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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From the Editor’s Quill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Physical and Human Environment of Sikkim State within the Geographical area of Eastern Himalayan</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivier Chiron</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anandaram and Maniram: A brief Comparative Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajen Saikia</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advent and Spread of the Thai People in Assam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahammad Taher</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sons of the Soil: Assamiya-Sikhs of the Brahmaputra Valley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himadri Banarjee</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Travails and Triumphs of the Beautiful Rose:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story of an actress of the Bengali public theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarvani Gooptu</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharaja Ranjit Singh on the Canvas of History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daljit Singh</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Study on Tribal Coins of Northern India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devendra Kumar Singh</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Disparities in North-West States of India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manisha Amanpreet kaur</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of Difference in Ethnic Identity:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new Look on the transition of Caste identity into Cultural identity of the Rajbanshis of Northern Bengal and Lower Assam</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rup Kumar Barman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutionalism and Political Stalemate in British India after Quit India Movement</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Om Prakash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective discrimination, social skills and gender justice A critical evaluation from Socio-legal Perspective</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupam Saikia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of Induced Feeding on Trace Element Profile and Isotopic Ratios of Carbon in Himalayan Domestic Goat <em>(Capra jharal)</em></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yagambar Singh Farswan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabir Singh Pharswan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandhian Revolution in Assam 1920-1922</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirmal Kumar</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Notes on Agrestic Servitude in South India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Mavali Rajan</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places of Historical Importance in the Punjab: A case study of Hoshiarpur District</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gagandeep Cheema</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History, Culture, Philosophy and relevance of the aboriginal Paharia tribes of Santhal Parganas in Jharkhand A Historical review</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumar Rakesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kalamukaha and Pasupata Sects in Karmataka: With special reference to Vijayapur District  
N. V. Aski 110

Launching the Individual Satyagraha: A Prelude to the Quit India Movement  
Uma Shankar Singh 115

Sulh-kul  
Ramchandra Prasad Yadav 122

The Trade and Revenue Pattern of Central India in Colonial Period With Special Reference to Malwa Opium  
Vinay Shrivastava 128

Who are Sonowals and a brief flash of light of their Cultures  
Dharmeswar Sonowal 134

Social Reformation by the Sultans of Malwa with Special reference to Central India Malwa  
Asha Shrivastava 140

The Demand of the Mizo: From Hill State to Independence (Political background of Mizo Independence movement)  
Malsawmliana 144

History and development of indigenous industry in Assam: Promotion and entrepreneurship in Lakhimpur District  
Sona Ram Kalita 151

Abbas Uddin Ahmed: The Legendary King of Bhawaiya  
Amzad Hussain 156

A Study of Sansi Tribe in Punjab (1871-1952)  
Sukhveer Kaur 164

The Right of Way: A Landmark Legal Case of Colonial Assam  
Avinibesh Sharma 170
From the Editor’s Quill

Tribute to historian, Professor Amalendu Guha and Geographer, Professor Mahammad Taher

History and Geography bear a very close relationship to each other. Geography is the stage on which the drama of history is enacted. Geography is one of the eyes of the beautiful maiden, history, the other eye being chronology. Michelet, one of the outstanding scholars, is of the opinion that, ‘without a geographical basis, the people, the makers of history, seek to be walking on air.’ In the light of this perspective, our state Assam has recently lost two stalwart scholars in the context of history and geography. One is Professor Amalendu Guha (1924-2015) and other is Professor Mahammad Taher (1931-2015). Needless to say, Professor Guha was an eminent historian who has written on topics ranging from Medieval Assam to the 20th century Afghanistan and from the saga of the early Parsi capitalists to the tribal and non-tribal unrest in post-colonial North-East India. He was trained in Economics and was a historian inclined towards Marxism. Guha obtained Ph.D. in 1963 from Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi. He was associated as a teacher and researcher at Darrang College, Tezpur, the Gokhle Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune and the Delhi School of Economics. He was the Professor of history at the Centre for Studies and in Social Science, Calcutta (Kolkata). He was able to be the member of Indian Council of Social Science Research and Indian Council of historical Research. In addition to, Professor Guha presided over the annual history session of the Assam Sahitya Sabha at Golaghat in 1978, North-East India history Association in 1981 and modern history section of Burdwan session of the Indian History congress in 1983. Among the ever scholarly writings, Guha’s ‘Planter-Raj to Swaraj : Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam (1826-1947)’ is a pioneering work of its own kind. The book goes beyond the limits of its title to probe deep into details not only of the polity but also the economy and society of colonial Assam and, while doing so, integrates the story at every step with its over-all all India context. In his foreword about this book, the eminent Indian historian and the then Chairman of the ICHR, Professor R.S. Sharma wrote in such a way, “Professor Guha has not only presented a detailed account of the evolution of the provincial legislature of Assam in the context of general political developments in the province, but has also provided valuable background for an understanding of the colonial socio-economic structure. He has discussed the politics of anti-imperialism both in the legislature and outside it, and marked a shift within the national movement in economic objectives and political ideas, particularly in the context of peasants and the labours. Thus, the book, which is based on massive research, may be read as an authentic record of the role of Assam in the development of the Indian National Movement, with a focus not restricted only to the leading party in the national movement, but also embracing other trends and elements, all of which together struggled in their own ways for liberation from colonialism.” In fact, this book is a master piece for the historical research in the context of modern socio-economic history of Assam. Likewise, Professor Mahammad Taher was one the doyens of Geographical research in Assam and North-East
India. He was the ex-Professor of the department of Geography at Gauhati University, author of several outstanding geographical books and supervised a learned section of geographers of the region in research and devoted teacher par excellence. It is true that these two stalwart scholars were the windows in context of basic and authentic research through which new winds of knowledge and research breezed into. They were able to establish the edifice of the true intellectual infrastructure and leadership through dynamics research in their field of study. According to them, research should not be a degree for getting lucrative job only; rather it should be a very serious academic morality, honesty and social values for which the society can be benefited. So far, according to them in many cases at present among a section of young researchers, it seems, research wisdom is yet to be emerged. However, this issue is dedicated in honour of these two stalwart scholars of the region. Although we have lost of these two scholars from biological point of view, but their ever scholarly writings and contribution to the development of original research will be an inspiration to the serious and young researchers in the days to come.

It is our second and humble approach to publish this volume of Journal of history department of our College located in the remote corner of the country. Our mission to publish this Journal is not just to gather API point, but rather, we are emphasizing and trying our level best to popularize the strong root of history, historiography, social science and to establish the link in academic and true research reciprocity among our Colleges, interested and learned section of the country and beyond. In fact, the death of history is the death of man not in physical terms, but in terms of his identity and roots. Besides, we feel that the completion of this volume, in a way, is redemption of our pledge to the subject of history. In this context, special expression of our gratefulness goes to our founder Principal, Sjt. Ananda Saikia, who is also a devoted scholar in the field of historical research and Sjt. Durlav Chandra Mahanta Sir, founder President, Governing body of our College. Their inspiration and guidance, in fact, sustained us in our Journal. We would forever remain grateful to all the contributors of the research papers and learned Advisory Board. Finally, we offer our sincere thanks to Mr. Parash Gogoi, Printing Centre, Jorhat for taking up the task of computerization with much care and patience.

Expecting healthy criticism and encouragement from the learned section,
With esteem regards,

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(Dr. Anjan Saikia)  
Editor
1.1. Sikkim localization

Sikkim is located in the eastern part of the Himalayan arc between 26° 30 and 28° north latitude and between 87° and 97° 30 longitude, it is up to the North East of India bordering China and Burma.

This part of the Himalayas is including eastern Nepal and the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Indian state of Sikkim (between 88° 00 '58' / 88° 55'25' '28° 07'48' / 27° 44'64') and Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. It borders the south with the region of hills forming the Duars of Bengal. The natural boundary of this set can be bounded by the River Arun in Nepal, which marks a biogeographic limit, the transition to the West to less humid bioclimatic conditions, with less flora biodiversity than Sikkim.

The lack of information on this part of the Himalayas, due to the relatively small number of studies conducted here (despite the studies of linguists, architects and historians in Bhutan and anthropologists or geographers in Sikkim) in these remote and difficult areas of access, prompted us to expand our geographic scope briefly and we are presenting this area before a description of the place of Sikkim state in Eastern Himalayas and of the study area localized in the western part of Sikkim (Figure no. 1).

The alluvial lands along the Brahmaputra River (over 1,000 kilometers long in its Assamese path) are among the richest in the Northeast India (like in Assam), sometimes flooded dewatered sometimes and cause problems for cultures and people who try to manage somehow the natural risk (Crémin, 2014). Multiple passes of the Himalayas and indo-burmesse hills have always facilitated the access to the region to many ethnic groups, which explains the great cultural diversity that prevails here. Thus, we can consider the Indian region as a microcosm of India. The rolling hills of North East Himalayas was a refuge for the Garo tribal, the Khasi in Meghalaya, Lepcha, Limbu, Bhotya (in Sikkim), Naga (Nagaland, Manipur) and among others, Adi, Monpa, Bangri in Arunachal Pradesh. It’s a melting-pot, but also a physical set of intersections hills, mountains and rivers meet as this region of Assam.

Aijazudin Ahmad (1999, p. 118) considers this region as a perennial nuclear area, it consists of a valley with a large river connected to other areas by roads. Indeed, the Brahmaputra and its tributaries organize the river system and more.

Indeed, rivers, hills, and rivers come together to the ends of Bengal, near the chicken neck, the place between Darjeeling and Siliguri along the bordering state of Bangladesh, the physical geography calls for a geography of corridors. The North East region of India belonging to the Eastern Himalayan arc is a crossroads ethnocultural meetingpoint where the Nepalese are widespread, and where, there is a fragmentation in the mountain ranges of small socio-linguistic units that have stood the Hindu assimilation more widespread in the Brahmaputra River.
putra and gangetic plain with high density of population.

1.2. Diverse backgrounds
A monsoon climate

The Himalayas are a barrier that protects from cold winds down from the Tibetan plateau to the north against the flow back coming from the southeast, originally from the Bay of Bengal which falls across the southern flank of the chain, the rainfall intensity is here considerable (Chiron, 2007, p. 23). For this reason, Cherrapunji in Meghalaya receives over 11,000 mm of water per year.

Indeed, this part of the Himalayas is very watered because the monsoon ranging here from early June to late September and brings its southwest winds coming from the Bay of Bengal, an air that condenses with the contact of mountain barrier, causing heavy precipitation (between 1500 and 3000 mm per year.). In Sikkim, the monsoon extends sometimes to mid October. The maximum (see the Figure n°2) is recorded in Kerporang (3600 mm/year), Gangtok (3493 mm/year) and Dickchu (3245 mm/year), the less (Figure n°2) is recorded in Thangu (at the entrance of the Chopta valley) in the northern Sikkim (821 mm/year). The orographic effect maintains the moisture wheather with bringing spring storms with winds.

The relief amplifies the monsoon because it forms a wall against which the flows come Southwest winds from the Bay of Bengal and worn originally by marine winds. “The rains that occur release a large amount of latent heat. A mechanism that amplifies the monsoon in this region” (F. Fluteau, 2002).

In Sikkim, during the last years, the monsoon tends to spread from mid-July to late October (Chiron, 2002, 2007, pp. 22-23). A difference is noted in the time; the monsoon starts later and ends later. Almost every day the clouds coming from the plain is gradually settle in towards the north and climb along the himalayan slopes. Thick cloud bars begin to concentrate, and the rain falls continuously throughout the day or even several days long. Winds can blow so hard at this time of the year that in altitude it is difficult to move. Heat exists but it is never very tenacious over 1500 meters; in the altitudes below it can get very hot, near the ricefields, in the lowlands where nepalese communities along Tista river (35° in summer and 16° in winter) are settled. Monsoon rains account for 70% of total rainfalls, the remainder rains are convective's rains and due to temperature differences between the lower parts and the upper parts of the slopes. The monsoon is due to extreme pressure gradients created by the large mass of land mass of the Asian continent. In summer (from April to September), the intense heating of the land leads to the development of low pressure northernee-w stern India southwesterly winds are drawn over the Indian Ocean. This southern monsoon brings heavy rains to India and the relief catches the rainfalls, this is an orographic effect (1992, p. 143). Le gradient pluviométrique est aggravé par l’effet de position des reliefs par rapport aux flux humide (Dobremez, 2002, p. 72).

Overall, Sikkim has three types of climates (Figure n°2), which have to be classified with the vegetation zones and corresponds to these zones:

Moist subtropical wheather below 1500 m corresponds to the tropical area.

He falls on average between 1500 mm and 3000 mm / year of rain and south-facing slopes are the most watered. The southern sikkimese resort of Namchi (South Sikkim) facing north (1800 m.) receives only 1500 mm./year lower than (1200 m.) facing south-west receiving more than double precipitation (3200 mm. /year). Average temperatures are high in summer (35° C.) and cool in winter (6° C). The Gangtok region is the wettest (peak at Kerporang with over 3000 mm rainfall / year. Figure n°2) of Sikkim. The average annual temperature in Sikkim state is 18 °C.
One type semi-temperate lies between 1500 meters and 2000 meters which is the so-called temperate vegetation zone.

Monsoon rains are abundant. The mild temperatures in summer (26°C.) and winter (8°C.) is less obvious than in the humid subtropical type.

The type temperate between 2000 meters and 3000 meters which is so-called temperate vegetation zone.

The temperatures are never very high (0°C. in winter and 15°C. in summer). Monsoon rains account for 70% of total rainfall, the remainder rains is convective rains due to temperature differences between the lower parts and the upper parts of the slopes.

A final type of climate is cold and dry climate of the high mountains lying above 4000 m and corresponding to the alpine zone where temperatures are very cold in winter.

The temperatures are always below 0°C in winter and rarely above 8°C during this season. Snow is common and some lakes and rivers are frozen.

Figure 2: Distribution of rainfall in Sikkim
Source: from field-ground and GB Himalayan Institute (Gangtok)

The geological basement of Sikkim is composed of metamorphic rocks (dolomite, marble) and crystalline (granite, quartzite, mica, schist). The inner belt, composed of sediments (limestone) belongs to the pre-Cambrian group Daling and Darjeeling. Mobile geologically, these belts give rise to hot springs such as Tato Pani (N.) at Kandosampshuk, the southern cave of West Sikkim localized on the road between Legship to Rinchenpong. The Indian tectonics's plate causes major earthquake the 18 September 2011 in Sikkim an earthquake 6.9 magnitude caused 78 deaths in the state. The topography is not conducive to the expansion of cultivated areas, but the terraces of the system is widely used by farmers for Sikkimese somewhat stabilize soils. The play of tectonics plates along faults produces hot springs in all the districts of Sikkim. You can see, below Legship, lower than Pelling city, downstream in relation to our field of study, this juxtaposition of terraced areas of rugged topography with faults. That portion of the more asphalt road is more chaotic and most exposed to landslides. The accidents are also due to high seismicity and micro-seism (païros in Nepali). Sikkim is close to a very high seismic zone located in the southeast of Nepal (recent earthquake the 25 April 2015 in Nepal was 7.9 magnitudes along this zone of subduction between the Asian tectonic plate and Indian tectonic plate where the oceanic crust gradually carried down into the mantle producing major earthquake like this sad 25 April in Nepal. The prominent tectonic features in Sikkim are northwest-north Gangtok-Tista lineaments (Hazrika, Prasad et al. pp. 788-792.). The September 2011 earthquake, of an intensity of 6.8/6.9 with a epicenter localized 68 km to the North West of the capital Gangtok, ravaged the North Sikkim area mainly.

1.2.2. Geology and soil instability

Four destabilizing factors are observed: the monsoon, the steep slopes, the seismicity and the fragile nature of the terrain made with debris of alterites, gneiss and schist stones. These elements leached soils occur unstable and fragmented into different soil's horizons, but the eroded and unstable...
soils are poorly developed. Building roads in areas where seismic activity is present and where the slopes's biostasie (the biostasie of the slopes) is reduced by the absence of dense vegetation and shallow soils, upsets the balance, favoring the same time maintaining the rheixistatie (high mechanical disintegration, landslides, impasto of lower part of the slope). 

There are many gullies and cast stones caused by heavy monsoon rains and lack of vegetation cover against. Road constructions are not sound: many servings are collapsing and are buried by mudslides and washouts. After the village of Jorethang at the entrance of Sikkim, on the road to Darjeeling, landslides likely due to heavy monsoon rains on steep slopes, force the Indian army (bulldozers work on the sector most eroded) and the local population to road's reparations along long portions of several kilometers. In addition, to the risk of landslides caused by monsoon rains, the construction of new roads can thus also be dangerous and cause the destabilization of the slope.

To combat these fragile soils, the sikkimese agricultors use certain plants such amliso (N. Thysanalaena agrestis) because they absorb a lot of water. Cardamom (Amomum) adapts to the spongy soil moisture because it's a hygrophilous plant. In sectors where cardamom grows, workers multiply the exploits so as not to sink into the ground while working. The rains are the cause of this fragility and instability.

1.2.3. A rich flora

Sikkim has over 6,000 species of plants (400 species of orchids and 35 of rhododendrons) including a section listed on the I.U.C.N. (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List corresponding to endangered species including some endemic species. The reasons for this biodiversity will be given in detail later in the third part, but we can already state on few criterias.

The hot and humid climate favors the development of vegetation and tropical species

Forests and a national park, the "Kangchendzonga National Park" puts away the few species that inhabit Sikkim. This shows that biodiversity is protected, but does not explain the entire phenomenon.

Green tourism shows tenuous links between the conservation of natural resources and the Buddhist religion.

Medicinal plants (Swertia chirata, Aconitum Heterophylum, Picrorhiza kurroa) are well known by the monks and the Lepcha tribe. On monasteries's estate, conifer species are preserved like Juniperus (Juniper tree), Abies (fir tree) or Pinus (pine).

1.2.4. Natural environments and populations

The geographical location of valley starts to the foots of Kangchendzonga mountain (Ti. Gangs Chen mzdod Inga) has made this region a unique biological environment in which we cross different ecological zones: subtropical in the bottom of the valley and temperate in the highlands alpine zones when you meet the yaks's pastures on the trekking's road (Dzongri, 4200 m, Singalila range and Phalut-Sandakphuk treks). Changes in altitude between the bottom grooves (1000 m.) and the peaks (3000 m. and higher) emphasize the formation of this mosaic of natural environments. I want here to emphasize the formation of this mosaic of natural environments that follows the phenomenon of layering characteristic of a mountain environment. The wide variety of bioclimates promote biodiversity, Sikkim is one of the places in the world with a high concentration of plant species. One third of its area is covered by forest. A wide variety of soils derived from the dominant influence of rains, mainly those of the monsoon.

Depending on the climatic influence, we can vertically cut in three ecological zones in a locally stepped system based on the model described by J.F. Dobremez (1976) or by observing what the geographer
could see by moving from the side of the motorable road in a vehicle.

The subtropical zone, corresponding to the northern edge of the alluvial plain of Bengal (Jaipalguri district) and the Duars of Assam (Buwa and near Goalpara in the plain) is cut by meandering rivers like Teesta, Torsa and the Jadakha. Sandbanks stepped into the river are common (before the bridge's Sevoke junction) in the Tista river. The well drained wetland corresponds to the presence of tea's plantations which starts around 300 meters (Siliguri area, Bagdogra-Matagara; Siliguri is located about 230 m.) and ranges up to 2000 meters (Darjeeling tea region). Here, we find a dense and rich forest but sometimes absent over 1500 meters where the tea plantations have replaced (Kurseong region) the former landscape. These slopes where grow a dense monsoon forest characterized by long lianas, a significant number of orchids, bamboo (Dendrocalamus hamiltonii, Bambusa nutans, Dendrocalamus hookeriana) and beautiful forests of Sal (Shorea robusta) in the plain and in the duars as well as Schima walichii species accompanied with teak (Tectonia grandis) near the Mahananda wildlife sanctuary. In this area at lower altitudes, the soils are rich with regular forest with a permanent humid monsoon and a space between the teak trees and sal of 2-3 meters.

This is the area of caste people (Indian, Nepalese caste as Bahun, Chetri, Newar) Nepalese untouchable (Kami, Da-mai) and many Tibeto-Burman groups (Gurung, Rai, Magar, Limbu, Lepcha, Tamang) and in the Duars of Bengal near, we find some tribes like Mahji, Tharu, Rajbon-gshi, Lepcha, Limbu, Mech, Bodo and Murmi. Farmers in these groups cultivate rice, millet, wheat, mustard, potatoes and corn. Fruit trees provide oranges, lemons and guavas. Cardamoms plants are growing under the trees which give (Alnus nepalensis, Castanopsis spp Macaranga denticula). They provide shade and humidity, two conditions essential to the development of cardamom plant which was introduced largely through the British in this area of the Himalayan foothills and searching with the help of the Nepalese mentioned above to move towards inland who came to Darjeeling during the XIX century.

The temperate zone consists of a high dense forest, mosses and lichens covering oaks (Quercus), rhododendrons (Rhododendrums), alders (Alnus nepalensis) and hazel (Katus in Nepali language, Castanopsis tribuloides). In its upper limit between 2800 and 3600 meters, there are conifers (Abies, Picea, Larix, Tsuga, Juniperus) mixed with deciduous forest trees (magnolias, poplars). An important flora develops on the ground: Polygonum, Osbeckia chinensis, Smilax spp Berberis sp, Impatiens sp, Plantago major, Thunbergia coccinea...

The slopes of this area notched beautiful moraines have formed a forest of bamboo (Arundinaria), mosses, lichens and other epiphytes. All ethnic groups are represented, except groups of transhumant pastoralists. They grow corn, millet, barley, potatoes and planted apple or peach trees.

The alpine zone marking the end of the forest zone and the beginning of pasture is between 5000-5500 meters and 3600 meters (5000 is the lower limit of glaciers in the Himalayas). This zone is composed of different varieties of rhododendrons (Rhododendron arboreum most common species found here), fir (Abies webbiana), and pine (Pinus longifolia) of the temperate zone. Tree size decreases and here we found mostly shrubs that are prey to violent winds. The frost than snow that appears with altitude and the cold is the physical factor limiting the life in this mountain area. This is one of the reasons why the rich flora increases, in fact there are rare species (Corydalis, Fritillaria) and endemic (Nardostachys jatamensi, Picrorhiza kurrooa, Podophyllum hexandrum) species used in local pharmacopoeia. The vegetation is disappearing above 4500 meters. It often follows the ecological character of the Tibetan plateau. We find here only
the snow that falls in mid-October, ice and rocks; in winter thick a winter fog impede the movement of pastoralists (mainly yacks herders). This did not prevent human life between 3500 meters to 5000 meters, the alpine zone is still the living place of local communities of Lachenpa nomadic's herders, Lachungpa (in the northern valley of Lachen and Lachung- Ingy Tenzing, 2015), Sherpa (for example in upper Rimbi valley at Yampbong village), and some Dokpa (in the Chopta valley) Bhotya rearing livestock of yaks (Plate 1/ photo 3) as well as military troops massed near the border of China with the indo-tibetan border force.

These highlands are cut into cirques, arêtes, glacial troughs and morainic deposit on the edges. The sediments fall down into the valleys and contribute to the filling of the lakes. The ongoing glacial, periglacial, glacio-fluvial, fluvial and pluvial activities are continously reshaping the face of this young mountain topography (Choudhury, 2006, p. 4). Here, the governement has build a lot of moraine dams. The case of Kaychupalri Lake is a bit special because it is the clearing of dense forest by farmers associated with the monsoon rains that create clogging. Here, there is no dams. The lake is currently undergoing eutrophization and an excessive growth of aquatic vegetation. The lake size decreases more than 3 hectares less from 1963 until today (Chiron, p. 109). The vegetation of the lake is shaped by inflow of organic debris and sediments from upland forest slopes is considered as higher place for biodiversity conservation with an evergreen forest (Sharma, et al, p. 2000).

In this area is the massive Kangchendzonga mountain (Wangchuck and Zulca, 2007) exceeding 8000 meters, which is framed by three glaciers : the impressive Zemu glacier (the largest of Sikkim and the longest of East Himalayas with a total of 116 km²: Wilkipédia and Choudhury, 2006) on Sikkimese side which is developed until Kangchendzonga's mountain, Yalung glacier and Kangchendzonga glacier on Nepalese side (in the region of the K.C.A., Kangchenzonga Conservation Area has a total of 2035 Km² in East Nepal-Taplejung district). The harsh conditions with cold and frost reduce the number of cultivated varieties: one potato grows in altitude (3000 m.) and are growed by Sherpa and Dokpa people. The economy is based mainly on livestock that provides butter, yak, wool and an important aspect, currencies through trekking. Further south (Darjeeling district), the path that starts from the crests of Sandakphu-Singalila (3600-3800 m.) to Dzongri are inhabited by farmers who are settled with bamboo huts and their livestock, it s' accompanied by the presence of hikers in this area of trekking.

The cows that feed lower leaves of forest's trees like Gogun (Saurauria Nepalensis), Dudhilo (Ficus nemoralis) and Nevaro (Ficus racemosa), are sometimes planted in alley along the paths of stone (in the Rimbik region in Darjeeling district) and are replaced from 3000 meters by yak herds (Chiron, 2007, p. 30). The local community of Sherpa benefit from the biological wealth of forests by collecting wild fruits in the forest. Note that the "famous yeti" (named in local language chokpa) lives around this altitude; it is the stories of Sherpa people and the Western climbers expeditions that mainly fueled this history (Baudrimont, p. 39, p. 41; 2001).

This accessibility complicated by the conditions of the terrain favors the creation of a myth: the imaginary and heavenly kingdom of Shan gri la takes place in those very high mountains of Himalayas. Sikkim has always been a strategic gateway to Tibet, commercial and military first today. The Chumbi valley in Tibet which borders China (Tibet and Sikkim's road closed during the Indo-chinese war in 1962, an reopened in 2006) and Sikkim (India) is a strategic pass, beyond the Nathu La (4? m.) where Chinese goods and Indian goods are trade on the Kalimpong-Lhasa road (Tina Harris, 2013).
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Anandaram and Maniram: A brief Comparative Study

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Anandaram Dhekial Phukan (1829-1859) and Maniram Dewan (1806-1858) were two important figures of public life of Assam. History, combined with folk memory and other flatulent writings have contributed to our knowledge and its pitfalls as well about them the upbringing, education, outlook and stations of life of these two persons were so different that their outward features would hardly admit of historical comparison. But to our mind, a comparative study of their contributions to the new awakening and the resultant growth of nationalism in Assam is likely to be prevented by any historical semantics. In this paper, we will attempt such a comparison.

Anandaram Dhekial Phukan hailed from an orthodox Brahmin family. His father Haliram was an Assistant Magistrate a fact which got him on in the world quickly. From 1849 till his untimely death in 1859 Anandaram served under the provincial government in various capacities.

Maniram also came from a family of considerable power and prestige. His father Ram Datta first served under the Ahom King, then under the Burmese and lastly under the British as a royal office. David Scott utilized the service of Ram Datta and his son Maniram. In his early career Maniram served the British over-zealously and sucked advantage out of that.

The year 1853 is a landmark in the history of constitutional agitation against alien rule in Assam. Both Anandaram and Maniram separately submitted petitions and memorandums to A.J. Moffat Mills, a judge of the sadar Diwani Adalat, who visited Assam to make an on the spot study of the province. The issue raised in the representations could give us a clear idea about the commitment, vision and intellect of their authors.

Anandaram had a thorough knowledge about the province of Assam. As soon as Mill’s visit was proposed he prepared a memorandum in English and submitted it to Mills on 4th July 1853. As a government official he was found by certain fetters and his memorandum was a charter of demands.

Anandaram admitted that under the British rule the people had ‘acquirer’s a degree of confidence in the safety of their lives and properly but he did not fail to point out the shortcomings of their rule, particularly the plight of the peasantry. His main grievances were: the Revenue officers were indifferent towards the ryots. He criticized the permanent settlement in Bengal as it had ‘enslaved the Ryots to the zaminders.’ He desired the short term basis of tenancy and pleaded for long term ones to put an end to ‘the ease and grandeur of a few opulent Zeminders.’ The judicial and Police system according to him, could not afford the ryot any relief against extortion or injustice. The Revenue Officers, he alleged, used to ‘cause an over assessment of the Ryot’s land’, and levied ‘illegal imposition for their private use.’

He raised his voice against disproportionate taxation and voice against disproportionate taxation and pointed out that ‘the present uniform rate on lands’ was ‘Compa-
ratively light upon some and heavy upon other.’ He exhorted the supreme gov-ern-ment to improve the methods of agriculture.

Anandaram disparaged the ‘retrogra-de state’ of education. His grievance was against the medium of instruction in schools. ‘Instructions in these schools are imparted in a foreign language, vi, the Bengalee…’ He urged upon the government to do away with Bengali in Assam. He sought establishment of technical and medical schools. He groused the ‘inefficiency of the police’ and ‘sordid corruption’ in the court. They were used ‘to sell justice for money’. He said, ‘when a poor ryot is put to duress or extortion, the wealth of his oppressor gains over the darogah to his aid.’ He favourable decentralized power and then only he thought, ‘the infliction of oppression and various other injuries by the rich on the poor, with the connivance of corrupt police, will be put in to end.’

Maniram submitted two petitions to Moffatt Mills in 1853. In the first petition he represented his own case and begged favours from the government. The second petition, a complete handiwork of Maniram himself was submitted under orders from Ghanakanta Singha. In this petition Maniram leaded for the restoration of the Ahom monarchy in favour of Ghanakanta. The petition highlighted some aspects of the British rule and deprecated very many other measures. He criticized, ‘Unjust taxation; lack of pensions, discontinuance of Poojahs at Kamakshya temple, discretions of the tombs of the Assam Rajahs, abolision of logwa licksons and the feeling of slaves. Maniram espoused the cause of those upper-class people ‘who had been exempted from the payment of revenue for 600 years…..whose ancestors never lived by digging, ploughing or carrying burdens’ but were throughout under assessment by the British government. He pointed out, ‘while a number of respectable Assamese are out of employ, the inhabitants of Marwar and Bengalees from Sylhet have been appointed to Mauzadarship; and for us respectable Assamese to become the ryots of such foreigners is a source of deep mortification’. He ‘prayer’ that ‘the old habits and customs of the people (be) reestablished…’

On the opium question, Anandaram and Maniram held different views. Maniram was opposed to the introduction of govern-ment opium only and he sought ‘gradual reduction (of production) at the rate of one in twenty per annum…’ Anandaram pointed out the fearful example of China and demanded that its production should be ‘so crushed as eventually to lead to its total extinction.’

Anandaram imbibed the sprit of Bengal Renaissance. He knew English well and had working knowledge of Parsi and Urdu. He could speak and write Bengali correctly. Occasionally he attended the Church and the Brahma Samaj prayers and provoked the ire of the orthodox community who criticized him for having allegedly lost his caste. Anandaram stood for educational reform including education for women. He attended the first conference of the Bethune Society of Bengal in January 1852 and was a regular member of that Society which took up the cause of women education in Bengal. Anandaram was largely enthused by the reformist zeal of Peter the Great who had Europeanized Russia at the cost of offending the reactionary boyars and church hierarchy.

Without ever visiting England, at the age of eighteen Anandaram wrote ‘An Account of England.’ He was aware of the boon of the Industrial Revolution. That was a time when capitalism was in full bloom and the challenge of its opponents had hardly started. He pointed out that the strength of England lay in her trade. At the same time he realized the importance of mechanization of agriculture. He emphasized that the knowl-ledge of history of England was most essential. (Macaulay was yet to say the ‘History of England is the history of prog-ress’).

Anandaram had admirable political perception. He wrote ‘English people are free which means they do not live under anybody….. It is the Parliament which
governs the country and all expenditure have to be approved by it. As such the king cannot do anything independently and is incapable of doing things unsanctioned by Parliament.’ Without love for freedom nobody could adore freedom like this. Perhaps he envisioned. Although mistakenly, that freedom would draw on his countrymen through a process of evolution. His writings could be comfortably compared with the utterance of some notable nationalist. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) said, ‘let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are royal to the backbone; that we understand the benefits English rule has conferred upon us.’ Surejndranath Banarjee (1848-1925) said, “To England we look for inspiration and guidance...From England must come the crowing mandate which will enfranchise our people. England is our political guide.”

Charmed by the British adventure Maniram in his Buranj Vivek Ratna wished the ‘uninterrupted and undiminished sovereignty’ of the British for thousand and thousand of years. Anandaram did not putstep the truth of their welcome but. No-where he desired the eternal subjection of his country under the British. The ripples of the ‘Bengal Renaissance’ and the Young Bengal movement reached Assam by a fine sweep. Anandaram was sympathetic to the Young Bengal movement and wished such a movement grow in Assam. Maniram belon-ged to the old privilegedo class. His retrogact-ive mind was less than sympathetic towards the new trends of thought. Even the bourgeois revolutionary slogan – ‘all men are equal’ did not appeal to him.

The resumption of Upper Assam in 1838 upset the applecart of Maniram. He got thre Mauzas and a pensions of fifty rupees per month which did not yield him a respectable living. He left them and joined the Assam Tea Company as its Dewan or Chief Executive. Since then Maniram came to be widely known as Maniram Dewan. He soon fell out with some of his British colleagues and ultimately left his job in 1845.

In the Assam Tea Company the Dewan had picked up the tricks of the trade and having been confident of his propects, he started two gardens of his own. As a native tea planter Maniram was not given the benefits available to the white breeds. His disillussionment with the English began when he found that inspite of all his past services he was not considered one among equals.

In 1848, Maniram set up an weekly hat or market place at Arjunguri, Sibasagar. It was at that time a news to the province. A rapacious Revenue Sheristedar now stood face to face with the darned-clothed peasant. It was but natural that the deprivation and discrimination, to which Maniram was subject-Ied, would push away any self-respecting person. We do not exactly know how Maniram reacted to his misfortune. We are inclined to believe that definitely a change of outlook came over him at this stage. But he failed to diagnose the malady. His consistent loyalty to his feudal class interest blurred his perception and diffused foresight. His long association with an indolent monarchy, intellectual ostracism and easy access to spoils deprived him of the fervor of a new outlook.

Anandaram and Maniram have long been inviting comments from historians. To H.K. Barpujari, Maniram was a ‘revolutionary’; Anandaram was ‘not a revolutionary like Maniram but that does not mean that he was less patriotic.’ Amalendu Guha called Maniram ‘the last  of the old aristocrats, - turned an extremist’ and although not ‘a very consistent freedom fighter’ yet ‘a bridge between the old man and the new.’ Anandaram, according to him, ‘was precursor of the Modern School and of its mendicant and economic nationalism in more than one respect.’ Another recent study calls Maniram a ‘conservative’ and Anandaram ‘an apostle of the new age.’

The growth of nationalism in Assam had some features in common with Andhra,
Orissa and Bihar. The nationalist consciousness in these regions found its expression through the dream of a separate geographical identity and he consolidating agent of this new consciousness was the oriflamme of language. Very much as in Andhra and Orissa, nationalism in Assam was also language-based. Free from the slightest touch of chauvinism, Anandaram was the first and foremost champion for the cause of the Assamese language. What was Maniram’s view? Prof. Maheswar Neog observes, “We do not have his opinion on the language question, but do very much see that in his remarkable Buranji Vivek Ratna he is torn between Assamese and Bengali.”

On the two main issues of the day, opium and language, Moffat Mills broadly agreed with Anandaram. He considered opium as the greatest hindrance to the progress of the province; admitted the ‘great mistake of imposition of Bengalee and reminded ‘that the Assamese must acquire, its rightful place. Mills outrightly rejected Maniram’s plea for restoration of the Ahom monarchy. The Dewan was further disheartened. He had no real native but to go on pressing the button here and there. He went to Calcutta in early 1857 and tried to impress upon the Governor General in favour of restoration. He was not yet a rebel in the making. But Calcutta did not answer the expectations favourably. While he was there, reports of Sepoy revolts and sporadic mass unrest came in. Probably for the first time, Maniram’s fancy played round the idea of a similar action in Assam. A man of considerable organizing capacity, he immediately collected some people around him and got on to a plot; but circumstances doomed it to perdition. Maniram and his collaborators were tried and punished. Maniram and Peli Baruah were held guilty of treason and were hanged. The trial of Maniram smacked of superstitiousness. Historians have not so far traced any contact of Maniram with the contemporary heroes of India. The intellectual climate of Calcutta could not have encouraged him.

Sadananda Chaliha says, ‘By accepting the suzerainty of the Emperor of Delhi these rebels wanted to make Yuvraj Kandarpeswar Singha the king of Assam.” But the Assamese people were unlikely to accept the overlordship of the Mughals, with whom their relationship was anything but friendly. ‘Assam was not committed to them,” remarked Mahendra Borah correctly. Politically, such an ideal of Maniram would always stand beyond justification. With the growth of political consciousness a legend was built up. It was realized more and more that Maniram and Piyali through their sacrifice in the upheaval of 1857 increased the political prestige of the Assamese people. Maniram still lives in legend. He was a hero of local patriotism whose name inspired the freedom fighters of this century in Assam. As a symbol of sacrifice his name is evergreen in people’s heart.

Bipan Chandra has nailed down three characteristics of the early nationalism of India: (i) they ‘were fearless critics of the individual administrative measures and worked incessantly for the reform of an administration ridden with corruption, inefficiency and oppression.’ (ii) they ‘agitated against the oppressive any tyrannical behavior of the police and the Government agents towards the common people and (iii) they ‘criticized the low level of the welfare service in India and urged the Government to undertake and develop the welfare activities of the state. In particular, they emphasized the need for the spread of education among the masses. Judged by these formulations, Anandaram may be undoubtedly ranked among the early nationalist of our country. Henry Hopkinson, Commissioner of Assam, once observed, ‘Anandaram is to Assam what Raja Rammohan Roy is to Bengal.” Perhaps he spoke more truly than he believed. Anybody accepting the raison d’etre of recognizing Ram Mohun Roy as the father of Indian Nationalism has to accept the fact that
Anandaram was the father of Assamese sub-nationalism who merged into Indian nationalism. It was he who prepared the ground to receive the message of nationalism.

In a beautiful poem, Tagore wrote, “Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark.”

Anandaram sang the song of modernism and so far as nationalism was a modernizing force Anandaram would have been the first men to welcome it. His untimely death denied him the honour and opportunity of going through with it.

Notes & Reference


2 David Scott was the Agent to the Governor-General, North East Frontier. He had played a significant role in the crucial years of expansion and consolidation of the British rule in the North-East. For a thorough account see David Scott in North East India by N.K. Barooah, New Delhi, 1970.

3 Moffat Mills submitted his voluminous Report on the province of Assam to Cecil Beadon, Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal Calcutta 1854, Reprint Guwahati, 1984. Henceforth to be called Mills Report.

4 Mills Report, Appendix J, pp. 93-132. It is a long and elaborate document. We have noted the salient points only.


7 The Orunodoi, April, 1847.


10 Quoted. in B. Sarmah, no. 1, p. 199.


12 B. Sharma, n.1, p. 106.

13 The Orunodoi, January, 1848.


19 M. Neog (ed), The Orunodoi (1846-1854), Guwahati, 1984, p. 65.

20 Mills Report, para 92, p. 28.

21 Benudhar Sharma and H.K. Barpujari have discussed this point at some length. S.N. Sen also held identical view.

22 The Journal Sambad Prabhakar bears testimony to it: S.N. Sen, eighteen Fifty Seven, Reprint, New Delhi, 1977, p. 408.

23 Sadananda Chaliha, Bharat Buranji, Guwahati, 1984, p. 194. (Translation ours).


25 Bipan Chandra (ed.), Freedom Struggle, New Delhi, Reprint 1982, see foreword, P.V.

26 P. Gohain Barua, n. 11, p. 18 (translation ours).

Advent and Spread of the Thai People in Assam

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North-East India is a veritable cauldron of races and cultures. Perhaps the first group of man that settled in this region is the Mon-Khmer speaking Austero-Asiatic people who were succeeded by the Tibeto-Burman speaking Bodo, Himalayan, North Assam, Naga, Kacjin and Kuki-Chin groups from the East and the Indo-Aryans from the west. Unlike the immigration of the Tibeto-Burman speaking people which was in waves, the immigration of the Indo-Aryans took place in a small trickle, but almost continuously, from the North Gangetic plain across North Bengal. However, these three groups of people built up the socio-economic and demographic substratum of North East India during the period from I millennium B.C. to I millennium A.D. Many dynasties of kings and rulers, great and small, had their sway over the region with varying territorial extent and from different capitals. While immigrations stated above continued, two new elements appeared in the socio-political scene of North East India in the thirteen century. Under Bakhtiyar Khilji came the Muslim invaders from the West in 1203 and under Sukapha came the Ahoms from the East in about 1220 A.D. The motives of the two forces were different. While Bakhtiyar Khilji led his force to conquer and annex, Sukapha came to conquer and settle. Khilji was defeated but he left a trace of Muslim population and a tradition of invasion from the West. Sukapha won over the local people and established a kingdom which withstood the test of time for long six centuries. It is important to note here that the sustained rule, apart from anything else, contributed substantially to the formation of Assamese nationality with its distinct language and cultural heritage.

The route through which Sukapha entered in North-East India was tortuous and difficult. He moved with a large group of men, women and children consisted of Phu (single men), Ren (families), and Puk (clan), as also some animals, tools and implements. On his way from Kin Sen Maulang to North East India he had lived for some time on the Nongyang Lake and established his hegemony before moving westward along the Khamjang Pass across the Patkai range. Then he followed a tributary of the Burhi Dihing and reached the main river which the followed upstream to La Khen Tensa. He stayed here for two years and left downstream and reached Tipam area where he again settled for three years, got himself acclimatized with the physical and socio-political environment of the region won over the local people and then moved on leaving a base and an administrator on his behalf. In his next calculated and planned move he reached Salaguri, where again he settled for a couple of years and then proceeded down the Burhi Dihing leaving a fourth base and an administrator. From Salaguri he moved to the confluence of the Burhi Dihing and Brahmaputra and settled for 3 years at Habung in the north bank of the latter. He found it chronically floodaffected and left down the Brahmaputra and reached Dikhou for a little distance and up the Disang for some distance but retreated up the Dikhou to Simaluguri. It was at Simaluguri that he left a
navigable water course and moved overland to Charaideo where he established his permanent capital.

Two aspects of his advent settlement are important. Firstly, he was all along moving on or along a navigable river, and secondly, he was least involved in plundering and exploiting the local people, it is evident that although he entered North-East India in about 1220 he did not establish his hegemony until 1229. Sukapha took a decade to adapt himself to the local conditions. The five places where he made his long sojourns were settled by his men, cultivated crops and produced their necessities for themselves rather than depending on the people of invaded territories. They further established friendship and matrimonial relationship with the local people viz., the Brahmins, Morans, Nagas and Kacharis although, the latter were found to be weaker and at a lower level of material culture.

With this technique of a true general and a foresighted statesman, Sukapha established a kingdom and consolidated his rule over the territory between Burhi Dihing and Dikhou river with least resistance but a lot of connivance of and co-operation from the local people. Side by side, the number of Ahom population began to grow partly because of natural growth within themselves, partly through intermarriage with the local people—the off-springs identifying themselves with the ruling Ahoms and also through adoption of Ahom Socio-Cultural traits by those small tribes and individuals who found employment in the administration and in the personal services of the Ahom royal and noble families. Thus the number of Ahom population began to increase from only one thousand and eighty souls came with Sukapha. The distribution of Ahom population also expanded mainly because of two reasons: firstly, increase in their number necessitated a real expansion just for sustenance and secondly because the Ahom administrators wanted their own trusted officers and pykes to defend and maintain their expanding frontiers. The annexation of Moran kingdom which extended to the North bank i.e. present Dhakuakhana region necessitated Ahom settlement in this area of the north bank during the time of Sukapha himself. Subsequently Suhungmung started Ahom settlement in Sadiya after the annexation of Chutia country and instalment of the Sadiyakhowa Gohain in 1523-24. He further defeated the Kacharis and settled Ahoms at Marangi along with the instalment of the Marangikhowa Gohain in 1531. Then from 1546 to 1563 there were attacks from Koches and Daflas in the north bank in the present Lakhimpur and Sonitpur districts. This had to be effectively contained and some Ahom officers and pykes had to be settled in Lakhimpur, eastern Sonitpur and at eastern Nowgong besides installing Solal Gohain at Kaliabar in about 1564. After that from 1611 onward during the time of Momai Tamuli Barbaruah, new and systematic settlements of 1000 pykes divided into 9 villages were started at a place about 12 k.m. to the east of present Nowgong for guarding the frontier of the Ahom Kingdom from the Karbis, Jaintias and Kacharis. That is how some Ahom villages are still found to be distributed over eastern Nowgong upto Kampur. Then again, in 1627, the Moghul invaders attacked the Ahoms at Kaliabar. The former were defeated the chased beyond Gauhati and a Barphukan was installed at Gauhati. With the installation of a Barphukan at Gauhati some trusted Ahom officials and soldiers were also settled in Gauhati region, especially at North Gauhati.

With the passage of time thus Ahom settlements expanded areally. It is difficult to give an estimate or the present Ahom population. It was recorded at 150144 (including 2321 Chaudangs) in 1872 by Hunter’s Stastical Account of Assam. This rose to 178,049 by 1901. The present population may be around a million. They are traditionally densely distributed over the area between Burhi Dihing and Dikhou of Sibasagar district. Towards north and west of
this area the density decreases but continuity is retained upto Sadiya in the Northeast and Kaliabar in the West respectively. In the North Bank Ahom population is continuously distributed from the Brahmaputra upto Burai. Thus Kalong in the south bank and Burai in the north bank are the natural western limits of distribution of the Ahoms. Beyond this, there are only isolated settlements as in North Guwahati, Chatia, Tezpur etc.

The settlement pattern of the Ahoms within the said territory is geographically interesting and bears the mark of the culture that they carried with them. Contrary to the common notion Ahom were neither tribal nor hillmen. Back in Shan Plateau and its surrounding region in Upper Burma, there are flat valleys with meandering rivers and lowlying areas where people have been cultivating lowland rice with the help of buffalo-drawn ploughs. The Ahoms perhaps brought this culture with them from South-East Asia and selected similar relatively low lying areas in Upper Assam for their settlement. This is evidence even by their selection of sites for their capital, the first capital was established on the lowlying tract at the foot of the Charaideo (1229-1396) leaving the high hill slope for ritual royal burial. Then they moved to charqua near present Rajmai and the Dimou River (1396-1500). Next the capital was shifted to Bokota, again a lowlying area between Disang and Dirai (1500-1540). Thereafter it was taken to Garhgaon (1540-1700) and thence to Rangpur (1770-1794). It may be noted that except their last capital Jorhat (1700-1626), which they chose because of strategic reasons, all are located in lowlying areas, this obviously shows their preference for low-lying areas which are neither immediate river banks nor chronically flood affected. Such situations provided them ideal ecological condition to cultivate rice with the help of ploughs drawn by buffaloes often single ones. It may be noted that contrary to the opinion of some scholars that plough culture was brought to Nort-East Asia India by the Indo-Aryans alone, Ahom also introduced it from South-East Asia. One who knows plough technology can see that while the Indo-Aryan plough is rectangular that introduced by the Ahoms have Krumel structural elements. However, an examination of the persons distribution of the traditional Ahom villages reveals ecological control as stated above.

A few words may perhaps be added here about the later day Tai immigrants groups consisting of the Khamti, Khamyang, Aiton, Phakial and Tiurung. When the 3rd Burmese empire was expanded by Alaung Payas the smaller Tai Kings and Chiefs had to move away and the Khamtis entered North-East India after 1752 and settled in the Sadiya region. Their present population is about 4000. The Khamyangs or the Naras have political and trade relations with the Ahoms since very long and some of their groups settled in Margherita and Sibasagar regions in the eighteen century. They now number about 8000. The Phakials and Aitons followed the Khamti at the wake of Burmese expansion and two groups has about 5000 souls. The Turungs were the last Tai group to enter Assam just before the British annexation. They are distributed in the Western part of Golaghat and Western part of Diphu sub-division. They now number about 5000.
Sons of the Soil: Assamiya-Sikhs of the Brahmaputra Valley

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It is the story of a minority Sikh community residing in a number of Nagaon villages for more than two hundred years. Historians of Punjab are hardly aware of them. There are doubts whether historians of Assam have shown much interest in reconstructing their past. The community may be regarded Forgotten Sikhs in contemporary Sikh studies. Like the Bihari-Sikhs, they do not know Punjabi but speak in local languages. They represent a religious group with deep cultural link with the local valley tradition and experiences.

Litterateurs from Assam have, however, suggested remarkable enthusiasm regarding the Sikh past of Brahmaputra Valley. It is in diverse colours and refers to Sikh presence long before the establishment of the colonial rule (1826) in the region. Its dominant theme is the coming of 500 Sikh soldiers from Punjab and their heroic self-sacrifice at the Battle of Hadirachaki (1823). These narratives suggest that those who were alive after the disastrous military encounter with the Burmese did not go back to Punjab. They remained in the Valley and their descendants claim the status of sons of the soil. Assam is proud to have an indigenous ethnic Sikh group of nearly 3,000. These Sikhs, however, do not figure in the writings of scholars outlining the history of the Indian national movement or the evolution of the Indian nation state during the post colonial decades. Their role is pushed to the margin as their contribution is considered insignificant in the anti-colonial struggle. In the absence of any significant information about them in government record rooms and libraries, the historians of Assam prefer to rehash the easily available literary sources. Provincial district gazetteers published by the Government of Assam as well as the multi volume projects of the Peoples of India series of the Anthropological Survey of India on the north-east India have also incorporated many uncorroborated materials from Assamese literature. The history of these Sikhs, which one tome across reading in any Assamese scholarly writings, is more or less the same old tale derived from Assamese literary imaginations. In the recent years scholars from other disciplines have given these texts legitimacy by citing them in doctoral dissertations.

