



## TAMILNADU LAND CEILING ACT OF 1961 AND ITS REFLECTIONS: AN ASSESSMENT

**Dr. K. Madhusudharsanan**  
**Head, Department of History**  
**& S.Murugaiya**  
**Research Scholar**  
**C.N College,**  
**Erode (T.N.) India**

The United Nations had defined agrarian reforms as an integrated programme with the aims to remove the barriers for economic and social development, which follow from defects in agrarian structure. Every one of us knew the fact that one cannot have ownership in sunlight, air, water etc. In the same way there can be no more possession in land, which is God given social property. It is to be used for the benefit of the whole society. Just as sunlight, water, air etc belong to the community. So, also land must belong to the community. It will be let out according to one's capacity to use it for social benefit.<sup>2</sup>

The First Five Year Plan drawn under the chairmanship of Nehru, even in the revised version turned down the proposal of Ceiling on existing holdings and limits it to future acquisition. Even in the Election Manifesto of 1951 issued by the Congress Party assured Ceiling only in future acquisition of land. It only revealed the power and influence wielded by the landed aristocratic lobby within the ruling party.<sup>3</sup>

In an editorial on 'Land Reforms', the Hindu dated April 1960, states that, "it is a healthy sign that vital issues affecting the public welfare and the future of the country are being vigorously debated in the open instead of being decided in secret enclave. It is of the opinion that the lively controversy that has arisen over the Nagpur Congress Resolution in Land Reforms and the sharp expression of views by leaders in the country, have certainly served to focus public attention on the dangerous implicit in courses of action, which however

well intentioned, carry in them the needs of regimentation and totalitarian Planning. The paper felt that the pattern of land reforms envisaged in the Nagpur resolution represents not only a radical break with the past, but a dangerous leap in the dark”.<sup>4</sup>

The Congress at its Avadi Session passed a resolution in economic policy which laid down the broad principles in order to increase production, ensure equitable distribution and progressively raise the standards of the people and bring about fuller employment.<sup>5</sup>In the Second Five Year Plan the intention of imposing ceilings on the then existing holdings in each state was clearly mentioned. The Plan document stated, “In those parts of the country where cultivable waste lands are available and sufficient number of cultivators are not always easy to obtain, a ceiling may be necessary at this stage or may be set in higher land than that envisaged here, there may be areas in which the level of ceiling may be lower because of high density of population”.<sup>6</sup>

### **Land Ownership Pattern**

The census of 1961 carried a write up on land ownership pattern in Thanjavur. Fifty percent of the cultivating households own less than 2.5 acres each. Seventy six percent of the cultivators, holding up to five acres, own only 37 percent of the cultivated land, which about one-fourth of the cultivating households; holding more than 62 percent of the cultivated area. Within this section the ownership pattern was very much skewed. 3.85 percent of the cultivating households owing more than 15 acres, own 28.88 percent of the cultivated area.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Land Ceiling Act of 1961**

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of land reforms included division of large land holdings and distribution of the same amongst landless peasants, elimination of tenancy, security of tenants, reduction of tenancy rates, mobilization of the production potential of agriculture, diversification of production etc.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Provision**

The Act fixed ceiling on land holdings in the case of every family consisting of not more than five members at 30 standard acres. In the case of every family consisting of more than five members, the ceiling area was raised upto a limit of 60 standard acres allowing additional five standard acres for every number of the family in excess of five. A standard acres was defined as an acre of wet land paying a land revenue assessment of Rs. 10 and above per acre.<sup>9</sup> For both wet and dry lands with assessments below Rs. 10 the Act had prescribed conversion factors as shown in Table.

Table. I

|                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Rate of Assessment | Equivalent of one standard acre |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|

| Wet Land          |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Rs. 8 to Rs. 10   | 1.2 acres  |
| Rs. 6 to Rs. 8    | 1.6 acres  |
| Rs. 4 to Rs. 6    | 1.75 acres |
| Below Rs. 4       | 2.00 acres |
| Dry Land          |            |
| Rs. 1.25 to Rs. 2 | 3.00 acres |
| Below Rs. 1.25    | 4.00 acres |

*Source : Land Reforms in Tamilnadu by K.S. Sonachalam, P.16.*

Exemptions were granted to the following categories of land.

- (i) any land held by the Central or State government.
- (ii) any land held by any University constituted by any law or any other educational institute or by a Trust for a public purpose of an educational nature.<sup>10</sup>
- (iii) Land held by a co-operative society and lands in any hill area.
- (iv) All plantations in existence in the date of commencement of the Act.
- (v) Land converted on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of July 1959 into Orchards or aracanut Gardens.
- (vi) any land on which Casuarium trees are standing on the date of commencement of the Act.
- (vii) Gramdan land and land donated for purposes of Bhoodan Yagna.
- (viii) Land used for dairy farming and livestock breeding.<sup>11</sup>
- (ix) lands interspread among plantations or contiguous to any plantations.
- (x) any land awarded for gallantry in the First and Second World War.
- (xi) any land used for the cultivation of sugarcane and in respect of which the Sugar Factory Board was granted permissions under section 37.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding land ceilings, the total area declared as surplus upto 1989 (September) was 1.72 thousand acres.<sup>13</sup> Out of this, the scheduled castes received around 29.6 percent of the total area declared as surplus. About 38.9 percent of the total area was distributed. However, an insignificant percentage was distributed to the scheduled tribes. As per the 1981 census, the population of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Tamil Nadu was 88.8 lakhs (18.4 percent of the state population) respectively. The area distributed per head for the state as a whole was 1.25 acres and Scs and STs received 1.10 acres and 1.46 acres respectively.<sup>14</sup>

It has been pointed out that the area declared as surplus was much less than the earlier estimates. For example, the Land Revenue Reforms Committee estimated it to be around 2.55 million acres. A figure of 2.82 lakhs acres was estimated as surplus and placed before the state Assembly in the early 1960s.<sup>15</sup>

**Table . II**

**Implementation of land ceiling acts (As on August 31, 1989)**

|  |   |       |
|--|---|-------|
| Area declared as surplus (1000 acres)  | - | 1.72  |
| Area covered by stay before initiating the process for distribution (% of 1) | - | 5.43  |
| Area for which the process had been initiated (% of 1)                       | - | 94.58 |
| Area covered by stay after process initiation (% of 1) (% of 3)              | - | 10.33 |
|  | - | 10.93 |
| Net area available for distribution  | - | 84.24 |
| Distributed to eligible persons  | - | 89.07 |

*Source : Land Reform Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, December 1989.*

**Table. III**

| Categories of Beneficiaries | No. of persons benefited | Area distributed (Acres) | Area distributed (per head) (Acres) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Scheduled castes            | 45,950                   | 50,967                   | 1.10                                |
| Scheduled Tribes            | 93                       | 136                      | 1.46                                |
| Others                      | 58,696                   | 79,758                   | 1.36                                |
| Total                       | 1,04793                  | 1,30,861                 | 1,25                                |

*Source : Land Reform Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, December 1989.*

**Causes for the failure of the Acts**

The landlord had complete sway over the village and its politics. He was economically and politically strong and financially sound. The tenants and landless labourers were weak and poor. They failed to reap the advantage of the Acts owing to the danger of earning the displeasure and open hostility of the Landlord.<sup>16</sup> Many of them were also ignorant about their rights and benefits conferred on them, by the various acts. They were also handicapped to move the court owing to dire poverty.<sup>17</sup>

**Absentee Landlordism**

The land ceiling Act aimed at abolishing absentee landlordism in our country. But absentee landlordism was increasing in our country after the passing of the Land Ceiling Acts due to various reasons.

**(1) Loopholes in the Land Ceiling Act**

There were many loopholes in the land ceiling act. The Act had not provided measures to prevent a person from acquiring more land than what was fixed in the acts. So people, who want to acquire wealth in the form of land, were able to purchase land in different places and manage it without much difficulty.<sup>18</sup>

**(ii) Benami Transactions**

Even though many lands legally own less than the fixed area of land, they owned several hundred acres of land by all sorts of benami transactions. So rich people were able to possess unlimited acres of land through benami dealings.

**(iii) Increasing value of Land**

Next to Gold, the price of land was ever increasing. The increase in the land price had been phenomenal, especially in the case of villages which were very near to cities and also on roadsides. So the business people want to invest their money in land and try to get a huge profit in land dealings. The business in real estate was fast growing and tempts many rural people to sell their lands. The urban rich were able to acquire more lands and become absentee landlords.<sup>19</sup>

In the ceiling law the fixations of ceiling was as two counts

**(i) The definition of family :**

Article 37 of the Act defines family as the individual and his/or her spouse and their children whether major or minor. Later the law was amended to include married daughters whereas childless widow was not considered to be member of his deceased husband's family.

**(ii) Non-Recognition of Women's Child Rights**

Where the women did not had record of rights, her land rights were subsumed under those of this husband. A women did not count as an owner on her own rights and therefore, was vulnerable to losing the land.<sup>20</sup>

Katheleen Gough made a field study in several places of the Thanjavur district for contrasting the performance of the Act and the beneficiaries of the state after implementation. She noted several cases of violation in her field study. She cited a case of a landlord. The landlord, an energetic and intelligent entrepreneur aged 59 in 1976, belonged to a Tondaimandalam Mudaliyar (high ranking Vellalar) family in east Thanjavur. The family had been Pattakdars or revenue farmers and military officers in the 1780s and 1790s. This landlord inherited 8,004 acres in 27 villages in 1923. Along with this position he succeeded to the Chief Trusteeship of a famous temple owning 8,143 acres in 147 villages. His younger brother managed the temple income and controlled the expenditure of funds for the ceremonies, priests and temple servants. The landlord was active as a Congressman on the District. Development council in 1950-55, but gave up congress politics on becoming an industrialist in 1956. He remained an advisor to the central and state governments in several capacities.<sup>21</sup>

The cases cited above illustrate the fact that the ceiling Act failed to divide large estates into small or medium family farms to facilitate distribution of land to the landless.<sup>22</sup>

Coming to the question of ceiling on land, M. Muni Reddy said in the budget session of the State Assembly "it was a vexed problem. There were many difficulties in the distribution of land. First, lands in the state will have to be surveyed thoroughly and statistics will have to collected in regard to the fertility of various lands. It may be easier to fix ceiling on dry lands, but it

would be really difficult to fix ceiling as wet lands. Ceiling on holdings should not be hinder intense and scientific methods of cultivation. It should be both economical and beneficial to the tillers and owners of land. Limit on individual ceiling alone should be fixed in such a way as to encourage individual enterprise and also investment of capital for improved and scientific methods of cultivation. There must be a flexible limit to surrender area basic, and that too with reference to each land.<sup>23</sup>

According to T. Sampath, member of the State Assembly, there should not be any ceiling as enterprise, and each individual must be allowed to consolidate his land into an economic holding, as otherwise, it will lead to further distribution of poverty again.

Regarding the land ceiling Acts, the Communist Party members urged that the ceilings should be reduced from 30 standard acres to 15 standard acres.<sup>24</sup>

The Planning Commission set up a Panel to study about the effective implementation of land Ceiling Act and reviewing the progress made the Second Five Year Plan. The panel observed that “the main tools for the implementation of land reform legislation are the record of rights and the revenue administration which is the main agency for the implementation of land reforms programmes in the state”.<sup>25</sup> The panel therefore recommended that a phased programme for survey and settlement should be co-ordinated with the strengthening of the revenue agency. The panel further expressed itself against “the association of Panchayats with the implementation of land reforms and the suggestions regarding the setting up of committees representatives of different groups interests or of panels of Panchayats”.<sup>26</sup>

Speaking at a public meeting held at Madurai on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1960, C. Rajagopalachari, leader of the Swatantra Party, urged the public to oppose strongly land reform measure which he said, would be the ruin of agriculture. He said that the Congress Party should sponsor this Bill only if they were returned to power at the next General election.<sup>27</sup>

Strong comments had appeared in some of the leading newspapers in respect of the Madras Land Ceiling Bill. The Mail said, “No legislation measure proposed by any government in India has given rise to so various and so totally opposed views as the Madras Land Reforms Bill and to press to its conclusion such a Bill not a just”.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding the Land Ceiling Bill, “The Hindu” remarked, this bill will not promote social justice in the countryside nor contribute to increased production.<sup>29</sup>

K.A. Mathialagan, quoting the extract of U.S. Team experts, who visited Thanjavur district, in the Legislative Assembly, observed “the Land Ceiling Act is only a paper proposition only a great optimist would say that the district has a bright future unless the land system in completed overhauled”.<sup>30</sup>

## Conclusion :

Ceiling on land holdings was the important landmark in the direction of land reforms. The State and Central Government were chalked out several measures for the redistribution of land by passing of Land Ceiling Acts. However the Land Ceiling Act of 1961, could not reached as the desired results because of the loopholes in the act and the vested interest of the social set up. It is evident from the speeches of the members of the Legislative Assembly and the Press Reports. As a result of it, the agrarian unrest took place in several parts of the State.

## Reference :

1. S.K. Lampa and J.S.Toner, *Impact of Land Reforms in Rural Development*, Agricole publishing Academy, New Delhi, 1986, p.4.
2. M. Thankaraj, *Land reforms in India*, Vol.9, *Tamil Nadu: An Unfinished Task*, Sage publication, Delhi, 2003 p.52.
3. Harkashan Singh Surjeet, *Land Reforms in India*, (Promises and performances), National Book Centre, Delhi, 1991, p.70
4. *Fort Nightly Report*, Madras, April 1960.
5. A.M. and S.G, Zaidi, *The Encyclopaedia of the Indian National Congress*, Vol.14, 1951-54. Towards Freedom from want, AICC meeting, May 9-11,1955, Resolution, p.72.
6. Second Five Year Plan, 1959, Review of Progress for 1956-57 and 1957-58 and Programme for 1958-57, Madras, p.29
7. Mithily Shivaraman, 'South Asia in Turmoil-Thanjavur, Rumbling in Tamil Nadu', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian scholars*, Vol:4, No:1, Winter, 1972, pp.45-49.
8. Bikram Sarkar, *Land reforms in India*, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989, p.1.
9. K.S. Sonochalam, *Land Reforms in Tamil Nadu, Evaluation of Implementation*, Oxford and IBH publication, New Delhi, 1970 p.63-92.
10. G. Parthasarathy, 'The Madras Land reforms Bill, A critical study', *Economic Weekly*, May 21, 1960, p. 772.
11. Report of the National Commission in Agriculture, Part IV, 1976, Delhi, p.103.
12. Ibid.
13. Badri Narayanan, 'Agrarian Reforms and Peasant struggles in Tamil Nadu, 1950s to 1980s', *Indian Journal of labour Economics*, 1991, pp.413-459.
14. K.S. Sonachalam,, *Land Reforms Tamil Nadu, Evaluation and Implementation*, Oxford and IBH Publication, Delhi, 1970, pp.63-96.
15. Ibid.
16. *Karukshetra Journal*, August 1, 1978, p.6.

17. Ibid.
18. M. Thankaraj, *Land reforms in India, Tamil Nadu; An Unfinished Task*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2003, p.51.
19. B.K. Sinha; *Land Reforms in India, Vol.5 An unfinished Agenda*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2000, p.42.
20. Suchalata Panda – ‘Land Rights for Women’- *Social welfare*, Vol.51, No.03, June 2004, p.36.
21. Kathaleen Cough, *Rural Change in South East Asia - 1990s to 1980s*, Oxford University press, New Delhi, 1989, p.21.
22. Ibid.
23. Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Assembly Debates (PMLA) - Vol. XVII, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1959, p.193.
24. PMLA – Vol XVII, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1959, p. 495.
25. Report of the National Commission on Agriculture, Part XV, Agrarion Reforms, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, New Delhi, 1976, p.79.
26. Ibid .
27. *Fort Nighthly Report*, (General A), Department, Madras, April 1960, p.4.
28. ‘*The Mail*’ dated April 22, 1960.
29. ‘*The Hindu*’ dated April 29, 1960.
30. PMLA – Vo; XXIV 22 October 1964, p. 484.





## Situating MahiMa Cul t-As the Cul t of the Dal its

**PROFESSOR BHAGABANA SAHU**  
Professor of History,  
Berhampur University  
Odisha India

The origin and growth of Mahima cult constitutes a fascinating chapter in the socio-cultural history of modern Odisha. When the system untouchability and caste rigidity raised its ugly head, the custom of animal, bird and even human sacrifices was rampant in the society, and the Brahminical rituals became unbearable in Odisha, Mahima Goswami appeared as a new messiah and founded a new religious order in Odisha known as “Mahima Dharma” or *Alekha* Dharma.<sup>1</sup> By the devotional songs of Bhima Bhoi and the tireless efforts of Mahima Goswami and Abdhuta Govinda Das, this cult was not only spread to every nook and corner of Odisha but also found its way to its adjoining states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.<sup>2</sup>

The name of this religious cult varies from place to place. In some parts of Odisha, it is known as *Alekha* Dharma or the religion of the Formless God. The word *Alekha* means one who cannot be described in Lekha (writing). In some other parts, the people call it as *Kumbhipatiyas*. It is so because, the saints of this religion wear bark of the *kumbi* tree as their only garment. Similarly, it is also known as Satya Mahima Dharma and Satya Sanatana Mahima Dharma due to its propagation of *satya* or truth.

### **Origin of the Cult:**

Mahima Goswami was the founder of Mahima Dharma. He was regarded by his disciples as a God incarnate. Mahima Dharma, the latest religious reform movement was originated in Odisha in 1826. But it really came to limelight in

Odisha in 1862, the year when the founder expounded his faith among the masses. According to Baba Biswanath, (the oldest exponent of Mahima Dharma) Mahima Swami spent many years in Atmayoga in the Himalayas in north India and travelled many places before his first appearance at Puri in 1826. The Mahima Dharma Samaja of Odisha recognized 1826 as the first “Mahimabada” or Mahima era. Thus, the year 1826 A.D. may be reckoned as the year of Origin of Mahima Dharma in Odisha.<sup>3</sup>

### **Life of the founder:**

The early life of Mahima Goswami, the founder of Mahima Dharma is shrouded in mystery. Nothing is known about his date of birth, place of birth and parentage. Even the two famous works i.e. “*Satya Mahima Dharma Itihash*” and “*Satya Mahima Dahrma Sidha-Sadhu Charitamrita*” composed by Biswanath Baba are silent about his life and activities before 1826. His first appearance at Puri in 1826 was a great epoch in the religious history of Odisha.<sup>4</sup> It is said that, Mahima Goswami had his self-revelation at Puri in 1826 because of the several reasons.

Firstly, Puri has been recognized as famous religious place or Dhama of all India importance. Secondly, it was the meeting point of various religious movements and the reformers, through the different periods of her history.<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, the Christian missionaries have by that time, made Puri their centre for the spread of Christianity. Fourthly, the Christian Government tried to assume the role of the “Church-warden” of the temple of Jagannath and began to make vehement attack on Hindu religion and culture. Fifthly, the gratification of desires as the goal of the religious practice, the sacrifice of birds and animals, the division of society on the basis of castes had become the order of the day by then. It was against this back-drop, Mahima Goswami for the first time appeared at Puri *Badadanda* (grand road) and raised his voice against polytheism, rites and rituals, caste-prejudices. The pundits of *Mukti Mandapa* invited him for religious discussion.<sup>6</sup>

Accordingly, he delivered a lecture on Non-Dualistic doctrine. In his speech, he criticized the Brahminical rituals, caste system and idol worship. During his stay at Puri, he rolled on the dust of Badadanda and hence known as Dhulia Babaji. During that period, he had matted hair on his head and saffron-coloured loin cloth round his waist.

