other, because they were imprecated by Tumburu, an expert in dramaturgy. Once Urvaśī smiled at Purūravā while she was performing her dance in front of Indra and Purūravā too smiled at her. Tumburu, the great expert in dramaturgy, noticed it and got angry at their laughing over. He anathematised them that they would be separated from each other very soon and would have to suffer the pangs of separation. Then Purūravā made an apology to Indra for his indecent laughing over. Indra advised him to bathe in the sacred water of Sādhyāmṛta-tīrtha in order to be free from his imprecation. Having bathed in the holy water of Sādhyāmṛta-tīrtha Purūravā got rid of his curse and reunited with Urvaśī in Amarāvati.

Addition of such a new episode to this legend substantiates the excoigative power of the mythologist who perhaps attempted to impart moral instruction to common people that any kind of negligence in one's performance should be punishable.

Though no elaborate episode about Purūravā and Urvaśī as found in *ViṣP* IV.6.36-46, *BhāgP* IX.14.41-49 and *SkP* III. 1.28.52 - 71 is available in the *AgP*, quite a new idea that Agni originated from the womb of Urvaśī as the son of Purūravā has been interpolated here in *AgP* CCLXXIV.14. Here it has been said that just after the commencement of the 2nd epoch called *Tretā-Yuga* Purūravā attained *Gandharvaloka* by virtue of religious contemplation. This portion is to some extent identical with the content depicted in *BhāgP* IX.14.46;⁵⁶ therefore it seems to be influenced by it. Agni, son of Purūravā and Urvaśī, has been

called the inaugurator of *Tretā-Yuga* in the *AgP*, whereas the content of the *BhāgP* IX.14.49 indicates that Purūravā only imagined Agni as his son and he himself was the inaugurator of the three *Vedas* and three kinds of sacred fire.⁵⁷

Other Purāṇas

Except these four *Mahāpurāṇas* which have been chosen here for discussion there are a few other Purāṇas which have also included this legend. Some of these Purāṇas are not so much influenced by the Vedic source as by the anterior Purāṇas. Sometimes some homogeneous or congeneric episodes from the anterior Purāṇas have been interpolated in this legend. Some Purāṇas refer to some of the characters of this legend in various contexts without representing this legend. In order to restrict this discussion within a reasonable range only the reference to the other Purāṇas in which the discussion of this legend is found, is given below with special reference to the sections wherein these are found: *BḍP* II.14-25, *MārP* CXI.6-18, *VāP* LXXXV.18 and 23, *MatP* XXIV.9-33, *KūrP Pūrvabhāga* XXII.1 & 2, *VāmP* LXXIX.84, *BrP* X.1-12 and *GḍP Pūrvakhaṇḍa* CXLII.3, CXLIII.2 and 3.

Conclusion

Ṛgvedic Legends through the Ages by H.L. Hariyappa, *Legends in Purāṇas* by S.G. Kantawala, *Vedic Mythology* by A Hillebrandt, *Hindu Mythology Vedic and Puranic* by W.J. Wilkins and *Legends in the Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇas and Their Subsequent Development in the Rāmāyaṇa & Mahābhārata* by Sanjiban Sengupta are the most important and remarkable research works on Vedic and post-Vedic legends. Among them none but S.G. Kantawala has dealt with *The Legend of Purūravā and Urvaśī*; but he has unfortunately missed the proper chronological development of this legend, as he has not included the evolution of this legend as found in the *ViṣP*. He has traced and discussed the Ṛgvedic source of this legend and has shown the subsequent development of it in the *ŚB* and then he has directly come to the discussion of the rehashed form of this legend as depicted in the *BhāgP* without any reference to its evolution in the *ViṣP*. In the aforesaid book he avoided further attempt to reveal the subsequent development

of it in the later Purāṇas. With a view to filling up this research gap and furnishing an almost complete post-Vedic form of this legend I have ventured on discussing how it evolved through the *Viṣṭ* and how it flourished in a few other posterior Purāṇas.

A subtle critical review of the chronological development of this legend from the Vedic literature to the puranic one has proved that a successive influence of the anterior literature on the posterior one remained active all along its progress through the literature of different ages. Thus the archetype of the legend in *ṚV* X.95 has directly dominated the legend depicted in *ŚB* XI.5.1 wherein it has been represented on the whole in a reasonable shape with agreeable perfection. It is usually found that the component parts of most of the other legends are generally collected from various *Ṛg*vedic hymns; but this legend has been formed of only a single *Ṛg*vedic hymn. This is due to its dramatic structure in the form of a dialogue. Since this hymn has been represented in the form of a dialogue which is popularly known as *Samvāda-Sūkta*, it assumed a dramatic shape in the *ṚV*. Afterwards it has achieved perfection in the *ŚB*, as it has fulfilled all the deficiencies of the story and has overcome the weakness of proper linkage of events in it. With the advancement of time the legend has been reshaped in the subsequent puranic literature by way of reformation, augmentation, additions and alterations of events with a view to keeping harmony with the social demands of the post-Vedic era and enhancing the quality of the legend. The legend has a deep rooted influence not only on the *Mahāpurāṇas* but also on the contemporary literature. It may be noted that *Vikramorvaśīyam* of Kalidasa is one such excellent example.

In fine, it is gravely important to point out that this legend has evidently exposed the empowerment of the fair-sex in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature. The way in which Urvaśī imposed some pre-conditions upon Purūravā for being married to him has evidently denoted an authoritative predominance and ascendancy of women power in the contemporary society and again, the manner in which Urvaśī rudely and authoritatively jilted Purūravā on trivial ground and overruled his supplication for conversing and coming back with

him has sufficiently substantiated the domineering authority of the then women community of India. Moreover, it is to be noted that Śacī, wife of Indra, was also found to exercise such woman power when she cleverly outwitted and expelled Nahuṣa from heaven (SkPI. 1.15.61-87). Many such instances of empowerment of the fair-sex in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature have directly or indirectly been recorded in different contexts. This order and custom of women empowerment as found in this legend is still in force even in the present Indian society. The key to female emancipation as well as the women empowerment even today in the modern Indian society is no doubt implied in this legend.

Notes

- ¹ Although many precursory savants have used the name Purūravas, the uninflected form (i.e. prātipadika) of Purūravā, the inflected form Purūravā, which has been derived by adding suffix, has been frequently used in almost all the Sanskrit texts. That is why the derivative Purūravā has been intentionally and deliberately used throughout this article.
- ² Hazra, R.C., *Studies in the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*. pp. - 174 - 188. Banerji, S.C., *Studies in the Mahāpurāṇas*, p. - 12.
- ³ ṚV X.95.16.
- ⁴ ṚV X.95.14 and 15.
- ⁵ ṚV X.95.16.
- ⁶ ṚV X.95.18.
- ⁷ ŚB XI.5.1.
- ⁸ ŚB XI.5.1.1.
- ¹⁰ ŚB XI.5.1.4.
- ¹¹ ŚB XI.5.1.4.
- ¹² ŚB XI.5.1.8 and 9.
- ¹³ ŚB XI.5.1.10.
- ¹⁴ ŚB XI.5.1.11.
- ¹⁵ ŚB XI.5.1.13.
- ¹⁶ ŚB XI.5.1.14-17.
- ¹⁷ *iti tvā devā ima āhuraila yathemetadbhavasī mṛtyuvandhuḥ*. ṚV X.95.18.
- ¹⁸ *ViṣP* IV.1.8 and 9 and *BhāḡP* IX.1.21 and 22.
- ¹⁹ *kanyelā ca manorāsīdbudhāttasyām purūravāḥ purūravasamutpādya selā sudyumnatāṅgatā*. *AgP* CCLXXIII.7.
- ²⁰ *urvaśī hapasarḥ*. ŚB XI.5.1.1.
- ²¹ *antarikṣaprāṇm rajaso vimānīmupa śikṣāmyurvaśīm vasiṣṭhaḥ* ṚV X.95.17.
- ²² *yadvirūpācaram martyeṣvavasam rātrīḥ śaradaścatasrah ... etc.* ṚV X.95.16.
- ²³ *yam satyavādinamatirūpavantaṁ mitrāvaruṇaśāpānmānuṣe loke mayā vastavyam iti kṛtamatirurvaśī dadarśa*. *ViṣP* IV.6.20.

- ²⁴ *mitrāvaruṇāyohi śāpādāpannā naralokatām.
niśamya puruṣaśreṣṭhaṁ kandarpamiva rūpiṇam.
dhr̥tiṁ viṣṭabhya lalanā upataste tadantike. BhāgP IX.14.17.*
- ²⁵ "... mitrāvaruṇaśāpena bhuvan̄m prāporovaśī dvijāḥ || Sā cacārorovaśī tatra rājñastasya purāntike | .. sāpi kāmāturā tatra rājānam̄ pratyabhāṣata | bhavatoevaṁ naraśreṣṭha samayaṁ yadi me bhavān. SkP III. 1.28. 19 -23.
- ²⁶ RV.X. 95.11.
- ²⁷ ŚB XI.5.1.1
- ²⁸ RV X.95.5.
- ²⁹ ŚB XI.5.1.1.
- ³⁰ ... *daṇḍena hatādakāmā sma mā nipadyāsai ...* ŚB XI.5.1.1.
- ³¹ *mo sma tvā nagna-ndarśameṣa vai na strīṇāmupacāra iti.* ŚB XI.5.1.1.
- ³² ViṣP IV.6.29.
- ³³ BhāgP IX.14.22.
- ³⁴ *na nagno dṛśyase rājana kadāpi yadi vai tathā.* SkP III.1.28.26.
- ³⁵ ViṣP IV.6.30-31 and SkP III.1.28.30-42.
- ³⁶ BhāgP IX.14.26-31.
- ³⁷ *atatāmānayaṣyāmi devalokamiti dvijaḥ | viśvāvasurvicāryyaiṣām
bhūrlokamaḡamataḡaṣaṇāt | urvaśyāḥ samayaṁ rājñā viśvāvasurayaṁ saha | viditvā
saha gandharvaih̄ samaveto niśāntare ||* SkP III.1.28.31 and 32.
- ³⁸ BhāgP IX.14.21 and SkP III.1.28.25.
- ³⁹ ViṣP IV.6.28, BhāgP IX.14.21. SkP III.1.28.25 and ŚB XI.5.1.2 - 4.
- ⁴⁰ *ghṛtasya stokaṁ sakṛdahna āśnām̄ tādevedaṁ tātrpāṇā carāmi.* RV X.95.16.
- ⁴¹ *nocchiṣṭam̄ mama dadyāścettadā vatsye tavāntike.* SkP III.1.28.26.
- ⁴² *yadvirūpācarāṁ martyeṣvavasāṁ rātrih̄ śaradaścatasraḥ ghṛtasya stokaṁ sakṛdaha
āśśrāntādevedantātrpāṇā carāmi'ti ...* ŚB XI.5.1.10.
- ⁴³ ViṣP IV.6.29.
- ⁴⁴ *ramamāṇastayā ... tanmukhāmodamuṣito mumude' hargaṇān bahūn ||* BhāgP IX.14.25.
- ⁴⁵ AgP CCLXXIV.13.
- ⁴⁶ *ekaṣaṣṭiṁ sa varṣāṇi ramamāṇastayānayat.* SkP III.1.28.29.
- ⁴⁷ ViṣP IV.6.33.
- ⁴⁸ BhāgP IX.14.33.
- ⁴⁹ ŚB XI.5.1.4 and 5.
- ⁵⁰ BhāgP IX.14.42.
- ⁵¹ BhāgP IX.14.43.
- ⁵² BhāgP IX.14.43 - 46.
- ⁵³ ViṣP IV.6.43-44 and SkP III.1.28.66-68.
- ⁵⁴ BhāgP IX.14.-47.
- ⁵⁵ BhāgP XI.26.25.
- ⁵⁶ *tasya nirmanthanājjīto jātavedā vibhāvasuḥ/trayyā sa vidyayā rājñā putratve
kalpitastrivṛt ||* BhāgP IX.14.46.
- ⁵⁷ BhāgP IX.14.49 and AgP CCLXXIV.14.

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Revisiting Some Areas of Ṭhākurmar Jhuli : The Magical Journey of Folk-Tales

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Abstract

Ṭhākurmār Jhuli (Grandmother's Bag of Tales) is one of the pioneer collections of some floating folk narratives of undivided Bengal. It was compiled and illustrated by Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumdar. The book was originated at a time that was infused with excitement of the '1905-1907' Anti-Partition Movement of Bengal (Banga Bhanga Birodhi Andolon) and got first published in 1907. The 20th century Bengal welcomed traditional oral narratives as their own identity. It also served the purpose of expressing the nationalistic emotion as that has been pointed by Rabindranath Tagore in the prefatory note of this book. The publication of this book coincides with the socio-political environment of Bengal. This paper will particularly address to the third section of the book that is the Animal and Household tales which is called "Cyāñ-Byāñ". In Bengali the word "Cyāñ-Byāñ" is a nonsensical one but if we go through the texts, it can be proved that these texts reveal the social formation of rural folk world in a satiric and sarcastic mood. From the "Pāthshālā" of "Śiyāl Paṇḍit (fox)" to the journey of a thumb-like boy who becomes the prince (Pippalkumar) or the tale of some poor Brahmin and his wife or the story of "Sukhu-Dukhu" — they portray their struggle for life. "Cyāñ-Byāñ" is basically stories which question the differences in the social system and policy making and household politics. This paper will try to address the formation of a 'Folk-Narrative telling' or how the collective unconscious of the anonymous mind is revolting against the ruling power in a humorous mode and ultimately how they are winning.

Key Words: *Ṭhakurmār Jhuli*, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumdar, Swadeshi Movement, Bengali folk narrative, Collective-Unconscious, Magic-Journey, Oral literature.

“Once upon a time there lived a...” more these words create the beginning of a magical journey of storytelling to ignite the young minds with some mystic and imaginative excitements. Over hundred and ten years one book has made itself mandatory with overwhelming response to be a Bengali household collection. It is a book of Bengali Folk-Tales and Fairy-Tales (mostly known as ‘Rupakathā’). It is a collection of stories by Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder named as “Ṭhakurmār Jhuli” (Grandmother’s Bag of Tales”) and was published in the year 1907 (1314 in Bengali)¹. The inspirations to collect stories from different parts of Bengal came from renowned folklorist Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen. Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder has mentioned his name in the introductory part of the book².

The tales of *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* mainly follows the structure of ‘Rūpakathā’ with frequent use of fantastic scenarios and hyperbolic incidents within the premise of the tales. Binaries of good and evil are common troops: it also has the use of talking animals and material things. The element of wonder and surprise are the main reason for the popularity of the book. Besides, it also had a special Socio-Political background in spite of being a popular text when it got published. Basically from the young reader’s point of view, tales of legends, rites, rituals, myths and origin are narrated to provide the sense of History and heritage of cultural traditions. The text of *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* had that sense of ethnicity and Bengal’s original essence as well as some natural elements of Socio-Cultural and Anthropological element which are common between most of the orally transmitted text.

Born in 1877, in the village of Ulail near Savar in Dhaka, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder³ lost his mother early and settled at Mymansingh. He was brought up by Rajlaksmi Devi, his paternal aunt. He again shifted to Murshidabad for his education, started writing in different journals. Finally he returned to Mymansing again

and started to collect tales, hymns, and ballads with inspiration from Sri Dinesh Chandra Sen. His vast academic collection and edited works have given the Folk Literature of Bengal a permanent place and huge popularity in Bengali Literature.

Every collection of tales published by Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder has a certain distinction of names. While *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* (1907) is subtitled to “Banglār Rūpakathā”, *Ṭhākurdādār Jhuli* (1909) is subtitled to “Banglār Kathasāhitya” and “Dadamashaiyer Thole (1913)” is subtitled to “Banglār Rasakathā”. Every single name points to a robust yet fragile old time generation of grandparents only to distinguish the character of the narratives as a long-hereditary process. The whole series came under a final name of “Mātri- Granthāboli” (Collected Tales of The Mother).

Not only this, the collection in *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* is also classified into four categories: Tales of adventure (Dudher Sāgar), Tales of Demons (Rūp-tarāsī), Animal and Household Tales (Cyān-Byān), and a poem which puts the children to sleep (Aām-Sandesh). The other volumes also had the same sub-parts to describe the quality characteristics of the tales collected. Anyway, beside the earnest initiative of collecting the oral texts, Dakshinaranjan’s *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* served another interesting purpose as well.

In the first decade of twentieth century, the vast treasure trove of oral Folk-Narratives were recovered, recreated and reinvented by the educated Bengali middle-class mostly with an intension to rediscover our ethnic identity as a nation. The quest began in the late nineteenth century by a pioneer person Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen. Chandrakumar Dey, collected many Ballads from the hill area of Cachar and Bangladesh. After this, Jyotirindranath Tagore and Rabindranath Tagore himself joined in this holy initiative to recover the orally-transmitted texts, songs, ballads, riddles, poems and proverbs. As for *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli*, the introductory note was written by Rabindranath Tagore.⁴ He clearly signified its another substantial identity of political and nationalist edge to this enterprise of recovering the heritage of

rural Bengal to fit in with the current colonial and anti-British movement of the 'Partition of Bengal' or the 'Swadeshi Movement'.

'Swadeshi'— the word can much more be defined as a sentiment rather than a movement. The term is closely associated with many phases of Indian Nationalist Movement. The indigenous goods should be preferred by consumers relating to their imported substitutes. The 'Swadeshi' spirit manifested itself through economic activities having a patriotic component. Its goal was to reach out to the English educated elite society of Kolkata which was unaware of their traditional oral literature. The leaders of the *Bangabhanga Birodhī Āndolan* (1905-1907) tried to convince the people to believe in self-help and self-power.⁵

Focusing on the "Anti-Partition Movement of Bengal", Rabindranath Tagore took a great initiative for the cultural sect. Time and again, in his writings and lectures⁶ he returned to the fundamental problem of the alienation of the 'Learned Upper-Class' from the mass and suggested most notably in his lectures a variety of imaginative forms of popular education, including the use of traditional folk media (The Mēlā, The Yātrā, The Kathokatā) as well as the modern audio-visual method of Magic-lantern talks. It is for the reason that the folk-literature had the innocence and oral-history supported elements to be a 'Swadeshi' product which could be matched with those sentiments of the leaders and the urban-centric Bengali sector who were mainly attached to this particular movement of *Boycott* and *Swadeshi*.

Thus, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder's *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* came with a flash of that 'Swadeshi' feeling and got its first popular approach as a mass oriented talk-narrative collection with the nationalist background engrossed. *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* also got endorsements from the renowned nationalists like Aurobinda Ghosh, Surendranath Banerjee, Ramendrasundar Tribedi, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Gurudas Banerjee and other leaders.⁷

The 'why' and 'wherefrom' of the primitive mind tried to seek answer in the surrounding animal and planet kingdom. This is the secret of the fascination that the folktales are evenly interesting for

the old, the young, and the younger ones. The tales through fantasies, make-belief situations satisfy the basic curiosity about the unanswered questions of the nature's law. It could be crude and grotesque but in these narratives, lay human societies' evolution and development. This paper attempts to focus on the third part of the selected text, titled "Cyān-Byān". In Bengali, those non-sense words lead to the idea of something unimportant or minimal things. In this part of the text, Dakshinaranjan has addressed the day to day life of the common-man who is mainly the unaware propagator of Folk-psyche. Under this title come four stories: "Śiyāl Paṇḍit", "Sukhu ār Dukhu", "Brāhman-Brāhmaṇī" and "Deḍ- Āṅgule". Parental love, family happiness, children's adventurous habits, love and fear for the unknown, greed, household-politics are some of the usual points of these stories. They reflect the voices of the common mass that yearns for richness and comforts which they cannot usually look for. The upper-stratum of the society or the privileged class also tries to suppress and dominate these people's voices. In folk narratives created by these common-man class thus comes - the princesses, kingdoms, queens, boxes full of Jewels and a overwhelming exaggeration of wealth and happiness. Fantasy brings satisfaction to the deprived section of the society. The folktales are woven around the moral undertone of day to day life; it depicts the struggle of man with his joys, sorrows and ultimately fulfilment of his wishes.