My attempt to reconstruct the Assamese-Sikh past may experience many similar pitfalls unless these texts are rigorously scrutinised. It would be a rewarding venture, if those writings were read in the light of other sources like oral traditions, Assamese Buranjis, archival records and printed official reports. A historian seeking to rebuild the history of the Assamiya-Sikhs also needs to review not only the background of the Dandua Droh (1790s) and manar din (period of anarchy) but also to study the far reaching changes taking place under the colonial rule in the Assam valley.

There are a few important studies outlining the impact of British rule in the Brahmaputra valley. They also point out how the varied colonial economic imperatives introduced print culture and stimulated national consciousness in the Assam plains. The imagined nation of the Assamese middle class communicated alternately in the language of little nationalism of the Brahmaputra valley as well as its wider pan Indian.
vision. These conflicting experiences of the last two hundred years are again intimately associated with the Assamese nationalist rhetoric.

Here one may get an idea regarding the causes of the coming of the Sikhs and their subsequent settlement in the valley. Its historian will be expected to listen first to what the Assamiya Sikhs have to say about themselves. These are scattered in their oral traditions. Any historian would no doubt he missing, the dhadhi parampara of Punjab. Instead of it, he would come across another form of oral tradition from the rural folk The historian of Assamiya-Sikhs, therefore, cannot remain an archive bound scholar nor can he simply consult some literary sources preserved in the libraries of Guwahati and Nagaon. He should put on strong boots and carry a note book of an anthropologist to gather the field view of his subject of enquiry. He should be listening to oral history drawing inspiration from indigenous sources.

Contemporary Sikh studies deal with many relevant issues of the twenty-first century. But these Sikhs of Assam are still an elusive domain to the world of scholarship lying beyond the Assam valley. It may be due to their lack of homogeneity as well as demographic insignificance in the ranks of the wider Assamese population. Local Sikh population is broadly divided into two sections. The larger one is composed of the Punjabi-Sikhs who are from the manjha-doaba areas of Punjab. They are here since the closing decade of the nineteenth century and their mother tongue is Punjabi. Generally speaking, they pose as the sole spokesmen of the Sikhs and Sikhism at the regional level. Predominantly an urban community, they are mostly of the Ramgarhia caste, a composite social group of carpenters, blacksmiths and masons. The other is the Assamiya-Sikhs. Representing a regional profile of Sikhism, they are predominantly a rural group associated with agriculture and prefer to maintain a safe distance from their more affluent counterparts from Punjab.

The paper intends to focus on the Assamiya-Sikhs. They have been so far, ignored in any academic agenda of the contemporary Sikh study. A journey to their reconstructed past may introduce social scientists to a few unexplored areas of Sikh ethnicity. It provides historians a rural profile of the Sikhs which is distinctly different from their commonly projected urban image prevailing outside Punjab. Their link with Assam is as good as proverbial. Assamese is not only their mother tongue but they also regard Assam and not Punjab, their permanent home. Their intimate association with the culture and civilization of the Brahmaputra valley makes them an exciting subject of investigation.

These Sikhs are sons of the soil owing to their two century long residence in Nagaon villages of lower Assam. It facilitated the incorporation of some of the important markers of the Assamese identity associated with food, dress, religious belief, language and the rite of passage. Like Assamese-Hindus of the neighbourhood, Bihu plays an important role in their community life. Not Bhangra but Bihu is their most popular festival. They dwell in a common cultural space shared by other indigenous groups of the region. As a result, neither do they subscribe to the Rahit (the Khalsa code of conduct) nor do they read Sikh sacred text (i.e. Sri Guru Granth Sahib) in Punjabi. Like other Assamese-Hindu castes, the Assamiya-Sikhs feel happy to participate in the congregational singing (Samkirtan). To many of them; it is also a familiar religious terrain since the time of Guru Nanak in the mid fifteenth century. They practice nam simran (remembering the Name) while the emphasis on nam (remembering) in Assamese Vaishnavism stands for a similar religious experience. In both these religions, congregational participation as well as the message of bhakti (devotion) plays a pivotal role. Thus Assam-
ese Vaisnavaism cuts across some of the fundamental religious beliefs and practices of the Sikh Gurus and Assamiya-Sikhs could make their room within the dominant devotional framework of the regional Vaishnavas. It is also not an unusual occurrence that the Assamiys-Sikh referred to their most important religious institution not as gurdwara but as namghar. It underlines their readiness to reject a word universally current among the Sikhs in favour of an expression which is exclusively restricted to the limits of Assam. Even their first gurdwara at Chaparmukh village, which dates back to the first quarter of nineteenth century, was initially in a thatched house. Its twentieth century conversion into a permanent structure also maintains its Assamese distinctiveness and does not convey the message of a typical gurdwara from a distance.

Assamiya-Sikhs' interactions with Vaisnavaism in Assam also represents a long drawn process and it is difficult to suggest any specific time frame pointing out how these Sikhs were inducted there. On the basis of fragmentary sources cited earlier, it may be tentatively stated that it is a protracted and multidimensional encounter stretching over nearly two century which eventually transformed the Sikh mercenaries into the sons of the soil. They had to make numerous adjustments so that their Sikh identity continued to persist within the wider profile of an Assamese peasantry.

As a mercenary, they had thus begun their journey in Assam nearly two hundred years ago. Later on they took part in the revolt of Haradatta-Biradatta (1790-92). Soon they changed their side, and then ended at Raha Chakî (in Nagaon district). It was set up by the Ahom rulers in the mid seventeenth century to stem the tide of the repeated Kachhari incursions along their southern boundary. They were advised to settle at Chaparmukh, a village situated on the banks of the Titaimara Suti. It was a small rural tract located within a radius of two miles from the Raha Chaki. Assam was then a sparsely populated territory. During their early days, they were generally welcomed by the local populace. In the nineteenth century, with the increase of population and periodic river floods from the Kapili-Kalang watershed, they moved to a comparatively safer and higher plane.

The Assamiya-Sikhs are predominantly self-cultivating peasant proprietors owning small plot of agricultural holdings which they had mostly cleared from the wastes. They produced rice, oil seeds and sugar cane. Here they learnt the techniques of cultivation, mastered the significance of utilising different types of manures, grew wiser in the rotation of crops, appreciated the significance of better management of family labour as well as importance of a long cycle of unpredictable seasons.

Their expertise attuned them to the rhythm of local agricultural calendar and encouraged them to identify with the hopes and aspirations of Assamese peasants. They incorporated the culinary practices of the local folk, participated in their fair and festivals and made themselves fit to fight the annual floods as well as malarial attacks. These experiences helped the descendants of the old mercenaries to refurbish their claim to be the sons of the soil. They tying knots with women from Assamese rural society added colour and cemented Assamiya identity. It made their presence in the valley a narrative of new dignity and honour, introduced them to Assamese cultural motif and delicacy, Even their use of gamochha became common and brought the technique of weaving (tantshal) into their courtyard.

All these experiences introduced them to the inner domain of Assamiya culture. They were no longer merely Sikhs but Assamese as well. Their cultural communication as well as religious interface propelled them to redefine their boundaries of identity which would accommodate their dual self in local territorial space. They represent a distinct process of socialization of Sikhism where some of the older religious practices
and beliefs of the Sikhs were reframed with reference to local expediency. Their perception of the sacred and profane was simultaneously modified. It was conditioned to accommodate the hierarchy of village god, belief in evil spirit, magic and legend. They continued to appreciate the superior power of holy men, sought blessings of Goddess Ai when afflicted by chicken pox and used folk medicines like charm and amulet to ward off the power of ghosts and witches. Perhaps they increasingly started presuming that like village trees, pathways and namghars, they were as much a part of Assam as any of their neighbours of the locality. Their past was reconstructed through revisiting memory lanes and these were increasingly revised, given many forms and expressions. They put their old mercenary identity under the carpet. Instead of it, their kinship ties with local populace made them an inseparable part of it.

Their ties with the Assamese-Hindu religious beliefs and practices were cemented over the years. They were found worshipping Hindu pantheon and subscribing to the rite of passage of local Hindus. They generally declared themselves as Hindus in different census returns, participated in the Durga and Kali puja, believed in the healing power of the Kamyakhyia and made pilgrimage there on certain days declared auspicious in Hindu almanac. They found no apparent contradiction between worshipping of Hindu pantheon and the celebration of gurpurabs because they believed that different Sikh Gurus were Hindus and they were born to reform and regenerate Hinduism from the oppressive rule of different Muslim rulers of medieval India. Their pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim view of religion was reinforced by some newer turns in the twentieth century Assam politics, viz, the coming of hundreds of hard working Muslim peasants from the Mymensingh district (now in Bangladesh) in the early twentieth century, the middle class Assamese Hindu fear of being submerged by them in their place of birth and the aggressive response of the Assam Samrakhshini Sabha to all these developments of the 1930s.

While these political experiences brought Assamiya-Sikhs closer to the Brahmaputra valley, their rite of passage also came to communicate those of rural Hindus of Nagaon villages. Their male folk continued to have beard and turban but their female counterpart felt comfortable in saris and dabbed sindur at the time of marriage. Their wider use of the pan-tamol on nearly all social celebrations, the prevalence of toloni biya at the time of the first puberty of a girl, the selection of an auspicious date in the presence of priests for any family celebrations, joran in matrimonial arrangement, tilioni, machhani etc. in case of any death in the family, the strict seclusion of the newly born baby with his/her mother in a separate room (showaghar) for a certain number of days and the use of black mark on the forehead of a child to ward off evil spirit are some of the markers of their intimate association with the local Hindu community.

The story of social transformation of Assamiya-Sikhs is possibly nothing impossible owing to their intimate ancestral ties with the Bihari-Sikh world. It is evident from different sources that those Sikhs who had earlier entered lower Assam in the late eighteenth century were the natives of the northern Bihar districts. They were then experiencing many devastating economic transformations owing to the penetrations of the East India Company's power there. Matters were made worse by the Company's oppressive rule leading to the famine of 1770 and the revolt of the Sannaysis and Fakirs in the early 1780s. The ranks of the Sannayi and Fakir rebels were swelled by a large number of disposed peasants and others who had suffered seriously from the contemporary economic experiences. They carried on raids in northern Bengal districts during the administration of Warren Hastings (1772-1784). The Company's military operations forced them to leave Bengal but they had already managed to enter the plains of lower Assam,
then witnessing declining period of Ahom rule, its fight with local zamindars like Haradatta-Biradatta as well as Mayamaria religious rebels in the last two decades of the century.

These Bihari-Sikhs were local folk who had embraced Sikhism during the ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur's short stay there in the 1660s. They shared many common religious experiences and beliefs with their Hindu counterparts of the neighbourhood. Even today they practice arati (holding lamp in front of a deity) during their gurdwara daily service, put tilak (sacred mark) on the forehead, participate in different Hindu festivities like Chhat (sun worship) and Ramnavami (coronation of Lord Rama), declare them as Sanatani-Sikhs, and find nothing wrong in performing shraddha (death ritual) of Guru Nanak during the celebration of Mahalaya.

It is likely that the predecessors of Assamiya-Sikhs had brought with them some of their old Bihari-Hindu experiences. We are not sure whether these markers facilitated their Assamization process and made their incorporation with the local culture comparatively easier and frictionless. In spite of their general cultural agreement, the minuscule community had to face occasional harsh treatments at the hands of dominant community. They were not only victims of periodic Assamese xenophobia but also sufferers of local caste stigma.

Xenophobia was an important distinguishing mark of the newly born Assamese middle class. It came to dominate their psyche since the late nineteenth century. It was not altogether an unknown Assamese experience during the days of the Ahoms. Under the colonial rule, however, it assumed an aggressive form. It had its origin in the Assamese middle class' fear of being submerged by a large-scale migration of the educated Bengali middle class to Assam. In the early twentieth century, the gravity of the problem was further heightened. The situation took a serious communal turn with the increase in the number of the hard-working Bengali-Muslim peasants from the northern districts of the Bengali Presidency and their subsequent settlement in all the districts of lower Assam. It made Assamese Hindu middle class extremely belligerent and hostile towards local Bengali migrants and the former even looked forward to their cultural annihilation. According to its revised political philosophy, migrants like Assamiya-Sikhs who had settled almost a century ago were not also spared in this campaign of vilification. They were not only denounced as foreigners but also portrayed as greedy dogs and vampires ready to suck the blood of the Assamese and dishonour even their womenfolk. Assamiya-Sikhs gradually learnt to respond to some of these local challenges. They identified them with the 'politics of Assam for the Assamese' in the 1930s.

Secondly, Assamiya-Sikhs were not only the victims of political slander coined by a section of the high caste Hindu intellectuals, but they also suffered from many social disabilities. These made their position equally miserable. We do not have any written evidence directly pointing out their low social status in the agrarian society. But we have some indirect evidence culled from the different social surveys, village studies and census reports suggesting their unfortunate plight in different social arenas. They were not only placed almost at the bottom of social hierarchy but were deprived of the services of the higher caste Brahmins. They were treated as an exterior social caste and were considered untouchables like the Hiras, Koches and Nadiyals of the locality. They could exclusively marry daughters of these communities. Even their experiences with the local namghars run by some high castes were not always very pleasant. In the early twentieth century they were not allowed to go beyond certain limits of this sacred institution.

These cruel social inequalities as well as the bitter political vendettas of the dominant social group of the Brahmaputra...
valley sometimes generated a deep sense of frustration, if not small sparks of silent protest, in the ranks of Assamiys-Sikhs. The minuscule social group was not strong enough to challenge the hegemony of the dominant religious group openly. They also suffered from a subaltern mentality. Hence their symbolic defiance cannot take the position of an open revolt or any radical assault in broad daylight. In Assam, folk traditions like the Padumkuwarir malita and the Barphukan Geet conveyed the fragments of deep agonies in a language understandable to the common people. There were, therefore, occasions when the rais voiced their opinion in popular terminology and through it sought to narrate their experiences of social humiliations and oppressions committed against them.

Contemporary oral traditions narrating Assamiya-Sikhs’ heroic self-sacrifice at the Battle of Hadirachaki (1823) perhaps suggests a similar form of symbolic protest of the subalterns. Here Assamiya-Sikhs provides historians an important key to decode their mental world. If the Padumkuwarir malita referred to the oppression of Kumedian Singh, Assamiya-Sikh’s oral tradition created a new hero Chaitanya Singha out of the mud of Hadirachaki. If Kumedian Singh was universally hated by Assamese people, the new hero Chaitanya Singha could win the heart of Chatala, the new heroine of the Assam valley of the twentieth century.
The Travails and Triumphs of the Beautiful Rose: story of an actress of the Bengali public theatre

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A young and beautiful girl aptly named Golaap Sundori grew up to the promise of her name in her mother’s home near Mahesh in the 1870s. She was probably being groomed to follow her mother’s footsteps in the flesh trade and her melodious voice was an added asset. But Fate had a different plan for her. Unknown to her many events were taking place leading to a momentous day in 1873, when Golaap stood on the stage of Bengal Theatre to create history. It was not that Golaap’s role in this history was easy, on the contrary among all the actresses Fate played tricks with her the most, but she triumphed over her destiny in the end. This paper will follow the career and life of Golaap Sundori and try to locate her within the politics of theatre and gender in late 19th – early 20th century Calcutta.

With the rise of the moneyed classes in the city of Calcutta in the 19th century and the growth of the western educated elite, the love for theatre and performance became fashionable and many amateur theatrical companies rose, triumphed and vanished in the period between 1840s and 1870s. In these plays performed for an invited and exclusive audience in the houses of the elite bhadralok, all the roles were performed by men, even the female roles. But in the last decade one can discern in the newspapers and periodicals of the time murmurs of dissent about the aesthetic quality of men/boys performing, singing and dancing in female roles. Michael Madhusudan Dutta was said to have promised to write a new play for the theatre if actresses were used. There is no doubt that the educated men of the time knew about the successful performances of women in female roles in the past in the theatres performed in Bengali in 1795-96 and in 1835 though both times the performances were short-lived. The first theatrical performance in Bengali was by the Russian traveler Gerasim Lebedeff in 1795, at Domtolla in north Calcutta, where in the play Kalponik Sanbadal (The Disguise) women performed in the female roles. But the theatre he established could not continue for long and there followed a lull of some years till Nabin Chandra Basu organized the production of the popular play Bidyasundar in 1835 with both men and women performers. Though a resounding success, this venture too could not continue beyond a few performances. There was a large outcry against the ‘defiling’ of the theatre with natis from nishiddha palli or prostitute quarters. What was unarguably true was that there seemed to be no other option for theatre since women of the middle-classes were not emancipated enough to defy the social disapproval. Thereafter Bengali theatrical tradition survived in the innovated Jatras to suit the new sophisticated taste of the Bengali Bhadralok and in the private theatres in the houses of the rich and powerful of Calcutta and the suburbs. The performances that followed were before a restricted audience and the performances were entirely by men from middle class background. This history was not only hearsay because two young men in 1930s had presented doctoral dissertations on the subject to the London university which were soon to be publicly released to the interested readers. It was a time when writing on theatre even by non-performers started providing a semidetached yet informed view.

After much discussion in 1872 theatre doors opened for the public with the
price of a ticket being the only restriction for entry to the hall of magic. Theatre sponsored in the houses of the rich Bengalis had already become the benchmark of wealth and culture. Yet till 1872, it remained out of reach of rest of the society though western education and western contact and consequently money was filtering into the middle ranks of the society. So when it opened to the public, theatre-going became the symbol of social mobility as well as the means of showing off one’s wealth and culture.\(^3\) The connection between public theatre and women acting in female roles, that had been established since the time of Lebedeff stood in good stead, and from the first performance Bengal theatre employed five actresses who were recruited from the prostitute areas. On 16\(^{th}\) August, 1873, in Bengal Theatre Michael Madhusudan Dutta’s Sarmishtha opened with Jagattarini, Golaap, Elokeshi and Shyama in the female roles. The other public theatre, National Theatre, resisted the storm for another year stubbornly but had to give in in the face of falling ticket sales when as Great National Theatre, in 1874, 17\(^{th}\) September for the first time five actresses were employed in the Great National Theatre. Kadambini, Kshetramoni, Jadumoni, Haridashi, and Rajkumari. Girish Ghosh, the doyen of Bengali theatre, actor, director and playwright, wrote that they were forced to do so because they were facing stiff competition from Bengal Theatre. The number of the audience had dropped. Though Raj Krishna Roy wasted a lot of money on trying to find better boys, they were simply not good enough for the roles.\(^4\) Undoubtedly, it was Golaap’s brilliance in the Bengal theatre which forced the issue.

Golaap Sundari performed successfully in a number of productions in Bengal theatre - Sharmishtha (there is a controversy among critics whether she performed in the first or second performance),\(^5\) Maya Kanan, Chakshudaan, Mohanter e ki kaaj, Durgeshnandini (as Bimala), Mrinalini (as Girijaya) as well as a number of farces. Her greatest performance was in 1874 as Malini in Bidyasundar where she “acquitted herself with her usual grace and skill” as was pointed out by the Indian Daily news.\(^6\) Debnarayan Gupta found Golaap’s role as Aindrilla, in Puru Bikram as the most memorable one and which confirmed her as the greatest of the first actresses on Bengali stage.\(^7\) But soon, finding herself at odds with the management at Bengal Theatre Golaap moved to Great National Theatre which had recently started performing with actresses. Upendranath Das, the director and patron took Golaap under his wings and transformed Golaap into an even more accomplished actress able to perform in difficult and demanding roles under his direction and guidance.

Like most of the actresses of the time Golaap too came to the theatre at a very young age and coming from uneducated and backward background these actresses were dependent on the lading men/directors to teach them to perform in roles and characters they could not even conceive in their dreams. Very soon Golaap like the other famed actresses of the time Binodini, Tinkari, Tarasundari was performing with elan in difficult roles and winning accolades from the public as well as leading like personalities of the time. The correct enunciation of words without common speech defects, delivery of dialogues free from the jatra style to which these girls were more exposed to, as well as training in singing and dancing so as to fine tune they instinctive talents were all part of the training that these girls received. Most important was the training of their minds. As the journals of the time wrote, “while the actresses do not really need to have school education, an overall education definitely improves the quality of the minds and hence performance.”\(^8\) Others believed that they needed to be educated in the styles of performance present in the west so that they could emulate them. The contemporary periodicals ran series on the analysis of acting styles of contemporary
British actresses and the actor Nirmalendu Lahiri pointed out that the careers and lives of the leading actors of the time should be read to realize how much effort they put in to reach perfection. More relevant for the actress was the training they received in performance of songs and dances as well as appropriate costumes. Every play had multiple songs in which Golaap excelled. As some critics pointed out these actresses were more willing than the actors to train. Coming from backward families they knew they would be lost without training so they were more receptive. According to Monomohon Goswami, the men from well to do middle class backgrounds felt too superior to learn anything new. It was this ignorance that led to the degeneration of theatre.

There is no doubt that for the actress performance on stage not only brought freedom from the background of disrepute they were accustomed to under their mother’s protection, but also brought a regular income. There’s no doubt that their mothers when they encouraged these young girls to join the theatres it was this economic security they anticipated. But it is also true that the roles that these young girls had to portray on the stage opened up a world that was totally new. New relationships, new loyalties and new achievements awaited Golaap. Upendranath Das trained Sukumari in such a way that she was soon able to overcome the defects of her background in enunciation, dialogue delivery, body language, singing and performing so that she was able to do justice to a number of roles. On 2nd January 1875, Golaap acted in Sarat Sarojini where her character’s name was Sukumari. The play was a great success and Golaap became so popular as Sukumari, that the name stuck. It isn’t very uncommon for an actress to adopt a stage name in general but in the theatrical history of Bengali theatre she seems to be the only one. It was the popularity of her portrayal in the play that made the name stick. That she had no objection to the change is testified to the fact that when she was betrayed by the very people she trusted in and was forced to fend for herself it was this name she used probably because she knew it was this name that the public would remember and not the name she was given at birth.

The actresses were in such close relationship with their mentors in the theatres that they became not only their artistic creations but depended on their counsel for day to day personal decisions. This dependence unlike the career choices were not always beneficial to the actresses. Loyalty to their mentor would mean following him from one theatre to another despite being successful in the present one. Fortunately, she would show her mettle in every theatre she went notwithstanding the change in ambience and management. When Upendranath Das changed theatres and went to Bengal theatre with his troupe Golaap, now famous as Sukumari, followed. There the next performance Surendra- Binodini was a success with the playlist mentioning Birajmohini performed by “Golaap (Sukumari)” to attract new audiences.

Golaap/Sukumari however soon became the focus of great changes taking place in the country leading to momentous changes in her life which despite the good intentions of the leaders had an unfortunate impact. The 19th century has been called the age of reform and most of the reforms centred around women involving affirmative action by the colonial government. But as recent researches have shown though the reforms concerned women, they were only the site of the reforms and had no agency either in the initiation not in the effect. Most of reformers were male and upper caste and they had the overall improvement of the condition of women as their motive. Unfortunately their vision of reforms for women was according to a contemporary stereotypical view and did not include their empowerment either financially nor artistically. Also within their vision of ‘reform’ was an idea that only within the protection of domesticity could women achieves their
ideal. This was related to the prevailing domestic ideal where women in a ‘moral’ India would be ‘angels in the house’ reinforcing the purity of the home and strengthening the morality of their children. All other women beyond this ambit were public women and the colonial government was not really concerned about them. The relationship of these women with the middle class society too was marginal and though considered a degradation there was no real concern. But the dilemma occurred when these young girls from these ‘forbidden quarters’ came into direct contact with the middle class youth in the theatre. There was suddenly a fear within the society that proximity with these women would contaminate these young men and create a social upheaval. As Girish Ghosh pointed out in annoynce in 1900 that the “enlightened men of Bengal (should) offer constructive suggestions rather than simply criticize or express disgust. He pointed out that the theatre owners did not use prostitute out of any specific motive but because no ‘respectable’ woman would join theatre."

Some Brahmo leaders of the time like Sibnath Sastri and Upendranath Das wanted to remove the stigma attached with theatre as well as improve the condition of women in one go. Upendranath Das felt that social reforms could be wrought using the medium of theatre. He thought that if the actors and actresses could be married then the theatre would win a good name for itself and the actresses would no longer be considered as polluting the good name of the theatre. He married his favourite and obedient student Sukumari to Goshtobehari Dutta, a young actor from a well to do family who was dependent on Upendranath. They were married by the Marriage Act III of 1872. But the step was not a happy one for the young people. A debate raged in the newspapers and unkind limericks began to circulate about the man and woman in wedded bliss performing in plays. The boy’s family could not take the social pressure and refused to be associated with Goshto and his wife. He and Sukumari started living in penury in a slum area with very little income since Sukumari left the theatre in order to reinforce their ‘respectable’ life through motherhood. They had a little daughter. Soon Goshto was faced with an even greater tragedy. His patron and friend Upendranath Das had to leave the country for health reasons and unable to cope with the loneliness and social disgrace, Goshto abandoned his wife and daughter and followed Das to England where he eventually died.

Sukumari in the face of financial distress had to resume the career she had rejected for respectability. She first started a training camp and then wrote a play called Apurba Sati which was performed in Great National Theatre on 23rd August 1875. It was also performed in Bengal theatre. This play was a path breaking one since it was written for women. She was possibly the first woman dramatist. She also became the first woman to form her own theatrical group with the help of Ashubabu a youth of Bhavanipur, though the group did not last long. As critic’s points out when all these efforts failed, Sukumari in desperation resumed her old profession. She joined Star where under Girish Ghosh’s direction she performed as Motibibi in Kopaikundala, as Suryamukhi in Bishabriksha, as Rohini in Krishnakanter Will (all adaptations of the great novelist Bankim Chandra’s works) and won great acclaim. Towards the end of her career Sukumari joined Classic under Amarendra and was able to hold her own against young actresses. But she retired from public theatre due to ill health. In her long stage life of almost twenty eight years Golaap acted in Bengal, Great National, Emerald, Classic, Star and Arora theatres.

The book that Golaap wrote was Apurba Sati in the name by which she was more popularly known - Sukumari Dutta in 1875 and reprinted in 1882. It was dedicated to Maharani Swarnamoyee Devi. It was
surprising that more than once Latin was used in the headings of the work. (Apruba Sati- Castus Mirabillis and instead of Preface the word Pro-video is used) She wrote in the introductory words that she was presenting the play before Bengali women before it is placed before the general public. “If in our varied mirrors my sisters do not see their colourful faces, then will my incomparable hope regarding mirrors be lost in the future hollows of time.” The drama has two poems and 11 songs many of them set to various Hindusthani classical ragas and varied taals. The drama was probably written with the help of a youth from Bhawanipur called Ashutosh Das. According to critics the storyline in the play suggest that it was her life story.

The loyalty that Sukumari had for her mentor and the illusory hope of a family life which would win her the respectability of the society which these women could only dream and never achieve normally did not prove in the end to be a total failure in my view. It is true that Sukumari could not continue the peaceful life of a householder for long and the hopes of achieving respectability were fleeting but she was a success in several ways. The foremost was that in the face of financial difficulties she did not have to take up prostitution but had the courage to return to her acting career which she had left while she was at the pinnacle of glory. So the success of her career had inculcated in her belief and faith in her own ability which she could put to good use in the theatrical group she tried to put together and when that failed the acting career she resumed. Sukumari’s performance as Bimala and Girijaya in Kopalkundala was praised by the author of the drama Bankim Chandra Chatterjee as being true to life even when it was performed without the script. Once during a performance the script could not be found and Girish Ghosh improvised on stage while the actors and actresses were such experts that they followed his cue impromptu.

The biographer at times cannot rise above his time and even when writing about Sukumari Datta, Kiron Chandra Datta while describing the trouble the actress took after she was married off so that she could become respectable and accepting a life of penury instead of the fame and money she enjoyed as the prima donna there is an overarching acceptance that the life of a fallen woman is doomed to be sad. Datta described her decision to rejoin the stage to save her daughter’s life as “destroying all the hopes of her husband” - a husband who shirked all his responsibility, abandoned his family and fled the country soon after he destroyed Sukumari’s successful career. It seems incredible that Datta felt sympathy for him and accused Sukumari of going against his wishes. The article had been written under the pen name of Bisheshoggo (the Specialist) in 1912 instead of his own name which shows that it was difficult to show any support for the actress in the Bengali society.

But some critics like Basanta Kumar Ghosh in the same period, wrote in defense of the women in Bengali theatre that it was for excellence in theatrical performance that it was necessary to bring in women. This fact is not even denied by the social reformers who hold the theatre in such contempt. He feels that those who condemn the art simply because the actresses happen to come from not so respectable backgrounds are themselves guilty of poor taste. Why can’t actresses be regarded simply as artists? After all when the management takes over the life of an actress they simply lose their backgrounds and the audience should only see them through the prism of their performance. Besides even the prostitute is human. When she joins the theatre it is to start a new vocation afresh. Once she becomes an actress to earn her living and works extremely hard to achieve success in her performance she gets paid a salary by the management and no longer has to pursue her old profession. But the society remains unforgiving towards her and ignores the reality. In fact there are
instances where some so-called stalwarts of the refined society try their best to lure the established and successful actresses away from their profession. But the society remains unforgiving towards her and ignores the reality. In fact, there are instances where some so-called stalwarts of the refined society try their best to lure the established and successful actresses away from their profession.

Thus the Beautiful Rose of Bengali theatre, Golaapsundori, or Sukumari Datta, achievements (though based on testimony of others as she did not write her autobiography) were considerable and significant. It is not simply as an actress that she must be remembered by posterity but as the pioneer woman playwright and manager of a theatre company. Her struggle to overcome odds too, makes her story inspirational. She had been forced to give up theatre when she was to give birth to her child but when she was abandoned by her spineless husband she decided to take up her destiny in her own hands. She formed her own theatrical group - a first by a woman, a training camp (another first) she then wrote a play (another first by a woman) which was to be performed before women only (again a first testified to in her own words), but Sukumari never attained iconic status possibly because she had no strong voice championing her cause. It is hoped that future generations will be more sympathetic to her story and give her the due credit.

Notes and References

4Girish Racomabali, op.cit, Vol I p. 736.
5Amit Maitra gives detailed evidence indicating it was probably in the second performance that Golaap performed though she belonged to the group of five actresses who trained for it. Amit Maitra, op.cit, pp28-29. On the other hand, Deb Narayan Gupta refers unconditionally to Golaap as having performed in the first performance of Sharmishtha in the main role. Deb Narayan Gupta, Banglar Natnati, Vol I Kolkata, SAhityaLok, 1985, p. 22.
6Quoted in Amit Maitra, Rangalaye Banganati, Ananda Publisher, Kolkata, 2004, p. 31.
7DebNarayan Gupta, op.cit, p. 23.
8Nachghar, 3rd year, 4th samkhya, 3rd ASad, 1331 BS (1911).
9Nirmalendu Lahiri, Adhunik Abhinoy o darshakdiger kartobyo, Sisir, 6th Baishakh, 1332 BS. (1912).
12Kiron Chandra Datta, Suprasidhha Abhintri Sukumari Dutta, Shatabdir Natya Chinta op.cit, p.132.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh on the Canvas of History

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“His life was gentle and all the elements
so mixe'd in him that nature might stand up
And say to all the world 'This was a man!'
(Shakespeare)”

Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839), a legendary figure, is one of the most powerful ruler and fascinating personality of the nineteenth century Indian History and his reigns the most glorious epoch in the history of Punjab. He possessed the superb qualities of a born ruler. He created a state of the dimension of an empire and ensured the participation of all segments of society. He accomplished the task of the political unification of the Punjab and brought about peace, prosperity and all round development in every aspect of the life of the people of Punjab. He was truly the Maharaja for all peoples of the Punjab. Nowhere in history a state of this size had been created with so little bloodshed. Ranjit was monarch absolutely independent and possessing the greatest power in Asia after the British.1

The Austrian traveller Baron Charles Hugel remarked that the state established by Ranjit Singh was "the most wonderful object in the whole world." Like a skillful architect, the Maharaja raised a "majestic fabric" with the help of rather insignificant or uncompromising fragments2, and evolved a structure of power by which he could reconcile all important sections of his subjects of his support.3 He emerged from the status of a chieftain to become the most powerful Indian ruler of his time.4 He was the first Indian in a thousand years to stem the tide of invasions from whence they had come, across the North West frontier of Hindustan. Although he dispossessed hundreds feudal landholders to consolidate his kingdom, he succeeded in winning their affection and converting them into faithful courtiers."5 He was better obeyed by his subjects than the Mughal emperors in the zenith of their power."6

M Gregor in 1846 remarked that he was no common character but possessed of powers of mind rarely met with either in eastern or western world.6 The long politico-military struggle in the battle-field fighting on the one side the decadent, but still strong, Mughal empire, and the ferocious Afghan invasions on the other side, coupled with the shadow of the British colonial power looming large on horizon. Faqir Syed Waheeduddin writes, "Ranjit Singh still lives, large as life, in the imagination of the people. He does so not where the Sikhs now live but also where they lived before; for the Muslim village-folks shared him as legendary figure with the Sikhs and they have not let him depart with the latter."7

Maharaja Ranjit Singh endeavoured to usher in an open pluralistic society characterised by the values of secularism, justice, liberty and equality. This was a new revolutionary humanistic ethos in the medieval age that otherwise was marked by religious bigotry, communal exclusiveness, sectarian inwardness and compartmentalized value system. His emergence from such a struggle signalled the opening of a new era of peace and co-existence for the Punjab where people belonging to different religions were able to enjoy liberty and equality without
having to face religious bigotry of the ruler and his co-religionists.\(^8\)

The Sikh concept of pluralistic society is essential of a multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-racial society, termed as halemi raj by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's liberalism and secularism flowed out of the pluralistic Sikh tradition itself. That is why Ranjit Singh, on the occasion of his coronation as a Maharaja in Lahore on 12 April, 1801 issued the Nanak-Shahi Coins in the name of Gurus proclaiming that Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh were sovereign; as issuing of coins is considered a symbol of sovereignty the world over. He used to say that he was like Nagara of Guru Gobind Singh who had built a big drum and named it Ranjit Nagara (which means victory winning Drum).

Guru Gobind Singh's devout Sikh Bhai Kanaihya made no distinction between a Sikh and a Muslim at the time of providing water to the wounded soldiers in the battlefield. The Guru was blessed with his conduct and asked him to apply balm also to the wounded soldiers irrespective of their religions. Since Maharaja Ranjit Singh had deep faith in the teachings of the Gurus, the Guru Granth Sahib and the Khalsa, it was natural that the liberal principles of Sikhism should mould his policy accordingly.

The Policy of government adopted and followed by him was to place all his subjects on the same political level irrespective of their faith or religion. His policy and conduct towards the non-Sikh subjects were guided by the ideas of paternalism, liberalism and benevolence. It is incorrect to say that his solicitude for all people, irrespective of caste, colour or creed, was rooted in any conception of the secular state, The notion of a secular state as we understand it today, was alien to Ranjit Singh. His approach was religious (not communal) and not irreligious one which is an indispensable condition or qualification of modern theory of the secular state.\(^9\)

Maharaja's religious liberalism was thus beyond their comprehension. Be that as it may, his policy of secularism was a great success. It was because of his policy that "Ranjit Singh gave the Punjab forty years of peace, prosperity and progress of an order which it had not known since the time of the great Mughals."\(^10\) Due to this policy his reign witnessed no communal riots and the Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims lived in perfect harmony and goodwill for one another. The Maharaja elicited profound respect and love for all the communities. Even when he fell ill, invariably all his subjects belonging to different faiths prayed in their respective modes for his speedy recuperation. Nearly fifty years after his death Griffin writes, "Although half a century has passed since his death, his name is still a household word in the province: his portrait is still preserved in castle and cottage."\(^11\)

Like Mughal Emperor Akbar, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was an unlettered but intelligent man and a wise statesman. "I never quitted the presence of a native of Asia with such impression as I left this man: without education, and without a guide, he conducts all the affairs of his kingdom with surpassing energy and vigour, and yet he wields his power with a moderation quite unprecedented in an Eastern Prince."\(^12\) The contemporary foreign travellers like Baron Hugel and Victor Jacquemont and the contemporary European officials, like Murray, Orlich and Osborne were deeply influenced by the unusual ability, under-standing, wisdom, statesmanship and firm determination of the Maharaja.\(^13\)

Ranjit Singh's policies of recruitment of the staff for civil and military duties with regard to trade and industry were all based on the spirit of liberalism. The hinge posts in his civil and military administration were held by the people belonging to different communities such as Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and Christians. His principal criteria in selecting them were merit, suitability and loyalty. Caste, creed and nationality carried
no weight with him. According to Gulshan Lal Chopra, Ranjit Singh had a commendable quality of selecting suitable persons for government jobs. "He selected the right men for right place, and attached much importance to the hereditary instincts and traditions, of the various classes of his subjects." King and political head of the Punjab, as well as chief of the Khalsa, he aimed at reconciling the varied divisions of race and creed among his subjects and employing all in his service.  

The non-sectarian nature of Maharaja's government is clearly evident from his appointments. The Dogra brothers, Dhan Singh, Gulab Singh and Suchet Singh held high ranking posts in the Lahore Darbar; the three Faqir brothers, Azizuddin, Nuruddin and Imamuddin held the posts of ministers and governors. Diwans Bhiwani Das, Ganga Ram and Dina Nath held charge of the revenue and finance departments. Mian Ghaus Khan and then Missar Diwan Chand were appointed chief officers of artillery department. Diwan Mokham Chand was held in high esteem for his Military skill and soldierly qualities. No ruler of ancient or medieval Indian History could match Ranjit Singh in his cosmopolitan approach who appointed to important posts more than sixty persons, hailing from more than dozen foreign nationalities. For example, Josiah Harlan, the Governor of Gujrat, was a citizen of United States of America; Avitabile, Governor of Wazirabad, was an Italian, and army General Venture belonged to Italy and Allerd and Court from France. Similarly people from Greece Russia, Germany, Austria, England, Spain, etc., were also in his employ.  

Faqir Waheduddin a descendant of Faqir Family, basing his information on his family records, writes that among the top ranking Muslim officers of the Maharaja, there were two ministers, one governor and several district officers. There were forty-one high ranking Muslim officer in the Durbar, two of them generals, several of them colonels and the rest holding other important ranks. There were as many as ninety-two Muslims who held the posts of senior officers in police, judiciary, legal department and in the supply and store departments. "Thus while the ruler was a Sikh, the government was run by an elite corps composed of members of all communities. This gave Ranjit Singh's regime the character of a secular system of government."

In fact, the liberal character of the Sikhism had immense impact upon Ranjit Singh. It was this spirit annunciated in the teachings of the Sikh Gurus that made the Maharaja to show tolerance and liberalism to other communities of his reign. No religious prejudice or discriminations carried any weight in the public appointments. The merit of the concerned persons mattered most. The records of Khalsa Darbar as stated by Sita Ram Kohli, justify this point. He says, infantry paltans of Maharaja Ranjit Singh army, mentioned in the pay rolls between 1819-20 six were of Muslims. The names of these paltans were Aziz Khan, Ibadullah Bhaktawar Khan, Sheikh Basawan Gulam Hussain Khan and Nazib Khan.  

Jacquemont writes that during the Maharaja's time the fanaticism of the Sikhs had become extinct and tolerance of Ranjit Singh was so great that all were equal in the good grace of the Sikh Monarch. He followed completely a non-communal liberal policy throughout his career. During his expeditions even non-Sikhs did their best to achieve glories for the Maharaja. After his demise the Khalsa stood up against the double menace of British machinations and intrigues of the chiefs of the Lahore Darbar. Men of all communities, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were compelled to take up arms against the armies of the British. They fought shoulder to shoulder and ungrudgingly mingled their blood in defence of their beloved state. Religious tolerance, religious charities and religious impartiality in the recruitment of his soldiers and officers, diplomats, judges, kardars and Governors.
made him a popular king. The tributes of his contemporaneous poets like Shah Mohammad paid him, are genuine, unsolicited and very creditable.22

No doubt Ranjit Singh was a dedicated Sikh and he not gave jagirs and grants to Sikhs shrines and institutions only but to Hindu and Muslim shrines and institutions too. It is historical evidence that he oftenly visited Hindu places of worship. As per Kenahya Lal, Ranjit Singh used to visit Haridwar and had a sacred bath in the Ganga. There he distributed huge amount in the shape of dan (Charity) to Hindu priests.23 Even he took bath at Parmandal situated in Jammu Hills.24 He gave twenty-two lakh cash and articles of worth rupees twenty-five lakh to Hindu and Muslim places of worship.25 He also sent 250 mounds of desi ghee for havan performed at Jawalmukhi temple.26

His bounty is as boundless as the sea,
His love as deep; the more he give to thee
The more he has, for both are infinite
Shakespeare (Italics are mine)
Under his liberal policies, no religious taxes, like Jaziya and Zakat, were imposed or collected.27 Though the Persian was made the state language, even then the people belonging to different communities were allowed to read, write and speak the language they like.28

Even though Ranjit Singh did not get formal education from Granthi, Pandha or Mullah, the traditional teachers of his time, yet he got plenty of practical training and upbringing which made him the chief of Shukarchakaia Misal at the very young age of ten, when his father died unexpectedly. Almost from the beginning, he learnt riding, hunting and fighting, which also let him a robust body and mind. Remaining constantly by the side of his father all the foraging and battling of his misal honed his acumen of soldiery, tactics, sharpness, cleverness, agility and ability required for being an able warrior, leader, chieftain and king. He was a keen learner, and as his stature grew so did his knowledge, consciousness and insight. As he annexed more and more territory and other misals, and soon became the ruler of the Punjab, his intelligence and wisdom blossomed to new heights in contact with chieftains of other misals, visitors, travelers vakils of neighboring states and distant nations, foreign mercenary soldiers and officers he recruited and British agents of East India Company. To run the affairs of his kingdom he gathered around his excellent masters of state craft and war.29 Being farsighted, a wise saw always occupied his mind, "Every subject's duty is the king's; but every subject's soul is his own."

If the process of inter community partnership, sense of co-existence and toleration fostered by Ranjit Singh among major religious traditions had continued, the communal problem which led to dismemberment of Punjab could have been avoided. Maharaja Ranjit Singh symbolizes courage, sagacity, foresight, magnify, endurance, common sense and inter-communal partnership that united the people of Punjab and led to effulgence of a common Punjabi culture. These values are a precious treasure of all advanced civilizations. For advancement and progress these values have to be cherished, sustained, and diffused so as to serve as a beacon light for future generations.

Footnotes and References
Technically speaking a secular state is one which is neutral in religious matters and officially does not give patronage to any religion. This term cannot apply to Ranjit Singh who aligned himself to a particular religion and a community and called his government the government of that community.


Orlich writes, “In energy of will endurance and craftiness he was unequalled by any of the people.” According to Victor Jacquemont, Ranjit Singh” is an old fox, compared with whom the wiliest of our diplomats is mere innocent.” H.S. Bhatia, (ed.) Rare Documents on Sikhs and their Rule in the Punjab, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 223, 246.


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A Study on Tribal Coins of Northern India

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Coins are discovered from time to time either in the course of archaeological excavations or as accidental finds during digging operations of the earth. Coins play a vital role in illuminating history not known from other sources and help in its reconstruction. Coins are very important source of history such as political, social, economic, cultural, religious etc. They also confirm and substantiate the history known from other sources.

After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, the people and the principalities that were humbled under the imperial domination came into power again and re-established their administration-local, tribal and monarchial. Ancient Indian tribal republics are divisible into two groups i.e. the northern and the eastern republics. The early knowledge of the northern republics rest mainly on the material supplied by the classical authors and the Ashtadhayayi of Panini etc. some of these tribes are known to have resisted the invasion of Alexander. The coins of some of these tribes are known, but they are post-Mauryan. The eastern republics are known mainly from the Indian literature. They are, however, not known from their coins.

Study of the tribal coins of ancient India forms a very fascinating chapter of ancient Indian history. The term ‘Tribal Coinage’ is usually applied to the indigenous coins bearing the names of certain tribal communities. These tribes followed a non-monarchical system of government and hence may be called as Tribal republics, though they were not republics in the modern sense of the term. The coins, though small size, are the most authentic pieces of evidence and enlighten us about various aspects of the life and culture of the people. Though the history of the study of ancient Indian tribal coins goes back to 1834 A.D. when James Prinsep published some coins discovered just by chance by canal diggers near Behat in district Saharanpur (U.P.), yet recent discoveries, interpretations and techniques of analysis have rendered earlier views in many cases as obsolete and worth revision

The term ‘tribal coins’ have been used by Allan is in a rather comprehensive sense to denote not only the tribal coins, but also the local coins. The similarities between the tribal and local coinage are many but their very nature is different and as such they cannot be referred to by a single term. The term Local coin is general taken to denote that series of indigenous coins, which is found generally, from Taxila, Eran, Ujjain, Mathura, Kausambi, Panchala, and Ayodhaya together with the coinages of the Audumbaras, Yaudhayas and such other tribes. The former class represents monarchial and the latter the non-monarchial coinage. Chronologically both of them belong almost to the same period and betray a uniform mode of manufacture. Together they constitute, thus an independent group or class of ancient Indian coinage. They have many other similarities, in addition to the ones already no-
ted. It was due mainly to these factors that they were often discussed together. They are both inscribed and uninscribed.

The tribal coinage is local in character. The coins of the particular tribal republics are found from the region once it ruled. As the extent of the territory of these republican states, is not known with certainty from any other source, it can possibly be determined on the basis of the provenance of their coins. The known provenances of their coins, however, are indicative of the local character of the coinage, and shows that the territory at the command of these tribes was but modest and their resources poor. According to E. J. Rapson “Coins of native Indian states from earliest times to 50 A.D. that is called tribal coins”4. V. A. Smith made a more scientific approach to the problem by dividing there coins into different categories like the local coins, tribal coins, coins of kings of north Panchala and Kosala and coins of kings and Kshatrapas of Mathura.5 Another scholar John Allen observed that all these species “may be conveniently called tribal coins; indeed, on several, the word gana (tribe) actually occurs in combination with proper name”6. S.K. Chakraborty’s idea is apparently similar to that of Allen.7 P.L. Gupta considers all these species as local coins further subdivides them into (1) Local (2) Tribal and (3) Monarchical.8 K.D. Bajpai divides them into Janapada and Naigama issues.9

According to an anthropological concept; a tribe is a social group, usually with a definite area, dialect, culture, homogeneity and verifying social organization. It may include several subgroups, such as sibs or village. A tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor as well a patron deity. The families or small communities making up the tribe are linked through economic, social, religious, families or blood ties. H. Risley had observed that “a tribe as we find it in India is a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name which as a rule does not denote any specific occupation; generally claiming common descent form a mythical or historical ancestor, and occasionally from an animal.”10

In the tribal coinage of ancient India, basically there are three major techniques of manufacturing of coin. The most of the tribal coins are manufactured by die-striking and casting method. They are generally of copper, billon and silver pieces being comparatively rare. A majority of them are inscribed, uninscribed coins being few and far between. The legends generally give us the names of the issuing tribes often coupled with the ruling chiefs or tribal republics alone are given.

A careful study of the relevant coin data will reveal that Shiva worship commanded immense popularity throughout the period under review and that some of the myths and legends countering round the god had also become current. Extant numismatics evidence indicates that Skanda- Kartikeya also was popularly worshipped by people. Particular importance in this connections attaches to certain classes of Yaudheya coins which bear the representations of the god who is also mentioned in accompanying legend. One of the most popular devices not only of tribal but also of local coins was the representation of goddess Laxmi.11

Political Boundary

The post Maurya indigenous currencies of Northern India are conventionally designated as a local and tribal coins. Monetary issues defiantly attributable to particular localities are known as local coins, while those bearing
name of tribes are termed as tribal coins. The later were mainly the issue of those oligarchical tribes who asserted their independence in the Punjab and Rajasthan area after the downfall of the Mauryas. The Nagas,

an important tribe of ancient India also established their power over a large portion of cultural India and their coins may as well be included in this category. The detail study of tribal coins as follows.

The Agartta (The Agras) Janapada

The first coin of Agra or Agreya (Agacha) tribe was published by James Prinsep in 1858. After a gap of nearly half a century, Smith catalogued some coins which may be attributed to the Agacha tribe. In 1936 the nine round coins catalogued by Allen and coming from Barwalla in the Hisar district of the Punjab. Fifty one more coins mostly rectangular, of this Janapada have come to light from the excavations at Agroha at the same district. It is therefore evident that Agroha is to be identified with Agrodaka, the headquarters of the Agratyas. Since the Agroha coins were found along with some Indo-Greek issues, they are to be dated to the second or the first century B.C.

The Audumbara Janapada

The Audumbaras, known also as the Udumbaras or Odumbaras, were one of the oldest and well-known tribes of ancient India. They were at the height of their glory and power during the first century B.C. when they issued their coins also. Though the earliest literary reference to the Audumbaras is found in Panini’s Asthadhyayi. The Audumbaras has also been referred to in the Mahabhhasya by Patanjali. The Audumbaras are located in the western part of the Kangara district (Himachal Pradesh) and Gurudaspur and Hoshiarpur district of Punjab. The Audumbara coins may be grouped into three classes, (i) a series of square copper pieces (ii) a few silver issues, and (iii) a group of round copper and billon coins without the name of the tribe. The copper and silver pieces of class I and II, bearing the name of the tribe may be dated about the first century B.C., while those without the name of the tribe (Class III) appear to be a little later.

The Kuluta Janapada

The Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas mention the Kulutas under various phonetically similar manes like the Ulutas, Kolukas, Kullathas etc. In the Bhisma parva they are mentioned as Uluta and associated with the people of Kashmira, Gandhara, Abhisara etc. The Kulutas are located by Cunningham in Kullu valley in the Kangra district Himachal Pradesh, and were according to E.J. Rapson, the eastern neighbors of the Audumbaras. Two classes of coins are known of the Kulutas. Class I is represented by eleven square copper coins of a homogeneous series discovered during the excavations at Taxila at the same district. Class two by the unique round silver piece of Virayasas. The coins of class I are purely
Indian in all respect and have groups of symbols on either side such a swastika, nandipada, tree in railing, taurine etc.