After that Mahima Goswami spent his 12 years of ascetic life in the wilds of Keonjhar and Khandagiri. It is a matter of great surprise that, during these 12 years he lived on water only. Therefore, he was known as Nirahari Baba or Jalahari Baba. At Khandagiri he spent his life in “Atmayoga” (self meditation). After spending twelve years in Khandagiri, Udayagiri and Dhauligiri, he went to Kapilas hill of Dhenkanal.<sup>7</sup>

He spent 24 years from 1838 to 1862 in the dense forests at the top of the Kapilas hill. During the first half of this period, (first 12 years) he lived on fruits and his second half on milk. Therefore, he was known as “Phalahari Goswami”

and Khirahari Goswami. Bhagirathi Mahindra Bahadur, the Raja Saheb of Dhenkanal made provision of sending milk for him in every morning. There he betook himself to severe meditation for long 24 years and lastly attained enlightenment.<sup>8</sup> Thereafter, he gave up his garment (Kaupini) and began to put on the bark of the *kumbhi* tree which later on became the only garment of the 'Para Sannyasi' (perfect sannyasi of the Mahima Ashram). After completing his yogic practices, Mahima Goswami descended from the Kapilas hill in 1862 to propagate his new faith among masses. Since then he ate the cooked food and travelled extensively in Odisha with a missionary zeal to preach the principles of Mahima or *Alekha* Dharma. Mahima Goswami made Govinda Das as his first disciple.

While he was preaching his religion, Mahima Goswami reached the house of a kandha blind boy named Bhima Bhoi at Konakanpada village of Rairakhol state. He taught him about Mahima Dharma. Bhima Bhoi was very much delighted to see Mahima Goswami. He saw the figures of supreme being inside the body of Mahima Goswami and automatically felt attracted towards him. It is said that, Mahima Goswami gave Bhima Bhoi the power of a poet. Since that day, Bhima Bhoi was able to compose a series of devotional songs. He played a very significant role in popularizing Mahima cult by his immortal creations like 'Stuti Chintamani', 'Brahmanirupan Gita', 'Adhyatmagita', 'Shrutineshedha Gita', 'Astaka Viharigita', 'Chautisa Madhuchakra', and 'Nirveda Sadhana'.<sup>9</sup>

In course of time, the number of the followers of Mahima Dharma were increased and the cult was began to spread to the different parts of Odisha. He established the *Gadi* (Main Ashram of the Mahima cult) at Joranda near Dhenkanal which was called as 'Mahanityapura'. He preached his gospels by oral instructions and his techniques were handed down from generation to generation orally. He preached his religion in the districts of Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam and the princely states of Dhenkanal, Athagarh, Hindol, Boud, Sonapur. Mahima Goswami and his chief disciple Baba Govinda Das preached the Mahima cult in different villages.

It may be noted here that, the Rajas of Dhenkanal, Boud and Patia rendered all sorts of help to Mahima Goswami in his missionary activities. During his preaching career he established 21 Mahima Ashramas in different places of Odisha. Thousand and thousands of people of different places of the state became his followers. He created a number of mendicants for the spread of his religion. There were 84 Para Sannyasis and 90 Apara Sannyasis of Mahima Goswami. Out of them, 34 Apara Sannyasis were endowed with supreme power and recognized as Siddha Sannyasis.<sup>10</sup>

After preaching his religion for long 14 years, Mahima Goswami left for his heavenly abode in 1876 A.D. His mortal remains were buried in Joranda in the district of Dhenkanal. There after 27 distinguished Para Sannyasis summoned a council at Joranda for the spread of Mahima Dharma. A big temple

was constructed over the cremation ground which is known as Mahimagadi Temple.

### **Teachings of Mahima Goswami:**

The teachings of Mahima Goswami were very simple. It is one of the simplest of all the religious tenets. He preached his new religion by oral instructions. His doctrines were transmitted from person to person and generation to generation orally. The essence of the Mahima Dharma are found expression in the different works of Bhima Bhoi.

The doctrines of the Mahima Dharma are as follows:

#### **Monotheism:**

Mahima Dharma believes in one God i.e. “Param Brahma” who is second to none. Param Brahma is the supreme soul and the creator of the universe. He is *Alekha*, Anadi, Anakara (without any form) Adeha (without physical appearance) Anama (without any name) and Nirvikar (without any emotions). According to Mahima Goswami, god is omini-present, omini-potent, omini-scient. He is present inside every living creature, right from the insect to the human being. Therefore, he advised his followers to worship only one god i.e. *Alekha* Param Brahma.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Ahimsa or Non-violence:**

Absolute faith in Ahimsa or the non-violence received the highest place in Mahima Dharma. The life of every living being was regarded as sacred. According to Mahima Goswami, the smallest of the small creature also possessed life like the human beings. As man himself does not want to be injured or killed, so also no creature would like to be injured or killed. According to Mahima cult, it is the duty of everybody to protect and preserve the life of every living creature. Thus, the followers of this religion are discouraged from hunting and killing of animals, birds and even the insects. The *Grihasta* followers of Mahima cult are not allowed to rear up goat, sheep, fowl etc. as they are sacrificial animals for Hindus.

#### **Opposition to Caste System:**

Mahima Goswami strongly condemned the caste-system. He believed that, all castes are equal without superiority and inferiority. He preached that, all are equal before the eyes of *Alekha* Parambrahma. In this regard he was a social reformer like Mahavir Jaina, Goutam Buddha, Sri Chaitanya, Raja Rammohan Ray and Dayananda Saraswati. He preached that each and every body has equal right to worship the supreme being.

#### **Opposition to Idol Worship:**

Like Mahavira Jaina and Goutam Buddha, Mahima Goswami also raised his strong voice against idol worship, supremacy of Brahmins and vedic rites and rituals. He said that, God is formless Anakar, Ananta (without end) and Anadi (without any beginnings). So it is not possible to make idol of him. According to him, only formless Brahma is to be worshipped. Mahima

Goswami preached, that purity of mind and true devotion, but not the idol worship is the proper method for achieving God.

**Guru-worship:**

Mahima Dharma believes in Guru Parampara or Guru Puja. Guru or Teacher occupies an important place in the history of Mahima cult. A teacher or Guru is regarded as a path-finder. He can show the path to a disciple and guide him to attain salvation. Bhima Bhoi therefore solemnly exclaimed that, but for the grace of Mahima Goswami, he would not have realized God.<sup>12</sup>

**Emphasis on Jnana yoga and Bhakti yoga:**

Mahima Dharma gives much emphasis on Jnana yoga and Bhakti yoga. Like Sankaracharya, Mahima Goswami advocated Jnana yoga as the best means to attain salvation. According to him, Gyana and Bhakti are co-related to each other. Bhakti means surrender of the mind to the Param-Brahma. As Bhakti is guided by Jnana, Bhajana or chanting the name of *Alekha*-Nirakar in a cool mind is quite necessary for salvation. Therefore, Mahima Dharma gives much emphasis on Bhajana.

**Emphasis on Morality:**

Mahima Dharma gives much importance to morality. Mahima Goswami advised his followers to lead a very simple and pure life. He advised them to possess a good moral character and lead a righteous life. For this, he prescribed a code of conduct to be followed by every individual of cult.<sup>13</sup>

**Code of conduct:**

There are 32 rules of conduct, the principal rules being to live a pious and austere life. To scrupulously observe the discipline. To discourage caste system and idolatry. To live a life of simplicity so much so that no Sanyasi is allowed to accept money or touch a women. The followers of Mahima Dharma are advised to obey the following principles:

1. Not to take food after sun-set and till the sun-rise.
2. To perform “Saranam” and “Darshanam” twice a day-one during the dawn (early in the morning) and the other just after the sun-set. To perform these, they bow down on the ground (with the face to the ground) seven times towards east and five times towards west respectively under the open sky.
3. One must pray Alekh-Niranjana at the end of “Saranam” and “Darshanam” for the good of mankind.
4. Do not observe any type of rites and rituals.
5. Do not believe in caste system.
6. To chant Bhajanas regularly.
7. Do not believe in idol worship.
8. Do not enjoy drama, dance, cinema and musical performances.
9. Observe non-violence, simple living, forgiveness and truthfulness.
10. Maintain Brahmacharya strictly.

11. The Sannyasis must travel from village to village on bare foot to preach the gospels of Mahima Dharma.
12. Do not take any type of food which is not offered to God “Alekhya Param Brahma”.
13. Do not rear goat, sheep, fowl, etc. as these are sacrificial animals of the Hindus.
14. Do not sleep on any mat or bed.
15. Do not attend celebrations of birth, death and wedding.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the Mahima Dharma believes in a well regulated life. Non-attachment to property and worldly desires are the coordinial principles of this religion. The call for a classless society and denouncement of ritualistic practices of the Brahmins attracted the simple folk of Orissa and the outside regions. When the Christian Missionaries were trying to convert the people of Odisha into Christianity, Mahima Goswami appeared and attracted them towards Mahima cult. In course of time this religion spread spontaneously to the different parts of Odisha and its neighboring states like Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Assam. But because of its rigorous principles, it could not become popular and was confined to the lower-strata of the society i.e. the *Dalits*.

#### References:

1. Biswanath Baba, *Mahima Dharma Itihasa (Odia)*, Cuttack, 1935, p.1.
2. Sahu, Bhagabana, *Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Orissa*, Cuttack, 2002, pp. 24-25.
3. Biswanath Baba, *Mahima Dharma*, Odia Palm Leaf Manuscript, preserved at Joranda Main Ashram, no date, p.5.
4. *Ibid*, pp.4-5.
5. S.Nath, *Mahima Dharma in Side Lights on History and Culture of Orissa*, M.N.Das(ed.), Cuttack, 1977, p.448.
6. N.Senapati(ed.), *Orissa District Gazetteers*, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, 1972, p.443.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid*.
9. Biswanath Baba, *Mahima Dharma*, Odia Palm Leaf Manuscript, preserved at Joranda Main Ashram, no date, p.5.
10. Anonymous- *Satya Mahima Dharma Siddha Sadhu Charitamruta*, Palm leaf Manuscript preserved in Mahima Gadi Joranda, no page, no date.
11. *Dhenkanal District Gazetteers*, Cuttack, 1972, p.445.
12. Biswanath Baba, *Mahima Dharma*, Odia Palm Leaf Manuscript, preserved at Joranda Main Ashram, no date, p.5.
13. Sahu, Bhagabana, *Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Orissa*, Cuttack, 2002, pp. 24-25.
14. Mukunda Das, *Mahima Dharma Palana Bidhi (Odia)*, Palm Leaf Manuscript, no date, no page.



## A look into the Philosophical Analysis of the Concept of *Puruṣārtha*

MANORANJAN DAS  
Assistant Professor  
B.B.M. College,  
Agartala, Tripura (W) India

### Introduction:

The antique Hindu prophets have originated a composite plan for unprejudiced growth of human life to enable man to march towards perfection. This plan comprises of two doctrines—*Puruṣāthavāda* and *Varṇadhrma*. The *Puruṣārtha* consists of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*, which have been determined by Indian *Sanātana* culture as the four main objectives of human life. This is one of the basic doctrines of *Hinduism* and central to the entire orthodox Indian philosophy and to the Indian *Sanātana* culture or Hindu ethics. The four-fold method of *Puruṣārtha* was advocated in the setting of the classical Indian society divided into four *Varṇas*—*Brahman*, *kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *Śudra* and with separation of the individual life into four periods – *Brahmacharya*, *Grahashtya*, *Vārṇaprastha* and *Sannysa*. The first three objects of human life - *Dharma*, *Aratha*, *Kāma* are to be pursued in the first half of life covering the first two phases— *Brahmacharya* and *Grahashtya* when people is leading an active life in order to gain worldly prosperity( *abhudaya*) while the second half of life consisting of the next two phases— *Varṇaprastha* and *Sanyasa*—is to be dedicated in pursuit of spiritual issues (*niśreyas*) for attainment of *Mokṣa* from bandage of *Samkara*. The first half of life is preparation for the last phase of human life that is called supreme *Puruṣārtha* (*Mo Kāma kṣa*). The abovementioned composite system of human life is meant for each individual of the universe to continue the pragmatic order by moral work. In the society and

the world, neglect of this system makes chaos and mayhem. For example, In *Dwapera Yuga*, the *Mahabharata* mêlée and the two world mêlée in the twentieth century brought unspeakable sufferings and total destruction due to man's failure in following the above mentioned integrated system of human life. The concepts of *Dharma*, *Aratha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa* have been made clear in the going after snippets.

### **Dharma:**

The word '*Dharma*' in common parlance is synonymous with '*Religion*'. The English term '*Religion*' refers to a system of beliefs; faith and worship. But, Sanskrit word '*Dharma*' has a deeper and wider meaning. It is basis of *Sanātana* life of Indian. It means to the individual and social ethics of man. It takes care of the entire moral method of man from birth to death and thereafter. It is therefore an especially noteworthy goal of life. So, *Dharma* means to sustain, to hold, and to protect (*dhara-yati-eeti-dharma*). It is the *Dharma* which holds people together. That which is capable to hold and sustain is *Dharma*. In Indian philosophy, *Dharma* is the first among the four-fold *Puruṣārtha*. '*Satyam bada, Dharma chara*' are the main words of *Upaniṣads*. *Dharma* refers to all duties (*karttyas*) that are imposed upon an individual life. Such kind of *karttyas* is aimed at the well-being of the society, social unity and harmony; otherwise the social institute will collapse leading to discord and unhappiness. *Dharma* is the basis for the welfare of humanity. When *Dharma* fails to transmute human life, the empirical world is misrepresented by suffering, terror, and fear. The creators of *Dharmasastra* meant by *Dharma* not a creed is religion but a mode of life or a code of conduct, which regulates man's work and actives as a member of society an as individual was intended to bring about the slow but sure development of man to enable him to reach the target of human existence. In Indian context, the first law giver of mankind—Manu had been expressed *Dharma* as that which is adopted by the wise men well-versed in the Vedas and granted by the consciousness of the righteous men. By the law of *Dharma* the life of a Hindu is regulated in a detailed manner. His rituals, family and social ties, personal ways of life and conduct are all conditioned by it. The foundation of *Dharma* is the concept of *Rita*, the eternal celestial law which upholds and regulates the life and evolution and governs the individual life, social manners and organizations. *Rita*, *Satya* and *Dharma* are very old words used more or less synonymously. Indeed, in thought (*chintana*), *Rita* is truth, in words (*bākya*), *Satya* is truth, and in action (*karma*), *Dharma* is Truth. *Dharma* walked is four legs (*chaturpada*) in *Satya Yuga*. These strengthens are *Satya*, *Dayā*, *Tapa* and *Dāna*. In *Treta Yuga*, *Satya* was absent, in *Dwarper Yuga*, *Satya* and *Dayā* were absent and in *Kali Yuga*, *Dharma* walks on one leg (*akpada*) only –*Dāna*.

In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Lord Krishna pronounced that whenever *Dharma* turns down and *Adharma* prevails, God descends into the earth to save '*Dharma*' from, *adharmā*, harm. The *Bhagavadgītā* highlights that the supreme *Dharma* in



each individual is to follow his *Svadharmā* fearlessly. Swāmī Vivekānanda, a reverend of absolute religion believes that the various religions that exist in the universe, although they vary in the form of adoration they are taken, actually one. The truths in all religion are similar. According to Swami Vivekananda, Religion does not consist of doctrine or dogma and the end of all religions is the realization of God in the soul. Indeed, ‘*Dharma* is all –comprehensive and it pervades and permeates every activity of ours in every branch and department of life from birth to death commencing long before our birth and continuing long after our death. Religion is an essential in life of human. This kind of religion is not the aggregate of some dogmas and customs. It is God’s vision as man, a realization of human values within. He asserts that man is the greatest God that ever was or ever will be. Here we get highest conception of man where the dignity and glory of man has accomplished infinity. So, *Dharma* is considered as of the highest value among the three *Puruṣāthas*— *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*. But *Artha* and *Kāma* are minor-league to *Dharma* which sublimates and control the *Artha* and *Kāma* otherwise they will make man naughty and lead him in wickedness course. *Sanātana* religion is true religion, “True religion is universal. It cannot be denominational. True religion is seeing the divinity in all. God is one. As such the God of the Hindus is the God of the Christians, and the God of the Christians cannot be different from the God of the *Mohāmmédans*. The light is one, though the lamps are many. The differences are man-made artificialities and illogical”.<sup>1</sup> As core part of *Mahābhārata* the *Bhagavadgītā* presents the analysis of *Dharma* in each Chapter. *Dharma* occupies a pride of place. *Hrisi Vyas* himself laments ‘I raise my arms and shout but no one listens. From *Dharma* comes success and pleasure.’ For Swāmīji, if one reads the only sloke of the *Gītā* one gets all the merits of reading the entire the *Gītā*, for in this one sloke lies embedded the whole message of the *Gītā*:

“*klaivayam mā sma gamaḥ Pārtha naitat tvayy upapadyate  
Kṣudram hṛdaya daurbalyam tyaktyottṣṭha parantap*”<sup>2</sup>

*Neo Vedāntin* Vivekānanda once more says that if there is anything in the *Bhagavadgītā* that likes, it is the two verses(XIII,27-28), coming out strong as the very gist, the very essence of Krishna’s teaching, “He who sees the supreme Lord dwelling alike in all beings, the imperishable in things that perish, he sees indeed. For seeing the Lord as the same, everywhere present, he does

---

1. Pavitrananda,S.’s, entitled, Swāmī Vivekānanda on Spiritual practice, Published in The Vedānta *Kesari*, Vol. I, No. 4, P.202, Swāmī Vivekānanda Birth Centenary Numbered, Kailasānanda, S., The Rāmākṛishna Mission, Jupiter Press Pvt. Ltd.,Madras,1963,p.168

<sup>2</sup> Prabhupada,A.C.B.S. *Bhagavad-Gītā* As it is, II.,3, The Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust,Mumbai,1986,p.77

not destroy the self by the self, and thus he goes to the highest good.”<sup>3</sup> According to *Mahātma Gāndhi*, the last nineteen stanzas of second chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā* contain the essence of *Dharma* and these stanzas embody the highest knowledge and principles enunciated in them are immutable. In his view one should crush the carving of senses, constantly, think on God, should live as it were a state of *Samādhi*<sup>4</sup>. Further, he observes that God had his own interest a divine interest in creating man and the latter should instead of seeking sense – pleasures devote himself entirely to his contemplation and service.<sup>5</sup> Man’s *Dharma* is to adhere to the natural righteousness that will save him from suffering and lead him to salvation. The universe exists because it is held together by the will of God manifesting as the immutable cosmic principle of creation. Therefore, ‘He’ is the real *Dharma* or *kartyava* of every human being is to find out by realization, that he is sustained by God.<sup>6</sup> Hrisi Aurovindo says “The mind is occupied with the pursuit of intellectual, ethical, and social standards, the mind that insists on salvation by the observance of established *dharmas*, the moral law, social duty and function or the solutions of the liberation intelligence, is that this indeed a very necessary stage, the *Dharma* has to be observed and, rightly observed, can raise the stature of the spirit and prepare and serve the spiritual life, but still it is not the complete and last truth of experience. The soul of man has to go beyond to some more absolute *Dharma* of man’s spiritual and immortal nature. And this can only be done if we repress and get rid of the ignorant formulations of the lower mental elements and the falsehood of the egoistic personality impersonalise the action of the intelligence and will, live in the identity of the oneself in all, break out of the ego–moulds into the impersonal spirit. The mind moves under the limiting compulsion of the triple lower nature, it erects its standards in obedience to the *tāmasic*, *rājasic* or at highest the *sattwic* qualities; but the destiny of the soul is a divine perfection and liberation and that can only be based in the freedom of our highest self, can only be found by passing through its vast impersonality and universality beyond mind into the integral light of the immeasurable Godhead and supreme infinite who is beyond all *dharmas*.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Vivekananda ,S., The Call Of the God, A Vedanta Kashari Presentation, Ramakrishna Math , Mylapore , Madras, 1992, Pp.2-3

<sup>4</sup> The Bhagavadgītā, II,63

<sup>5</sup> Gandhi,M.K., The Bhagavat-gītā, 194,pp.58,60

<sup>6</sup> Paramsamhasa Yogananda , The Bhāgavatgītā, Yosoda Satsanga Society, Kolkata, Vol, I P. 158, 2002 Voll, P.1091, 2002

<sup>7</sup> Sri Aurovindo Ghosh, Essays on Gītā, The Aurovindo library, Pondicherry, 1960, P.550

## **ARTHA:**

*Artha* means wealth. It includes all material comforts, economic welfare and financial security in family and society. *Aratha* is the acquisition of arts, land, gold, cattle equipment and friends. It is also the protection of what is acquired an increase of what is protected. *Aratha* or wealth provides all categories of material belongings, comprising everything that one can own, loose or reward. It includes all kinds of material things irrespective of their potentiality for rightful or wrongful uses. It also includes the material means for performance of religious, social, lawful and ethical duties, among those required for usual living and subsistence. So *Aratha* is the sole nexus of human life. In the world, human existence depends solely on wealth i.e. *Aratha*. The Hindu prophets and saints have never regarded acquisition of wealth as peccadillo nor did poverty treat as virtue. In human life, *Aratha* has a legitimate place. This is the reason why *Aratha* has been selected as one of the four chief objects of human life. *Artha* is utilized for various necessities of life. However, acquisition of *Artha* by illegal and wickedness ways has been condemned in the scriptures. For example, it is mentioned in *Manu smriti* that one should acquire wealth through noble and blameless. By social ethics man is bound to earn *Aratha*. He has to use capital for collectively useful reasons. Those who care for noble and divine qualities never indulge in unscrupulous use of *Aratha*. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Lord Krishna has declared among devotee is the *artharathi* who desire for power of fulfillment. He seeks the grace of God for gaining worldly prosperity, power and also spiritual attainment the whole time of life and after death. Economies, ethics and other important scriptures relating to wealth have highlights the significance of *Artha*. *Artha* was never regarded as an in itself; it is a means to an end. As a householder or an ascetic *Artha* are needs to live in the earth. In the *Mahābhārata*, it is also noted one should bring in *Artha* in the first half of life and then last half should one earn righteousness and enjoy happiness and should not connect himself too much to any of these. So, from ancient period to present epoch man has been a votary of *Artha* (wealth) and *ichā* (desire). He gets incentive to live by making for these two objects. He struggles throughout his life to accumulate wealth and fulfill his which are incalculable; endless. He has a cavernous desire for name, celebrity, prosperity and sense –satisfaction, and pleasure.