The four stories of *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* come in four different shades of the society. The story of "Śiyāl Paṇḍit" is about a crocodile and a sly fox where the crocodile comes out as a fool and the sly fox, being a cunning animal defeat everyone. At the end of the story, however he is punished by falling from a Palm-Tree. The point is to be noticed here is the schooling or the educational system which is addressed in the story. The original storyline revolved around the crocodile bringing along seven of his children to the school (Pathshala) of the Fox by the side of the river. Otherwise the school was full of implants of the

tortoise, the crab and some insects.⁸ The school was residential one so crocodile had to keep his children there with a promise from Śiyāl Paṇḍit's end that the children will be safe and educated. As soon as the Crocodile left, Śiyāl Paṇḍit, everyday ate one of the healthy children of the Crocodile. When the final day came, Crocodile came ready to take back home his children, only to find that the bones of his babies are left on the floor. The school is all vanished and the Paṇḍit had fled away. After several attempts, the Crocodile failed to catch hold of the Fox. Primarily the story gives us the moral that the tricky one will get out of any bad situation and the fool one will get defeated. But at the same time, it is also addressed to the unreal education system of the society where this kind of Paṇḍits are found who, 'gradually corrupts the young minds with their bad intension and negative thoughts'. However, ultimately, the tricky ways of Śiyāl Paṇḍit comes to an end when it falls from a Palm-tree all by its own fault. The unconscious mass minds thus, do an equal justice to the helpless Crocodile.

Next two stories "Sukhu-Dukhu" and "Brāhmaṇ-Brāhmaṇī" evolves around household corners of Bengal. The rural surroundings of these two stories reflect the thoughts, beliefs and quarrels between the women of rural Bengal. The simplest ones of the Bengali women folk, how they fulfil their hidden wishes to become a princess or a poor Brāhmaṇī, how she becomes a rich wealthy family member of the 'Rājsabhā' are the main tone of these two stories.

In the story of "Brāhmaṇ-Brāhmaṇī", the horrible and aggressive picture of a Brāhmaṇī depicted who had to run a family of two with no income guaranteed. This helpless situation, turns out her quarrelsome characteristics as a homemaker concerning the regular duties as a housewife.⁹ The Brāhmaṇ, unemployed and illiterate, manages to earn some money by playing tricks with other casual people. Here, the Brāhmaṇ takes some astrological illusions to befool other persons and by any means, manages to earn some money for his family. The story depicts a scene from any poor household quarrel to a satirist approach of the Brahmin Class of Bengal and their unfair ways to earn money

from the common subjects. It narrates the very common internal issues of any poor to poorer livelihood of certain families of rural Bengal, where the supreme institution, “The Rājā”, is detached and aloof from his tenants and his kingdom. The story ultimately does justice to that poor Brāhmaṇ where he succeeds to find a necklace of the princess which was stolen by theft and gets a strong position at the said *Rājsabhā*. The quarrelsome Brāhmaṇī transforms into a happily married woman.¹⁰ The in-between storyline reflects a world of household chaos, a fractious woman, an opportunist and cunning Brahmin who is represented from a negative and satiric approach from the originator of the story.

“Sukhu-Dukhu” is comparatively much more analysed in folk-literature world as a type-story of two sisters. The stories of two wives of one person and the predicament of his children by the first wife are much common in the world of folktales. Here also, the setting of the story remains in typical Bangladesh and the motifs become all the same. The good and poor people win over the bad and rich. A well behaved girl like Sukhu gets the boon of “Cāder Buḍi-mā” and transform into a princess with lots of property and wealth. In opposite, Dukhu, who is ill-mannered and rude, gets cursed by the same “Cāder Buḍi-mā” and dies over extreme gluttony. The most noticeable thing in the story is, the hatred and internal tension between the rival wives and their daughters with the co-wife and Sukhu. Dakshinaranjan has unfailingly addressed the terms of the rural Bengal by putting the idioms and phrases and attitudes behind those raising arrogant voices.¹¹

The most interesting story of the whole collection is “deḍ-āṅgule”, by nature which is the most unique one also. Characterwise it is much more similar to the European Folk-tale “Thumbalina”. But the world around “Thumbalina” was more imaginary and fantastic by nature. “deḍ-āṅgule”, on the other hand reveals the daily life of a practical world where people struggle to live and within their course of life, their journey to fulfill their hidden wishes to live in a better state, to reach to the expected wonderland, where everyone is equal and everybody is happy, rich and settled.

The story of “deḍ-āṅgule” represents that journey from some common person to the becoming of a prince. A poor woodcutter and his wife had no children. One day, an age-old lady in a forest gave that woodcutter a cucumber, which was to be eaten to have a baby. But the woodcutter, overwhelmed by joy to have a healthy baby forgot to tell his wife about the rules to eat that cucumber, So, the ‘Broto’ rule was flouted and the woodcutter’s wife ate the cucumber without observing the proper rituals. As a result, a tiny baby came with the height of just one and half thumb inches and with a long tied hair. Seeing the deformed child, the woodcutter left the house and set sail. The child, named as “deḍ-āṅgule” began his quest to find his father, the lost woodcutter.

Mostly in all fairy-tales (in Bengali, Rūpakatha), it is found that the little prince starts his quest to recover some hidden treasure or does some difficult tasks to gain the princess and her property. Here, “deḍ-āṅgule’s” journey remains the same, the difference is only that “deḍ-āṅgule” is a common-man, without having a kingdom or any assistance, ultimately succeeds to find his father and also becomes the prince. The journey is different from all the other typical fairy-tales, but at the end the journey and struggle of a nominal person as “deḍ-āṅgule” also becomes a fairy-tale-like journey. The obstacles, which come in deḍ-āṅguley’s” way, are also much more materialistic. He came to know that the woodcutter has mortgaged himself to the king of that country. The only way to release him from the supreme authority is money. “deḍ-āṅgule” had to manage that money by any means, fair or foul! In that process, he was helped by a frog and a blacksmith. After that deḍ-āṅgule also helped the king by repulsing a herd of thieves who were disturbing his country. The coins, the frog and its wife, the woodcutter, the blacksmith, the thieves and even the princes (Chokh-Bindhulī or Blind) do not represent the smooth and subtle world of fairy-tales, but leave us in a practical and material world where people fight everyday for their rights where everyone tries to become a full-heighten person from the measurement of “deḍ-

āṅgule". "deḍ-āṅguley" is the story of a hero who had to fight for everything he conquered and then only he was able to fetch his family's freedom from the king.

Thus, it can undoubtedly be said that "deḍ-āṅguley" is the most appropriate tale to end a volume like *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli* and also the "Cyāñ-Byāñ" part of the book. Specially, this tale holds on complete opposite view of the idea of "Rūpakathā" where the collective unconscious of the mass voice represents a revolt against the utmost grey and negative shaded idea of the institution and its representative 'The Rājā', who unfairly treats his subjects or rivets them from their freedom of livinghood. Side by side, "deḍ-āṅguley", after being the prince does not forget his original self and stays down to the earth. The binary nature of common-man, who forms the Folk-story by their willing suspension of disbelief, becomes ultimately the world of wish-fulfillment by the protesting hymns of numerous numbers of "deḍ-āṅguley" against the all odd and negative forces portrayed in Folk-Narratives. The magical journey, the success and the happy-endings basically make each "deḍ-āṅgule" to a wholesome "Pippalkumār". They come with an equal and balanced kingdom where, "deḍ-āṅgule" Pippalkumar runs his kingdom for the first half of the day, and cuts wood in the forest with his father for the rest of the day "... Khut Khut Khut"¹².

Notes

¹ The author has cited the following Edition :

Sri Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli*, Mitra and Ghosh Publishers, Calcutta, 37th Edition 1994 (সপ্তত্রিংশ সংস্করণ, ১৯০০).

The introductory note given by the publisher Sri Sabitendranath Roy is attached with this edition. That is dated ১লা ফাল্গুন, ১৩৭৬ (Bengali Year). The first edition was dated ভাদ্র ১৩১৪ (Bengali Year) by Dakshinaranjan.

² Sri Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Ṭhākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, p.16. In the introductory part Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder wrote that though the book was published in a hurry but it is to be said that the inspiration behind the book goes to his learned and beloved senior Sri Dinesh Chandra Sen. He also mentioned the collection as the essence of the motherland of Bengal (দেশজনীর স্নেহধারা).

- ³ বারিদবরণ ঘোষ (সম্পাদিত), দক্ষিণারঞ্জন মিত্র মজুমদারের জীবনালেখ্য, দক্ষিণারঞ্জন রচনাসমগ্র (২য় খণ্ড), মিত্র ও ঘোষ প্রকাশনী, কলকাতা, দ্বিতীয় মুদ্রণ ভাদ্র ১৪০৬, ৪।
- ⁴ Sri Dakshinakaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 9. “Is there anything ‘Swadeshi’ than ‘Thakurmar Jhuli’? But, alas, in recent times even these bags full of sweets were manufactured and came from the factories of Manchester. Now a day, our boys only get fairy tales from the West. The grandmother company from our own country got bankrupt...only books! Where are the words of the mothers! Where are the words of our nation’s own?” Rabindranath Tagore thus concluded that this book is the source of Bengals’ deepest adorable original tales (Rupakatha).
- ⁵ Sumit. Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1903-1908)*, People’s publishing House, New Delhi, 2nd reprint February 1994, 92-148.
- ⁶ Rabindranath Tagore, ‘Atmashakti’, Rabindra Rachanabali (volume 2), Viswabharati Publishers, Kolkata, Aagrahayan 1393, 625-641.
“সেই সুমহৎ দিন আসিবার পূর্বে- ‘একবার তোরা মা বলিয়া ডাক!’ যে একমাত্র মা দেশের প্রত্যেককে কাছে টানিবার, অনৈক্য ঘুচাইবার, রক্ষা করিবার জন্য নিয়ত ব্যাপৃত রহিয়াছেন, যিনি আপন ভাণ্ডারের চিরসঞ্চিত জ্ঞানধর্ম নানা আকারে নানা উপলক্ষ্যে আমাদের প্রত্যেকেরই অন্তঃকরণের মধ্যে অশ্রান্তভাবে সঞ্চার করিয়া আমাদের চিত্তকে সুদীর্ঘ পরাধীনতার নিশীথ রাতে বিনাশ হইতে রক্ষা করিয়া আসিয়াছেন... দেশের মধ্যস্থলে সন্তান পরিবৃত যজ্ঞশালায় তাঁহাকে প্রত্যক্ষ উপলব্ধি করো।
- ⁷ Sri Dakshinakaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, First Cover. It is graphed at the cover page of the same text followed in this article where are the quotes from those leaders of the contemporary Swadeshi Movement against the British Raj.
Ramendrasundar Tribedi - The completeness of Bengal.
Sir Gurudas Banerjee- Adorable for the whole country.
Sri Aurobinda Ghosh - New era in Bengali Literature.
Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das- The eternal flute of Bengal.
- ⁸ Sri Dakshinakaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 214.
Dakshinakaranjan here used a rhyme to prove the unimportance of other students. It also evokes the essence of the word “*Cyān-Byān*”.
চিঁ চিঁ পোকা, বিঁবিঁ পোকা, রাম ফড়িঙের ছা/কচ্ছপ, কেম্বো হাজার পা/কেঁচো বিছে গুবরে আরসুলা
ব্যাং/ কাঁকড়া-মাকড়া-এই এই ঠ্যাং!/শিয়াল পণ্ডিতের পাঠশালায় এত এত পড়ুয়া/পড়ুয়াদের পড়ায়
পণ্ডিতের সাড়ায়/শাঁটির বনে দিন-রাত হট্টগোল।
- ⁹ Sri Dakshinakaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 236. The depiction of the first appearance of the Brāhmaṇī comes like this :
“সংসারের যত কাজ ব্রাহ্মণীরই হ’ত করতে, ব্রাহ্মণ শুধু খেতে বসে, ব্রাহ্মণীর হ’ত মরতে। ব্রাহ্মণীটি
যে,- রণচণ্ডী! নথের বাঁকিতে নাক ছিঁড়ে।- মাথার চুলে তৈল নাই, গা-গতরে খইল নাই, ‘নিত্য ভিক্ষা
তনু রক্ষা’, তার ওপর আবার বামুনের চাটাল চাটাল কথা। আলাতন-পালাতন বামনী ঝাড়ে, তা’র
তুষ ফেলে, কি ধান ফেলে!”

¹⁰ Sri Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 249.

The scenario changes at the end of the story. The Up-graded version of that poor Brahmin got recruited as the “Sabhā Paṇḍit” of the *Rajsabha*.

“ত্রিতল প্রাসাদে সেই আগের ব্রাহ্মণ/ সোনার খাটেতে র'ন করিয়া শয়ন। আর তেলে ভাণ্ডার ভেসে যায়, আর গায়ে ধরেনা গয়না, ব্রাহ্মণী তো ভারী খুসী, হেসে ছাড়া-কয়-ই না। এখন-রোজই বামুন পিটা খায় - আহা লক্ষ্মী অতি। শনে' বামনী হেসে কুটিকুটি,- মনের সুখে- পতিসেবা করিতে লাগিলা সুখে সতী”।

¹¹ Sri Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 231.

“চোখ টানিয়া মুখ বাঁকাইয়া - তিন ঝাকনা ভিরকুটি সুখুর মা বলিল- “বালাই! পরের কড়ির ভাগ-বাঁটারি- তার কপালে খ্যাংরা মারি! তেমন পোদ্দারী সুখুর মা করে না! ছাই-নাতা আগর বাগর তোরাই নিয়া ধুইয়া খা। ম'নে ম'নে সুখুর মা বিড় বিড়- ‘শতুরের কপালে আগুন’, ক্যানো আমার সুখু কি জলে ভাসা মেয়ে? দরদ দেখে মরে যাই! কপাল থাকে তো, সুখু আমার কালই আপনি ইন্দ্রের ঐশ্বর্য লুটে আনবে”।

¹² Sri Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder, *Thākurmār Jhuli*, Ibid, 268. The final challenge for the ‘deḍ-āṅgule was to defeat the king of the thief “Chāṅg-Pichhe”, ‘deḍ-āṅgule’ succeeded in that and came to the king for reward; King gave him the name as “Pippal Kumar” and the princess “Chokh-Bindhuli” and also his subservient father. The last line was - “মায়ের দুঃখ গেল, বাপকে সোনার কুড়ুল গ'ড়ে দিল; তখন রাজা শ্বশুর, রানী শাশুড়ি, জামাই-বেয়াইকে’ রাজ্য দিয়া, তপস্যায় গেলেন;- দেড় আঙুলে’ পিপ্পলকুমার এক বেলা রাজ্য করে, এক বেলা বাপের সাথে কাঠ কাটে- খুট-খুট-খুট”!!

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Position of Muslim Women in Nineteenth Century Bengali Society and Efforts for Their Education

Imran Philip

Abstract

The object of my proposed research is to explore the status of Muslim women in the Bengali Muslim society and the idea of reform among Muslim women during the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. I will try to show the effort taken by the government and the reformers for the development of the Muslim women's education in colonial Bengal. From the late 19th century the Muslim intelligentsia started to voice out their opinion. Some women too started writing about issues regarding the well-being of women. Muslim literary journals came out from Calcutta, Dhaka and other provincial towns. I will critically study the writings of both men and women to understand the similarities and differences in their viewpoints regarding the issues of women's role and position in the society. The issues of class and region become important here. What effects did these writings and debates have on women in rural areas or from peasant families? Did their position and status change in their families? How difficult was it for them to create a separate identity from the shadow of patriarchy, poverty and marginalisation in terms of religion?

Keyword: Colonial Bengal, Muslim Women, Identity, Women Emancipation, Education.

Introduction

This paper focuses on the position of women in the Bengali Muslim society and the idea of reform among Muslim women during the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Though numerically

undivided Bengal was a Muslim-majority province, the upper-caste Hindus were more vocal in public life. From the late 19th century the Muslim intelligentsia started to voice out their opinion. Some women too started writing about issues regarding the well-being of women. Muslim literary journals came out from Calcutta, Dhaka and other provincial towns. The present paper has three sections. In the beginning I want to study the situation of the Bengali Muslim women in the first half of the 19th century, the second section deals with the idea of reform among the Bengali Muslim women during late 19th and early 20th century and, lastly I will try to show the efforts taken by the government and the reformer for the development of the Muslim women's education in colonial Bengal. Through this discussion I want to critically interrogate the ways in which the identity of the Muslim women in Bengal got shaped, where religion, class position, patriarchy, and larger political situation played important roles.

The Condition of Muslim Women in the First Half of the 19th Century

Purdah

In the beginning of the 19th century the Bengali Muslim women both in rural and urban areas spent their lives in the inner compartment of the home and they were expected to cover their faces in front of men who were not member of the family.¹ Ghulam Murshid writes that the elite Muslim women were more severely restricted by the code of *purdah*, which implies seclusion and veiling of the face. Muslim girls were often obliged to maintain *purdah* even before marriage.² Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880-1932) in her *Aborodhbāsini* mentioned that when relatives visited she was obliged to observe *purdah* even though she was only five years old.³ Dwelling in the *andarmahal* or *antahpur* Muslim women performed all their household activities — cooking meals, cleaning, handing out rations, washing, looking after children etc. In the rich households there would be plenty of hours of relaxation, such as, story-telling, listening to songs, gossiping, and sewing, reading religious texts or *punthi*.⁴ Rokeya recollects her childhood memories of strict *purdah* system:

From the age of five I had to observe *purdah* and had to conceal myself even from women. Men were, in any case, not allowed free entry into the *Antahpur* (inner house). I was too young to understand what all the fuss was about, yet I would have to conceal myself and observe strict *purdah*.⁵

Child Marriage

Child marriage among the Muslim of Bengal was widely practised. Adam in his education report of 1835 and 1838 mentioned about the custom of child marriage among the Hindu and Muslim societies of Bengal. Islam has not fixed the age of marriage for women. According to Quran, marriage should occur after attaining puberty, which may be even below 15 years.⁶ But in 1876 W.W. Hunter in his *A Statistical Account of Bengal* revealed that: "Both among Muhammedans and Hindus, boys are generally married between the ages of 15 and 20 Girls are usually married at 10 and have no choice. The parents arrange the marriage, if possible, within their own village."⁷

Polygamy

Polygamy was a common feature in both Hindu and Muslim communities in Bengal. According to the Quranic law, a man can marry up to four women on the condition that he will treat all of them equally.⁸ Polygamy marriages were prevalent in the Muslim community of Bengal. In 1876, Hunter mentioned about these practices in his *Statistical Account of Tipperah district*. He writes that "Polygamy is of course permitted among the Muhammedans. If the first wife is quarrelsome or ugly, or there is a great deal of household work, a second wife is required." Ibrahim Khan also mentions about the practice of polygamy in his novel *Bohubibāho*.

Education

In the beginning of the 19th century, educational facilities for women in the indigenous system of learning (*Ṭols*, *Pāḥshālās*, *Maktabas*, and *Mādrāssas*) were virtually non-existent as per the available literature. The social status of women was low and women of the middle and

upper classes led a life of seclusion under the dominance of male family members and interaction with males outside the family was prohibited. Among the upper class Muslim families girls were taught only to read the Quran in Arabic and incidentally to read Urdu and Persian. Women's education was synonymous with religious education. Many parents within the Muslim society disallowed their daughters to go to schools as this was considered violation of the Islamic rules. Besides that the Muslims feared that the English education might lead to Christian conversion, naturally they were not interested to send their daughters for English education. Writing was positively discouraged for women. The anxiety was that 'if a girl knew how to write, she might write letters to forbidden persons.'⁹ As Samsun Nahar Mahmud (1908-64) pointed out, "It was not just as if their persons were in purdah, but for the fear that their handwriting might perchance be unveiled ('be-purdah') before the eyes of male outsiders ('par-purush'), that reading and writing were totally forbidden to them."¹⁰

Social Position

From the above discussion it is clear that by the end of the 19th century the social status of Muslim women was low. The British started their modernisation process in India from the beginning of the 19th century. But, up to the last quarter of the 19th century the Muslim community did not start their modernisation process. When Bengali Hindu and Brahmo reformers were fighting for the development of their women, the Bengali Muslim society was far away from modernity or modern secular education.