**The Kuninda Janapada**

The Kuninda occupy a place of pride in the galaxy of ancient Indian republican tribes and their name shines forth with the brilliance of their silver currency. The provenance of the Kuninda Coins show that the Kuninda occupied an area between the upper courses of the Beas, Sutlej and the Jhelam, in the neighborhood of the Kuluta county and included some portion of the Kumaon and Gadhwal hills. The Kuninda Coins, known in two classes, belong to two different periods. Class I consists of silver and copper coins of the same type bearing the name of Amoghbhuti and are assignable to about the first century B.C., while those of Class II are copper pieces, which were struck in the name of Bhagavata, Chhatresvara, some two centuries later.

In Class I type, the obverse bears on the left a deer to right with three minor symbols around a female figure on right standing facing and holding flower in right hand. The reverse has six symbols, a six peaked mountain surrounded by Nandipada, a wavy line below a tree in railing to right, and a Swastika above a triangle headed object to left.

The coins of class two are large pieces of copper modelled on similar Kushana issues. They depict on the obverse a male figure standing facing, holding trident axe in right hand and having a flower or star over his left shoulder. The reverse shows a deer to left with some minor symbols around, a wavy line below a tree in railing, six peaked hill a triangle headed standard arranged in different order in different varieties.

**Rajanya Janapada**

The Rajanya are located in the Hoshiarpur district of the Punjab. The Sanskrit word ‘Rajanya’ connotes a person of the Kshatriya cast or royal personage in general. The word is met with for the first time in the Purush-Sukta of the Rigveda (X.90,12) where, dwelling upon the fourfold division of the society. Prinsep was the first scholar to discover Rajanya coins. Their coins, known only in copper, are two series- one with Brahmi legend and the other with Kharoshti legend both have identified types and bear on the obverse the standing figure of a deity (probably Laxmi) holding a lotus in right hand and on the reverse a bull standing to left with in a rayed circle. The legend whether in Brahmi or in Kharosthi, occurs on the obverse and reads, Rajana Janapada.

**Yaudheya Janapada**

The Yaudheya territory comprised an area extending from Bahawalpur in the west to Kangra in the east along the Sutlej and Beas and stretched up to Bharatpur in the south. The Yaudheya coins are classified into six groups. Class I consists of a series of small coins of Copper and Potin, which are generally uninscribed. The coins of class II bearing the name of tribe. In class II depict on the obverse the bull right standing before a Yupa and on the reverse an elephant to right with Nandipada above and a flying pennon behind it. Class III consists of a unique silver coin and an extensive series of copper coins of the same type, closely connected in type and style with the Kuninda coins of Amoghbhuti. The silver coins bear on the obverse the figure of six-headed Kartikeya and on the reverse that of a goddess identified with Devasena, the consort of Kartikeya, standing facing on a lotus flanked by a six-peaked hill surrounded by Nandipada and Tree in railing on either side. A coin of the same module as those of class III and having on the obverse the Brahmi legend Bhanuva-
between a mountain and Svastika above and a snake below, and on the reverse a trident and a standard each in a railing, constitute class IV. Coins belong to class V are very closely similar to class II. Coins of class VI are well-executed round copper pieces having distinct Kushana influence in their type and module. They depict on the obverse the figure of Kartikeya with his peacock and on reverse that of Laxmi standing in an attitude resembling Mao or Mirro on Kushana coins.

The Yaudheya coins are three different periods. Class I, II & V are the earliest and may be dated about the second and first century B.C. Class III and IV belong to the first and second century A.D., while those of class VI are of the post Kushana period, i.e. of the third and fourth century A.D.

Arjunayana Tribes

The Arjunayanas have been mentioned in Panini’s Ganapatha in the Rajanyadi group and then in Samudragupta’s Prayag Prasasti along with the Yaudheyas, Malavas, Prarjunas, etc. J.F. Fleet held that the Arjunayanas might have been connected with the Pandava tribe of Punjab mentioned by Ptolemy. Some other scholars also believe that, as their name indicates, they may have descended from their third Pandava brother Yudhishtira. The Arjunayana lived within the area between Delhi, Agra and Jaipur and were the neighbors of the Yaudheyas on the north and the Malvas on the south. There coins are very rare and are of two types. Type I has a standing female figure (Probably Laxmi) between a sacrificial post on left and a tree in railing on right on the obverse with the Brahmi legend, Arjunayana. On the reverse side mainly bull to left on hill. Type II depicts a bull to right before a sacrificial post and the Brahmi legend, Arjunayana Jaya and an elephant to right before tree in railing on the reverse.

Malava Tribes

The Malavas originally dwelt in the Punjab region during the time of Alexander. After some time they migrated and shifted and settled in the Jaipur area in eastern Rajasthan during the post-Maurya period. The Malava coins are very small and resemble the Naga coinage in type and size. Their coins are of two broad classes. The coins of class I has different varieties according to the reverse devices which are usually vase, lion, bull, fantail, peacock and other obscure designs. The obverse is generally occupied by the Brahmi legend. The legend varies from Prakrit to Sanskrit and is sometimes continued to the reverse. The coins of class II which do not bear the tribal name closely resemble those of class I. have generally similar types and are found in association with them.

Sibi Janapada

The Sibis are a people of great antiquity. They are probably the Sivas of the Rigveda where they are described as defeated by king Sudasa along with other tribes like the Alinas, Pakthas, Visanins, etc. in the battle of ten kings (Dasarajna-Yudhha) somewhere between the Vipas and Purushni (Vyas and Ravi river). Sivi were also originally the inhabitants of the Punjab region during Alexander’s time and afterwards migrated to eastern Rajasthan. The Sibi coins generally bear on the reverse two symbols, Swastika with a taurine at each prong and a tree raising from a circle, and on the reverse a six peaked hill with a Nandipada. The Brahmi legend on the obverse is found in tow varieties. (i) Shivi Janapadasa (ii) Majhamikaya Sivi Janapadasa. The Sivi
coins may be dated about the first century B.C.

The Nagas

Coins of the Nagas which are generally come from the Padmavati area in the former Gwalior state. According to the Vishnupurana, the Nagas kings ruled from Padmavati, Kantipuri and Mathura. The Puranas also refer to Naga rule at Vidisha. The Nagas coins are generally in copper. The majority of the Nagas issues are round in shape, while square coins of rare occurrence are known of a few rulers. The Nagas coins were evidently manufactured by a purely indigenous and unsophisticated die striking technique.

About twelve Nagas rulers are known so far from numismatic evidences from these places. The Nagas coins are very small pieces of copper, resembling the Malva coins; but they are larger and thicker in fabric. They generally bear on the obverse some small device, such as the Bull, Peacock, Trident, Wheel and on the reverse the name of the king along with the title Maharaja or Maharaja Sri. The Bull being connected with the national cult of the Bharsiva Nagas, who were devotees of Siva, is the commonest emblem on the Naga coins. It is seen on the coins of about all the Naga rulers. The Nagas coins range between the second and fourth century A.D.

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Gender Disparities in North-West States of India

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Introduction

The Human Development Report (HDR) 2011, published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates the human development index (HDI) in terms of three basic capabilities: to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and knowledgeable and to enjoy a decent economic standard of living. Among these factors, education plays an important role in determining the level of socio-economic development of an economy.

Education is the cornerstone of economic, social and cultural development of a country. It has emerged as the most important single input in promoting human resource development, in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress. An appropriate education system cultivates knowledge, better skills, positive values and attitudes among the people especially for those who acquire it (Annual Plan 2008 of Government of Punjab). “Education is the core sector for achieving the objective of employment, human resource development and bringing about much needed change in social environment, leading to overall progress through efficient use of resources. An appropriate education system cultivates knowledge, skill, positive attitude, awareness and sense of responsibility towards rights and duties and imports inner strength to face oppression, humiliation and inequality” (Ninth five year plan, 1997-2002). Education is the key factor in socio-economic development. Physical capital is required for economic development of an economy and the growth of physical capital depends on the rate of human capital formation which includes investment in education. Education is the important input for investment in human capital. The level of education is the mirror of society. To recognize this need, the Right to education is now Fundamental Right in the age group of 6-14 years in India. Education is a process and literacy is one of the most important components of this process.

Over the years, the level of literacy has increased in India. Literacy has significant effect on every sphere of human life. One such sphere is the gender ratio in a society. Gender ratio is defined as number of females per thousand males. Gender ratio reveals the situation of women in a society. Low gender ratio clearly depicts the picture of low status of women in India. Indian women face discrimination before their birth and it prevails throughout their lives. Gender based data show the existence of wide spread disparities between men and women on many fronts, education is one of these fronts. With the improvement in the level of literacy, is there any improvement in gender ratio in India? The present paper is an attempt to find the answer. The paper is based on the hypothesis that literacy casts positive impact on gender ratio i.e. the states having high literacy rate have higher gender ratio. The study is confined to five North-West states of...
India, viz., Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

**Objectives**
The main objectives of the study are:
1. To study literacy rate in five North-West states of India.
2. To examine the relationship between literacy rate and gender ratio in these states.

**Methodology**
The study is based on secondary data related to gender ratio and literacy rate. The data is collected primarily from Census of India, National Family Health Surveys, Statistical Abstract of States and Economic Surveys of India. Time taken for the study is post-reform period i.e. 1991.

**Finding**
Earlier there are four factors of production. Human capital becomes the fifth and the most important factor of production. It plays an important role in the development process of an economy. Healthy, educated and skilled workforce become very productive and contribute more in a country’s economic growth. The population of India is given in table 1. The table shows an increase in the population in these decades. It is observed from the table that females contribute half of the population in all these states. Number of females is more than the males in Kerala during these years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>33725</td>
<td>27704</td>
<td>49473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>11658</td>
<td>10756</td>
<td>22414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>33838</td>
<td>30692</td>
<td>64531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>8873</td>
<td>8742</td>
<td>17615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>1170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>21335</td>
<td>19954</td>
<td>41310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>88828</td>
<td>7636</td>
<td>16464</td>
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<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>2618</td>
<td>2553</td>
<td>5171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>4142</td>
<td>3695</td>
<td>7837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>11364</td>
<td>10840</td>
<td>21844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>22952</td>
<td>22025</td>
<td>44977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>14289</td>
<td>14810</td>
<td>29099</td>
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<tr>
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<td>25395</td>
<td>23172</td>
<td>48566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>40826</td>
<td>38112</td>
<td>78937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>16064</td>
<td>15596</td>
<td>31660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>10778</td>
<td>9504</td>
<td>20282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>23043</td>
<td>20963</td>
<td>44006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Population of India (in thousands)
There are three main indicators of development and literacy is one of them. Literacy helps in improving human capital. According to Census of India, literacy rate is defined as proportion of literates to total population in the age group of 7 and above. Overall literacy rate has increased from 1991 to 2011 in India. State wise literacy rate in India is shown in table 2. The table reveals that literacy rate increased from 52.21 percent in 1991 to 74.04 percent in 2011 in India. Male literacy has increased from 64.13 percent to 82.14 percent and female literacy rate has increased from 39.29 percent to 65.46 percent during this period. Overall literacy rate, male as well as female literacy rate increased in all the states in these decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>55.13</td>
<td>52.72</td>
<td>44.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>51.45</td>
<td>29.69</td>
<td>41.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>61.87</td>
<td>43.03</td>
<td>52.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>52.49</td>
<td>22.89</td>
<td>38.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>77.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>83.64</td>
<td>67.09</td>
<td>75.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>73.13</td>
<td>48.64</td>
<td>61.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td>40.47</td>
<td>55.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>75.36</td>
<td>52.13</td>
<td>63.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>67.26</td>
<td>44.34</td>
<td>56.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>93.62</td>
<td>86.13</td>
<td>89.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>58.42</td>
<td>28.85</td>
<td>44.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>76.56</td>
<td>52.32</td>
<td>64.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>71.63</td>
<td>47.60</td>
<td>59.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>53.12</td>
<td>44.85</td>
<td>49.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>85.61</td>
<td>78.60</td>
<td>82.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>67.62</td>
<td>54.75</td>
<td>61.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>34.68</td>
<td>49.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It seems that the female literacy rate has increased at a faster pace i.e. from 39.29 percent in 1991 to 65.46 percent in 2011, in reality what females have attained in 2011 males already had 64.13 percent in 1991. Females are lagging behind males by 20 years.

The literacy rate in North West states of India is shown in table 3. The table reveals that literacy rate is maximum in Himachal Pradesh i.e. 63.86 percent followed by Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan with 61.29 percent, 58.51 percent, 55.85 percent and 38.55 percent respectively in 1991. Almost same scenario has been seen in 2001 and 2011. The selected states had gone to lower ranks except Himachal Pradesh. The table reveals that Himachal Pradesh retained its rank (11) in these years. All these states have literacy rate higher than the average literacy rate except Rajasthan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States/India</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Rate</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Literacy Rate</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>69.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>55.85</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>67.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>76.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>69.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>52.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Literacy rate by gender in North West states of India is given in table 4. The table shows that male literacy is highest in Himachal Pradesh i.e. 75.36 percent followed by Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan with 73.13 percent, 69.10 percent, 65.66 percent and 54.99 percent respectively in 1991. Same scenario can be seen from the table in 2001 and 2011. Female literacy rate remained below male literacy rate in these years; however it is above national average in all these states. The male literacy rate is above the all India average in all the states except Rajasthan in 1991. With Rajasthan, Punjab too has male literacy rate below all India average literacy level in 2001 and 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States/India</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Rate</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Literacy Rate</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>69.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>55.85</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>67.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>76.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>69.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>52.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Literacy Rate by Gender in North West States of India (percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India/States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>73.13</td>
<td>48.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>55.85</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td>40.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Prades</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>75.36</td>
<td>52.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>65.66</td>
<td>50.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>54.99</td>
<td>20.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>39.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (a) Census of India 1991 and 2001 (b) Census of India 2011, Provisional Population Totals, Office of Registrar General, India.

Literacy rate by place of residence is given in table 5. The table shows that rural and urban literacy rate increased from 44.69 percent to 68.9 percent and 73.08 percent to 85.0 percent respectively in India during these years. Urban literacy rate is more than the rural literacy rate in all these states. Rural literacy rate is above the national average in all these states except Rajasthan from 1991 to 2011. The table further reveals that rural male literacy in Rajasthan i.e. 72.16 percent is above the national average i.e. 70.7 percent in 2001. Rural male literacy is 77.92 percent in Punjab which is below the national average of 78.6 percent in 2011. The table shows that the literacy rate in urban areas is above the all India level in Gujarat, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh except Punjab and Rajasthan in 1991. However urban female literacy rate (66.13 percent) in Punjab is above the national average (64.05 percent). Only Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat have above national average literacy rate in urban areas in 2001 and 2011.

Table 5: Literacy Rate by place of residence in North West States of India (percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India/States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>53.09</td>
<td>76.54</td>
<td>61.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66.84</td>
<td>84.56</td>
<td>74.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>38.65</td>
<td>67.70</td>
<td>47.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>49.85</td>
<td>73.66</td>
<td>63.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>64.78</td>
<td>81.96</td>
<td>75.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32.51</td>
<td>64.06</td>
<td>49.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Prades</td>
<td>61.86</td>
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<td>75.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>73.89</td>
<td>88.97</td>
<td>84.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49.79</td>
<td>78.32</td>
<td>65.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>52.77</td>
<td>72.08</td>
<td>65.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60.73</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>43.85</td>
<td>66.13</td>
<td>57.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>30.37</td>
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<td>55.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47.64</td>
<td>78.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>73.08</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>57.87</td>
<td>81.09</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30.62</td>
<td>64.05</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (a) Census of India 1991 and 2001 (b) Census of India 2011, Provisional Population Totals, Office of Registrar General, India.

India had made considerable progress in every sector. Despite this progress, Indian women are still struggling to find their place in the society. Women in India face discrimination before their birth and it prevails throughout their lives. Decline in gender ratio is one of the forms of this discrimination. State wise gender ratio in
India is given in table 6. The table shows that gender ratio in India had increased from 927 to 940. The gender ratio is above 1000 only in Kerala during these years. Gender ratio has increased in all states except Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab and Sikkim in 2001 and Bihar, Gujarat and Jammu & Kashmir in 2011. The table further reveals that the gender ratio in Tamil Nadu (995), Andhra Pradesh (992) and Chattisgarh (991) is very close to 1000 in 2011. In 1991, 13 states have gender ratio above the national average and 16 states in 2001 and 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>859</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>935</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chattisgarh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>1084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>935</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** (a) Census of India 1991 and 2001
(b) Census of India 2011, Provisional Population Totals, Office of Registrar General, India
Comparative interstate analysis of gender ratio in North West states is given in table 7. The table shows maximum gender ratio in Himachal Pradesh i.e. 976 followed by Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana with 934,910,882 and 865 respectively in 1991. Gender ratio in selected states decreased in 2001 except Rajasthan. Maximum gender ratio was in Himachal Pradesh i.e. 970 followed by Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana with 922, 921, 874 and 861 respectively in 2001. If we look at 2011 then the scenario is same as it was in 2001. The table shows an increase in gender ratio in all these states except Gujarat where it decreased from 921 to 918. A decline in rank from 11 to 19 and further to 22 in Gujarat, from 2 to 8 and further to 9 in Himachal Pradesh is observed over the years. The table shows a decline in rank from 21 in 1991 to 26 in 2001 and further an increase to 25 in 2011 in the case of Punjab. Rajasthan showed an improvement in rank from 19 in 1991 to 18 in 2001 and further a decline to 19 in 2011. Decline in rank from 24 in 1991 to 28 in 2001 is observed in Haryana but it remained constant in 2011.

Table 7: Gender Ratio in North West States of India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India/States</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Ratio</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Gender Ratio</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:**
(a) Census of India 1991, 2001, Office of Registrar General, India.
(b) Census of India 2011, Provisional Population Totals, Paper-I of 2011, Office of Registrar General, India.

The table 8 shows the relationship between literacy rate and gender ratio in North West states of India. The table reveals that literacy rate increased from 61.29 percent to 79.31 percent during these years and gender ratio declined from 934 to 918 in Gujarat. The gender ratio declined from 976 to 974 with the improvement in literacy rate from 63.86 percent to 83.78 percent in Himachal Pradesh. On the other hand, there is an improvement in gender ratio with an increase in literacy rate in Rajasthan followed by Punjab and Haryana. In Rajasthan it is 926 in 2011 and for Punjab and Haryana it is still below 900.

Table 8: Gender ratio and literacy rate in North West states of India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States/ India</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy Rate(I)</td>
<td>Gender Ratio(II)</td>
<td>Literacy Rate(III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>69.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>55.85</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>67.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>76.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58.51</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>69.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>38.35</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>60.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>65.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Same as table 4 and 7
Conclusion

Gender ratio increased from 927 to 940 during these years in India. However North West states (Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh) have gone to lower ranks except Rajasthan which holds constant rank. Low gender ratio becomes a serious problem in these states especially in Punjab and Haryana. Overall literacy rate, male as well female literacy rate increased in all these states. However female literacy rate is much lower than that of male literacy rate. Increasing literacy rate has positive effect on gender ratio in Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana. Gender ratio had declined in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh with the rise in literacy rate during these years.

Suggestions

Although there is rise in the female literacy rate yet changes are required on both social and economic fronts to make literacy a powerful tool in improving the gender ratio in North-West states of India. Awareness should be created in the society regarding the need to educate girls. Every girl should have complete knowledge about her Right to Education and it should be exercised by her. Government had initiated many programmes and policies; however effective implementation and strict actions are required to improve the gender ratio. Licenses of the doctors should be cancelled who engaged in gender selective abortions. Heavy fines should be imposed on the couples who go for gender selective tests.

References

Culture of Difference in Ethnic Identity:  
A new Look on the transition of Caste identity into Cultural identity 
of the Rajbanshis of Northern Bengal and Lower Assam

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Associate Professor  
Department of History  
Jadavpur University, Kolkata

Introduction  
‘Ethnic identity’ has been an inseparable phenomenon of ‘nation building processes’ in postcolonial India. A large number of ethnic groups have raised the question of their deprivation under the basic structure of the nation state and demanded the recognition of their cultural identity. In many cases, these demands have been transformed into political movement for regional autonomy where ‘cultural identity’ is being used as a symbol of ethnic assertion. In the history of ethnic movement for political autonomy in northeast India, sociopolitical assertion of the Rajbanshis (also spelled as Rajbangshi or Rajbongshi) of Lower Assam and North Bengal is a significant one. Their ethnic consciousness was generated in the early twentieth century with the question of their social (caste) identity particularly to maintain a ‘difference’ from the imposed (Koch) identity. But in the postcolonial period, caste identity of the Rajbanshis has been transformed into an ethno-linguistic or ‘cultural identity.’ In all cases the question of ‘difference’ has been a common factor in ethnic consciousness of the Rajbanshis. In this article I’ll examine the process of formation of Rajbanshi ethnic identity and the ‘culture of difference’ with a new outlook.

Understanding Ethnicity  
The term ethnicity has been derived from ancient Greek term ethnos which originally means heathen or pagan (William: 1976:119) but in common sense it is ‘nation’ or people of the same race that share a ‘distinctive culture’. As a concept of social science it is comparatively a new one. It appears in the dictionary of the English language only in the 1950s more precisely in 1953 in the Oxford English Dictionary (Tonkin, Mcdonald, and Chapman: 1989: 11). Since the late 1960s; ethnicity has been a main preoccupation in social and cultural anthropology (Eriksen: 2002:1). Ethnicity is now a quite common theme of research in almost all subjects of social science.

There are divergences of views about the meaning of ethnicity. It depends on the context and approach of the scholars. In general sense, ethnicity is ‘a kind of conscious-ssness about the status and problem of an ‘ethnic group’ which often described by the social scientists to denote membership of distinct people posing their own customary ways or culture.’(Brass: 1991: 1-9). In a broader sense, ethnicity takes shapes on the basis of certain characteristics such as language, religion, beliefs, race, caste and certainly a common cultural tradition, which differentiate a particular ethnic group from the ‘others’. (Shills: 1968: 167). According to Fredrik Barth ‘ethnicity is social organization of ‘culture difference’ (Barth: 1969). The question of ‘difference’ (whether real of imaginary) is a basic feature of an ethnic group. It led to the formation of a kind of a feeling of ‘othernesses. Thus a sense of ‘otherness’ and a desire of identification as ‘other’ are the distinct features of ethnicity of particular ethnic group. Ethnicity is ‘situational’ and ‘contextual’ where it is multidimensional and can be used for a ‘collective action’ more precisely as ‘reactive awareness’ (Phadnish:1995: 14-15; Azam:
It mobilizes the ethnic groups for the formation of a social identity and to assert for its share in economic resources and ‘power’ which that group consider to have been denied due to the discriminatory policies followed by the state or other groups.

Each ethnic group has its distinct socio-cultural identity and a sense of it motivates the group to attain its goal. Identity units of ethnic groups are common origin and common set of adaptive activities such as race, language, ritual, sacred symbol, shared values, etc. (Pant and Gupta: 1985:2). But imposition of identity by the dominants over the subordinate ethnic groups pushed them to mobilize their people for the formation of a standard social identity; even some cases a fictitious one. Formation of an identity of an ethnic group has thus two phases (i) denunciation of imposed identity, and (ii) affirmation of their own (self).

In a multi-ethnic plural society of postcolonial India; several ethnic groups based on tribe, caste, language, religion, even the region and the ‘sense of otherness’ cohesion by the question of ‘existence’ begun to assert distinctiveness instead of assimilation with the dominant or mainstream culture (Mallik: 1998:15-17). Unexceptionally, North Bengal being a polyphonic and plural cultural region has also witnessed similar phenomenon. Post-colonial developments in the region have motivated the Rajbanshi community to move for regional autonomy with an ‘otherized feelings’ of ethnic identity.

**Formation of Rajbanshi ethnic identity in Colonial period**

At present the term Rajbanshi means ‘a Scheduled Caste (SC) community of West Bengal having its large concentration in North Bengal. In Assam they have been classified as ‘Other Backward Castes’ (OBC). However, Rajbanshi is also refers to a linguistic community of India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. At the same time, Rajbanshis of southern part of West Bengal and southern Bangladesh socially and occupationally are quite different than their northern fellows, but the Rajbanshis of North Bengal, Eastern Bihar, Assam and other Northeast Indian States; northern Bangladesh and Nepal; have somewhat social cohesiveness bonded by linguistic and cultural features.

In the pre-partition(1947) days, the Rajbanshis were mainly distributed in the districts of northern Bengal like Rangpur, Rajshahi, Bagura, Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Malda and Darjeeling districts. However, they had highest concentration in Cooch Behar State. The Rajbanshis were also distributed in large scale in the districts of Lower Assam especially in Goalpara, Dhubri, Barpeta and Kamrup districts.

From the occupational point of view, the Rajbanshis of undivided Bengal were mainly dependent on the agricultural works. There were wide variations in the ‘cultivators -landowners relationship’ in northern Bengal and Cooch Behar State. In Western Duars (Jalpaiguri) and Cooch Behar State there were different strata among the landholders and cultivators beginning from zamindar in the top to the agricultural laborers (halua/kamla) in the bottom. The zamindars used to get land directly from the government subject to the payment of fixed amount of revenue. The jotedars stood second in that hierarchy who were intermediary between the zamindars and the chukanidars. Chuk-anidars could sublet their lands to the dar-chukanidars. The dar-chuaknidars could cultivate their land by their own initiative with the help of haluas (agricultural labourer/agriculturists) or through their tenants called adhiars (sharecroppers). The suppliers of land to the haluas or adhiars were called giri in rural areas of that region. So the agricultural labourers or the haluas stood in the bottom of the ‘landownership-production relations’ hierarchy (Choudhuri: 1903; Sunder:1895; Snayal: 1965).

There were again wide variations in the social position of landholders and actual
cultivators in the rural areas of sub-Himalayan Bengal. While a big landholder in a village often designated as dewani (often called dewnia or giri) had prominent position the adhiras or haluas were inferior in the village society. Again the zamindars/zotedars/dewanis had contact with upper castes what the ordinary haluas or adhiras often lacked. However, the relationship between the cultivators and the landowners in Sub-Himalayan Bengal particularly between the Rajbanshi cultivators and the zotedars was quite congenial because of common caste origin.

From the point of class, most of the Rajbanshis were adhiras (sharecroppers) who had good terms with the zamindars or zotedars. A few Rajbanshis of Rangpur, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Cooch Behar State and Dinajpur districts were zamindars and zotedars particularly in the permanently settled areas. A very small section of the total population of this community had been stratified as middle class in the census of 1931. The educated section and the landed elites had formed the core section of the Rajbanshis in the late colonial period in Bengal (like other caste communities).

In undivided Bengal, the Rajbanshis had developed a kind of social integrity through the social reform movement popularly conceptualized as kshatriyaization which led to the growth of self consciousness and formation of a social identity. Kshatriyaization movement of the Rajbanshis was started in 1891 from the question of their social status in the decennial census when Mr.F.A. Skyne, District Magistrate of Rangpur, issued an order to classify the Rajbanshis as ‘Koch’, another community of North Bengal and Lower Assam (Barman: 2007). The Rajbanshis were not agreed to accept this order. To them, the Rajbanshis are superior to the Koches. It means they raised the point of their ‘difference’ from another ethnic community of the region. This feeling of social difference led the Rajbanshis to develop a kind social identity what may be appeared as an imaginary one.

Let us have a brief idea how a consciousness was generated in a community whose identity became a matter of confusion because of observations of the colonial ethnographers. Here we find that the social identity of two communities, i.e. the Koches (the ruling community of Cooch Behar State) and the Rajbanshis (who were numerically prominent agricultural community of North Bengal) was intermingled since the late nineteenth century. The Koches actually were tribal people of the Himalayan region who had major concentration in the North Bengal, Lower Assam and Meghalaya of present day. They, along with other tribal communities of the region (like the Garos, the Rabhas, the Mechas, etc.); got special attention of the colonial ethnographers. In the nineteenth century the colonial observers had used ‘race’ as the main parameter of social classification of the Indian tribal and caste communities. So we do notice two major views regarding the racial classification of the Koches--- viz. Dravidians, Mongoloids.

Mr. E.T. Dalton was a notable one among the proponents of the Dravidian racial identity of the Koches. He identified the Koches in 1872 as the members of Dravidian racial family for their physical characteristics (Dalton: 1960: 276). Dalton’s view was strongly supported by Mr. Henry Beverley in the ‘first census report of India’ (1872) (Hunter: 1984:353). H.H. Risley, another notable civil servant in connection with the classification of tribal and caste communities of the late nineteenth century Bengal; had also identified the Koches (1891) as Dravidians and stressed on the possibility of admixture with the Mongoloids (Risley: 1891:492).

Another view about the racial identity of the Koches, i.e. Mongoloid origin; got more emphasis from the colonial ethnographers. In his Monograph Essay the First on the Koch Bodo and Dimal Tribes, Mr. Brian Houghton Hodgson observed in
1847 that the Koches are Mongoloid in terms of racial identity (Hodgson: 1847:viii). Hodgson was followed by Dr. Latham who emphasized on the Mongoloid origin of the Koches (Hunter: 1984: 350-351). Similarly L.A. Waddell categorically expressed that the ‘Koches do not as stated by Colonel Dalton, Mr. Risley and others, belong to the dark Dravidian aborigines of India but are distinctly Mongoloid though somewhat heterogeneous’ (Waddell: 1975: 48).

Similarly S. Endle had also corroborated the Mongoloid origin of the Koches in 1911 in his work titled The Kacharis. He even classified the Koches, the Meches, the Rabhas, the Dhimals, the Hajongs, the Lalungs, the Garos and such other tribes of Northeastern India within the same category (Endle:1975:1). Some postcolonial trained anthropologists have also echoed the observations of the colonial ethnographers regarding the mongoloid racial identity of the Koches. Indian anthropologists like B.M. Das and Swarthak Sengupta have classified them as the member of the ‘greater Bodo family’ of Mongoloid race consisted of the Garos, the Kacharis, the Bodos, the Rabhas and other Mongoloid tribes of Northeast India (Das: 1984:39-57).

Historians have also accepted the ethnographic classifications and observations in favour of Mongoloid physiognomy of the Koches. Administrative historians of the colonial period like Sir E.A. Gait (1863-1950) specifically expressed that ‘there seems to no doubt that the true Koches were a Mongoloid race, very closely allied to the Meches and Garos’ (Gait: 1963: 47-48). Similarly D. C. Sircar and Suniti Kumar Chatterji (1890-1977) have recognized the Koches as Mongoloids (Chatterji: 1988: 111). However, possibility of admixture with the Dravidian blood cannot be ignored. So subsequent historians engaged on the writings of the history of the Koches conclude that the ‘Koches originated from Mongoloid stock having close affinities and cultural similarities with the Meches, Garos, Rabhas, Dhimals and Hajongs and other tribes of ‘Bodo family’ and had mixture with the Dravidian race but Mongoloid features of physiognomy remained prominent (Nath: 1989:4). So racially the colonial and post-colonial anthropologists and historians have identified the Koches basically as Mongoloids or as a mixture of the Mongoloids and the Dravidians.

Although Mongoloid racial identity of the Koches has been accepted by the scholars but their social identity became a matter of confusion since the late nineteenth century. The Koches now more or less have been now assimilated with the designation of Rajbanshi, a hinduised caste. They are often called Koch- Rajbanshi in West Bengal and Assam (Nandi and Raman:1997:29-38). But pre-colonial literary sources of the Koch-history particularly the buranjis (chronicles), vamsavalis (genealogies) and some medieval Persian texts have categorically identified them as Koch. Genealogies of the Koch kings such as Darrang Raj Vamsavali of Suryakhari Daivagna, Raja Vamsavali of Ripunjay Das, chronicles like Rajopakhyan of Munshi Jaynath Ghosh, Kamrupar Buranji and Deodhai Assam Buranji, etc. have attached a fictitious kshatriya origin with the Koches and categorically mentioned that the Koch ruling family was originated from the adulterates union between Hira (mother of Visvasimha) and Lord Shiva (Daivagna: 1973:55-58), a prominent male deity of the Hindu pantheon. So the ruling family has been described as Shivabanshi. The Guru Charita of Ramcharan Thakur (a sixteenth century biography of Sankar Deva), has described that the Rajbanshis are different than the Koches (Thakur: 2001:687). So it appears that that ‘difference’ was a common fact in social identity of the Koches and the Rajbanshis of pre-colonial Lower Assam and North Bengal.

With the beginning of colonial ethnography and decennial census in 1872, social identity of the Koches, however, became almost inseparable from that of the...
Rajbanshis. Instead of ‘difference’ the term Rajbanshi became a point of ‘reference’ of social identity of the Koches. Buchanan Hamilton (1762 - 1829), a British Surgeon in India, who visited Rangpur and other parts of North Bengal in the early nineteenth century (1807-1814); had observed that ‘the Koches were designated as Rajbanshi although Rajbanshis are not Koch’ (Martin:1976:545). According to him the term ‘Rajbanshi’ is a greater and a respected designation where the Koches got place only after abandoning their tribal customs and rituals and by adopting the Hindu traditions and social practices. Hamilton was strongly supported by B.H. Hodgson (1847) who expressed that the Koches, Meches and the Kacharis originated from the great Mongolian race and Koches or Rajbanshis are merely the most hinduized form of the common stock (Hodgson:1847:viii). To them, after hinduisation the Koches began to be identified as Rajbanshi.

Although the rulers of the Koch kingdom had propagated themselves as Kshatriya (Hindu ruling caste) in their genealogies and official historical works but they never attempted to classify them as ‘Rajbanshi Kshatriya’. Even they did not use the title preferred by the Rajbanshis. The Koches could maintain a distinct identity of their own what was just different that the colonial observations. On the other hand, the Rajbanshis of North Bengal used to consider themselves as the descendants of a mythical Kshatriya ruler of North Bengal who named Bardhana (Barman:1401:1-25). And they were forced to conceal their Kshatriya identity. So according to the Rajbanshis their identity can’t be identical with the Koches as ‘constructed’ by the colonial administrators. The Rajbanshi intellectuals of Rangpur had founded their caste organizations to ‘differentiate’ them from the Koches. They began to publish several works containing, scriptural evidences that the Rajbanshis are kshatriyas. It can be explained as ‘a conscious attempt (or a culture) for the construction of an identity of difference’. Here the argument of Frederic Barth is clearly noticeable.

Feeling of caste Kshatriya origin of the Rajbanshis got a significant dimension when they founded a caste association called ‘Kshatriya Samity’ in 1910 in Rangpur under the leadership of Panchanan Barma (Sarkar), a lawyer by profession. Main objectives of this Samity were to (i) establish a kshatriya identity of the Rajbanshis, (ii) inform the government that the Koches and the Rajbanshis are different castes, (iii) publications and circulations of newspapers and periodical about the Rajbanshis and their cultural heritage, (iv) foundation of hostels for the Rajbanshi students and financial organization for the benefits of the Rajbanshis (Barman:1408:13). So first two objectives were basically the question of
‘social difference’ of a community what denounced a subordinated identity imposed by the ‘dominant outsiders.’ These also announced a respectable identity for the Rajbanshis. Rests of the objectives were basically the means of first two.

Second stage of ethnic identity formation of the Rajbanshis was their structural integration as a Kshatriya caste community. Rajbanshi Kulapradip (1907) of Hari Kishore Adhikary, Rajbanshi Kulakarika and Kuladipana of Avay Narayan Barma, Rajbanshi Kula Kaumudi of Jagamohan Singha (1913) and a few other writings had constructed a fictitious kshatriya lineage of the Rajbanshis of North Bengal (Barman: 2004:286). Writings and circulation of this kind of history had stimulated Kshatriya feelings of the Rajbanshis. It was a ‘significant attempt of the announcement of self-identity.’

Continuous demands of the Rajbanshi intellectuals for Kshatriya status and appeals to the census body were ultimately recognized by the colonial government in 1911. The Census Officer of Purnia district (of present Bihar) had issued an order to the assistants of the census operation on 11th January 1911, to stratify the Koches and the Rajbanshis separately. The Deputy Commissioner of Goalpara (of present Assam) also had allowed the Rajbanshis to classify them as Kshatriya. Even Mr. E.W. Denith, Superintendent of Cooch Behar State, had issued a similar order (Mandol: 1972:21). So O Mally, the Census Superintendent; wrote in 1911 that ‘the former request (of kshatriyas status) was granted without hesitation as there is no doubt that at the present day irrespective of any question of origin the Rajbanshis and the Koch are separate castes’ (Barman: 2004:287). So it appears that the announc-ement of ‘self’ by denouncing the ambiguous and imposed identity got official recognition from the colonial state.

Third attempt of identity formation of the Rajbanshis was the transformation of the ethnic feeling into their practical lives. So mere official recognition of Kshatriya identity could not establish a respectable social status of the Rajbanshis! They approached to the Brahmans who had (even still have) the sole right of determination of caste status of any community of traditional Indian society! Under the leadership of Panchanan Barma, the Rajbanshis acquired support of the Brahmans of Mithila, Kamarup, Cooch Behar and Navadwip. Pandit Jadaveswar Tarkaratna of Rangpur, Sri Kamakshya Nath Sharma Tarkavagis, Professor of Calcutta Sanskrit College, and the Kamrupi Brahmans of Cooch Behar, had recognized the Rajbanshis as Kshatriya. They also prescribed the necessary process of elevation of social status of the Rajbanshis to that of Kshatriyas by performing certain religious rituals (Mandol: 1972: 27-32). Eventually 400 delegates of the Rajbanshis of different districts of Bengal and Assam gathered at Deviganj of undivided Jalpaiguri district in 1913 under the banner of the Kshatriya Samity and they publicly declared them as Kshatriya. They now began to hold paita or sacred thread like the Brahmans, Kshatriyas and other upper caste Hindus. Within a year, the Rajbanshis had organized total 292 such gatherings in different towns and villages of North Bengal and Assam (Mandol: 1972: 26). More than one lakh Rajbanshis held sacred threads (paita). They had also adopted some rituals and customs of upper caste Hindus of Bengal. Even they now assumed caste Kshatriya titles like Barma, Barman, Ray, Singha etc., as prescribed in the Brihatddharma Purana (Barman:1408:59). So adoption of caste rituals from the ‘dominant others’ in order to make a difference from the subordinate (Koches) had transformed the ‘culture of difference’ into a common practice among the Rajbanshis of North Bengal.

The colonial state had also played a significant role in the process of their positive desire of identification as ‘other’ i.e. as Kshatriya. This opportunity was appeared
to the Rajbanshis with the outbreak of the First World War (1914-1918). Since military service was traditional (monopoly?) occupation of the Kshatriyas in pre-colonial India, the Kshatriya Samity tried to deploy the Rajbanshi youths in the British Indian Army (Singha: 1940:22-26). Mr.F.J. Monahan, Commissioner of the Presidency Division, assured the Kshatriya Samity to constitute a separate company for the Rajbanshi youths (Barman: 1401:29). Around four hundred Rajbanshi youths from Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur and Rangpur and around eight hundreds from Dhubri districts had joined the First World War (Barman: 1392:48). Formation of a separate kshatriya regiment, however, was not materialized due to the end of the war in 1818. But experience and feelings of war had stimulated their Kshatriya feelings.

The Rajbanshis had not merely kept them busy with the adoption of upper caste ritual practices. They realized that the adoption of educational practice of the upper caste is essential for the real progress of their caste status. So Panchanan Barma wrote in 1910 that ‘there is the need of reformation among the Rajbanshis who always considered them as kshatriya. Adoption of good traditions and abolition of evil customs from the society is social reform. Without education social reform is impossible. Education is essential for the cultivation of good spirits and exchanges of views among the caste fellows. So there is the need of newspaper for cultural exchanges’ (Singha:1940:12).

Thus they founded a hostel for their students at Rangpur in 1914. The Kshatriya Samity also founded the Kshatriya Chhatra Samity (a student organization) and introduced a monthly magazine titled Kshatriya Patrika to mobilize the Rajbanshi students along the line of its caste assertion. The Kshatriya Samity continued to publish law books of Hindu rituals and rules and regulation of the Samity in order to spread the Kshatriya feeling among the Rajbanshis. Publication of such kinds are Kshatriya Byabastha (rules of kshatriyaization), Upayan Byabastha, Sandhya Paddhati, Kshatriya Samitir Niyamabali, Mandalir Sthapaner Niyamabali, Upayan Grahan Niyamabali, etc (Singha:1940:34). These publications had direct impact on the educated section of the Rajbanshis while the rest of the caste fellows were induced by them.

There are few more literary pieces produced by the Rajbanshi intellectuals of the early twentieth century particularly in the local languages/dialect of Rangpur. Panchanan Barma, being the editor of the Sahitya Parishat Patrika of the Uttar Banga Sahitya Parishat; had collected the proverbs and phrases (called chhilka) of the local people. His Dangdhari Mao and Beta Chaoar Prati Dangdhari Mao poetries, Jagannathi Bilai (a short story), Kamata Bihari Sahitya (an article) and few other literary pieces were written in the local language of Rangpur, which according to Panchanan Barma is ‘Kamata-Bihari’ language. These works of Panchanan Barma had not only revived the folk literature of North Bengal but also contributed to the development of a dialect/language like the Rajbanshi (Adhikari:1398). So we notice that language, a very strong and sensitive parameter of ethnicity or cultural identity of a social group began to develop among the Rajbanshis to ‘differentiate’ them from other social/cultural group.

But the caste based social identity of the Rajbanshis had to face a serious challenge particularly when the Koches were recognized as Kshatriya in the census of 1921. The Koches now began to be recorded as Rajbanshis in the official records. In the census of 1931, figure of the Koches naturally was decreased drastically from 131273 to 81299 while the figure of the Rajbanshis increased suddenly from 1727111 to 1806390. One of the basic objectives of
the Rajbansi Kshatriya movement to prove the inferiority of the Koches thus lost its importance as both the caste became equal in the official records. The culture of difference between the Rajbanshis and the Koches lost the strong ground. Thus a shift in the ‘culture of difference’ of the Rajbanshis was inevitable. Here the Government of India Act 1919 was appeared as a serious stimulus of contextual change of ethnic feeling of the Rajbanshis especially with the beginning of caste politics in provincial level.

Caste-politics of the Rajbanshis was started in 1920 when they transformed the Kshatriya Samity into a political platform. Panchanan Barma and Jogesh Chandra Sarkar of the Kshatriya Samity were elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as Rajbansi Kshatriya Samity candidate in 1921. Once again Panchanan Barma and Sri Nagendra Nath Ray were successfully elected in 1923 in the Bengal Legislative Council as Kshatriya Samity candidate (Singha:1940:33). In the third election of the Bengal Legislative Council (held in 1926), the Kshatriya Samity maintained its victory. In the forth election held in 1929 (which was the last election on the basis of the Government of India Act, 1919) Panchanan Barma was reelected to the Legislative Council of Bengal. This trend proves that the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity had utilized the ethnic awareness of the ordinary Rajbanshi voters of Rajbansi dominated areas of North Bengal in collective action. It is also a noticeable fact that Prasanna Dev Raikot of Raikot family Jalpaiguri (what was a branch of Koch rulers of Cooch Behar); was elected to the Legislative Council. So ‘difference’ between the Koches and the Rajbanshis became a secondary issue.

The Rajbansi caste politics turned into a new dimension after the enactment of the Government of India Act 1935. In 1937’s election six candidates of the Kshatriya Samity were elected to the Bengal Legislative Assembly from Rangpur, Dinajpur, Malda and Jalpaiguri (Basu:2003).

These Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity members of the Legislative Assembly and eighteen other Scheduled Caste MLAs had formed the Independent Scheduled Caste Party (ISCP) in 1937. Sri Upendra Nath Barman, most significant Rajbansi Kshatriya Samity leader of that period; became the minister-in-charge of the forest and excise department in 1941 in the Progressive Coalition Government (1941-43) headed by Fajlul Haque as the ISCP member (Basu:2003:81). So the Rajbansi Kshatriya Samity became very close to the government.

But the reservation system in the political assembly instead of political competition between the ‘all India level political parties’ (dominated by the ‘upper caste Hindus’) and the ‘caste based political organizations’ of the lower castes had increased the caste-conflicts and competition among the Scheduled Castes. This trend seriously threatened the structural integrity of the lower caste communities. Like other caste organizations (and political parties of India), internal conflicts among the leaders of the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity became a common phenomenon since 1940. It developed a new kind of ‘politics of difference’. Most of the Rajbanshi leaders now showed interest to strengthen their position by joining the Indian National Congress to contest in the reserve seats of Bengal Legislative Assembly. The Rajbanshis even now began to join the Communist Party since they had significant participation in the Tebhaga movement (1946-1950) at that time. So in the election of 1946, only five candidates fought under the banner of the Kshatriya Samity and only Nagendra Nath Ray was elected from Rangpur (Barman:1408:98). Rest of the Rajbanshi members including Harendra Nath Ray (Dinajpur), Rajani Kanta Ray Barman (Rangpur), Mohini Mohan Barman (Jalpaiguri-Siliguri) elected to the Bengal Legislative Assembly as Congress candidate. Mr. Rup Narayan Ray (Dinajpur) was elected as Communist candidate (Chattopadhyaya:
Although Mr. Upendra Nath Barman was defeated as independent candidate backed by the Kshatriya Samity in Jalpaiguri-Siliguri constituency in 1946’s election but he was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946 as Congress candidate (Barman:1382:99). Thus it appears that the caste based social identity of the Rajbanshis got a serious challenge due to the reservation politics. So when the Congress, Hindu Mahashabh, Muslim League and other political parties had accepted the partition of the Bengal province, the Rajbanshis and other lower caste communities could not play their proper independent role although Jogendranath Mondal, the Namasudra leader, together with few other upper and lower caste leaders talked against the partition of Bengal. Thus the demand for a separate independent state particularly for the Scheduled Caste of North Bengal proposed by Jogendra Nath Mondal as “Rajasthan” could not drawn much attention of the Rajbanshis except former Kshatriya Samity leaders like Nagendra Nath Ray, Shyama Prasad Barman, Kshetra Nath Singha, Girijakanta Singha and Jogendra Nath Ray.

So on the eve of partition of Bengal, caste-based political organizations lost their influence. So the lower caste organizations practically switch over to the Congress politics. This transition of the caste politics was the second transition of the Rajbanshi ethnic movement in the late colonial period.

**From confusion to union: Koch-Rajbanshi Ethnic Identity in postcolonial India**

In the postcolonial India, caste identity of the Rajbanshis became a matter of confusion due to the partition of Bengal (in 1947) and large scale presence of the Rajbanshis in Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya and other states of Northeast India (other than West Bengal). After the partition, Kshatriya Samity with its head quarter at Rangpur (East Pakistan) lost its social influence over the scattered Rajbanshi population of India. So the local committees (mandals) of the former Kshatriya Samity began to reorganize in different parts of North Bengal in order to face the challenges of new political situation. A new branch of the Kshatriya Samity was opened on 8 November, 1962 at Dinhata (Cooch Behar, West Bengal) which emerged as a central organization of the Rajbanshis of North Bengal and Assam(Barman:1392:49).

It had deep sympathy to the Rajbanshis especially for their socioeconomic and cultural development including the formation of a linguistic state in North Bengal. But the Bangiya Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity, centered in Calcutta, was another parallel organization of the Rajbanshis of West Bengal (Annual Report: 1986: 4). Its main purpose were to (i) develop the educational status of the Rajbanshis (ii) change the social customs in accordance with new situation (iii) achieve political rights, (iv) to provide vocational training, etc (Sarkar:1990:1). So there was no homogeneity in the caste-based social movements of the Rajbanshis of West Bengal after the independence.

Condition of the Rajbanshis of Assam was more crucial. Although the Koches and the Rajbanshis have been categorized as Scheduled Castes (SC) in West Bengal and in Meghalaya Koches are Scheduled Tribes (ST) but in Assam they did not have fixed status. On the recommendations of the Kaka Kalelkar Commission (1955), the Koch-Rajbanshis of Assam were generally declared as OBC (Other Backward Class) in 1953 but the Rajbanshis of Goalpara were given a new name called MOBC (Most Other Backward Caste) (Datta:1978:31).So there is no common status of the Koch-Rajbanshis in postcolonial India.

However, the postcolonial concept of ‘Rajbansi’ (greater Koch-Rajbansi/ Kamtapuri) means indigenous people those who adopted Rajbanshi/Kamtapuri dialect/ language as their lingua franca including the Rajbanshis, Koches, Paliyas, local Muslims (Nashya Shaikhs) and other tribal and non-tribal people of North Bengal and Northeast India. So the sociopolitical organizations
founded by the Koch-Rajbanshis like the Uttar Khanda Dal (UKD, 1969), Uttarbangla Tapashtili Jati O Adibashi Sangathan (UTJAS, 1980), Koch - Rajbongshi International (KRI, 1984), Bharatiya Kamata Rajya Parishad (BKRP, 1985), Kamtapur People’s Party (KPP, 1995), and Greater Cooch Behar People’s Association (GCBPA, 1998 ) have categorically classified the Rajbanshis/Kamtapuri of postcolonial period as a composition of ‘all Rajbanshis, Koch, Mech, etc., listed as Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Constitution (SC and ST ) Order of 1950; local Muslims and bonafide refugees entering the region.’(Maynaguri Declaration:1986).

So Rajbanshi obviously is a greater connotation in postcolonial India than the Rajbanshi caste of colonial period. It is more a cultural community than a caste community. So in postcolonial India, the Rajbanshis of North Bengal began to reorganize on the cultural ground rather than caste identity. So former ‘culture of difference’ between the Rajbanshis and the Koches transformed into unity as Koch-Rajbanshi as a linguistic community. However, the ‘culture of difference’ of this uni-fied community did not die. Rather it got a new dimension especially in the generation of sense of difference between the Rajbanshis and the non-Rajbanshis in different forms what will be discussed in the next section.