## **KĀMA:**

The word '*Kāma*' means desire for enjoyment resulting out of the fulfillment of desires and therefore it may be said to denote pleasure or appreciable feeling. In common parlance *Kāma* means the desire for pleasure of sex and aesthetic experiences. It is defined as the enjoyment of appropriate objects by the five senses (*jñānadriya*) i.e. seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling and testing and is assisted by the mind tighter with the soul. It is a peculiar contact between the organ of sense and its object arousing the consciousness of

pleasure.<sup>8</sup> In *Mahābhārata*, Lord Krishna stated, “I am *Kāma*, not at strife with *Dharma*.”<sup>9</sup> *Kāma* stands for pleasure and everyone desires it. But all things of desire may not be desirable. *Kāma* is variously termed in Sanskrit like *Vāsana*, *Spr̥tha*, *ichā*, and *Tṛṣṇa*. Among these four terms first one *Vasanā* is a subtle form of desire, proceeding from likes and dislikes, for the safeguard of self body, spouse, children, wealth, social honour and status, etc. The second one is *Spr̥tha*. It is the feeling of desire or indispensability in respect of agreeable object. This is a more developed form of desire. Third one is *ichhā*. It is the desire for the possession of an appreciable object. The last and final one is *Tṛṣṇa*. In the stage of *Tṛṣṇa*, man seeks to possess more and more even though one has all desire. *Ṛgveda* contains the principle of *Kāma*. It presents the key to the creative process. *Kāma* is the fundamental *guna* or quality of mind and it was the first principle to come into existence. According to principle nature is constantly perpetuating life. In the *Bṛhadarāyana Upaniṣad*, it is stated that man is throughout composed of *Kāma*. The way of *Kāma* is the initial step towards *Mokṣa* (freedom). Man has countless *Kāmas* many of which bring wickedness results. There is prohibition in the scriptures against such *Kāmas*. Again, in Buddha *nithikathā*, Gautama Buddha has told that we feel misery is due to *Kāma* which cause bandage (*bhavachara*) and that *Kāma* is never pleased nor extinguished by enjoyment. According to *Bṛadarānya Upaniṣad*, when the *Kāma* in his heart cease, then at once the mortal becomes immortal and achieves here *brahmātva*. In *Bhagavadgītā*, it is stated that *Kāma* is the origin of sin and lust and anger and others evils. These evils die out when *Kāma* vanishes. One who is capable to control the urge to *Kāma* and anger before leaving his mortal body is an *mārgi* –and he is blissful. Man normally lives like a beast (*pashu*) with every part of passions, desires, annoyance, envy and such other ways of thinking (*Spr̥tha*). But those people who can manage these comprehend Supreme Being; *Brahman* and get everlasting pleasure. In the *Kāmasutra*, it is believed that nature is full of examples of death, decompose or demolition because of indulgence in sense-enjoyments. For example, the deer stands beguiled by the charismatic music only to be killed by the seeker and secondly the bull–elephant is arrested in the bunker due to its fascination to consume the cow. The astute men have lain down *Dharma* generates wealth and wealth constructs desires and the latter creates gladness which is the result of *Dharma*. This is the basis why more highlighting is prearranged to *Dharma*. There are no grounds to enhance *Kāma* but increase of *dharma* is required. *Kāma* should not go against to *Dharma*.

### **MOKṢA:**

*Mokṣa*, the supreme goal of human life means *Moha Kṣaya* (decline of delusion or salvation; liberation). A person whose delusion has declined will

<sup>8</sup> Vatsyana, *Kāmsutra*, Sahini Publication, New Delhi, 1999, p.8

<sup>9</sup> The *Bhagavadgītā*, VII-2

achieve *Brahmtva*, the state of *Brahman* (salvation). In the *Bhagavadgītā* says that it is called God realization, liberation, *Brahma nirvana*, attainment of supreme peace, attainment of immortality, deliverance of Soul (*Ātman*), attainment of God-consciousness, etc. *Mokṣa* is the ideal towards which humanity has to move. All life is set to the music of the ideal.<sup>10</sup> *Mokṣa* in common parlance means a number of things—freedom from the bondage of birth and death, freedom from sufferings, freedom from karma, freedom from attainment to objects of desires, eternal bliss, propinquity to God, identity with God etc. the classical philosophers have used the terms *Mokṣa*, *Kaivalaya*, *Nihsreyas*, *Nirvanate* to denote the highest value.<sup>11</sup>

In the state of *Brahma-nirvāna* a man is no longer identified with limitation of the body, mind and senses; he unites himself in the consciousness of *Brahman*, which is known as the *Samādhi* of the *mārgis* and the *Nirvāna* in the Buddha thinking. The four stages of human life are to be lived successively. These stages are like four steps of a ladder to climb to up to *Mokṣa*. Thus Hinduism gives an integrated system of life, as cited in the past, consisting of four *Puruṣārthas*, four *Varna Ashramas* for gradual spiritual development of man to build him accurate and perfect. In order to attain *Mokṣa*, the *Upaniṣads* offered two—it can be attained by practising meditation or by observing ethical rules. The Indian orthodox and heterodox philosophies have originated their own doctrines respectively for achieving *mokṣa*. For example, Jaina philosopher has proclaimed that *Mokṣa* is accomplished by absolute abolition of *karma* from *jīva*. According Buddha philosophy, *Mokṣa* is the state of *Nirvāna* which brings complete calm, peace and constructive bliss. The Buddhism has recommended eight-fold way (*astāṅgika mārag*) to achieve *Nirvāna*. As a very popular orthodox philosophy—*Vedanta* philosophies in India and abroad as especially *Advaita Darśana* says “*Brahman satya jagat mithyā*” (Absolute Self; *Brahman* is alone real and the empirical world is unreal). The individual self is non-different from *Brahman*. The universe is enveloped by a jacket of *adhyāsa* or *Māyā* (ignorance). The evil will disappear as soon as the *yathārtha jñāna* (accurate knowledge) of the eternal dawns in man and his own individual self amalgamates in the omnipresent absolute Self (*Ātman*). This is the state of *Mokṣa* (salvation.). According to *Upaniṣads*, *Mokṣa* can be attained during the life time of human life or at the moment of his death. “The person who has achieved liberation while has the vision of *Brahman*. He is called ‘the living free.’ He has no delusion, no selfish desire. His only delight is in God. He has established himself in purity of conduct by pursuing the yoga of renunciation.

<sup>10</sup> Radhakrishnan, S., Indian philosophy, Vol. I., Oxford University Press, 1949, p.77

<sup>11</sup> Prasad, R., Theory Of Puruṣārthas, Journal of Indian Philosophy, Vol. IX, P.50

He attains to immortality in this life.<sup>12</sup> The *Bhagavadgītā*, known as the *Mokṣa* sutra edifies four types' *mārgas*—these are respectively *Jñāna mārga*, *Karma mārga*, *Bhakti mārga* and *Rājamārga* for *Brahman* realization. Each and every one of these *mārgas* either independently or in amalgamation can enable man to achieve salvation. Together these constitute *mārga* of synthesis. The *karmayogi* (follower of action) relinquishes achiever ship and enjoyer ships and goes about his *karma* as the instrument of Lord. The *jñāna mārgi* has the realization that God is only the truth and he is one with the divine. The *Rāja mārgi* culminates in *nirvikalpa* Samadhi, the total dissolution of individuality which is God realization. In *bhakti mārga*, the disciple's only concern is God, he being totally indifferent to his own existence. In the *Charan Sloka* of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Lord Krishna declares 'Renounce all *dharma* and take unconditional refuge in me. I shall absolve you of all sins. Don't grieve.' The *sarangat* in these lines is required to give up his ego, his *ahaṅkāra*. All the above mentioned four *mārgas* reach their summit in *sarangati*. The State of perfection comes by living in the divine self. The soul of man is united with Supreme Soul and it becomes one with all beings an spirit, one with them both in God in nature. He sees all in God and God in all.

#### CONCLUSION:

In the *paramparā* lifestyle of India, the worldly existence is smaller amount or big amount belittled as such living is not pain free. The antique seers and philosophers have attempted to find a therapy for the sufferings and heavy wretchedness of life. There are of course differences among the different Indian disciplines about the accurate characteristic and method of getting liberation from the suffering life. But they all have the same opinion that *Mokṣa* (the spiritual freedom) is not utopian. In this world and the next, the supreme end i.e. *Summon Bonum* of life is to have perfect peace and joy without sorrow. The *Upaniṣads* has accentuated that spiritual illumination can be achieved in the very life. It also says that if liberation is not attained in one life; limitless opportunity is given to man to achieve spiritual liberation beyond one life. Man lives *Artha* and *Kāma*, when he neglects *Dharma* and *Mokṣa*. The ideal of *Dharma* and *Mokṣa* is immediate value of life for the common man. All evils get in *Samkara* for neglecting of *Dharma* and *Mokṣa*. It is therefore very much necessary that all the four *Puruṣāthas* – must act in joining together and harmony. It is stated that *Vidura*, the wisest of the wise and the four brothers of *Judhirstir* extolled the superiority of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* respectively in *Mahabharata*. But *Judhirstir*, the virtue-personify accentuated that out of the four main objects of life, *Mokṣa* is superior—most as it brings supreme good to man and that emancipation comes to one who remains unattained to the other three *Puruṣāthas*— *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* who is beyond vice or virtue and who remains indifferent to desires, pleasure and discomfort; pain. In

<sup>12</sup> Mundaka Upaniṣad ,III-II-6

finishing, it may be whispered that the doctrine of the four-fold *Puruṣāthas* (*chaturbarga Puruṣāthas*) has stood the test of time. The humanity has to move towards perfection which is the supreme goal of life. The spiritual impact of the eternal values of the *Puruṣāthas* on the individuals, human society and nation is very useful. The hypothesis of *Puruṣātha* has been promulgated not for Hindus only but also the complete mankind. The individual, society and nation are believed to comprehend the significance of the principal objectives in human life. When mankind acknowledges and follows the principles of the *Puruṣāthas* the earth will become an ideal place to live in. In view of the abovementioned truth, *Puruṣāthas* will continue to occupy superior and basic place in the scheme of human life with *Mokṣa* as the highest goal till existence of human race lasts.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Gandhi, M.K., The Bhagavat- Gītā, Delhi, 1948
2. Goyalka, J., Bhagavatgītā, Tattva Vivecani, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 2012
3. Manusmitriti (year unidentified )
4. Nivadita, S., Religion and Dharma, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, 2012
5. Paramsamhasa Yogananda , The Bhāgavatgītā, Yosoda Satsanga Society, Kolkata, Vol, I  
2002 Voll, 2002
6. Parabhavananda, S., Spiritual Heritage Of India, The Ramakrishna Math, Kolkata, 1990
7. Pavitrananda, S.'s, entitled, Swāmī Vivekānanda on Spiritual practice, Published in The Vedānta Kesari, Vol.I, No.4 Swāmī Vivekānanda Birth Centenary Numbered Kailasānanada, S The Rāmakrishna Mission, Jupiter Press Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1963
8. Prabhupada, A. C. B. S. Bhagavad-Gītā As it is, II., 3, The Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, Mambai, 1986
9. Prasad, R., Theory of Puruṣārthas, Journal of Indian Philosophy, Vol. IX Rāmakrishna Mission, Jupiter Press Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1963
10. Radhakrishnan, S., the Bhagavadgītā, Oxford University Press, 1940
11. Sri Ramakrishna, The Call Of the God, A Vedanta Kashari Presentation, Ramakrishna Math , Mylapore , Madras, 1992
12. Radhakrishnan, S., Indian philosophy, Vol. I. , Oxford University Press, 1949
13. Sri Aurovindo Ghosh, Essays on Gītā, The Aurovindo library, Pondicherry, 1960
14. Sri Satya Sai Baba, Dharma Vahini , Andrapradesh , 2012
15. The Bhagavadgītā
16. The Upaniṣads
17. Tapasyānanda, S., Srimad Bhagavadgītā, Advaita Ashram, Kolkata, 2004
18. Vatsyana, Kāmsutra, Sahini Publication, New Delhi, 1999

19. Vivekananda ,S., The Call Of the God, A Vedanta Kashari Presentation, Ramakrishna Math , Mylapore , Madras, 1992
20. Vivekananda ,S., The Complete Works Vol. I-IX, Advaita Ashram a, Kolkata,2009
21. Vyāsadeva ,The Bhagavadgītā, (Gitamatmya) (year unidentified)
22. Vora, D.P., Evolution of morals in the Epics, G. R. Bhatkal Popular Book Depot, Bombay,1991





## Formation of new Indian elites during British Raj: sociological perspective

**DR. UMESH KUMAR SINGH**  
**Assistant Professor of Sociology**  
**VSSD College**  
**Kanpur India**

The revolt of 1857 is an issue of controversy among historians – whether it was a mutiny or it was first freedom struggle against the British. Whatever it was, at least one thing is certain that this revolt opened up ways for a basic and decisive changes in almost all aspects of public life, be it politico-economic or socio-cultural, or any other domain. Out of these, only political aspect was the point of focus for most historians and academicians; the social aspect was not addressed much and was kept as a neglected side. However this social aspect has been of crucial importance while considering it as a factor causing major impacts on the society. The revolt of 1857 put deep impacts on the Indian social system and public psyche. Out of these, some were self-sprouted ones whereas some of them were sponsored by the British.

In history, India first time got governed by a foreign ruler after the revolt of 1857. Earlier the series of foreign invasions were made on India however the invaders who took political power in India established them as an Indian ruler. Though there had been governments of Slave Dynasty, Afghans and the Mughals, there were no government of Ghazni, Kabul, or Ujbekestan. However now India was being governed by London. The Indians were well aware of its economic repercussions but once known as ‘Golden Bird’ changed into a poor country by the time of the Independence. The aim of the present paper however is to discuss the social consequences of 1857 revolt which are still effective even in the present day Indian society.

In the post-1857 period, the British adapted the social power structure very strategically to accomplish their objectives. They created a new elite class to carry out this process. This new elite class had been devoted to and loyalist of the British in power. This tendency of the Indian elites continued after the Independence and is still present to some extent even in the present period.

To have their objectives achieved, the British tried to diminish the monopoly of politico-social power structure of the Muslims for they feared the Muslims as a threat to British government. As the Muslims were in majority among the ruling class, they lost more political power due to British domination. Consequently, Muslims responses were much rapid and they became more biased towards the new western tendencies. This led to domination of Hindus in bureaucracy and the impact of the Renaissance remained limited to great extent among Hindus only.

Despite being the Muslim rulers more religiously conservative in the medieval history of India, generally the common masses of both Hindu and Muslim had harmonious living. Gaus Khan being the most trusted of Rani Laxmi Bai, companionship of Azimullah Khan with Nana and Tatya, Meerut's rebellions reaching to Delhi and asking Bahadur Shah Zafar to provide leadership were not the exceptional events. However the division of power in the post-1857 era changed the situation and that created a background for growing mistrust and reactionary approach between Hindus and Muslims. On other side, writers like James Mill created a history, either intentionally or unintentionally, that became instrumental to fulfill the interests of the British. Laws like Arms Act were enacted to dismantle the capacity of armed struggle of the Indians. At academic level the Indians were presented as other-worldly and meek. Neglecting the harmony and all encompassing traits of Indian philosophy, it was deliberately labeled as the one focusing on asceticism only.

Along with all these, after the revolt of 1857, the British ruler planned a massive campaign of reward and punishment. The local power structure was fully dismantled in this process. The helpers and sycophants of the British were bestowed with judicial rights and special privileges and were awarded Zamindaris and special titles. On the other hand, those who were distrusted, even a little, were punished severely. During the suppression of the revolt of 1857 and even after that thousands of people were hanged publicly, many a times on the roadside trees. Those who were under doubt of helping the rebellions in any which way, their houses, fortresses, vehicles, and other assets were fully dismantled and destroyed. After all these, the new elite class that emerged had tendency to have blind faith for their ruler and foreign culture, neglecting the common masses and even suppressing them.

An important aspect of British rule in India was the psychological indoctrination of an elite layer within Indian society who were artfully tutored into becoming model British subjects. This English-educated layer of Indian society was

craftily encouraged in absorbing values and notions about themselves and their land of birth that would be conducive to the British occupation of India.

A major impact of the British rule in India was the beginning of a new middle class. With the rise of the British commercial interests, new opportunities opened to a small section of the Indian people. They often acted as the agents and intermediaries of the British traders and thus made huge fortunes. The new landed aristocracy, which came into being after the introduction of Permanent Settlement, also formed a part of this new class. A major section of the old landowning aristocracy lost ownership of their land and in many cases were replaced by a new class of land owners. These people got some English education and became the new elite.