The Idea of Reform among the Muslim Women during Late 19th and Early 20th Century

Bengali Muslim 'renaissance' took place about fifty years after the Bengal renaissance. During the second half of the 19th century the thought process of the Bengali Muslims substantially changed. The idea of Rev. James Long and W.W. Hunter left a great impact on the thought patterns of the Muslims of Bengal. Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-93), Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-98), Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928), Syed Ameer Hossain the leading Muslim intellectuals of the age had a

great influence in the process of “Muslim Revivalism” and had great impact on the Bengali Muslim community as they urged the Muslims to adjust themselves with the changing situation. With the progress of education in the Muslim community a new professional middle class men (*bhadrolok*) and women (*bhadromohilā*) emerged in the Muslim society. These Muslim reformists believed that emancipation of women was a part of greater project for modernising the society. But the question of “Muslim Women’s Education” was a matter of debate among the liberal Muslim elite. The debate over the question of female education had definitely come to be a public issue by the early 1920s. In the early part of the 20th century some Bengali Muslim literati writers felt that women had a right to education, but debates focused on the level to which the women to be educated, in what manner, and on the ultimate objective of education. Many of them were not interested in the education of women. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) believed that it was inappropriate to send women for education. In 1882, before the Education Commission he stated that:

I admit, however, that the general state of female education among Mohammedans is far from satisfactory, but at the same time, I am of the opinion that government cannot adopt any practical measure by which respectable Mohammedans may be induced to send their daughters to a government schools for education ... in fact, no satisfactory education can be provided for Mohammedan females until a large number of Mohammedan males receive a sound education any endeavour on the part of the government to introduce female education among Mohammedans will, under present circumstances prove a complete failure as far as respectable families are concerned.¹¹

The conservatism of the Muslim society regarding education was criticised at a meeting of the Bengal Social Science Association in Calcutta in 1868, where Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-93) presented a paper entitled “Mohammedan Education in Bengal” and raised the issue of Muslim Education.¹² While discussing the paper, Peary Chand Mitra enquired whether steps had been taken for the education of Muslim

women, as had been the case with their male counterparts. The Nawab did not respond. Maulavi Abdul Hakim of the Calcutta *Mādrāssaā* responded to this question saying that the education offered to Muslim girls at home was quite adequate. As the Muslim girls observed *pardah* they could not go to schools.¹³ Unlike Abdul Latif, Syed Ameer Ali proved supportive to the cause of women's education. At the All India Muslim Educational Conference in 1891, he strongly advocated women's education saying that it should advance at the same pace as that of male education. Unfortunately, nothing concrete emerged out of this.¹⁴ Syed Ameer Ali realised that strict *pardah* system is the main reason behind the backwardness of Muslim women in the field of education. So he put forward a proposal saying that " the long-established usage of the Purdah should be abandoned in its entirety:" In this respect he gave the example of Turkish women and said that, " there is no reason why the Mussalmans of India should not follow the example of their brother Moslems of Constantinople, where the women are able to move about freely and to take part in the social economy." He commented that, "If the Mussalmans of India desire to raise themselves, they should restore women to the pedestal they occupied in the early Centuries of Islam."¹⁵

In 1311 B.S., *Mihir O Sudhākar* argued: "female education is desirable, but its boundaries should be set down. The knowledge of the holy *Quran*, *Urdu* and a little bit of Bengali is essential in order that girls may understand the meaning of scriptures, religious instructions and advice on ideal female conduct. Ability to read Bengali works like *Lalonā Suhṛd* is commendable so that girls learn the basics of homemaking, health care, child-rearing, care of husband and elders. Higher education is not desirable in our opinion, its poisonous effects are easy to gauge."¹⁶

Traditionally, the women in Bengal received their education at home, and it was mostly religious and moral in nature.

Role of Press and Publication

With respect to education of the Bengali Muslim girls, public opinion has been reflected in the contemporary Bengali press from the beginning

of the twentieth century. *Nabanūr*, *Mohammadi*, *Sawgat*, *Śikkhā* and other periodicals of those days published a number of articles on Muslim women's education and its problems. The *Sawgat* took an important role to propagate the necessity of education for Muslim women. In *Strī Jātir Abanati* (Degradation of the Status of Women) of 1905 and *Ardhāngī* (Better Half) of 1904, Rokeya took pains to demonstrate that Islam has rationally interpreted and enjoined an equal education for girls. In her writings, Rokeya described the nature of education that an average Bengali Muslim girl received at that time. She wrote, 'the arrangement for education in this country is like this: first we learn the Arabic alphabet and after that the recitation of the Quran. Since the meanings of the words are not explained, we are expected to recite it like a parrot with the help of our memory.'¹⁷

According to the Census of 1901, four hundred Muslim women knew English.¹⁸ *The Mihir O Sudhākar* suggested that English should be taught in girls' *mādrāsās*. To preserve the traditions of Islam and protect the Muslim society, Rokeya aimed at spreading both sacred and secular education among the Muslim women as well as implementing liberal ideas without weakening their allegiance to Islam. She advised the Muslims to provide primary education to their girl children along with the Quranic teachings for obtaining real knowledge. She raised the important point that all children should be sent to school, girls should be properly taught and trained, and women's role should be recognised and integrated in the social process.¹⁹ Ayesha Ahmed²⁰ wrote, "Chastity is an inner thing and its preservation requires mental faculties, a sense of duty and the power to discriminate between good and bad. These faculties can be fully developed only through education".²¹

Although public opinion grew slowly in favour of women's education, attacks of pious Muslim leaders came towards women education. In 1919, Sheikh Abdur Rahman wrote an essay in *Al-Eslam* entitled "Śikhkar Bhatti" in which he argued: "of late one finds women who pride themselves as being educated, who rise at eight in the morning to a cup of tea and biscuits, shudder at the thought of the kitchen, idle their time over clothes and cosmetics, who laze on an

easy chair, hair unbound, novel in hand or some embroidery, pay no heed to elders and love to venture outside the home instead of staying in the *andar*— what name shall we give them? They are certainly not the Grihalakshmi or the shade giving foliage of a Muslim home.”²² *Āl-Islām* was worried about the type of education to be given to women and suggested that the Muslim women needed a type of education suited to the Muslim society. A course was suggested that it would cover six years and lead to knowledge of Urdu, religious instruction, Bengali, history, geography, arithmetic, physical environment, hygiene, moral training, arts and crafts, embroidery, cooking, child-care and looking after the members of the household, house-keeping and hand writing.²³

On the other hand, Firoza Begum wrote “The chief impediments to female education are the *Mullas* But they do not realise that if our womenfolk are properly educated then they will not only become worthy mothers and housewives but also true mates to their husbands and competent advisers to them”.²⁴ Rokeya held the view that the purpose of education was the development of God-given faculties through disciplined mental exercise. In her words: ‘God has given us hands, feet, ears, mind and ability to think. If we strengthen our hands and our feet through exercise, do good work through our hands, make good use of our ears and develop our ability to think, that is true education’.²⁵ Rokeya viewed education not only as an aid to women’s familial role, but also as a means of women’s economic independence.²⁶ In her *Sugrhiṇī* (Ideal Housewife), she emphasised the fact that women were deprived of their independence. In this essay, Rokeya reminded us that ‘we are first and foremost Indians, then Muslims, or Sikhs’. A good housewife, she advised, should try to inculcate this idea within her family. According to her, ‘a housewife must know about nutrition, diet, the proper way of cooking various foodstuff, house cleaning, nursing and child psychology, etc. Education is the first requisite for motherhood, for a mother is the first, most important and real teacher and trainer of a child.’²⁷ In her novel *Padmarāg* (1924) Rokeya allowed the possibility of female education to develop its full economic

significance. According to her, economic independence would only be achieved through the promotion of a useful education, which would be a mixture of eastern and western influences.²⁸

Women's Education and Christian Missionary

Perhaps one of the greatest successes of Christian missionary was education for women. They took lead in establishing schools for women's education after withdrawal of the ban against missionary activities by the Charter Act of 1813. The first missionary girls' school was established in Calcutta in 1760 by Mrs. Hedges. But this school was not established for native girls, it was mainly for the European or Anglo-Indian children. After that many schools were opened for girls such as Mrs. Pitt's School for Young Ladies (1800), Mrs. Hannah Marshman's boarding institution for girls (1800) at Seerampore, Mrs. Lawson's School (1812), Robert May opened a girls' school in 1814. Between 1819 and 1823 a good number of schools were set up in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal. By 1828 the number of school rose to 30 and the number of students attending them was 600. But these schools were attended by the Christians and the lower class Hindus. The Muslim girls were not mentionable. Adam's Report (1838) shows that, there were 175 pupils in Burdwan, among them only one was Muslim, while 138 were Hindus and 36 were Christians.²⁹ Girls in these schools were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, needle work and in some cases, religion.

W. H. Pearce, Miss Cooke, Lady Amherst, Mrs. Mack, Miss Marshman, Miss Ward and Miss Carey were the prominent missionary women active in spreading women education. Apart from that, many missionary associations like Calcutta Female Juvenile Society, the Church of England, Church of Scotland, the Free Church, the American Mission, the Ladies Association of the Society and the Baptist Mission were active for disseminating education among the Bengali girls.³⁰ In the year 1820, under the chairmanship of Mrs. W. H. Pearce The Female Juvenile Society of Baptist Mission established a free school at Gauribari (Ultadanga) in Calcutta, which was attended by a few Muslim girls.³¹

In this field if we look at the Scottish missionary activity we can see they came after 1830 and their most important establishment was the General Assembly's Institution. It was established with the active help of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Dr. Alexander Duff, in 1830 not only established this institution but also imparted sound Christian instruction through the medium of English language. Free Church of Scotland Institution and Duff College trace their origin to the labour of Rev. Alexander Duff. It had both school and college section. He also opened an orphanage, a Hindu Girls' School and a Normal School. Mrs. Durel's Seminary for Girls attained much fame in those days.³²

Christian Missionary and *Zenana* Education System

In the second half of the 19th century, *zenana mahal*, became the site where the Christian missionaries began active proselytisation through institutionalising the age-old practice of home education which gained cognition as the *Zenana* Education System.³³ This system refers to the practice of ladies visiting the native women in their own residences, teaching them and educating them on many matters of social importance. This *Zenana* work arose chiefly because a large number of Indian women were confined to their homes and were seldom allowed to go out by the men at home. This *Zenana* work was largely undertaken by the wives of the missionaries and by women missionaries. *Zenana* work developed directly out of the school mission.³⁴ Binay Bhushan Roy and Pranati Roy mention that *Zenana* Education was introduced in 1841 in Calcutta by Miss Saville under the auspices of the Church of Scotland Women's Mission.³⁵ On the other hand, Geraldine Forbes attributes the beginning of *zenana* education to Ms. H.C. Mullens.³⁶ The newspaper *Somprakash* corroborates this information.³⁷

Hossain mentions that the instruction provided under the *Zenana* system by various missionary societies was practically free. The fee charged by the Church Missionary Society was only Rs. 1 a month for each home visited and by the American Mission it was Rs. 2 or 3 per month.³⁸ In spite of this effort, only some respectable, wealthy and

enlightened Bengali realised the necessity of *Zenana* education for women member of their families. But the lower caste Hindu and Muslim parents did not show the courage to educate their girls and women. The benefitted age group of *Zenana* education under missionary societies generally belonged to 4 to 40 years.³⁹

The Muslim women had a linkage with the *Zenana* education system. The Priscilla Chapman and Benoy Ghosh have written that a Muslim lady helped the missionary to open a school at Shyambazar and campaigned for women education.⁴⁰ The Muslim women actively participated in the education programme provided by the Female Juvenile Society and Ladies Association. *Samachar Darpan* (27 December 1820) reported that: "At 10 o'clock in the morning of Friday an examination was held at Gauribari in Calcutta. About 150 Hindu and Muslim girls participated in the examination." There is no doubt about the fact that the exam was conducted by the Female Juvenile Society at Gauribari.⁴¹ A similar exam was taken on 23 December 1823 where 140 Hindu and Muslim girls were participated in the examination.⁴² In the year 1827 the Ladies Association set up 12 girls' schools in Calcutta, more than 160 girls students and the majority of them were Muslim.⁴³ After that, beginning from the 1860s, the enlightened group of Hindu, Brahmo and Muslim men started *Zenana* teaching separately for spreading education and preventing proselytisation attempts by the female Christian missionaries.⁴⁴

Individual Efforts

The pioneer in spreading formal education among the Muslim women of Bengal was Nawab Faizunnesa Choudhurani (1847-1903). She was a courageous Muslim woman who broke norms by making herself visible through her social and literary activities. She was a reputed social worker and a patron of learning with a large Zamindari estate at Paschimgaon in the district of Comilla. She appeared in a critical time and felt the urgent need of modern education for the Muslim girls. She established a free *Madrassah* at her residence in Paschimgaon. Later in 1943 her *madrassah* was promoted to a higher secondary Islamia College and afterwards *Gazi Alia Madrassah*. She

also established four boys' and two girls' schools. Her most pioneering work was the establishment of a girls' school in Comilla in 1873. 'Faizunnesa Middle Girls' School' at Comilla was considered as the 'best girls'school' (except Eden School) in the Government Report on Public Instruction in Bengal in 1880-81.⁴⁵ She was the first woman in Bengal who was given the title of "Nawab" by the British Parliament for her philanthropic works.

Khujasta Akhtar Banu (Suhrawardiya Begum, 1874-1919), was a member of the politically and culturally prominent Suhrawardy family of Midnapore and Calcutta. She was educated in Persian and Urdu by her father, Maulana Ubaidullah al-Ubaidi Suhrawardy, who was the first Principal of the Dhaka Madrassa. She became fluent in English as well and translated several novels from English into Urdu. She also founded two primary schools for girls in Calcutta in 1909.⁴⁶ Later on, one of these two schools was named "Suhrawardiya Begum Muslim Girls' School". Suhrawardiya Begum was awarded an honorary degree in Persian by Calcutta University.⁴⁷ Her younger son Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy (1892-1963) became the Prime Minister of Bengal in 1946-47 and later on the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1956-1957.⁴⁸

Khairunnesa Khatun (1870-1912), was born in a middle class family of Munshibari in the district of Sirajganj of East Bengal. She was very talented as a writer. In 1895, Khairunnesa took the responsibility of the post of the Headmistress of Sirajganj Hosenpur Girls' School (founded by Munshi Mehrulla).⁴⁹ Her pioneering zeal and persistent efforts were considered as the great force for the progress of school and the door-to-door campaigning in the village for the barest minimum necessities were unique.⁵⁰

The most remarkable Bengali Muslim woman in this respect was Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880-1932), the founder of the Sakhawat Memorial Girls' High School in 1911 at Calcutta. She was born in Pairabandh, a village in Rangpur district in the then Northern Bengal. Rokeya was the daughter of a zamindar, Zahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Saber. Like many other men of his time, Zahiruddin Saber was aware of the need to educate his sons to meet the demands of the

changing times, but he felt no need to educate his *purdah*-observing daughters, who were, as might be expected in a highly literate family, clever and eager to learn.⁵¹ Rokeya's elder brother Ibrahim Saber, who had graduated from the St. Xavier's College, taught Rokeya Bengali and English late at night, when the rest of the household was asleep. Rokeya got married to Syed Sakhawat Hussain, a firm supporter of women's education who encouraged her literary talents. Rokeya started her literary career in 1901 with her essay "Pipāsā". Rokeya published her articles in 1903-1904 in *Islam Procharak* on subjects relating to the status of women. In 1905, a Madras-based English periodical, *The Indian Ladies' Magazine* carried a story titled *Sultana's Dream* written by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. It was a "utopian fantasy"⁵². Some of Rokeya's writings exclusively concerned the problems of patriarchy. Her "Strī Jātir Abonati" (1905), "Ardhāṅgī" (1905) and "Nārīr Adhikār" (1932) express her feminist message which was revolutionary in the context of those times. The Sakhawat Memorial Girls' School which had started with only eight students was able to increase the number of girls by the tireless effort of Rokeya (8 in 1911, 27 in 1912, 30 in 1913 and 39 in 1914).⁵³ In curriculum and *Purdah* restrictions, this school conformed to the schools for Muslim girls.⁵⁴ The syllabus in the school included the Quran, English, Bengali, Urdu, Persian, handicrafts, home science, first aid etc.⁵⁵

Government Effort and the Progress of Muslim Women Education till 1911

Undoubtedly, the responsibility to support education went to the ruler. After the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the East India Company became the main ruling power in Bengal. But initially they did not put much emphasis on the education of its subjects. The first step towards the acceptance of this responsibility was marked by the inclusion of a clause in the Charter Act of 1813, requiring the East India Company to spend one lakh rupees annually on education. The Company's government did not support the indigenous educational system which, according to them, was distinctly religious in character. Before 1757 there was a good relation between East India Company and the missionaries. But after 1757, when the Company gradually

took charge as the ruler of India, they started to keep a distance from missionary activities. The Company knew very well that the missionary education policy of conversion could be harmful to the new ruler. The Company did not want to shake the religious faith of the native Indian. It needed support of the Indians for their establishment. In 1783 the missionary activities were restricted by the Company.⁵⁶ After 20 years a change came in 1813, when the royal charter was renewed. In 1813, the restriction was modified to allow the practicing missionaries' entry into Company lands, and after that a forty year period (1813-1854) saw a growth of mutual tolerance, converging attitudes, and in many cases real sympathy, between the missionaries in the field and the company officials.

But after the Charter Act of 1813 some controversies arose. Thus, the changes introduced through Bentinck Resolution of 1835 and Sir Charles Woods Despatch of 1854 was to be considered more important from the point of view of Christian education. The former dealt with the Government's attitude towards native languages and the latter dealt with private enterprise in education. In case of women education, for the first time Woods Despatch of 1854 recommended that female education was to be encouraged by the Government.⁵⁷ In 1849, Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) informed the Bengal Council of Education to include female education.

The Government of Bengal took the responsibility of women education in 1870. In 1872-73 the backwardness of women education was discussed in the Government Report on Public Instruction of Bengal. Some measures for promoting women's education were adopted there. But a very few number of Muslim girls attended *Maktabs* and schools. The reasons for the lack of progress in women's education were numerous. The Muslim girls, however, were slow to take modern education. They had their own reasons for doing so. The Census Report 1901 revealed that the slow progress in the Muslim female education happened "between" 1881-1901. For every 1000 there were 104 literate males but only 5 literate females.⁵⁸ While many Hindu and native Christian girls were coming to the girls' schools, one or two Muslim girls could be found in the registers. According to the Census

of 1901, 400 Muslim women knew English.⁵⁹ In 1901-02 38,095 pupils were in the primary and middle schools of Bengal. Of them 1,224 (3.18%) were Muslims, 32,140 (84.36%) were Hindus and 3,986 (10.46%) were native Christians.⁶⁰ *Bamabodhini Patrika* in its May-June issue (1903), reported that in Bengal 1,00,322 girls took school education. Of them only 1% were Muslim women. In the same year 3883 girls took higher education, among them 439 girls were Hindus, 183 were Christians, 89 others and Muslims were only 6.⁶¹ So, it can be presumed that though the position of the Muslim girls was lower than the native Christians, they came out of their doors to the courtyard of schools.