Koch-Rajbanshi Culture and Ethnon-linguistic identity

The point of difference between the Rajbanshis and non-Rajbanshis more precisely the difference between the Koch-Rajbanshis and the Bengalese was germinated with the question of reorganization of states (provinces) on the linguistic ground in the 1950s. Language, being a significant marker had stimulated many dormant ethnic groups of India with the beginning of nation building process. We have already highlighted that a sense of linguistic identity had developed among the Rajbanshis in the early twentieth century. This sense got a sudden stimulus with the formation of the State Reorganization Commission (1953). For instance we may talk about the Siliguri Zonal Rajbanshi Kshatriya Sanny (SZRKS), a social organization of the Rajbanshis. It supported the reorganization of the states along the linguistic line. It also demanded in 1955 the merger of Purnia district of Bihar and Goalpara district of Assam (where the Rajbanshis have significant concentration as a linguistic community) to West Bengal, on the linguistic ground.

The linguistic issue of the Rajbanshis was again raised in the 1960s by some middle class intellectuals of that community. Sri Kalindra Nath Barman, a Rajbanshi social activist and poet (and later founder of the Uttar Khanda Dal in 1969) brought the linguistic distinctiveness of the ‘Rajbanshi’ into the forefront of the Rajbanshi middle class. He argued that the language spoken by the Rajbanshis is a distinctive one and deserves to have a particular name. He wrote in 1965 in the Uttar Banga, a weekly published from Madarhat (Jalpaiguri), that the language spoken by the Rajbanshis may be called Bahe as the Bengalese widely called it (Uttarbanga: 1965:3) in order to differentiate it from the standard Bengali.

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against the attempts of identification of the Rajbanshis as Bahes particularly by the non-Rajbanshi intellectuals and laureates. The Rajbanshis do prefer to identify their language/dialect as the Kamtapuri/Kamata Behari/Rajbanshi/Kamarupi-Kamtapuri. So again the ‘question of difference’ arises among the members of the unified Koch-Rajbanshi identity. So without spending few words about the cultural-linguistic identity of the Koch-Rajbanshis we cannot complete our analysis on the transition of caste identity of the Rajbanshis into a cultural identity.

Culture is a collective terminology which describes material, social, cultural, religious and artistic achievement of the human society. Tradition, customs and behavioral format unified by the common beliefs and values are also the significant features of culture. So socio-religious traditions, mode of living, artistic achievements, language and other related elements of the Koch-Rajbanshi community formed the Kamtpuri (Rajbanshi) culture. The distinctive elements of the Kamtapuri culture are folk songs like "Bhaoiya and Goalparia songs, folk dances and theatre like "Kushan Bishahari, Marai, Hudumdeo, Madankam and Mechini etc.; and off course Rajbanshi dialect (language) which is suffering from language-dialect debate. Among these elements of Rajbanshi cultural identity linguistic issue is the most significant one.

Linguistic status of the Rajbanshis is full with ‘contradictions and philological difference.’ There are two opposite views regarding the linguistic status of the Rajbanshi. One group of scholars has argued that the Rajbanshi/Kamtapuri (also called Kamta-Behari) possesses all linguistic features to be recognized as a distinct language (different from others). Taking the cue from the Linguistic Survey of India (Grierson: 1969:163-200) of G.A. Grierson (1927) they argued that ‘Rajbanshi’ (Kamtapuri) is essentially a separate ‘code’ from the Bengali. Rajbanshi dialect according to Grierson ‘belonging to the eastern variety of the language, has still points of differences, which entitle it to be classed as a separate dialect. It has one sub-dialect called Bahe spoken in the Darjeeling Tarai’(Grierson:1969:18). Grierson had also argued that the Rajbanshi dialect is generally spoken by the Koches who adopted the Hinduism and the Islam and it is also called the Rangpuri(Grierson:1969:163). It is to be noted that the Koches had adopted the Bengali language during the time of their kingdom formation. The Cooch Behar State itself had patronized the non-tribal vernaculars which had inevitable impact on the tribal languages. The intellectual section of the Rajbanshi community, however, has overlooked this phenomenon of cultural change and categorically stressed on the observation of Grierson. A number of Rajbanshi scholars have already produced a few works to prove the independent linguistic status of the Rajbanshi like –Ekti Birat Jiggasha: Ora Bahe Na Bangali? of Kalindra Nath Barman(1969) (Barman: 1377), Kamtapuri Bhasha of Harimohan Barman (Barman:2001), A Step to Kamata Behari Language of Dharma Narayan Barma (Barma:1991), Rajbanshi Bhasha Sahityar Parichaya of Dwijendranath Bhakat(Bhakat: 2000), etc.

Dharma Narayan Barma in his A Step to Kamata Behari Language has dealt with the grammatical aspects of the Rajbanshi or Kamtapuri language. He thinks that the Kamta-Behari is a distinct language what is different from the Bengali. Dr.Bhakat, on the other hand, has traced the existence of the Rajbanshi language since the seventh century. He argued that there are similarities between the Rajbanshi and the language used in the copper plate grants of ancient Kamarupa (Bhakat: 2000:20). The Charja literature (early Bengali literary specimen) produced during the period between eighth and the twelfth century are also bearing the testimonies of the origin and development of the Rajbanshi language (Bhakat: 2000:28). Bhakat also claims that
the literature produced under the patronage of the Koch kings are the specimen of the Rajbanshi literature (Bhakat: 2000:28). All these scholars have a common point in their argument. All of them tried to show the distinctiveness (or the point of difference) of the Rajbanshi language what is spoken by a large number of people of Sub-Himalayan Bengal and Lower Assam. According to them it is ‘different’ than Bengali and other languages of this region. It means the question of linguistic difference has been used as a solid argument for the establishment of standard linguistic identity of an ethnic community.

On the contrary, a number of experts have opined that Rajbanshi is nothing but a dialect of the Bengali and both shares the same root (Das:1997). Nirmal Das in his Uttar Banger Bhasa Prasanga (1985) categorically argued that the Rajbanshi can not a distinct language. It is merely a regional variety of the Bengali.

**Photo 1:** Demonstration for Separate State and Scheduled Tribe status for the Koch-Rajbanshis of Assam in Gossaingnaon on 5th March 2013.

**Conclusion**

Although linguistic status of ‘the Rajbanshi’ (language/dialect) is debatable one but in the recent years significant contributions have been made by the educated section of the Rajbanshi community by publishing books and pamphlets, writing novels, drama, poetry, and composing music in this medium. Again the linguistic structure of the Rajbanshi is being analyzed with different perspective both by the Indian and non-Indian scholars. On the other hand, cultivation of literature in ‘the Rajbanshi’ has strengthened its linguistic status. At the same time it has contributed to the growth of criticism of ‘the Rajbanshi’ particularly among the non-Rajbanshi scholars. So we find ‘a phenomenon of difference’ between two opposite group of scholars about the linguistic identity of ‘the Rajbanshi’ what is not confined only in the educated middle class level. In the mass level it is clearly noticeable as ‘Deshi-Bhatia difference’. And it is this ‘difference’ which is the driving force of demands raised by the UKD, UTJAS, KRI, KPP, GCBPA, All Kamatapur Student Union (AKSU), All Koch-Rajbanshi Student Union (AKRASU) , etc., for the formation of a separate state in North Bengal. The Koch-Rajbanshis of Assam are again agitating for constitutional tribe on similar ground (Barman: 2013:17-40).
The Rajbanshis or Koches were classified as Other Backward Classes by the Government of Assam by its letter no TAD/BC/268/75/37 dated 27th November 1975. To ensure educational facilities, the Rajbanshis and the Koches (of Goalpara and Garo Hills) were treated as More Other Backward Class (MOBC). However, the Koch-Rajbanshis got Scheduled Tribe status in Assam in the 1990s (G.O. No TAD/ST/98/92/138). Hence they lost the OBC status. But their ST status was withdrawn in 1998 (Ref.No. TAD/ST/98/92/212 dated 7th April 1998). So again they have been assigned OBC status with effect from 03.04.1997.  

Siliguri Anchalik (Zonal) Kshatriya Samity in its First Annual Conference held on 8th April 1955, supported the formation of linguistic state in India and stressed on the continuity of reservations policy for the Rajbanshis and implementation of reservations in the semi-government organizations. See Copy of resolutions passed in the First Annual Conference of the Siliguri Anchalik (zonal) Kshatriya Samity in its first Annual Conference held at Haidarpara, Dist. Jalpaiguri.  

The immigrant East Bengalese popular calls the Rajbanshis of North Bengal as Deshi. On the contrary the Rajbanshis of North Bengal have branded the East Bengalese as Bhatia/Bhatiar ghhar. This difference in mental perception often generates contradiction in the rural and semi-urban areas of North Bengal.

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Notes


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Constitutionalism and Political Stalemate in British India after Quit India Movement

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Introduction
It has been said that Constitution, is “a transparent garment clinging to the body politic”, contains the hopes and aspirations of the people.\(^1\) Constitutionalism means “limited government” and the rule of law to prevent the arbitrary, abusive use of power, to protect human rights, to support democratic procedures in elections and public policy making, and to achieve a community’s shared purposes.\(^2\) Constitutionalism in a democracy both limits and empowers government of, by, and for the people. That’s why “Constitutional government is called the anti-thesis of authoritarian rule.”\(^3\)

Constitutionalism is the idea, often associated with the political theories of John Locke and the “founders” of the American republic, that government can and should be legally limited in its powers, and that its authority depends on its observing these limitations. India in the course of transfer of power witnessed this process of constitutionalism and also after the transfer of power the constituent assembly debated on the idea of India for almost two years to finally come to a constitution of India.

The Contentious Issue
In the year 1942, the Cripps plan put forward a three-tier federal form of government in which the central government would be limited to power only over defence, foreign relations, currency and communication. Rest of the powers would be delegated to the provinces. The plan also prescribed the zones that would be created. North-West Bengal and Assam would be joined to form a zone with a slight Muslim majority; in the North-West, Punjab, Sindh, North West Frontier Province, and Baluchistan would be joined for a clear Muslim majority; and the remainder of the country would be third zone, with a clear Hindu majority.\(^4\)

The approximation of the boundaries of a new Pakistan was clear from the delineation of the zones. The mission also suggested the right of veto on legislation by communities that saw their interests adversely affected. Finally, the mission proposed that an interim government be established immediately and that new elections be held.\(^5\) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has written the motives behind the Cripps offer.\(^6\) He has also described insensitive and non-serious behaviour of Stafford Cripps.

Congress and Muslim League Varying View Point
The Indian National Congress discussed the proposal of Cripps and it was rejected. The Congress Working Committee (CWC) passed the following resolution about non-accession of provinces:

“The acceptance beforehand of the novel principle of non-accession for a province is also a severe blow to the conception of Indian unity and an apple of discord likely to generate growing trouble in the provinces, and which may well lead to further difficulties in the way of the Indian states merging themselves in the Indian Union... the Committee cannot think in terms
of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will. While recognising this principle, the Committee felt that every effort should be made to create conditions, which would help the different units in developing a common and cooperative national life.\textsuperscript{8}

The rejection of the Cripps proposal followed nation-wide Quit India movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi, arrest of the leaders of Indian National Congress, government repression etc. The issue of constitutional deadlock was largely because the Muslim League was not in a mood to cooperate with the Congress.

**Gandhi- Jinnah Debate**

C R formula was put forward by Shri Chakraborty Rajgopalachari in March 1944 in order to break the deadlock between the Congress and the Muslim League. In a letter addressed to Mahatma Gandhi in 1944, M A Jinnah raised a number of concerns about C R formula including person/s going to frame it and time of it’s enforcement.\textsuperscript{9} He wrote that as in the formula it is held that “Muslim League will cooperate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period”, but what will be the basis of this interim government. He had his doubt about the basis on which such a government is to be set up; also who will appoint the commission referred to in the clause and who will give effect to their findings? The terms like absolute majority were ambiguous to Jinnah. In the proposed plebiscite formula he had his concern like: whether it would be district-wise and whether such a plebiscite would be based upon adult franchise or other practicable franchise; who will give effect to the decision or verdict of the above mentioned plebiscite; would only the districts on the border, which are taken out from the boundaries of the present province by delimitation, be entitled to choose to join either State, or would also those outside the present boundaries, have the right to choose to join either state.\textsuperscript{10}

The above concern of M A Jinnah was addressed point to point by Mahatma Gandhi in his letter dated September 11, 1944 as follows:

“The Constitution will be framed by the provisional government contemplated in the formula or as an authority specially set up by it after the British power is withdrawn. The basis for the formation of the interim government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress. The Commission will be appointed by the provisional government. Absolute majority means a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier provinces. The form of plebiscite and the franchise must be a matter for discussion. Mutual agreement mentioned in the formula means agreement between contracting parties. Safeguarding defence etc. means for me a central or joint board of control…The power is to be transferred to the nation, that is, to the provisional government. The formula contemplates peaceful transfer by the British government.”\textsuperscript{11}

But finally Rajaji formula was rejected by Jinnah in toto and any compromise with the League seemed impossible at least for some time. In an interview given to an overseas newspaper, Mahatma Gandhi explained the reasons of failure of the talk with Jinnah:  “I could not accept the two nation basis. This was Mr. Jinnah’s demand. He wants immediate recognition of the North-West Frontier Province, Sind, the whole of Punjab, Bengal and Assam as sovereign and completely independent Pakistan.”\textsuperscript{12}

When the same journalist asked Mahatma Gandhi, whether he was prepared to recognise Pakistan and on what basis there could be any hope of agreement in future, he said:

“...I want to make it clear that I believe that Mr. Jinnah is sincere, but I think he is suffering from hallucination when he
imagines that an unnatural division of India could bring either happiness or prosperity to the people concerned. It was my suggestion that provided there was the safeguard of a plebiscite there could be sovereignty for the predominantly Muslim areas, but it should be accompanied by the bonds of alliance between Hindustan and Pakistan.”

On October 4, 1944 Jinnah called a press conference and criticised Mahatma Gandhi’s statement given to the News Chronicle. He stated:

“Mr. Gandhi, perhaps under provocation, again asserted that he had never admitted the claim of the Muslim League as the only authoritative organisation of the Mussalmans, and darkly hinted that there are other Muslim organisations with a large body of Muslim opinion behind them who do not see eye to eye with the League and do not support the two nation theory. There by he has again made an attempt to discredit the Muslim League and disrupt the Mussalmans, for he knows that is not true. …On the one hand he wants a League-Congress agreement, and on the other he denies its representative character and authority to speak on behalf of the Mussalmans of India. Mr. Gandhi is an enigma.”

C Rajagopalachari had managed to persuade a reluctant Mahatma Gandhi on the negotiating table after Quit India Movement by his proposals, which had rejected the idea of Pakistan and sought to find a middle path but finally it got vetoed by the recalcitrance of M A Jinnah and the rot deepened.

Wavell Plan and League-Congress Impasse

In 1945, Lord Wavell called a conference at Shimla to discuss his plan to break the Indian political stalemate. Significant features of the Wavell plan are:

1. The Executive Council of the Viceroy was to be reconstituted and all its members except the Viceroy and the Commander-in-chief were to be Indians. Provision was made for the inclusion of equal number of Hindu and Muslim representatives in the council.
2. The Viceroy was to be the President of the Council. He was allowed the power of overriding the Council.
3. The new Executive Council would carry on the Government of British India until a new Constitution was framed and put in force. Thus, under the plan the Executive Council was to function as a Provisional national Government.
4. In the Provinces, administered by the Governor ministries would be formed. Soon after the Conference began, the differences between the Congress and the Muslim League surfaced. By the second day, the Conference had agreed on certain main principles like representation for minorities, support to the war effort and continuance of the reconstituted Executive Council under the Government of India Act till the end of the war. Difference however arose about the composition of the Executive Council. In a letter written to Lord Wavell on 7 July, 1945 Jinnah made the following point:

“...The Working Committee of the Muslim League is emphatically of the opinion that all the Muslim members of the proposed Executive Council should be chosen from the Muslim League, subject to confidential discussion between your Excellency and the President of the Muslim League, before they are finally recommended by you to the crown for appointment...While the Committee appreciated the remarks of the Secretary of State in the House of Commons that the power of veto will be exercised by the Viceroy to protect the minority interest, it was felt that some other effective safeguard would be necessary in the interest of smooth working of the interim arrangement.”

Jinnah’s demand was that Congress could nominate only the Hindu members while, the Muslim members must be nominees of the League. Congress objected such demand because it had always approached all...
political problems from a nationalist point of view and recognised no distinction between Hindus and Muslims on political issues. It could not in any circumstances agree to be an organisation of Hindus alone. At this juncture Maulana Azad insisted that the Congress should have the freedom to nominate any Indian it liked regardless of whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim or a Christian or a Parsi or a Sikh. He also suggested that the Congress should participate on the basis of Indian nationhood otherwise it should boycott and as far as the Muslim League was concerned, it was the League to decide who should be its nominees. Later on Maulana Azad wrote:

“All discussions between the Congress and the Government had till now failed on political issues. The Congress was not ready to accept any solution, which did not ensure Indian freedom. Discussions had therefore failed on political issues and never reached the communal question... Now that the political issue between India and Britain seemed on the point of solution, the Conference broke down over the question of communal representation in the new Executive Council.”

Cabinet Mission and Muslim League’s Position

In March 1946 the British Cabinet Mission reached to Delhi. Headed by Sir Patrick Lawrence it aimed as said by then British Prime Minister:

“My colleagues are going out to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavor to help her to attain that freedom (the freedom to decide their own destiny) as speedily and fully as possible. What form of it is to replace the present regime is for India to decide, but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision?”

Maulana Azad believed that the Constitution of India should be federal in nature but it should ensure complete autonomy to the provinces in various subjects. In this way such federal principles would ensure that in the Muslim majority provinces, all subjects, except defense, communication and foreign affairs, could be administered by the province itself. This would eliminate from the mind of the Muslims all fears of domination by the Hindus. Once such fears were allayed, it was likely that the provinces would find it an advantage to delegate some other subjects as well to the Central Government.

Muslim League vacillated over the scheme articulated by Maulana Azad and which the Congress ratified later. Even the Cabinet Mission was on board with the scheme. Muslim League’s Lahore Resolution was somewhat vague and it was time for Jinnah and Muslims League to take some more specific position.

At the outset, Jinnah was completely opposed to the scheme. The Muslim League Council met for three days before it could come to a decision. On the final day, Jinnah had to admit that there could be no fairer solution of the minority problem than that presented in the Cabinet Mission Plan. He told the Council that the scheme presented by the Cabinet Mission was the maximum that we could secure. He advised the Muslim League to accept the scheme and the council voted unanimously in its favor.

The Muslim League had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan only under duress. Jinnah was not very happy about it. In his speech to the League Council, he had clearly stated that he recommended acceptance only because nothing better could be obtained. His political adversaries started to criticise him by saying that he had failed to deliver the goods. They accused him that he had given up the idea of an independent Islamic state. They also taunted him that if the League was willing to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan - which denied the right of the Muslims to form a separate State - why had he made so much fuss about an independent Islamic State?

Jinnah was not happy about the outcome of the negotiations with the Cabinet
Mission. Pandit Nehru’s statement came to him as a bombshell. Nehru declared that the Congress could change the scheme through its majority in the Constituent Assembly. This was understood that the minorities would be placed at the mercy of the majority. Jinnah immediately issued a statement that this declaration by the Congress President demanded a review of the whole situation. He asked Liaquat Ali Khan to call a meeting of the League Council and issued a statement to the following effect: “The Muslim League Council had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan in Delhi as it was assured that the Congress also had accepted the scheme and the Plan would be the basis of the future constitution of India.” The Muslim League Council met at Bombay on 27 July 1946. Jinnah in his opening speech reiterated the demand for Pakistan as the only course left open to the Muslim League. After three days’ discussion, the Council passed a resolution rejecting the Cabinet Mission Plan. It also decided to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan.

The Congress and the Muslim League emerged from the 1946 elections as the two dominant parties, although the Muslim League again was unable to capture a majority of the Muslim seats in the North West Frontier Province. At first, both parties seemed to accept Cabinet Mission Plan, despite many reservations, but the subsequent behaviour of the leaders soon led to bitterness and mistrust. The formation of an interim government was also contro-versial. Jinnah demanded equality between the Muslim League and Congress, a proposal rejected by the Viceroy. The Muslim League boycotted the interim government, and each party disputed the right of the other to appoint Muslim ministers, a prerogative Jinnah claimed belo-nged solely to the Muslim League. The Congress and the Muslim League emerged from the 1946 elections as the two dominant parties, although the Muslim League again was unable to capture a majority of the Muslim seats in the North West Frontier Province. At first, both parties seemed to accept Cabinet Mission Plan, despite many reservations, but the subsequent behaviour of the leaders soon led to bitterness and mistrust. The formation of an interim government was also contro-versial. Jinnah demanded equality between the Muslim League and Congress, a proposal rejected by the Viceroy. The Muslim League boycotted the interim government, and each party disputed the right of the other to appoint Muslim ministers, a prerogative Jinnah claimed belo-nged solely to the Muslim League.

The Falling Curtain

In February 1947, Lord Mountbatten was appointed Viceroy with specific instructions to arrange for a transfer of power by June 1948. British Prime Minister Attlee made following statement in the House of Commons on 20 February 1947:

“In the constitutional field, the Acts of 1919 and 1935 passed by the British Parliament represents a substantial transfer of political power. ...in the opinion of His Majesty’s Government the time has come for responsibility for the government of India to pass into Indian hands. ... It is of the essence of the plan that the Assembly should be fully representative...Although the final transfer of authority may not take place until June 1948, preparatory measures must be put in hand in advance. It is important that the efficiency of the civil administration should be maintained and that the defence of India should be fully provided for.”

Mountbatten assessed the situation and became convinced that Congress was willing to accept partition as the price for independence, that Jinnah would accept a smaller Pakistan than one he demanded (that is, all of Punjab and Bengal), and Sikhs would accept a division of Punjab. Mountbatten persuaded most Indian leaders that immediate acceptance of his plan was imperative.

On June 3, 1947, British prime minister Clement Attlee introduced a bill in the House of Commons called for the Independence and Partition of India. Some of the significant parts of the bill are as follows:

“The majority of the representatives of the Provinces...have already made progress in the task of evolving a new constitution. On the other hand the Muslim League party...has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly...any constitution framed by the Assembly cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept...the Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and Punjab will be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority areas and the other the rest of the province...the members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empo-
wered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned...if it is decided that Bengal should be partitioned a referendum will be held in Sylhet to decide whether the district of Sylhet should continue to form part of the Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new Province of Eastern Bengal."

On July 14, the House of Commons passed the Indian Independence Act, 1947. Two independent dominions were created on the sub-continent; the princely states were left to accede to either. The partition plan stated that contiguous Muslim-majority districts in Punjab and Bengal would go to Pakistan, provided that the legislatures of the two provinces agreed that the provinces should be partitioned. Sindh’s legislature and Balochistan’s jirga (council of tribal leaders) agreed to join Pakistan. A plebiscite was held in Sylhet District of Assam, and as a result, part of the district was transferred to Pakistan. A plebiscite was also held in North West Frontier Province. Despite a boycott by the Congress, the province was deemed to have chosen Pakistan. The states made their decision after giving consideration to the geographic location of their respective area and to their religious majority.

The transfer of power was to take place on 15 August 1947. Both the Muslim League and the Congress accepted the plan. The Congress although with great pain, accepted the proposal for the partition of India. Sardar Patel said: “I felt if we did not accept partition, India would be split into many bits and would be completely ruined. My experience of office for one year convinced me that the way we have been proceeding would lead us to disaster. We would not have had one Pakistan but several.”

Conclusions

What would have happen if Jinnah would not have rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan which he had accepted initially? What would have happen if Muslim League leadership would have come to their senses after the brutal killings of 1946 as a result of direct action? History does not proceed on if’s and buts. One thing is very clear that partition of India was the result of that virus of Hindu-Muslim communalism which was sown deep by the British through its policies to keep the interest of the Raj intact.

Endnotes and References

5 Ibid., pp. 311-12.
6 “It is interesting to consider why the British Government wanted to consult the representatives of so many bodies in India. It was well known that Congress spoke for the vast majority of the Indian people. It is true the Muslim League had gained considerable influence among a section of the Muslims, but this was largely due to the support, which the Government had extended to it. As for the other parties, they were almost entirely the creations of the Government. If the British Government came to a settlement with Congress, they had neither the strength and courage nor perhaps the inclination to oppose. The only reason for inviting all such parties to meet Sir Stafford was to use them as possible counterweights to Congress. The British Government wanted to inform the world outside that there were many parties in India and Congress could not speak for the whole country. The British also perhaps felt that it this way they could exert some pressure on Congress. It was in this context that Cripps felt he ought to invite the President of the Nationalist Muslim Convention when he was meeting leaders of other Indian parties.” [ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India Wins Freedom: An Autobiographical Narrative, (Orient Longman: New Delhi, 1959), p. 49].
“I have already said that before Sir Stafford came to India, he had asked the Viceroy to issue invitations to a number of political leaders of whom one was the late Mr. Allah Bux. After arriving in India, Cripps appeared to modify his stand, perhaps as a result of the influence of the Viceregal House. Allah Bux had come to Delhi on the Viceroy’s invitation and was waiting for an interview with Sir Stafford but the interview was not being fixed. This was creating an awkward situation. I spoke to Cripps and he said that he would soon invite Allah Bux. In spite of this promise, no invitation was actually issued. Allah Bux at last got disgusted and said he refused to wait in Delhi any longer. When I heard this, I spoke strongly to Sir Stafford and pointed out that this was an insult not only to Allah Bux but also to the strong body of Muslims whom he represented. If Cripps had any doubts on the points, Allah Bux should not have been invited at all. But since the invitation had been issued, he should be properly met. My intervention resulted in an interview between Sir Stafford and Allah Bux the next day. The interview was for only an hour and was confined to general discussions. Cripps did not touch the root of the problem. This incident created a bad impression on me. I felt that this was not the proper method of dealing with difficult political issues. In my judgment, Cripps had not behaved like a statesman. The invitations should not have been issues without consulting the Government of India. Even if there were difficulties, he should have pointed them out to Allah Bux in a straightforward manner and not kept him cooling his heels in Delhi.” [Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India Wins Freedom: An Autobiographical Narrative, (Orient Longman: New Delhi, 1959), pp. 55-6].

The Resolution of the Congress Working Committee dated April 2, 1942 communicated to Sir Stafford Cripps, and released to the press on April 10, 1942. (Times of India, April 10, 1942).

The Formula says that after the war a commission would be appointed for demarcating the contiguous district in the North East of India, wherein the Muslim League were in absolute majority and in such areas a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult franchise or other practical franchise would decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority would decide in favor of creation of a sovereign State separate from Hindustan such decision would be given effect to without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State. In the event of separation, a mutual agreement would be entered for safeguarding defence, communication, commerce and other essential purposes. These terms would be binding only in case of transfer by Britain full power and responsibility for the governance of India. The Muslim League would accept the India demand for independence and would cooperate with the Indian national Congress in the formation of interim Government for the transitional period. [Verinder Grover (ed.), Political System in Pakistan, (Deep and Deep: New Delhi, 1997), Vol. 1, pp. 505-06.]


Interview given by Mahatma Gandhi to Stuart Gelder of the “News Chronicle” on September 29, 1944 at Bombay. (The Times of India, September 30, 1944).


The Indian Annual Register, (Calcutta, Jan-June, 1946), p. 116.
The Working Committee (of Congress) was initially somewhat sceptical about the solution and members raised all kinds of difficulties and doubts. I was able to meet their objections and clarified doubtful points. Finally the Working Committee was convinced about the soundness of the proposal and Gandhiji expressed his complete agreement with the solution. Gandhiji in fact complimented me by saying that I had found a solution of a problem, which had till then baffled everybody. He said that my solution would allay the fear of even the most communal among the Muslim Leaguers and at the same time it was inspired by a national and not a sectional outlook.” [Maulana Azad, Ibid, pp. 147-49]

The difficult question of Indian freedom had been settled by negotiation and agreement and not by methods of violence and conflict. It also seemed that the communal difficulties had been finally left behind. Throughout the country there was a sense of jubilation and all the people were united in their demand for freedom. We rejoiced but we did not then know that our joy was premature and bitter disappointment awaited us.” [Maulana Azad, Ibid, pp. 157-58]

The Act provided for the partition of British India and the establishment of two dominions i.e., India and Pakistan from the appointed day (15th August, 1947). It provided legislative supremacy of two form of government. Henceforth-British government shall have no control over the affairs of the dominion. Till new constitution is framed for each dominion, the existing Constituent Assembly shall exercise powers of the central legislature in addition to framing of the constitution. Till the constitution is adopted the provisions of Government of India Act, 1935 shall be applicable and till March 1948 Governor General was empower to modify or amend the provisions of the Act of 1935 and after that only the Central Legislative Assembly is competent to amend or modify the constitution. Henceforth the Governor General shall have no power to veto or reserve any bill and it will be passed by majority of house and after that Governor General has to sign it. Suzerainty of the House over the princely state was terminated and all agreements between them lapse from 15th August 1947. Agreement of the crown with Schedule Tribes of North West Frontier Province was repealed and the concerned dominion is authorized to enter into a fresh dominion. The post of Secretary of State was abolished. Henceforth crown shall not be emperor of India. The post of Governor General shall continue till new constitution provides otherwise. Henceforth Secretary of State shall have no control over ICS but the judges of the Federal Court and High Court shall continue to work till retirement or resignation. Sections 11, 12 and 13 regulated the Armed Forces. Henceforth Governor General shall not issue any instruction and direction to the governor and the governor shall act on the aid and advice of Council of Ministers.
Protective discrimination, Social skills and gender justice
A critical evaluation from Socio-legal Perspective

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For promotion of social skills in a country like India, full of diversities in all aspects, the Constitution of India in Part III, IV and IV(A) have incorporated certain provisions and implementation of the same will certainly enhance the social skills in our country. The objective of modern liberal education has been banking on the principles of access-equity and expansion for improving the standard of living of the people. This has also accorded space for critical evaluation of the constitutional mandate as its subterranean force, which has become ingenuously important in the present situation. As the development of skills for widening the scope of participation of the educated people, especially of the youths in availing of the opportunities of employment has been accorded due importance by the State, the issue of skill development should also be discussed and debated in a meaningful way by the stake holders by developing clear perceptions.

In this paper an attempt is made to identify the core ingredients of the social skills, which are necessary for sustenance of the democratic fabric of the nation relying on the spirit of the constitutional mandate and corresponding interpretations of the same in the light of a few Judgements of the Supreme Court of India. How the Constitutional spirit may be primarily taken in to active consideration by the stake holders for promotion of social skill, is a serious point to be reckoned with. A critical evaluation of the same may infuse a new lease of life to the parameters of social skills, if an innovative perception is applied to understand and interpret the subject in its contextual propriety. The implementation of Gender Justice in India for ensuring meaningful participation of the fair sex in the walks of socio economic life may also be categorized inter alia as a meaningful component of social skills, as marginalization of the issue may stultify the very trajectory of inclusive development based on equity, equality and social justice.

The Directive Principles of State Policy embodied in the part (IV) of the Constitution of India having embodied the guidelines for the governance of the country in a meaningful way has also laid the foundation of a responsive democracy committed to welfare of people and inclusive development.

There was a perception earlier that, the State should be mainly concerned with the maintenance of law and order and protection of life, liberty and property of the citizens. The Directive Principles of State policy by incorporating certain economic and social policies to be pursued by the State have however imposed certain obligations on the State for taking affirmative actions in certain directions to promote welfare of the people and fulfilling needs of an economic democracy.¹

The Article 39 of the Indian Constitution by emphasizing on promotion of economic justice, Articles 41, 42, 43, 46, 39-A, 47 embodying the spirit of a social security charter and Articles 44, 48, 49 50 and 51 encapsulating the ingredients of community welfare, have mapped the future of the nation on sound principles of equity, justice, inclusive growth and prosperity. The Article 51(A) under Part IV (A) of the
Constitution by incorporating the fundamental duties to be performed by the citizen for sustainable growth and meaningful efflorescence of basic goals of the nation has also perspicaciously made rights and duties correlative.

The Articles 14, 15 and 16 with certain exceptions have strengthened the principles of equity and equality in enjoying the fruits of a welfare State by the individuals. The part (III) (IV) and (IV-A) of the Constitution have been incorporated in the Constitution for representing the conscience of the nation, which stands on rich traditions and high intellectual values.

The Supreme Court of India (AIR 1978 SC1461), while delivering its judgement in Kesavananda Bharati Vs State of Kerala5 stated that, the fundamental rights and directives aim at the same goal of bringing about a social revolution and establishment of a welfare state and they can be interpreted and applied together. They are supplementary and complimentary to each other. It can be well said that the Directive Principles have prescribed the goals to be achieved and the Fundamental Rights lay down the means by which that goals are to be achieved.

The Supreme Court of India by delivering a landmark judgement in State of Tamil Nadu vs L. Abu Kavur Bai (AIR 1984, SC626)6 viewed that although the Directive principles of State are enforceable, yet the court should make a sincere effort for harmonizing and reconciling the Fundamental Rights and Directives for avoiding conflicts. The implementation of the Directives by the State may depend on capacity, situation and circumstances. The reasonable nexus between the object of legislation and the inherent spirit of the Directives may determine the constitutionality of a Statute.

The Fundamental Duties incorporated in Article 51(A) of the Constitution in Part IV (A) are basically aimed at strengthening the foundation of the collective well being of the nation. The rights and duties being correlative have enhanced the importance of the duties for creation of “Social capital” for fulfilling the goals of the Constitution and a progressive social system. In a landmark judgement delivered by the Apex Court in Aruna Roy Vs Union of India (AIR 2002, SC 3176)4, the learned Court straightened the pleats in the interpretation of the Article (28) of the Constitution with regard to inclusion of value education in the National Curriculum Framework for school education. The Apex Court after critically examining the arguments and points raised by the petitioner alleging blatant violation of the spirit of the Article 28 by the State, ruled that the Constitutional mandate embodied by the said Article and Article 51(A)(e) of the Constitution, has been harmoniously retained by the State by infusing the spirit of universal values such as truth, good conduct, peace, love and nonviolence. The values representing the conscience of the social life should be the foundation of education system and the Apex Court held that such education would not push to periphery the spirit of the Article 28 or secularism.

When we lay emphasis on cultivation of universal values, it should include the cultural values also. The cultural values can not be cultivated in a society, where women are not given ample scope to prove their efficiency in the nation building process including employment, production and decision making.

The spirit of “Protective Discrimination” within the meaning of the Article 15(3), and 16 has not only repressed the concerns of the architects of the Constitution to such a fundamental issue, but also added a scope to the State for playing a meaningful role for protection of the special interests of women on the basis of the Constitutional mandate.

The development of social skill, a key component of liberal education in an inclusive democratic life requires that the implementation of gender justice should be accorded due emphasis, as the vibrancy of
The social life is dependent on the enforcement of the Constitutional mandate in a dynamic way subsuming this core issue amongst the indicators of social skill. The section 51A(e) of the Indian Constitution, embodied in part IV(A) of the constitution states that, “it shall be duty of every citizen of India to promote harmony and spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religion, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities, renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.”

The fundamental rights and duties shall have to be harmoniously construed for sealing the scope of downright deprecation of the spirit of the Article 51(A)(e) as impediment in enjoying the rights guaranteed by the Constitution in the part III. Since rights and duties are correlative, the importance of the both should be understood by the citizens for dispelling the scope of any conflict in enjoying the fundamental rights and performing corresponding duties. The behaviour of the people of the Country must be democratic and reasonable by championing the cause of a value based life. The ambrosia of a responsive democratic system can be imbibed, when social skills are accorded due importance with that of professional and working skills in knowledge based globalized competitive world.

The Article, 51A, Part IV of the Indian Constitution and the Preamble of the Constitution of India have accorded wide scope to the Supreme Court of India to define “un enumerated rights” under Article 21 of of protests against the oppressive political regimes. The substantive rights being the offspring of the long drawn struggle against oppressive socio economic systems extend meaningful support to the traditional rights and co-existence of both in a civil society would lay the foundation of “Human Rights”. India being committed to the cause of establishing a strong welfare state shall have to translate the goals of the Constitution in to reality. The Apex court having developed the theory of “core or substantive rights”, viewed that the substantive rights and traditional liberties should march hand in hand. The substantive rights always enhance the traditional liberties which have emerged out of Constitution and transformed into concrete achievements by the taking some proactive measures. The Indian judiciary having imbied the Constitutional mandate over the years devised new strategies for playing a proactive role in shielding traditional and substantive rights of people. The distinguished judges of the Apex Court, namely P N Bhagawati, Krishna Iyer, D A Desai and Chinnappa Reddy inter alia championed the cause of the masses for protection in of the fundamental rights in a dynamic and meaningful way.

Madan J, a judge of the Supreme Court of India justified the role of a activist judge by stating “A judge who denies himself judicial activism, denies himself the role of a judge. Nature abhors vacuum, take away judicial activism and tyranny will step into fill vacant sphere” “Exceptions Under Article 16(3),(4),(4-A) and (4-B) and 5 and the spirit of protective discrimination”

The Article 16(1) of the constitution of India has guaranteed to the citizens equality of opportunity in matters of employment to any post under the State with certain exceptions under the above mentioned clauses of the said Article. The equality of opportunity in matter of appointment under Article 16(1) should mean the equality among the same or identical class of persons and employees and equality between members of separate independent classes. The Supreme Court of India in a number of judgments without ambiguity upheld that special treatment should be granted to the women within the parameters of Constitutional laws, whenever the situation warrants the same.

The denial of maternity relief to a woman employee on the pretext of being a casual employee was challenged by Delhi
Municipal Workers and the Tribunal after hearing the petition ruled in favour of the petitioner within the framework of Maturity Benefit Act, 1961. When the matter came for hearing before the Supreme Court Of India in the form of special leave petition, the Apex Court relying on the Article 39,42,43 of the Constitution of India vis a vis the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, determined the legality of the submissions of the petitioner. The Court examined matter within the ambit of the Article 42, which speaks of “Just and human conditions of work” and “maternity relief”. Although the same is not legally enforceable, the Constitutionality of the impugned action was critically examined by the Court. The learned court also by drawing inspiration from the Article 11 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women upheld the order passed by Industrial Tribunal for the grant of maternity benefits to the female workers engaged on daily wage basis by the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

The spirit of Protective Discrimination and special relief to be granted by the State to the women is an inalienable right and the Apex Court held the same to be inviolable. The Supreme Court of India in a judgement delivered in CB Muthamma vs Union of India ruled that certain discriminatory provisions of the India Foreign Service Rule, 1961 should be expunged immediately from the Statute, because of contravention of the Article 16 of the constitution of India by such rules. The petitioner in the instant case challenged the condition of giving an undertaking by a woman employee at the time of joining the Foreign Service to the effect that, she would resign from the service in the event of her marriage. The petitioner termed the rule as discriminatory for blatantly violating the spirit of the constitution of India under Article 16 and prayed before the learned Court for shielding the interests of women employees from such unreceptive discrimination. The petitioner was denied promotion for entering in to marriage under the scope of the impugned rule. The Apex Court held finally the rules as “ultra vires” of the Constitution and directed the Central Government to overhaul all the service rules. But the Court in the judgement categorically ruled that scope of exclusion of the persons of either sex would continue in certain jobs, wherever special preference to a particular sex is necessary by taking in to consideration the nature of the job, sensibility of a particular sex and other possible consequences fraught with the selection of persons. The learned Court also clearly stated that men and women are not equal in all situations and occupations and the State can frame separate rules for protection of the substantive rights by taking in to consideration the sensitivities attached to a particular sex, which should not however transgress the inherent spirit embodied in the Constitution meant for the purpose under Article 15(3) and 16.

The Apex Court Air India vs. Nargesh Murza also held that the service rules of the Air India had violated the Article 14,15,16 of the constitution, as the airhostesses under the regulation had to retire at the age of 35 years or if got married within four years of their service or on first pregnancy. Though the Apex Court in the instant case held the conditions of retirement on the ground of pregnancy or discretion-ary power of the managing director as absolute infringement of the Constitutional man-date, however stated that the regulations preventing an Air hostess from marrying within four years of her service as reasonable and non discriminatory. The Court did not find anything detrimental to the health and dignity of women in marrying between the age group of 20-23 years after joining the service.

The above mentioned judgments of the Apex Court have clearly affirmed that, the coordination between the object and implementation of any decision of the State with regard to Article 14,15 and 16 of the Indian Constitution, should be reasonably examined for laying distinction between
“discriminatory and non discriminatory” regulations or decisions under the canopy of protective discrimination.

Savour-faire of the judiciary in understanding the crux of the issues involving the empowerment of women and intention of a legislature would continue to guide the State in implementing the policies meant for the empowerment of women, children and weaker sections of the society.

In Gayatri Devi Pansami Vs. State of Orissa and others, the Supreme Court of India by transcending all the complexities exhibited scintillating prudence by accepting a special leave petition filed by the petitioner. The petitioner was a lady pharmacist who was allotted a pharmacy by the Chief of Medical Officer of the district, Bolangi, Orissa in the campus of the Sub-divisional Hospital of Patnagarh and her selection was made on the basis of the Govt.”s decision mentioning that, 30% of the 24 hours medical stores shall be reserved for women. The condition was challenged in the High Court of the state by raising the contention that the selection was backed by extraneous considerations and not on the terms and conditions of the advertisement. However the High Court, found no deviation in the allotment of the Medical Store as the same was very much in consonance with the policy and advertisement for the purpose. However the Division Bench of the High Court on appeal ruled that fresh applications should be called for the allotment of the Medical Store as the Government had not identified the stores to be reserved for the women before processing the allotment.

The Bench of the High Court in the appeal laid emphasis on completion of the process of identification of the Medical Stores, since the order of the allotment was primarily governed by the policy of the State Government for giving 30% of such Medical Stores to the Women. Though the question of eligibility of the petitioner as a registered Pharmacist was also raised before the Bench, the Bench did not specifically rule on the same.

The Supreme Court of India on appeal after going through the facts subsequently, viewed that the High Court was too pedantic and technical in construing the spirit of the Government’s decision regarding the grant of preference to the women candidates in the allotment of medical stores in the state of Orissa and held the invalidation of the allotment of appellant by the Division Bench of the High Court as iniquitous. The Apex Court held that the High Court should have construed the order of the Government by keeping in view the purpose and substance and the object underlying the same. The Apex Court also viewed that he High Court should have been guided by the spirit of promoting the policy decision of the Govt rather than stifling it. The Supreme Court in the instant case set the rule that, “reservations of seats” and giving of preference to a particular class or entity were two different principles. The Apex Court also held that due to any omission or lapse on the part of the ministerial officers as to the identification of a shop before advertisement, the legitimate claim of a lady applicant should not be allowed to suffer by defeating the very purpose and object of the reservation itself.

The view of the Division Bench of the High Court would render irrelevant the very object of the State Government for implementing welfare schemes for rehabilitation of women. The state Govt by launching the scheme intended to promote self reliance of women and by providing employment opportunities to them the goal of empowerment of women was tried to be achieved. The impugned order of the Division Bench of the High Court was set aside by the Apex Court on the above considerations.9

The Constitutional mandate for maintaining equality of opportunity in appointment of persons in public offices under Article 16(1) and (2) and Article 15(3) of the Constitution, if not harmoniously
construed, the very purpose of the same would stand defeated. The prudence of State in imbibing the spirit of the Articles 16(1),(2) and 15(3) are absolutely required for transformation of the spirit in to reality. These Articles have been incorporated in the Constitution for maintaining equity by protecting the sustentative and core interests of the women in availing of the opportunities of employment under the State.

**Conclusion**

The Constitution of India being the supreme source of all the laws of the land has meaningfully manacled the state from taking any discriminatory measures against women by taking in to consideration the vulnerable aspects in implementation of gender justice. The architects of the nation at the time of framing the Constitution being acquainted with backwardness, impediments and hurdles in advancement of the socio, economics and political rights of the women and weaker sections of the society, embodied some important provisos under different Articles of the Constitution of India and the Part III, Part IV and Part IV-A of the same have represented the basic goals required for transformation of visions in to achievements.

But, after the six decades of independence the nation is still lagging behind in ensuring gender justice and implementation of the Constitutional mandate in to reality. Perusing the judgements delivered by the Apex Court in a number of cases, we may frame the following parameters for avoiding the executive and administrative arbitrariness, caprice and discriminations to the women, whenever the Constitutional mandate with regard to the accordance of special treatment to the women for empowering them in the socio-economic and political life appears to be essential. The multiplicity of the issues centring round the object of women empowerment under scope of protective discrimination may be summarized as below for guidance of the stake-holders so that the constitutional goals are not diluted by arbitrary and nonchalant acts of the State –

1. The intention of the legislature in construing the spirit of a welfare scheme should get primacy over hyper technicalities, which may otherwise eclipse the very purpose of the scheme.

2. The concatenation of the object of legislation with that of the crux of an executive action is material for examining the legality and validity of any decision in case of its intrusion in to the constitutional mandate. Substance should get importance rather than form in case of interpretation on such matters.

3. Any decision(s) infected by nefarious objects with regard to the protection of special interests of women would ipso facto have the effect of filibustering the advancement of women in Socio, economic and political life of the nation. Therefore by resorting to constitutional remedies such strategies should be defeated for strengthening the pillars of social justice.

4. The spirit of harmonious construction of Statutes should be judiciously applied for removing contrariety of objects and implementation.

It may be concluded that the future of India will be murky unless the spirit of “protective discrimination” is implemented in true sense of the term for addressing the issues relating to the empowerment of women through employment in government jobs. These aspects being ingredients of social skills should be accorded due importance for cultivation of constitutional and cultural values by the society for raising the vibrancy of our democratic life.

**Notes and References**


State of Tamil Nadu vs. L. Abu Kavur Bai (AIR 1984, SC 626).
AIR 2002, SC 3176.
Municipal Corporation Of Delhi vs Female workers (Muster Roll) and others 2000, (2) SCR(171), Case no SLP(civil) 127970 of 1998.
AIR 1979, SC 1868.
Effects of Induced Feeding on Trace Element Profile and Isotopic Ratios of Carbon in Himalayan Domestic Goat (Capra jharal)

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Introduction
As we know that diet is a basic and necessary component for the survival of any living organism/animal. Scientific investigations also revealed that for the survival of any organism/animal/person, it is important to get a specific quantity of calories from their diet. But it is also clarified from biological analysis that the access amount of calories taken by any living system is stored in different parts of their bodies, it is stored in the form of composition of various elements, which they can use during starvation. Not only this, some part of the access calories are converted in organic form and stored into the hard body parts i.e. bones and axial systems of the animal. In present scenario reconstruction of palaeodiet is an important aspect of archaeological and anthropological research, as it is significantly helpful for reconstructing the systematic history of dietary behavior of ancient occupation.

To estimate the palaeo-diet and palaeo - dietary behavior of ancient animal/human population, various types of traditional and analytical scientific techniques and methods have been used by the various archaeologists in different parts of the world. Based on the applied scientific methods, it has also been observed that the levels of a particular trace elements preserved in bone provide a potential gateway to reconstruct the diet of an extinct primate species and archaic human. Strontium (Sr), barium (Ba), magnesium (Mg), calcium (Ca) and zinc (Zn) are some of the most useful trace elements for dietary reconstruction. Meanwhile, it is obvious from the studies carried out by Farswan and Price (2002); Price et al. (1994); Pate (1994); Hollund, Higham, Belinskij and Korenevskij (2010); Al-Bashaireh, and Al-Muheisen (2011) etc. that following basic principles are useful in reconstruction of palaeodiet of any animal being.

1. Higher concentration of Sr, Ca, Mg, Zn and lower values of Ba and Ba/Sr ratios in the bones of any animal, as compared to the reference samples, clearly indicates about the consumption of marine diet.
2. Continuous intake of terrestrial diet deducted the concentration level of Mg, Sr and Zn in the bones of any organism as compared to reference samples, while the same intake of diet increases the values of Ba and Ba/Sr ratios in the bones.
3. Lower values of Mg in animal bone always indicate about the consumption of terrestrial diet, while higher values of the same indicate the consumption of marine diet.
4. Carnivores generally have higher concentration level of Zn in their bone than the herbivores.
5. Higher ratio of bone Sr-To-Ca and Ba-To-Ca represent a greater percentage of vegetable food in their diet and lower ratio of the same indicate greater percentage of meat in their diet.

However, if we go through the survey of Indian archaeological data it has been observed that the study of the potential application of inorganic analysis of excavated human and animal bones to reconstruct the past diet is very limited, and it believed that it happened due to our rudimentary understanding of the process of passing of elements from diet to bone and also stability of these elements in bone. Though, some studies on the trace element profile of archaeological faunal remains recovered from Garhwal Himalaya and some taphonomic bones have been carried out by Farswan and Price (2002), Farswan (2007 & 2012), Farswan and Pharswan (2009 & 2012) and Farswan et al. (2014) but still a lot of analytical studies on the chemical analysis of faunal remains in Indian context is pending.

Keeping in view of the earlier studies on bone chemistry as well as to obtain an idea of the average amounts and day by day variations in trace elements to the ordinary diet and also in order to clarify how diet affects inorganic bone structure, we have carried out feeding experiments on some young Himalayan goats, Chapra jharal. This experiment was conducted with the help of a local butcher as these goats were procured for butchering purpose by him. The experimental goats were fed with different types of induced diets along with their normal diet for 08 months. The aim of the present study was mainly to see the effects of various diets on trace element profile of bone and isotopic ratios of carbon as the dietary indicator.

**Materials and Methods**

For the purpose of feeding experiments a contract of 08 months was fixed with the local butcher and feeding experiment was started with three young goats of about same age group were fed with seven different types of locally available protein rich induced diets, such as wheat, casein, black gram, rajma, black bean and manduwa, along with their normal food. Besides two goats, one goat of the same age group was fed with normal diet during the experimental period; it was termed as controlled goat. Feeding experiments was carried out for 08 months on contract basis with a local butcher, as he had procured the experimental young goats for butchering. A fixed amount of each induced diet i.e. 100 gram per day was given to the experimental goats along with their normal diet for the period of 08 months.