Important fact is that even after the Independence, this new elite class continued to have their power intact, and there had been an increase in their share of power. Because of this very reason the Indian elites could not become carrier of any concrete social change. There have been void of major social movements. This new elite class depended on the government and the government depended on it. For this new class, the story of Alha-Udal is nothing but a myth and the inspiration of patience and chivalry can only be had from the life history of King Bruce. This class takes pride in discussing the historical past of Rome but have no knowledge about Humpi at all. Considers Alexander as great but knows rather scanty about Samundragupta. For this new class, even to have little talk about the genealogy and chronology presented in Purans is an academic sin. Period after the revolt of 1857 was a starting point for drifting away of the elite class from the public psyche – ill consequences of which are visible in all domains of social, economic, and political spheres. All our academic curricula, plans, policies are indirectly infested with this problem. This is the reason that common man finds himself alienated from the governance process and policy making. For him, the policy makers are not one belonging to his society but someone alien with whom he has no way to interact. Even today, New Delhi governs like London and I.I.M.s and J.N.U. are like Oxford and Cambridge. Even in the areas of literature and culture, only person who can get recognition is the one who is politically correct in his views. The first step to come out of this situation is implicit in the proper exploration of this phenomenon. For this, joint effort made together both by historians and sociologists is necessary.

## **References**

Bayly, C.A. et al. (1993). "Imperial Nostalgia", review of *The Raj: India and the British 1600-1947*, *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, nos. 29-30 (17-24 July 1993):1511-13.

Brown, Judith M.; Louis, Wm. Roger, eds. (2001). *Oxford History of the British Empire: The Twentieth Century*. Oxford University Press: New York

Roberts, J. (1971).The movement of elites in Western India under early British Rule. *The Historical Journal*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 241-262.

Tomlinson, B.R. (1996). *The Economy of Modern India, 1860-1970*. Cambridge University Press: New York

Tunzelmann, Alex Von (2007). *Indian Summer: The Secret History of the End of an Empire*. Picador: New York



## The position of Gond women in Central Indian Tribal Society : Their marriage conventions

**DR. NANDITA BANERJEE**  
**Lecturer of History**  
**Katwa College**  
**Burdwan (West Bengal) India**

Gond tribal society exhibited completely different norms in colonial period from ordinary urban society. The status of women was quite high and suppression of women was not usually heard of. In fact women were allowed to make their own choice of husbands.<sup>1</sup> They were provided opportunities for meeting suitable partners. But this emancipation did not usually proceed beyond the boundaries of the society of the concerned tribe. When it came to crossing the boundaries of the tribe for uniting with the partner of one's choice Gond society was cautious, suspicious and even conservative.<sup>2</sup>

The proposed paper will deal with one or two conspicuous instances of such violations of tribal norms which drew their ire of tribal society, and was dealt with hostility, reminiscent of the conservation of non tribal societies.

Observers of tribal society are familiar with the peculiar institution called 'Ghotul' amongst the Gonds, where tribal girls and boys were allowed to meet each other and make their own choice of partners in a very liberated and emancipated manner. So far as this custom was concerned, Gonds were not burdened with any monetary or other tactical considerations.

In this respect their attitude stood in sharp contrast with the attitude of non tribal societies where parental dictation, caste considerations, family interests and even financial inducements came to play a big part. But only in one respect Gonds displayed some semblance of conservatism. They did not

look upon the transgression of the tribal boundary with favour. For them the tribe was an end in itself.<sup>3</sup> They were therefore quite alert about policing its boundaries. I have traced an interesting story in Kedarnath Tshchyu's – 'The Gond kingdom of Chanda'.

One definite case settled by the Gram Panchayat Samiti concerns a Komati youngman, Ramyya by name has kept a Kapewar girl who had been living with the widow mother and brother. It was maintained by the Sar-panch and other members of the Samiti that it was because of their persuasion that the girl in question was accepted however reluctantly, by the Komati householder on the ground that Ramyya and Potaka Pramila had frankly admitted before all that she later had been impregnated by the former. The Kapewars are generally held to occupy a relatively 'lower' position than the Komati in the case – hierarchy of the region, so it was rather difficult for the aged parents of Ramyya to accept the Kapewar girls as their daughter in law.<sup>4</sup> She is found residing in the Komati household, attending to the household chores and has given birth to a son. Pramila is not allowed to cook for her aged parents-in-law though her father in law quite often fondles his grandson, mother in law refuses to accept the new born baby from the Kapewar girl as her own grandson. It appears that both the aged parents of Ramyya still cherish fond hope of marrying their erring son with a Komati girl in their known circle. In case they succeed in this respect, the status of Pramila would be reduced to that of an ordinary 'Kept' mistress having no claim in the Komati household in the eyes of villagers.<sup>5</sup>

On making further enquiries from other informants including the Kapewar brother of Potaka Pramila who has been acting as the head of the family since the expiry of his father, it has been established beyond any doubt that the young couple had been indulging in clandestine affair for the past two – three years, when it became evident that Potaka had been impregnated by Ramyya she was bold enough to express her keen desire to live with her lover and indeed she actually started living in the Komati household much to the chagrin of her brother<sup>6</sup>. The result was that the whole Kapewar household to which she belonged by birth was excommunicated ( *Betad* ) for some time. For being re-admitted, ( *Zat Milana* ), the brother of Potaka had to incur an expenditure of Rs. 50/- to Rs. 55/- by way of meeting the requirements concerning the punishment ( *Dand* ) imposed upon him. The punishment included shaving the hairs of the male members of the household by a barber ( who was to be paid by him); throwing away the earthen vessels, big and small; arranging a feast for twenty – thirty persons of their own community, belonging to different villages; and payments made in cash and kind to their own Sendia as well to the Jangam priest.<sup>7</sup> So far as the girl in question is concerned her relationship with her natal family is not completely served, for she was attended to during her confinement period by the female members of her natal (Kapewar) family from about two months; but she returned to her Komati household along with her new born son,

after she was nursed back to health. It was further reported that whenever she likes, she goes over and visits her natal family and is given food etc. but none of them accepts any cooked food prepared or touched by her; not even her own mother takes any food or water from her hands. Her own brother, who is a literate young man, and is working at present as the village post-master stated that he has completely stopped talking to her for as he puts it, her affair involves the family prestige and honour (*Izzat*) and as the head of the family, he prefers not to have anything to do with her for all times to come even if she is thrown away by the Komati household; neither does he care for his nephew, whom he has never seen from close quarters.

The Gonds are very particular about enforcing exogamy<sup>8</sup> and the Gond tribes are endogamous. In spite of this, during the many centuries, inter-marriage has taken place, though not on a large scale. Even among the savage Khonds, Thurston says that inter-marriage prevailed among Khonds, Panos and Uriyas.<sup>9</sup> Russell has stated that "Khonds will admit into the community a male orphan child of any superior caste, including the Binjhvars and Gonds. A virgin of any age of one of these castes will also be admitted. A Gond man who takes a Khond girl to wife can become a Khond by giving a feast."<sup>10</sup>

Grigson has mentioned inter-marriage between the Marias of Sukma and the Koyias of Malkan giri and also between the Marrias with the clans on the Dantewara and Jagdalpur plateau.<sup>11</sup> Verrier Elwin affirms the presence of rare inter-marriages between Jhorias and Gonds, and the Murias of the north parganas inter-marry with the Kanker Gonds, who also inter marry with the Murias of Jagdalpur.<sup>12</sup>

### **Bhima :**

A small sub-tribe of Gonds, living mainly in the Mandla and Seoni districts. They indignantly rejected the suggestion that they were Hindus, although they celebrate many of the Hindu deities in their songs (but that is just custom, they said) and practice child marriage. They do not call Bramhins for their ceremonies, in fact their women refuse to eat from the hands of Bramhins, though they will eat with Gonds. Within the tribe, there are the regular exogamous septs, generally with Gond names, *Marabi*, *Parteli*, *Markham*, *Durwa*, *Tekam*. If a Gond girl associates with a Pankr she is put out of the tribe, and is never taken back, but if she goes to a Pardhan, she can be readmitted if she gives a feast.<sup>13</sup> She must go down to the river, and a little of her hair is cut. Then cow-dung is thrown at her, and she is led across the river. Then she returns, spreads a cloth on the ground, and the food is placed on it, the chief man of her sept eats first and then the other members of the tribe follow suit, and she is readmitted to all her tribal privileges.<sup>14</sup>

In a Gond society the system of marriage, and the social functions and positions of the women are complex. Within the family as well as the community women are treated as equals to their male counterparts. Economically they are hard working partners. She goes to the village bazaar

both to purchase and sell. She has a good share of money tied up in her clothings, and when there are problems relating to the cultivation of crops, or decisions have to be taken on economic issues like purchasing cattle, the woman is not only consulted, but her advice is attentively listened to.<sup>15</sup>

In all social life, celebrations and community matters, she plays an important role, but its another strange aspect of Gond society where in religion women are always a taboo.<sup>16</sup> She offers no worship, though now a days she joins in the common prayers. It is presumed but not so certainly that she is so occupied with her domestic and economic activities that probably she feels no need for religious activities.<sup>17</sup>

### **Adult marriages**

Early marriages were rarely known to the Gonds and adult marriages are generally the rule. Grigson says that pre-puberty marriages never occur amongst the hill Marias Rev. K. Cain, in probably the earliest survey of the Gonds says that the Koyias generally marry when of fair age.<sup>18</sup> The initiative for a marriage proposal, amongst the Gonds is taken by the father of the boy. One or sometimes two visits are arranged, before all details are finalised. The second visit deals with the problems of marriage experience, feast and so on. Grigson found that if the girl agreed to marry the proposed youth, liquor was at once drunk by the parties from the two villages. If she refused, the boy is parents took the liquor back to the villages.<sup>19</sup> There was a third visit when two large pots 'landa' three pots of Mahuwa and five pailies of rice or Kutki are given to the bride's family to seal the deal.<sup>20</sup>

On arriving at the girl's house, on the first occasion, the young man's party sit at the door thereof and making three cups from the leaves Kiredol (Uncaria Gambier) or Jak (Auto corpus Entegrifolio), pour the liquor into them, and lay them on the ground. As the liquor is being poured into the cups, certain names, which seem to be those of the ancestors are called out. The liquor is then drunk and an arrow (am) is stuck in the roof, and a brass bangle (*Khadu*) left before the visitors take their departure. If the match is unacceptable to the girl's family, the arrow and bangle are returned.<sup>21</sup> The second visit is called *pank-sal* or *Sang-Sang-dal-sol*, because the liquor pots are smeared with turmeric paste, sometimes it is called *nyanga-dal-sol*, because the future bride groom carries a small pot of liquor on a stick borne on the shoulder; or *bojang*, because the arrow, which has been stuck in the roof, is set up in the ground close to one of the pots of liquor.<sup>22</sup> ('Castes and Tribes of Southern India', by E. Thurston, p.322)

The Gonds are romantic in love when they are young, but when marriage is contemplated, they appear to be most businessman like and full of material considerations, when arrangements are completed, Mahuwa liquor is distributed all around, and dinners are given and attended in return.<sup>23</sup>

Marriage amongst the Gonds, as in most primitive societies, "it is a free, and transient union". There are references of 'limited promiscuity' of the



Murias, and the early Gonds have been known to practice polygamy.<sup>24</sup> Grigson has stated that women are very free to change their attachment or if unattached, to go to the house of the man of their choice and live with him as his wife even if he is already married.<sup>25</sup>

Captain Forsythe has said a hundred years ago “that polygamy is not forbidden but women being costly chattels, it is rarely practiced”.<sup>26</sup> Conversely, when women were not considered as movable properties, polygamy prevailed. The practice has differed in various places, only a few Gonds have several wives. Some of them are very proud of it, and even parade them. But the majority of Gonds marry once, or have only one wife at a time. A number of Gonds have more than one wife for the sake of convenience or as a result of their duty to provide for near female relatives. R.V. Russell says “In a rich Raj Gond of Khatalia Gond family two or three girls will accompany the wife, and become the concubines of the bridegroom.”<sup>27</sup>

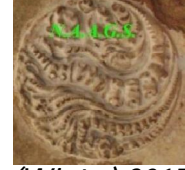
This was evidently a common element of feudal society, but this has not been the tradition of the early Gond class.

Above references do not indicate any kind of prudishness on the part of tribal society as manifested amongst Central Indian Gonds. Its neither exhibited apartheid or racial exclusivism which is the bane of present day urban society. However, the exclusivism displayed in this instance indicated a fond concern to maintain the tribal identity. All tribes had their own social norms. Their particular tribal rituals and their own set of religious belief system. There might be parallels amongst tribes so far as these particulars were concerned, but when it came to maintaining the identity of a particular tribe the tribes were no less arrogant, possessive and exclusive.<sup>28</sup>

## References

1. B. H. Mehta, *Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984, PP – 421-422.
2. Stephen Fuchs, *The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern Mandla* Reliance publishing House, New Delhi, 1968, (1960 first published) P-488. (Source-Census of India, 1931, Vol. – I)
3. Ibid, PP-379-380.
4. Kidarnath Tshchyu *'Gond Kingdom of Chanda'* with particular reference to its political structure ( India, Anthropological survey memoir no. 53) Kolkata, June, 1980, P- 68.
5. Ibid, P-69.
6. Ibid, PP-70-71
7. Ibid, P-72
8. E. Thurston *'Castes and Tribes of South India,'* P-73 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
9. E. Thurston *'Castes and Tribes of South India,'* PP-73-74. ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *'Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society'*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
10. Russell, *'The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India,'* P-472 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *'Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society'*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
11. W. Grigson, *'Maria Gonds of Bastar'*, P-57 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *'Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society'*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
12. Verrier Elwin , *'Murias and their Ghotuls'*, P.18 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *'Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society'*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
13. Verrier Elwin, *'leaves from the jungle – Life ina a Gond village'*. Oxford University Press, 1958 (First edition 1936), P-179.
14. Ibid, P-180
15. Gazetteer of Mandla, P-64
16. Gazetteer of Bastar, P-42.
17. Ibid, P-43.
18. W. Grigson, *'Maria Gonds of Bastar'*, P-62 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, *'Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society'*. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)

19. W. Grigson, '*Maria Gonds of Bastar*', P-248 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, '*Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society*'. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
20. Ibid, P-2007.
21. E. Thurston , '*Caste and Tribes of Southern India*', P-322 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, '*Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society*'. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
22. Ibid, P-322.
23. Gazetteer of Central Provinces, PP-138-141.
24. Gazetteer of Chanda district, P-45.
25. Ibid, P-46.
26. James Forseath – '*The Highland, of Central India* (Notes on their Forests and wild tribes' natural history and sports) London, 1889, P-48.
27. Russell, '*Caste and Tribes of Central Provinces*', PP-71-72 ( quoted in B. H. Mehta, '*Gonds of the Central Indian Highlands – A study of the Dynamics of Gond society*'. Vol. I, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1984.)
28. Gazetteer of Betul – P-14.



## THOUGHT OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ABOUT WESTERN WORLD

**DR. JITENDRA SINGH**  
**Assistant Professor of History**  
**Jagran College of Arts, Science & Commerce**  
**Kanpur (U.P.) India**

From the last century onwards, when Western people came in touch with Indian thought, they saw an entirely different approach from what they had been associating with among their own thought in the West. We have seen it in our Western history: there is constant conflict between science and religion, and in general outlook, it is the spirit in conflict with the flesh, matter in conflict with mind. Our modern minds are conditioned by these events. We cannot imagine that there can be another approach where there will be none of these conflicts. But, today, more and more people are realizing that the approach in India to the subject of Truth is without any such creedal and dogmatic limitations. There are varieties of approaches and different fields of experience to study.

Why should there be conflict? After all, truth is our aim. We approach it from different points of view and in different fields of experience. There must be understanding and tolerance. Now, this attitude is what makes the Upanishads- the fountain head of the great philosophy and spirituality of Vedanta-a literature of immortal interest that, in this amazing age in which we are living, makes people study them as a serious literature. Unless a literature voices something deep in the human spirit, something profound in human experience, it cannot remain immortal like this. There is this famous line in the poet Tagore's Gitanjali: 'Where words come out from the depth of Truth' Those words become immortal; when you read the literature of the Upanishads, you may not comprehend what it says, but you feel- 'Yes, some profound truth is being expounded here'. But what and where is that truth? It is here that the subject of this afternoon's talk- 'Approach to Truth in Vedanta-assumes

importance. About the earnestness of the sages of the Upanishads in the search for Truth, the Christian missionary Robert Ernest Hume says; The earnestness of the search for truth is one of the delightful and commendable features of the Upanishads.”<sup>1</sup>

Vedanta recognized two worlds for human investigation-the external world and the internal world. A vast inner world of experience waits to be studied and investigated. The external world is what is revealed to us through the five senses. We study that world, and that study, when in the ordinary sense we do study that world; like a new-born baby trying to understand that world. What is that world that impinges on my sense organs every minute? The baby is puzzled. It is not able to understand what it is, but it struggles to understand. Slowly, it gets a grip on the world while trying to understand it. Thus, you can see the child growing in knowledge of the external world. It is that study that becomes organized and precise when it becomes scientific. Today, in this modern period, that scientific approach to the external world has become very thorough and near-complete. That is what makes physical science a subject of profound respect for every lover of truth. That is the greatest contribution of the modern period towards understanding the environment in which we are living and this understanding is necessary if we want to improve our life.

In the Bhagavad-Gita Krishna says, "Whenever virtue declines and evil increases, I incarnate myself to rescue the holy, to destroy evil and to establish righteousness".<sup>2</sup> History shows that from time to time world teachers have arisen who have done just this. Swami Vivekananda was such a world teacher. He travelled all over the world and taught in both the East and the West. He always taught what was needed by the country and culture he was in. His teaching in the West was formulated to meet the special needs of the West, just as his teachings in the East were formulated for the East.

He admired the West for its energy, its enterprise, its enthusiasm, its accomplishment in practical affairs. But he was not deceived by the fact that the accomplishments of the modern West were mostly in the realm of wealth and physical comforts. He saw that, beneath its mask of easy optimism the West had desperate need of something more than material prosperity and efficiency. He knew that this need was neither physical nor intellectual, but spiritual.

He admired and loved the Orient also, especially India, for it was the land of his birth and he was always a great patriot, but was based on spiritual perception. He loved the Orient for its age-old tradition of renunciation and its whole-souled pursuit of spiritual realization. He knew of its vast accomplishments in that area, of its long line of rishis from time immemorial down to the present who have immersed themselves in the infinite and turned their backs on the finite. But he saw that this too needed correction, for to turn one's back on the finite completely is to forget the vow of the world teachers, the Buddha's and the bodhisattvas, the Ramas and the Krishna, and the Shankaracharyas and the Chaitanyas and all the sung and unsung sages, who

have vowed to help all beings attain enlightenment. He knew that India needed some of the practicality of the West, and that the west needed the spirituality of the East.

As a world teacher of both East and West, Swami Vivekananda knew that meditation and realization must be put to practical use for the relief of the sufferings of the world, and that the Buddha's basic pronouncement, that all relative experience is suffering, would be of no avail without the opening of the gates to liberation or nirvana for as many illusion-bound souls as possible. He knew that the Buddha's last temptation under the Bo tree had been to refrain from teaching anyone what he had realized; for, the Swami himself had felt the pull of that very same temptation. He had asked his master, Ramkrishna, to grant him the boon of staying in Samadhi for many days at a time. Ramkrishna knew that this desire, worthy as it might be in itself, was not the destiny of the world teacher Swami Vivekananda was to become, and that this desire must be given an even higher direction and turned into the desire to help mankind achieve illumination. When the future Swami Vivekananda finally achieved Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Sri Ramkrishna said, "Now you know all. But this knowledge will be locked in a chest, and I will have the key. Not till you have done my work will you have it again."<sup>3</sup>

All of Swami Vivekananda's life and teachings must be studied in this light: he was doing his Master's work. Jesus said, "I am about my Father's business".<sup>4</sup> Swami Vivekananda once said he felt as though divine hands were holding his and guiding him in everything he did,<sup>5</sup> and when he was at a loss to find new material to lecture on while in the United States, he often would hear the voice of Sri Ramkrishna telling him at great length what to say.<sup>6</sup> This means that Swami Vivekananda was a world teacher who was rooted in another world teacher, Sri Ramkrishna, and that he cannot be understood apart from his Master. It also means that his world-wide work was never merely abstract and theoretical, but was always the intensely practical job of bringing God to man and awakening man to God.