The Partition of Bengal in 1905 paved the way for educational development for Muslim women due to the enhanced Government patronage and increased awareness within the community.⁶² A number of remarkable persons like Nawab Salimullah (1866-1915), Nawab Ali Chowdhury (1863-1929) and Rai Dulal Chandra Dev were invited to participate in the committees on women education. On the recommendation of the Female Education Committee⁶³ the Government established more primary schools for girls in the province. Indeed, the number of primary schools rose from 2,789 in 1906 to 4,956 in 1911 and that of their pupils from 51,180 to 1,10,817.⁶⁴ In addition to the primary schools the Government also established a number of secondary schools for girls. Their number increased from 13 in 1906 to 22 in 1911.⁶⁵ Three Government schools, Eden Female School at Dhaka, Alexander Girls' School at Mymensingh and Dr. Khastagir's Girls' School at Chittagong were taken up by the Government during this period for better management.⁶⁶ The number of pupils increased at the Eden School from 125 in 1906 to 244 in 1911, at Dr. Khastagir's School from 68 in 1906 to 110 in 1911, and at the Alexander Girls' School from 100 in 1906 to 170 in 1911. In 1906, there were 121 Hindu and only 4 Muslim girls in the Eden School. In 1911 there were 1 Eurasian, 1 Persian, 8 Indian Christians, 209 Hindus and 25 Muslims among the students in that school.⁶⁷ By the end of 1911 the province had five Middle English schools. Two of them were maintained by the Government and the rest were aided. The Government schools were the Faizunnesa Girls' School at Comilla

and the Girls' school at Sylhet. All middle vernacular schools for girls were more or less developed. The progress of education among Muslim women in the new province among eastern Bengal has been shown in the following table.

Table-I: Progress of education of the Muslim women in the New Province of Eastern Bengal, 1906-1912⁶⁸

Year	Type of Institutions	Number of Institutions	Total Pupils	Muslim Pupils	% of increase of Pupils	% of Progress
1906-07	Primary School	2,781	51,180	22,223	43.42%	
1911-12	Primary School	4,956	11,817	56,575	51.05%	7.63
1906-07	Secondary Education	18	1,503	48	3.1%	
1911-12	Secondary Education	22	2,480	108	4.35%	1.34

The above table shows that the position of the Muslim pupils lagged behind the others but their rate of progress was satisfactory. The percentage of Muslim girls rose from 43.42 in 1906-07 to 51.05 in 1911-12 and their progress was 7.63% in the primary level. In the secondary level it rose from 3.1 in 1906-07 to 4.35 in 1911-12 and their progress was 1.34%. The efforts of the Government and inspiration from the Muslim leaders were the causes of progress in the education of the Muslim women in the new province.

However, if we look at the overall scenario of Muslim women's education in colonial Bengal, we can see the backwardness of Muslim women education. The 1911 census report shows that the ratio of the literate Hindu female was 0.94%, that of the Brahmo was 36.54% and Muslim 0.11 % respectively.⁶⁹

Conclusion

In the first half of the 19th century, surrounded by the strict *purdah* system, illiteracy, patriarchy, poor economic condition, "orthodox

practices”, wrong illustration of “Koran” and “Hadis”, the Muslim of Bengal women were dwellers of the *andarmahal* (i.e., inner house) and significantly “voiceless”. Until the second half of the 19th century, seclusion was almost universal among the Bengali middle and upper class women. From the second half of the 19th century the Muslim women started to get access to formal education, but till the Bengal partition (1905) the progress of Muslim women education was very limited. In spite of this, with the help of this modern education, in the late 19th century the modern urban middle class Muslim women had emerged in the Muslim society. These women focussed their attention on certain social issues from their own point of view in order to change their traditional world and to uplift the status of their women. They widely campaigned for women’s emancipation through literature as it was one of the grounds of their battle for liberation and the pioneer of these campaigning was Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. Muslim literary journals came out from Calcutta, Dhaka and other provincial towns. Besides female education, the forerunners of women’s emancipation movement in India also focussed their attention on *sati*, polygamy, child marriage, *pardah*, *debdāsis*, and patriarchal joint family.

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Attitudes towards Mizo Women in Formal Political Institutions

Mary Vanlalthanpuii

Abstract

Since the 2003 general election for the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, the number of female registered voters has outnumbered the number of male registered voters. Nevertheless, in the thirty-seven years since Mizoram became a state in 1987, only five women have been elected to the state assembly. Mizo women are the most literate and most engaged in the workforce in India, so it seems reasonable that they would be significant players in politics as well.

The participation of Mizo women in formal politics from the time of statehood in 1987 to the present will be covered in this essay. It will look into how women perform in the Mizoram State Legislative Assembly in an effort to draw attention to how society views women in politics. It will pay particular attention to how cultural and religious perspectives impact women's political roles. I shall contend that a complex web of issues must be considered in order to fully explain the disparity between women's overall economic engagement and their absence from politics. The Mizoram case presents a challenge to standard feminist theory concerning the correlation between education, workforce participation, and increased political activity among women. In this case, women are literate, actively engaged in the workforce, and possess voting right.

Keyword : Culture, Religion, Women, and Politics.

Introduction

Mizoram, a state in northeast India, is surrounded by Tripura and Bangladesh to the west, Myanmar to the east and south, and Manipur and Assam to the north. Politically speaking, the state of Mizoram is split into eight districts and forty seats. In Mizoram, there are three

Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) for ethnic tribes: the Mara Autonomous District Council, which represents the Mara people in the south-eastern part of the state, the Lai Autonomous District Council, which represents the Lai people in the southern part of the state, and the Chakma Autonomous District Council, which represents the Chakma people on the state's southern border with Bangladesh.

According to the 2011 census, Mizoram's population of 1,097,206 included 541,867 females. Mizoram is the second least populous state in India, but the second in terms of literacy and the female literacy rate in Mizoram was 89.40% (male literacy was 93.71 %). Mizo women won national attention following the 2001 census for the highest female worker participation rate at 47.54% (male worker participation rate was 57.29%). However, the 2011 census registered a significant decline in female worker participation to 36.16% while the male worker participation rate also slipped to 52.35% (Census, 2011).

After India gained Independence, the Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council was created under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India² in 1952. The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India paved way for the institution of District Councils and Regional Councils within the autonomous hill districts in Assam (Sang, 1990). Then, the Government of Assam formed Sixth Autonomous District Councils — United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, Lushai Hills, Naga Hills, North Cachar and Mikir Hills in 1952. The Lushai Hills, District Council was inaugurated on April 25, 1952, followed by the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council on April 23, 1953. The three seats of the Assam Legislative Assembly were allotted to Mizoram — Mr. Ch. Saprawnga, Mr. R. Thanhaira and, Mr. R. Dengthuam represented the Mizo in the Assam Legislative Assembly. From the period of the Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 until 1986, a few women became legislators by nomination and election. Mrs. Lalziki Sailo and Mrs. Hmingliani occupied nominated seat in 1952 and 1957 respectively. Miss. Saptawni and Mrs. Rokungi occupied nominated seat in 1972 and 1984 respectively. Mrs. Thanmawii, the first Mizo woman elected member in the Legislative Assembly occupied seat in 1978 and 1979

while Mrs. Thansiami occupied a nominated seat in 1978 and elected later in the year 1984. The post-statehood Mizoram State Legislative Assembly had only five female legislators during the 27 years of statehood. Mrs. Lalhlimpuii was elected in 1987, and Miss Vanlalawmpuii was elected in 2014. For the first time in Mizoram political history, three females were elected in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly election held on November 7, 2023, of which Mrs. Lalrinpuii, the first Mizo woman to become minister with cabinet rank, 32-year-old Miss Baryl Vanneihsangi is the youngest Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Mrs. Pravo Chakma won the seat from West Tuipui Constituency.

The researcher employed a qualitative methodology to investigate Mizo perspectives on women participating in formal politics. In order to take this approach, 100 locals from the villages of Seling and Reiek were questioned about their opinions of Mizo women going into politics from 2018 to 2019. The literacy rates are high in both villages. In Seling village, the male literacy rate was 96.52% and the female literacy rate was 94.86%, as per the 2011 census. In Reiek village, the literacy rate for women was 98.05%, while the rate for men was 98.13%. Two hundred individuals from each hamlet, ages 40 to 75 (fifty men and fifty women), were questioned.

Attitude towards Women in Politics

According to liberal feminism, women's participation in electoral politics is a prerequisite for democratic institutions. It is believed that in nations where women participate in politics to a greater extent, these women tend to create policies that support more equality and broaden the scope of social progress. What this theoretical formulation misses is the many challenges women face when it comes to exercising their political rights. Although women may have, the rights to participate in the political process, cultural, social, and economic conditions create barriers to the exercise of these rights. In Mizoram, women have made considerable gains in literacy and work participation but remain under-represented in local and state politics.

Cultural and Religious Beliefs that Affect Women's Political Roles

The primary reason for why women do not participate in official politics can be attributed to the traditional gender norms (Galligan & Clavero, 2008). In actuality, Mizo society has traditionally been patriarchal, with men holding the majority of significant administrative and religious positions. According to Mizo folktales and history, women are inferior to men (Malsawma, 2002). The oldest Mizo historical writings that have been translated from colonial sources place the start of the 'traditional period' in the 16th century, when the Lushai people inhabited the Burmese highlands. The system of hereditary Chieftainships originated in the early 18th century after they moved towards India (Lalnithanga, 2005) and in those days, every village was under the authority of their respective chiefs.

Along with the village chief, the traditional social institution called *Zawlbuk* [Bachelor dormitory], constructed adjacent to the house of the village chief serves as an institution to instruct young male into a responsible adult member of the society (Sangkima, 1992). The village chief held a de facto position of head of the *Zawlbuk* and the leader of the *Zawlbuk* and a *Val Upa* [Elder] appointed by the chief carried out the administration in the *Zawlbuk*. These institutions occupied a central position in the organisation and administration of the village and marginalised the women (Zorema, 2007). *Zawlbuk* in the traditional period, acted as an important tool for empowering the male dominance because an outraged member of *Zawlbuk* had the power to impose punishment towards on girl's family (Vanlaltlani, 2005; Lalthansangi, 2013). One common punishment occurred when a young man felt disgraced upon the girl's behaviour that he visited. If the angry man consulted the *Zawlbuk* the outraged *Zawlbuk* community would demolish the girl's hut until it fell down, and this punishment was called *Bang Sawi* (Chakraborty, 2008). In some cases, the girl's family had to move out to another village.

Marriage was a civil contract that endorsed the bride price played a crucial role and one that affected family relationships as in the case

of parents 'selling' daughters to men without their consent (Colbert, 2013). When the bride price was paid in kind, the demand for bride price varied depending on the status of the bride's clan and generally ranged from three to ten domesticated Mithuns (Nunthara, 2004). Unlike the mainstream India, where the Hindu caste prevails, the Mizos value the birth of a girl child more than that of a boy due to her being valuable asset bride price. For this, the physical beauty of a girl was highly valued and the songs welcoming the newly born girls wished beauty for them. For example, one Mizo adage welcomes a newborn attractive female infant as being worth ten Mithuns (e.g., a high bride price). For economic reason, girl child is preferred and unlike boys, who by custom had to move to the *Zawlbuk* at an early age, girls at a young age could be employed for keeping the domestic household work and looking after younger siblings when parents were in the field. The bride price was a mean to compensate for the loss of a woman's labour in her parental home. Paying the bride's price to the bride's father also suggests that she had to put in a lot of effort in her new home in order to live up to the groom's family's expectations. According to the stereotype of women in traditional society, girls are powerless to choose their partners and must act favourably towards all the males in order to ensure the protection of their families. It also identified the fact that traditional society expected women to be submissive and obedient to her family (Shimray, 2004).

In terms of religion, the Mizos followed animistic religion and they believed in the existence of supreme God and the spirits of good and evil. Women followed the religion of their parents or husband as they were not allowed to have their own religion. For example, the traditional saying, *Hmeichhia leh chakaiin sakhua an nei lo* translated as, 'Women and crabs have no religion' is a popular one (Tribal Research Institute, 1991). Further there is no scope for women to enter the paradise and the faith of the Mizo religion that predicted eternal resting place *Pialral* but admitted it only to a man of *Thangchhuah* [Distinguished Men]. According to Reverend Lawmsanga, who studied the traditional Mizo

religion, *Thangchhuah* is a title given to a man, who has killed a certain number of different animals in the chase or by giving a certain number of public feasts. The wife of a *Thangchhuah* shares the title of her husband (Lawmsanga, 2010). This situation suggested that a rich man could avail a permit to *Pialral* by sacrifice and meritorious deeds and women might have chances of entering the *Pialral* based on the deeds of their husbands.

The two male priests *Sadawt* and *Bawlpw* perform all the rituals in their respective roles and the evil spirits were believed to be responsible for the cause of misfortune, illness etc. For this, to maintain good health and good harvest, they offered a series of sacrifices to the evil spirit through the male priest. *Sadawt*, approved by the chief perform all the sacrificial rites and worship. He held a high prestige for his role in the village community. *Bawlpw* performed sacrificial rites for the sick people. As a medicine keeper, he was known to be aware of a particular spirit that caused illness to the patient. The family, who consulted *Bawlpw* for sickness would follow his prescription that involved the killing of a particular domesticated animal.

Regarding the Mizo customary traditions, the advent of British colonialism and missionaries is linked to a significant shift in the customary norms, as they established distinct ceremonies and rituals (Sudhir & Kimi, 2001). Much has been written about the impact of the British colonial and Welsh missionaries that brought about a transformation from the so-called backward people to the civilised society. In these accounts, the missionaries were portrayed as promoting the status of women. A considerable achievement of literacy rate in Mizoram has been credited to the work and contribution of the missionaries. In fact, unlike the traditional period, women took part in the church activities after adopting the Christian religion. However, though Christianity has brought about changes in the position of women the gender inequality still prevails in the church activities too. In case of the Presbyterian Church, while women were allowed to contribute fund and work as missionaries, they were denied to become

Pastors and Elders to obtain decision-making channel in the church. It is evident that there has been discrimination of the women, despite their considerable contribution to the church. One explanation for this could be an agreement between the indigenous cultures with the Christian patriarchy on women's secondary status.

In fact, because of adopting the Christian virtue and values, many of the indigenous practice and customs have declined and the social importance of *Zawlbuk* devalued and finally abolished in 1938. With the increasing political consciousness among the missionary-educated people, a political party the Mizo Union removed the chieftainship after the implementation of the Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 and then the Assam legislature passed the Act in 1954. In terms of the village administration, the colonial authority broke the barrier of clan division by reducing the authority of the hereditary chiefs. The declining clan variation brought about changes in the marriage pattern; the traditional arranged marriage curving for bride price has changed in common interest; however, the revised bride price of Rs 420 since 1980, though profoundly invaluable and worthless comparing to the traditional bride price is still in practice today. While many traditional customs have changed and modified according to the changes in the social and economic conditions, the customary law ruling bride price the remains unchanged since its last revision in 1980 (Lalrinchhani, 2013). Besides, the declining value of bride price as compared to the traditional period, the cultural definition of *Mo* or bride has certain implication on the society's attitudes towards a bride. The word *Mo* itself is discriminatory in nature implies hard work and lack of ownership in the husband's family. Despite the declining value of bride price, the society's attitude towards a bride remains strongly associated with her ability to perform domestic household chores in her husband's family.

As mentioned earlier, among the male respondents, there are twenty-eight percent government servants and pensioners from the army, twenty-five percent are engaged in small hardware business,

furniture workshops, working as private and individual drivers, and the rest of the respondents are farmers and daily wage labourer working in construction sites, and few of them are contractors (full time politicians). Among the female respondents, only six percent are employed in the governments section as schoolteachers, nurses, health workers, thirty-two percent own small business such as tea stalls, grocery shops, a number of them work in the second-hand clothes markets, some of them are vegetable sellers and the rest of the respondents are farmers and housewives.

In both the communities, forty-five percent of respondents said that they do not think women should go into formal politics. The Female respondents expressed stronger views against women into politics. Merely twenty percent of the respondents supported women entering politics, while thirty-five percent of the respondents were undecided on the topic. However, they did agree that only well-qualified women should hold political offices. Many cited the Bible's teachings, such as 'The woman was created for the man, not the man for the woman,' (I Corinth 11:3, 9) in response to the question of whether or not the Mizo women should be encouraged in pursuing careers in politics. They used the Bible as the foundation for their protest against women in politics because they believed that politics and a good Christian life could not coexist. In summary, they linked women entering politics to the efforts to challenge the biblically-sanctioned dominance of men over women. Both male and female respondents were equally in agreement with this viewpoint.

However, before the most of the respondents voiced their opposition to the women in politics, they highlighted the duties of daughters, wives, and mothers emphasising the negative impact on families when women failed to fulfil their responsibilities in these roles at home. Some of the male respondents, who expressed their strong reluctance to their wives entering politics said that they do not want their wives to travel with male politicians or to stay away overnight for political party committee meetings, campaigns, or other activities. Some men

declared that they would never let their wives, daughters, or other female relatives enter politics. They proclaimed that women's participation in voting was sufficient to perform their duties as good citizens.

Most of the male and female respondents believe that women should be active in church, not politics. Bijukumar argues that these attitudes developed because of the fact that the society is under the control of religion and all social relations are influenced by Christian beliefs (Bijukumar, 2008). To many of the respondents, entering politics was not simply the wrong decision for women, they thought it to be shameful. The female respondents defended their position by arguing that they have tremendous responsibilities at home and therefore they have no time for public activities. They claimed that they were satisfied performing their responsibilities as nurturers. Many women interviewed indicated that they would rather be good mothers than good politicians. It can be argued that combining the family responsibilities (Galligan & Clavero, 2008) and the political office is largely a problem for women because the gender division of labour keeps the women closely tied up the private domestic sphere (Lister, 1998). However, one cannot ignore the role of the views cited above on women's decisions.¹²

Most of the female respondents agreed that politics is not and should not be a priority for women and that women should not struggle to become politicians. As mentioned above, one of the reasons was their household works and the widely accepted argument that women should find fulfillment in their family responsibilities and church work. At the same time, they regarded the politicians corrupt and dishonest. They also indicated that they would not want to be seen as female politicians because the kind of women who enter politics are masculine and they also made it clear that they know very little about politics because these topics are never discussed at home. The respondents, even those from the families of the politicians, said, 'We never discuss politics at home'. Generally, they believed that discussion

of politics at home was incompatible with the way a good Christian family behave. Noticeably, there is a greater desire among the people to make a history in church rather than in politics. Here we might say that under the strong influence of religion (Wiranto, 2013.), the traditional gender roles reinforced through the teaching of Bible and accepted by the society convinced the women that the public domain rightfully belonged to the men (Daskalova, 2000: Watson, 1993). Men were not forced to make these choices because their political activities were considered separate from their domestic relations (Peterson & Runyan, 2010).

There were a few respondents, who neither supported nor opposed women entering politics. While accepting the fact that women should enter politics, they pointed out the problems involved in encouraging more women in politics. They believed political capability of women do not depend on intelligence, the desire to be a politician or to gain popularity in the communities. They said that women must have special traits to enter politics and suggested that may include high academic achievements and obedience to the Christian ideas. It was clear that they were reluctant to encourage women in general to enter politics. It also implies the society's perception of involvement women in politics and becoming a strong, capable leader demands physical strength extensive for making travels (Usha, 1999) signifies the dominant stereotypical gender roles of women to be weaker and man to be stronger. Thus, ultimately requires her exclusion from political participation (Tucker, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, when the Lushai Hills District Councils was formed in 1952, the people opted for the Village Council at the grassroots level under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution to incorporate their traditional customs in governing the people at the grass root level (Shyamkishor, 2016). Therefore, Mizoram is exempted from the implementation of the 73rd Amendment Act to adopt Panchayati Raj Institution in the region. While one-third of the seats are reserved for women under the provision of Panchayati Raj

Institutions, the Village Council did not implement it. In pursuance of the Government of India Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the government of Mizoram formed a Core Committee on February 11, 2008, for the successful implementation of Panchayati Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Bhiyan. In October 2008, the core committee submitted a recommendation to the Government of Mizoram as well as the Central Government to introduce the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in Mizoram to enjoy the reservation of 33 percent of elected seats for women at different levels of local self-government in both the rural and urban Mizoram. In November 2014, the Mizoram Legislative Assembly passed 'The Lushai Hills District (Village Councils Amendment) Bill of 2014'. As per the Amended Act, one seat will be reserved for women in a village/local council having five seats, two seats in village/local council having seven seats, and three seats in village/local council having nine seats.