After termination of the experiments all the three goats were butchered by the butcher for their professional purpose. We have procured all the long bones (femur, radius-ulna, tibia-fibula and humerus) from these three goats from his shop and all the flesh, tendon cartilage and other non-bone tissue were removed from each of the bone sample. This was done with the help of edge of a glass. Each long bone samples recovered from 03 experimental goat were marked accordingly. 50% samples from each goat were buried at different levels of soil i.e. 60, 120 and 180 centimeters depth from surface level. Rest 50% of the bone samples from 02 experimental and 01 controlled goat was used for the estimation of isotopic ratios of carbon and concentration level of different elements, now these bone samples from each goat were broken to expose the medullary
cavity and cleaned again with sand paper to remove non bone tissues.

For elemental analysis the selected cleaned bone samples were again broken into small pieces, a few millimeters in diameter, placed in separate glass vial (20 cc liquid scintillation vials with linear lids), rinsed with de-ionized water, covered again with de-ionized water and allowed in a Ultrasonic bath for thirty minutes. After sonication, the liquid was then drained and all the samples were rinsed again with de-ionized water. Later on the bone pieces in the same vial were covered with 1-Molar acetic acid solution and allowed to sit at room temperature and are removed after half an hour. The acid washed bone were then rinsed with de-ionized water and dried in an oven at 80-90 degree Celsius for overnight. Approximately one and half gram (1.5 gm.) of each bone sample was taken into pre-labeled porcelain crucible and these crucibles were then placed into a muffle furnace at 725-degree Celsius for eight hours, to ash the samples.

For each sample, 50 milligram (0.50 gram) of bone ash was weighed into a disposable 16x25 mm Pyrex test tube. A reference (H5), (B5407) (B1026) and a controlled sample were also included in addition to the experimental samples. One milliliter of concentrated nitric acid was added to each test tube (using micropipette) and the tubes were placed in an aluminium heater block on a hot plate and heated to 100-120 degree Celsius for one hour, allowed to cool and diluted with 16 milliliters of 5% nitric acid to a total volume 17 milliliter. Finally the solution obtained was then introduced directly into the Inductively Coupled Plasma (ICP) Emission spectrophotometer for elemental analysis.

For isotopic ratios of carbon the long bones of both experimental and controlled goats were separated carefully and fragments of each were ground in a Spex mill/grinder. The resultant powders were pretreated in 1.5 % sodium hypochlorite solution to remove organic material and 1 M acetic acid to remove secondary carbonates and more soluble apatite fractions. Each step was followed by thorough rinsing in distilled water. These samples were submitted to space research laboratory of University of Wisconsin, Madison for carbon isotope analysis. The powdered samples were reacted with 100% O-phosphoric acid in ISOCARB on line carbonate separation system of ratio recording Atomic Mass Spectrometer. The isotopic ratio is presented as delta per mill (‰) against PDB standard. The value of isotopic ratios of carbon is obtained through the following expressions.

\[ \delta^{13}C = \frac{\left( \frac{^{13}C}{^{12}C} \right)_{\text{Sample}} - \left( \frac{^{13}C}{^{12}C} \right)_{\text{Standard}}}{\left( \frac{^{13}C}{^{12}C} \right)_{\text{Standard}}} \times 1000 \]

Analytical results obtained from inductively coupled Plasma Emission Spectrophotometer as well as Mass Spectrometer are calculated statistically.

**Results and Discussions**

Mean values of trace element as well as isotopic ratios of carbon for different experimental goats and induced diet are presented in Tables-1, 2 & 3. The main aim of the present study was to see the effects of various induced diet on isotopic profile of carbon and concentration level of different trace elements in bones of experimental and controlled goat. The detailed experimental setup and methodology has been explained in material and method section.

Before going through results it is also important to clarify about the selection of seven induced diets. The chemical analysis revealed that these traditional local food grains have a rich nutritional value, therefore, these diets, such as Wheat, Casein, Black Gram and Black Bean, Manduwa, Rajma and Jhangora were selected for the purpose of induced diet. As Lambert and Homeyer (1993) reported that wheat is high in Mg, Ba, fat and fibre. However, casein is high in protein; low in Ca, Sr, Ba, Zn, Fe, fat, fibre as compared to meat. If we see the elemental
composition of rice then we find that it shows higher values of Mg and lower concentration of Ca, Zn and fiber. Groupe ((194), Pate (1994) and Farswan and Pharswan (2009) have also noticed the same patterns in various types of archaeological study. In present study the estimated results of trace elements from various induced diet are presented in Table-2 which are also showing similarity and positive correlation with results obtained by the earlier workers. The same pattern is also obtained from the analysis of isotopic ratios of carbon in various induced diets.

The experimental results presented in Table-1 & 2 clearly indicated that the induced diets have played important role to increase the concentration of trace elements in experimental goats moderately as compared to controlled goat / reference sample. A positive correlation in between induced diet and concentration of elements derived from the bones of experimental goats came into existence, as in case of all the experimental goats, concentration of Ca, Sr, Ba, Mg, Na and Zn increases gradually in comparison to the controlled goat and reference sample. If we compare the results of isotopic ratios of carbon in induced diet and bones of experimental goat then we also observed that these results are positively correlated with each other. Not only had this, it is also noticed that the concentrations of different elements are within the profile of herbivore group.

**Conclusion**

Experimental analytical results from induced diets and experimental goats finally indicated that such type of experimental studies in modern occupation is significantly helpful in the establishment of base line dietary data of trace elements and isotopic ratio of various elements, which will not only be helpful to the researchers and archaeologist but it will also be useful to the students of history, archaeology, anthropology and other multidisciplinary subjects as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table-1 Mean Concentration Values of Different Elements in the Bones of Experimental and Controlled Goat after termination of the Induced Feeding Experiment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bones of</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induced Goat-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Capra jharal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Induced Goat-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Capra jharal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Goat</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Capra jharal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal Ref-1 Herbivore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrestrial Ref-2 Omnivore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnivore Ref-3</td>
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<tr>
<th>Table-2 Mean Concentration Values of Different Elements in different induced diet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Diet</td>
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88
### Table-3 Isotopic Ratio of Carbon in Induced Diet and Bones of Experimental, Controlled Goat after termination of feeding experiment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Induced diet</th>
<th>Isotopic Ratios of Carbon (Δ¹³C) in %o (Per Mill)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Casein</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Black Gram</td>
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<td>Black Bean</td>
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<td>Manduwa</td>
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<td>Rajma</td>
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<td>Jhangora</td>
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#### References


Gandhian Revolution in Assam 1920-1922

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Indian national movement had a strong legacy and vision. It not only revolutionized Indian society, economy but also created vast changes in society of India and the world. Imperialism and imperial powers began to crack as usual way. Fight for the imperialism got momentum – Third World power began to gain momentum.

Indian Nation began to emerge. Here we may quote the following words of Professor Bipin Chandra, “It was Lokmanya Tilak who first used the phrase – India is a nation in the making. The British used to say India is a geographical expression, not a nation. Tilak never asserted that we are a nation”. He said, “True, we are not, but we are becoming a nation. Surendranath Banerjea, one of the founders of the Indian national movement, wrote his autobiography and its title was Nation in Making. Therefore, there was a consciousness that India had entered the process of becoming a nation on the basis of its diversities. This notion of consolidation of Indian people on the basis of the acceptance of the full flowering of the diversity – this was a very very important part of the vision of Indian freedom struggle.”

Mahatma Gandhi brought radical change in methodology & strategy of struggle for freedom. He brought common people into the vortex of freedom struggle. Our social rituals, customs, traditions, women’s position etc. changed. Indian National Congress became all India party and it constituted many layers of sub – parties like socialists, democrats, communists etc. At this, beloved part of India, Assam acted and participated in the freedom struggle. The paper is to examine: Whether did Assam challenge the British Imperial Power? How far did it follow Gandhian way in challenging the Raj?

No doubt, here grass roots level work is not possible because of lack of time, all India politics with reference to Assam is just possible. So I take up the response of Assam towards Non-Cooperation movement. Noted historian Sumit Sarkar says: “Non-cooperation attained a strength which no later phase of the national movement would ever equal.” Further, he said, “The most important development was in the tea gardens of Surma valley, where at Chargola in May 1921 coolies demanded a big wage increase with the shouts of Gandhi Maharaj Ki Jai, followed by a massive exodus of some 8,000 (52% of the labour force here) again amidst declaration that such was Gandhi’s order. There were rumors which had spread that Gandhi-Raj was coming to give them land in the villages from where they had been so forcibly or deceitfully torn away. Further, the militant Non-cooperation was going on. Sporadic strikes and disturbances were being reported in October and December 1921, from tea gardens in Darrang and Sibsagar districts. The officials repeatedly complained that Non-cooperators were active among tea garden labour. We find some contradictory statement also. Most Assam Congress leaders, however, were not at all enthusiastic about strikes in plantations, since some of them (like N.C. Bardaloi) were planters themselves.”

The situation can be gauged by the following facts. A Congress activist’s memoirs recall how his heart was almost frozen...
when some workers came to him one night with a strike proposal.

The climax reached when there were signs also of a no-revenue movement among peasants, and even after Gandhi’s Bardoli retreat, a route march of the Assam Rifles was ordered in Sibsagar for the special benefit of tea garden coolies. (Viceroy to Secretary of State, 20 February, 1922). The 1921 days left a deep impression on Assamese literature, through the poetry of ‘Assam-Kesari’ Ambikagiri Roy Chaudhauri as well as numerous folksongs where Gandhi Raj was substituted for Krishna in Vaishnava lyrics. So we have a good impact of Non-Cooperators in Assam and tea-garden labourers played leading role in Non-cooperation movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. The grass root laboures had abiding faith in leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. They also believed that piece of land would be given to the tillers in short while by landlords.

The various other programmes of Non-cooperation movements were carried out. As for instance, the prohibition work was the central point wherein villagers were concerned. Their social habits were harmful and the uplift was necessary to raise the standard of common people. In order to keep the idea in view, Bardoli session of the Indian National Congress formulated a detailed programme. According to Gandhiji’s instructions “the Congress workers in Assam had organized an anti-opium campaign to remove the evils of excessive addictions to opium. In this connection Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Rajendra Prasad visited Assam and addressed various meetings to impress upon the local people the need for eradicating the evil.” Rajendra Prasad toured some villages. He felt that their tour was a great success.5

Assam got an opportunity to hold a session of Indian National Congress at Gauhati in December 1926. The author of the article knows the election of its President.6 Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad persuaded Mazharul-Haque7 to hold the presidency of the Congress. But the internal infighting in Congress and subsequent decline in Congress politics did not convince Haque to be elected as the President of the Conference. Haque was a moralist and true in politics. He was contemporary to Mahatma Gandhi, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bhupendranath Basu, S.M. Samrath, M. A. Jinnah. He had very crystal clear outlook of the solution of long standing Hindu-Muslim problem. Finally, Mr. Srinivasan Iyengar was elected President of that Congress Session of 1926. The Congress session discussed the achievements of the policy and programmes of the Congress inked by Mahatma Gandhi. In order to understand character of the welcome address delivered by a noted freedom fighter, Mr. T.R. Phookan8 it becomes here necessary to go through his speeches that would explain activities and the programme of the Congress. The Congress programme was keynote to Gandhian ideology and activities. Spread of Khaddar, socialization and ideology of Hindu – Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, establishment of national schools & colleges and establishments of national courts and panchayats were programmes of the Congress.

The following words indicate the Hindu – Muslim culture reached at height in Assam. A bird’s eye view can be had in the speech of welcome address by T.R. Phookan at annual session of Indian National Congress. As for instance, Kamrup, the sacred land of progressive Hinduism is also a place of great pilgrimage for the Muslims, for there is holy Powa Mecca at Hajo within 15 miles from Gauhati. It is in Assam where Hindus and Mohammedans have at all times lived in friendliest of friendly terms.”9 “Khadi weaving & spinning has become very old. There were several places in Assam where spinning in cotton, silk, endi and muga are done on an extreme scale, and clothes worth several lacs of rupees produced every year. One centre in Nowgong alone where all
the All India Spinners Association is working, has produced no less than 30,000 yards of khaddar within three months only and in a season where the people do not generally spin."\(^9\)

In weaving we can surely claim to be some of the best weavers of India. Mahatma’s expression that ‘ladies of Assam weave fairy tales in cloth’.\(^1\) Regarding the achievement of Congress it is a fact that Hindu-Muslim unity is a living reality. The Congress shaped the life style of delegates coming from All India like Sheep. “Let us hope, therefore, that the magic influence of this land will enable the fighting groups to settle their differences and make the Hindus and Mohammedans unite the leadership of the Congress like innocent lambs tended by the gentle shepherd of Sabarmati.”\(^12\)

Finally, the spirit of Charkha can be summed up in the following words of Mr. T.R. Phookan, “That tiny little charkha – that wheel of Indian life, moved with unfailing regularity by that mighty little man Mahatma Gandhi, is in my opinion not only spinning yarns for the dumb millions of India, it is not merely laying a straight path for the economic salvation that irresistible world of force of Non-violent, Non-cooperation which alone will be able to check effectively the deadly spirit of imperialism, which is out to crush the soul of independence of the weak and the helpless nations.”\(^13\)

The Gandhian revolution in Assam can be summed up in the following words of Mr. T.R. Phookan, “Non-violent Non-cooperation had worked wonders within the very short time it was practiced. It has animated Indian life with a sense of manhood; it has infused that love for freedom for the motherland which cannot be killed even by the most in-human methods of Bureaucracy. It has taught us that the weakest nation has a right to rebel against the most powerful nation that tries to impose by strength of arms its will against the wish of the people.”\(^14\) The above indicated sayings marked the point that Gandhian ideas and activities during our freedom struggle deeply affected the workings of freedom fighters of Assam. It is a little attempt to work on major topic. However, I am completely silent on regional and local sources like newspapers, periodicals, journals available in Assamese and other languages due to time & space.

**Notes & Reference**

2. ibid, p. 17.
4. ibid, p. 218.
Some Notes on Agrestic Servitude in South India

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The term ‘agrestic servitude’ refers to the servile condition of agrarian slaves, who are engaged in agricultural operations. They are also known as nila adimai (land slaves) in Tamil. The ‘servitude’ means bondage of people, who is totally the property of, and entirely subject to another person, whether by capture, purchase or birth. They were servants completely divested of freedom and personal rights. Another meaning is that the servitude was a human chattel, a legal property of another and was bound to absolute obedience. Sharat Patil in his monumental work ‘Dasa-Sudra Slavery’ describes that the Sanskrit term by which a slave came to be referred to be dasa. It was derived from the root ‘das’, one who performed menial service. The Tamil word ‘nila adimai’ denotes those slaves formally attached to land, transferable along with the land at the time of sale or mortgage. The ‘adiyan’ was a slave, a servant, a devotee and a low caste agrestic serf, cultivating land on condition of receiving a portion of the crop. They were also called pannaiyal in Tamil, referred to form servants of the landed masters. Another Tamil word Pannaik-kiruthal means serve as slave labourer on a farm, bonded for particular period or whole life. The bonded slaves were registered, and the deed was called adimaippattiram (sale deed of slave).

In south India particularly in Tamil country the term ‘adimai’ itself denotes slaves as opposed to kudimai (freeman). The agrarian slaves of south India mostly served in the lands and received a minimum wages from their masters; were known by different names such as agrestic slaves, praedial slaves, allodial slave of the soil, agricultural serfs, ascripti glebae and nila adimai. Burton Stein who use the term adimai, which is strongly stressed that the agrestic bondage in medieval Tamil country. South Indian literature and inscriptive evidences often refer to the existence of slavery. There are frequent references to ‘urimaiccurram’, ‘adimittrial’ in the post-Sangam text Silappathikaram. In ancient Tamil society they were also known as ‘adiurai’. The most of the Tamil scholar also used of more generalized terms such as adimai, adimittrial and adimaikal for the lower caste agrestic slaves. On the other hand Kathleen Gough in her researches has clearly pointed out that the ‘adimais’ from the third and fourth century A.D. were called Paraiyas or the lowest ones and usually were forced to live outside of territorial limits of the village. According to Arnold J. Toynbee “slavery is a non-voluntary system of personal relations resting wholly upon force”. It is a unique phenomenon in the Hindu society, having a special and significant meaning. Generally servitude is a condition in which one human being is owned by another who was considered in law as property, and were deprived most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons.

The ‘servitude’ is one of the oldest social evils in the recorded history of mankind. It has been widely and uncertainly applied to the field labour extracted through force. In part, this terminology stems from British usage of the early 19th century A.D. The usage of the Tamil term ‘adimai’ also refers to persons and families who attached themselves to temple service.
of south India the term ‘servitude’ has got a wide range of meaning and it stands for different degree of dependence and lack of freedom. Francis Buchanan, when he mentions about the slave in Malabar region, uses the caste name of Cheruman (Cherumar) instead of the Malayalam term for slave ‘adima’. This was very natural since by far the largest proportion of the ‘adimas’, were Cherumars as they were known in south Malabar, or Pulaiyas or Pula Cherumas, as they were known in north Malabar, both being of the same castes. It is also significant that word ‘slave’ is invariably used for describing Cherumas. The Pulaiyas and the Cherumas of Malabar region were treated worse than the Paraiyas of Tamil region. The word ‘pula’ the root of the term Pulaiya meant pollution, while ‘cherumi’ the root of the term Cherumas meant poverty. Meanwhile the Pulaiya is a synonym for Cherumas as well as the name of a Tamil caste of hill cultivators in Madurai and Coimbatore regions. Francis Buchanan views that the Pulaiyas were the cultivating caste in Malayalam country also, called as low caste Cherumas or Churmacul. They cultivated Brahmin lands.

In south Carnatic region (Canara), the term ‘slave’ was invariably used to refer to the caste Dhed. The Dhed communities were commonly found in south India as a slave caste, were almost as a synonym for agricultural slaves, served in the master’s land, and received customary allowance of rice, cloth and so on. The Holeya, another agricultural caste, commonly found in the north Carnatic region, served as slave in their master’s land. They are divided into three sub-groups; the Maris, the Meras and the Mundalas, who were mostly agrarian slaves in the Carnatic region.

The term ‘slave’ came into common usage in Europe because of the large number of slaves who were forced into servitude as a result of wars. The slave of the common Western image is first and foremost a commodity, to be bought and sold and inherited. Slave is a chattel, totally in the possession of another person who uses him for private ends. Slave can be inherited, moved or sold without regard to his feelings, and may be ill-treated, sometimes even killed with impunity. Slaves as a group from a class at the very bottom of the social ladder.

The agricultural labourers and servitude are very important facts in the agrarian structure of medieval south Indian society. The term ‘slavery’ and ‘servitude’ may be applied to it, in so far as some agricultural labourers were bought and sold, and others were born into a state where they owed service to the masters on their lands. But terms drawn from European experience do not fit Indian conditions perfectly. One of the most striking and important peculiarities of the Indian forms of servitude is its close connection with the caste system. Most types of servile status were hereditary, and in general the ‘serfs’ and ‘slaves’ belonged to lowest caste. In fact the caste system not only confirmed the economic and social disadvantages of the agricultural labourers, but also gave in some rights of social and ritual nature.

The agrestic slavery was in practice in south India since ancient period. Evidences are available in south Indian literature regarding the existence of slave system. South Indian historian S. Manickam states that institution of slavery existed in Tamil country at least from the early medieval period and exclusively the agrarian and domestic slavery existed in India from the ancient times. Slavery in south India raised its head only when the caste system had taken strong roots between the 8th century and the 16th century A.D. In any slave-owning society, slavery and violence were integral part. The very objective of caste was to segment the feudal society with permanent human bondage. The Brahmanic law extensively provides for slavery and does not permit for the emancipation of slaves unlike the Roman law, which provided for manumission or emancipation of slaves.
The social and religious literatures of the Brahmins are replete with ideas of an unequal society and extensively deal with slavery highlighting the social prestige of the slave owners. In dealing with agrarian slavery in the Tamilnadu, one could learn soon that neither all the landless agricultural labourers engaged in agriculture were living under servile and inhospitable conditions, nor those who were due to various reasons reduced to slavery were fairly free.

II

During the Colonial period, the British officials reported the different forms of agrestic slavery of Tamil country, which was based on voluntary contact between the masters and slaves. It was widely assumed that various forms of bondage had existed in Tamil region from times immemorial. There were in fact, a large number of marginalized communities had been forced in to agrestic servitude. Francis Buchanan, a British official, in his report points out the practice of agrestic slavery in different parts of Madras Presidency. Further he says that in Carnatic region, the Brahmins had much of land; were referred to as landholders seldom cultivated the lands themselves and the task of cultivation process was mostly left to the slaves of the inferior caste called Punchum Bundam, who essentially considered as a class of people comprising, the marginalized communities the Paraiyas, the Pulaiyas, the Chakkiliyas and Totti. Among the community the Paraiyas served as slaves and performed the duties of agricultural labourers in the lands of Mirasidars. These people were owned either by individual land masters or village community as a whole. If they were under individual private owners, the food and asylum of the slaves were master’s responsibility. In case of joint village; they belonged to the community as a whole. F.W.Ellis, an authority of Mirasi system, says that agrarian slaves were a part of the village system and were the backbone of the rural economy. In his documents ‘Papers on Mirasi Right’, has pointed out that it was common among the Mirasidars to have a group of slaves or serfs to cultivate their lands. They were even sold apart from the land. From his opinion we come to know that the Paraiyas, who lived in the villages, where Mirasi right was said to existed, toiled under a state of bondage, which resembled a form of Villeinage (bondage of agricultural serfs in the Western countries). It was also noted that in Tondaimandalam of medieval Tamil country, the lower caste bonded labourers could not be sold separately from the land, which they cultivated, and neither could the land be sold separately from them.

Most of the lands in Tamil country during the medieval and late medieval period vested in the hands of privileged communities of villages. The privileged land owning community were called as Mirasidars, who had virtually monopoly in land ownership, the land were mostly cultivated either through the Pallas, the bonded labourers, or through parakudi (non-resident cultivators), or under tenants. The cultivation of land was carried out under three different systems. The first system was pannai system, under which the Mirasidars cultivated their lands with the assistant of pannaiyals or farm labourers, who were paid daily wages. The second method of cultivation was known as varam or sharing system. Both the Mirasidars and parakudis jointly cultivate the land and shared the produced grains. The third system of cultivation was the least system. This method was adopted by the non-resident Mirasidars, who shared none of the risks of cultivation and got only a stipulated quantity of grain out of total produce of their lands. But in kottadimai (bonded slave) system, they had no right, only they had to live with the master assistant.

Many of the castes are included in the British official records as labour castes. The Pallis are also included in all the Census Reports under the agricultural labour castes, they alone were not untouchables. Together with the fact that few of the early reports on
serfdom in the Tamil districts mention them, this makes it unlikely that they were traditionally serfs. Indeed, the Collector of Tanjore wrote in 1819 that the slaves here were of two castes only, the Pallar and the Paraiyar whereas Ellis stated that the agricultural slave castes were the Pallis, the Pallars and the Paraiyars. Again Ellis states that Pallis were the slaves of the Brahmans and that the other two castes served non-Brahmins. While according to the 1881 Census of India, many of the Pallis probably were once the agrestic slaves of the Vellala landlords. Bryan Pfaffenberger says that two most important castes were the menial labourers, the Nalavas and the Pallar. The slaves lived apart from their Vellala masters, often in Palmyra groves where they were permitted to forage and to garden for their subsistence. However, their master had the right to call them to work at any times, and when he did so; he was obliged to provide them only with meals and clothing.

Among the agrarian community the Pallas are a class of agricultural labourers believed to be one of the earliest inhabitants of Tamil Nadu. Tilling of the soil and cultivation of paddy has been down the ages mainly in the hands of Palla community. They were serfs in the lands of the individuals and temples till the end of the first half of the 19th century A.D. They cultivated the lands of the non-Brahmin high castes such as Nayar, Pillai, and Mudaliyar. They were engaged in agrarian activities such as ploughing the land, sowing the seed and watering the field. The female members were employed in transplanting the paddy and assisted the male members in harvest work. In early stage the Pallas enjoyed special privileges in the society. According to an inscription of medieval period, they seem to have enjoyed a number of privileges. But, Pallu literature describes the Pallas being poor agricultural serfs. The Pallas lived in Cheri (residential quarters) are known as pacheri or patcheri. An inscription mentions that the Pallas lived in separate streets called pallar teru (street of the Pallar community). It is a tradition that the inhabitants of the Pallas are on the eastern side of the main villages. This Palla community belonged to the Idangai (Left Hand) groups. They were subjected to slavery by the later waves of people. Antiquity and hereditary occupation made them expert in the art of cultivation. As landless serfs, the Pallas was the worst sufferers in the society.

The system of agrarian slavery under which the Pallas was subjected to hardships was known as kottadimai. According to this system the whole family of a man entered into slavery on a hereditary basis. They were called slaves after the name of the prime god of the temple to which they belonged without any human rights. They were denied the rights of land ownership. They were forced to sell their services for an indefinite period. Their masters enjoyed full rights to extract every kind of service from them. They worked in the lands with all their family members. The Mallar, the foremost landed warrior community of early Tamil country, after becoming suppressed caste with the new name Pallas, were in a condition of ‘bonded serfdom’ by which the children of the Pallas were also made as slaves.

The most of the marginalized communities of the Tamil society were reduced to slavery by the higher castes and they appear always to have been in enslaved conditions, and it is more natural to suppose that they were reduced to a servile condition by physical oppression, than to suppose that they were enslaved by operation of ordinary social causes. The Paraiyus, who were scattered over a large part of Tamil country comprised the largest marginalized agricultural community in the medieval period were treated as slaves. They were the traditional drummers, who performed during the funerals and village festivals. But with the proliferation of their numbers, they were forced to undertake degraded occupation, such as those of scavengers and grave
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diggers. Thus, they came to be stigmatized as a degraded community, whose touch was considered to be polluting. They had been dethroned from the position and reduced to a state of servitude and degeneration by Brahmin influence.

By the dictates of caste rules marginalized castes were forced to accept the status of ‘slave castes’ and to a very large extent their economic and social disadvantages and civil disabilities had been determined by caste. The communities who considered as agrarian slaves were almost transferable with land and were obliged to perform services to others under condition of social inferiority and restrictions. But they played a vital role in the cultivation of paddy and other crops. Thus their identity was closely associated with the land.

III

The agrastic slaves of south India were mostly employed in agriculture in their master’s land. They were of a low social status, and were treated as untouchables by the caste-Hindus. The men slaves were concerned in ploughing the land, sowing the seeds and the irrigating land on which rice was grown. The women slaves were engaged in transplanting, seedlings, reaping, threshing, etc. These slaves were also employed in constructing temporary rooms, or pandals and they did free work for their master during marriages or other festivals. Generally the agrastic slaves spent their whole time in the land, but the wages paid to them were not equal to the work performed. They got a thatched hut and yard frees; also certain dues in grain and presents in clothes, grain and money. In general the agrastic slaves solely depended on their masters and had very little freedom.

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Places of Historical Importance in the Punjab: A Case Study of Hoshiarpur District

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Situated in the north–western part of India, Punjab is one of the smallest but the most progressive state of India. It derives its name from the two Persian words: ‘Punj’ meaning five and ‘ab’ meaning water. Punjab was the land of five rivers, namely the Satluj, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jhelum. This nomenclature came into usage during the reign of Akbar and it referred to the Mughal province of Lahore. The Punjab, in its present form, which came into being on 1 November, 1966, is only a segment of the erstwhile Punjab which stretched from the river Yamuna in the east to the river Indus in the west. Before independence, the former Punjab province and its native states spread over an area of 3,46,389 sq. kms i.e., nearly seven times the area of the present Punjab. In 1947, Punjab was partitioned into two parts, the more prosperous and developed part went to Pakistan and the relatively backward eastern part became part of India. Soon after independence, the princely states were constituted into a separate political unit called PEPSU. In 1956, at the time of reorganization of the Indian states, PEPSU was merged with the Punjab. In 1966, Punjab was once again reorganized on linguistic basis. Haryana was carved as separate state out of it and the hill districts were merged with Himachal Pradesh. Triangular in shape, Punjab extends from 29°-32’ to 32°-30’ north latitude and 73°-53’ to 76°-56’ east longitude covering an area of 50,362 sq. km.¹

Hoshiarpur, the submontane district of the Punjab lies in its north-east. It is surrounded by Himachal Pradesh on the east, while the river Beas separates Hoshiarpur from Himachal Pradesh in the north and the Gurdaspur district in the west. The river Satluj in its south separates it from Rupnagar district.² As compared to other districts of the Punjab, Hoshiarpur district has a greatest topographic variety. The Shiwalik Hills which follow a north-west south-east alignment and run almost throughout the length of the district have influenced the disposition of its other physiographic units. The intra-district variations in local relief, slope, topographic texture, arrangement of landform features and superficial mate-rial divide the district into four units, viz., the hilly tract, the foothill plain, the floodplains of the Beas and the Satluj and the upland plain. Excavations at various sites in Hoshiarpur district have revealed that the entire area near the Shiwalik foothills was selected for habitation not only by the early palaeolithic man but also by those in the protohistoric and historic periods. The perennial supply of water and patches of good agricultural land and pastures ensured
them a living. It is in these regions that the link between earlier Stone Age and protohistoric periods-neolithic periods may probably be found. During excavations, seven early Stone Age sites at Atbarapur, Rehmanpur and Takhni, 30-40 kms north of Hoshiarpur at the foot of the Shiwalik Hills, have been discovered having stone artifacts. These artifacts, approximately 4, 35, 000-1, 50, 000 years old, include hand axe, stone implements, chopping- tools and cleavers.3

Some historians believe that two Diwans of Muhammad Bin Tughlak (1325-1351 A.D.) named Hargobind and Ram Chand founded the district of Hoshiarpur while others believe that it was founded by Hoshiar Khan, a resident of Bajwara (a suburb village of Hoshiarpur), who lived about the same period and after whom the town was named.4 Though it is a debatable question yet the excavations and archaeological remains at Dholbaha, 30 kms north-west of Hoshiarpur district, and some local legends throw much valuable light on the ancient history of the district. Archaeology has fixed the antiquity of this picturesque valley to the Pleistocene period. Local tradition associates this place with the legendary king Dhol, however according to another local tradition the name Dholbaha is derived from ‘Dhavalavaha’(white rivulet), which symbolizes the crystalline water of a gently murmuring stream winding its way along the silvery bed of glittering sand. Dholbaha is known as an ancient temple-town and the tradition of temple building and sculptural art further flourished during the early medieval period (700-1200 A.D.) The existence of a large number of amalakas (crowning members of temple spires) buried walls, plinths and other architectural pieces establish the fact that a large number of temples were built at Dholbaha in the earlier period. A 500 years old Mahishasuramardini temple, a temple of goddess Mansa Devi and a Shiv temple are very famous. Shiv temple was constructed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh out of reverence for a saint Shital Giri who detained Maharaja’s troops when he was going on his way to Kangra expedition. By the side of the temple, there is a samadhi of saint Shital Giri. Apart from temples, the oldest sandstone granite sculptures excavated from Dholbaha are Vishnu head of 7th-8th century A.D., Vishnu head of 10th century, reclining Ganesha, Shiva-Parvati seated on Nandi Mahishasuramardini, female figures and statue depicting four jina images seated back to back. These are exhibited in the museum maintained by the Archaeology Department, Punjab.5

Local legends associate some places in the district with the Pandavas. A place named Sri Pandain, eight miles north of Hajipur, having a well and a temple (Shiwala) served by gosains derived its name from Pandavas. Dasuya, a sub-division of Hoshiarpur district, also known as ‘Virata Ki Nagri’ was founded 5000 years ago by RajaVirata. In Mahabharata it is mentioned that the Pandavas served the Raja for 13 years during their banishment.6 During their exile they also spent some time at Bham, a place situated at a distance of 13 kms.
Vishnu Head From Dholbaha

from Chabewal on Hoshiarpur- Garhshankar road. This fact is commemorated by a temple (shiwala) known as “Shivan da Mandir”. The temple is unique in construction and one has to step downwards to pay homage to the deity. A temple Kamahi Devi originally called ‘Kamakshi Devi’ situated in a village Beh Nangal, tehsil Dasuya was built by Pandavas.

Garshankar, situated at a distance of 40 kms from Hoshiarpur on the Hoshiarpur- Garshankar road, is also an ancient town. A fort which was built by Raja Shankar Das on the site of the present town was conquered by Mahmud Ghaznawi and subsequently given to the sons of Raj Man Singh of Jaipur State by Muhammad Ghauri. The Mahtons, the original inhabitants of this place were overpowered and driven out by the Rajputs in 1175 A.D. A Kali mosque and a well built by Raja Shankar Das are now in ruins. A fair is held every year at the shrine of a saint known as ‘Bara Rauza’. Balachaur, situated near to Garshankar, was also inhabited by Mahton Rajputs. A smadh named after Baba Balraj, a local saint, is held in great esteem by the people of the area.

Bajwara, situated at a distance of about 3 kms to the south-east of Hoshiarpur, was founded by three immigrants from Ghazni, one of whom was Baju Baora, a renowned singer of the Mughal period. It is believed that Bajwara derived its name from Baju Baora. The town of Bajwara was broken into small divisions by Raja Todar Mal, revenue minister of Akbar, as a punishment to the people for not showing him due respect. An Afghan ruler, Sher Shah Suri, was born in the fort of Bajwara. In 1801, Raja Sansar Chand, a hill chief, ousted Sardar Bhup Singh Faizullapuria from this town. Later on, it was annexed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1825. The British converted the fort of Bajwara into a military prison. A historic fort in a dilapidated condition exists in a village of Malot, 10 kms from Hariana. It was built during Bhelol Lodhi’s period and was used by Babur to imprison rebellious governor of the Punjab, Daulat Khan Lodhi and Ghazi Khan.
Muhammadan shrines are also found at several places in the district. A tomb of Shah Nur Jamal, a Muslim saint, situated at a distance of about 15 km from Hoshiarpur dates back to 1250 A.D. There are three graves inside the tomb; the central one is of Shah Nur Jamal and on the left and right are the graves of his parents. Before partition, it was a place of great religious importance as a large number of Muslims gathered to pay their homage. There are two old mosques in Hariana town. The mosque of Mufti situated to the west was built by Haji Sambal Khan in the reign of Akbar in 1597-98 A.D. The Qazi’s mosque is a little larger of somewhat later date and is without inscription. There is a famous Muhammadan shrine of a saint Sakhi Sarwar at Ahyapur where annual fair is held. Besides, there are four darghas (tombs) of Muhammadan saints at Tanda and two at Jaja near Tanda. At one fair is held in Muharram and at the other offerings are made for the recovery of sick cattle. The tombs of Mahi Shah at Jhangi Mahi and Bulla Shah at Manaswal are also famous. Khankah of Hazarat Shami Sahib is situated at Sham Chaurasi. The tomb of Adina Beg, the last Muhammadan governor of the Doab who died of colic at Khanpur, a village near Hoshiarpur, is situated at Naloyan.  

After the withdrawal of the Afghan hold in the north-western region of the country, the tract was divided among Sikh leaders of various groups who organized themselves into Misls. These Misls continued to fight against one another all through the difficult times in the eighteenth century. From 1739 to 1811, the district of Hoshiarpur gained historical and political importance as it became an apple of discord among Misl chiefs. Jassa Singh, the founder of Ramgarhia Misl, established his control over the territories lying in Dasuya. His son, Jodh Singh, succeeded him in 1803 but dissensions in his family made Maharaja Ranjit Singh to intervene in 1816 who ultimately seized all the territories of Ramgarhia Misl in 1817. The remnants of an old fort, which was once a stronghold of Ramgarhias, still exist in the north of Dasuya town. Mukerian was founded by Chaudhry Dara Khan in 1754 A.D. but the town was enlarged and improved by Sardar Jai...
Singh of Kanhaya Misl. Maharaja Ranjit Singh after his marriage with Mehtab Kaur of Kanhaya Misl acquired the fort of Atalgarh in Mukerian in 1819.²⁵

Remnants of Fort of Dasuya

Gurdwara Garna Sahib, situated at a distance of 1km from village Bodal, tehsil Dasuya, was built in the memory of the sixth guru, Guru Hargobind. It is believed that Guru Sahib planted a dried branch of garna tree here which grew up as a tree. Hence, the place where the Gurdwara is built came to be known as Garna Sahib. Gurdwara Tahli Sahib (Monak Kala) situated at a distance of 5 kms from Tanda Urmar was also constructed in the memory of Guru Hargobind. On his way to Garna Sahib Guru rested at this place and buried a twig of tahli which grew into a tree. Another Gurdwara Akalgarh, situated at a distance of 5 kms from Garshankar, was also built in the memory of Guru Hargobind because he stayed here on his way to Kiratpur.¹⁶

Gurdwara Garna sahib

Hoshiarpur, headquarter of the district and tehsil of the same name, is situated in the foothills of the Shiwalik. In the past, Hoshiarpur had business dealings with Samarkand, Tibet and Ladakh. Shoes, brass wares, doll making, wood furniture and especially the ivory-inlay work of Hoshiarpur town are world famous. The Vishveshvaranand Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies, which has earned world-wide fame, is situated in a building named Sadhu Ashram in the vicinity of Hoshiarpur.¹⁷ Shish Mahal, situated in the heart of the city, is a source of attraction for the visitors. Built by Lala Hans Raj Jain in 1911, the building is known as Shish Mahal since its interior walls and roofs are well decorated with glass work. The statues of religious deities, life size statues of George V, Queen Victoria and other foreign visitors are well maintained in the building. A painting, depicting the scene of the coronation ceremony of George V at Delhi, by an artist, Jan Mohammad, is very attractive. Shish Mahal is looked after by the local Jain Sabha.¹⁸
A Scene showing Coronation Ceremony of George V In Sish Mahan, Hoshiarpur

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History, Culture, Philosophy and relevance of the aboriginal Paharia tribes of Santhal Parganas in Jharkhand
A Historical review

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Ethnologically the Santhalparganas in is one of the most interesting districts of Jharkhand owing to the variety of races found on it. The Paharias are considered to be the earliest inhabitants of this District. They are divided into three branches, namely Sauriya paharia, Mal pahariya and Kum-rbhag pahariya. The earliest inhabitants are Maier, they have been identified with the Malli mentioned by Megasthenes, who visited the court of Chandragupta Maurya at Patliputra (Patna) in 302 B.C. According to Hiuen Tsang, a Chinese pilgrim, who came to India about 645 A.D., visited the kingdom of Champa, the northern boundary of which extended along the Ganga from Lakhisarai to Rajmahal, while the southern boundary passed through “Desert wilds, in which in which were wild Elephants and savage beasts that roamed in hoards.” No doubt record says that Pahariyas are the oldest inhabitants of this region.

The main problem that faced the British in the early years of their rule in the area was that the Paharias had become bandits and dacoits in the declining years of Muslim rule and lawlessness prevailed in the region. The pacifications of the Paharias and their conversion into a law-abiding people was a major achievement of the early British administration under such people as captain Brooke, captain Brown and Augustus Cleveland. The Santhals first begun to move into the hills and forests of which was later called Santhal parganas, towards the end of the 18th century. The Britishers formed a demarcation boundary for tribals and aborigines which named Damin-i-koh. The meaning of this Persian word is the skirts of the hills. The Damin-i-koh was a densely forested and hilly area. Even in the valleys there was hardly an human interference except for an occasional Paharia village. That was the situation for centuries. There were two groups of Paharia primitive tribe namely Sauriya paharia and the Mal paharias. They had been living in the Rajmahal hills since when it is difficult to trace. They lived mostly in hill tracts, prior to the arrivals of British. The Paharias lead a life undisturbed by the mighty empires reigning in the region. That was mostly the result of their geographical isolation.

The Pahariyas as a community have gone into a shell. They lost heavily in the past in their struggle with the Santhals and the British and have not recovered from the shock. They live mainly on the hills away from the santhals and the plainsmen and are inaccessible to the administration. A section of them live on the foot hills and are known Sauriya Pahariya. They are also called high landers, Hillman or hill race. In earlier correspondence they are also known as free boaters and cattle lifters. Very little is known about Pahariya from the authentic sources. No comprehensive study like other tribes in Santhalparganas has been made on them. The hill Pahariyas largely practice slash and burn cultivation methods and supplement their income by collecting minor forest product produce. Poverty in its ugliest can be seen in paharia village. Mal nutrition and diseases have rendered whole into a shambles. The traders and money lenders also have a merry time with Paharias due to their gamble nature.
In Sauriya Paharias life the passage of one stage into another is viewed with great concern. It is thought that any important stages like pregnancy, birth, marriage and death are very susceptible to evil influence of spirits.\textsuperscript{3} It has been noted that there were no ceremonies of any kind associated with pregnancy but pregnant women refrained from drinking country liquor. But recent researches show that there were no such taboos or rules and the only precaution she was to take was to avoid being alone in the jungle or at the source of water. During the birth period it is interesting to note that the husband observes along with his wife a period of avoidance for about five days, after the delivery of the child and in this period he lives rigorously exclusive life. Bainbridge mentioned that the period of avoidance was a month.

Pahariya tribes are bound by their customary behaviour. This can be seen in social contracts and marriages also. Marriage is the principal institution of the society. The Paharia society is accustomed with all sorts of marriages such as monogamy, bigamy, Polygamy, Polyandry, widow remarriage etc. Besides the above kind of marriages two other types of marriage Levirate and Sororate are also seen. The former takes place between a woman and her husband’s younger brother after her husband’s death. Divorce is not unknown in tribal society. Agents known as Sithus are also employed to find a bride. Bride price is paid on both cash and in kind. The amount of pon (the bride price) varies from time being. THE Paharias are having peculiar dresses which are especially prevalent in Santhal parganas. Generally female use panchi and parhan.panchi is upper garment and parhan is lower one. There are the men who use a piece of clothe to cover their nakedness, that piece is called Bhagwan. However new fashion has attracted them but old fashion in dress and of ornaments still continued among the tribal’s. The Pahariyas are emotionally, religiously, economically and socially attached to the home on the hill-tops. Moreover the Pahariyas have their own well organized society at the hill-tops and when they are brought to the plains to settle in the colony they get bewildered and fall lost in a sort of mental psychosis. The Pahariya also think that their Gods live on the hill tops and if they desert their original hearth and home the Gods may become angry and some disaster may fall upon them. These are the emotional and Psychological factors which are responsible for their not setting in the colonies.\textsuperscript{4} Pahariyas had firm belief in the transmigration of souls. The ritualistic observances to the gods and deities were made season-wise and crope wise.

The Paharias had a nomadic life style and the British government in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries was trying to settle them. In any settlement if the crops failed or frequent deaths occurred the Paharias left their village and settled in some other place. As they practiced shifting cultivation, which required a large tract as a production unit, a significant feature of their society was communal property ownership. Thus no doubt a significant feature of the Paharia economy was communal property ownership. Under this system, each household unit had rights over the natural resources as a member in the village.\textsuperscript{5}

The tribals managed the forest as a resource for fulfilling their basic needs and kept its use to an optimum level to maintain the balance of a productive ecosystem. Shifting cultivation ensured that there was no famine in the tribal society. Significantly even the worst famines of 1770 did not affect the Paharias. When the entire region was facing acute food shortage, the Paharias gave shelter to hundreds of plain people, who chose to go to the hills. They stayed there for a year, and when not accepted in their village on their return after one year took to the tribal way of life. Thus this was a time when different socio-economic system\textsuperscript{6} interacted with each other.
The population size of the aboriginal tribes particularly of unprivileged Pahariya tribe has been found declining following each census. Therefore it is presumed with great concern that the continuing poor health and deteriorating socio-economic conditions of theirs may, one day, put them under “endangered community.”

The populations of this tribe are receding continuously in proportion to demographic ratio of the Jharkhand state as well as country’s ratio. It is well known fact that the poor health status of any population is basically due to the mainly reasons, important among them is malnutrition, contamination of potable water, increased parasitic load, and important among all is increased genetic load.7

References
1“Final report on the survey and settlement operation District of Santhalparganas” Bengal Secretariat 1909, p.16.
4Santhalparganas Gazetteer, p973, para.3.
5ibid, p241-43.
Kalamukaha and Pasupata Sects in Karmataka: 
With special reference to Vijayapur District

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Bijapur District is a district in the state of Karnataka in southern India. The city of Bijapur is the headquarters of the district, and is located 530 km northwest of Bangalore. Bijapur District has an area of 10541 square kilometres. It is bounded on the east by Gulbarga District, on the southeast by Raichur District, on the south and southwest by Bagalkot District, and on the west by Belgaum District. It has six taluks – Basavana Bagewadi, Vijayapur, Indi, Muddebihal and Sindagi. It has 681 villages and most of the population besides in them.

The history of the district begins with old Paleolithic age and travels through various stages of time up to unification of Karnataka (1956), which is vivid in nature. The district has the historical evidences of Ramayana and Mahabharata. It has been subjected to the rule of Nanda, Mauryas, Satavahanas and Kadambas. Then Chalukyas of Badami, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas of Kalyana, Kalachuris, Yadavas of Devagiri ruled it and then it came under the invasion of Muslim. The Bahumanis and Vijayanagar.

A long standing feud ensued between Bahumani and Vijayanagar to usurp Doab between Tungabhadra and Krishna. Then Vijayapur was a vassal of Bahamani kingdom. Then it went to Adilshahis, then politically it went to Moghuls, Marathas, Peshwas, Hyder Ali, Tippu and British. Under the British rule it was a part of Bombay Karnataka. The people of the region fought for freedom as well as unification of Karnataka.

The number of inscriptions found in Vijayapur district are as follows;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vijayapur</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indi</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindgi</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagewadi</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muddebihal</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these 07 belong to Rashttrakutas, 105 belong to Chalukyas of Kalyana-, 34 belong to Kalachuri-, 48 belong to Yadavas of Devagiri-, 04 belong to Adilshahi-, 04, belong to Vijayanagar and rest of the inscriptions does not mention any name or time. The Kalyana Chalukayas have maximum inscriptions followed by Yadavas.

Out of the 419 inscriptions, many are broken and in some incomplete text is available. Inscriptions with full text are very less. In these the inscriptions depicting Kalamukah and Pasupata are even less. The inscriptions that directly point Kalamukah are only 04. Out of these 02 are in Vijayapur taluk (No. 7&31), Bagewadi taluk 01(No. 7&31) and Sindgi taluk (no 71). If we consider Rashi, Pandita, Jiyu, Muni, Shakti etc. names then they are mentioned in 20 more inscriptions. But this paper concentrates on the inscriptions that have direct references.

The first among these belongs to 1024 AD, which is kept in Vijaypur museum. It mentions Kalmukah Guru traditions as follows;

110
LakulagamadBhujangamunip:

(Kalmukhagresava)  
Trilochnan deva  
Balasuryamunipā  
KashmeerSureeshwar  
VadimahapraylayaBhujravamuni  
YogeshwaarPandit

Yogeshwar Deva of this inscription lived at Siddeshwar temple in 1024 AD. In the inscription of 1079 same dynasty is mentioned but in the place of Kashmir Sureeshwar, the name of Kashmir Deva is mentioned.³

Many inscriptions have described Vadimahapralaya Kalabhairav Pandit as following;

"SwastiYamaniyama...Prasannarum|Shu kti Sudhasantarpita Samasta Lokarum Oorjita Vivekarun] Kalamukah Kulakalasa Vanarajahamsaru Saraswatee Karnavatamsaru Sri Mattiloc\hana Deva Labdavar Prasadarum Sakala Vidyavinodarum Nistrupa Mahamahimo Petaram Cha rita Datarum Shishatjanabhishta Phaladayarum Muninayarakarum..."² (Bijapur)

In 1074 inscription there is a mention of Bhuvanaikyamulla while reigning a Commander called Nashimayya. He ruled Taddewadi Savir in Vankapur. Then by requesting the king, a temple of Siddeshwar was built in Vijayapur. To look after the examples of the temple, 300 Acre land of Bijjanahalli area Kannur was given⁵ (Bijapur7). These are present day Kannur and Bijjanahalli of Vijayapur taluka.

The Bijapur museum inscriptions of 1120 belong to reign of VikramadityyaVI.

"Borakuru Viviyakaram Kalamukaha Prahitodhathitamarim Maravavrajakasoo rem Soreysvchararana Kumar: bhringamSinga"³⁶

The Managuli village inscription of Basavana Bagewadi Taluka of 1161 mentions of Jagadekamall a ruling Kalyana. It also has beautiful description of Manikyavalli (Managuli), which was the crown of Tardawadi Savira. This village was gifted to Ishwar Ghalisasi by Nurmadi Taila Govadana, belonging to KashyapaGotra and Vaji dynasty was born in this village. To his son Revdas, there were four sons named Nagadeva, Vishnu, Goyyayavas, and Chandrambika. Basava built temple of Karideva in Manigavalli. In this temple Jadakamalla washed the feet of Kalamukaha Panita, Sadyojata Pandita and gave 50 acre land for the temple. He divided these fifty acres like this Dhoopa, Sacrament, Light-25, Worship of Sharadadevi-08, Preachers-5, Brampuri-08, and for Amrutasi Pandita-04 other than this he also gifted Shops, Gardens, Dharmahala, and sites etc.⁷

Sadyojata Pandita has been mentioned “Jagattunga Bhujangavali Kulatilaka Kalamukaha Naishthika Parma Tapontista Bramakula Balabrammarchari Sri Sadyojata Pandita Devarkalam Karchi Dharapurvaikam Madi Devakayanamam”,... (Bijapur)

Fourth inscription is in Hipparagi of Sindgi taluka. According to this inscription of 1192 Yadava Narayan Billama Deva, Mahamandaleshwar Gonaras of Shalar dynasty, Bommayya Nayaka and Malleya Sahani established this inscription to Raja Guru of Bhujangavali branch. The inscription says

“Paramanda Munidrarum Nenisalu Devanshadim Pempininda Stircharitira Tapa Prabhavadolu Tam Surya Prabhvalokntakardi nda BhujangavaliKuladolam Sri Sarasu Deviyolo Varadam Raj Guruvumunishanesedem Lokaika Vikhatiam|| A Rajaguru Muneeswar Charucharitira Bratake Shouchar Pempadharini Bannise Sakaladaramanipudi Mahatvagunam bhira\r[ Antaa Bhujangavale Kulalakarappa Raja Gurudevar Padaprashtalanam Madi”⁹. It also records the services of Kalideva like Angabhoga, Rangabhoga and for rejuvenation of the temple, Ingunige village was given as a gift.⁹

PASHAPATHA

Pasupatha and related Lion mark are mentioned in 06 inscriptions discovered in
the district. Three are in Bagewadi Taluka, Sindagi taluka has 02 and Indi Taluka has 01.