We can see, then, that Swamiji's teachings cannot be studied casually, as isolated lectures, as mere speculative theory, or something occurring in a vacuum, but rather must be understood and related to his whole teachings and to the teachings of Sri Ramkrishna, as part of the world teachings of the triple world-teacher incarnation we can only call the Ramkrishna Holy Mother-Vivekananda constellation phenomenon, a phenomenon of incarnated divinity unique so far as we know in the whole history of mankind. Nothing that Swamiji said is a casual remark; everything has the deepest significance, for it is God's voice speaking to our age.

Thought the Orient is symbolized by the transcendental peace of the Buddha, and though Swamiji was every inch the Buddha in his physical appearance, his serene face, his long and deep meditations, his keen mind, his insight into human nature, his boundless compassion, and his attainment of the

highest nirvana or Samadhi, he came to the West also as a warrior monk, ready to do battle for the greatness of the Vedanta philosophy against the skepticism and narrow-mindedness of the West. Like another great predecessor of his, Sri Krishna, he did battle against the demons of ignorance and prejudice, and slew them right and left wherever he met them. Swamiji came to conquer, and conquer the West he did, winning it for the establishment of the cultivation of Vedantic ideas from London to San Francisco.

Swamiji's first salvo of shots in this conquest of the West was fired in the very first small handful of speeches he made before the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. Few and short as these speeches were, they yet laid down the essence of his whole message to the West. All the rest of his lectures and talks and books simply expanded upon and added details to this basic framework he laid down at the Parliament of Religions.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, 1893, he made his first speech at the parliament. Though this was not his first talk in the United states, it was, as Marie Louise Burke makes clear in *New Discoveries*, his first truly public lecture to a large, unselected audience.<sup>7</sup> That first day, as he sat on the platform before the huge crowd among the many other distinguished delegates representing all the major religions of the world, he felt very alone, and very nervous. This was a new experience for him. He kept postponing his address, but finally he could do so no longer. So he rose, and looked over the whole, huge sea of faces outspread before him, and in that moment something happened, as if a vast flood gate suddenly opened: he was inundated by the ocean of the Divine Self manifested in the crowd of people, and he spontaneously addressed them with words: "Sisters and Brothers of America!"<sup>8</sup> And in that instant the electric contact was made, and it was as if a bolt of lightning had shot between them, for the whole crowd rose as one man and cheered him for several minutes. He had hardly said anything, yet he had already conquered their hearts. Then the crowd hushed, and the worlds came, like rain falling drop by drop, faster and faster, on the parched earth.

It was a brief talk, but it opened hearts deep-buried under long ice-ages of grieves and fears and prejudices. He gave two quotations from Hindu scriptures which revealed what few if any in the audience then knew, that religion is not for the purpose of destroying other men's beliefs, but for the purpose of finding the infinite divine unity underlying all apparent religious differences. He went on to say, "Sectarianism, bigotry, and fanaticism have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it with blood, destroyed civilizations, But their time has come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal."<sup>9</sup> He thus sounded the main theme of his message: the unity of religions. This was the theme of his second talk, too, a little parable about a frog in a well who met a frog from the sea and who

could not believe the sea was bigger than his well, an apt symbol for religious and cultural bigotry. The third lecture, however, was much longer, and laid down a magnificent, systematic groundwork for his whole message, and it is here that we get to the essentials.

This lecture was given on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, and it began by reminding the audience of what he had already said, that Hinduism is a vigorous and all-inclusive religion that has absorbed and assimilated all the separate sects that have existed in India from time immemorial. This must certainly have been a new idea for his listeners, most of whom probably looked upon India as a land of competing sects and many jealous gods which were worshipped in the form of what the West called Idols. To dispel these ideas, Swamiji said, "From the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists, and the atheism of the jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion."<sup>10</sup> He had used the Western term idolatry, though later he was to condemn its use and deny there is any such things as idolatry anywhere, but here he used it probably because he knew his listeners would understand no other word, and at this point he could not go into details. But the main idea he introduced here was that there need be no conflict among apparently conflicting religious beliefs. He also introduced the idea that there is no conflict between Hinduism and science, because he knew that the conflict in the West between religion and science was one of the main issues of the day, a conflict which must be resolved, but could not be except on the basis of an all inclusiveness such as that exhibited by Hinduism.

He then said that Hinduism is based on the revelations of the Vedas, an idea that sounds like the Christian belief in the Bible as divine revelation, but he went on to say that the Vedas are not a book but are immutable spiritual laws like the laws discovered by Western science. Here he is illustrating the meaning of divine laws revealed to the mystics by the Western belief in the universal and timeless laws discovered by science. Note that he is not repudiating or belittling science, but rather is using it to show that science and religion are harmonious in that both are engaged in the discovery of immutable laws that exist beyond time and space. This was an appeal to the scientific West to accept Oriental religion on the same basis as it accepted science: experimental proof. Thus in one deft stroke he destroyed the Western idea that science and religion are necessarily at war with one another.

And by introducing the idea that the Vedas are not a book but are the revelations of eternal truths, he made a distinction hitherto unknown in the West between book worship, which is bigotry, and the acceptance of a higher mystical revelation of truth which is completely beyond all words and books and is open to all who truly seek it. When words are spun on the wheel of the Eternal, they blaze on the skies of the mortal mind as more than words. They shine with a beauty which is truth. Thus was the western belief in the Bible as



revelation at once accepted and enlarged to infinity and taken out of all sectarian bigotry, for such an interpretation opens the doors to the acceptance of all religions as equally revelations of eternal divine truths.

He then said that the discoverers of these laws in ancient times were the rishis, the seers, the mystics, and that some of the greatest of these were women. Thus did he at once strike a blow for the equality of women in spiritual life and show that revelation means mystical experience. He went on to say that, in Hinduism creation is considered to have no beginning and no end, but is an eternal process. This statement was a decided blow against the Western belief that the world was created once and once only at a particular time of Augustine. Swamiji opened up this insoluble paradox of how God who is eternal could have created the world at a particular time, by saying that according to Hinduism creation is cyclic and never begins or ends, but, from the point of view of time, continues like a revolving wheel forever, with its kalpas or eons forever succeeding once another. Time is thus shown as one with eternity, as eternity perceived in bits, as it were, not something separate from it. In all this, Swamiji is not really refuting Western beliefs but enlarging them to infinity.<sup>11</sup>

He then said that the human being is not the body but the spirit, a statement that agrees with the Christian teaching, a teaching which was all but forgotten under the avalanche of materialism that was burying the West. He went on to say that the soul is immortal, which means, according to Hinduism, that the soul is not only deathless but birthless as well. This destroys the barriers erected by Western orthodoxy against the prenatal eternity of the soul, thus giving the soul an all-dimensional immortality instead of a one-way immortality- as does the traditional western view which says that the soul is created by God at the conception of the body.

Then he solved another problem, the problem of why God seems to create some people happy and others miserable. Swamiji said that we cannot say that God does any thing so arbitrary, that the inequalities in happiness and misery are due to our past actions in former lives, and that the soul, being immortal backwards in time as well as forwards, has been incarnated in various bodies for many lives in the past, and that its past actions, performed under the veil of ignorance of its infinite and perfect nature, are what produce in the present life the effects of happiness and misery. The soul alone produces its own sufferings and joys; it alone creates its own fate. So was the West introduced to the idea of karma and reincarnation, so important in Eastern religions, so long discredited and forgotten in the West. Heredity, the Western scientific explanation of many individual differences, Swamiji said, could only be applied to bodily differences, not to differences of character and personality, mental differences. We create our own minds, he said, since they are formed by what we have done in the past. He disposed of the question of why we can't remember our past lives by calling attention to the fact that we also forget much of our present life too. Our conscious mind forgets, but there is a deeper mind where all our

memories are stored, and these memories can be evoked by the right means. There are some people, he said, who do remember their past lives, or some fragments of them. Thus in a few deft words he placed before the West the whole theory of reincarnation as a major psychological, philosophical, moral, and religious theory and experience.

Yet he repeats the question, rephrasing it slightly, for it is an insistent one: How can the perfect soul be deluded? How can we be anything but soul, and how can soul be anything but perfect? An entirely new approach to the whole problem of selfhood is thus opened up. For centuries the West had writhed under the accusations of sin by which religion flagellated the people. Now Swamiji was saying that the soul is perfect. This was an idea the West had not heard since the days of Plato and Plotinus; it had long since lain buried under the rubble of collapsed civilizations, and now Swamiji brought it forth as vital and fresh as a new born babe, a spring born lamb, from the East, where it had never died. The mystery of human life is deeper than the West had dreamed, and Swamiji put it before us. We go up and down, he says, a powerless, helpless wretch on an ever-raging current of cause and effect...Is there no hope? Is there no escape? Here Swamiji's dispassionate reasoning gives place to impassioned poetry and high drama. In presenting this picture he first gives the materialistic view of man as but a cork on the waves of an impersonal, no conscious matter. He seems almost to be agreeing with it; the law of karma seems to be a cause and effect vortex from which there is no escape.<sup>12</sup>

All this is but prelude to one of his highest flights of poetry and truth. He says, reached the throne of mercy, and words of hope and consolation came down and inspired a Vedic sage, and he stood up before the world and in trumpet voice proclaimed the glad tidings: "Here ye, children of immoral bliss! Even ye that reside in the higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One who is beyond all darkness, all delusion: knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death over again." "Swamiji continues, "Children of immortal bliss"-what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name-heirs of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth-sinners! It is a sin to call man so."<sup>13</sup>

This out welling of ecstatic love for all mankind as manifestations of perfect divine being struck at the outward form of Western religion, which was primarily concerned with sin and its punishment and had little to say about bliss, and it exploded a large portion of the stern fortress wall of the Western obsession with sin and witch-hunting that had turned much religion in the west into a grim and sadistic affair. For the first time in centuries the West was told by someone who saw it with his own spiritual eyes that the soul is perfect and divine.

One might think that the lecture would end on this high note, but Swamiji had much more to say, all of it extremely relevant. He said that the Vedas did

not teach a wrathful and unforgiving God but rather a God of all pervading power and love, the formless One, yet at the same time the Father, Mother, Friend, and the Beloved who is dearer than all, who is to be loved without bargaining or self-seeking. He said the Vedas teach the essential divinity of the soul though it is held in bondage by matter; but this bondage can be broken through the mercy of God, and this mercy come only as a result of the soul's having purified itself. Purity of heart, he says, evokes the mercy of God and leads to God-realization.

He says that the Hindu wants God right now in this life, not in some vague future time after the death of the body. For the Hindu, he says, religion is not a matter of formalized creeds but is the actual experiencing of God here and now by the pure soul. When a man realizes God, he says, he lives a life of infinite bliss and perfection. Perfection for the Hindu means oneness with God. Swamiji thus combined the paths of Jnana and Bhakti with exquisite finesse and brevity in this first major lecture to the West. And he added the point he later repeated many times in different ways, that oneness with God through knowledge and love is not a loss of individuality, but is rather the shedding of the false individuality and the gaining of the only true individuality there is, the infinite self.

He made two more important points before he closed. The first was about science. He used the West's intensive involvement in the development of science to show how the infinite alone is the true individuality and the true reality. He said that science reveals that matter is one unbroken ocean, and that the so-called individual body is a delusion. What I call my body is simply a wave or bubble in that ocean; through it flows the whole material universe. It has no real boundaries either. Then he made the point he later expanded upon many times. Science, he said, is the search for unity by sorting out particulars into classes, and smaller classes into larger classes. So science consists in the search for and the finding of unity. But why stop before ultimate unity is reached? He asks. Religion is the search for ultimate unity or God, so religion is simply the science of sciences. Thus at one stroke Swamiji destroyed the separating ramparts reared in the West between science and religion. He did not say to stop being scientific. Instead, he said to carry science to its logical conclusion and reach the final unity of all, the absolute one, which is the goal of all sciences and all religions.

Thus, not only are all religions one, but science and religion as well are one, according to Swamiji, in the sense that all sciences and all religions are seeking the same goal, and in the sense that goal can be found, absolute Unity. Since Swamiji spoke these words in 1893, modern scientists in their search for unity have produced results that bear out the mystical view of the final unity of all beings, Einstein's Relativity Theory and his Unified Field Theory<sup>14</sup> broke down many barriers of beliefs that had previously appeared to separate various phenomena that are not really separate. Frits of Capra, Professor of physics at

the University of California at Berkeley, has shown the harmony he believes exists between Eastern religions and modern physics in his book- The Tao of Physics. In an article of the same title published in the Prabuddha Bharata magazine of March 1979, Dr. Capra summarizes his views. Thus we can see that science, using scientific methods, is getting closer and closer to the universal unity behind phenomena as it was urged to do by Swamiji in 1893.

The second important point he made was about idolatry. He discussed not the word but the idea. He showed why image worship is necessary as a preliminary step on the spiritual path. He said that God cannot be expressed in images, words, or ideas; being formless he is beyond all relative things. But that doesn't mean that all images, words, or ideas are wrong. Would it be right, he asked for an old man to say that childhood is a sin?<sup>15</sup> Thus did he show that it is no sin to worship God through images. It is a stage on the path, that is all, a stage that must be used and transcended. He said that hinduism recognizes nature's plan of unity in variety; that is, Hindism is universal and accepts all form of religion if practised with sincerity. He quoted Krishna as saying, I am in every religion as the thread through the string of pearls; and pointed out that Hinduism admits Buddhism and Jainism that do not believe in God. What a tumbling of walls was there! To the cradle Western mind, atheism could not have been considered a religion at all, yet here is Swamiji saying that Hinduism includes even atheism in its pantheon of religions.

Now this is the essence of his message to the West, this his first major lecture in the West, at the Parliament of Religions. Whatever he said after that was an expansion of these points. The only subjects he did not introduce in this lecture were the paths of Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga. These two paths he lectured on extensively later and wrote out painstakingly in book form, showing that he considered them just as important as the other two paths of Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

He thus introduced Advaita Vedanta, the immortality of the soul and the oneness of the soul with God, the essential infinitude, eternality, and perfection of the soul, the law of Karma and reincarnation as applied to the apparent self, and the truth that religion and science are not really opposed to one another but are actually seeking the same goal, absolute unity. He also wanted the west to know that sin should not be the chief preoccupation of religion, but he cautioned here that Hinduism is not indifferent to immorality, since it teaches that the mercy of God in granting illumination to the soul depends upon the purity of heart in the apparent self. And, instead of urging the West to give up reason, science and philosophy, he urged it to develop these studies much more thoroughly than it had yet done and to apply scientific methods to religion to find ultimate unity. Above all, he urged the West not to be content with mere verbal theories about God but to translate theories into practice and actually realize God in experience here and now.

In developing later his teachings on Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga, he brought out the fact that he was urging the active, practical West to be active, practical and scientific about religion and treat religion like a science in order to produce practical results in experience by following the rules of practice laid down by the experts, the rishis. The path of Raja Yoga is a series of techniques which if followed correctly will produce certain specific results in spiritual experience inevitably, just like any experiment in science. He was not suggesting irresponsible tampering with higher experiences, any more than scientists teach irresponsibility in the handling of chemicals, but rather he taught an exact, scientific approach which uses specific means to produce specific results.

Thus God can be reached by experience, says Swamiji. Consciousness can be altered, raised, and redirected away from the sense and the mind towards God, not by drugs but by the four yogas. Kant was absolutely right except that he did not go far enough. The senses and the mind are but forms superimposed upon the thing-in-itself, and we know things through the forms of the senses and the mind, but this is not true knowledge. Kant was wrong, says Swamiji, in saying that neither the thing in itself nor the soul nor God can be known, they are one and the same all embracing, infinite non-duality which is what each one of us is and which can be known through identity not through separative, objective knowledge, which is not knowledge at all. The veil of ignorance hiding reality can be pierced, not by the senses, not by reason, not by the two together, but by consciousness raised above the sense and the mind so that it cuts the veil like a sword of light and dispels all darkness. Consciousness is independent of the forms of the senses and the mind, and when it is freed from these, and from the desires for these forms, it can soar into the infinite, its proper home. The four yogas together give us the means to accomplish this.

All the rest of his teachings to the West developed the details of the four yogas into one yoga. He thus blew up the roadblock that had obstructed Kant. For, as it turned out, Kant, the forgotten Kant, was, or is, in reality, ourselves, each one of us. And all his bumbling doubts and hesitations are ours, and it is we ourselves, all of us Western Kantians, who need the courage to pierce the veil of scepticism we have interposed between ourselves and the reality and to see that reality as our very own inmost self, Swamiji gave us the power, which is, after all, courage, to realize this. He came to the West and bridged the gap of centuries, a gap that was not so much geographical as mental, and completed the world circle, and thus became the encircling World Serpent, the Serpent with its tail in its mouth, the kundalini power awakened and united with itself, the ring symbol of immortality, of Eternal Life. The emblem which we see on every Advaita Ashrama publication symbolizing the unity of the four yogas was devised by Swamiji himself, and it embodies the essence of his message to the whole world. It is magic talisman for our infinite meditation.

What did Swamiji himself say about his work? Two quotations from his letters are of great interest. In one he says, "To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry Philosophy and intricate Mythology and queer startling Psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, and popular and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds- is a task which only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living-poetic- in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate Mythology must come some concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogism must come the most scientific and practical Psychology and all this must be put into a form a child can grasp. This is my life's work."<sup>16</sup> In the other letter he says: All religion is contained in the Vedanta, that is, in the three stages of the Vedanta philosophy, the Dvaita, the Vishishtadvaita, and Advaita; one comes after the other. These are three stages of spiritual growth in man. Every one is necessary. He then goes on to show how every major world religion can be classified under one or another of these three stages of Vedanta.<sup>17</sup> The popularization of Hinduism without watering it down, and the teaching of Vedanta as the comprehensive unity of all outward form of religion, as the Mother of all particular religions these are the important aspects of his work, not only in the West but in the whole world, according to Swamiji himself.

Above all, Swamiji taught renunciation and self- sacrifice He laid before the West a plea for the sacrificial life in words of eloquence such as had never before been spoken by anyone. Speaking from his own personal experiences as a wandering monk all over India, in the towns, villages and jungles, he said: " As a result of this intense, all absorbing love comes the feeling of perfect self surrender, the conviction that nothing that happens is against us. Then the loving soul is able to say, if pain comes, "Welcome pain" If a serpent comes, it will say, Welcome serpent." The Bhakti in this state of perfect resignation, arising out of intense love for God...ceases to distinguish between pleasure and pain in so far as they affect him... Why should our body be saved, say from a tiger? The tiger will thereby be pleased, and that is not altogether so very far from self-sacrifice and worship. Can you reach the realization of such an idea in which all sense of self is completely lost? It is a very dizzy height on the pinnacle of the religion of love, and few of this world have ever climbed to it... Blessed are they whose bodies get destroyed in the service of others."<sup>18</sup> He himself was the best example of this ideal, he laid down his body in the service of mankind as a whole, but especially in the service of the West, for he spent his best years in the West and spared no effort to bring to it the whole message of Vedanta as taught by his Master, Sri Ramakrishna.