Over all, there was a general reluctance among the interviewees to support the implementation of reserved seats for women in the Village Councils' elections as a strategy for enhancing women's political participation. Most of the respondents thought that the social conditions were not ready for this strategy. The general perception was that introduction of reservations for women, in a situation where women have not achieved the necessary skills for the job, would undermine democratic decision-making. They reasoned that reservations confirmed the fact that women would not be able to secure sufficient votes to win the election and hence it would be more anti-democratic. A few respondents, who supported women participating in politics, argued Mizoram should follow the lead of other countries in the world. They believed that having women leaders in politics would improve the status of women in the society as a whole. They also believe that to have female politicians would prove women's capability in the field of politics.

Discussion

During the interviews, the participants contended that women are unable to hold political office due to their obligations at home, their incapacity to manage political matters, and the fact that becoming a politician would be conflicting with then being a devout Christian wife, mother, and daughter. It is clear that women's contributions to public affairs are not well-received or supported. On the other hand, playing the conventional roles—which uphold the women's lower status—is widely accepted and supported (Bhasin, 2007). This implies that Mizo women must have resilience in order to pursue and remain in politics. This is not uncommon; many nations have the customs and cultural barriers that hinder the women even from exercising their right to vote (Pintor & Gratschew, 2002; Moghadam, 2003). However, it is apparent that for Mizo women, the cultural barriers are reinforced by the religious beliefs.

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Simte Language and Ethnic Identity: An Outline

Manasi Dilip Nadkarni

Abstract

The languages belonging to the Kuki-Chin ethnic group show a greater amount of mutual intelligibility. The picture then is more of a gradually increasing uniformity and homogeneity. However, even in this set-up, some marked kinds of linguistic diversity remain. Most commonly these are bounded up with promoting or preserving distinct ethnic identities. We can see this in the case of ethnic minorities in their deliberate attempts to reverse the decline of separate languages such as Simte, Zou, Gangte etc.

This paper aims to examine the explicit or implicit reflections on the 'linguistic universe' — including language use, linguistic diversity and language variation — of the Kuki-Chin language group in Churachandpur District of Manipur. Often, the various languages show prestige or stigma which emerge from language attitudes based on linguistic prejudice and stereotyping. The present paper is an attempt to highlight the status of the Simte language and community amongst the Kuki-Chin group against this backdrop. This study will aid in understanding the situations of linguistic minorities, the issue of language equality versus inequality, language development profile, the nature and extent of marginalisation, and the language attitude of the speech communities.

To the Simte, their ethno-linguistic identity will be lost if their language failed to survive as a living means of everyday communication. Ultimately the survival of the minority languages is closely bound up with the preservation or affirmation of a distinct ethnic identity and culture.

That is why there is an urgent requirement towards a detailed enquiry regarding the social dynamics of language maintenance and shift in case of a tribal language like Simte. This paper will make an attempt in that direction.

Key words: Language maintenance and shift, Language Attitudes, Linguistic Prejudice, Language Ecology, Ethnic Identity

Introduction

The state of Manipur, in India, is home to one of the largest concentration of ethnic groups and over thirty-three languages. It is a land of people with shared cultural beliefs, values, practices, and behaviour. It is also bedrock of linguistic diversity. There are three major ethno-linguistic indigenous groups in Manipur namely, the Meitei, the Naga and the Kuki-Chin.

The Kuki-Chin Speech Community

The Kuki-Chin people of Manipur are concentrated mainly in the southernmost part of the state with pockets of the community population dispersed intermittently in other districts as well. Kuki-Chin as a nomenclature is used to describe the people as well as the language. It is an umbrella term which denotes numerous tribes and languages spoken by the people belonging to this group.

The Kuki-Chin group presents striking socio-cultural features in terms of ethnicity, linguistic and socio-cultural practices. The languages belonging to this linguistic group are quite similar to one another and therefore are mutually intelligible. Yet every tribe in this linguistic group has been striving and asserting for self-identification. As such, there has been a great contention and tension politically as well as linguistically amongst the tribes who have similar cultural and linguistic traits.

The people who speak the Kuki-Chin languages and live in the Myanmar portion generally tend to call themselves as belonging to the group of Chins. The people speaking the Kuki-Chin languages living in the Indian territory tend to be named as Kuki-Chin in the literature that deals with the linguistic classification, but this common name is not adopted by the people themselves.

Before independence the word 'Kuki' was the commonly used term to refer to these people. But after Independence and with the recognition of the tribes by the government, the term 'Kuki' has

significantly lost its relevance. Kuki is no longer easily accepted by these ethnic groups. Each and every recognised tribe now strives to be recognised as an individual identity. A publication by William Shaw (1928) named "Notes on Thadou Kuki" has set a deep-rooted prejudice among the people. M.S. Thirumalai states, "they feel that, 'he praised only one tribe and under-rated the other tribes, which resulted in disunity, the quest for independent recognition and revolts against inclusion under a general name.'" This same feeling mixed with political and social ambitions have been the outset of revolt against the umbrella name 'Kuki'.

More recently the terms 'Chin' and 'Kuki' have been rejected by some for the term 'Zomi', a name common to several peoples speaking small Northern Kukish languages, including the Zou. There is large scale movement, popularly known as the Zomi Movement which aims to gather all the tribes and sub-tribes under one umbrella. The term 'Zomi' literally means, 'people of the Zo', as the Kuki-Chin tribes assert their ancestry to their progenitor 'Zo' through whom all the Kuki-Chin people originated. Though this movement is gaining popularity, due to many political aspirations and the striving for self-identification, not all tribes are forthcoming or willing to join the umbrella.

Ethnicity and Territoriality among the Communities

The Kuki-Chin group is the largest linguistic group in Manipur and is mainly concentrated in the Southern district of Churachandpur with scattering population in the neighbouring districts of Chandel, Kangkpi, Pherzawl, Tengnoupal and also in the Imphal valley. In every district of Manipur, there are at least five or more ethnic groups speaking different speech forms. We find evidence of a unique presence of 'polarised'¹ 'group' identities and territoriality of speech communities in a multilingual area like Manipur. Every district in Manipur shows a peculiar ethnic settlement pattern wherein there is a concentration of almost each speech community in a discrete area where one particular dialect group/clan is dominant. Such patterning

of people in the state has led to the survival of numerous dialects, village speeches or patois thereby preserving and maintaining in-group and out-group distances. It has further resulted in the polarisation of ethnic identities and territorial localisation or of dialect communities.

In Churachandpur district, we find the ethnic groups such as the Thadou, Paite, Hmar, Gangte, Simte, Zou, Vaiphei, Lushei etc, coexisting together in their individual territorial groups.

Most of the Kuki-Chin areas show a large evidence of territorial linguistic enclaves. Each group has a distinct area or a territory that can be uniquely identified through its linguistic traits. These groups are scattered all over and deep into the interiors of Churachandpur district. Only in the urban areas or close to it we find certain cases of linguistic fluidity and loan-blends². In the main town area of the district, we find an amalgamation of the ethnic groups staying together and often intermixed with one another. These language groups share common features including many lexical items that are virtually identical in all of them. These common features make the languages of the Kuki-Chin group mutually intelligible to one another. However, they also contain lexical and grammatical differences that make them unique.

For the purpose of this paper, we will focus on Simte, a language belonging to the Kuki-Chin group. The ethno-linguistic identity of the Simte will be lost if their language failed to survive as a living means of everyday communication. The aim of this paper is to highlight the status of the Simte language amongst the Kuki-Chin language group with respect to their identity, usage, and vitality. This study will also aim to determine the need for language development in the Simte community of Manipur.

This paper gives a glimpse into Simte community and sets goals for a detailed study and analysis to be undertaken in the forthcoming field study. It urges for the following specific goals:

1. To clarify the relationship between Simte and other related languages of the Kuki-Chin group, and to find out the degree of comprehension between them.

2. To investigate the patterns of language use in the Simte community as well as attitudes towards their own language and towards other languages spoken in the region; to assess the vitality of the Simte language.

In order to meet these goals, this paper expresses the need to examine the territoriality of the degree of differences in the dialectal features of the various languages of the Kuki-Chin group by showing the word geographies of different speech groups. This will help to explore the degree of differences in linguistic features and to examine the ensuing social situations among and within different communities. The analysis will immensely help in understanding the nature of linguistic diversity or multilingualism, monolithic concentration of speech communities, inter-ethnic communication, and other socio-cultural elements peculiar to such areas.

In Manipur, as described earlier, there is an important relationship between language and ethnicity which ensues to territoriality of ethnolinguistic elements. This relationship between language and ethnicity is not only reciprocal but also vital and socially significant. It stimulates the social behaviour and the psyche of the people ingraining their very thought process and attitudes. The language usage influences the formation of ethnic identity, but ethnic identity also influences language attitudes and language usages.

It would therefore be helpful to look at some of the features pertaining to the various tribes of the Kuki-Chin group. This will give a background to the language and ethnicity interrelation as we study the Simte language in particular.

The Languages belonging to the Kuki-Chin Speech Community

The ethnic groups belonging to the Kuki-Chin speech community are Anal, Aimol, Chothe, Chiru, Koireng, Kom, Purum, Lamgang, Gangte, Lushei, Vaiphei, Thadou, Ralte, Simte, Sukte, Paite, Zou and Hmar.

The Kuki-Chin languages are further divided into two groups: a) The Old Kuki-Chin languages; and b) The Northern Kuki-Chin languages as proposed by Grierson (1904).

The Old Kuki-Chin languages are Aimol, Anal, Maring, Mayon, Monsang, Lamgang, Chothe, Chiru, and Kom. We find constant shifts in ethnic loyalty amongst the various language groups due to social and political pressure. This fact is especially true for the Old Kuki-Chin languages of Manipur. They have declared themselves as Nagas with whom they share no linguistic affinity. In Manipur, such shifts in loyalties are very common. The shifts are found mainly due to the political pressures and have no significance on the linguistic affiliations. According to C.A. Soppit, the “Old Kukis” migrated to Manipur in the early 11th century, while the “New Kukis” migrated to Manipur during the first half of the 19th century. The new immigration groups are often called the “New Kukis” and the other, the “Old Kukis” (Ranjit, 1988; Gangte, 1993). The “New” Northern Kuki-Chin languages are Thadou, Paite, Vaiphei, Gangte, Zou, Simte.



A depiction of the Simte ethnic lifestyle

The Status of Simte in the Kuki-Chin Speech Community

The Simtes, one of the ethnic groups of the Kuki-Chin group, are mainly concentrated in the Southern parts of the State of Manipur. A significant number of the Simte population are also settled in neighbouring areas of Mizoram, Nagaland and Assam. The Simtes are also known by the name of Ngaihtes in the Chin State of Myanmar. Interestingly, the Simtes claim their ancestry by the name 'Ngaihte'.

Simte is one of the Kuki-Chin tribes. The term 'Simte' literally means 'People of the South', 'Sim'- 'South' and 'Te' - 'People'. They have mostly settled in the Thanlon sub-division of Churachandpur and also in other parts of Churachandpur district.

According to the *Ethnologue*, Simte is spoken in the following villages of Churachandpur district Minjiang, Tuibuong, Simveng, New Bazar, Thanlon, Leijangphai, Zoutung, Sumtuk, Mongken, Pamjal, Sainoujang, Tallian, Dumsao, Khuangnung, Lungthul, Singngat, Mualjin, Maokot, Suangdoh, and Suangpemun.

According to the Census Report 2001, the population of Manipur has been 2,166,788. Of this 741,141 are Scheduled Tribes (STs), which constitutes 34.2 per cent of the total population of the state. Of the total STs in Manipur, Thadou is the largest with 1.8 lakh population representing 24.6 per cent of the state's total ST population, followed by Tangkhul (19.7%), Kabui (11.1%), Paite (6.6%), Hmar (5.8%), Kacha Naga (5.7%), and Vaiphei (5.2%). Among other major tribes, Maring, Anal, Zou, Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes, Kom, and Simte are having percentages between 3.1 and 1.5. The rest of the STs are comparatively small in number having less than 10,000 populations each. The total population of the Simte tribe according to the 2001 Census is 10,225. However, in the 2011 Census, Simte failed to get a mention as it could not achieve the 10000 speakers mark. One reason for this could be that some of the clans within the Simte community preferred to be recorded under the Paite group showing a shifting alliance typical of a 'monor tribe'.

Tribe wise population of Manipur according to 2001 census is shown in the Table given below:

S1.No	Name of the Tribe	Population	Sl. No.	Name of the Tribe	Population
1.	Aimol	2,643	16.	Maring	17,361
2.	Anal	13,853	17.	Mao	80,568
3.	Angami	65019	18.	Monsang	1,710
4.	Chiru	5,487	19.	Moyon	1,710
5.	Chothe	2,675	20.	Paite	44,861
6.	Gangte	15,100	21.	Purum	503
7.	Hmar	42,690	22.	Ralte	110
8.	Kabui	62,216	23.	Sema	25
9.	Kacha Naga	20,328	24.	Simte	10,225
10.	Koirao	1,200	25.	Sukte	311
11.	Koireng	1,056	26.	Tangkhul	1,12,940
12.	Kom	15,467	27.	Thadou	1,15,045
13.	Lamkang	4,524	28.	Vaiphei	27,791
14.	Lushai	10,620	29.	Zou	19,112
15.	Maram	10,510	30.	Unrecognised	75,768
			Total		6,69,474

[The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act 1976, of North Eastern Region (N.E.C. Secretariat, Shillong, 1987), p.176. *The Gazette of India*, Published by Authority of Law and Justice, dated 8/1/2003, New Delhi.]

Like the other ethnic groups in Manipur, the Simtes are also sub-divided into numerous clans and sub-clans. The Simte clans and sub-clans can be noted as follows:

Ngaihte

↓

- Simte →
1. Taitom
 2. Seldou
 3. Thangsing
 4. Leivang →
 - a. Vanglut
 - b. Vanghao
 - c. Vang-oh
 5. Sonna - Khumlai
 6. Biangtung - Khumlai
 7. Haotual

The Simtes are one of the minority language groups in the Kuki-Chin language group. The older generations identify the Simte language alternately as the Khuangnung language, indicating their ancestry to Khuangnung village in present day Chin Hills of Myanmar. The Simtes today trace their settlement at Zuangkhoa in Burma and that they were a relatively strong tribe at Khuangnung village. The Khuangnung village lies between the present Lailo and Tuiluang in the Tedim area of Burma. In Myanmar itself, the group is known as Ngaihte.

According to their historical records, the Ngaihte is the progenitor of all the Khuangnung (Simte) people.

Interestingly, today, the Ngaihtes in Manipur have split up into two groups. There are a few who have had claimed their affiliation to the Paite group. As such the Ngaihte speakers affiliated with the Paite community speak Paite language. The other few, who today call themselves as the Simte, speak the Simte language.

The Simtes belong to an endogamous society wherein marriage between clan members is sanctioned. Traditionally, marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter was preferred. Today we find the Simtes accepting not only the traditional pattern of marriage but also intermarriages between other ethnic groups within the Kuki-Chin



STC (Simte Tribe Council) celebrating Diamond Jubilee Celebration in 2016

group as well as other national and international communities. This has also led to many borrowings and coinages into the Simte language.

The Simte language has never been used in school or in radio and mass media. It was only on 27th March, 2015, that the State Cabinet of Manipur decided to approve Simte (along-with Maram, Anal, and Maring languages) and accordingly introduced them in the school syllabus upto Class VIII. Some of the criteria for the same were that the population should not be less than 10,000 speakers and that there should be books, magazines and journals published in the language. Today the Simte Literature Society is striving to put the Simte language on a pinnacle through various writings, and publications.

Simte: A Minority Language

Comparing the status of the Simte language with the other surrounding languages, we find that the Simte community could be labelled as a 'minority' speech community among the Kuki-Chin group.

If we look at the linguistic profile of Manipur, then we find that there are many languages which fall into the minority status. In Churachandpur, as mentioned in preceding paragraph, the New Kuki-Chin language group shows a highly polarised tendency between the various languages. The Thadou and the Paite speakers constitute the majority chunk of this linguistic group. Due to the strength of their population, these two groups have always been at 'tug-of-war' of power and dominance. The other languages lie at an intermediary position. Many linguistic groups are either absorbed into the bigger groups or lie at the mercy of the bigger groups. What we see with the Simte, Zou, Gangte, etc. language groups is that they do not have a say in mass media or writings. The speakers of these languages then end up using their language as an oral means in their day to day activities. Observations from my field study showed that though the various languages of the Kuki-Chin group show high level of mutual intelligibility, the speakers of the minority group subconsciously shift to uttering the languages of the majority. The only books these minority languages possess are the Bible and the hymn books.

The following table better explains this phenomenon:

Name of the Tribe/ Langage	Population as per 2001 Census	Language Usage
Thadou (Kuki)	(Thadou) 190,595 people; (Kuki) 52,873 people	Taught up to class XII standard as a subject of instruction. It is also used as a language of mass and media.
Paite	64, 100 speakers	Taught up to graduate level as a subject of instruction in Manipur. The language is also a part of mass media communications.
Vaiphei	39,673 speakers	Taught up to X standard under the Board of Education of Manipur. It is also used as a means of mass media.
Zou	20.857 speakers	Zou is taught up to X standard as a subject of instruction as a major Indian language. The language is not used in radio or in mass media, both print and electronic.
Gangte	14,500 speakers	Gangte is not used in school neither in radio or mass media

Today however, there has been a conscious effort among the minority speakers to revitalise their languages. The introduction of these languages into the school syllabus is one such step towards their revitalisation. Recent socio-political movements by the minority

languages strive for their self-identification. The move made by the Gangte speakers to be grouped under the Mizo umbrella is an example of self-preservation. In the past the Kuki movement has seen the dominant Thadous demanding one umbrella term for all the 'new' Kuki-Chin languages. We have seen reports of resistance from the Paite majority and the ensuing ethnic communal clashes in 1997 where the various groups tried to assert their identity. Recent movements have seen the Paite majority backed by the Teddim-Chin speakers demanding for one umbrella term 'Zomi'. Initially most of the minor groups had agreed for this term, all except the Thadou populations. However, eventually, even the smaller tribes have backed out in their attempt to self-assertion and preservation. Instead each tribe is fighting now for its own progress and survival. However, after the ethnic violence that started on May 3, 2023, the vaited term Kuki-Chin-Hmor is gaining more popularity.

Some pictures from the Simte community



A traditional Simte kitchen



Zubel – traditional rice beer pot



Traditional weaving style



Traditional process of making *Tuibu* – a liquid collected from vapour of burning tobacco leaves



A typical doorpost decorated with skulls of hunted animals



Khuangpi – the traditional drum



Traditional mat

Conclusion

The languages pertaining to the Kuki-Chin group often find themselves in a complex relationship due to their obscure knowledge of their history and background. Ethnic power and dominance rules their everyday existence. But with education and the zeal to survive as a separate linguistic group, many of the minority languages have started to assert themselves. This leads to tensions and many complexities, and yet provides a ray of hope into their very existence. This paper hitherto preliminary, is just a glimpse into the socio-linguistic profile of the new Kuki-Chin language groups.

Simte as a language has made a recent attempt to survive through various means of writings and publications, and has been recently accepted into the school syllabus. Thus, it makes an interesting sample of the struggle and attempts of a minority language group in its socio-political and ethnic existence. Taking Simte as a sample, the study will be able to explore on the overall status and functioning of the minor language groups in the Kuki-Chin languages of Manipur.