The first inscriptions are in Devuru Village of Sindagi Taluka. Jagadekamallaa’s Queen SuggalaDevi has donated the land, farms for Marasingeshwar temple of Devapur. The person who received the donation has named as “Pashupatha Yogacharya”. Many details have been destructed.\textsuperscript{10} Second inscription belongs to 1045 AD and is in Basavana Bagewadi taluka. To commemorate the victory of Chalukya Trilokyamalla over Pallavas, his queen Mailala Devi conducted Laksha Homa on Soma Grahana day. The inscription mentions the land donation towards Someshwar temple of Honnwadi Bhatta village. It also mentions about Pasupatha Yogacharya Inyanarasi as below;

“Yamaniyamasan Pranayama Pratyahara Dhyanadharana Japasamadhi Sampanna-rappa Pashupatayogachyarya Inyanarashi Vakhyanadevara Sthanada Someshwara Devara Degulada Khandasputitha Nadakamanada Besakkam Devara Bhogakkam.”

Here in the end the Sthanapati Govova place has been called Bhiksharthi Stana.\textsuperscript{11}

Third inscription is in Devaru village of Sindagi Taluka of 1064 AD. Nolambapallava Jayadevasimha, was the vassal of Chalukya Tardavadi. His chief vassal Varavasa donated 60 acre land to Morasinganahalli temple worship and students. This donation has been started with washing the feet of JnanarasiPandita. Jnanarasi has been mentioned in the inscription as below;

“Swasti Yamaniyamasa Pranayama Pratyahara Dhyanadharana Japasamadhi Sampanna Pashupatha Yogachyarya Srimatha Jyananarasi Panditarge Kalamakrchi Dharapurvakam Madi….\textsuperscript{12}”

Fifth inscription belongs to 1147 discovered in Muttagi village of Bagewaditaluka. The inscription records the war on Hoysala by Bammama Danthanatha by the order of Jagadekamalla. His son Shivaraj built Trikutachal in Muttagi. To manage this temple, Jagdekamalla gives, Tardawadi, 1000. Muttagi 300, Hebbal 12, Nagawad to Bammadandadip. This was taken by Yumar through Bijjala Devarasa. This temple tells about tradition of Gurus as;

Kashmir Muni
KalbhairavaDeva
Yogishwara Deva
Vareshwara Deva
Yogishwara Deva
Lakulishwara Deva

Shivaraj donates 12 mattaru lands by washing the feet of Lakulishwara. It is like as below “Sakalajnya Vishvatavagvedi Manu… Madantana Charitradam | Sakalorivalayam Pavitratarmayembrannegam Mikka Naishthika Chudamane Lalakugam Sudhambo Rashita-radipam Lakulishabriciyendu Banniputilabhasam Manoragadim”\textsuperscript{13}

In this inscription Shivastuti begins as follows;

“Srikhantanityarupam Nirupamamahimam Vishvalokadhinatham Sri Kantambhoja Jnanapramukha Suragunastuyamanam Mahesham Lokalokaikbijam Pashupati Shivelingam Jitanangani Bhulokakellandadidam Shubha”\textsuperscript{14}
In this inscription, it is recorded that Vani came and lived with Kashmir Muni. Therefore he must have come from Kashmir to Karnataka.

With this inscription as proof Dr. M.H. Krishna opines that this Kashmir Muni is from Kashmir.\(^\text{15}\) to support it Prof. K.G. Kandanagar says that in olden days Kashmiri Pandits were famous for their scholarly ventures.\(^\text{16}\) In Kashmir the Shiva sect became systematically prominent theory during 9\(^\text{th}\) century. But according to Vasugupt’s Shivasutra, Shaiva Dharma was in practice before Kashmir in Karnataka.\(^\text{17}\)

The Kundagol’s inscription of 1116 AD says... “Yamaniyamasana Pranayamapatyahara Japamadadhishilagunasampnarappar Simhaprsheyu Abhinapashupata Subratabharamrappar Saravalliyu Jyanarajagurudevara Sishyarrappu Sri Siddhayogi Pandita Devaprabu Billarasantu Sri Mallikrarian Devar Linga Pratishtheyam Madi Aa Devarave Halavaru Seri Aa Matadalumb Tapodhanarahrhardhanakkam Manrada Hittin Katyam Surya Panditarige Devarige Trikaladalu Pujeyam Nadesuvantagi Bitta Pumarige Yendide”.\(^\text{18}\)

The sixth inscription belonging to Kalachuri Bijjala of 1176 AD was found in Ingaleshvara, there is the mention of Jnanarashi Pandit, Mahastanacharya of Kedar Vijapur and disciple of Dharmarasi Muni of Simhaparishumandali. There is the mention that this donation was made after washing the feet of Jnanarasi Pandita.

By the above references we can assume that Kannune of Bijapur taluka; Bagewadi and Managuli of Bagewadi taluka; Hipparage of Sindagi taluka are the centers of Kalamukha tradition. Three inscriptions directly refer to Kalamukha tradition and in one it is referred to Bhujangavalli, its branch.

Of the 6 inscriptions, three form Bagewadi taluka we come to know that Pashupatha Yogacharya lived in Bagewadi, Muttagi and Ingaleshwar. Devur of Sindagi taluka and Marasanahalli of Indi taluka are other centers of Pashupatha. The inscriptions of Ingaleshwar and Managuli refer to Maleyali Pandita and tells about Dharmarasi, Munijyanirasimuni, Kumarbhratijanjanarasi tradition (Ingaleshwar-1176). Other one refers to Gouladevamuni, Maleyala Jyanarashi Bratishwar, Dharmarashi Munipar.\(^\text{19}\) (Managuli 1200AD) of these according to first inscription KumaraDeva Bhratipa and Jyanarashi Pandita were Mahastanacharyas of Vijapur. Jyanarashi Pandita who received donation in Ingaleshwar must have been the disciple of KumaraDeva (Ingaleshwar- 12 Century). KumaraDeva Bhratipa established other branch to Managuli — Ingaleshwar. This has been mapped by Dr. S.K Koppa as below;
Govindaras Dandnath to commemorate his daughter-in-law Padmavati’s death has donated 25 Jagadal Gadyana to feast Andra Danda Parshe on full moon day (Vijayapur 1121 AD). Where there Shakti Pershe and Simha Pershe are branches like Andradanda Pershe otherwise it indicates link between Shrishaila Pashupata- Kalamukha branches.  

Foot Notes
Devara Kondareddi, Inscriptions of Bijapur District, Kannada University, Hamapi-2011.
1Ibid, 7.
2Ibid.21.
3Ibid.
4Ibid.
5Ibid.
6Ibid.
7Ibid.
8Ibid.
9Ibid.
11Ibid, Bagewadi 23.
12Ibid.
13Ibid.
15Devarakondaraddi, Ibid
16E.I. III page no 4.
17Ibid.
18Ibid.
19Devarakondaraddi- Ibid no 19.
20Ibid.
Launching the Individual Satyagraha: A Prelude to the Quit India Movement

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The popular governments had been formed in most of the British Indian provinces between 1937 and 1939, after the elections held under the provisions of the government of India Act, 1935. The congress had won a majority in most of the provinces and had formed governments. When the Second World War was declared on 3 September 1939, the British government announced that India was also a party to the war and that she would fight on behalf of the Allied powers. This was criticized by the Indian National congress and the popular ministries, since they had not been consulted on such a vital matter. The unilateral imposition of a decision by the foreign government, without the consent of Indians and their representatives was very humiliating and wrong. It outraged the nationalist opinion in the country and the Indian National Congress felt deeply hurt by the arbitrary action of the British government.¹

But a questions most of the congress leaders asked was how was it possible for an enslaved nation to aid others in their fight for freedom? The official Congress stand was adopted at a meeting of the congress working committee held at Wardha (presently in Maharashtra) from 10 to 14 September 1939. In keeping with the nationalist tradition of accommodating diversity of opinions, members of the left, that is Subhas Bose, Acharya Narendra Dev and Jaya Prakash Narayan had also been invited to this session to express their views. Sharp differences emerged in this meeting. Despite their differences, Gandhi seemed anxious to give the platform to Jawaharlal Nehru. He even suggested that Nehru should become President of Congress in place of Rajendra Prasad. Technicalities prevented this suggestion from being implemented.² A three member war sub-committee was formed with Maulana Azad, Vallabhai Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru as its members. Explaining his position to a correspondent, Gandhi said that, this display of sympathy for the adversary was part of his strategy. “A satyagrahi loves is so-called enemy even as his friend. As a satyagrahi, i.e. Votary of ahimsa, I must wish well to England.”³ By thus this disarming his opponent, he wished to secure a psychological advantage. Moreover, it must also be remembered the Gandhi was only offering emotional support – there was no question of giving material help to the war effort. By expressing sympathy with Britain’s cause, congress got a hearing from certain progressive sections of British public opinion. Labour leaders like Attlee, Wedgwood Benn and Stafford Cripps agreed with the congress that the

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time had come for Brita in to make very substantial concessions to India. The Muslim League had evidently been watching the reaction of the Congress before formulating its own policy. On 18 September 1939, it passed a resolution on the situation created by the war. The British government was promised support and cooperation only on two conditions. First, the Muslim must be assured of “justice and fair play” in the congress provinces. Secondly, the British government must give an undertaking, “that no declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All – India Muslim League, no any constitution be framed and finally adopted by his majesty’s, government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.” Further, the government was asked “to take into its confidence the Muslim league which is the only organization that can speak on behalf of Muslim India.”

The British Placation: The Congress and the Muslim League

The 18th September 1939 resolution of the working committee was interpreted by government as the refusal of the congress to cooperate in the war effort. Zetland, who was secretary of state, characterized it as an attempt at bargaining. The governor of Madras advised the viceroy: “personally, I think we should not enter into any bargain, for if congress goes out it will be their funeral, not ours.”

The viceroy in a long dispatch discussed three alternative ways of dealing with the congress demand – total rejection, full agreement, or a middle course with a face-saving device. He interviewed about fifty Indians – political – leaders of different parties and representatives of different schools of opinion – including Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah. On October 17, he came with his statement. He reiterated that dominion status was the goal of British policy. He pointed out that for the present the Act of 1935 held the field. The only hope he held out was that at the end of the war it would be open to modification in the light of Indian views, full weight being given to the opinion and interests of the minorities. In order to associate Indian public opinion with the prosecution of the war, he proposed “the establishment of consultative groups, representatives of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian princes, over which the governor – general would himself preside.” Thus without weakening British hold on India, they harped out the differences among Indians, and tried to use the Muslim League and the princes against the congress. A few months later, Linlithgow in a private communication to Zetland (the secretary of state) remarked: “I am not keen to start talking about a period after which British rule will have ceased in India. I suspect that that day is very remote and I feel the least we say about it in all probability the better.”

Speaking in the House of Lords on 18th October, Zetland stressed on the differences prevalent among Indians, especially between Hindus and Muslims. He branded the congress as a purely Hindu organization. It was clear now that the British government had no intention of loosening their hold on India during or after the war.

The Indian people and the national leadership reacted very sharply. Rajendra Prasad, the president of the Congress, declared, “There is no room now left for any one to doubt that British policy remains as it always has been.” Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Liberal leader, commented, “The viceroy’s declaration is bound to cause much disappointed.” Jawaharlal and Azad in a joint statement said, “If this is the final answer of the British government to the people of India, then, there is no common ground between the two and our paths diverge completely.” The angriest reactions came from Gandhi who had been advocating more or less unconditional support to Britain. He felt that the British government was still
continuing the policy of divide and rule. He further argued:

“The Indian declaration (of the viceroy) shows clearly that there is to be no democracy for India if Britain can prevent it…The congress asked for bread and it has got a stone. Referring to the question of minorities and special interests such as those of the princes, foreign capitalists, zamindars, etc., Gandhi remarked: The congress will safeguard the rights of every minority so long as they do not advance claim inconsistent with India’s independence. But, he added, ‘independent India will not tolerate any interests in conflict with the true interests of the masses’.”

The working committee meeting at Wardha on 22 and 23 October unanimously regards the viceroy’s statement as unfortunate in every way and refused to give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the congress had always condemned. As a first step in this direction the committee called upon the congress ministries to tender their resignation. All the congress ministries resigned between 27 October and 15 November, 1939.

The governor assumed all powers under section 93 of the 1935 India Act. The withdrawal of the congress from provincial politics increased the relative importance of the league and the self importance of Jinnah. The preceding two years of congress rule in UP and other provinces had provided both the excuse as well as credence to the political slogan raised by the League of ‘Islam being in danger’. Ever since the Muslim League’s session in December 1938, Jinnah had been asserting ad nauseam that the congress was merely a ‘Hindu body’ which did not even represent all sections of its own society, e.g. The Scheduled Castes and the follower of the Hindu Mahasabha. After the resignation of the congress ministries, Jinnah appealed to all provincial, district and primary Muslim League units to observe Friday, 22 December as the day of deliverance and thank giving, ‘because it was the high command of the congress that was primarily responsible for the wrongs that have been done to the Musalmans and other minorities.

From Resignation of Congress Ministry in UP to Starting of Gandhi’s Individual Satyagraha:

On 30th October 1939, the UP assembly passed by 127 votes to 2 the congress ministry’s resolution on war. It voiced the feeling of regret which the viceroy’s statement of 17 October had produced in the minds of the Indian people. It also regretted that the British government had made India a participant in the war without popular consent and had, in complete disregard of Indian opinion, passed laws and adopted measures curtailing the powers of the provincial government. Kailash Nath Katju, Minister of Justice under G.B. Pant government stated: ‘I am glad that the governor had put into an end to an increasingly embarrassing position by accepting resignation.’ On this day G.B. Pant had informed Harry Haig about the decision of the UP assembly.

On 5th November, 1939, following the instructions of the Provincial Congress Committee, Kashi (Benares) celebrated the resignation of Congress Ministries. The Congress committee organized a huge procession form Dashashvamedah Ghat on 4th November to facilitate the congress ministries for tendering their resignations. The procession was transformed into a meeting on reaching the Town Hall. It was a long procession led by Sampurnanand, the city congress committee president, Mahavir Singh and other well known congress office bearers and Krishna Chandra Sharma. They were followed by Congress workers from all the eight wards of the city singing patriotic songs, shouting slogans and waving the national flag. Then came various peasants mounted on bullock carts depicting how talks were held between the government officials and the country’s prominent leaders at the outbreak of war and what led to the resignation of the congress ministries. The
masses marched alongside the bullock carts. The procession passed through Godoliya Chowk and Maidagin and reached the town hall where a meeting was held. All along the route, shopkeepers had decorated their shops and streets with banners and flags. These shopkeepers greeted Sampurnanand with garlands. Some of them had even arranged for illumination.  

The Hindi weekly Sangharsh reported: …the congress has taken a step forward by resigning form their ministries. The imperialist government was ruling from behind the scenes. Now, they stand exposed before the people. The resignation of the ministries was imminent. The congress has declared in its resolution on national demand at the Tripuri Congress that, under the so-called provincial autonomy, the scope for the people’s welfare had come to an end. The congress had not accepted the ministries in the hope of governing; it has made clear at the outset that it was accepting power only with the goal of abrogating the constitution. There could not have been a better opportunity for the ministries to resign. Their resignation will make the Indian people aware of the true nature of the government of India Act of 1935, drawn up for British political scientist. The resignation marks the first step in the battle for freedom. The nation will now have to renew its great struggle, a greater struggle than the one we witnessed after the Great War in 1921, 1930 and 1932. The country will have to stand a greater test than ever before. It will have to face the imperialist once more; there will be more arrests, sentences and confiscations. Once more we shall have to pay the price for freedom, many more sacrifices at alters of freedom. But the struggle for independence is one in which there can be no defeat.  

“The resignation of the ministries”, Nehru in his Allahabad speech on 7 November 1939, stated that at the present juncture was a great proof of non-coope-ration, the results of which would be grave and varied. He asked the masses to get prepared for all eventualities. This was the time when on 15th November 1939, Viceroy wrote to Haig. In his letter he talked about the differences between Gandhi and Jinnah on the prevailing political situation. Citing example of ‘South Africa’ and ‘Irish free state’ he wrote that pinning for freedom or independence was not a great mistake on the part of Congress. Although the ministries resignation was the product of British appeasement policy but British journalists have offered other explanation. Guy Wint and George Schuster in their book India and Democracy have suggested, “The congress would have lost the support of the people if it had not resigned”.  

In November 1939, Jawaharlal Nehru arranged a meeting between Gandhi and Congress leaders of U.P. Congress men were asked to take part in constructive works and start preparing for future movement. After this meeting UP PCC had resolved to pay more attention to Charkha spinning. A UPCC circular dated 15 January 1940 of announced the setting up a temporary committee of five members under the convenorship of R.S. Pandit to deal with the spinning and weaving of Khaddar.  

The annual session of the All India National Congress was held at Ramgarh on 19th and 20th March 1940 under the presidentiaship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. A Muslim candidate had consciously been selected to offset the Muslim League’s attack of the congress for being a Hindu organisation. Ramgarh Congress expressed full confidence in Gandhiji’s leadership. The resolution, after reiterating the congress position on the war and asserting ‘nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people’, declared that the congress would resort to civil disobedience ‘as soon as the congress organization is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis.”  

The left groups – Subhas Bose and his Forward Bloc, the congress socialist party, the communist party, the Royists etc. characterized the war as an imperialist war and asserted that the war – crisis provided an opportunity to achieve freedom through an
all-out struggle against British imperialism. It was convinced that the masses were fully ready for launching a mass movement against the government of India for getting complete independence.30

The war situation in Europe took a grave turn shortly after the Ramgarh session of Congress. In mid-April, Germany launched the offensive in the west, and Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France collapsed. It had a profound effect on India. It was feared by many that Britain, too, would shortly share the fate of France. On 10 May 1940, Winston Churchill was called to Buckingham Palace and asked to form a new administration.31 The suspicion that Chamberlain was not fully pursuing the war was largely responsible for his being replaced by Churchill.32 Once confirmed as Prime Minister Churchill set about creating a true National government, including Labour, Liberal and even Trade Union leaders in his cabinet. To dominate the character of politics for the next five years he had appointed himself as the Defence minister also.33 Leopold Amery replaced Zetland as the new Secretary of State.34 The change in the British set-up was bound to toughen the approach towards the handling of the Indian situation.

Faced with the worsening of the war situation, the British made a bold bid for winning the willing support of India in her war efforts. The new declaration of British policy, known as the “August Offer”, was issued in the form of a statement by the Viceroy Linlithgow on 8 August, 1940. Two main points emerged from the declaration.35 First relate to position of minorities says that they could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of govt. whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India’s national life. The second point was related with the machinery for building within the British commonwealth of Nations the new constitutional scheme when the time would come.36 There was no suggestion that they would constitute a National government of the kind the congress had been demanding. It was made clear that the British would still retain the key portfolios of finance, defence, and home in official hands. There was nothing to meet the congress demand for independence at the end of war.37

The Muslim League’s reception of the ‘August offer’ was friendlier but congress rejected it outrightly. Nehru criticized it as being “thousand of miles removed from what congress thinks essential for India.”38 On 10th August 1940, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote a pamphlet entitled “the Parting of the ways”, with a forward by Gandhi.39 He wrote:

Declaration of the British government meant the final breaking of bond between Indian and British mind. All hope of marching together had ended. Now there could be no bond with out freedom. The way of co-operation was not for us; the hundred year old hostility would remain and grow in future conflicts. He argued that Muslim in India were only technically a minority. They were vast in numbers and powerful. They could not be coerced against their will. In political and economic matters people do not function religious groups. The communal question was essentially one of protection of vested interests and religion had always been a useful stalking horse for that purpose. Those who had feudal privileges and vested interests feared change and became the camp followers of British imperialism. The British government on the other hand delighted in using the communal argument to deny freedom.40

With deep anguish and regret the congress reassembled at Bombay on 15 September 1940. It declared the Poona offer infructuous and announced its reversal to the Ramgarh position. This was the time when even those congressmen who were skeptical of Gandhi’s scheme of non-violence against external aggression, returned to the Gandhi fold.41 They conceded that Gandhi had the most accurate understanding of British policy. But radicals and left minded congressmen wanted to
show their strength by launching a mass movement. At this moment Gandhi asserted boldly to the congressmen that he knew when to start a mass movement. From the beginning of the war Gandhi had promised viceroy not to create problem for him. With the bourgeoisie reaping good return, the left getting restive and the League developing reservations, Gandhi realized that launching any movement at this state of the national struggle could easily get transformed into a class struggle or degenerate into a civil war. So to have a proper grip of the future course of congress actions and to manage the prevailing risk he began to talk of launching the “individual satyagraha.”

Notes & References

D.N. Panigrahi, Quit India and the Struggle for Freedom, (Delhi, 1984), p. 10.


3 The Harijan, 9 September, 1939, quoted on Coupland, II, p. 214.


5 CWMG, vol. 70, p. 170.

6 “Attlee has evidently been spoon-fed by the congress and I suspect through agency of Krishna Menon and he took a purely view of the problem”. Zetland to Linlithgow, 11 October 1939, Linlithgow Papers, Ms. Eur. F 125/8, p. 104.; In a letter on 16 October 1939 Nehru informed Rajendra Prasad, Gandhi and Patel: “I have been receiving some news from England…I gather from all these that our statement and resolution have created some stir in political and journalist circles in London.” (SWJN, Vol. 10, NMML, p. 189.; Stafford Cripps’ letter to Nehru, 11 October 1939, J.N. Papers, vol. 14, NMML, pp. 97-100.

7 The Government of India Act of 1935 ushered in a number of important political and constitutional changes. These were accelerated when provincial elections took place two years later in 1937. The Indian National Congress had contested 1161 of the 1585 seats and won 716. It had a clear majority in 6 of the 11 provinces and was the largest single party in the other three provinces. The congress came to power in the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, the Central Provinces, Bombay, Madras, Assam, and the North West Frontier provinces. Its ministries in the provinces were more stable than the ones in the non-congress provinces, and they worked purposefully and effectively. The ministries functioned between 1937 and 1939. The head of the ministries were called ‘Prime Ministers’. They were: G.B. Pant in the United Provinces, C. Rajagopalachari in Madras, B.G. Kher in Bombay, Srikrishna Sinha in Bihar, Gopinath Bardoloi in Assam, and R. S. Shukla in the Central Provinces. The important ministers included Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, K.N. Katju, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, K.L. Nanda, K.M. Munshi, Dr. Subbarayyan, Anugrah Naryan Sinha, Jagjivan Ram, Fakkruddin Ali Ahmed, and a host of other stalwarts. Muslim League fared poorly especially in 1937 elections. It performed better in the non-Muslim provinces, but that could hardly indicate its claim of being the sole representative of the Muslim. The success of provincial parties like Krishak Praja Party in Bengal and Unionist Party in Punjab illustrated that the Muslim electorates were primarily concerned with ‘provincial’ or ‘local’ issues. They wanted to safeguard their interests at this level rather than turn to the rational arena where the British, the congress and the Muslim League wrestled with the intricacies of devolution of power. Mushirul Hasan, (ed.), Ibid. pp. XI-XII.


10 Bipan Chand, and others, Ibid. p. 449.

11 S. Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru – A Biography, vol. one, p. 263.

1The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 394.


5Ibid.


8Mushirul Hasan, ed. Ibid, p. 189.


10Aaj, Hindi Daily, Banaras, 7 November 1939.

11Aaj, Ibid.

12Sangharsh, Hindi weekly, 5 November 1939.

13Nehru’s speech at Allahabad, SWJN. Vol. 10 pp. 228-29.

14N.A.I, Haig Papers, Acc. No. 2068.

15Wint, Haig papers, Acc. No. 2068.

16AICC Papers, F. No. 20/1940, UPCC circular No. 139, pp. 317-19.


22Leopold Charles M.S. Amery (1873-1955), British Statesman, Secretary of State for India, 1940-45.


24Ibid.


26Indian Annual Register, 1940, vol. II, pp. 16-19.

27NAI, Home political, F.No. 37/14/1941, 1941, p. 4.


29At Poona in early August the Delhi resolution was put to vote. Delhi resolution of July 3, 1940 offered Congress’s services to the govt. At Poona resolution was passed by 91 votes in favour and 63 votes against it. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Prafulla Ghosh, J.B. Kripalini and Hare Krishna Mehtab voted against the resolution (Sitaramayya, op.cit., vol. II).

Sulh-kul

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In this paper an attempt has been made to trace out the sulh-kul and its contribution to the stability of the Mughal state. We have to examine how far the policy of sulh-kul was followed by Akbar’s successors, and whether there is its relevance in present time?

The policy of sulh-kul was completed in October-November, 1580. The meaning of sulh-kul is universal concord (peace with all). According to Abul Fazal, sulh-kul emerges from a paternal love towards Akbar’s subjects. Prior to sulh-kul, Akbar introduced Mahzar, which brought about the pre-dominance of Ulema to an end and allowed all kinds of developments, the emperor wished to encourage. Even earlier, Akbar developed a taste for the mansavi of Jalaluddin Rumi and the Diwan of Hafiz, which moulded his thoughts into a matrix of humanitarianism. Early in the seventh year of his reign, in March 1562, he abolished the traditional practice of enslavement of the families of those who were killed or taken captive in war. In August 1563, the pilgrim tax was abolished. In March 1564, he took a more liberal step by abolishing the Jizya.

The sulh-kul allowed the different sections of population to enjoy imperial patronage. On the basis of sulh-kul Akbar adopted the policy of religious tolerance. The policy of sulh-kul gave the Mughal state a rational philosophy on which the fraternity of members of different faiths could be based. Men of all faiths and creeds were given position in the nobility. Not only Hindus, but the men of other faiths such as Shias, Jains, Christians, too, were patronized as Akbar himself wrote to shah AbbasSafavi about sulh-kul, that he employed in his service men of all races – Firangies, Jews, Iranis and turans. Sulh-kul came into being for political and humanitarian reasons.

In 1595, there were 17% Hindus in the Mughal nobility. Out of 8, 2 Hindus and 4 Iranis were given the mansab of 5000. Out of 13, 3 Hindus and 5 Iranis were given the mansab of 3000-4500. Out of 37, 6 Hindus and 6 Iranis were given the mansab of 1000-2500. Out of 63, 12 Hindus and 12 Iranis were given the mansab of 1000-2500. Out of 63, 12 Hindus and 12 Iranis were given the mansab of 500-900. Out of 159, 24 Hindus and 45 Iranis were given the mansab of 200-450. Thus, out of 280, 46 were Hindus and 72 Iranis. Even the mansab of 7000/7000 were given to Man Singh, who was conferred only to the Mirzakuka, the forster brother of the Emperor Akbar.

A part from the mansab, other important positions were open to the various Hindu Rajas. Bhagwan Das of Amber, who earlier was given the mansab of 5000, was appointed the joint governor of Lahore. His son, Man Singh was appointed the governor of Bihar and Bengal. Todarmal was given the post of Diwan. Birbal became the favourite of Akbar. RaiBikramjit, too, was patronized. HirviJaina was given the title of Jagat guru. A Shia NuruillahShushtari was made the Qazi of Lahore. Hindu rajas were also placed in charge of strategic provinces, such as Agra, Ajmer and Gujar at various times. They also were made the high grandee of the empire.

Efforts were made by Akbar to enforce the policy of sulh-kul. For instance, MirzaFaulad, who killed a shia theologian Ahmad Thattawi, was given capital punishment by the imperial order. AbdunNavi the chief of the sadr, had given the punishment of death to the shia and the Brahmin of Mathura for their beliefs. He was dismissed.
by Akbar and was ordered to proceed to Mecca for Haj.\(^9\)

In other ways, also, Akbar made efforts to enforce the policy of sulh-kul and the peace and harmony among the subjects of different faiths. He set up a big translation department for translating works in Sanskrit, Arabic and Greek into Persian.\(^10\) For instance, Singhasanbatti, Athervaveda and the Bible were taken at first for translation. These were followed by the Mahabaharta, Gita and Ramayana. In addition, Panchtantra and works of Geography, too, were translated. For the first time, the Quran was translated into Persian.

Akbar also revised the secular subjects, such as agriculture, geometry, astronomy, logic and history. Poetry, medicine, novels, philosophy, mathematics, too, was cultivated and thought necessary.\(^11\)

To maintain communal harmony, people were allowed to worship the God according to their own desire. They also were allowed to convert themselves into other religion. In 1602, at the request of father Anine Machado and Benoit Da Goes, Akbar issued the farman, by which father’s were permitted to convert anyone to Christianity, whosoever wished so.\(^12\) Cow slaughter was banned. For instance, it was banned in Punjab.\(^13\)

To maintain communal harmony, several Hindu customs were adopted. From the new years day of 25 years of his reign, the Emperor openly worshipped the Sun and the Fire. The custom of Rakhi became quite common.\(^14\) Shaving, too, was introduced.\(^15\) After the death of khan-i-Azam’s mother, Jijiangã, in May, 1600, Akbar saved his beard, moustache and eyebrows as a sign of grief.\(^16\) The ringing of bell was introduced.\(^17\)

The policy of sulh-kul was implemented in the award of madadi-ma’ash grants to Non-Muslims also. Previously it was held by Muslims only. After 1580, the number of Non-Muslims grantee steadily increased. Miransadr-i-Jahan, from the time of his appointment as shadr till the death of Akbar, enthusiastically implemented the Akbar’s policy of sulh-kul by making rent free grants and awarding stipends.\(^18\) In granting madadi-ma’ash to Hindus, he was more liberal than Abulfazal. For instance, in 1593, Abulfazal proposed that only seventy eight bighas of land be given to Udantnath Jogi, but on Miran Sadr-i-Jahan recommendation 100 bighas were awarded.\(^19\) Jesuits, too, received free land to build churches.\(^20\) On the basis of the information given by Abulfazal about madadi-ma’ash grant, it can be said that in awarding the rent free grant, the government made no distinction between Muslims and Non-Muslims. The word Mukhaidiformly used for Muslim religious classes only, came to be used for Non-Muslims also. The poets of Akbar, also, played important role to enforce the sulh-kul. For instance, kahi played role for the furtherance of movement of sulh-kul.\(^21\)

As we know, Akbar had introduced the ‘institute of discipleship’ that also played an important role in enforcing the policy of sulh-kul. Both Jahangir and Abul Fazal give us information that the disciples were urged to follow the rules of universal concord.\(^22\)\(^23\)

Now, let us examine the impact of sulh-kul. S.A.A. Rizvi, in his book Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar’s reign says that Akbar was hostile to orthodox Sunnis and they suffered. This view has been refuted by M. Athar Ali. He opines that Shia theologians were by no means more liberal than the Sunni theologians in their attitude to the Non-Muslims. Actually, it is difficult to agree with S.A.A. Rizvi, because as we know that after the discussion in the first phase of IbadatKhana, Akbar came to the conclusion that Shia Ulema are as narrow minded as Sunni Ulema.

As a result of the policy of sulh-kul, grants of orthodox theologians were curtailed, because new grants were given to the Non-Muslims. Other imperial patronage, too, was given to all. All lands previously held in grant, were transferred to the specified villages. A large number of Qazis were
deprived of their land. Both the theologians, Shias as well as Sunnis, were the sufferers. Badauni, too, suffered and said that the policy of sulh-kul was at the root of his financial difficulties and sufferings. Badauni has described how Akbar’s successive measures curtailed the grants made to the Muslim theologians.

As a result of the policy of sulh-kul, the people of different communities other than bigoted orthodox became the backbone of the Mughal administration and gave Akbar unqualified support to override Akbar’s opposition. The religion of sulh-kul secured the Mughal Empire the series of bravest warriors in India. It made the empire a state of protective arms. It paved the way for the consolidation, stabilization and expansion of the Mughal state. It laid the essential foundation of the Mughal Empire based on equal rights to all citizens irrespective of their religious beliefs. It was designated to bring all matters affecting the life and well being of Akbar’s subjects, both Muslims and Non-Muslims, directly under his control. It attempted to obviate the possibility of playing with the life of the people in the name of orthodoxy and Islam. Now Hindustan had became the centre of security and peace. After, 1580 onwards, saints and ascetics, who had no worldly desires became the object of the attention of the Mughal government. They were now being given cash grants. In the time of Akbar daily, monthly and yearly cash allowances called Waza‘f were paid regularly. In 1583, outside FatehpurSikri, two establishments were founded to feed poor Hindus and muslims. A third establishment to feed yogis, too, was constructed, which came to be known as jogipura.

The policy of sulh-kul brought about dissatisfaction against Akbar. Akbar’s encouragements of the Iranis provoked orthodox Sunnis, who accused him of being a Shia. Similarly Akbar’s encouragements of Hindus was misinterpreted as his being apostate and heretic.

The policy of sulh-kul was continued by the successors of Akbar, such as Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. The policy of Akbar to patronize Hindus was continued in the reign of Jahangir. Important positions were given to the rulers of Amber, Jaisalmer and Bikaner. The mansab of 5000/- was given to the rulers of Amber, Jodhpur and Bikaner. Jahangir also entered into matrimonial alliance with the Hindus. Jahangir, whose mother was a Rajput princess, had himself married a kachhwaha princess as well as a Jodhpur princess. Princess of Jaisalmer and Bikaner, too, were married to him. Rent-free grant continued to be made to the Non-Muslims. For instance, sadri-jahan, who implemented the policy of sulh-kul by making rent free grants to Non-Muslims and awarding stipends, carried on the same policy till 1616-17, when he died. Jahangir also continued the prohibition of cow slaughter.

Shah Jahan also worked on the policy of Akbar. Akbar’s policy of appointing Hindus to high positions was continued. Maharaja JaswantSingh and Jai Singh were given the mansab of 6000/6000. Dayanand Rai and RaiBharmal represented the revenue and accounts departments. RaiShabbona was the Diwan of Lahore in the 12th Year of his reign. RaiMukund Das was made the Diwan-i-Tan. Beni Das served as the Diwan of Bihar. Rai Raghunath officiated for some time as imperial finance minister.

Hindu poets, too, were patronized. For example, Sunder Das and Chintamani, were patronized. Hindi literature and language were developed. Several Sanskrit works also were translated into Persian. For instance, Bhagwat Gita, Yoga Vashista, Rama yana and Upnishad were translated into Persian.

In certain other matters, also, shah Jahan continued the Akbar’s liberal practices. Unorthodox practice of raising hands in salutation was continued at the court. Hindus were allowed to attend the court festivals. Shah Jahan considered it his duty to enable the Hindus to live in peace. Akbar’s policy of
the prohibition of cow slaughter was continued. As we know that at the request of the citizens of Combay, Shah Jahan prohibited cow slaughter there. Religious liberty to Hindus was continued. So far as the policy of Aurangzeb is concerned, there is a great controversy on that. Here question arises whether Akbar’s policy of religious toleration was followed or was there any reversal of the same. S.R. Sharma and J.N. Sarkar opine that Hindus were humiliated in the time of Aurangzeb. According to S.R. Sharma higher offices were closed to Hindus. He further says that the percentage of Hindus in the high ranks of the state could not have been more than 50% of what it was towards the end of shah Jahan’s reign. J.N. Sarkar also says that Aurangzeb began to attack on Hinduism. Two the aforesaid writers mean to say that by reversing the policy of Akbar, Aurangzeb undermined the loyalty of Hindus to the Empire.

It is difficult to agree with the critics of Aurangzeb, because in the time of Aurangzeb the number of Hindus in the nobility actually increased over what it was in the time of his predecessors. In the time of Akbar, 17% Hindus constituted the Mughal nobility. In the time of Shah Jahan, the percentage of Hindus in the Mughal nobility was 24%. In the latter part of Aurangzeb’s reign, the percentage of Hindus in the Mughal nobility was 33%. In the time of Aurangzeb, Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Maharaja Jaswant Singh, in spite of latter’s role in the battle of Dharomat and Khajwah, were promoted to 7000/7000. After Mansingh’s recall from Bengal in 1606, no Hindu Nobel was given an important province apart from Jaswant Singh’s appointment to Malwah in 1658, Jaswant Singh was twice made the governor of Gujrat. Mirza Raja Jai Singh was made the Vice-roy of Deccan in 1665 with full authority, but not as an advisor to the prince. This was the most important position with which only princess were entrusted. Jai Singh remained the close friend and confident of Aurangzeb till his death in 1667. Raja Raghunath Singh was made the Diwan in the early years of Aurangzeb’s reign. Later, he was promoted to 3000/700. Sahu, son of Shambhaji, too, was given the mansab of 7000/. The title of raja also, was given to him. Decent allowances, too, were fixed upon him. Rana Jagat Singh, son of Rana Raj Singh, was given the mansab of 5000.

In 1698, Satvaji Dafle, an intermediary Zamindar of the Deccan, was given the mansab of 6000/5000. He also was given the Deshmukhi of four Parganas in suba Bijapur. This was the most important position, so far as intermediary Zamindar is concerned. Throughout the Mughal Empire, no intermediary was entrusted with this position. On one occasion, Aurangzeb observed on a petition where a post was claimed on religious ground, as to, what connection and what rights have worldly affairs with religion. And what rights have matters of religion to enter into bigotry. For you is your religion, for me is mine. If this rule (suggested by you) were established it would be my duty to extirpate all Hindu rajas and their followers.

Aurangzeb did not hesitate to issue secular decrees, called zawabit. A compendium of his decrees and government rules and regulations had been collected in a work called, Zawabit-i-Alamgiri. Aurangzeb never allowed the Ulema to dictate the state policy. He also took actions, which were contradictory to shara.

Akbar’s practices of land grants to the Hindu temples were continued by Aurangzeb. Land grants to the temples of Vrindavan, Brahmputra and other parts of the empire were given. Faruqui in his book, Aurangzeb and his times, also talks of the land grants to Sadan Brahman.

The policy of sulh-kul has its relevance even in the present time. Every government and all political parties, whether at the centre or state try to work on the path shown by the Mughal emperor Akbar. This is
absolutely undisputed that the policy of sulh-kul, as followed by the Mughal emperor Akbar, is more relevant and desired, not only in India but in the whole contemporary world at large. The founders of Indian constitution were far-sighted enough to realize this truth and this is the reason that they incorporated the term ‘secular’ in the preamble of the constitution. Most of the countries in the world today follow the policy of sulh-kul. Some countries, like the United Kingdom, though do not declare themselves as a secular state, but in principle, provide equal percentage and equal rights to their citizens, irrespective of their religions or faiths. This is also an undisputed fact, that in a heterogeneous society of today, Akbar’s policy of sulh-kul, or policy of state secularism in today’s terms, is the only way out to maintain peace and harmony in any society.

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19 The Mughals and the Jagirs of Jokhbar, p-60. Also quoted by S.A.A. Rizvi, Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar’s reign, pp-429-430.
20 Jesuits and the great Mughals, pp-313-322.
21 Quoted by S.A.A. Rizvi, Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar’s reign, p-435.
22 Ibid,403.
23 Ibid,429.
24 It was not a new step. Earlier sultans also had made cash grants on monthly or daily basis. But Akbar expanded the system vastly.
The establishment for Hindus was called Dharampura and for Muslims was called khairpura.


S.C. Chandra, History of Medieval India, Orient Block Swan 1/24, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi, p-248.


For the first time he was the governor of Gujarat in 1659-61, second time in 1670-71.

S.C. Chandra parties and politics at the Mughal court, peoples publishing house, chapter-introduction.

S.NurulHasan aspects of Zamindari system in the Deccan, Indian economic and social history review.

Theoretically Zawabit supplemented the shara. However in practice, sometimes it modified the shara, in view of the circumstances prevailing in India.

S.M. Azizuddin Hussain, structure of politics under Aurangzeb, chapter-introduction, p-XIX. S.R. Sharma who accused Aurangzeb of being anti Hindus, opine in his book religious policy of the Mughal emperors, chapter-VII, p-122, that in the sixteen years of his reign Aurangzeb had resumed all the grants made to the Hindus.
The Trade and Revenue Pattern of Central India in Colonial Period  
With Special Reference to Malwa Opium

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The Mughal emperor Akbar captured Malwa in 1562 A.D. and made it a Sabah (Province) of his empire. The Malwa Sabah existed from 1568 A.D. to 1743 A.D. Malwa was well-known for its Opium at least since the 16th century. Rajput troops fighting for the Mughals introduce the habit of taking Opium to Assam. Opium was given daily to Rajput soldiers (1620s-1670s). It would appear that the Opium sold as ‘Cambay-Opium’ at markets along the west coast in the 16th and 17th centuries was in fact the produce of Malwa. In 16th century Opium was a considerable source of revenue to successive governments.

It was not until the 15th century that residents of Persia and India began consuming Opium mixtures as a purely recreational euphoric, a practice that made Opium a major item in an expanding intra-Asian trade. Indeed, under the region of Akbar (1556-1605 A.D.) the Mughal state of North India relied upon Opium land as a significant source of revenue. Although cultivation covered the whole Mughal Empire, it was concentrated in two main areas up river from Calcutta along the Ganges valley for Bengal Opium and up country from Bombay in the west for Malwa Opium.

After 1818 A.D. the British organized the numerous princely States of central India into the Central India Agency. The Malwa Agency was a division of Central India, with an area of 23,100 km2 (8,900 sq.mt) and a population of 1,054,753 in 1901. It comprised the states of Dewas (Senior and Junior branch), Jaora, Ratlam, Sitamou and Sailana, together with a large part of Gwalior, parts of Indore and Tonk, and about 35 small states and holdings. Political power was exercised from Neemuch.

The region of Malwa is predominantly agricultural. Malwa is one of the world’s major Opium producers. Opium is the inspissated juice extracted from the capsules of the Poppy plant, which is grown in many parts of Europe, Turkey and India. The most important areas of manufacture in India are -1. The district of the united province of Agra and Oudh lying alongside the Ganges Valley and North of it the produce of which is termed ‘Bengal Opium’ and -2. Various native states in Central India and Rajputana, such as Indore, Gwalior, Bhopal, Mewar and Baroda. The produce of which is termed ‘Malwa Opium’.

Narsinghgarh State  
The State of Narsinghgarh is one of the mediatised and guaranteed chief ships of the Central India Agency under the Political Agent on Bhopal lying in the division of Malwa known as Umatwara. The chief town of Narsinghgarh which is the capital of the State. The only important sources of miscellaneous revenue are the “Sayar” duties and Excise or “Abkari.” For customs arrangements the State is divided into 32 Nakas or circles, each “Naka” being under a “Nakedar” who has generally from 12 to 15 villages in his charge. It is his duty to visit these villages daily and see that no dutiable articles escape duty, and to pay his collection to the “Chabutra” or circles office to which he is attached every month. There are two Chabutras in the States, one at Khujner, and the other at Narsinghgarh. A Nakadar at each Chabutra supervises the work of the Nakadars under
him and receives their monthly accounts, while the muhatamim of “Sayar” is in charge of the whole department. One acre will produce six seers (twelve lbs) of chick. The Chick or crude Opium produced is weighed by a weigh man in the presence of the “Patel “and “Patwari”, the amount being registered and reported by the latter to the” Tahsildar” and muhatamin of “Sayar” before it is exported.  

The average number of gunny bags of Opium (each containing 100 seers) exported from the State, every is estimated at about 450, the gross average value being about rupees 2,40,000/- .The State Levies an export duty on crude Opium at the rate of Rs.1-7-6 per dhari of 5 seers including the” biai “or weighing tax. .The proceeds average Rs.10,000/- per annum. An important duty of Rs. twelve per “dhari” is also levied.

The amount exported between 1890 –1900 averaged 1,200 maunds a year, the actual figures being for 1900-01, 912 maunds, 1901-02, 1087 maunds, 1902-03, 1, 347 maunds, 1903-04, 848 maunds,1904-05, 299 maunds, 1905-06,583 maunds and 1906-07 ,1024 maunds.About 30 maunds are consumed locally. The cultivation of Opium and the is popular both with the State cultivator.

Rajgarh State

Poppy is extensively grown in the State. All Chicks is collected by the Durbar and sold to merchants who export it to Indore and Bhopal, where it is made into Opium. A duty is levied of Rs.1 per dhari (10lbs) weight and 3 pies as biai of weighing tax on every rupee worth sold. The revenue from this source is about Rs.15000/- a year.

Dhār State

In the 10th Centuries, Dhār was one of the chief seats of leaning in India, and many Hindu and Jain scholars flourished at the court of the Parmara Rajas. Of hands industries in the State the only important one is the manufacture of Opium, which gives employment to a large class of people. The system of manufacture is that usually followed in Malwa.
Rs.12,171. In the succeeding three years it was Rs.5,799(1901), Rs.5,579-8-9(1902) and Rs.10,865-6-5(1903).  

**Duties on Opium**  
A transit duty of eight annas is levied on every “dhari” or five seers of crude Opium, when it leaves a village or town. Several classes of export duty are also levied.  

1. Export of manufactured Opium to Bombay or other British districts-  
   (a) The duty is fixed at Rs.20 per chest, containing 66 seers of “battis” (balls) with the addition of 1 anna and 9 Pies to cover State expenses.  
   (b) On Rubba Opium it is levied at Rs.7-8 per chest weighing 66 seers.  

2. Export to other Native States-  
   (a) A duty of Rs.2-8 is taken on every “dhari” of crude Opium.  
   (b) A duty of Rs.3 on every “dhari” of manufactured or batti (ball) Opium.  

3. **Import duty**  
This is the same as the export duty specified in the section, but hardly any instances occur of Opium being imported into the State.  

**Indore State**  
The excise revenue in the State is derived from the manufacture and sale of Opium, hemp drugs and intoxicating liquors. The first of these was until lately, the most important of the three, and this, for the reason that for more than a century past the poppy had been grown in the State for the manufacture of Opium for export to China and other countries, as well as, for home consumption.  

Formerly, however, owing to the vicissitudes of war and the consequent unsettled conditions prevailing-round on the that account, there could be no continuity of purpose and no certainly of return, with the result that poppy cultivation languished for several decades after the Treaty of Mandore. But with the advent of Peaceful conditions after 1843, owing to the introduction of a stable administration and the gradual extension of irrigation from the numerous tanks and wells constructed by Maharaja Tukoji Rao (second), trade in Opium soon attained considerable importance, especially so, as the restricted poppy cultivation in British India at the time meant more of that in the Indian States for the next three or four decades. From 1880, however, owing to increased cultivation of the poppy in China and Persia, as also to the accumulated stock of Opium here consequent on over production in the past, and to a succession of unfavorable seasons, the trade in Opium slowly declined, the more so, as the cultivation, production and distribution of Opium had come to be regulated by the state to meet the altered conditions.  

In fact, under the circular of 1900 though the cultivation of poppy remained unrestricted, yet, the cultivator was bound to sell all the poppy juice to an Indore subject or to a “Tipdar” or “Ijaredar” of the State within a prescribed time, reserving only a reasonable quantity for his own use. Further restrictions were also imposed on the movement of Opium within the State and on its export, a local “Mahal” duty being levied on the former and a State export duty on the latter. A definite system of transit passed and cash security (called Hadap) was likewise introduced and a check was thereby maintained both on smuggling and the irresponsible handling of Opium by unauthorized persons.  

In 1904 licenses were for the first time issued for the manufacture of Opium $ a duty of Rs.0/- was charged for every such license, possession of Opium over a prescribed quantity $ the manufacture of the drug without a license being altogether prohibited. From the same date, monopoly of manufacturing “Rabba” was also abolished and a license system for its manufacture was introduced, the fee charged being Rs.200/- per year. The right to vend Opium throughout the State was sold yearly by auction to a contractor. It fetched about Rs.13, 000/- per annum. The retail price of Opium was 5 tolas per rupee.
In 1907 the Government of India having entered into an agreement with China gradually to restrict the export of Indian Opium, the right of unlimited export to that country came to be curtailed, which seriously affected the Malwa Opium market, the number of chests to be exported from the whole of Malwa during 1908 being fixed at 15,100/- and at 12,100/- during 1910. Meanwhile, the Government of India had appointed a committee to visit Malwa to go into this question in consultation with the Opium producing States and the dealers there, with the result that greater latitude was allowed them and a larger, though gradually diminishing, number of chests was fixed for export during the three succeeding years. As a measure of future policy, therefore, the State in 1910 decided to curtail Opium production by restricting the cultivation of poppy to the two districts of Rampura-Bhanpura and Indore, and, as a partial set of the heavy loss resulting to the State from the curtailment in foreign export, to revise its Opium tariff by raising the export duty on crude Opium to Rs.7/-per “dhari” (5 seers), and on manufactured Opium to Rs.110/- per chest. In 1912, as a further step, poppy cultivation was restricted to buy 1,200 acres in the Manasa Pargana of the Rampura-Bhanpura district or just sufficient to grow the stuff required for local consumption only. But the Government of India having entered into a new agreement with the State in 1917 annually to purchase 500 chests of crude Opium for the next 5 year, (the price paid to cultivator being fixed at Rs.9 per seer at 70 consistency), there was again gradual expansion in poppy cultivation throughout Rampura-Bhanpura district (except the Pargana of Nandwai) and later on the Mahidpur district as well.