We are here today to remember him and think about him, and especially to think about his impact upon our lives. I ask you to consider this: if he had not been born, where would we be today? He himself was overheard to say, on the last day of his life, Only another Vivekananda could understand what Vivekananda has done.<sup>19</sup> This thought explodes the mind. The finite mind

cannot hold the infinite. Swamiji was that very explosion itself. He made the commonplace world no longer commonplace. He revealed that the streets we walk on are not stone but the very breath of the Eternal, that the sunlight is the immortal fire of divine knowledge and vision, that the trees that line the street are all divinities who salute us as we pass, that all people who walk the streets are divinities we have the opportunity of serving.

The essence of Swamiji's message to the whole world can be summed up in one word: Advaita, non-duality, Not oneness, unity, a bringing together of diverse and separate elements into one homogeneous whole, but rather the opposite principle, the expansion of the finite into infinity. The infinite is beyond all limited experience, as space is beyond the atmosphere, but yet it is here and now with no there or then. It is a lightning flash of vision with no limits of any kind.

That is his message, his message to the world, East and West. Whether he was immersed in the Mother, in Shiva, or in Nirguna Brahman, his message was always essentially the same: the total dissolution of the many into the infinite, dualism and qualified non-dualism being way stations on the path to the unqualified non-dual Infinite. His message to the West was simply the particular way he expressed this ascent into the non-dual so as to meet the special needs of the West. He was a Pilgrim from the Eternal who wandered for a time on the shores of our relative world, bringing us a message from that infinite Sea, Stirring us to remember our ancient divine heritage, and then returning to the Infinite once more.

He was himself his own greatest message. He taught us of the West by his own example how to live in our own mechanized society. He meditated in street-cars, in trains, in railway stations, on lecture platforms, and in doing so showed us how to be yogis in the world of daily affairs. He rekindled in the West the flame of God knowledge. He brought the guru power in his own person, and in the persons of all the Ramakrishna swamis who have followed, so that now here in the West we have that flame burning that has descended in unbroken succession from Vedic times down to the present.

#### REFERENCES

1. Swami Ranganathanand, The Approach to Truth in Vedanta, Published in Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, first edition-1999, Page.9-10.
2. Bhagvad-Geeta, 4.7-8
3. The Life of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960), p. 145.
4. Luke 2:49
5. The Life of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960), p. 595.
6. Ibid. p. 332

7. Marie Luise Burke, Swami Vivekananda in the West: New Discoveries (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1966), pp. 120-2; and Life, pp. 350-1
8. Art, Culture & Spirituality (A Prabuddha Bharat Centenary Perspective : 1896 - 1996), Published in Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, first edition-1997, Page-505.
9. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), vol. 1, p. 4.
10. Ibid. p.6
11. Art, Culture & Spirituality (A Prabuddha Bharat Centenary Perspective : 1896 - 1996), Published in Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, first edition-1997, Page-508.
12. Ibid. Page.5-10
13. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), vol. 1, p. 10-11.
14. See Lincoln Barnett, the Universe and Dr. Einstein (New York: Mentor, 1950).
15. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), vol. 1, p. 17.
16. The Life of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960), p. 392.
17. Ibid. p. 345
18. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), vol. 3, p. 82-83.
19. The Life of Swami Vivekananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960), p. 749.





## Marginal ized autochthones: episodes of SikkimeSe HiStory and tHe Lepcha

**DR. ANIRA PHIPON LEPCHA**  
Assistant Professor of History  
Sikkim University  
Sikkim India

### Introduction

Sikkim is a small Himalayan state with an area of 7096 sq km. It merged with India as 22<sup>nd</sup> state of the union with effect from 26<sup>th</sup> April 1975 by the Constitution of India (Thirty Sixth) Amendment Act, 1975. It comes under administrative and financial jurisdiction of North Eastern Council as its 8<sup>th</sup> member since December 2002 by amendment of the NEC Act. For allocation of Special Central Assistance to Integrated Tribal Development Project, Sikkim has been grouped as one of the 9 states under 'Category A' where substantial areas are predominantly inhabited by the tribes. This is a land of different communities but the major groups are the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalis. Sikkim was originally known as *Nye Mayal Renjyong Lyaang* or in short *Mayal Lyaang* meaning "the land of hidden paradise or the delightful region or abode,"<sup>1</sup> by the Lepchas,<sup>2</sup> the autochthones of the region. The Tibetan called it '*bras ljongs*' meaning valley of rice,<sup>3</sup> and the Bhutias call it *Beyul Demo jong*, which means the hidden valley of rice. The present name Sikkim has been anglicized from the Limboo word *Su-Khim*, *Su* means new and *Khim* means 'a house or palace.'

---

<sup>1</sup> K.P Tamsang, *The Unknown and Untold Reality about the Lepchas*, Kalimpong, 1983.p.1.

<sup>2</sup> The endoethnym of Lepcha is Rong, meaning the beloved sons/daughters of God.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Alfred Bell, *Portrait of a Dalai Lama: The Life and Times of the Great Thirteenth*, Wisdom Publications, 1987, p. 25.

Sikkim is inhabited by many tribes/groups since centuries. After the Lepchas, the Tsongs or the Limboos, the Magars, the Bhutias and others sub-groups of Nepali (apart from Limboo and Magar) came and settled the land. From the reign of the Lepcha chieftains to its merger with India and the emergence of new political dynamics, Sikkim has witnessed many episodes of history, which has markedly influenced and marginalised the real autochthones of the region, called the Lepcha or the Rong. This paper highlights a few such episodes.

### **The saga of Blood Brothers and the Rise of the Bhutias**

Until 1642, Sikkim was inhabited mostly by the Lepchas under chieftainship. The first population census of Sikkim carried out in the year 1891 also reveals that the Lepchas were then the biggest group among 15 different ethnic groups in the state. Table (1.1) below shows that the Lepcha's population was 5762 (18.92%) followed by Bhutia 4894 (16.06%) and Limboo 3356 (11.02%).

**Table - 6.1: Community-wise Distribution of Population of Sikkim-1891.**

| Caste/Communities       | Males        | Females      | Children    | Total              |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Lepcha                  | 2362         | 2399         | 1001        | 5762 (18.92)       |
| Bhutia                  | 1966         | 1960         | 968         | 4894 (16.06)       |
| Limbu (Limboo)          | 1255         | 1159         | 942         | 3356 (11.02)       |
| Gurung                  | 1108         | 1047         | 766         | 2921 (9.59)        |
| Murmi (Tamang)          | 801          | 778          | 1288        | 2867 (9.41)        |
| Raj/Jimdar Etc.         | 742          | 691          | 587         | 2020 (6.63)        |
| Khambu                  | 726          | 648          | 589         | 1963 (6.44)        |
| Kami                    | 626          | 464          | 580         | 1670 (5.48)        |
| Brahman                 | 521          | 372          | 521         | 1414 (4.64)        |
| Mangar                  | 363          | 346          | 192         | 901 (2.95)         |
| Chhetri                 | 303          | 253          | 273         | 829 (2.72)         |
| Newar                   | 240          | 183          | 304         | 727 (2.38)         |
| Darji                   | 102          | 92           | 93          | 287 (0.94)         |
| Slaves                  | 124          | 99           | 103         | 326 (1.07)         |
| Misc/including soldiers | 350          | 72           | 99          | 521 (1.71)         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>11589</b> | <b>10363</b> | <b>8306</b> | <b>30458 (100)</b> |

Source: H.H. Risley : The Gazetteer of Sikkim , 1894. Fig. in parenthesis shows percentage.

As reflected in the census, the Bhutias and the Tsongs or the Limboos are the first to arrive the land of the Lepchas alongwith the Magars. Among them all the Lepcha's encounter with the Bhutias, who initially came from Tibet, also known

as *Bhot*,<sup>4</sup> is said to have “markedly influenced”<sup>5</sup> the history of Sikkim and the Lepcha way of life. This phase may be regarded as the most critical phase in the Lepcha life in view of the fact that the Tibetans after perching into Sikkim from the North, made the gullible Lepchas their blood brothers, speedily converted them into their faith and became their noble masters.

There are accounts which suggest that cultural-religious penetration in the Lepcha community started much before the installation of Chogyal<sup>6</sup> or the Bhutia king who came from Tibet. It has been said that, Guru Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rimboche, visited Sikkim in 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. During that period he is said to have prophesized about hidden treasures in Sikkim. A few sources have talked about this particular visit but they lack authenticity; moreover the story looks much legendary and mythical. Although Padmasambhava is much adored and a prominent character in the history of Sikkim, yet having come from the Tibetan Lamas and royal source the story reeks much of a colonial design and as such the veracity of the same is in fact difficult to establish. Having said so one cannot ignore the sea followers of Guru Padmasambhava in Sikkim prevalent since centuries.

The visit by Padmasambhava slowly exposed Sikkim to world outside, and it worked as a goat trail for later visitors especially from Tibet. In the process a Tibetan chief of Kham province in Tibet, Khye-Bumsa visited the land of the Lepchas in 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and made a bond with the Lepcha chief, Thekung Tek, which is known as the *Treaty of Blood Brotherhood*. An eternal friendship was made between Khye-Bumsa and TheKong-Tek, “binding the Lepchas and Bhutias in an inseparable bond.”<sup>7</sup> “The historical blood treaty, “coolly arrested the Lepchas, the yeoman of the soil, under the reign of the Tibetans, the first alien ruler of the region.”<sup>8</sup> This treaty therefore, marks the beginning of the end of the Lepcha era and the rise of the Bhutias as the royal masters. After this accord, this advanced group enjoyed the status of blood brothers of the demure Lepchas, which also provided them the right to own land and other such resources. However, the legitimacy of this treaty is also questionable and a section of the Lepchas today do not agree to the story of

---

<sup>4</sup> In India and Nepal Tibet was known as Bhot in early days, and therefore, the country lies in its south end as *Bhotanta* or Bhotan/Bhutan. The Bhutias got their name from Bhotay i.e. a resident of Bhot Pradesh. Bhutia is the anglicized form of Bhotay. The Bhutias are also known as *Lhopos* or Lhopas which literally means ‘people from upper valley.’ They are the early Tibetans to have come to Sikkim. They called the Lepchas as *Monpas* meaning ‘people from lower valley.’

<sup>5</sup> Rahul, Ram. “The Himalayan Borderland” Delhi, 1970,p-31.

<sup>6</sup> Chogyal also means Dharma Raja, a king having both religious and temporal power.

<sup>7</sup> Halfdan, Siiger, *op.cit.*, p.29.

<sup>8</sup> D.C Roy, *Dynamics of Social formation Among the Lepchas*, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, 2005, p. 36.

blood brotherhood.<sup>9</sup> One of the prominent Lepcha scholars, Foning (1987), notes that the Tibetan's domination over the Lepchas started with the signing of blood brotherhood treaty. He remarks:

A few generations earlier, patriarch Thekung Tek, who was a ' bongthing ' but never a chief as has been made out, was coaxed into ceremoniously swearing eternal friendship of brotherhood with the Tibetans who were gradually infiltrating into our land. Eventually as a result of this friendship pact, we agreed innocently to accept kings among us and we as a tribe have upheld them ever since.<sup>10</sup>

The story about the ritual performed by the Lepcha chief of Kavi area says that the "Dzo-nga"<sup>11</sup> was invoked so that Kye-Bhumsa may be blessed with a male descendent. Upon their return to Chumbi, the couple had three sons who later became the ancestors of a number of Lhopo lineages, including that of the Sikkimese royal family.<sup>12</sup>

In fact if we see the genealogy of the first Chogyal Phuntsog Namgyal it will trace its origin to Kye-Bhumsa. The second son of this Khye Bumsa, Mi-tpon-rap had four sons, the youngest of whom was Guru Tashe. From these four brothers the four chief families of Sikkim traced their descent.

C.De. Beauvoir Stocks has placed genealogical tree showing descent of the Sikkim Maharajas which clearly shows their lineage with Khye-Bumsa.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Geneology of Rulers of Sikkim**

Zhal-nga-guru ( A Tibetan)

↓

Jo - Khye – Bumsa

↓

Mi-tpon-rab

↓

Guru Tashe

↓

Zhal – Nga – A – Phag

↓

---

<sup>9</sup> See also History of Sikkim by Maharaja Thotub Namgyal and Maharani Yeshey Dolma, 1908, p.13-14. As per the account "A Tibetan, Khe Bhumsa came to Sikkim to seek blessing from Thekong Tek, a Lepcha wizard. After receiving the blessing for offspring a compact is said to have been entered between Khe Bhumsa and Thekong Tek, where blood of a variety of animals were used to smear the feet of the two participant to signify the compact. This act was supposed to bind the Lepcha and the Bhutias as blood brothers." However, there is no documentary evidence to prove its veracity; moreover having come from the Royal source it smacks of royal design. See also, Sonam Rinchen Lepcha (2006) *Pristine Sikkim*.

<sup>10</sup> A.R. Foning, *op.cit.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2003. p.8

<sup>11</sup> Dzo-nga in Tibetan means Kanchenjunga

<sup>12</sup> Anna Balikci Denjongpa, *op.cit.*, p.19.

<sup>13</sup> Beauvoir Stocks, *op.cit.*, p.332.

Guru Tenzing

↓

Phun –tsho-Namgyel

(the first Chogyal)

(Source: *C De Behaviour Stocks Folklore and Folk Tales of the Lapchas of Sikkim*, 1920)

In fact the coming of Khye-Bumsa was a colonial thrust and not what was told in the stories wrapped up in religious halo. History points out that the Tibetan migration was actuated by the infighting between the Red Hat sect and the Yellow Hat sect of the theological kingdom, Tibet. The vanquished Red Hat monks fled in search of safe haven towards south to perch in Sikkim. Three monks of the sect wandered along, and landed in Yuksam; a village in the western part of the present day Sikkim. There they transported Pencho Namgay; effected an alliance with him to proselytize the Lepchas into Lamaism, the Tibetan variety of Buddhism, after his installation as the king of the Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> Thus it can be said that the Bhutia's infiltration took place with a road map and after the realization of their intended design, they "swept aside and subjugated its aborigine, the Lepchas."<sup>15</sup> In the year 1642 the three powerful lamas of Tibet consecrated Phuntshok Namgyal (Pencho Namgay) as the first Chogyal<sup>16</sup> of Sikkim in the place called Yuksam.<sup>17</sup> This marks the era of Bhutia rule in Sikkim which lasted for 332 years. During the reign of Chogyals only a few influential Lepchas were made Dzongpens or the Ministers during initial years but majority of them were pushed to the periphery. Even those who assumed good positions were either forced to leave the position or were treacherously murdered. According to British historian and linguist R K Sprigg (1995), the death of Bholod, the leading member of their [Lepcha] race brought to an end an era in which the Lepchas had enjoyed influence in the social and political affairs of Sikkim, and, after Bholod's murder in 1826 the royal family chose its consorts from the aristocracy of Tibet and not from among its Lepcha subjects prior to that.<sup>18</sup> The murder of the Prime Minister was immediately followed by the flight of some of his close relatives to Unthoo, on the border of Nepal.<sup>19</sup> A deep sense of insecurity among the Lepchas of Sikkim was evident when 800

---

<sup>14</sup> Risley, See "The Gazetteer of Sikkim", 2001 reprint, Low Priced Publication, Delhi,p-ii.

<sup>15</sup> See Ram Rahul, *op.cit.*

<sup>16</sup> Chogyal means the Dharma raja or the protector of Faith. The king having both spiritual and temporal power.The Chogyalship or the power structure in Sikkim was based on theocratic structure of Tibet.

<sup>17</sup> Derived from Lepcha words, Yuk Mun meaning lama or the priest (Tibetan/Buddhist) and sam meaning three.

<sup>18</sup> R K Sprigg, '1826: The end of an era in the Social and Political History of Sikkim', *Bulletin of Tibetology*, NIT Gangtok, 1995.

<sup>19</sup> See Risley, *op.cit.*, p.19.

houses of Lepcha subjects left Sikkim for Unthoo in Illam district of Nepal immediately after their leader was assassinated by the Lamas of Sikkim.<sup>20</sup> It is said, Bho-lod's cousin, Yuk-Lhat Grup alias tkra-thup (Dathup alias Rathup?), fearing a similar fate, fled from Sikkim and took refuge at Unthoo in Nepal with some 800 of his Lepcha tribesmen."<sup>21</sup> A number of accounts say that after Bolek was assassinated the Maharaja Tsugphud Namgyal suspecting Ra-thup/Dathup, the cousin of slain leader, for planning a retaliation, 'made a sudden onslaught and slew on several of his (Rathup) relatives,<sup>22</sup> which in turn made Dathup and Jerung Denon and Kazi Gorok left Sikkim taking with them about 800 houses of Lepcha (1200 able bodied Lepchas – according to Capt. Herbert) subjects from Chidam and Namthang and went towards Unthoo and Illam and settled down there.<sup>23</sup> This incident alone illustrates the plight of the Lepchas, the real yeomen of the land.

### **The Gorkhas Expansion and After**

During the reign of Third Chogyal Chador Namgyal i.e. in 1700AD, the Bhutanese attacked Sikkim and took away the Kalimpong region, presently in West Bengal. During the raid many Lepchas were taken to Bhutan as slaves. After the Bhutanese, the Gorkhas from Nepal attacked Sikkim in 1788-89. During this battle also the Lepchas were made to go in the forefront. As a result, this demure tribe once again had to face the brunt as before.

The Gorkha incursion which took place, in the last part of 18<sup>th</sup> century brought in a wave of Nepalese settlers to the zone. In the year 1788 Gorkhas overran many places in west and south Sikkim. The major incursion took place in 1788-89 under the leadership of Purna Ale, a Magar commander and Johar Singh. Many sources have cited that the Nepalese raid on Sikkim was carried under the leadership of Damodar Pandey. However, a few sources reveal that this account is not in consonance with the Nepalese sources. The Nepalese sources of historical records reveal that during the time Damodar Pandey held overall command of Nepalese army. It has also been found that Damodar Pandey did not come to Sikkim but fought with the British in Nalapani, Kumaon and Garhwal region leading the western command.<sup>24</sup> The force under Purna Ale advanced upto Reling and Karmi, now in Darjeeling and Chyakhung in West Sikkim; whereas, another force moved under the commandship of Jahar Singh towards the south-west of river Teesta and occupied many places there. In the process they establish their authority and hegemony especially in

---

<sup>20</sup> See Risley, *op.cit.*, p.19.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>22</sup> G.B. Mainwaring, *op.cit.*, p.xii.

<sup>23</sup> Maharaja Thutob Namgyal and Maharani Yeshey Dolma, *op.cit.*, p.60.

see also, Dr. R.K Sprigg, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> Kumar Pradhan, *The Gorkha Conquests*, Himal Books, Kathmandu, 2009, p.144.

these areas, i.e. the southern and western part of Sikkim, leading the mass settlement of Nepali population. Although the brunt of the attack was upon all the subjects including the ruler, Bhutia lamas and Kazis, yet, it was ultimately the Lepchas who had to bear the real bruise as the places overran by the Gurkha force were apparently Lepcha hubs. Further, they were a major force to have been put to war. The Gazetteer of Sikkim records that “it was a Lepcha, Minister Chothup [Chuthup], son of a previous Prime Minister, Karwang, who commanded the southern army of the two armies in the Sikkim defence force, that resisted the Gorkha invasion (1775-80) and won the title “Satrajit” for his seventeen victories in Sikkim Terai.”<sup>25</sup>

Many accounts of European travelers bring to light, the hard times Lepchas of south Sikkim faced during the Gorkha raid. For example, renowned botanist J D Hooker, who carried an extensive research on Taxonomy of plant and its diversity in Sikkim and Darjeeling Himalayas in 1849, has thrown some light on the historical events that took place in south Sikkim in 1780s. In his book *Himalayan Journal* (1854) he has stated that “a considerable stand was made here [Mainam area of south Sikkim] by the Lepchas during the Nepal war in 1787; they defended the pass with their arrows for some hours and then retired towards the Teesta, making a second stand lower down, at a place pointed out to me, where rocks on either side gave them the same advantages.”<sup>26</sup> This historical evidence confirms that the Lepchas (were made to) fought and retired to further remote.