Notes

- ¹ An ethnic polarisation index is a measure of the extent to which individuals in a population are distributed across different ethnic groups.
- ² a word that *is* composed of parts from different languages.
- ³ Dute to the ethnic clashes which started on May 3, 2023, there is no more any trace of the Kuki-Chin and Kuki are sub-summed under the Kuki-Chin umbrella as conglomerate languages. Population in the Imphal Valley.
- ⁴ Kuki is an umbrella term under which all the Kuki-Chin Languages are summed up. The dou is a language under the Kuki-Chin group but a times

it is alternatively also called as Thadov (Kuki). Yet there is another group which prefers themselves as only Kuki. Both Thadou (Kuki).

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*The Mundas of Kolkata: from Chhotonagpur Plateau to the
Labyrinth of an Urban Megalopolis*

Amrita Das Gupta

Abstract

In anthropological parlance 'social change' connotes change in the social institutions, the social behaviour or the social relations of a society, or other social structures, any event or action that affects a group of individuals that have shared values or characteristics; acts of advocacy for the cause of changing society in a normative way.

The present study has been visualised in the backdrop of the study *The Mundas and their Country* by the eminent anthropologist Sarat Chandra Roy. The aim of this paper is to understand the nature of social change that has taken place among the Mundas residing in Kolkata. The objectives of the present research is to find out the following: (i) reason for migration of the Mundas from Chotonagpur to Kolkata, (ii) nature of change in their material, social and religious life, (iii) how far urbanisation and modernisation has made impact in their life styles and finally (iv) how the Mundas of Kolkata maintain their tribal identity even in an urban megapolis like Kolkata. Data is collected from the Mundas residing at Mundapara in Anandapur at the Eastern Metropolis of Kolkata.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been applied for the collection of data. Culture, change and its explanations are the essential ingredients of this paper. Finally, the study reveals that several factors of social change have radically altered their life styles. But in spite of such changes they still maintain their identities even in an urban megapolis.

Key words: Tribe, Social change, Urban megapolis, Munda, Identity.

Introduction

Change is the law of nature. Every change leases life to it and every decay gives it a new birth (Bukhari, 2006). The study of social change started in India in the 20th century. D. N. Majumder (1937) was the first Indian anthropologist who turned his attention to the change in 'Ho' society. Social change brings change in different aspects such as nature, behaviour, institutions etc. Change in a society may take place due to cultural, religious, economic, scientific or technological forces. Changes may have intensive or extensive impact on the large section of a society and its population. Due to some modern forces the life-ways as well as thought processes have changed. It is evident that no society is completely traditional or modern. Tribal societies are no exception. The impacts of modernisation, development and globalisation on the tribes have assumed great significance. Tribal migration from one place to another was regarded as powerful agent in the production of a virtually new culture. In the present context migration is happening even to the urban areas for the betterment of lives and livelihood (Roy, 1912). Social changes have taken place due to migration. It is generally believed that when any change takes place in a society the material aspect of life changes a lot more rapidly than the non-material aspects of its culture (Sachhidananda, 1964). Social change has specific meaning for anthropologists and sociologists.

The word 'Munda' means the headman of the village. The name 'Munda' is Sanskrit in origin. The Munda people mainly descended from Austro-Asiatic migrants of South-East Asia. The Mundas call themselves 'Horoko' meaning 'mankind'. The Munda tribe is divided into a number of clans known as 'kili'. The main concentrations of the Mundas are found in the states of Jharkhand, Orissa, and West Bengal. They speak in 'Mundari' language, belonging to Austro-Asiatic group of languages, which is also known as 'Kolarian' (Roy 1912, Guha 1944). They are a patrilineal tribe. Agriculture is their primary occupation. Besides it, they depend upon animal husbandry, fishing, earth cutting, selling goods etc. Their religion is a mixture of both

Sarnaism and Hinduism. Influence of Christianity is much in evidence among the tribe in many areas. The name Munda is given to them by the non-Munda people, specifically the Hindu neighbours, and is exclusively used by all but the Munda themselves (Hoffman,1950). The Mundas prefer to maintain their distinctiveness as separate group among other tribal communities. Chhotonagpur plateau is the original homeland for the Munda people.

Prof. Sachhidananda (1979) researched among the Munda tribe and pointed out some basic factors, which may be considered as the causes for giving rise to undesirable changes in their society and culture. Roy gave a general account of the Mundas including their livelihood pattern, original settlement, language, phase of the struggle etc. His first book is *The Mundas and their Country* (1912). He traced their original home to a distant land of 81 uplands and 83 elevated rice fields (Vidyarthi, 1978). Birsa Munda, the freedom fighter first worked to unify the tribals of Chhotonagpur and resisted the British rule in India. The Mundas appeared to have modified some of their customs and practices in imitation of Hindu neighbours (Roy, 1912).

The present study on the Mundas is made keeping in mind S. C. Roy's work mentioned above. The field work is conducted in the area of the Mundapara, at Anandapur. There are a few tribal settlements in Kolkata. A number of them belong to the Munda and Oraon communities. All of them are urban migrants. They have no clear idea about their migration pattern. But evidence shows that they have been living in Kolkata almost for three to four generations. Migration has emerged as a powerful factor for cultural transformation and change among the tribals. The search for employment has forced them to work at different places throughout India or even outside. The Mundas of the Mundapara still try to maintain their original identity besides their traditional practices.

Objectives

The aim of this paper is an attempt to understand the nature of social change that has taken place among the Mundas residing in

Kolkata in the backdrop of the study *The Mundas and their Country* made by the eminent anthropologist Sarat Chandra Roy about a century ago. According to scholars working on migrated tribes in India (Orans, 1965), the tribes try to maintain their solidarity and identity, but on the other hand they also absorb some traits of the greater tradition in which they are placed as migrants. The focus is to find out both the elements, traditional and modern, among the Munda tribal population in the Mundapara, Anandapur, Kolkata. Objectives for the present research are as follows:

- a) To understand the nature of social change that has taken place among the Mundas of Mundapara, Anandapur.
- b) The reason for migration of the tribal population from Chhotonagpur to the urban megalopolis.
- c) How the material, social and religious lives have undergone changes in the present context, in the backdrop of the study in Chhotonagpur made by an eminent scholar like Sarat Chandra Roy.
- d) Impact of modernisation and urbanisation in the present situation.
- e) Lastly, to understand whether they maintain their original culture as before or some new cultural traits have been incorporated in their daily lives.

Methodology and Area of study

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data are collected from different source materials on the Munda population such as, various records, publications, documents, Census of India etc. This paper reveals the nature of social change of the above mentioned tribal population in the backdrop of the study *The Mundas and their Country* by Sri Roy. In order to have detailed information on various aspects related to education, occupation, economy, migration, customs, religion, social change among this group, household surveys have been conducted with the help of well designed schedule. Both structured and unstructured schedules have been used to collect the relevant information. Both interview and direct

observation methods have been used for the collection of other necessary documents from the field study. The case study took an important role for proper understanding of migration histories and some social changes of the population.

Location of the area

Mundapara is under the Kolkata Corporation area since 1984. Prior to 1984, the area was under the Municipal Board. Mundapara is under Anandapur police station. The post office is under the Presidency division. Adarsha Nagar, Hussainpur in East Calcutta Township. Chowbaga and Paschim Chowbaga are the nearby localities of Anandapur, which is under the ward number 108. The area is adjacent to Ruby General Hospital. There is a college of Technology named Meghnad Saha Institute of technology at the adjacent area of the Mundapara. This place is connected with other parts of Kolkata by bus, auto, van etc.

History of the settlement

History of settlement of the Mundas in the area is given below. This place was under the zamindari of Sri Pratibha Ranjan Roy. The Mundas have been living here for the last 3 to 4 generations. Their ancestors migrated to this place from Chhotonagpur through Sundarban area and or Sandeshkhali region (De 1983, Huque 2018). The present generation is not able to inform much about their original homeland. As far as evidence goes from literature (De 1983) and from the interviews in the field, their ancestors used to live in their original homeland i.e. Ranchi in Chhotonagpur. The condition in their homeland was miserable. They were oppressed by the colonial policies of Settlement Act, zaminders and money lenders, and escaped from there either to West Bengal or to other surrounding states. According to the version of the respondents of Mundapara, migration has taken place due to occupational mobility. Some others also said that their previous generations were brought by the British people to clear the jungles and create settlements. Under such circumstances Sri Roy, the zaminder of the area employed some Mundas in his zamindari. The informants said

that the zamindar had initially allotted one bigha of land to each Munda family. Since then they have been living in the present day Anandapur area. They were engaged in cultivation of the land given and also kept animals like goat, pig and cattle. They had enough cultivable lands. But at present they fell victims to various urban projects.

Modernisation of the settlement area

Modernisation and urbanisation have great effect on the lives of the Mundas of Mundapara. There appear evidences of change in the dress and jewellery they use, food, drinks and the games they play. Every household has electricity, water and toilet facilities which are important aspects of their daily lives. The water facility is quite good in Mundapara. There are many tube wells in the locality, which provide them with fresh drinking water. Besides tube wells there are ponds where they take bath or clean their clothes and utensils. There is good market facility in the area. The settlement pattern of Mundapara is almost 'E' shaped. The houses are of different types. Some houses are made of mud and thatched with tiles or sometimes with straw. There are some concrete houses made of bricks and pillars. The concrete houses are either two storied or three-storied. The houses are often arranged in a linear pattern at one side of the inner road of Mundapara. Some houses are arranged on both sides of the brick road. The brick road joins the main road at the entrance of Mundapara. This is a metalled road which is linked with other roads of Mundapara. There is a market on both sides of the main road and the Mundas living there avail the facility of the market. At the entrance to the para there is a club, which looks after the welfare of the people living in Mundapara, irrespective of the community they belong to. The name of the club is Adibashi Kalyan Samiti. The club arranges rituals and festivals throughout the year for the members of the Mundapara. Although The Ruby General Hospital is adjacent to the locality, the Mundas do not go to that hospital as it is costly. They go mainly to Chittaranjan Hospital in Park circus or Chittaranjan Seva Sadan and Ramkrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan (Shishumangal). Many economically stable Munda households own television set, radio, tape recorder, cooking gas, motor bike, bicycle, almirah, refrigerators and other valuable gadgets.

Population of the locality

It was informed by the local people that in 1970 there were 12 to 13 households of the Mundas living along with other communities in Mundapara area. Now the number has increased. At present there are 91 household of the Mundas in the Mundapara. The other communities include the Oraons, Santals, Bhumij, Mech, and Hindu Kayasthas. But the area is dominated by Munda community and that is why the locality is known as Mundapara. The author in the present study found that a total of 374 Munda people live at the locality. Out of these, 180 are male and 194 are female members. There are some male and female members who have come to the Munda families by marriage but do not belong to the Munda group. There are about 8 converted Christian Munda families. The clan groups that reside in the place are Topno, Kucher, Baota, Hansch, Supari, Kashyap, Horduari etc. The data collected have been analysed and the results are given below.

Firstly, age-sex wise calculation is made of the data collected in the census. The data is arranged in tabular form. Age distribution is calculated at 5 years interval.

Table 1. Age-sex wise distribution of the total population of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	MALE (N & %)	FEMALE (N & %)	TOTAL (N & %)
0 to 5	17(9.44%)	13(6.70%)	30(8.02%)
6 to 10	23(12.78%)	20(10.31%)	43(11.50%)
11 to 15	19(10.56%)	19(9.79%)	38(10.16%)
16 to 20	24(13.33%)	21(10.82%)	45(12.03%)
21 to 25	13(7.22%)	28(14.43%)	41(10.96%)
26 to 30	17(9.44%)	26(13.40%)	43(11.50%)
31 to 35	22(12.22%)	21(10.82%)	43(11.50%)
36 to 40	19(10.56%)	12(6.19%)	31(8.29%)
41 to 45	5(2.78%)	8(4.12%)	13(3.48%)
46 to 50	8(4.44%)	15(7.73%)	23(6.15%)
51 to 55	4(2.22%)	3(1.55%)	7(1.87%)
56 to 60	4(2.22%)	4(2.06%)	8(2.14%)
61 to 65	4(2.22%)	2(1.04%)	6(1.60%)
71 to 75	1(0.56%)	2(1.04%)	3(0.80%)
Total	180(48.13%)	194(51.87%)	374

The distribution shows that females (52%) are more in number in comparison to the male counterparts (48%). This ratio is more tilted towards the female in the age groups of 21-25, 26-30, and 46-50 years. Proportions of both are the same in case of 11-15 years of age group. There is a trend of increase of population throughout childhood to middle aged group, though this trend is not gradual in nature in the age groups of 51-55 years, 56-60 years, 61-65 years and 71-75 years. Surprisingly it is found that not a single member irrespective of both sexes is found in the age group of above 75 years. It is informed that no one goes back to their original homelands at all. The numbers of female members are higher (n=194) than the males (n=180). Another important feature of the area is higher birth rate among the population. The child-women ratio is noticeable.

In the age group of 61-65 years age group the male percentage (2.22%) is higher than their female counterparts (1.03%). But in the higher age group (70 years and above) females (1.03%) are higher than their male counterparts (0.55%), though meager in number. It reflects our national trend of aged population.

Marriage system of the community

Table 2.1 Marital status of the Male Mundas of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	UM	M	DIV/SEP	Total
0 to 5	17(9.44%)	-	-	17(9.44%)
6 to 10	23(12.77%)	-	-	23(12.77%)
11 to 15	19(10.56%)	-	-	19(10.56%)
16 to 20	23(12.78%)	1(0.56%)	-	24(13.33%)
21 to 25	5(2.78%)	8(4.44%)	-	13(7.22%)
26 to 30	1(0.56%)	16(8.89%)	-	17(9.44%)
31 to 35	-	21(11.66%)	1(0.56%)	22(12.22%)
36 to 40	-	18(10%)	1(0.56%)	19(10.56%)
41 to 45	-	4(2.22%)	10.56%	5(2.77%)
46 to 50	-	8(4.44%)	-	8(4.44%)
51 to 55	-	4(2.22%)	-	4(2.22%)
56 to 60	-	4(2.22%)	-	4(2.22%)
61 to 65	-	4(2.22%)	-	4(2.22%)
66 to 70	-	-	-	-
71 to 75	-	1(0.56%)	-	1(0.56%)
Total	88(48.89%)	89(49.44%)	3(1.67%)	180

Um=Unmarried=Married, Div/Sep=Divorced/Separated

Table: 2.2 Marital status of the Munda Females of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	UM (N&%)	M (N&%)	W (N&%)	DIV/SEP (N&%)	Total (N&%)
0 to 5	13(6.70%)	-	-	-	13(6.70%)
6 to 10	20(10.31 %)	-	-	-	20(10.31%)
11 to15	19(9.79%)	-	-	-	19(9.79%)
16 to 20	13(6.70%)	8(4.12%)	-	-	21(10.82%)
21 to 25	8(4.12%)	19(9.79%)	-	1(0.52%)	28(14.43%)
26 to 30	2(1.03%)	20(10.31%)	1(0.52%)	3(1.55%)	26(13.40%)
31 to 35		20(10.31%)	1(0.52%)	-	21(10.82%)
36 to 40		7(3.60%)	2(1.03%)	3(1.55%)	12(6.19%)
41 to 45	-	5(2.58%)	3(1.55%)	-	8(4.12%)
46 to 50	-	6(3.09%)	9(4.64%)	-	15(7.73%)
51 to 55	-	3(1.55%)	-	-	3(1.55%)
56 to 60	-	1(0.52%)	3(1.55%)	-	4(2.06%)
61 to 65	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	2(1.03%)
66 to 70	-	-	-	-	0
71 to 75	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	2(1.03%)
Total	75(38.66%)	89(45.88%)	23(11.86%)	7(3.60%)	194

UM=Unmarried, M = Married, W = Widow, DIV/SEP = Divorced/Separated

Marital status means the condition of being married, unmarried, divorced or separated. Marital status is influenced by age and socio-economic features of a population. More women in marriageable age are married. At the age groups of 0-10 years both the males and females are unmarried. It is quite obvious. Within the age group of 16-20 years only eight females (4.12%) are married. The trend of getting married is earlier in case of female than the male members. The numbers of married males are high in the age groups of 21-40 years. For females it is high within the age group of 21-35 years. A number of widows are found among the Munda female population. Surprisingly no widower is found in the above case. The scenario also reflects the national trend of the population because the mortality of aged male is higher than the females. This is an important feature of the population. Divorced and separated cases in case of both genders mostly are found among the middle-aged groups.

Mate choice is a process in which selection is dependent on the attractiveness of an individual's traits. There are two methods prevalent among the Mundas for acquiring mates. These are marriage by negotiation and marriage by love. Love marriage (51.09%) is higher than the negotiated marriage (48.91%) in case of males, but in case of females it is completely opposite. One thing is noticed that within 16-20 years of age one male and eight females preferred love marriage. Maximum males prefer love marriage (14.13%) within the age group of 31-35 (11.96%) years followed by 26-30 years of age group (10.92%) and 21-25 years of age group (7.62%). Maximum number of females prefer love marriage (11.76%) at the age group of 26-30 years followed by 21-25 years (10.92%) and (8.40%) at the age group 31-35 years respectively. Both the aged males and females went for arranged marriage. Arranged marriage is higher in the case of females (56.30%) than their male counterparts (48.91%). The parents prefer the negotiated marriage than the love marriage. A noticeable percentage of both males and females prefer arranged marriage in the present urban context besides love marriage. It is also the combination of both tradition as well as modern system of society.