About 1920; however there was an ad interim revision of the said agreement that forthwith raised the price paid to the cultivator from Rs.9to Rs.15 per seer at 70 consistencies and also augmented the quantity of Opium to be provided by the State by more than 50 p.c. A State factory on up-to-date lines was established in 1920 at Indore for Opium manufacture under the supervision of the commissioner of Opium and Abkari. Moreover, to suit the spirit of the times, an Opium law was also enacted in 1922 with a view to remove the existing anomalies, to control the production, manufacture, export, import and transport of Opium, and to regulate its movement through-out the State.

The aforesaid agreement for the supply of crude Opium to the Government of India by this State was renewed in April 1923 for a further period of six years, ending 30th September, 1928 on certain conditions. (subject to termination in any intervening year by notice to be given by either party not later than the 31st of March of that year). The principal terms thereof being that:-

(1) The State would arrange to place under poppy cultivation an area sufficient to produce yearly as nearly as possible 140,000 lbs.(approximately 1750 maunds) of crude Opium of consistency 70 (for an equivalent amount of Opium of higher or lower consistency), and deliver to the Government the produce of the same at the then existing rate of Rs.15 per seer provided that, should the price paid to the cultivator in the United Provinces at any time be increased or reduced, the price paid to the State will also be correspondingly affected.

(2) The cultivation in question will be entirely confined to the main block of the Rampura-Bhanpura District, including Sunel, Zirapur and Machalpur Pargana. It was further provided that the Agent to the Governor General in Central India was to be kept duly informed, from time to time, of the acreage allotted to and actually placed under poppy ion, and the cultivation, and the anticipated outturn every year, as also of any serious damage to the crop from hail, frost, blight or any other cause. Subject to these conditions the Government of India undertook to purchase the whole produce of the areas mentioned above, whether it be...
more or less than the quantity actually stipulated for. But in the event of considerable variations in quantity, the State, as far as might be possible, was to adjust the cultivation for the following year in such manner as may be necessary in order to secure the required reduction or increase. 30

This agreement continued unaltered for a year, but in consideration of the falling prices, the Government of India in the following year decided to reduce the price paid to the State in Central India and Rajputana, which produced Opium for Government, from Rs.15 to Rs.13 a seer for Opium of consistency 70, and from Rs.16 to Rs.14 per seer for entirely oil-free Opium, with effect from the season of 1924-25 31

These ups and downs into the Opium trade and the consequent rise and fall in the bazaar price of Opium promoted a spirit of speculation in the Indian Opium market, which, in its turn brought into vogue a new form of business in this time called Satta or time bargains which soon became the favorite hobby of traders in Indore residency and elsewhere. 32

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27 Dealings in Opium are regulated by the State Opium law and Regulations of 1922, and dealings in prepared Opium and allied intoxicants are altogether prohibited. Dealings in
Medicinal Opium are also controlled by the same law.

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Who are Sonowals and a brief flash of light of their Cultures

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Introduction

Assam is a land of varied culture and races, offering diversity in unity and unity in diversity. Assam is a state composed of mainly two elements of race i.e. Aryans and Mongolians the two races has their separate identity in culture, education, language, politics and economics spheres. The Aryans being advanced in all above, while the later is backward mostly in these respects in general.

The tribals of Assam means the tribes of the plains of Assam i.e. Kacharis, to which Bodos, Rabhas, Dimasas, the Saranias, the Rajbonshis (Barpeta, Goalpara) the Lalungs, the Sonowals, Thengals, the Hazongs, Meches, Miris, Mikirs, Deoris, Khamtis and Karbis etc.

All these tribes are enumerated in the census of 1914 as tribals with a view to make them separate groups of people in consideration of their status of education, wealth as well as history in order to enable them to have separate entity in the constitution of India under Govt. of India Act, 1935 to the plain tribes of Assam.

The language or dialects spoken by these people widely differ from the Assamese language and the other Sanskrit language, though few of them speaks partly Assamese and partly of their own. Such as Sonowals, Saranias, Deoris, Thengals, Meches etc. Their languages are derived from Mongolian origin and have similarities with the Indo-Chinese. Although, they mong themselves has a slight variation of expression according to the situation of the localities they inhabit and who were converted into Hinduism and wanted to merged in the caste Hindus such as part of the Rajbonshis, Koches, Saranias, Meches etc. they wanted to unite themselves to have a status of their own to live together and assimilate themselves with the societies of the caste Hindus.

The Sonowal Kachari tribe is a part and parcel of the Great Bodo race (Kirata) and which is a historical truth. The great scholar and famous Archaeologist of Assam, Raj Mohan Nath said that they belong to the great Bodo Groups. But, the absence of documented history of the pre-historic stages of Assam, notwithstanding the anthropological and literary evidences, customs and traditions bear testimony that they had their own origin in the Tibeto-Burman Mongoloid stock, who had settled in Assam in the Pre-Christian era and had migrated from Indo – Tibetan Border who are basically similar to the Dimasa- Kacharis of Assam. (Ref. Dr. Bhubon Mohan Das).

The kingdom of Sonowal Kacharis was preceded than the foundation of the Chutia Kingdom in Sadiya. In the Folk-Lore of the Sonowal Kacharis, it is said that, despite onslaught from the powerful tribes they could hold on the Sadiya country or Hallali kingdom beyond 1260 A.D. without being subjugation by other power in the territory stretching from present day Dangori and Domdooma up to Kherem and Tengapani of Tinsukia District, on the Southern Bank of Brahmaputra River in upper Assam. So, that the Chutias were settled in Sadiya in the part of Hallali kingdom founded by the Sonowal Kacharis some times before 1000A.D. in Sadiya before Ahoms came to Assam in 1228 A.D. On the other hand, it might be the two countries of Kacharis or Chutias, where Kacharis founded and preceded their country than the Chutias in Sadiyas. (Ref. Dr. Dambarudhar Nath).
Terminology of the word Sonowal

In the early history of Sonowal Kacharis, they had two main groups i.e. Ujani Kuchia and Namoni Kuchia. Those belong to the Ujani Kuchia ruled in the Upper Assam part and those of the Namoni Kuchia ruled in the Lower Assam part of river Brahmaputra. But, interestingly there are some views in regard to Ujani Kuchias about the origin of the name Sonowal. First of all, it is generally believed that, during the time of Ahom king Pratap Singha in 17th century A.D some Kacharies were given assignment of washing gold from the sands of the river Subansiri and its tributaries and consequently they came to be called as Sonowal after their profession. But, the question generally arise that the name Sonowal became generate to mean all the Kacharis subsequently, and even the tribe living in Upper Assam irrespective of knowledge of the process of gold-washing is also started to called Sonowal which is fond of susceptible.

Secondly, one more historical views that during the reign of Ahom king Godadhar Singha (1681-96) the said groups of Saiyalia Kacharis took Hinduism under one Mahanta namely Kesob Deo Mahanta, who had spiritual and God power and resided near Sadiya near Tengapani River now under Tinsukia District. By show his God power they took Hinduism in addition to their traditional animistic religion and as a token gift to their priest, they offered plenty of golds to Kesob Deo Mahanta and Mahanta kept these Sadiya Kacharis as Sonowal Kacharis and now became the Sonowal Kacharis of Assam.

Thirdly, there is also an another views, that the term Sonowal owes its origin from the Bodo word Sonolanya with suffix wal put at the ending of the word Sona as done in the case of other term to signify a particular Dynasty as Badu-Sonolaya of the Kacharis in Assamese language. But, the fact remains that, it does not signify a family, group of profession among the Kacharis. So, it is clear that, it is a separate tribes having independent identity of their own within the great Bodo race (tribe) of Assam before Ahom came to Assam.

Moreover, what is actual significant, that in this context is they derived their name Sonowal not from the division of works given by the Ahom kings, but from the designation of their dynastical chiefs, who headed their respective clan and Sub-clan. These names had their corresponding terms in Bodo language, had under gone the phonetic change while pronounced in Assamese due to assimilation with the Assamese Society. In course of time, especially in the region of Kachari King Mahamanikya in 17th century they had lost their language. The Kachari King Mahamanikya favored Madhab Kandoli, poet-laureate to translate the Epic Ramayana to the Assamese language. So, it can be considered that a group of Kacharis had already been accepted and patronized the Assamese language as well as their own language and in course of time this group of Kacharis had lost their Mother Tongue and later on they became famous as Sonowal Kacharis of Assam. (Ref. Dr. Dambaru Nath).

On the other hand, it should is also be mentioned that, during the time of Ahom reign, the people who were engaged for washing gold from rivers were all belong to Kachari people. So, it can be considered that, the Kachari people knows very well about the washing gold from the rivers of Brahmaputra Valley before the Ahom came to Assam. And it can be considered that in ancient Kamrup the families of tribal kingship was expert in gold washing, so that the Koutiliya in his book Arthasastra where he mentioned about the word subarna-kundiya and where the gold particles were founded easily. Hence, the term Sonowal was invariably be preceded before Ahom came to Assam and also they were called as Sonowal or Sonowal-Kachari of Assam not from the assignment given for washing gold from the river by the Ahom kings, but, it was from the
terms of dynastical group of Badu-Sonoloy from where the term Sonowal has been derived.

Political history, Hallali Ganarajya/public kingdom of Sonowal-Kacharis of Assam

The word Hallali denotes from the Dimasa Kachari Language. The word Hallali means HA means State and Llali means bright. Thus, it means a bright state of East, or which is similar with that of the name of ancient Assam, i.e. Pragjyotishpur, the modern Guwahati and the people lived were descendants of mythological king of ancient Kamrup i.e. Narakasura and Ghatutkaccha (Jogini Tantra). Who were the Krata’s origins and Kacharis are Kiratas.

According to Sir E.A. Gait, the Kacharis had their own state before the Ahom came to Assam in 1228 A.D. in upper Assam. To some extent, due to expansion of Hinduised high culture in Assam after the advent of Ahoms, some groups of Kacharis abandoned their native tongue and adopted their captors language and as well as supplanting Kachari and other tribal languages and spread themselves in various place of Assam. And after that, they became separate groups with a separate identity, and accordingly, the groups of Sonowal - Kacharis were fled away to Sadiya and established there a Ganarajya or public kingdom which was known as Hallali-Ganarajya of Sonowal Kacharis of Assam. This is how the philogical changes of Kacharis took place and displaced the racial fusion of earlier generation.

In 1000 A.D. the Kachari King Kundilya Narayana ruled in the North Bank of Brahmaputra and the name of the Nagara was known as Kundilya Nagar and at present it is known as Sadiya. In the Kachari language it was known as Hallali (Ref. Kacharir Itibitra, p.-6, Upendra Chandra Guha). But as per the views of Dr. S.K. Bhuyan in his book the Kachari Buranji he named as Kachari Rajya which was in the North Bank of Brahmaputra River and the inhabitants of this kingdom was known as Sadiyali Kachari or Sonowal-Kachari of Assam.

The Hallali Ganarajya (Public Kingdom) was spread up-to the Southern Bank of Brahmaputra and present day Bordumsa of Tinsukia District, where King Ganhibdhabja of Kundilya Narayana Dynasty was ruled till 1234 A.D. and followed by him the Kachari King Keshob Fa, Prasanta Fa, Probhak Fa and Mongul Fa were respectively again established a recognized Kachari Rajya called Diburgarh Rajya and ruled in that Kingdom upto 1279 A.D till the first occupation of Deori-Chutias to the Sadiyalaya Rajya or Sadiya country. They had twelve foids (Clans) such as Domosoy, Borohoy, Juholyo, Intuhojoy, Iatuminochoy, Intumechoy, Badusonoly, Ravusoroy, Kusory, Intu, gosoy, Badu hojoy and Daunoy.

Contemporarily, in the North Bank of Brahmaputra i.e. in Lakhimpur District, the Kachari King Janardan Fa Established another Ganarajya called Nemali and at the same time it was also known as Louhitya or Louhityapur. The word Nemali is still commonly used by the Sonowal Kacharis of Assam, in their Bihu folk song husori and sings the songs during the month of Baisakh(April). In the Nemali Rajya there were as many as 14959 nos. of Sonowal Kachari people, who were the second largest populated community at that time and where Ahoms were ranked as the first by 43942 nos. of populations in the first census.

But, in the last part of 1279 A.D. the Deori-Chutias again occupied this Kingdom with the help of Ahom King Suteupha and Kachari King Janardan Fa flew away to Nagaon and again established a new Ganarajya there in 1281 A.D. This Ganarajya was situated in between the Sadiya in the East and Dikhow and Kalong River in the West to which the Kachari King Bhupen-dradhabja lost this country again in the hands of Ahom King Suteupha which is presently known as Nagaon.
Although, except a few, there was no much written records about the Sonowa-Kachari Hallali Ganarajya yet the existing histories of Assam, says that from Sadiya to Dimapur in the South Bank of Brahmaputra was called as Hallali Rajya and from Sadiya to Dillihar Kenduguri in the North Bank of Brahmaputra (in the district of Lakhimpur) it was called as Hemali or Hallali where Kacharis were ruled once before the advent of Ahoms in 1228 A.D.

But, towards the last part of the 14th century A.D. the Kacharis had lost their easternmost part, i.e. their territory in Sadiya to the Chutias. But, the people did not followed their royal order and rewind in their home land again at Sadiya. Because, the Chutias were the inhabitants in the amidst of the kingdom made and ruled by the Sadiyalia Kacharis, i.e. in the Hallali Rajya in the 15th century A.D. of Sonowal-Kacharis of Assam. (Ref. Dr. Dambarudhar Nath). But in the later phase of Ahom rule, the Kacharis had lost their Sadiyalia Kachari Kingdom to Ahoms. So, it is proved that, Sadiya Rajya was in Sadiya in the East, Dikhowmukh in the West, and Dillihar-Kenduguri in Lakhimpur District (at present in Sonitpur District in the south (Ref. Dr. S.K. Bhuyan).

Geographical Location

From the Ahom Buranji or from the Assam History, the Kirat-Kacharis were inhabitants in the North Easternmost part of India. It is also learnt that the territory of Eastern Assam was bounded by the Kolong River of present day Nagaon. It is also mentioned that in the South Bank of Brahmaputra River was also under the sway of the Kacharis. The Valley of the Dhansiri River and the North Cachar Sub-Division were also included in the Kachari Kingdom and the capital city of the said kingdom was Dimapur.

According to Dr. S.K. Bhuyan in his book The Kachari Buranji tries to locate the geographical boundary of Sadiya Rajya was at Sadiya in the East, Dikhowmukh in the west and Dillihar-Kenduguri (in the district of Lakhimpur) in the south which was also in the Deodhai Buranji. But, these integral parts of the great Bodo-Kacharis of Assam i.e. Sonowal-Kacharis were respectively inhabited in the District of Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar and in the Golaghat district of Assam.

And this is how, a same group so clannish and was united as the Bodo-Kacharis of Assam; a well known Tibeto-Burma-Mongoloid Tribes would over become spread so widely in course of time in the West as Bodos; in the South as Dimasas; in the East as Sonowals, Rabhas, Meches and Lalungs etc. of Assam due to powerful political reasons and religious Sect-Violence of Hinduised High Caste and speared in the Hills and Plains of Assam.

(i) The Social System

There is although twelve main clans among the Kirat-Kachari dynasty, which were founded in the Mantras and Puthis of Sonowal Kacharis as from the Domosoy Clan Dimasa; from the Bodoloi Clan Bodo, from the Juholoi Clan Lalungs; from Intohojoi Clan Hojai; from the Intominokhoi Clan Moran; from the Dunoy Clan Deori, Chutia; from the Intomechoi Clan Meches; and from the Kuchoi Clan Koches (Goalpara District); and from the Badusonoloi Clan Sonowals or Sonowal-Kacharis Sonowals of Assam were appeared.

In this regard, Dr. S.K. Bhuyan also prominently mentioned in his book “The Kachari Buranji” that about the 12nos. of Kachari family in the “Sadiyalia or Hadiyalia Kachari” Chapter, the Greek traveller Ptolemy also noted about the rule of 12 clans of the Kacharis and the name given by him to the Kingdom which was ruled by the Clans of...
Kirat was as “Khirhadiya” or “Hadiya” Kingdom.

In course of time, as mentioned earlier from the “Badusonoloy Dynasty” of the Kirata-Kachari, the Sonowal Kachari clan has been appeared. Present at the Sonowal Kacharis have 14 nos. of major Clans and 7 nos. of Khels. The 14 nos. of major Clans are Modonial, Manikial, Dingial, Ahmal, Barhajual, Haruhajual, Muktal, Formal, Kumral, Lathial, Dengral, Chutial, Dhekial and Hoygral. And, the 7 Khels are Ujani Kuchia, Namoni Kuchia, Dhulial, Balikhitarie, Amarabotia, Sipoporia and Tipoma respectively.

They also have as many as 114 nos. of “Hoch” or “Sub-Clans” or “Progeny”. All the above 14 Clans and 7 Khels were exogamous and the marriage between the same blood members of the same progeny is a taboo and always interdicted and some of the clans are dafliaree, Pedaree, Bhaktiaree, Dakulee, Gokhowaree, Dharolee, Chellengee, Nakor-ee, Fatotee and Teparee etc. The pattern of Clan system is as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clan Name</th>
<th>Houch/Sublan</th>
<th>Khel name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kumral</td>
<td>Dhorolee</td>
<td>Dhulial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larangee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Akalhoraree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zingree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amongst the above Clan, Sub-Clan and Khel cannot be a marriage or not at all permissible and which will be social extermination.

The Sonowal Kacharies traditionally are animistic in all religious practices. They believed in supernatural power and worships to their own “God” and “Goddesses”. Their supreme God is “Khiring” or “Bathow” or “Shiva” and they also believe in soul substances and practices of ancestor’s worship, who were originally their Deities.

In the Pre-Ahom periods, it is not known and there was also no sufficient written records of the history of the language that they had used, but, if we look back to their past they might have used the Bodo stock of language. Still, after the fall of Kachari Kingdom in 1830, with the assimilation and the initiation of Sri Shankardeva the “Nava Vaishnav-Aism” had spreaded among the people of Sonowal Kacharis. On the other hand, due to cultural fusion and exchanges they started to use the religion, language, socio-cultural virility and life style of other developed communities and as a result the sonowal Kacharis became unaware and forgot their aborigine language & dialect. But, still following their own social customs, traditions, religious faiths (ancestors wor-ship) amongst themselves. They are still wor-shipping of “Bathow” Gazai, Monai, Piradia, Burha-Burhi, Swargodeo Puja etc. They still maintained “Hoydang Geet” which is the principal cultural wealth (folk song) Lessari Geet, Puhare Geet, Phul-konwar-Moniknowar Geet and Kulabu-rhi of Sonowal Kacharis of Assam.

As per the census of 2003 at present the population of Sonowal Kacharis was 7 lacs approx and the percentage of literacy is 26 % approx of more than 3 crores of the total population of Assam.

The family oriented Sonowal Kachari’s social structure unfortunately started as joint farming and patriarchal. The outdated mode of cultivation system and demand for greater amount of manpower and co-operative affords is still too widespread. And the family is the only principal productive unit and the only source of labour force. So that, sometimes the pre- mature death of the head man results in ruin of the whole family. Remarriage is sometimes possible. Almost, all the families are nuclear in character.

The unique feature of Sonowal Kachari’s Socio- Political structure is their civil liberty and enjoyed by the individual in the co-operative life of the village community. Every individual have rights of social, political and religious justice. There is a custom for co-operation of work and man power called “Howuri”. The rights of women were limited in some special cases to social and religious matter.
The traditional and rituals practices were performed as instructed by their priest. The God and Goddess were Khiring, Bathow, Gazai, Monai and Swargdeo etc. and these equated with Lord Shiva, Kechakhaity (Female deity), Goddess Durga, Minuchi- Midura equated with Lakshmi Devi, Swaraswati, Apeswari, Kasu Knowari, Surjiya, Barun, Paban, Kuber, Burha-Burhi gatigiri, Thal Dangoria, Ranga Chamon, Kola Chaman, Batualees, Jol Dangoria etc. etc. and so on. Besides, they have the customs and rituals child birth, naming cradel songs of child, Hoydang, Hogra and Bohwa dance, marriage system, polygamy, widow-remarriage, divorce, adoption, death ceremony, Pujas, bachelors dormitories, such as Deka Chang, Missong is still Hasong existing.

But with the extensive influence of Hindu religion and religious atmosphere, the Sonowal Kachari found themselves some what congenial in social spheres surrounded by non-tribal counter parts and accepted “VAISNAVISM” and several other Hindu religious elements within their socio-religious structure. As a result, they have the religious sects among the people which are Shankari, Nirgunia and Bhokotia etc. in addition to their original customs and religion.

The changing life style and standard of living of Sonowal-Kacharis under modern condition are resulting in occupational and incoming mobility. This is because, after independence, the education has made a few progresses among other developed community and as a result they are able to produce a few qualified people for their community in all categories of jobs like technical, vocational and administrative service etc. But, due to poor economic condition, Lack of good environment and compulsory agricultural works the Sonowal-Kacharis are still in under developing stage.

Notes & References

2. J.D Anderson, Kachari Folk Tales and Rhymes, 1895.
5. F.C. Hemmer, Gold and Silver Wares of Assam, 1905.
15. Sonowalee (Dibrugarh), 1888.
Social Reformation by the Sultans of Malwa with Special reference to Central India Malwa

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The state of Malwa was situated on the high plateau between the rivers Narmada and Tapti. During the fifteenth century, the kingdom of Malwa remained at the height of its glory. From the beginning the kingdom of Malwa was torn by internal dissensions. Malwa was a preponderantly Hindu province, with a sturdy Rajput population. The ruler of Malwa has taken care of their states very well. They were independent and powerful rulers. Their ideals were based on the ritual policies and religious Granth. The Present research paper is an attempt to study and highlights the various welfare works done by Delhi Sultans for the social reformation and also explains the politics behind the welfare work.

Dilawar Khan not only laid the foundation of an independent kingdom but he also gave new shape to the culture of Malwa, particularly to Architecture. He started a process of synthesis of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture in his mosques at Dhar and Mandu, a process which was never checked in Malwa and succeeded in producing a distinctive style of its own marked by a close synthesis and assimilation of the two styles, which are mostly found elsewhere at their best in juxtaposition.

He also laid the foundation of Mandu as a cultural centre and started well by giving it the name of Sahadiabad. Tarapur gate inscription leaves that the name was given to the city during Dilawar Khan's reign, and the coins of Hoshang Shah period bear Sahadiabad as the mint name. By his policy of peace, friendship, matrimony and toleration, not only founding the independent kingdom of Malwa, but even in the brief period of his reign revived the spirit of Malwa and gave it a new life.

To increase the glory of his kingdom, he extended his patronage to scholars and the existence of the Madarsa in Mandu indicates that he had taken positive steps for the promotion of learning. The royal patronage attracted scholars and Masharkh from different parts to come and settle in Malwa.

During the short reign, Dilawar Khan had fully realized the importance of gaining local support for maintaining the independence of Malwa, and for this purpose he observed a policy of toleration towards Hindus in general and Rajputs in particular. Hosangshah also was conscious of the need of toleration. All Malwa Sultans' policy of toleration was not confined to social and cultural matters. In his politically and administrative machinery too he allowed the Hindus to occupy such position for which they were found efficient. In his all welfare works or social reform was a policy and was dictated by political need and not coloured by religious zeal. In Malwa a large section of the population was Hindu and unless this section felt safe and secure the house that Hosangshah was building could never acquire an enduring character. Anyone contemporary historians mentioning the demolition of temple or forceful conversion, on the contrary, the epigraphically evidence found at Lalitpur dated v.s.1481 Saka 1346/A.D. 1424 clearly indicates that Hoshangshah had placed no restriction on the construction of temples by the Jains. He founded the city of Hoshangabad on the banks of the Narbada as an out-post to guard the south-eastern frontiers of his kingdom.
Sultan Hoshangshah had a large progeny which proved to be the cause of the ruin of the Ghuri dynasty in Malwa. After the Ghuri dynasty was raised the Khalji dynasty in Malwa. The Khalji of Malwa had a close relationship with the Ghuries of Malwa. In 1436 A.D. Mahmud khan ascended the throne of Malwa, the title of Mahmud shah khalji.  The reign of Mahmud khalji the Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully and maintained friendly relations with each other. 

The Sultan did not overlook their mental development. He certainly encouraged by state patronage the promotion of learning. He founded a college (Madrasa) in Sahadiabad with a grand building in which residential arrangements for students and teachers were provided. The teachers and students were provided with food and other necessities free of charge. 

The educational activity was not confined to the capital alone. Mahmud built colleges in his territories and encouraged education so much that Malwa soon acquired a reputation for learning.

At Sahadiabad on the other side of the Madrasa, Mahmud constructed a Khanqah which was to serve as a residential and resting place for the travelers and Fuqra and Masakin. Here to the provisions and requirements were provided from the charity fund of the sultan. 

Mahmud khalji paid a good deal of attention to maintenance of law and order in his kingdom. To prevent theft and robbery taking place he had made adequate arrangements. He immediately made good the loss and recovered the amount from the village where the crime was committed.

The highways of Malwa suffered from another danger. These roads at many places passed through regions where wild animals lived in abundance. The tigers and leopards were habitual way-layers and Mahmud issued orders to all his officers that they should make efforts to kill these beasts and also imposed a penalty that after issue of the orders if ever a tiger or a leopard was found in the jurisdiction of any officer, he would be awarded capital punishment. The
result of the ordinance was that during his reign and for a long time after his reign, the roads became safe. Mahmud's attention was not confined to agriculture alone. He fully recognized the importance of trade and commerce. The emissaries of the khalifa of Egypt and the embassy of Abu said Mirza are clear indications that Malwa had an established reputation outside India. The cause of sending prince Ghiyath shah towards Surat was the information received by sultan Mahmud that a number of traders who were coming towards Malwa had been plundered by the Muqaddams living on the route of surat. The instructions to Prince Ghiyath shah were to chastise these merchants and to teach them a lesson so that in future they might not trouble the traders and travelers. Such a measure certainly was a source of encouragement to the merchant community.

Prince Muhammad ascended the throne of Malwa on June 1469 A.D. the title of Ghiyath shah. Ghiyath shah established his reputation as a soldier and as a general. Ghiyath shah endeavored to consolidate and increase the material prosperity of Malwa, and Malwa under Ghiyathshah reached the zenith of its cultural development, which is always associated with peace and plenty. After succeeding Ghiyath shah declared that he would wage no more wars, and give all time and energy for peaceful pursuits. He organized now a new college for Fine Arts, and Home Science mostly comprising of his seraglio, at one time 15,000 in number, to train in different arts and professions according to their aptitude and talent, and employed according to their proficiency. Some of the slave girls were taught the art of singing and dancing and playing on the instruments. Education was also imparted to them and some were employed in reading and recitation. Some of the slave girls were taught the art of wrestling and a quite a large number of them were employed as personal body guards of the sultan. He had a thousand of Hafizahs among his slave-girls. To have greater knowledge and control over the administ-rative affairs of the state, he set up an office in his seraglio, where the appointed a selected number of slave-girls to check up the affairs of the state. Thus that his seraglio consisted of officers of court, courtiers, teachers, musicians, dancers, prayer-readers, embroil-derers, soldiers and followers of all crafts and callings. Nasir shah, the successor of Gyiath shah ascended the throne on 1500 A.D. He ruled eleven years. His addictions to wine and drugs had produced serious effects. After the Nasir shah, Mahmud khalji (II) ascended the throne. Mahmud was personally brave and courageous but no wonder, he carried with him to his grave, the glory and grandeur of Malwa, and left the country in the pangs of death which lasted for about thirty years from which it was relieved by its final adsorption into the Mughal Empire. With the death of sultan Mahmud khalji (III) in 1531 A.D. came not only the end of the khalji dynasty but also the end of the independent kingdom of Malwa.

Conclusion

The paper account the welfare works in Medieval Malwa under the rule of Muslim sultans. The period of Ghuri rule was truly formative period. Dilawar khanand Ghuri established the kingdom and laid down certain principals to serve as the basis for it. His successor Hoshang shah to achieve a well-protected boundary, and established some welfare work. With the coming of Mahmud khalji on the throne Malwa reached the zenith. Under his rule Malwa acquired a prominent place amongst the kingdom of India. Malwa under Ghiyath shah remained peaceful and enjoyed no doubt made the people in dolente but it led to increased cultural activities. The reign of Nasir shah saw deterioration in the internal condition of Malwa. With the accession of Mahmud (II) Malwa entered into the third phase, the period of decay.
References

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6. Archaeological survey of India Reports (New Series) Vol. II, p.120 and Day, p.64.
17. Maathir-i-Mahmudshahi, op.cit.f.155b.quoted,Day,p.203.and Briggs,ibid,p.214,
22. Ibid, f.110a, quoted, Day, p.204.
27. His full title as found from his coins is; Abul fath Ghiyath shah Al- khalji, and Write, Vol. II, p.250. And Briggs, Vol-IV p.236.
The Demand of the Mizo: From Hill state to Independence  
(Political background of Mizo Independence movement)

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Introduction:  
During the colonial period, the British administrators acquired many of the Mizo chief’s rights and privileges which later reduced the position of the Mizo chiefs. Therefore, the Mizo Chiefs only acts as an agency of the British in their own village and all the powers were vested in the hands of the British. Meanwhile, the Govt. of India Act, 1935 has excluded the Lushai Hills from Indian Union which alienated the Mizo people from the mainstream of India. Thus many of the Mizo began to feel that ‘we are not Indian’. Mizo has different distinct cultures, traditions etc. which was far different from Indian culture. So there was a need to formulate the future of the Mizo hills in respect of administration.  
Thus, there was political conscious ness among the Mizo which resulted the formation of political parties in Mizoram.

Political Background: Demand of Greater Autonomy  
On the eve of the independence of India from Britain, there rose a question over the future administration of the country and particularly the excluded areas, which were declared by the Government of India Act, 1935, in north east India. The Act excluded such areas in all legislations and executions meaning which such excluded areas should have no representatives in all Federal and Provincial Legislative Assem-blies of the British India. Being located in the remotest area of Assam province, the Mizo district was economically and politically backward when comparing with other districts of Assam. Politically, many of the educated Mizo began to think and interest in politics and initiate for the formation of political party in 1946. Thus, the leaders and prominent citizens of the Mizo felt the need to formulate for future administration of the Mizo district and provided concrete ideas to the authority for this purpose. To them, the prevailing District Conference is not enough for their future administration.

In view of the disadvantageous of the District Conference, the Mizo leaders felt the need of greater autonomy for the district. Accordingly, a number of petitions on this regard were submitted to the authority. For instance, when the Bordoloi Committee visited Aizawl during April 17-18, 1947, the demand of greater autonomy was submitted by the Mizo Union leaders. To them, it was an autonomy in which the rights, customs, and traditions of the Mizo should be protected and granting of protection against exploitation from outsiders. They also demanded that the Mizo in living in Lushai Hills, Manipur, Cachar and Chittagong districts should be put under one administration i.e. under Assam.

Apart from Mizo Union party, the demand of political autonomy was also made by some individuals before the Bordoloi Committee. For instance, Rev Zairema advocated the local autonomy with full self-determination within the Assam province and he was the first person to use the term ‘autonomy’ in the case of Mizoram while R. Thanhliira demanded much autonomy as possible for the Lushai hills. The autonomy of the hills as advocated by Rev Zairema, would have National Council with supreme power to make laws and executive authority for enforcement of the laws. He suggests that the Mizo should be given full self-determination within the province of Assam; and there
should division of powers and functions between the province of Assam and Mizoram. He also suggests that the form of government shall be the purest form of democracy. Meanwhile, HK Bawihchh- uka also advocated that the Lushai Hills should be given a widest possible self-determination and his proposal includes the amalgamation of the Mizo territories (all areas inhabited by the Mizo) into one administrative unit under Assam province. He also said that there should be a clear division of powers and functions between the Government of Assam and the Mizo National Council.

Thus, in view of the demand of the Mizo people and the political situation of the Mizo hills, the Bordoloi Committee (Committee of North East Frontier Tribal Areas and Assam Excluded and partially Excluded Areas, a Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly, finally recommended the formation of autonomous district council in Mizoram. Accordingly, the Mizo District Council was inaugurated on April 25, 1952 by Bishnu Ram Medhi, then Chief Minister of Assam.

**Hill state to Mizo State**

Soon after, while working of the District Council was in progress, there arose unsatisfactory among the hill leaders on the powers granted to them by the government as it was not consistent with provisions of the Sixth Schedule. Meanwhile the demand for separate hill state from Assam was underway, some of the Mizo political leaders began to look keen interest in the movement. But some, particularly the leaders of Mizo Union party were divided on these issues. Later, the Mizo Union decided to support the Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU) for separate hill state without liquidating the party or merge with other party. In this connection, T. Raatan highlights the situation of how the Mizo leaders turned their attention towards hill state, below:

“...but when they felt that the Assam Government, whom they had been looking to for their own sustenance, became unappreciative of the workings of the Mizo District Council, which they were running, the emergent elites then came up and joined the Hill State Movement in the early fifties. Again, the hill state movement also did not very well suit their attempt to hold power because such movement was highly broad-based and their power equations with the other hill leaders were poor.”

The Mizo leaders then actively involved in the movement and joined All Party Hill Leader Conference (APHLC), which was formed in 1960 following the introduction of official language bill in the Assam Legislative Assembly on June 22, 1960. Meanwhile, a contrasting view on the hill state movement among the Mizo Union leaders was witnessed in one of the secret meetings of the party councilor in which the party policy on whether to choose separate hill state or separate Mizo state was to finalise. It is said that Ch.Saprawnga was in favour of a separate hill state while Ch.Chhunga spoke in favour of Mizo state. Likewise, R. Thanhlira, Chairman of the APHLC Council of Action expressed in favour of forming separate Administrative Region with Mizo District, North Cachar District, Manipur and Tripura states. However after a long deliberation, they could not arrive at any concrete decision on this regards.

However, a procession was held at Aizawl observing ‘Protest Day’ against the passing of the official Language Bill of the Assam Legislative Assembly on October 14, 1960 where the Mizo Union party and EITU were participated where they express their unwillingness to accept Assamese as official language and demanded a separate hill state. Meanwhile, the Mizo Union proposed Federal Hill state in which equal numbers of MLA from each hill district but rejected by the APHLC in its third meeting at Haflong. Furthermore, officially the Mizo Union resolved to support the Hill state movement in its Special Assembly during November 2-
3, 1960. At the same time the EITU Unit of Mizo District gave its all efforts for separate hill state and fully cooperates with the APHLC as it was formed for this purpose only. They also contact the leaders of the PL Regional Council to get support of the people to their demand for a separate state. 

Although the Mizo Union party was seen actively participated in the hill state movement, it was only in name in the true sense. This is indicating that some of the leaders of the Union were not interest in the hill state but the Mizo state. At last, the Special assembly of the Mizo Union held on June 10, 1963 discussed about the hill state movement which was attended by some of the APHLC leaders to negotiate with the Union leaders for their continuing support of the movement. In this assembly, particularly Ch. Saprawnga, then Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Mizo District Council and HK Bawihchhuaka, then President of Mizo Union and Chairman of MDC, stands in favour of a hill state by saying the following points:

(a) Reservation of post in Police service in the Hill state would be mean for the Mizo as other hill peoples were not interest in the service.

(b) It may be easy to have hill state than Mizo state

But the pro-state movement could easily tackle the above points in the assembly. Then, finally the Assembly resolved to adopt the Mizo state as a new policy of the Union which automatically closed the chapter of the hill state movement and cut its connection with the AHPLC by passing the resolution as below:

"Indian Government not conceded to our demand for a separate Hill State, though we had been fighting so long. Therefore, this Special Assembly of Mizo Union, after a prolong deliberations on the issue of the party policy, unanimously resolved to adopt ‘MIZORAM STATE’ as party policy. Party Headquarters will please find out ways and means to materialize it."

Accordingly, the Mizo Union has submitted a petition to the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru regarding the formation of Mizo state. In view of the adoption of the policy of Mizo state by the Mizo Union, Ch. Saprawnga says that ‘we(pro-hill state) are much beaten by the supporters of the ‘Mizo state’ in the assembly, so it is difficult to estimate that the Mizo state was surely attain. So, we feel very despair…’

Thus the Mizo Union leaders decided that ‘Direct Action may be launch unless Mizo State is given by the Government of Assam before the end of 1964’. But the issues of Direct Action create disunity among them which later resulted the resignation of Ch. Saprawnga from Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the Mizo District Council. Thus, the Mizo Union could freely launch the movement for ‘Mizo state’ and is interesting to note that a song has been composed for this purpose.

**Mizo Independence movement**

As cited earlier, there arose divergent views among the Mizo political leaders on the future of Mizo hills. Some preferred to join Burma instead of India while others prefer to remain as a part of India Union. Meanwhile, some sections of the Mizo feel self-determination rather than remaining a part of Indian union. For instance, it was when the public meeting was held at Aizawl (at Bengali Theatre Hall) on February 21, 1947, that the motion for independent of the Mizo hills was passed, as follows –

"mi tam fe in ngeilhlan hrang hrang an sawi hnuin leh sriathiam loh zawng in zawhna leh in hrilhiahna te a awm hnu in ban phara Vote lakna a awm a, he ti ang hian thu a tlu a ni. “Keini Mizote chu mahni a ro in relin mahni ke negi in kan ding tur a ni” tih a ni. (chu chu Independent thina a ni).”(after a long deliberations, the meeting unanimously resolved that ‘we, the Mizo should stand on our own feet and we should have self-determination i.e. independently)."
The meeting was attended by about 200 peoples from various walks of life including church worker, teachers, prominent citizen etc. The meeting was chaired by Pu Sainghinga, Assistant Superintendent and convened by Pu Pachhunga, Pu PS Dahrawka and Pu Hmartawnphunga. It discussed about the future of the Mizo hills after the withdrawal of the British and is indicated that the meeting desires for self-government i.e. independent which would be the only safeguard from annihilation by the larger communities, instead of putting the Mizo hills under Indian Union.

‘tin, a reng reng thu an keini Mizote chu Kumpinu Sorkar hnuaiyah chaup lo chuan tu Sorkor hnuaiyah mah kan la awm ngai si lova, eng vangin nge Kumpinu Sorkor a kal avanga India Sorkor lo ding thar hrnuaiyah chuan kan kuna kan lu lu mai ang ? Keini chu Vai nen chuan hnam hrang daih, in an na nei hlek lo, hnam hlwmhhat fel hlak, tawngkhat hmang thei ngat leh pIan chhuahna lam pawh thuhamun vek kan ni si a, eng vang mahin Vai Sorkor hnuaiyah kan in barh mai tur a ni lo. Mahni ngeiin kan inti hrangin kan in bawk hrang tur a ni. Kan hnam zalenna leh thawvenna te kan Mizo nihna te hi chelh tlata humhalh kan duh phawt chuan tu bawih ah mah kan in tulut tur a ni lo."(the Mizo never submit themselves except only the British, what reasons shall the Mizo submit into the Indian government after the British regime ends. The Mizo are quite different from Indian peoples in respect of culture, habits, customs, language etc. They should be given independence and separate from the administration of India Union.)

Meanwhile, the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO) party which was founded on July 5, 1947 have an objectives of joining Burma instead of Indian Union. To them, the Mizo would have better and bright future if they opt out of India and join Burma. C. Lalthlengliana makes a few highlights the reasons which later steered the party to opt for Burma as follows -

‘it was chiefly because this small Lushai hills was not the only Mizo settlement, but also in Burma, whose kinship and appearance of these people were more similar to the Mizo besides the other Mizo settlements of Manipur, Tripura and East Bengal of India. They also once again hoped the old same policy to unify the whole Mizo settlements under one administration. The party therefore evidently aimed to join Burma, which they believed to be the nearest solutions’. 

Therefore, the UMFO party prefers Burma to India as they were convinced that they should be comfortable more in Burma than India due to their(Mizo) closer affinity with the Burmese people.

In case of Mizo Union party, when Assam Congress leaders such as Gopinath Bordoloi, Sir BN Rao and JJM Nichols Roy arrived in Aizawl on the eve of India Independence in 1946, to discuss the future of Lushai Hills. They consulted political leaders of Mizoram and persuaded them to join India which later resulted convinced the Mizo Union leaders to join India and then the party decided to have ‘full self-determination within the province of Assam’ instead of independence or joining Burma. Though the political leaders of Assam advised the Mizo leaders to join India, they also gave alternatives other than joining India. For instance, Sir BN Rao when addressing the public at Kulikawn (Aizawl) says that ‘the Mizo people would also choose independence if they wish’ 

In case of the questions on independence, though the Mizo Union was against independence, but there were differences of opinion among the leaders on this regard. For instance, R. Vanlawma, the founder of Mizo Union party, favours Independence by saying that ‘we must govern ourselves. We have enough supplies; we will be able to produce a sufficiency of things. Now is the time to fight for independence.’ On the other hand, Vanthu-
ama, who was against independence, said as follows-

"it is impossible to fight for independence now. If we look around us we see the ‘Darwin Theory’, the more powerful swallowing up the less powerful. If and when we are more powerful, we will swallow the Indians, and if they are more powerful than us they will swallow us. Besides, if we are independence, where will we get salt, and iron ore to make our farming equipment, and how are we going to make money?".30

Thus, it is indicated that the leaders of Mizo Union were divided on the subject of independence, in which majority of them are in favour of joining India while others favoured independence. Interestingly, C. Pahlira, once the leader of the party also revealed his ideas that ‘God will give us independence at the right time; we cannot have it by means of violence/fighting.’31 Likewise, many of them believed that ‘after a numbers of years, we may have a chance to attain independence from Indian Union’. So they decided to join India first for the betterment of Mizoram.

Formation of MNF and Declaration of Independence

The Mizo National Front (MNF) with having ‘For God and our Country’32 as its preamble, was formed on October 22, 1961 with Laldenga as Chairman and R. Vanlawma as Secretary General.33 The party chooses ‘self-determination’ as its aim.34 Soon after, the MNF party gained immense popularity within a short span of time and were confident enough to contest the elections of District council and Assam Legislative Assembly. In short, the MNF Party has submitted memorandum to the Prime Minister on October 30, 1965 demanding ‘self-determination of the Mizo’.

Finally, the Mizo National Front then declared independence for Mizoram against Indian Union on March 1, 1966 appealing to all independent states to recognize independent Mizoram. As a result, the Government of Assam declared the Mizo district to be a disturbed area under the Assam Disturbed Area Act, 1955 and counter-insurgency measure were soon taken.35

Factors for the declaration of independence

As cited earlier, many of the Mizo feel that they are very strange to Indian and never accept themselves as Indian. The MNF believed that ‘the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indians or in India nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do not therefore, feel Indian.’36

a) Different political ideology –Hill state, Mizo state, Independence.-transition period. The idea of attaining independ-ence from India was possesses by many of the political leaders of the Mizo hills instead of joining India or Burma,

b) Poor developmental works of the government failed to satisfy the people which led maximum support of MNF”s independence policy

c) Nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness led the cry for political self-determination among some section of the Mizo

Concluding remarks

Thus, there is indication that the ideas of independence or political self-determination or separation from Indian Union was possessed by most of the political leaders of the Mizo hills, but the way they wished to achieve was vary from party to party. It is also evident that there is a ‘desire for more political autonomy or self-govern/rule’ among the political leaders of the Mizo hills. For instance, they demand greater autonomy from District Conference, District council from Hill state, then separate Mizo state to independence/self-determination. In view of the political situation of the Mizo hills, the period when MNF declare/fought independence may be appropriate as there was a thirst for more political autonomy among the Mizo leaders during those days.
Notes and References


2. With the initiation of R. Vanlawma, the first political party in Mizoram i.e. Mizo Commoners’ Union’ Party was established on April 9, 1946 at Aizawl. It was later renamed as Mizo Union party.

3. The Block Officers Conference of the Mizo Union held at Sialsuk during April 4-5, 1947 resolved that ‘Mizoram may have District Autonomy and attached to Assam Province’ along with other resolutions. See P. Lahinthanga, Political Developments in Mizoram, Aizawl, 2006, p.23.

4. HC Thanhranga, District Councils in the Mizo Hills, p.36. Also, see the resolutions passed by the Lakhipur Conference of the Mizo Union during November 21-22, 1946 at Lakhipur, Cachar District, Assam.

5. HC Thanhranga, op.cit, pp.76-77.


7. Ibid, p.79.

8. Ibid.


12. Ibid., p.66.


19. The Mizo Union party demanded full self-determination with the province of Assam, see Memorandum submitted to His Majesty Government, Government of India and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee by the Mizo Union party in 1947.


21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.


26. Lalmawia, op.cit.

27. Memorandum submitted to His Majesty’s Government of India and its Constituent Assembly through the Advisory Committee by the Mizo Union Party in 1947.


30. Ibid, p.254


The other members of Office Bearers were – A. Rohnuna(Joint Secretary), Vanlalliana(Treasurer), Kailianchhunga (Executive members), H.Zirliana(Executive Members), C.Hermana(Executive Members) and Lairokunga (Executive members). See R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah*, Aizawl, 2007, pp.169-170.


Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India by Mizo National Front on October 30, 1965.
History and development of indigenous industry in Assam: Promotion and Entrepreneurship in Lakhimpur District

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The overall development of a nation is closely depends on economy but remain unchanged and have not been able to spreads of benefits to every nook and corner of the society, especially in Lakhimpur district of Assam. The importance of the discourse is felt very much needful, because of without play positive effort to recover the indigenous industries by implementing new ideas; the development to be arrested in the hands of riches. Transforming an individual entrepreneur to entrepreneurship concept is a prime importance whereas it is found that many predecessors among the tribal and non-tribal population tried to form concentration of own production according to social fabrics. The professional groups who are coming to very depress way to produce their livelihoods, community habits and habitats of have made it difficult for them to keep pace with modern society; they are not well placed economically, politically, educationally or industrially but they are trying hard to catch up with the rest of India. It is widely accepted that the main focus of the poverty alleviation programme i.e. development of the backward areas and the improvement in socio-economic conditions of the weaker sections through raising their employment and income opportunities. The main priority of this topic is to give attention on the indigenous industry by conceptualizing entrepreneurship development programmes for the worker section of the society. Secondly, the ruler of the Assam in different time can provide to fulfill the socio-economic conditions of the people and showed their performance of the working of poverty alleviation programmes, the type of beneficiaries that have been occurred, the impact of the programmes on income and employment of the target groups and difficulties that are faced by the government officials in implementing the programmes.

The main objectives of this topic are as to give attention on the major development programmes on worker section of the society, to examine the impact of the programmes on the socio-economic conditions of the people in rural areas, to examine the details of the performance of the working of poverty alleviation programmes, the type of beneficiaries, the extent of benefits that have been occurred, the impact of the programmes on income and employment of the target groups and difficulties that are faced by the government officials in implementing the programmes, promotion of the SHGs to Entrepreneurship concept and increase of leadership quality, formation of the Clusters of homogeneous SHGs to serve their common interest on a large platform. In modern times, different people, according to their own convenience, produce some goods and in many cases, they supply their labour and other resources to another producer or some producing organization. In this way, they earn money and buy necessary goods. As a producers sell their produced goods in the market, so different people, according to that needs and capability buy them and use or consume them. In this way, goods produced by different persons and organizations and
distributed among people in the society of modern economics.

The existing situation of employment and income for the entrepreneur does not provide adequate scope to raise the economic life of the entrepreneurs in Assam. Several small industries have turned sick because they have to approach several departments to attain no-objection certificate from the State Governments for electricity, water, etc. Despite talk of collateral-free loans, MSME face difficulties in availing loans. It is also found in the Ministry records that there is scarcity of land, and labour laws are complicated, so they are preparing a plan to simplify process and accord single-window clearance. They will get a time line to say 15 days, one month for entrepreneurs to acquire necessary clearances and to get loans within a specified timeframe. The authority says that they will design the policies to enable the youth to attain self-employment through entrepreneurship and creates jobs. Historical evidence bearing on Assamese old time industries are not scanty and references that we have in historical and other literature of Assam are sufficient to point to a high standard of industrial efficiency that the people obtained in Assam in early times. Assam produced almost all that was necessary for life in the light of the standard of living prevalent in those days. It is stated that the industry was highly developed in Ahom period. There are references to weavers, spinners, goldsmiths, potters and workers in ivory, bamboo, wood, hides and cane. According to the Mohammedan historians, the people were very skilful in weaving of embroidered silk cloths. According to records, Momai Tamuli Barbarua, a minister of King Pratap Singha, made it compulsory for every adult able bodied female to spin a certain quantity of yarn every evening. The Assamese were excellent carpenters who made their boxes, trays, stools and chairs by carving these out of a single block of wood.

**Entrepreneur in indigenous industry**

Nearly 50% people were engaging as entrepreneur in industrial sector in Assam. The professional class of people belonged to different communities traditionally entrusted in entrepreneurship development. They could be mainly put under two divisions (a) Those who engaged in homogeneous need-based work (b) Those who engaged in community-based supplier. Their struggle for existence made them for consuming and surplus became the most important and interesting work. Even now as labour intensive and capital saving industry, commonly handicrafts, handloom, vegetables, horticultural items, and domestic pastoral has a great importance. There is no dispute among economists and social thinkers about the urgent need for the emergence of an entrepreneurial society as a forerunner of accelerated development of the economy in an integrated manner. Entrepreneurship can be defined as a purposeful activity indulging in initiating, promoting and maintaining economic activities for the production and distribution of wealth and service. It requires relentlessly pursuing new opportunities, commitment to innovation and challenging traditional boundaries of through. In other words, it is a risk taking activity and a challenging task which needs hard work and utmost devotion, systematic planning, total commitment and greater sincerity with fullest involvement for his personal growth and prosperity. At the same time, a true entrepreneur must take care of his/her people, natural resources, the ecology and assure that his/her enterprise becomes a catalytic agent of development.