Unlike the Tibetans and the Bhutanese, the Nepalese came in numbers and being polygamous, quickly multiplied. For their sustenance they occupied a large amount of available resource including land. The nature lover and gatherer Lepchas thus lost their home subsistence or food products available. The docile autochthones who were already marginalized by the Sikkimese Bhutia regime and the Bhutanese were further pushed to the periphery.

It is said that “...while there had not been much opposition in Sikkim to immigrants coming in from Tibet, there was a powerful body of opinion that foresaw the dangers of allowing unrestricted entry of Nepalese into the country.”<sup>27</sup> It is true that there was not much opposition to the coming of the Tibetans as the country then was settled by relatively less people. It is also pertinent to mention that although there was not much opposition to the coming of the Tibetans from the Lepchas yet a lot of resistance was carried by the Magars and Limboos against the installation of Chogyal in Sikkim. Sikkim, by the time of Gorkha raid and the settlement of the Nepalese in last part of 18<sup>th</sup> century, was an established sovereign country with a defined political boundary.

---

<sup>25</sup> H.H. Risley, *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*, Delhi, Low Priced Publication, reprint, 2001, p.18.

<sup>26</sup> J.D. Hooker, *Himalayan Journal: Notes of a Naturalist*. vol. 1, Natraj Publishers, Dehradun, 1854, p.293.

<sup>27</sup> Nari Rustomji, *Sikkim-A Himalayan Tragedy*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, p.9.

It is therefore obvious to have opposition to the settlement which becomes a threat to the ruling establishment or to the people who were in the centre of affairs and held supremacy. As such, the opposition to Nepali settlement was mostly from the ruling class but the brunt was more upon the Lepchas.

Furthermore, like the Bhutias, “Nepalis equally contributed a lot towards the destruction of the historical records and literature of the Lepchas. The historical information obtainable about Sikkim is very meager, and the local records—a very fine manuscript kept at Pemyiongchi—was destroyed by the Gorkhas during their irruption in 1814 [sic! 1788-89].”<sup>28</sup>

### **The British Mediation**

The involvement of the British into the affairs of Sikkim became prominent after 1835, when they landed in Darjeeling through the dubious *Grant of Deed*. They encouraged Nepalese to settle in the Darjeeling and Sikkim. Campbell, who happened to be the ambassador of British India to Nepal, was immediately brought to Darjeeling after its cession to British by the Sikkim raja in 1835. The British needed industrious people to work in their projects like construction of rail, road and sanatoria etc. They found the autochthones Lepchas as “lazy and indolent” and “not a good tax payer”<sup>29</sup> and the industrious Nepalese fulfilled these criteria and thus were invited under the supervision of Campbell. Further, the fast developing Darjeeling hill areas as industrial centre were another attraction, or a pull factor, for Nepali migration in India. The areas were suitable for cultivation of high quality tea, and many tea gardens came up all around. “The success of tea garden owned mostly by the British depended upon the availability of abundant labour. There was an organized attempt to attract labour from adjoining area of Nepal which led to a large-scale migration.”<sup>30</sup> Another factor which seemed to have worked for Nepalis was the changing socio-political scenario in the Himalayan Kingdom. The military expeditions intending to consolidate Nepal politically under Prithivi Narayan Saha and his successors, the population explosion and its effect on land holdings, declining economic conditions and food deficiency in Nepal are specially highlighted by scholars as indigenous factors, also called push factors, responsible for Nepali migration. Besides, the emergence of autocrat Janga Bahadur Rana in Nepal, and the suppression of the masses by his clans also led to the migration of Nepalese to this region.

The British involvement in the affairs of Sikkim and their attitude of favoring Nepalese becomes visible again in 1880 when “some Sikkimese fomented trouble between the Bhotias and the Nepalese and skirmishes between the two communities became frequent. As a result in 1880 there were large

---

<sup>28</sup> Tulsiram Sharma, ‘Sikkim Farkiyera Hearda’ (Nepali), in *Kanchanjunga Journal*, Vol. 8/9 (10), Gangtok, 1970, p. 85.

<sup>29</sup> Darjeeling District Gazetteer.

<sup>30</sup> R N Thakur, *Himalayan Lepcha*, New Delhi: Archives Publishers Distributors, 1988. p.v-vii.



scale riots in Renok. Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, A.W. Paul was sent to pacify the two groups which were to the advantage of the new settlers *i.e.* Nepali.”<sup>31</sup> In fact the Taksari Newars, who later on minted the Sikkimese coins, came to Sikkim under the British support. After 1835, they, “a defeated power in Kathmandu valley at the hands of the Gorkhas, moved to Sikkim with their entrepreneurial skills for trading and colonizing under the British patronage and turned themselves to be the Kazi counterpart among the Nepalese in Sikkim,”<sup>32</sup> commonly known as the Thikadars.

Historical evidences, including the gazetteers discloses that a greater migration to Sikkim by people from Nepal took place only in later years after the coming of the British. Writers are of the opinion that “the Nepali migration to Sikkim must be seen in the context of the general Nepali migration to India in the wake of British interest in the Gorkhas as recruits to their fast growing Indian army. Many Gorkhas came to settle down in hilly areas where the climate and topography were similar to their homes in Nepal.”<sup>33</sup>

#### **Increasing Nepali population: Threat to the Lepchas**

The Bhutias while entering into Sikkim from the North, called the country of the Lepchas as de-ma dzong (bree-mee-jong as said by Desideri SJ), meaning ‘the land or valley of rice,’ but, historically, “it has been proved that the agriculture [the paddy cultivation and terraced farming] in Sikkim was imported from Nepal.”<sup>34</sup> It is found that the second wave of Nepali settlement in Sikkim began since the reign of Sidkeong Namgyal. In 1867, he granted a lease in his state for settlement of Nepalese as agriculturists. They were skilled cultivators and introduced the cultivation of cardamom.”<sup>35</sup> As such the entry of Nepalese into the region marked the introduction of settled cultivation in Sikkim which opened up different avenues for earning livelihood for this verily industrious people who soon flooded the lower valleys of the country.

In fact the people in power could foresee the strength of Nepalese emerging, which was equally a concern for the Lepchas. The Lepchas were aware of the possible risk to their existence as the Nepali populace multiplied within no time; yet, they could not go up against this new immigration. They knew that the settlement of the Nepalese will shrink the habitat and their right over it, but they were adequately inadequate to resist as they were virtually pushed to the periphery of the margins by the earlier migrants like the Limboos, the Magars, the Bhutanese and the Tibetans and the dominion of the Chogyals and the Kazis.

---

<sup>31</sup> R.N.Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.vii.

<sup>32</sup> A.C. Sinha, *Studies in The Himalayan Communities*, Books Today, Oriental Publishers, New Delhi, 1983. p.32.

<sup>33</sup> R N Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.vi-vii.

<sup>34</sup> R N Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.30.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.vi-vii.

Economic exploitation by the Nepalis coupled with their increasing population as against the Lepcha-Bhutias which became noticeable as early as the beginning of the twentieth century. In an interview with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in Darjeeling in 1900, Maharaja Thutob Namgyal highlighted the difficulties and gradual dwindling down of the real Bhutia and Lepcha population of Sikkim and begged that, “the government should adopt such measures as to give effect to the word of the late Sir Ashley Eden who had said that although the waste land of Sikkim might be opened to Paharia settlers, yet they should never be created headmen.”<sup>36</sup> Thakur (1988) says, “In spite of the efforts of the Maharaja to check Nepali colonial expansion, the Sikkim territory was increasingly exploited by Nepali settlers.”<sup>37</sup>

As the Nepali population and settlement grew with new patches of jungles cleared for cultivation new laws were promulgated in order to check the Nepali expansion and to prohibit the land alienation of the Bhutias and the Lepchas. The Chogyal enacted a new regulation on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1917 which is known as “Revenue Order No 1” which reads:

With reference to the order dated the 2nd January, 1897 it is hereby again notified to all Kazis, Thikadars and Mandals in Sikkim, that no Bhutias and Lepchas are to be allowed to sell, mortgage or sublet any of their lands to any person other than a Bhutia or Lepcha without the express sanction of the Durbar, or officers empowered by the Durbar in this behalf, whose order will be obtained by the landlord concerned. If anyone who disobeys this order will be severely punished.

This order however benefitted Bhutias as in the absence of competitors they could get Lepcha land cheaply. However, despite framing the law prohibiting the sale of Lepcha-Bhutia land the increase in Nepali population and settlement continued, as the Bhutia kazis invited the Nepalese to work in their lands. The Administrative Report of the state of Sikkim for the year 1931-32 reveals the increase in Nepali population and need and demand for more cultivable land every year. The Report says:

In recent years cultivation has been steadily extending and more and more demands for throwing open areas reserved for forest continue coming in mostly from Nepali settlers, and it appears that the country has been fully colonized as far as it could be. Further settlement of riots could only be possible at the sacrifice of forest reserved areas.”<sup>38</sup>

The Report further states:

A portion of the country lying in the Teesta Valley north of Dikshu has not been thrown open to Nepali settlers and is specially reserved for the ‘hereditary’ inhabitants of Sikkim, such as Lepchas and Bhutias; recently

---

<sup>36</sup> “History of Sikkim, Part-I, pp.185-186” quoted in R N Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.vii.

<sup>37</sup> Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.vii.

<sup>38</sup> The Administrative Report of the State of Sikkim for the year 1931-32, Kolkata, 1933.

Tamangs and Sherpas who are Nepali Buddhists were allowed to settle there, and own land ....”<sup>39</sup>

There are two vital points in this report-i.e. ‘specially reserved for the hereditary inhabitants of Sikkim such as Lepchas and Bhutias’ and ‘Tamangs and Sherpas who are Nepali Buddhists were allowed to settle there, and own land.’ The tract mentioned in the report as ‘a portion of the country lying in the Teesta valley north of Dikshu’ also include the Lepcha Reserve Dzongu,<sup>40</sup> but the report indicates that the Bhutias also had some kind of right to hold in these areas which was otherwise meant only for the Lepchas. Further, the Tamangs and Sherpas, sub-groups of Nepali were also allowed to settle and own land in the forbidden area of North because of they being the Nepali Buddhists. The rationale behind the Lepcha Reserve was to protect the Lepchas and their culture but by allowing other groups to settle in these areas further jeopardize their interest. It must be mentioned that although existing rule permits only the Lepchas to settle in Dzongu, yet, at present a large number of people from outside have been residing due to hydel power projects and other such industries. This has posed a serious threat to the primitive culture of the Lepcha people.

According to B. S. Das (1983), “The dominance of the Bhutia was so overwhelming that the Lepcha remained the poorest and the most neglected of the people...confined inside the Djongu living the life of indolence and negligence contributing little against the aggressive exploitation of the riches in land and forest.”<sup>41</sup> Suresh Gurung (2011) is of the opinion that “slowly but steadily the Lepchas... lost their leaders their land and most importantly their freedom,...territorial confinement of the Lepchas in the seemingly barren and desolate area of Djongu, though in the name of protection, has ruined the community in diverse ways, most significantly in the field of economic and educational advancement.”<sup>42</sup>

### **Recent Experience**

The coming of the Bhutias and the Nepalis marginalized the lepchas in many accounts. In recent past especially after it s merger with the India union, Sikkim has witnessed a quantum leap in population. The Byaparis or the people from the main land India like the Biharis, the Marwaris, the Gujaratis, and the Bengalis etc now have a significant presence in Sikkim, mainly in urban hubs. They are regarded as the business class in the state and most of the businesses are run by them. Of late, they are moving towards small towns and markets leading to the retirement of small traders from the village areas. This has

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> B S Das, *The Sikkim Saga*, Vikash Publications, New Delhi, 1983, p.5.

<sup>42</sup> Suresh Kumar Gurung, *Sikkim Ethnicity and Political Dynamics, A Tragic Perspective*, Kunal Books, New Delhi, 2011 p.160.

significantly hampered the economic life of the Lepchas. Many such business class families are Sikkim Subject or residential certificate holders and for them there is no restriction to get trade license etc. Recently, in the eve of Municipality Election, the state government run by Sikkim Democratic Front Party brought out a notification on providing residential certificates to many of these settlers from the plains. This has created a sense of insecurity among the local populace of the state. Such policies on the part of the government indicate the rising vote bank of such communities and the pattern of politics and population of this Himalayan region undergoing a complete transformation with the large-scale migration. Today large majority of the population in Sikkim are the Nepalese<sup>43</sup> followed by the Bhutia and other groups mentioned above, who will have a big say in the policy making of the state.

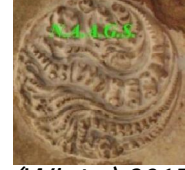
### **Conclusion**

The Lepchas, indigenous and the largest group till 1891 lost the grip of power since 1642. They lost their land, culture and Language. After the usurpation of throne by the Bhutias, Sikkim entered the phase of history where its language, its culture and its ruling culture emerged as Tibetan, in every form and substance and the relics of the ancient Lepcha civilization lost forever. The coming of the Nepalis further denuded them economically. After Sikkim's merger with India and the subsequent advent of democracy in Sikkim, the majority Nepalis played a prominent role. After the merger of Sikkim with India, the Lepchas were given the status of Scheduled Tribe in 1977 but they are classed under BL (Bhutia/Lepcha) category, which means they have to compete with the more advanced group i.e. Bhutia. The Nepali sub-groups like the Limboos and the Tamangs are made STs in 2002 and presently state government has been pressing hard for the ST status to all the left out Nepali communities in the state. All these developments have pushed the autochthones Lepchas further interior. Another serious issue is the land alienation. The comparative figure of pre and post merger period shows a huge gap in land ownership of the Lepchas. Although this 'vanishing tribe'<sup>44</sup> has been given the Primitive Tribal Group status by the state government, yet, timely intervention is required to address the issues related to their right and identity. Lepcha language has been considered as one of the oldest languages and hence their culture equally holds special significance. If this is lost, the world will lose a world view, a colour in the portrait of human civilization, without which its meaning would remain incomplete.

---

<sup>43</sup> Thakur, *op.cit.*, p. vii.

<sup>44</sup> The term used by Arthur Foning in his celebrated work 'Lepcha my Vanishing Tribe, to denote that the Lepchas are vanishing culturally.



## Merciless Growth and internal Displacement : Upshots in tamil nadu (1990-2012)

**DR. J. SHUNMUGARAJA**  
**Assistant Professor of Modern History**  
**School of Historical Studies**  
**Madurai Kamaraj University**  
**Madurai (T.N.) India**

### **Introduction**

Even prior to the times of British colonialism, Tamilnadu has been one of the foremost states in India, which sending and receiving migrant labourers. While studying the Tamil labourers' contemporary internal displacement, however, we could not afford the identical global views (tools) to understand the contemporary Indian internal labour migration. Consequences of non-maintenance of proper government registration or records on migration in the respective villages, districts or in the respective states have made it to be baffled to uphold the day to day mounting issues of in-migrants.

It is a predictable fact that, predominantly a good number of in-migrants of India have employed in un-organised sectors of any one of the cosmopolitan cities, where too the employers, much consciously, skip to keep up any ingenuous records of their labourers. In an urban centre when we raise a question with an India in-migrant labour, as why you have been here? For which he or she could answer as cause or causes of the following hypothesis: (1) In addition to the erratic monsoon thanks to the constant quarrels of Indian riparian states led farmers to shun from availing enough water for their cultivation on in their respective villages which stimulate them to move out (mostly the problems of Tamilnadu is akin one which facing it between the boundary states of Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh). (2) Poor income from the fading out agriculture is a direct consequence of non-availability of

agricultural labourers. (3) Continuous power shortage led the small scale industries to dysfunction and forced many to move out of their village, (4) Caste oppression and un-touchability: an evil practice and maintenance of racial exclusiveness over the socially underprivileged which forced them to eternally evict from the village as against to their wishes, (5) Landlessness and lack of further hope to purchase any land from their village for their survival and feature upliftment of life have raises questions on in their minds, (6) To provide better education to the children from a modern school of a city or a sub-urban and finally and most importantly stimulated them to move out (7) To receive higher wages from a job other than agricultural activities to settle their debts in the village or to save few grams of gold and pay for dowry for the marriage of a daughter or daughters or to construct a decent concrete roofed house in the village stands as reasons behind modern migration.

### <sup>1</sup>**Internal Displacement of Indian Labourers: Conflicting Definitions**

No need to say that migration is not a modern phenomenon. When the man animal had initiated the hunting for consumption and understood the method of cultivation, from on moved in the world in search of better livelihood from place to place. The point where we need to be clear is that the varying sense of the word “better livelihood” from ancient to modern and modern to contemporary, constantly which has now been changing in many folds. The United Nations defines the kind of a migrant as in the words: ‘...any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country has considered as migrant.’<sup>2</sup> The UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants explains the word ‘migrant’ in article 1.1 which refers that:

“...This definition indicates that ‘migrant’ does not refer to refugees, displaced or others forced or compelled to leave their homes. Migrants are people who make choices about when to leave and where to go, even though these choices are sometimes extremely constrained. Indeed, some scholars make a distinction between voluntary and involuntary migration. While certain refugee movements face neither external obstacles to free movement nor is impelled by urgent needs and a lack of alternative means of satisfying them in the country of present residence, others may blend into the extreme of relocation entirely uncontrolled by the people on the move...

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nadars of Tamilnadu: The Political Culture of a Community in Change* (London: University of California, 1969), p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Report [http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/glossary\\_migrants.htm](http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/glossary_migrants.htm); see also <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/>

This broad definition of migrants reflects the current difficulty in distinguishing between migrants who leave their countries because of political persecution, conflicts, economic problems, environmental degradation or a combination of these reasons and those who do so in search of conditions of survival or well-being that does not exist in their place of origin.

Turning to the concept of ‘migration,’ it is the crossing of the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time. It includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants. Internal migration refers to a move from one area (a province, district or municipality) to another within one country. International migration is a territorial relocation of people between nation-states...” It also attempts to define migrant population in a way that takes new situations into consideration.<sup>3</sup>

In contrary to that Indian Census Report which gives a deferent characterization to the migrants as: “A person is considered as migrant by place of birth if the place in which he is enumerated during the census is other than his place of birth. As a person could have migrated a number of times during his lifetime, migration by place of birth would not give a correct picture of the migration...A person, on the other hand, is considered as migrant by place of last residence”<sup>4</sup> Remarkably Indian Census Report has nearly classified all married women as migrants because marriage cited as a key reason for their change of residence.<sup>5</sup> In India over 200 million people have depended on agricultural and industrial works whom are chiefly migrant labourers.<sup>6</sup> Most of the in-migrant labourers of India have chiefly targeted to move to the cities of

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Report on Census of India 2001: Data Highlights on Migration Tables (D1, D1 (Appendix), D2 and D3Tables),p.7;[http://censusindia.gov.in/Data\\_Products/Data\\_Highlights/Data\\_Highlights\\_link/data\\_highlights\\_D1D2D3.pdf](http://censusindia.gov.in/Data_Products/Data_Highlights/Data_Highlights_link/data_highlights_D1D2D3.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 4; see also Priya Dehingkar and Shaheen Akter, “Migration and Human Development in India,” *United Nations Development Programme*,2009, p.3.