Educational Status of the Mundas

Table: 3.1 Level of education of the Munda males of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	1 (N&%)	2 (N&%)	3 (N&%)	4 (N&%)	5 (N&%)	6 (N&%)	7 (N&%)	8 (N&%)	TOTAL (N&%)
0 to 5	10(5.55%)	1(0.55%)	6(3.33%)	-	-	-	-	-	17(9.45%)
6 to 10	-	-	6(3.33%)	15(8.33%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	23(12.77%)
11 to 15	-	1(0.55%)	-	4(2.22%)	10(5.55%)	4(2.22%)	-	-	19(10.55%)
16 to 20	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	3(1.66%)	7(3.89%)	10(5.55%)	2(1.11%)	-	24(13.33%)
21 to 25	-	1(0.55%)	-	1(0.55%)	2(1.11%)	6(3.33%)	-	3(1.66%)	13(7.23%)
26 to 30	-	-	-	7(3.89%)	5(2.78%)	3(1.66%)	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	17(9.45%)
31 to 35	1(0.55%)	5(2.78%)	-	2(1.11%)	6(3.33%)	6(3.33%)	-	2(1.11%)	22(12.22%)
36 to 40	1(0.55%)	4(2.22%)	-	6(3.33%)	7(3.89%)	1(0.55%)	-	-	19(10.55%)
41 to 45	1(0.55%)	-	-	-	2(1.11%)	1(0.55%)	-	1(0.55%)	5(2.77%)
46 to 50	1(0.55%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	3(1.66%)	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	8(4.44%)
51 to 55	-	-	-	3(1.66%)	-	-	-	1(0.55%)	4(2.22%)
56 to 60	-	-	-	1(0.55%)	3(1.66%)	-	-	-	4(2.22%)

61 to 65	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	-	-	4(2.22%)
66 to 70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	1(0.55%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1(0.55%)
TOTAL	16(8.89%)	17(9.45%)	12(6.66%)	43(23.89%)	48(26.66%)	32(17.77%)	4(2.22%)	6(3.33%)	180

1-Non-literate, 2-Can sign, 3-Below primary, 4-Primary, 5-Upto viii, 6-Secondary, 7-Higher Secondary, 8- Graduate and above

Table: 3.2 Level of education of the Munda females of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	1 (N&%)	2 (N&%)	3 (N&%)	4 (N&%)	5 (N&%)	6 (N&%)	7 (N&%)	8 (N&%)	9 (N&%)	TOTAL (N&%)
0 to 5	7(3.61%)	-	5(2.58%)	1(0.51%)	-	-	-	-	-	13(6.70%)
6 to 10	-	-	5(2.58%)	15(7.73%)	-	-	-	-	-	20(10.31%)
11 to 15	-	-	-	5(2.58%)	10(5.15%)	4(2.06%)	1(0.51%)	-	-	19(9.79%)
16 to 20	1(0.51%)	-	-	1(0.51%)	8(4.12%)	5(2.58%)	3(1.54%)	2(1.03%)	-	21(10.82%)
21 to 25	2(1.03%)	3(1.54%)	-	2(1.03%)	6(3.09%)	6(3.09%)	3(1.54%)	6(3.09%)	-	28(14.43%)
26 to 30	1(0.51%)	2(1.03%)	-	5(2.58%)	11(5.67%)	3(1.54%)	1(0.51%)	1(0.51%)	1(0.51%)	26(13.40%)
31 to 35	4(2.06%)	4(2.06%)	1(0.51%)	4(2.06%)	2(1.03%)	5(2.58%)	1(0.51%)	1(0.51%)	-	21(10.82%)
36 to 40	4(2.06%)	4(2.06%)	1(0.51%)	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	-	-	12(6.19%)
40 to 45	6(3.09%)	1(0.51%)	-	1(0.51%)	-	-	-	-	-	8(4.12%)
46 to 50	10(5.15%)	4(2.06%)	-	1(0.51%)	-	-	-	-	-	15(7.73%)
51 to 55	3(1.54%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3(1.55%)
56 to 60	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4(2.06%)
61 to 65	3(1.54%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2(1.03%)
66 to 70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2(1.03%)
TOTAL	45(23.20%)	19(9.79%)	12(6.19%)	37(19.07%)	38(19.59%)	23(11.86%)	9(4.64%)	10(5.15%)	1(0.51%)	194

1-Non-literate, 2-Can sign, 3-Below primary, 4-Primary, 5-Upto viii, 6-Secondary, 7-Higher Secondary, 8-Graduate and above, 9- Technical Degree

A remarkable educational progress is found among the female groups in comparison to the male groups. It may be the effect of urbanisation, awareness and the overall outlook towards the female groups of the Munda society in urban situation. In case of 0-5 years of age there are ten males and seven females respectively who are unable to take education in respect to their ages. Education up to primary section is higher in case of males (23.89%) in respect to the females (19.07%). The maximum male education is up to class viii (26.66%). It may be due to the fact that many male members dropped out of school in search of job. 17.77% of male and 11.86% of female

availed secondary education respectively, whereas 2.22% of male and 4.64% of female take higher secondary education. The tendency of pursuing higher education (both in graduation and above bachelor's degree) is higher in case of female (5.15%) than the male groups (3.33%). It is due to better job opportunity. It appears that the guardians of the females continuously inspire them for this betterment. This is the direct urban impact. The females are also opting for technical degree (0.51%) for better future. The older generations are not much educated irrespective of both the genders. The aged Mundas were not at all aware of pursuing education at old age. But in present urban context, the eagerness of receiving knowledge due to modernisation, awareness as well as the influence of the other caste groups made them eager for getting formal education, especially the women.

The young boys and girls travel to schools quite far from the area of their residence to Kasba, Ballygunge, Baghajatin etc. Education plays an important role in shaping the lives of both the males and females. Some of them go for higher education. It indicates a kind of change in the outlook of the society.

Occupational Status of the Mundas

Table: 4.1 Nature of occupation of Munda males of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	1 (N&%)	2 (N&%)	3 (N&%)	4 (N&%)	5 (N&%)	6 (N&%)	7 (N&%)	8 (N&%)	TOTAL (N&%)
0-5	-	-	-	-	-	7(3.89%)	10(5.55%)	-	17(9.45%)
6-10	-	-	-	-	-	22(12.22%)	1(0.55%)	-	23(12.77%)
11-15	-	-	-	-	-	18(10%)	1(0.55%)	-	19(10.55%)
16-20	4(2.22%)	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	-	10(5.56%)	2(1.11%)	6(3.33%)	24(13.33%)
21-25	2(1.11%)	2(1.11%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	2(1.11%)	1(0.55%)	4(2.22%)	13(7.23%)
26-30	4(2.22%)	1(0.55%)	5(2.78%)	-	-	-	-	7(3.89%)	17(9.45%)
31-35	2(1.11%)	4(2.22%)	9(5%)	-	-	-	1(0.55%)	6(3.33%)	22(12.22%)
36-40	2(1.11%)	3(1.66%)	8(4.44%)	-	-	-	-	6(3.33%)	19(10.55%)
40-45	2(1.11%)	1(0.55%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	-	-	5(2.77%)
46-50	2(1.11%)	1(0.55%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	-	3(1.66%)	8(4.44%)
51-55	1(0.55%)	-	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	-	1(0.55%)	4(2.22%)
56-60	1(0.55%)	-	-	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	-	1(0.55%)	4(2.22%)
61-65	-	-	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	-	2(1.11%)	4(2.22%)

66-70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	-	-	-	-	1(0.55%)	-	1(0.55%)
TOTAL	20(11.11%)	13(7.22%)	33(18.33%)	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	59(32.78%)	17(9.44%)	36(20%)	180

1-Service, 2-Business, 3-Wage earner, 4-House-hold work, 5-Pension holder, 6-Student, 7-Don't work, 8-Others

Table: 4.2 Nature of occupation of Munda females of Mundapara

AGE GROUP	1 (N&%)	2 (N&%)	3 (N&%)	4 (N&%)	5 (N&%)	6 (N&%)	7 (N&%)	8 (N&%)	TOTAL (N&%)
0-5	-	-	-	-	-	6(3.09%)	7(3.61%)	-	13(6.70%)
6-10	-	-	-	-	-	22(10.31%)	-	-	23(10.31%)
11-15	-	-	-	-	-	18(9.28%)	-	10.51%	19(9.79%)
16-20	2(1.03%)	-	-	6(3.09%)	-	10(5.15%)	-	3(1.54%)	21(10.82%)
21-25	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	1(0.51%)	12(6.18%)	-	8(4.12%)	-	4(2.06%)	28(14.43%)
26-30	4(2.06%)	1(0.51%)	-	13(6.70%)	-	1(0.51%)	-	7(3.61%)	26(13.40%)
31-35	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	-	12(6.18%)	-	-	-	6(3.09%)	21(10.82%)
36-40	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	-	8(4.12%)	-	-	-	1(0.51%)	12(6.19%)
40-45	-	1(0.51%)	-	1(0.51%)	-	-	-	6(3.09%)	8(4.12%)
46-50	1(0.51%)	-	1(0.51%)	8(4.12%)	-	-	-	5(2.58%)	15(7.73%)
51-55	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	1(0.51%)	3(1.55%)
56-60	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	4(2.06%)
61-65	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	-	2(1.03%)
66-70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	-	2(1.03%)
TOTAL	13(6.70%)	5(2.58%)	2(1.03%)	68(35.05%)	-	63(32.47%)	7(3.61%)	36(18.56%)	194

1-Service, 2-Business, 3-Wage earner, 4-House-hold work, 5-Pension holder, 6-Student, 7-Don't work, 8-Others.

Occupation in the present study means a person's usual or principal work or business, especially as a means of earning. Working force is defined as the proportion of active workers in the population. In the present study 'working age group' has been considered as 16-59 years of age. There are seventeen males belonging to different age groups who do not work. This includes ten (5.55%) new born male babies and seven (3.61 %) new born female babies in the age group of 0-5 years. The highest number of occupation in case of male is student (n=59), followed by the other group (n=36), wage earner? (n=33) and female as house-wife (n=68) followed by student (n=62), other group

(n=36). Other groups include sweeper, cook, garden cleaner, mason etc. Within the 'working age group' category the service holder (government or private sector) is higher in case of males (11.11 %) than the female groups (6.70%). Most of the females belong to housewife category (35.05%) which is a very common scenario in every society. From the age group 15-20 years the majority of male population pursue different kinds of occupations which is a national trend. But a noticeable number of (32.47%) female populations can continue their education up to the age of 30 years. It seems that their parents allow them to go for higher education. It is the effect of urbanisation. A very few aged males (wage earner, sweeper) and females (household work, sweeper) are engaged in different working sectors. Surprisingly it is found that the females of urban Munda society are engaged in different outside works simultaneously with the male population. They are engaged in service in government as well as in private sectors, in business, as wage earner, in studentship, house-keeping, bag factory, garden cleaning etc.

Birth Place of the people

5.1 Place of birth of the Munda males of Mundapara

Age Group	1(N & %)	2(N & %)	3(N & %)	4(N & %)	Total
0-5	-	17(9.45%)	-	-	17(9.45%)
6-10	1(0.55%)	21(11.66%)	1(0.55%)	-	23(12.77%)
11-15	2(1.11%)	16(8.89%)	1(0.55%)	-	19(10.55%)
16-20	7(3.88%)	15(8.33%)	2(1.11 %)	-	24(13.33%)
21-25	9(5%)	2(1.11 %)	2(1.11%)	-	13(7.23%)
26-30	11(6.11 %)	2(1.11%)	3(1.66%)	1(0.55%)	17(9.45%)
31-35	9(5%)	6(3.33%)	7(3.88%)	-	22(12.22%)
36-40	9(5%)	1(0.55%)	9(5%)	-	19(10.55%)
40-45	1(0.55%)	2(1.11%)	2(1.11%)	-	5(2.77%)
46-50	2(1.11 %)	1(0.55%)	5(2.78%)	-	8(4.44%)
51-55	-	1(0.55%)	3(1.66%)	-	4(2.22%)
56-60	2(1.11%)	1(0.55%)	1(0.55%)	-	4(2.22%)
61-65	2(1.11%)	-	2(1.11%)	-	4(2.22%)
66-70	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	1(0.55%)	-	1(0.55%)
Total	55(30.56%)	85(47.22%)	39(21.66%)	1(0.55%)	180

1-Present location, 2-Out of present location but within Kolkata, 3-Out of PI but within West Bengal, 4-Outside India

5.2 Place of birth of the Munda females of Mundapara

Age Group	1(N & %)	2(N & %)	3(N & %)	Total (N&%)
0-5	-	13(6.70%)	-	13(6.70%)
6-10	1(0.51 %)	18(9.22%)	1(0.51 %)	20(10.31%)
11-15	2(1.03%)	14(7.22%)	3(1.54%)	19(9.79%)
16-20	5(2.58%)	13(6.70%)	3(1.54%)	21(10.82%)
21-25	7(3.61%)	12(6.19%)	9(4.64%)	28(14.43%)
26-30	13(6.70%)	11(5.67%)	2(1.03%)	26(13.40%)
31-35	7(3.61%)	11(5.67%)	3(1.54%)	21(10.82%)
36-40	6(3.09%)	3(1.54%)	3(1.54%)	12(6.19%)
40-45	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	5(2.58%)	8(4.12%)
46-50	2(1.03%)	1(0.51%)	12(6.19%)	15(7.73%)
51-55	-	1(0.51 %)	2(1.03%)	3(1.55%)
56-60	-	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)	4(2.06%)
61-65	1(0.51 %)	-	1(0.51 %)	2(1.03%)
66-70	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	2 (1.03%)	2(1.03%)
Total	46(23.72%)	100(51.54%)	48(24.74%)	194

1-Present location, 2-Out of present location but within Kolkata, 3-Out of present location but within West Bengal.

The place of birth (POB) is the place where a person was born. The place of birth is not necessarily the place where the parents of the new baby live. The birth in present location is higher in case of male (30.56%) than their female counterparts (23.72%). It signifies that most of the male persons are born in the place but number of the females has migrated here by marriage. Outside the present location but within Kolkata includes different places of Kolkata. Here all the new born male and female under the age of 0-5 years are included because they are born in different hospitals of Kolkata. Surprisingly, one case is noticed in the age group of 26-30 years that one male person is born outside India i.e. in Nepal. He is not a Munda. He belongs to Thapa community but is married in a Munda family and lives in that family as a permanent member. The percentage of the birth place out of

present location but within Kolkata is highest among all categories in case of both males (47.22%) and females (51.54%). In females the percentage of the birth place out of present location but within West Bengal (n=48) is higher than present location (n=46). But in case of male it is totally reverse in nature. The birth of most of the middle and old aged population of both genders are born out of present location but within West Bengal. It signifies somehow that they have migrated from other parts of West Bengal. The aged males (above 60 years) are born at present location; it means they have been staying in the place for a long time. But in case of aged females the scenario is quite different. They came to the place as brides.

Duration of stay of the above population

6.1 Duration of stay of the Munda Males of Mundapara

Age Group	Since Birth (N&%)	Within 20 Yrs (N&%)	Within 30 Yrs (N&%)	Within 40 Yrs (N&%)	Within 50 Yrs (N&%)	Total (N&%)
0-5	17(9.45%)	-	-	-	-	17(9.45%)
6-10	22(12.22%)	1(0.56%)	-	-	-	23(12.77%)
11-15	18(10%)	1(0.56%)	-	-	-	19(10.55%)
16-20	22(12.22%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	-	24(13.33%)
21-25	10(5.55%)	3(1.66%)	-	-	-	13(7.23%)
26-30	14(7.77%)	2(1.11%)	1(0.56%)	-	-	17(9.45%)
31-35	13(7.22%)	9(5%)	-	-	-	22(12.22%)
36-40	10(5.55%)	7(3.88%)	2(1.11%)	-	-	19(10.55%)
41-45	1(0.56%)	-	3(1.66%)	-	1(0.56%)	5(2.77%)
46-50	2(1.11%)	3(1.66%)	1(0.56%)	1(0.56%)	1(0.56%)	8(4.44%)
51-55	1(0.56%)	1(0.56%)	1(0.56%)	-	1(0.56%)	4(2.22%)
56-60	3(1.66%)	1(0.56%)	-	-	-	4(2.22%)
61-65	2(1.11%)	-	-	1(0.56%)	1(0.56%)	4(2.22%)
66-70	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	-	1(0.56%)	-	1(0.55%)
Total	135(75%)	30(16.66%)	8(4.44%)	3(1.66%)	4(2.22%)	180

6.2 Duration of stay of the Munda females of Mundapara

Age Group	Since Birth (N&%)	Within 20 Yrs (N&%)	Within 30 Yrs (N&%)	Within 40 Yrs (N&%)	Within 50 Yrs (N&%)	Total (N&%)
0-5	13(6.70%)	-	-	-	-	13(6.70%)
6-10	18(9.27%)	2(1.03%)	-	-	-	20(10.31%)
11-15	13(6.70%)	6(3.09%)	-	-	-	19(9.79%)
16-20	12(6.19%)	9(4.64%)	-	-	-	21(10.82%)
21-25	10(5.15%)	18(9.28%)	-	-	-	28(14.43%)
26-30	13(6.70%)	11(5.67%)	2(1.03%)	-	-	26(13.40%)
31-35	8(4.12%)	11(5.67%)	2(1.03%)	-	-	21(10.82%)
36-40	7(3.60%)	3(1.54%)	2(1.03%)	-	-	12(6.19%)
40-45	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)	-	8(4.12%)
46-50	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)	5(2.58%)	4(2.06%)	2(1.03%)	15(7.73%)
51-55	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	1(0.52%)	3(1.55%)
56-60	-	1(0.52%)	1(0.52%)	1(0.52%)	1(0.52%)	4(2.06%)
61-65	1(0.52%)	-	-	-	1(0.52%)	2(1.03%)
66-70	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	-	-	-	-	2(1.03%)	2(1.03%)
Total	99(51.03%)	65(33.51%)	14(7.22%)	9(4.64%)	7(3.61%)	194

Duration of stay of the Mundas in the present location may throw some light on understanding the change and diffusion of culture. Majority of the males (75%) and females (51.03%) irrespective of all age groups have been living in the area since birth. The percentage of males living since birth is higher than the females, which is obvious because in most cases the females have come to live in the place after their marriage. Most of the younger generation, irrespective of genders, especially the unmarried girls, are living at the place since birth. Those who are living at Mundapara for the last 20 years show that 16.66% of them are males and 33.51% are females. 4.44% males and 7.22% females are in the area since last 30 years. It is informed that 1.11% males belonging to an age group of 61 - 65 years are living at Mundapara since birth. In case of elderly aged females belonging to age groups 60 to 75, only one person lived since birth and three

women lived at the place for the last 50 years. The elderly people informed that the Mundas lived at the place for the last three to four generations. Data shows that the place was occupied by the Mundas at least for the last 65 years if not for 75 years.

7.0 Family types of the Mundas of Mundapara

Gender					
	Single-Membered (N&%)	Nuclear (N&%)	Joint Family (N&%)	Incomplete (N&%)	Total (N&%)
Total	1(0.27%)	203(54.28%)	160(42.78%)	10(2.67%)	374 (100%)

The family type signifies the total structure or set up of the families. Only 0.27% is single-member families. It seems that nuclear family is in highest percentage (54.28%). Nuclear family consists of Husband, wife and their offspring. In the present study joint families (42.78%) are found next in frequency and percent. Under this category several related married couples and their children of both vertical and parallel generations living together and sharing the same hearth are considered. Incomplete families (2.67%) are those who are either divorced or separated and live with their children. In this category there 7 families headed by females and only 3 families headed by male members is noted. According to the informants, they prefer nuclear family under urban influence but they had joint family in Mundapara in earlier times.

It is noted that some men had married into Munda family and are staying with the nuptial family. The reason given was that either the work places of the male members are nearer to Mundapara or the man was an orphan.

Difference between past and present situation related to land settlement

Some years ago the situation was completely different. There were lots of lands, which were mostly cultivable. The Zamindar gave one bigha land to each family. The Mundas cultivated those fertile lands and several types of grains were produced. Sometimes they went for

fishing in the *bheris*. In the past they also used to go for hunting. While clearing the jungles during the British period they faced dangers from attack of wild animals. They had to fight those off. They guarded the area they cleared and occupied them. According to their opinion that is the reason why they were called 'Sardar' by the British. Sundarban was very close to the place they are living in at present (De 1983).

Since then the condition has changed. Due to the urban impact they have lost all the cultivable lands. One multinational project "Urbana" made its appearance and took their agricultural lands. The companies built a large building complex. In lieu of the cultivable lands they offered 1 lakh per bigha to the families who directly owned the land, and Rs. 75000 to the families, who were indirectly engaged in cultivation of those lands as *rayot* to the Zamindar. The Mundas diverted their occupation from tilling the land to other jobs. Instead of agriculture, fishing and hunting, they took up jobs in different government and private sectors. Some started business. It is informed that some are still waiting for compensation.

Cultural changes that took place in the studied area

Change is observed in various sectors of the society, namely, language, marriage pattern, rituals, festivals, even to some extent in the realm of solidarity. These are discussed below.

I. Language of the population

The Original language of the Mundas of this region is *Mundari*. But now the present generations are not much proficient in *Mundari* language. They speak in *Sadri* language. *Sadri* is the mixture of Bengali, Hindi and other regional languages. Like many tribes of eastern India the Mundas of Mundapara are bilingual. While speaking with the people other than Mundas they use Bengali or Hindi. The present generation may speak in English also since many of them have taken up education in English medium schools. It is noticed that the people of older generations are continuously trying to keep up with *Mundari*. People of Mundapara said that the *Mundari* is rather difficult for

them. The change in spoken language, specially among the young generation is result of urban impact.

II. Occupation of the population

The mundas were settled agriculturalists for two or three generations back in Mundapara, Anandapur. At present Mundas of Mundapara are much educated. They are engaged in different occupations like service, business, wage earning, sweeping, cooking, daily labour, working in bag factory, carpentry and so on. The Mundas lost their agricultural lands to the multinational land development project "Urbana". Animal husbandry is given up. This is the effect of urbanisation. The elderly males are engaged in different household works and gardening etc. They also participate in different works for the welfare of the Munda society. The middle aged females are also engaged in service sectors, business (mainly of sari), as labourer in bag factory, as cook, maid servant and in different house hold activities. Both male and female converted Mundas have better occupations.