The need for a broad-based entrepreneurial class in India arises from the need to speed up the process of activating the factors of production leading to a higher economic growth, dispersal of economic activities, improvement in the standards of living of the weaker section of the society by developing backward and tribal areas creation of massive employment opportunities and finally to create involvement of all section of the society in the process of economic growth.
Several factors go into the making of an entrepreneur. Being a dynamic and challenging task, the requirements of an entrepreneur to become successful in his field are many. Become entrepreneurs is about more than just starting a business or two, It is about having attitude and the drive to succeed in business. All successful Entrepreneurs have a similar way of thinking and process several key personal qualities that make them so successful in business. Successful entrepreneurs are ambitious and have an inner drive to succeed and grow their business, rather than having a business degree or technical knowledge in a particular field.

Prospect of Industrialization in the Lakhimpur District

The industrial atmosphere and the infrastructural facilities do not allow this district for the development of large and medium scale industries. But at the same time, availability of waste land, local available resources and enough manpower indicate that Lakhimpur can fairly be adopted for the development of industries as adumbrated above lead us to think that the district has the enough potentiality for setting up of the following kinds of industries.

1. Agro based Industries: About 90% total population in the district live in rural areas. Most of them are paddy farmers and hence it can be expected that based on locally available raw-materials different kinds of agro-based industries (i.e. Rice-mill, Chira mill, oil mill, spice mill) can be developed.

2. Forest Based Industries: This district has 84,321.26 sq. K.m. of reserved forest areas. The reserved forest have the valuable frees like sal, segun, chafa, simolu, cane and bamboo etc. Based on these resources match, furniture industries can be developed.

3. Food processing Industries: The district has also the greater potentiality is established food processing and preservation industries like jam, jelly etc. Etc.

4. Cottage industries: Cottage industries have a scope in the district too. These will include handloom, cane and bamboo and handicrafts etc.

5. Plantation Development industries: Such as rubber, coffee, small tea gardens, flowers etc. can also be developed.

6. Animal husbandry resource based: Animal husbandry resource based industries such as dairy farming, piggery, poultry, farming etc. Etc. Have the potentiality for the development of industries in the district.

7. Bee-keeping industries: Bee-keeping industries can also be developed.

8. We can develop packet freezing fish, dry fish industries, fish nursery etc.

Major findings

1. The infrastructural facilities have to be improved in order to reduce the cost of production and raise the margin of profit. Power facilities and wide networks of transport and communication should be provided as a basic prerequisite.

2. Education and training should be extended to the workers. Such programs should be drawn simultaneously for the entrepreneurs and also for these of the existing ones.

3. The artisans have to be acquired with the economical methods of producing maximum output with minimum cost. Consequently services relating to knowledge on management skill and small technical guidance should be provided to the small entrepreneurs at their door steep.

4. That market for khadi and village industries product can be much widened if the design and patterns are made to suit the fashion of the day. There should be some agencies to encourage the entrepreneurs to keep to the latest design and patterns.

5. Without remaining financial hardship of the small enterprise, no amount of effort...
can develop the sector. The role of village money lenders should be climate for this purpose, credit facilities on easy terms inadequate quantity should be made available from banking institutions and cooperative societies.

6. Marketing of the products should be remunerative to the entrepreneurs. The role of middleman and commission agents must be eliminated and exploitation of the entrepreneurs in marketing of the product removed.

7. Research and development should be organized on a much wider scale. Innovation of new technology which facilities product with minimum cost can help raising the competitive strength and profit level of the industries.

8. National Bank for KVI sector and a National Rural Industries Marketing Cooperation are recommended. Another suggestion is the KVIC should remain an apex body for KVI sector, and set involved in direct financing of registered institutions.

9. Cluster approach as emphasized by various committees needs to be perused vigorously. Development of infrastructure, common service and other requirements needs to be planned cluster wise. Margin money, capital equipment grant, subsidy and rebate need to be continued and strengthened by emphasizing the repayment culture among artisans/co-operatives.

**Conclusion**

At last we may referred by top management institution it is vital that every entrepreneur plan to include the mission, analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and state the marketing and financial goals for the plan period. It is essential for marketers to develop a service strategy while developing their intangible products needs to consider the art of managing customer expectations and satisfaction. Pricing is a critical factor in every step of marketing plan. Effective pricing strategies must take into account costs and customer perceptions and competitor’s reactions. The manufacturers should pay sincere attention to their marketing channels, while they can be available when and where customers desire to buy. Today everybody needs money for their improvement in the living standard. But some of the entrepreneurs are still searching for that financial requirement to cope up with their problem. The rural females should be brought to participate into the mainstream of development activities and this would necessitate extension of education and training facilities. However the tentative aspects are as well as simplification of products, encouraging support to be given by Governmental and other intuitional quarters for the entrepreneurship sector of various stages and integration of KVI activities with other self employment and rural development programmes at state and district levels.

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Abbas Uddin Ahmed: The Legendary King of Bhawaiya

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Introduction

Abbas Uddin Ahmed is one of the prominent singers of India as well as Bengal. He was the son of the soil of the native state Koch Behar. His father wanted to make him a high level lawyer; but his genius made him a legendary king in the field of musical world. In his early life as a singer though he had been doing to and fro in the different section of music but his genius in Bhawaiya song made him the legend of Bhawaiya. Before Abbas, Bhawaiya also prevailed in the region but it was regarded the song of workers and cultivators of the field. Abbas Uddin was the first man; by his tireless effort he was able to spread the melody of Bhawaiya in every door of the people of Bengal. For the improvement of Bhawaiya, he left Kochbehar for Kolkata. Without some break he had been staying in Kolkata till the date of independence of India. When in 1947 India bifurcated in communal basis he left Kolkata for Dhaka. Till the last breath he was the inhabitant of old polton area of Dhaka. During the time of his death he left two sons and one daughter in this planet. Though he was a music lover person in his whole life, in spite of it, he never propagated his child to learn music. But when they wanted to learn that then he arranged to learn that and kept teachers to improve the skill of the child. His son Mustofa Jaman Abbasi and daughter Ferdousi Rehman was able to become prominent singer of Bangladesh. Ferdousi Rehman, the prominent and versatile personality of music who was able to spread the melody of Bhawaiya in its top most sphere of progress. She obtained Doctoral Degree from London in Bhawaiya song. Another son of Abbas, Mustofa Kamal was able to become the chief justice of Bangla Desh Supreme Court.

By the effort of Abbas Uddin, the great poet Qazi Najrul achieved versatile character as a song composer. Inspiration of Abbas made Najrul the composer of Islamic song. By his melodious voice Abbas made popular the Islamic song of Najrul among the Muslim people of Bengal. Before this, Najrul regarded as Qaferamong the conservative Muslims. Abbas Uddin was the contemporary of famous poets Gulam Mustofa and Jasimuddin. He also recorded their songs by his voice. Abbas Uddin was the embodiment of communal harmony, during the time of communal riots either in colonial India or in independent Pakistan he holds the song in loud voice against communalism. He like to travel, in his whole life he travelled different parts of the world. Some times for tour, sometimes for the purpose of music, he went to the different corner of the world. Abbas was not only a singer but was a writer also. He composed good quality of songs and poetries. Apart from this he was a high profile actor; he acted in some films and in theaters. In his whole life he able to achieved many awards. This famous personality of Bengal who popularly known as the “Bird of Song of Bengal ‘at last left his breath at Dhaka in 30th December 1959. Though, he is no more with us yet his song is immortal among the people of Bengal.
Bhawaiya is one of the important folk song of India as well as Bengal. Northern part of integral Bengal, specially the surrounding area of Koch Behar kingdom is the birth land of Bhawaiya song. It is said that the word “Bhawaiya” originated from the Bengali word “Bhab” [passion]. Many scholars are of the opinions that the word “Bhawaiya” derived from the Bengali word “bhawya” [garden of tall grass]. Actually Bhawaiya song related with open boundless field, sandy bank of river, bullock cart, gang of cow [herd], gang of buffalo [herd], field of tall grass, cattle grazing boy [grazier] and also with coachman. Before Abbas Uddin Bhawaiya regarded as the song of illiterate people, no one composed Bhawaiya in the script like other songs. Most of the composer of Bhawaiya in that time composed the song, sang the song and kept it in their mind. In this way singers had been singing the songs for the years. This type of songs regarded as existing and traditional songs. Famous bhawaiya song Fandeporiyabogakandere is the example of traditional Bhawaiya song, no composer had been found of this song in any history of song.

As its features, Bhawaiya mainly two types – Chotka [rapid] and Doriya [slow and long]. As above mentioned song one is Chotka and another is Doriya. The first one is Chotka and the later one is Doriya. The breaking of voice is another feature of Bhawaiya song. Though in ancient times Bhawaiya was not composed in script but nowadays like other songs Bhawaiya have been composing in script and singing based upon the ragas. Though Dotara [two chord or poly-chord instrument is the main instrument for Bhawaiya song but nowadays dram, guitar and other instruments have been using during the time of Bhawaiya song.

Indian song mainly divided into two groups-one is cultivated and the other is uncultivated. Tribal song situated within uncultivated group, when the classical song based upon the ragas stand inside the cultivated group. But the folk song situated between the both groups. The famous ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettle expressed his view about this matter. According to Bruno Nettle, “folk music occupies a kind of middle group between the primitive and cultivated.” Bhawaiya is one of the important folk song of India. It is now the question is that, what is folk music [song]. There are different opinions about it among the ethnomusicologists. The famous ethnom-
usicologist Cecil sharp stated his view about folk music [in 1907], “the spontaneous music of the unspoiled, unlettered classes and created out of their pure natural instinct.” On the basis of Cecil sharp’s expression the International Folk Music Council has given the definition of folk music in its Shawkawlo summit in Brazil in 1954. According to International Folk Music Council- “folk music is the product of musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission.”

Bhawaiya is the song of folk community of North Bengal. It is the song of the soul of the people of integral North Bengal. It is the song of men and soil. Before Abbas, Bhawaiya also was prevailed in the region but not as large scale. But by the tireless effort of Abbas Uddin, the legendary king of Bhawaiya, Bhawaiya emerged as the song of mass people and adopted global characteristics.

**Early Life of Abbas Uddin**

Abbas Uddin Ahmed is the son of the soil of the native state Koch Behar. He was born in 27th October 1901 in Balarampur Village of Tufanganj Subdivision in Kochbehar. His father jafarali Ahmed was a prominent lawyer and famous personality of Tufanganj. Jafar Ali was a renowned Joddar [Jamindar] of Tufanganj Subdivision. His Mother Heeraman Nesha was a kind hearted and pious personality of the village. From his early life Abbas Uddin was very intelligent and sharp knowledge boy. He completed his primary education from the village Pathsala. After this he was admitted to Tufanganj N. N. M High School, from where he completed his degree of matric with first division in 1919. Though he wanted to admit in Laxmi Morish Musical College but the conservative environment of that time made a barrier between Abbas and his hope. So he compelled to admit in Victoria College in Kochbehar. From where, he was able to achieve I.A. degree in 1921. When he was studying in B, A and he was the student of 3rd year his father become seriously ill. Due to his father’s illness he had to give up every sort of activities of his academic life. So it had not been possible for him to achieved B.A degree in his future life. It was a tragedy in his whole enlightened life. But it was the benediction for youth Abbas and for the Bhawaiyal over people of Bengal. If he achieved the degree of B.A, perhaps he would have engaged himself as a high class official of the govt. But when his dream had broken in academic level, he fully involved his mind in the music world and he able to become the bird of music of Bengal.

**Turning Point in the Life of Abbas**

From his childhood, actually when he was at five he had a massive tendency to control the tune, tone and rhythm of any song from gramophone or sung by the cultivators in the field. He tried to seeking tune and tone even in the evening sound of crickets and collective voice of Jackals [yell]. In his boyhood he was not send in any time to any music teacher. Yet, he sings any kind of song as its original form. When he was studying in N.N.M High School several times he was awarded for his melodious song in the annual cultural meet. He never tried to loss any chance to stage performs nearby his shelter. Listening his song every one asked him to go to Kolkata for farther experiment and to record his song. But when his dream had broken in academic stage, he had to engaged his mind to look after his father’s business. Due to watch the different types of activities of Jamindary he had to go to Krishnapur hat regularly. In this source he able to meet with many prominent personalities of Kochbehar. Surnendra Nath Roy, advocate Rajen Roy, Sunil Roy, Satya Narayan Sukul, Ram Ratan Agrwal and Professor Chunilal Mukherjee those who met with him every one asked him to go to Kolkata to record his song as Abbas was a melodious boy. Chunilal Mukherjee, the professor of Economics of Victoria College always inspired him to carry on farther experiment in music and asked him to go to Kolkata to record his song.
In this context one thing is most memorable that Abbas was a fortune boy able to meet with Qazi Najrul Islam in Kochbehar. When Abbas was studying in Victoria College and also had been staying in College Hostel, during that time the Muslim students of the college had arranged Milad-un-Nabi and invited Qazi Najrul as their chief guest. Without any asking the moon comes out in his room. The committee of the function arranged lodging for Najrul in the hostel room of Abbas. In this source Abbas become familiar with Najrul. Najrul become astonished after listen the song of Abbas. Najrul said to Abbas, you have golden future, you no more spend your time in Kochbehar, very soon welcome to Kolkata. This was the big turning point in the life of Abbas.

Another important thing should be expressed in this context that when Abbas was the student of Victoria College he applied for the post of Daroga [O.C] and had gotten the appointment letter for the job. After received the appointment letter he become very glad and ran to the quarter of Radheshyam Chakravorty, one of the important Daroga [O.C] of Koch Behar city. Radheshyam was the prominent friend of Jafar Ahmed [Father of Abbas]. When Radheshyam was at Tufanganj as a Daroga of that police station, then Jafar Ahmed was the prominent lawyer of that time at Tufanganj. Gradually, a cordial friendship between the both families began to develop. Jafar also offered his son to Radheshyam Chakravorty and asked him to look after Abbas like his son. From that time Radheshyam become another guardian of Abbas. Radheshyam like very much to Abbas and Abbas also obey his second guardian like his father. Any way when Abbas went to Radheshyam Chakravorty then Radheshyam become very angry, because he did not want Abbas would be appointed as Daroga. In that time the job of Daroga was not honorable Job in the society. Abbas was intelligent, so Radheshyam wanted, Abbas would be appointed in high level job. In this situation Radheshyam take Abbas with him and soon reached to the office of Mr. Lesser, the S.P of Kochbehar. Radheshyam returned the appointment letter to the S.P and requested him to cancel it. In this way Abbas was saved from that type of job and which also was another important turning point in the life of Abbas.

City Life of Abbas in Kolkata

One day in 1931 Abbas left Koch Behar for Kolkata. More or less Abbas had been staying in Kolkata till 1947. Any way when Abbas reached in Kolkata it was very hot due to Civil Disobedient Movement. In this situation it was too tough to get a shelter in Kolkata like Abbas a countryside boy. But Abbas always a fortune boy, like in Koch Behar many kindhearted persons come to Abbas to help him. With the help of Jiten Maitra Abbas had gotten a shelter in the house of Taskin Ahmed as a home tutor. Taskin Ahmed was a prominent advocate and public procurator had been staying in Kolkata but originated from Dhaka. After this Abbas had gotten a job of Rs.45 Per month in D.p.I, with the help of Safiqul Islam the P.S of D.P.I. But Abbas was a creative boy, by his creative activities he able to get a job in agriculture department. During the time of A.K Fajlul Hoque the prim-minister of Bengal, Abbas was appointed in publicity department.

Before permanently settled in Kolkata in 1931, Abbas had gotten a chance to record his song with the help of Vimal Das Gupta a prominent personality of Koch Behar. In 1930, when Abbas was 29 years old he recorded his first song-“sworonparerogopiya” and “konbiroheern oyonjo lebadoljhore go”. The both songs were the Bengali modern song composed by Shailen Roy. Abbas was the native of Koch Behar, so his mother tongue was a Kamrupi dialect, not pure Bengali. So, during the times of voice recording of Abbas linguistic amendment had done by K. Mallik. K. Mallik was a famous personality of that time in music world. But during his city life Abbas got lot of advantage to improve his quality.
Some times, Abbas tried to imitate the tune and tone of other prominent singers like Krishna Chandra Dey. But when it has appeared in the eyes of Najrul, Najrul asked him to ban it. After that Abbas never practiced such type of imitation. Though Abbas in his first life had been doing to and fro of the different section of music and he recorded different types of song, He recorded Bengali modern song, Rabindrasangeet, Najrulgeeti, Bhawaiya, Bhatiyali, Kawali, Jari, Sari, Marsiya, Urdu song etc. Yet in a stage of his career he offered himself to folk song, especially for Bhawaiya and Islamic song. This change made him famous and authentic in the music world.}

Abbas Uddin recorded many songs in his whole life. But now we able to get only 37 recorded Bhawaiya songs of Abbas in the museum of Dhaka Radio center.25

Out of 37, the most popular songs of Abbas are given below.26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Lyrics</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Music Record No</th>
<th>Year of the Record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kunch-boron Konyare tor</td>
<td>Abbas Uddin</td>
<td>Abbas Uddin, 22227</td>
<td>December, 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nodiramsoionjona</td>
<td>Qazi Najrul</td>
<td>Qazi Najrul, 78 Rpm</td>
<td>December, 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ki bondhukajolbhomorare</td>
<td>traditional</td>
<td>17006</td>
<td>December, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bao-kunta batasjemon</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>27436</td>
<td>December, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaganaoyedubodubo</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>17332</td>
<td>December, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premjanenarosikkalachand</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>19725</td>
<td>January, 1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandeporiyabogakande re</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>17332</td>
<td>February, 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamojamnojamokoinya he</td>
<td>A.Karim</td>
<td>Abbas Uddin, 27111</td>
<td>April, 1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-Kigariyalbhai</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>17006</td>
<td>December, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aabonaedaritammmoriya</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>27055</td>
<td>November, 1940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbas Uddin was the contemporary of famous poet Jasimuddin and GolamMustofa, he become familiar with them. The songs “feerechaobarek fire chao, hey nithurpriya..” composed by GolamMustofa and this song was recorded by Abbas. Another famous song “O aamardorodiaagejanle tor bhanganoukaychortamna..” was composed by Jasimuddin and the song was recorded by Abbas. Apart from this many other songs of both poets recorded by Abbas.27

Abbas has a great contribution in the field of Islamic song and Bangla Gazol. Famous poet QaziNajrul composed more than 3000 thousand songs. He also has composed songs related with goddesses Kali which known as shyamasongeet. But till that time Najrul had not any contribution in the field of Islamic song. So Najrul regarded as Qafer among the conservative Muslims. Only by the request of Abbas, Najrul started to compose Islamic song and Gazol. The songs– “Aallahtejar purnoimmankotha se musalman” “Aallahnamerbijbunechhirousulname-mathe.”; “tribhubonerpiyo Muh-ammad eloeduniyay was composed by Najrul and recorded by Abbas.28 Within few months Islamic song become very popular towards the Muslim people. The conservative Muslims those who kept their finger into their ears during the time of song and music, they brought gramophone into their drawing room. Najrul composed many Islamic songs in this time which become very popular within short time. In this way Najrul and Abbas brought a radical change among the conservative Muslim society. And Islamic songs helped Najrul and Abbas to become
popular within the Islamic society. We can easily realize the popularity of Abbas in the words of A.K FajlulHoque the prim-minister of Bengal of that time. Once FajlulHoque said, I could easily win the mind of the people of Bengal within few days, if I go out for campaign with Abbas and Najrul. It is the great achievement for Abbas as well as Najrul.

Abbas as a man of variety

Abbas was a versatile boy, he was not only a singer but also performed in different section of culture. His life as actor started with the acting in the theatre. He had acted in the dramas – “Devla Devi”, “MishorKumar”, Rijia “Shahjahan” etc., In his acting life once he had gotten chance in film. He acted in the films like – “Bishnu Maya” (1932), “Mahanisha” (1936), “Ekti Kotha” and “Thikadar” (1940). Abbas also wrote few poetries and a book entitled “AamarShilpiJeevaner Kotha.” The book was published by his son Mustofa Jaman Abbasi in 1960, immediate after the death of Abbas. Abbas went to the different parts of the world as the ambassador of music for his own country. In this way he had spread the melody of Bhawaiya in the different corners of the world. Abbas had participated more than five thousand Jalsa stage for music and conference. He was awarded in many times. 

Abdul Karim the brother of Abbas was a famous lyric composer, who provided lyrics to Abbas for sing. Abbas had been staying in Kolkata from 1931 to 1947. But in leisure time he never forgot to visit his mother land Koch Behar. It was very pathetic for him when he had to leave Kolkata for Dhaka. Though now in west Bengal a large number of Muslims are remains. Yet, as India bifurcated on communal basis, the communal situation of that time was very disastrous. So Abbas left Kolkata in 1947 for Dhaka with his whole family. In Dhaka he took shelter in old Polton are and he spend there the last 12 years of his life. He never spoiled any time, always served for music. At last this legendary king of Bhawaiya left his last breath at Dhaka in the morning of 30th December in 1959.

At the time of death, Abbas left two sons and one daughter in this planet. His son Mustofa Kamal is a high level intellectual of Bangladesh and he able to become the chief justice of Bangladesh Supreme Court. Mustofa Jaman Abassiand Ferdausi Rehman are the A grade artist and celebrity of Bangladesh. FerdausiRehman is the bright star of music world who achieved Ph.D from London on Bhawaiya music.

Abbas was the pioneer father of Bhawaiya and where he finished his activities about the progress of Bhawaiya, his son and daughter have taken the charge to develop it. And by their effort Bhawaiya reached it to most sphere of progress and achieved global character.

 personal Life of Abbas

Abbas married LutfunnesaSarrkar, the daughter of FajiluddinSarkar in 1929. Fajiluddin Sarkar was the inhabitant of Chikon Maati village of Nilfamari of Rangpur District. Though Abbas was an artist yet he maintained his personal life according to Shorijat. He always participated in Namaj [prayer] in every times of the day. He was an honest and pious personality. He always extended his hand for improvement of the people. When he was in Kolkata he realized if I able to produce more Bhawaiya artists from my locality, it would be profitable for Bhawaiya. So he had taken many persons from Koch Behar to Kolkata. Out of them Nayeb Ali [Tepu], Keshab Barman, Dhirendra Chandra, Surendra Nath Bosuniya were very famous.  

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Abdul Karim the brother of Abbas was a famous lyric composer, who provided lyrics to Abbas for sing. Abbas had been staying in Kolkata from 1931 to 1947. But in leisure time he never forgot to visit his mother land Koch Behar. It was very pathetic for him when he had to leave Kolkata for Dhaka. Though now in west Bengal a large number of Muslims are remains. Yet, as India bifurcated on communal basis, the communal situation of that time was very disastrous. So Abbas left Kolkata in 1947 for Dhaka with his whole family. In Dhaka he took shelter in old Polton are and he spend there the last 12 years of his life. He never spoiled any time, always served for music. At last this legendary king of Bhawaiya left his last breath at Dhaka in the morning of 30th December in 1959.

At the time of death, Abbas left two sons and one daughter in this planet. His son Mustofa Kamal is a high level intellectual of Bangladesh and he able to become the chief justice of Bangladesh Supreme Court. Mustofa Jaman Abassiand Ferdausi Rehman are the A grade artist and celebrity of Bangladesh. FerdausiRehman is the bright star of music world who achieved Ph.D from London on Bhawaiya music.

Abbas was the pioneer father of Bhawaiya and where he finished his activities about the progress of Bhawaiya, his son and daughter have taken the charge to develop it. And by their effort Bhawaiya reached it to most sphere of progress and achieved global character.
Conclusion
The boy who was born in a deep rural area in a native state during the colonial rule in India, by his own effort able to become a famous personality of the music world. By the melody of his songhe had gotten place in the mind of music lover people of Bengal. Without any teacher of music very few artists in the world able to reached in such position like Abbas. He was famous singer but individually strict in his religious activities.35 Yet, he was highly secular minded. When he left Kolkata for Dhaka in that time Dhaka was very hot due to communal riots. In this situation, Abbas hold the song in his voice loudly against communalism.36 When he was in Kolkata he also have faced many communal situation. Abbas sang many songs for communal harmony during his city life in Kolkata. As an artist he never had jealousy to other artists. Bhawaiya was the song of illiterate people before Abbas. But Abbas by his own effort able to send the melody of Bhawaiya in the drawing room of the urban people of Bengal irrespective of cast and creed. Friendship with Najrul, Jasimuddin and with GolamMustofawas become the massive inspiration for his rapid progress. In anywhere Abbas was not alone; people spontaneously come to help him. So, one day he became the artist of the people.

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Punjab is the western gateway of India which witnessed people and communities of various racial stocks and cultural traits who visited and inhabited in this part of the Indian sub-continent. As a result of it, the people of Punjab have diverse demographic and cultural characteristics including all the dominant Indian religion, numerous communities, castes and tribes. This research paper is an attempt to study of Sansi tribe in Punjab (1871-1952) comprising its historical background, social, economic, political and religious aspects in Punjab. Both primary and secondary sources are consulted regarding this tribe in above mentioned context.

The Sansis of Punjab were one of the most ancient people of the Indo-Aryan stock, who entered the land of five rivers, thousands of years ago. The name or the title ‘Sansi’ came into being many centuries after the immigration of the Aryans into India. This tribe was found in 1891 in 26 districts, but in 1901, it was reported that there were none then in 6 districts in which small numbers had been recorded at the census. As far the historical background is concerned the ancestors of Sansis were once called the ‘Sursenas’ and Yadu Rajputs of Mathura. From the Yadus, descended a race which was called Bhatti Rajputs. The Bhatti Rajputs flourished in Rajasthan for some centuries before the attack of Muslims and particularly before the invasion of Allauddin Khilji, who destroyed Chittor and expelled many Rajput tribes from Rajasthan. Most of the expelled tribes of Bhatti Rajputs wandered towards Punjab. Out of these tribes, there was one known as the Sansi tribe which was named after its leader, ‘Raja Sansmal or Sansi’ about whom many legends and historical traditions are prevalent. The wandering Bhatti Tribes kept roaming for a very long time. After some centuries, some of them settled in the territories of Hissar, Ferozepur, Bathinda and some other parts of Punjab.

Sansis were divided into two major groups known as Mahla and Baindu. Both these groups used to intermarry and were further divided into 23 gots (clans). It is believed that Mahla was the elder son of Sansmal who had 12 sons (from whom 12 gots originated) and the younger one Baindu had 11 sons from whom emerged 11 gots. All the persons observed brown complexion of one shade or the other, but none has black complexion. Sansis wore tragi, a cotton cord round the loins, and it was prohibited to be used by any other class. Punjabi Sansis used to wear the hair long and keep twisted, within its coils a small sharp knife, called kapu, used for purse-cutting. The nails of the right thumb and index finger was kept long for similar purposes. Sansi women used to dress up elaborately for festive occasions, but the usual attire of both sexes was rarely anything more than a langoti.

Traditionally they lived in joint families where the father or the elder brother...
was the head. If the male member of the family was executed or jailed then the women folk would take over the responsibility of the family. They command equal respect. No case of female infanticide has been reported among them. So as per the gender issue is concerned it is observed that both men and women were better treated in this tribe. Owing to the constant absences of the man on thieving excursions and in jail, the women had gained a position of unusual influence in the tribe. The Sansis were under the influence of their aged women. Their system of marriages was also unique as the Sansis were endogamous so no one was allowed to marry outside the tribe. If someone did it then he had to face excommunication from the community. In Punjab it was known as *Huqa pani band*. In certain cases cousin marriage was allowed and there was custom of levirate form of marriage also. Dowry was always small, comprising of articles of domestic use, but it was never demanded. Polyandry was absent.

Sansi dialect may be categorized as the main dialect and the criminal variation. The former is used by all Sansis in ordinary conversation. It closely resembled Punjabi, though it was sometimes more or less like Urdu language. The later one namely criminal variation was absolutely unintelligible except to the initiated.

If we analyse the economic condition of this tribe it is observed that this tribe was economically weak. They had either little or null sources for their survival. They lived on small scale animal husbandry like rearing sheep and goat. They kept dogs for hunting and donkeys for transportation in their early nomadic life. Traditionally, the gender division of labour was based on the type of the occupation opted by them. In their nomadic past, the men used to hunt or steal and the women were there to help them. But after their settlement the men turned to be laboures in agriculture or other sectors but they failed to develop a large scale enterprise. Thus, their mainstay was labour or petty crime. With the settlement women took to house-keeping, collecting fuel wood, cooking food or doing light agriculture work. They however, preferred to work collectively as a team rather individually. The Sansis were traditional hunters who caught and used to eat all sorts of wild animals. Cleanliness of flesh did not matter them. At the time of marriage both the bridegroom and bride were given specific parts of goat, which was sacrificed and cooked on this occasion. Both meat and liquor were inseparable part of their functions as no rite of their community was considered complete without it. Sansis developed special techniques to distil and sell liquor. However, their young women-folk, were not allowed to take liquor or other intoxicants but some older women used *naswar* or *bidis* (cigarettes). Both men and women had special liking for fried and spicy food. In this concern they were very particular.

The Sansis have always headed the list as the chief of criminal tribes of the Punjab and they contributed very largely, in 1870, to furnishing the object and reasons for the passing of the act XXVII the following year. By this Act of 1871, number of communities in Punjab mainly the Bauria, Bazigar, Barad, Bangala, Gandhila, Nat and Sansi including their numerous sub-groups were declared “criminals”. According to David Arnold, the Criminal Tribes act was used against “wandering groups, nomadic petty traders and pastoralists, gypsy types,
hilly and forest dwelling tribe’s, in short, against a wide variety of marginal who did not conform to the colonial pattern of settled agricultural and wage labour."¹¹

According to the Act of 1871 the number of Sansis on the register was 571, all males out of the total population of 1,902. They were scattered all over the district of Sialkot but were chiefly confined to six kots, which were reformatories in the shape of small walled villages, standing apart from any other habitation and under the control of a jamadar paid by Government and assisted by a small staff of police.¹⁹

The organization of separate gangs was made for practicing a sort of rule of exogamy among themselves. The Sansis were used to be divided into seven gangs (gol), of which the leaders of five were women and two were men because so many of the sansi males were in jail.²⁰

The Sansis were one of the extremely bold and fearless criminal tribe in the province. It was admitted by the British government and stringent proceedings were taken against them. In the year 1890, they were all simultaneously arrested.²¹ In 1891, Sansi Tribe was found in 26 districts, but in 1901 they were found in six districts in which small numbers had been recorded. The tribe was proclaimed criminal but orders for its registration were issued only on the Sansis of Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Lahore, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujrat. The Sansis of Amritsar, Karnal and Ambala were not registered under this Act.²² The younger members were removed to a reformatory, and the elders were distributed throughout the province in the hope that they would adopt an honest course of livelihood. An expectation was made but it was not been realized. In the Upper Doab careful enquiry conclusively proved that they had no other means of livelihood except Dakaiti, road robbery, thefts from vehicles, threshing floors and persons sleeping in the fields.²³

In 1908, the first Criminal Tribes Settlement Act was passed to make arrangements for those members of criminal tribes included Sansis who were convicted. In these settlements they were taught to work. Instructions were given to lead an honest life. Their children were sent to schools. Settlements were created for the reformation of the criminals. Although an effort was made but it could not achieve much, again in 1911 an amendment was made to this effort.²⁴ Besides the settlement programmes of the British government some religious and social organizations like Salvation Army made efforts to uplift tribal population. The Salvation Army founded in London in 1865 by the late William Booth. It was first of all reached Bombay on 19th September 1882, in the same year they started their work in India under the supervision of commissioner Booth Tucker. The head- quarters of this army in Punjab was on Ferozepore road, Lahore. It was establish to provide training to the members of criminal tribes included Sansis. There was also one settlement known as ‘Danepur’, where some members of the Sansi tribe were kept after their released from the jail.²⁵ They, with the assistance of local government, established four settlements for members of these tribes.²⁶

Three classes of settlements were recommended.²⁷

(1) Reformatory Settlement
(2) Industrial Settlement
(3) Agricultural Settlement

The features of these settlements were-²⁸:
(a) The settlement shall be under the charge of some officer or non-official who will enforce the prescribed discipline.

(b) Men shall ordinarily be joined in settlements by their wives and families.

(c) Every adult male shall be compelled to work for his living and the females given the opportunity of working.

(d) Boys shall receive literary and industrial education, and

(e) Work shall be provided for all able bodied workers on payment of wages sufficiently large to maintain them.

In 1928 a Reformatory school was established at Amritsar where the boys of criminal tribes included Sansis were given vocational training and ordinary education up to the lower middle standard. Tailoring, carpentry, shoe-making and weaving was taught to them. The industrial settlements were all self-Supporting. Remunerative occupation was provided for all settlers in the Railways workshops, forest plantations and Tea Gardens where majority of the men worked well. Where as in Agricultural settlements sometimes difficulties were faced due to crop failure. Even then there was a marked improvement in the administration and control of criminal tribes included Sansis set in during the year 1928. Agricultural education was introduced into all agricultural settlements. Schools set of books and pamphlets containing relevant information in regard to plants and seeds etc. were supplied.

The scheme framed by the government classified the members of the tribes included Sansis in different categories in order to exercise control over them. The worst characters were put into reformatory settlement, hopeful were kept in industrial settlement and well-behaved were shifted to agricultural settlement. These three classes of settlements were to form stages in the reformation of the criminal tribes. All the members of these tribes were not sent to the settlements. They were kept under the surveillance of the local police.

By the year 1920, there were six settlements for sansis in the District of Sialkot only-Mandianwala, Goindke, Jhandu, Nangal, Ahdiau and Dningranwali. The Sansis settlement at Kot Ahdian was set up by the Salvation Army in 1915. The Sansis settlement at Kot Jhandu and Goindke were established by the Deo Samaj in the year 1918. A considerable number of Sansis with their families had been transferred to these settlements where they were provided with facilities for earning an honest livelihood.

The settlement proved efficacious as a means of reformation, the most hopeful measure of reform was the education of the children of criminal tribes included the children of Sansis which was over 3000. Even the girls were taught the elements of domestic economy. There was a weaving school for boys at Palampur and the Moghulpura settlement had established a night school for youths who were employed during the day. It is interesting to learn that the children of these tribes were usually above the average in intelligence and showed extra-ordinary keenness to learn.

Whenever a dispute arose between Sansis, the parties called a gathering of their brotherhoods and appointed chiefs from them. They used to submit their appeals before this assembly and they were required to accept it. The punishments were also of different kinds. The man held to be at fault was punished with a dand (a fine imposed by the brotherhood), its amount being fixed by the chiefs. In case of parties opposed the decision then, another custom, called paun bhuti, was observed. Each party used to give a rupee to the chiefs who sent for two divers. A bamboo was planted in a well and the divers were sent down into it. They dive into the water, and the man whose diver comes up last, was considered to be truthful. They believed that water would not allow a wrong man to remain below its surface. This decision was final. There were many such
methods to test genuineness of claims and counter claims of the parties but generally the
decision used to depend on the judgement of
lambardars. The punishment inflicted upon
offending parties generally was in monetary
form like fines varying from Rs. 5 to Rs.30.
It was imposed according to the seriousness
of the offence committed. It was a significant
fact that burglaries and thefts were not
covered under this category of an offence.

As a community, the Sansis had a
practical approach towards religion. In 1881
Muslim Sansis comprised 11% of their
population. There were a few Sikhs and the
rest were Hindus. They followed their own
religious practices and worshiped their
ancestors. On various occasions Sansmal, his
two sons namely Baindu and Mahla and his
twenty three grandsons were worshiped. A
feast was organized for the community in
case the wish come true or realized practically. They had a vague idea of a great
God, whom they used to call Bhagwan,
Parameswar or Narayan. They also worshiped many saints, fazirs and devis such as Malang Shah and Fatha Shaheed. The
real vagrant Sansi after the death often
merely exposed their dead bodies in the
jungle. They observed the Shraddh
ceremony, and they first made two offerings
to spirits of ancestors who had died a violent
death or had committed a suicide and to
those who had died unmarried.

So we can say that Sansi tribe
functioned on its own rules and regulations.
Prevailing circumstances transformed it as a
criminal tribe. Although India got indepen-
dence on 15 August 1947 but all the criminal
tribes including sansi tribe had to struggle
hard for their freedom. At last, after 5 years
and 15 days they tasted the fruit of their long
fight in the form of freedom (De-notified)
dated 30 August 1952 and the tag of crim-
inality was removed from them.

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British colonial rule has been described as a ‘crucial watershed’ in the ecological history of India. Colonial rule enabled the global expansion of the resource base of industrial societies as land and natural resources earlier controlled by gatherer and peasant societies came under the control of new rules of property that created the legal foundation for the industrial mode of resources use. Assam was gradually incorporated into this new global resource use regime. The land settlement project resulted in significant dispossession of the Assamese peasantry and of the shifting cultivators and hunter-gatherers of the Brahmaputra Valley and the surrounding hills. As, Sanjib Baruah points out, the most dramatic aspect of the colonial land settlement project in nineteenth-century Assam was the allocation of vast tracts of land to tea plantations. According to Percivial Griffiths, ‘a madness comparable in intensity with that of the South Sea Bubble’ hit the London stock exchange as ‘normally level-headed financiers and speculators began to scramble wildly for tea shares in tea lands’. Land was given to tea plantations under the Waste Land Grant Rule of 1838. In 1854 new rules were introduced to give ninety-nine years’ lease and to raise the minimum area of a grant to five hundred acres. By 1901 tea gardens enclosed ‘some one fourth of the total settled area (or five percent of the total area) of Assam proper under their exclusive property rights’.

Sanjib Baruah argues that it led to a disruption of the old order. The land grab by tea planters had profoundly disrupted the hunting and gathering economies of the Naga peoples who live on the hills that border the Assamese plains where the first generation of tea plantations were established. Among the British adventurers were tea planters as well as speculators in raw rubber who tried to enclose as many tracts as they could. The Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1877 therefore empowered the colonial government to ‘prescribe, and from time to time, alter by notification…a line to be called the Inner Line.’

The line was drawn along the foothills and the peoples living beyond this line were supposedly left to manage their own affairs. The colonial government laid down rules to bring ‘under more stringent control the commercial relations of our own subjects with frontier tribes living on the borders of our jurisdiction.’ These rules governed activities by British subjects beyond the Inner Line; no British subject or foreign citizen could cross the line without a license, and trade or possession of land beyond the line was severely restricted. Even communication between villages was disrupted as parts of public roads were fenced off and villagers were denied access. Even many weekly bazaars and hats, where the villagers brought their farm products for sale came within the limits of tea gardens. Planters exercised exclusive control over these markets. Indeed the right of way through tea plantation became a major issue during the anti-colonial struggle in the twentieth century. In many parts of Assam, a villager had to walk many miles around tea gardens. The use of roads that went through the tea gardens was restricted. For instance, Indians could not go through a tea plantation on a bicycle or on horseback, or with umbrella open. When the automobiles arrived on the scene there were cases when bullock carts were not allowed on these roads for
they might damage the roads and make them unfit for the automobile.\textsuperscript{5}

One such incident involved an Assamese tea planter, C.K. Bezbaruah whose bullock cart was detained as it had taken the stretch of road that went through two tea plantations owned by the Conan Dewan Hills Produce Company and under the management of a British tea planter named Sydney Cartier Dutton who was the Superintendent of the Nakachari/Kakojan sub-division.\textsuperscript{6} The trial of Bezbaruah is a historic event considering the fact that it presented the first major challenge to the land enclosure policy of the colonial government. A landmark legal case in the colonial period of Assam its significance can be gauged from its impact on the anti-colonial struggle in Assam.\textsuperscript{7} The court eventually ruled in favour of Bezbaruah, thus a colonial subject winning the case against the colonial master Mr. Dutton.

Bezbaruah was a resident of Boloma (then under the Sivasagar District). He was the owner of the Boloma Tea Estate which he had bought in 1906. He had also bought the Baidiha tea estate from the Satradhikar of the Auniati Satra in 1917. Bezbaruah travelled from Boloma to Baidiha via Kakojan Tea Estate taking the Meleng-Nakachari Road also known as the Nagadera Road. In the month of February 1924, the bullock cart owned by Bezbaruah had taken this particular stretch of road to transport tea leaves, bamboo and wood from Boloma to Baidiha. To his utter bewilderment, the rider found a barrier on the Kakojan Bridge. Bezbaruah was later informed by his Daroga that the bullock cart rider has been detained near the Nakachari Post Office. In the month of May, Bezbaruah received a letter from Mr. Dutton formally informing him about the detention.

Bezbaruah filed a case in the Jorhat District Court demanding the “Right of Way” and its reinstatement for public use. According to Bezbaruah, he had met people treading that path by foot, riding elephants and even driving automobiles. Previously, he never had to seek permission to travel through that road.

This case which started on Nov 15, 1927 ended on Jan 28, 1929 when the District judge ruled the judgment in favor of the petitioner Bezbaruah. There were about 300 witnesses. There was even a witness aged 100 years old. Special bamboo huts were built to house the witnesses coming to support Bezbaruah and bungalows of prominent Assamese tea planters like Someswar Baruah, Phani Sarma and Rameshwar Sarma acted as rest houses.\textsuperscript{8}

Counsels on the side of the petitioner were Mr. Tarun Ram Phukan Bar-at-Law, Mr. Nabin Chandra Bordoloi, Mr. Debeshwar Sarma B.L. and Mr. Krishna Nath Sarma. Counsels on the side of the defendant were Mr. N. Mukherjee, Mr. E.S. Rafi, Mr. Buckingham Jones, Mr. Lalit Kumar Ghosh and Maulvi Keramat Ali.\textsuperscript{9}

Two notable witnesses on the side of the defendant, the 75 year old former Deputy Inspector Gulap Chandra Baruah and Maheshwar Sarma Kataki stated that they had travelled through that road without any difficulty and did not require permission or a pass to do so.

There was a sudden turn of events when a witness on the side of the defendant Mohammad Abdullah who worked as the manager of the Times of Assam newspaper (about 1500 readers) showed a notice from the Conan Hills Produce Company published in the issue of May 23, 1925. It stated that the roads to all the tea gardens owned by them would blocked. But there was no mention of Nakachari and Meleng tea gardens but of Kakajan, Bheleuguri and Rajoi.

According to the statement of the defendant Dutton, the way through Rajoi and the way through Nakachari tea estate were shut down thrice a year. People travelling on foot could go through taking special permission on those particular days. No vehicles could pass through without a pass. When the weekly bazaar sits in the place
between Gakhirkuwa and Lahdoigarh, people take the disputed way but are never stopped. Every year the road is blocked by bamboo gates. Dutton claimed that way as private because it was repaired not using public money but garden money (since 1912). He also claimed another way (from Kalio Paani to Dihajan) and the land beside it (which was a part of Bezbarua’s Baidiha tea garden). Dutton stated that even during the days when the way was closed, all traffic was allowed except for automobiles. About 10/14 days prior to the closure, notices were sent to the newspapers, namely, “Englishman”, “Statesman” and “Times of Assam”. He was aware of the setting up of the Baidiha Estate and knew its owner Bezbaruah personally. According to Dutton statement, Bezbaruah took his permission to carry wood and tea leaves to Boloma. Initially, about 114 men carried the load and later took a pass from him to carry it by cart. It went on till 1922. Once, the cart was turned back but Bezbaruah did not object to it. It was only on 7th May, 1923 that Bezbaruah wrote a letter asking him about the reason for turning back the cart. Thereafter, letters were exchanged between the two. “We had mutual respect for each other. Although it does not seem to be so in the courtroom.” said Dutton. On hearing this audience burst into laughter.

It appeared after cross examination that some public highways which run through tea garden are repaired with garden money and some of with Local Board money. Garden authorities seemed to do repairs with their money for their own advantage. Tarun Ram Phukan, counsel for the petitioner argued that there is evidence to show that several people went in carts and passed through without any opposition from the defendants. Even marriage processions passes by without any permission of the defendants. Instances in these were cited by some of the witnesses. There was also no advertisement in newspapers to the effect. Carts came into use after Mr. Toddcame to Meleng (1862) and there is evidence that carts used to pass without any interference from the defendants. Admittedly carts were allowed without any pass on the hat days. Budhboria hat is near Gakhirkuwa and the Debrapar hat near Nagadara (the disputed way) are Government hats and there is no reason why carts would be allowed on these paths to go to Government hats. Mr. Barnwell (a witness under obligation to the defendants) however, say that carts cannot pass indiscriminately even on hat days. The witnesses who have used carts deny that they ever had to ask for a pass.

When some documents relevant to the case were sought from the chairman of the Local board, the chairman replied that he cannot do that within 2/3 days. At this Nabin Chandra Bordoloi, another counsel for the petitioner retorted angrily, “Papers are not to be brought from Mecca, the local Board office is at a stone’s throw.” Everyone in the audience bursts into laughter.

Bordoloi argued that neither there is any evidence that prior to 1922 carts carrying timber from Baidiha to Boloma was turned back nor there is evidence that the petitioner used the pathway with permission of defendant. The manager of Boloma said that the letter written by him on 7th May 1923 refers to a shorter route through Tali garden as that time the wooden bridge at Nakachari was under repairs.

Mr. Dutton denied that the letter could refer to any other path than the disputed one and that the bridge at Nakachari was not under repairs. However, the counsel for Bezbaruah argued that Mr. Bezbaruah never admitted the disputed pathway as a private pathway of the defendants. Mr. Dulton failed to show that Bezbaruah over acknowledged the path as private path of his (defendant). No letter of Mr. Bezbaruah was forthcoming to show that he applied for a pass. There was also no record to show that any pass (either foot traffic or for cart traffic) was ever issued. From the statements of Bezbaruah, it appeared that the attitude taken by him was that of a man who was using the
pathway as of right or as a public highway. From the correspondence that passed between Mr. Bezbaruah and Mr. Dutton, it appeared that the former knew of Mr. Dutton’s claiming the pathway as a private pathway for the first time only in 1923. Letter (Exb. 3) dated March 20\textsuperscript{th}, 1923 shows that Mr. Dutton acknowledged that Boloma carts were stopped through mistake. Until 6\textsuperscript{th} July, when Bezbaruah resumed correspondence there was no exchange of letters. Mr. Bezbaruah was away in Calcutta then. Upon return, Bezbaruah wrote a letter which would show that he would not recognize the disputed road as private. From the correspondence between them, it appeared that Mr. Bezbaruah did not admit the road as private. Mr. Dutton also said that when Mr. Bezbaruah saw him for the first time at his bungalow on 10\textsuperscript{th} August, 1923 he refused to acknowledge the disputed pathway as a private path of the defendant and to apply for a pass for its use. Moreover, the pathway has been a significant way for communication. The Nagas used this path to go to Naga Khat, near Rongdoi. Tarun Ram Phukan shouted, “If there be Naga Khat, there must be Naga bat.” Taking all the evidences into consideration, the District judge Jogen Baruah ruled the case in favor of Mr. Chandra Kamal Bezbaruah in this historic judgment. Dutton later made an appeal to the High Court but lost the case once again. He had to pay remuneration to Mr. Bezbaruah and the Nagadera road was opened for public use. This case played a major role in influencing public opinion during the Civil Disobedience Movement. A colonial subject winning a case against the colonial master did give a huge boost to the Freedom Movement in Assam which hitherto lacked popular support.

Notes & References
Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India, Delhi, 1993
\textsuperscript{5}On the colonial land settlement policy in Assam and its consequences, see, Sanjib Baruah, Durable Disorder: Understanding the Politics of Northeast India, New Delhi, 2005, p 83-97
\textsuperscript{6}Under Dutton’s management were four tea gardens, namely- Kakojan, Bheleuguri, Rajoi and Lahing. He started working for the Conal Dewan Hills Produce Company in 1897.
\textsuperscript{7}Quoted from an obituary published during the centenary of Bezbaruah (1968) written by a prominent resident of the village named Majkuri (which lie adjacent to the Boloma Tea Estate), Late Indrananth Sharma (1908-1974) who was a close acquaintance of C.K. Bezbaruah.
\textsuperscript{8}Benudhar Sharma, Buronjir Xophura, Guwahati, 1987.
\textsuperscript{9}Mr. Todd established the Meleng and Nakachari tea estates.
I have found articles on the Dubrajpur town and the abolition of land system in Assam particularly interesting. The article on dalits takes a primordial importance in order to understand the role and position of untouchable groups in Indian society and their discrimination in lower social layers of Indian society especially in the violence against women.

Dr. Olivier Chiron
Geographer
Bordeaux I University
France

I should have a birds' eye view on the editorial quill. A good length of discussion has been covered on history, historians and historiography. The volume has begun its journey well. I have pleasure in looking into the journal.

Dr. Nirman Kumar, Former Fellow
Nehru Memorial Museum & Library
Teen Murti House, New Delhi

Because of the love on history the editor has established the journal to propagate the historical knowledge in the field of social sciences and humanities.

Dr. K Manali Rajan
Dept. of A.I.H.C & A
Viswa-Bharati University
Santiniketan

As I went on turning the leaflets of the journal, my intellectual hunger craved for more and I couldn’t resist myself reading out the entire journal in a single sitting. Reading the journal was an immersive experience as it focused on different dimensions of historical study and research.

Dr. Devendra Kumar Singh
Dept. of History
Indira Gandhi National
Tribal University
Madhya Pradesh

It is a profitable journal for historians, scholars, educationalists, teachers and as well as students to acquire the waste knowledge of the various parts of the country and their history.

Dr. N V Asbe, Principal
Govt First Grade College,
Terdal, Karnataka

Publication of literary journal by a single under-graduate college is truly a hard task and needs sincerity, efficiency and cooperation. It indicates the hard working and good cooperation among the faculties in the department of history of this college. I hope this bilingual journal will give a fruitful result in historical research in north east India.

Dr Malasamuliana
Department of History
Govt. T. Romana College,
Mizoram

The publication of this journal through research approaches will make useful not only from the academic point view but it will also help in cementing the bond of universal co-operation amongst the colleges of Assam abroad in such a manner to filling up the gaps of the National and local history.

Dr. Dharmeswar Sanowal
Director of Archives
Assam

We are ever greatful to Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi for subscribing our journal from the very first issue.

Principal,
& Editorial Board

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