III. Dress, jewellery, food and drink

Modernisation and urbanisation have a great effect on the lives of the Mundas. Their clothing, jewellery, food, drink and games have changed. According to Roy (1912), the dress of the Mundas was very simple and less elaborate. Due to the contact with other urban communities their dressing pattern has changed. The Mundas under study wear trousers, shirt, jeans, sari, salwar-kameez, long dress etc. In any festive occasion they usually wear dresses of good qualities. In occasions like the celebration of birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, both the male and female Mundas wear modern dresses whereas the performers of the program wear traditional Munda dresses. The effect of education can be found in the type of dresses the school going children prefer. The converted Christian Mundas usually wear western clothes.

In Mundapara both the male and female have interests in personal adornment. The married Munda women at Mundapara wear bangles made of conch-shell, red coral and iron. Wearing traditional jewellery

is still most common in the original homeland of the Mundas. At present the Mundas of Mundapara wear jewelleries available in the local markets. The younger girls often wear ornaments of beads, glass, plastic, gilt etc. The change in preference of ornaments is due to the effect of urbanisation and also of Hinduisation.

The Mundas of Mundapara normally eat rice, dal, sabji (vegetables), fish, chicken etc. which are common among the communities living in the locality. The well to do Munda families usually take good vegetarian or non-vegetarian dishes almost every day. Some other food item that originally were preferred by the Mundas, such as fresh water snails, field rats, are hardly taken because these are rare and hard to get in the present situation. They generally do not take pork or beef. The converted Christian Mundas usually prefer both vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. Tea is one of their favorite beverages. Besides tea they often take coffee as drink. The children prefer milk.

They specially use processed milk of mother diary or cow milk. They still consume *Hanria*, the indigenously brewed rice beer, which is a traditional drink of the Mundas. Locally available alcoholic drinks are also taken by them. Drinking habit has been quite increasing among the middle-aged as well as the younger generations.

IV. Economy

Economy among the Mundas is changing due to the effect of urbanisation. Due to lack of cultivable land agricultural activities cannot be continued any longer. Most of the Mundas are moderately well off now. They have bank accounts in different banks as per necessity. Some of them even take loan from different organisations to fulfil their needs and later they return back the money. The Government took initiative for Voter Cards as well as Aadhar Cards for each and every persons in every households. The persons who are engaged in service, business or any other profession have PAN cards. They have electricity facilities in each and every household. The households of the Mundas in the area vary in size and shape. Some houses are one storied concrete houses, some houses are made up of mud, thatched with straw. But the well to

do Mundas have 2-3 storied well decorated buildings. Most of them have bed, almirah, television, refrigerator and bi-cycle as their household assets. They use steel and aluminium utensils. A few Mundas use brass materials for special occasions.

V. Education

Education plays an important role for the development of any society. The researcher witnessed the development of the Munda society under study because better educational facilities available in the city. The Government provides stipend to the children of Scheduled Tribes upto the level of class V. State Government also provides some privileges to the students specially the girl children. They get *Kannyashree* grant once in a year from the Government. The children belonging to below poverty level also get privilege from the Government. The children from the area of Panchayat are given bi-cycles for going to school. The women education plays a major role for the development of the present Munda society. The female literacy has gone up. Many women go for higher education. They take up teaching job and other Government and non government services. The parents without any formal education are also eager to educate their daughter. Women often go for technical training as well. This may also be considered as the effect of urbanisation and Hinduisation in the present locality. The previous generations of Mundas of Mundapara generally lack in formal education but they have enough interest to make their next generations literate. Both the girl and boy children get privilege in all educational policies. The influence of urbanisation also plays a major role for the spread of formal education, which leads to the development of Munda society.

VI. Marriage and Kinship system

Endogamy in case of the tribal community is a rule. Any person marrying outside his or her community is usually excommunicated. But in present situation all the previous concepts have changed. In the present area clan exogamy is prevalent but at the same time

marriage of a Munda to a non Munda is also accepted and the offspring of such marriage is accepted by the local Munda community. They believe that the clan members are descended from a common ancestor. Marriage within the descendants of the same clan is punishable. After marriage many of them live in the same house with their parents. Marriage to a person belonging to communities other than Munda shows the influence of urban contact in the present situation. Usually the spouses for Mundas are selected from the Mundas of the surrounding areas of Kolkata, like Bamanghata, Bantala, Nortala etc. or from the Mundapara itself. Marriage by negotiation is very much common among them.

Besides love marriage, marriages by elopement are common. In case of negotiated marriage they follow the rules; customs as well as rituals of the marriage in details for the sake of prestige and status in the society. Dowry system is often found in the present Munda society. Sometimes instead of bride price, the parents of the girls are willing to give furniture and other valuable things on the occasion of their marriage.

The present Mundas under the study address the parents and relatives in local Bengali Hindu terms. They call their father and mother as 'maa' and 'baba' respectively. The kinship bonding among the intra-tribal group is quite good. In urban context they live separately from other groups in hamlets. The inter-tribal relationship is also remarkable. The Mundapara is at present inhabited not only by the Mundas but some other tribal groups as well as Hindu caste groups. Some Muslim communities also live there side by side with the Hindus. They are of different social status, even then they have good understanding with each other. Though Mundapara is from Munda dominated area but the people from different tribal and caste groups maintain good relationship with each other. They all live in harmony.

VII. Religion and festival

Religion and festivals are modified due to urban influence in the present area. Earlier the Mundas used to observe festivals and

performed rituals in relation to their occupation, livelihood and the environment in which they lived, which changed in accordance with the seasons. In Mundapara Mundas vary in their faith. Some are following their traditional belief system and there are also some Christian Mundas living in Mundapara. The Christian Mundas do not participate in any Hindu ritual. They have a place in each house for worshipping Jesus. Friday is considered as special day for prayer. They run a sort of school where children from other communities are also taught. Mundas observe rituals related to birth, marriage and death like other tribes of the country. At present it is found among the Mundas of Mundapara that they observe the rituals in modified and shorter forms due to lack of space and time.

The tribals generally are not worshipping of idol. But in present case the concept has changed. Due to the contact with the Hindus and other non-tribals they now worship Hindu gods and goddesses. They have a '*than*', a sacred place within the locality where a *Shivalinga* is present. The '*than*' is maintained mainly by the Munda as well as Oraon people. They perform the *Bastu Puja*, named as *gram-bandha*, at the '*than*' in the Bengali month of *Agrahayan* (November - December). A similar festival, known as *gram khola*, takes place in the month of *Aashar* (July-August). The puja is performed by a priest or *pahan* belonging to Oraon community from another place. The Munda people of Mundapara do not have their own *pahan*. Arrangements of the puja are done by the Munda males and females. This Puja is usually performed with long gaps of time.

According to Roy (1907) the festivals, rituals and customs observed by the Mundas were very illustrious. It is seen that the present Mundas under study perform their rituals in a modified way. To name some of the rituals and festivals are: *Bastu Puja*, *Karam Puja*, *Buro-Buri Puja*, *Saharai* festival etc. Besides these some other rituals and festivals are borrowed from their Hindu neighbours. *Buro-buri Puja* is performed on different occasions such as during the time of marriage, *Bastu Puja* etc. This puja is performed to worship their ancestors. It is still performed in the same way as was traditionally performed by the

ancestors. *Karam Puja* is an important ritual related to agricultural activities, performed in the Bengali month of *Bhadra* (August-September). Martin Oran (1965) has considered it as a festival borrowed from the Hindus. Though at present because of paucity of cultivable land agriculture is not prevalent among them still they perform the same at the specified time of the year as their ancestors used to perform. The *Karam Puja* among the Mundas in the urban set up has changed to some extent. They perform it in a hall at the town of Canning, under Canning sub-division South 24 pgs. The Mundas from other places gather at Canning for this purpose. Several delegates are invited there to deliver speech and make valuable comments related to the festival. Some dance programmes are arranged at the hall. A day long activity is observed on that occasion.

The Mundas of Mundapara perform *Goal Puja* in the Bengali month of *Kartik* (October-November). This takes place on the courtyard of the individual house. It is worshipping of the household cattle. The *Tushu* festival is observed in the month of *Pous* (December-January). They also perform *Pous Samkranti*.

During the fieldwork it was observed that the 142nd birth anniversary of Birsa Munda was celebrated. He is considered to be the God to them now. His birth anniversary is celebrated every year in the month of November. During the present occasion a program was arranged to celebrate his birth anniversary. It is organised at the entrance of their locality. Shortage of space was obvious. Several delegates came to deliver lectures. A dance troop came from West Midnapore to perform Munda dance. Different competitions were held, such as, sit and draw competition, lucky dip etc. Later on prizes were given to the winners. The Mundas in the study area perform Durga Puja, Laxmi puja, Kalipuja, Saraswati puja, Bipottarini Brata, Shivaratri etc. Sometimes they perform *Ranna Puja*. The influence from the neighbouring Hindu communities is obvious in these performances. It may be said that the Mundas are trying to keep their solidarity in the settlement, but at the same time they have imbibed much of the rituals from the neighbouring communities.

VIII. Music, song and dance

The Mundas have much interest in music, song and dance. Song and dance are the ways of life of the Mundas in their original homeland. In present situation the concepts have changed a little bit. Collective tribal songs and dances focus on cultural solidarity of the society. All of their customs have taken a different shape due to urbanisation and to some extent Hinduisation. Original Munda song and dance are very much interesting but they are not so prevalent in Mundapara presently. Due to the assimilation with the local people they mostly take up the song and dance of the current genre. The young as well as middle aged people prefer Hindi songs and modern Bengali songs. The traditional songs and dances are preferably performed in any kind of their traditional festivals. During marriage ceremonies the older generations usually prefer traditional songs and dances. The researcher witnessed traditional dance ceremonies by the troop of West Midnapore on Birsa Munda's birth celebration. Sometimes the Munda females and often males perform dances with 'Rabindra Sangeet' (Tagor songs), Nazrulgeeti, 'Adhunik' modern or sometimes devoted songs in schools, colleges or in any other function in the locality. This appears to be the direct impact of urbanisation.

IX. Disease and supernatural belief

In the present situation the concepts of disease and supernatural beliefs have changed. Some of the Mundas believe in positive as well as negative powers. They believe that any kind of disease may occur due to ignorance of health and hygiene. Most of them go for local doctors in nearby area or go to a hospital (government or private) for better treatment. A few Munda females go for 'ojha' or a person who usually claims create a situation of possession or 'bhar' and to predict the patients' physical condition as well as identify the culprit who caused the disease. The young generations are more knowledgeable about diseases and supernatural things rarely belief. This seems to be the direct impact of urbanisation and the effect of Hinduisation.

The concepts of *churil*, exorcism, human sacrifice are no longer

considered relevant in the present situation. Due to advancement of education their viewpoints have changed. However, some of them still believe in spirit. They believe that after death of any human being the spirit leaves the body and enters into a new born baby.

X. Political system

The concepts like *pahan*, *mahato*, headman have changed among the Mundas of Mundapara. In the urban context the Munda people do not have their own *pahan*. In case of any puja they hire the *pahan* from Bamanghata, a place near Mundapara, who belongs to Oraon tribe. The headman concept has disappeared in the present situation, but still they rely on elderly people to solve their problems and resolve the conflicts.

As a scheduled tribe the Mundas try to maintain their identities and solidarity in the urban set up. They have lost the cultivable and homestead lands due to migration expansion into the urban sectors. The young generations are not able to continue with the traditional subsistence system. The older generations are trying to maintain their tribal identity. For any problem they would first discuss among themselves. The elderly people will advice against any offensive behaviour. Offences like sexual harassment, robbery, theft and murder are counted as punishable offence. In case of petty theft, the person is beaten up by the members of the 'pare' and sometimes the offender is handed over to the police. Fine is also exacted to the offenders in case of some lighter offences. The greater community in the vicinity of the Mundapara is also bringing in the changes in various sectors of the migrated Mundas. The political system is merged in with the local polity of Kolkata.

XI . Change in the attitude towards women

The pattern of social change regarding tribal women differs from one tribal group to another. Patriarchal tribal societies generally have dominance of the males over the females, specially in decision making. In Mundapara, the change is quite apparent. The basic things like inheritance and descent have remained unchanged but women in

Mundapara have under gone some changes in the attitude and in the realm of empowerment. The opportunities in the city have given rise to educational progress among the women. The finding shows that more women have gone for higher education compared to the males. The young girls also avail of some technical degrees. In addition to the house-hold works they are engaged in different paid jobs. Some women are engaged in government services. Majority of the women can earn something for their families. Both their parents and the in-laws give them freedom to do any kind of work. They often deviate from the rule of endogamy and clan exogamy in marriage. The Munda females are marrying into other communities frequently and the children born out the mixed marriage are accepted by the Mundas of Mundapara. The demography of the society shows that the number of both the male and female children within 0-5 years are more or less the same. Some of the Mundas eagerly desire for female children. This shows the importance of women in the Munda society. Love marriage is permissible in case of the young girls in the same way as the boys. In the study area it is found that Munda females interact freely with the females of other tribal groups or caste groups. They take part in decision making regarding the matters of both house-hold as well as community and society. They take the lead role in arranging different pujas of the Munda community along with the male members of their society. The influential Munda females often openly address the members at the meetings of the Munda community. However, it is found in the present study that traditional system of bride price is gradually being replaced by dowry under the changed situation.

XII. Inter-generational gap in changing society

Focus group discussion has given some glimpse of the generation wise gap in changing situation among the Mundas of the region. The author has observed such generation wise change in factors like dress pattern, language, attitude and some social issues. Culture and society change through time. This is a universal phenomenon. This may also be reflected with regard to some social issues like the roles,

responsibilities duties etc. of the members of the community. In present context the change is rapid because of the extension of urban sectors in recent time and culture contact with wider society. Even the older generation cannot avoid the change.

The older generations try to maintain their traditions, identities and cultural norms in their own way. The younger generations are more prone to change. Marriage endogamy and clan exogamy is the rule of marriage of the Munda groups. There is evidence that present generation often breaches the rule. They have taken to modern ornaments and dress codes, food and drink as well as different livelihood patterns. The older Mundas try to observe the traditional festivals and rituals in the same way as they did earlier. Though in case of rituals the traditional ways are followed but in festivals a great change is visible among the younger generation. As mentioned they prefer modern songs, loud speaker and modern dance in comparison to the traditional ones.

On the contrary, due to the impact of modernisation as well as higher education and exposure to outer world the younger generations have undergone many changes.

A comparative study of the Mundas of Chhotonagpur by S. C Roy and those under study from Mundapara, Kolkata

S. C. Roy studied the Munda communities of Chhotonagpur region more than a hundred years back. The monograph, *The Mundas and their country* was published in 1912. He focused on socio-cultural issues like material, social and religious lives of the Mundas. Similar issues are taken up in the present study. According to Roy (1912), their primary occupation was agriculture. There were secondary occupations such as domestication of animals, horticulture etc. The Mundas of Mundapara had to give up agriculture due to land loss and animal husbandry due to urban rules against it. A multinational project took away the cultivable lands. They entered into service sectors, took up business and other jobs available in the city. In contrast to Mundas of Chhotanagpur, formal education and motivation for education for better opportunities in jobs is found among the Mundas of Mundapara. A change is found in their attitude towards female



Pahan the Oraon Priest



Bastu or Gram puja at the "than"



142nd birth anniversary of Birsa Munda



Bastu or Gram puja at the "than"



The Club

education and job opportunities for women. The food and drink habits changed in Kolkata. 'Hanria', the rice beer, used to be preferred and was the main type of alcoholic beverage. Most of their houses were built up of mud thatched with straw. Though the Mundas of Mundapara in the beginning lived in mud houses but with recent influx of urbanisation, brick built houses even with several stories are preferred. The present Mundas use Aadhar card, PAN card, voter card. These are modern innovation. Marriage endogamy and clan exogamy was the rule at that time but at present some deviation of the rule is found among the Mundas of Mundapara. A Munda can accept the bride from other communities and their son and daughter

are also accepted in the modern society. There are changes observed in life cycle rituals since Roy's times. Kinship terminologies have undergone changes. Traditional songs and dances are restricted to some traditional ceremonies, which used to be performed on regular basis in their original homeland. *Pahan*, the priest, was a very important person among the Mundas in Ranchi. But the present Mundas have no *Pahan* in their area. They engage *Pahan* from the Oraons from another part of the city. The present Mundas have less amount of faith in exorcism, 'churil', magic, human sacrifice as found in the Munda society during Roy's time. The Mundas of Mundapara prefer modern medical professionals at the time of illness unlike their ancestors of Chhotonagpur. The rituals and festivals have altered in case of the present Mundas. Some Hindu festivals are taken up by the present Munda society. The Mundas of Mundapara have come a long way from what Roy had observed more than a hundred years back in the terrain of Chhotanagpur plateau.

Conclusion

The Mundas of the Mundapara are living in the area for a long time. They are trying to maintain their tribal identity, but at the same time it appears that they also have imbibed some socio-cultural traits from their neighbouring communities. Most of the male members are born either in Mundapara or in other parts of the city. Formal educational level has gone up. Their children are sent to schools and for higher educational institutions. Female education has remarkably increased. After the loss of cultivable land to the encroachment of the city, the Mundas have taken up other occupations that are available in the city. Change is evident in their material culture, in the house type, dress pattern and food habits. The concept of village leadership has given way to modern system. A club called "Adibasi Kalyan Samiti" has stepped in to look after the well-being of the residents of Mundapara, though the elders are still consulted in times of disputes and problems. Their traditional language *Mundari* has been replaced by *Sadri*. That too is giving way to locally used Bengali, Hindi and even English dialects. Much change is seen in their rituals and festivals. Although

they perform their traditional pujas and festivals, but they also observe some of the local Hindu festivals. Their traditional festivals are observed in a changed and improvised fashion. There are a few converted Munda Christian families, who have their own way of worship. The marriage pattern in the study area shows that there have been changes; people from other communities are welcome at times to marry into Munda families and even reside in the nuptial household. Similar studies in tribal culture and change are done but this study has got its own importance. The study has a long way to go but so far it shows that the greater community of Kolkata is gradually taking over the pocket of little community in its midst.

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SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

SANSKRIT

आ = ā	ई = ī
ऊ = ū	ऋ = ṛ
ऌ = ṝ	च = ca
छ = cha	ज = ja
ट = ṭa	ठ = ṭha
ड = ḍa	ढ = ḍha
ण = ṇa	श = śa
ष = ṣa	ं = m̐

TIBETAN

ཀ = ka	ཁ = kha	ག = ga	ང = ṅa/nga
ཅ = ca	ཆ = cha	ཇ = ja	ཉ = ṅa/nya
ཏ = ta	ཐ = tha	ད = da	ན = na
པ = pa	ཕ = pha	བ = ba	མ = ma
ཚ = tsa	ཛ = tsha	ང = dza	ཤ = wa
ཞ = zha	ཟ = za	འ = 'a	ཡ = ya
ར = ra	ལ = la	ཤ = śa/sha	ས = sa
ཧ = ha	ཨ = a		

ARABIC (both Cap & Small)			
ا	A	a	ا
ا (long)	ā	ā	ا (long)
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ت	T	t	ت
ث	Th	th	ث
ج	J	j	ج
ح	H	h	ح
خ	Kh	kh	خ
د	D	d	د
ذ	Dh		ذ
ر	R		ر (long)
ز	Z		ز
س	S		س
ش	Sh		ش
ص	S		ص (long)
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It will flourish, if naturalists, chemists, antiquaries, philologers and men of science, in different parts of Asia, will commit their observations to writing, and send them to the Asiatick Society at Calcutta; it will languish, if such communications shall be long intermitted; and it will die away, if they shall entirely cease.

Sir William Jones
on the publication of the Asiatic Society