<sup>6</sup> Rajan Gupta, *Report on Risky Sex, Addictions and Communicable Diseases in India: Implications for Health, Development and Security* (Washington D.C: Chemical and Biological Arms and Control Institute, 2004), p. 80.

the states of Mumbai, Delhi, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.<sup>7</sup>

### **Outlook on In-migrant Labourers' Life**

In Tamilnadu, paucity and the craving for an improved being are believed to be the primary motivating factors for in-migration, while the increasing seasonal labour has also receiving considerable attention. Individually causes of migration might be different from each others, but their life experience in the urban centers has had much resemblances in every means.<sup>8</sup> The studying subject has its objective as is to understand the cause and consequences of pathetic living condition of internally displaced Indian labourers in Tamilnadu.

While we equates the contemporary Indian migration studies with any other nations of Asia or Europe where we could have a complete different literature on it. In India neither the governments nor the migrants still decisively think about their fatal future in their motherland. In-equality adoption and imprudent economic policy of successive central and state governments of India are directly responsible for the poor villagers' internal displacement.<sup>9</sup> Un-uniformed fiscal policies creates colossal opportunity of livelihood in few places and left the major part of India be lurches with limited accession of resources, which kindle merciless uneven growth of states and urban centers of India to grow further unbridledly, amazingly which creates artificial stress on urbanization too.<sup>10</sup> The growing capitalistic attitude of the Indian states has made it further worst, which are now stumbling to answer the vulnerable questions of Indians in-migration. Liberalism, Globalisation and Neo-Liberalism have converted the land owning Indians as landless labourers and the prosperous agriculture as a nonviable business in India. To serve the causes of few capitalists in the country the land less masses has been converted as a cheap labour commodity.<sup>11</sup>

The pattern of in-migration in Tamilnadu have not understand appropriately and somewhat very little have known about the exact numerical information of people moving in and out of the state and their period of halt in their working places too. The internal displacement of migrant labourers have

---

<sup>7</sup> Report on IIHS, 2011 see <http://www.iihs.co.in/wp-content/themes/education/resources/Migration.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Straubhaar, "The Causes of International Labor Migrations - A Demand-Determined Approach," *The International Migration Review*, Vol. 20, Winter 1986, pp. 836-837.

<sup>9</sup> M.V. Shobhana, "Condition of Women Workers in Madras, Madurai and Coimbatore 1914-1939," *Social Scientist*, Vol. 19, May-June 1991, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Göran Djurfeldt, Venkatesh Athreya, N. Jayakumar, Staffan Lindberg, A. Rajagopal and R. Vidyasagar, "Agrarian Change and Social Mobility in Tamil Nadu," *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 43, November 2008, pp. 51-52.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



represents two way idea of give and take.<sup>12</sup> While supplying the needed labourers of the unorganised sectors of the urban centres from a village which creates a vacuum or led to the loss of chief economic producer of a family, which means depopulation. Whereas receiving, the urban centers has forced to share the limited availing common resources with the adding population, whom are often consider as intruders of the society, which means overpopulation.<sup>13</sup>

Overpopulation is a direct challenge to the unplanned ecological atmosphere of the country. To settle the newly adding population within the urban centre the city has to afford higher wages, electricity, water, food, medicine and shelter.<sup>14</sup> To receive higher wages the labourers displaced with their family or individually who have to bear the identity of disease monger and ought to accustom themselves to live in filth filled streets. Particularly in the case of women migrants who may be further exposed to vulnerability because of their low social status or engagement in sex work. To realize the negative effects of in-migration and the mobility of sex workers, The Population Council a nonprofit organization, had conducted a research in the four states of Andhra Praesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Maharashtra based on their findings have submitted a report which claims that, excerpts:<sup>15</sup>

“...according to the National Family Health Survey Tamil Nadu, the state in which India’s first case of HIV was detected in 1986, ranked third in 2006 for prevalence of HIV among the general population of India,... Around 75 percent of the mobile FSWs (Female Sex Workers) in Tamil Nadu are aged between 25-39 and 15.2percent are illiterate. More than 30 percent are divorced, widowed, or separated. In all the districts, however, the majority of sex workers are married. This proportion is highest in Madurai (77 percent) and lowest in Namakkal (60 percent)...More than three-fourths of the sex workers earn money through a combination of sex and other work such as daily-wage work, petty businesses, selling flowers or vegetables, and contract work...In Madurai and in Namakkal, a different pattern is observed, and more than four-fifths of the sex workers earn from both sex work and from work that is unrelated to sex...The FSWs were asked about their reasons for

---

<sup>12</sup> Prashant Bhardwaj, Asim Khwaja & Atif Mian, “The Partition of India: Demographic Consequences,” \_\_\_\_\_, 2008, pp. 5-6.

<sup>13</sup> J. R. Rele, “Trends and Significance of Internal Migration in India,” *Sankhyā: The Indian Journal of Statistics*, Vol. 31, December 1969, p. 501.

<sup>14</sup> Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nadars of Tamilnadu*, p. 230.

<sup>15</sup> *Report on Patterns of Migration and Mobility and HIV Risk Among Female Sex Workers of Tamilnadu, 2007-2008* (New Delhi: Population Council, 2008), p. 3.

entering sex work, and their responses indicate that their financial situation at home was their main reason (70 percent). About one-fifth of the sex workers reported that they entered sex work because they were in debt... About half of the sex workers surveyed reported that they had consumed alcohol...Around 43 percent of the sex workers in Tamil Nadu also reported using tobacco...Tobacco consumption is relatively low among sex workers in Kanyakumari (24 percent) and in Madurai (26 percent)...mobile female sex workers presence in Tamil Nadu is already high and it does not show any major differences in the consistent condom use by mobility or the duration of migration...Sex workers who migrated for more than two years had a higher perception of their vulnerability to HIV risk than did those who migrated for less than two years...Clearly, the female sex workers of Tamil Nadu are mobile to a large extent. About 58 percent of sex workers have moved across at least one district during the past two years and, on average, across four districts in the past two years...In Tamil Nadu, sex workers solicit sex commonly at railway stations (71percent), bus stands (65percent), and marketplaces (32 percent)...This pattern is consistent across all districts except Chennai.”<sup>16</sup>

The securities of the in-migrants have often questionable at the working places, who are continually exposed to helplessness of harassment and health hazardness too. Thanks to the non-implementation of labour legal codes of India has habitually made the internally displaced not to obtain legal remedies against of their exploiters. Un-planned and legally un-controlled in-migration within India has led to the forewarning of bad public health. Indian states or centre government of India not having any effective national policies to assimilate the migrants' health and safety. Psychological health may be affected while of the process of leaving family and coping with job insecurity, legal problems, unfamiliar language and culture. Stress and anxiety can result in more serious psychological problems.<sup>17</sup>

In-migrants of Tamilnadu have generally preyed to socio-economic and cultural factors, which very directly affect their physical and psychosomatic health. The mainstream of the in-migrants are men. The majority of them lead forlorn life as they stay away from their families for months at a time and work long hard hours. Their everyday life has inflicted a need for woman flesh traders. Usually lots of male migrants are habitually having sex with their

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-47.

<sup>17</sup> M.V. Shobhana, “Condition of Women Workers in Madras, Madurai and Coimbatore 1914-1939,” p. 42.

female fellow workers whom have involved in prostitution, but there is also under the guise of migration a great amount of flesh traders who have traveled within this migrant community. In most of the cases husbands are aids and support their wives earning by the way of prostitution and in many instances act as pimp. These sex workers are hard to identify and reach as they have no fixed location of work and are mostly loners.<sup>18</sup>

Un-skilled migrants are being likely to do jobs in soaring jeopardy industrial sectors. For instance, the frequency of work-related accidents and infection in construction and agriculture work is higher than in other diligence. In too many cases migrant labourers are hardly know the safe usage of modern apparatus and scarcely receive adequate training, supervision and protection. Painfully many of the cruel crimes committed against of the migrant workers are neither come to light nor properly represented before the Indian judiciary and simply the cases related to the migrants' disappearance from the working places are treated, registered and closed as a man or woman missing case.<sup>19</sup>

On 22 May 2011, a group of Delhi based students formed an independent fact finding team to inquire the appalling living conditions of in-migrant labourers at Tirupur in Tamilnadu. At the end of their enquiry produced a report where they have identified an outrageous fact that 'more than 800 workers have committed suicide in the last two years and the new district of Tirupur witnesses 20 suicide attempts in everyday.'<sup>20</sup> Pathetically most of the migrant labourers of Tirupu and Coimbatore are coming from economically deprived districts of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, and Sivagangai.<sup>21</sup> The report further states that, extract:

“...On top of it their food is poor and living conditions are unhygienic and bad. They have forced to work extra hours and that too without payment. There are many occupational hazards in cotton spinning and garment industry like respiratory problems, tuberculosis, abdominal pain and giddiness. Along

---

<sup>18</sup> Rajan Gupta, *Report on Risky Sex, Addictions and Communicable Diseases in India: Implications for Health, Development and Security*, p. 28.

<sup>19</sup> J. Shunmugaraja, “Colonial Emigration and Contemporary Migration: Legacy Continues,” *Shanlax International Journal of Economics*, Vol. 2, March 2014, p. 138.

<sup>20</sup> The Tirupur Report was prepared by a group of Delhi students and presented at a discussion meeting held in Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi on 22 May, 2011 - See more at: <http://sanhati.com/excerpted/3787/#sthash.RnMhXrj8.dpuf>. p.1.

<sup>21</sup> *Regional Report on Help Wanted: Hiring, Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery in the Global Economy: Indian Workers in Domestic Textile Production and Middle Eat-Based Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Construction*, June 2010, p.15.

with the unwholesome living conditions these go to aggravate their health problems. To make matters worse these girls are sexually exploited too. Labour laws are followed here in the breach. The girls working as *Sumangalis* are classified as either trainees or apprentices. As such most of the labour laws do not apply to them and on top of it they are not entitled to the wage rates for regular workers. They are at the mercy of the factory management. The female workers face a double exploitation as workers and as females... Cheap labour from Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan and Jharkhand are brought by the labour contractors. These labour contractors keep an eye on their folks and the managements deal with these workers through them.”<sup>22</sup>

Like such system of labour recruitments and painful life of in-migrants are akin to the legally abolished colonial Indentured Labour System and its labour recruitment. Here too the prudent owners of the factories have completely focused their labourers’ recruitment only towards the illiterate populace of the marginalised urban poor and villages, naturally whom are do not having enough knowledge to understand the legalities of the agreements which are make used by the employs.<sup>23</sup>

### **Criminal Profiling of In-Migrants**

In Tamilnadu criminal profiling of other parts of Indian migrant workers are escalating in every day. Such attitude led us to raise a question that, are all the criminalities in Tamilnadu have done by the criminals of “North Indians or Andhra Pradesh” people alone? In 14 May 2012, Hindustan Times quotes that “In February 27, 2012 killing of a mentally challenged person from Andhra Pradesh in south Chennai as an example... The victim was mistaken for a North Indian burglar. Police allegedly let the attackers go free.”

Today to raise this question we are having sufficient grounds, because the mighty state’s suspicion on the involvement of migrant workers in a burglary at a jewelry showroom in Tirupur and the daylight robberies in banks in Chennai has pointed its needles towards of the poor migrant workers. By showing the peripheral incidents of crimes committed by the migrant workers as reason the state government of Tamilnadu has ordered to profiling the migrants of non-Tamils (from educational institutions to shelters of migrant workers) and proceeding with the discriminated ideas of regionalism. Is it a right approach? If the encounter killings of innocent migrants and booking them in criminal cases on the basis of mere suspicion would led to what? Could we provide solutions to the growing resentments of insiders against outsiders?

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>23</sup> *Regional Report on Indian Workers in Domestic Textile Production and Middle Eat-Based Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Construction*, June 2010, p.15.

The constitution of India guarantees every Indian citizen's free movement within the country, despite few states like Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have not acknowledged it well. If such actions of the states continue in the future then the poor people whom really deprived of a day meal in their village again would be forced to be confined themselves in the unfortunate villages themselves. Again the victimisation of the poor village populace would be in the figure of suicides, hunger deaths, malnutrition and so on. Are the federal states of India expecting such consequences?

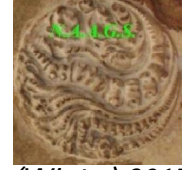
We cannot forget the slogans of "Mubaikar" and the victimization of poor migrant labourers in Mumbai in 2008. The slogan "Mubaikar" had portrayed the north Indian immigrants of Mumbai as usurpers of jobs from the locals, particularly from the Marathi Manos. Verbal attacks on migrant workers sparked violent protests and led to the killing of a poor migrant labourer of a Bihari youth Rahul Raj and the mayhem continued in the form of ransacking of the railway examination centers. Consequently hundreds of the migrant workers were forced to flee the state without minding justice.

Persisting dominance of Regionalism, Regional Prejudices and Regional Political Parties' biased approaches on the problems of migrant workers have made the existence of the central government of India as (questionable) an invisible in many senses.

### **Conclusion**

Intricacy of continuous movements of people has made the simple categorisations of states into complication and the government migration policies too became inadequate. Impetuses of in-migration are hardly ever simple which does not easily apt with the administrative procedures of state and central government of India. Indian states are witnessing various and interconnected engagements of people over unified reasons have required the respective state governments to vigil over their in-migrant policies in feature.

Migration has been a major area of research for social scientists for at least a century. It has been a concern of states and policy makers for even longer. While many theories of migration have been elaborated by academics from different fields, in particular economics, geography and sociology, they are fragmented and no dominant paradigm has been established. Moreover, migration studies developed in the epoch of nationalism, and most migration research was linked to specific national assumptions on migration and minorities. One of the major challenges for migration researchers today is that the process has become multi-layered and dynamic taking on new forms, involving new populations and destinations and adapting to the ever changing global context. Four inter-related arenas of change can be identified and will continue to be critical in the shaping of global migration over the coming decades.



## **CASTE AS AFFECTING FACTOR IN PAKISTANI POLITICS: FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF ANSARIS IN THE KASUR POLITICS**

**Asif Nazir**

PhD Scholar

Department of History & Pakistan Studies

GC University

Faisalabad, Pakistan

### **ABSTRACT:**

Pakistan consists of several federating units including Punjab,<sup>1</sup> KPK, Balochistan, Sindh, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Its each unit is further divided into administrative divisions, districts, tehsils and union councils. A variety of political trends can be observed in the Pakistan's political setup. Elections conducted after every five year term in Pakistan convince the political parties to have direct and continuous contact with the voters. Different factors influence the electoral process and Punjab being the most populous province exhibits interesting existence of many castes in all the constituencies which play pivotal role in the power sharing arena. Caste, called *Baradri* in the local language, has been playing vital role in the electoral history the Subcontinent so it continued after Pakistan came into existence in 1947 as a traditional and cultural legacy of the region. Kasur<sup>2</sup> is an important constituency of the Punjab after Lahore. It

---

<sup>1</sup>A Province which was divided into Indian and Pakistani Punjab in 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Kasur is plural word of "Qasr" meaning palace. It is 34 km in south-east of Lahore. It has very ancient history of existence. Lord Rama had two sons named Kush and Loh or Lav. Kush or Kassu founded Kasur and later Lahore. The colony of Pathans (Kasur) was located at some time during the 15<sup>th</sup> century according to the account during the reign of Zaheer-ud-Din Muhammad Babur (1526-1530) but more probably in 1560, during the reign of Akbar the Great. Kasur was a Tehsil of District Lahore till 1976. It was upgraded to District on 1 July

comprises of five National Assembly and ten Provincial Assembly seats. Total population of Kasur is 3244259. The voting trends in Kasur politics are prevailed by the dominant factors of Baradri and commercial stakes. Different Baradris<sup>3</sup> in Kasur has their share in the constituencies but Ansari Bradri has massive impact on main stream politics. The political culture of Punjab is dominated by violence, purchase of votes and threats but in Kasur, the Ansari Baradri has been playing a positive and wise role throughout the political and electoral history. It is a big change and surprise when a candidate of any other Baradri defeats the Ansari Baradri but this success of the non-Ansari candidate proves timely and temporary win because he is unable to win the next term and the losing candidate of Ansari Baradri restores his position through utilising the slogan of Baradri and commercial stakes. Eight times<sup>4</sup> for Provincial and National Assemblies were held in Pakistan. Except first general elections of 1970, rest of the elections were influenced by different factors but most probably by Baradrism. In urban constituencies of Kasur, six times candidates of Ansari Baradri won Provincial seats. (Interview, 2014).

Term ‘caste’ is derived from “*Casta*,” the Portuguese or Spanish word that means blood relation and breed (Andrew, 1997: 9). Retrospectively, history of caste system in Subcontinent starts from 2000 BC to 1000 BC. Aryans invaded Subcontinent, defeated Darawars<sup>5</sup> and established their rule. Aryans renamed Drawers with Dashoo (the workers). Aryans are said to be founder of casteism in Subcontinent. They distinguished social status of all communities according to their professions. Being the rulers of the land, they divided themselves in three categories; 1. Brahman. 2. Khashtri. 3. Vaish.

The locals were called *Shooders* (untouchables) or the working class. This is more or less similar to the Platonic classification. Social system of Subcontinent is blend of different cultures but till the date Aryan culture had been dominant (Afaqi, 1996: 54). The new trends in history repudiate this traditional direction by considering the lack of communication between one to another village. The rural areas lacked facility of roads and bridges so question arises as to how they could interact with people living in remote areas or the villages that simply raises a question of historiographical problem. The arrival of Islam in subcontinent abolished the social difference on base of castes. It explained to the Muslims that need of castes and tribes is just for their identity in the society. But the Muslims of subcontinent indulged of *Baradrism* as a mark of social identity.

---

1976 with two Tehsils including Kasur and Chunian. Recently, Chunian Tehsil was bifurcated into two Tehsils, Chunian and Pattoki.

<sup>3</sup>Arain, Mayo, Kambo, Bhatti, Jatt, Sheikh, Julaha, Gujjar, Malik, Pathan and Ansari. Arain, Sheikh, Ansari, Kambo and Mayo.

<sup>4</sup> Elections of 1970, 1977, 1985, 1990, 1993, 1997, 2008, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> The natives of the subcontinent before invasion of Aryans.

The element of *Baradrism* was strengthened by the British to prolong their rule in subcontinent. Feudalists always favoured the British policies for accomplishing their social interests like allotting of lands, jobs in the EIC and the British Army. On the other side, British did not allocate agricultural land to manual class (*Kammis*) in canal colony districts but also threw them into agony of a lower social status. This neglected faction might be absorbed permanently in the mainstream of the society and the British could do that with ease but it seemed impossible in the existing social set up (Sandhu, 2014: 143).

Voting pattern in politics of Punjab is adherently under the stress of Baradri factor. The political support of populous Baradris can be assessed in the light of 'patron-client relationship' theory which determines relationship between different stakeholders. The Punjabi society in its historical perspective has always been a blend of different cultures. The religious differences and socio-cultural values divided its natives in Caste system (Niaz, 2013: 23-40).

Local culture is significant for social system which ultimately impacts the political system. Political behaviour is based on attitude, beliefs and values which are related directly to the caste system (Ahmad, 2011: 9). Baradri system has appeared a dominant force in Punjabi Social and political system. It determines the voting behaviour and also being taken as an important factor in election campaign.

In politics of Kasur, the most influential *Baradris* are Ansari (mixture of Jatt, Sheikh, Kambo and Julaha), Arain, Kambo, Mayo, Kamiyar (commonly known as Kasuri) and Sheikh. The candidates of these Baradris have always been successful because of their Baradri support. These Baradris make alliances with other Baradris in the election days to counter their opponents. Almond writes that the real purpose behind the alliances is to maximize their gains during and after the elections (Almond, 1988: 29) and the situation in Kasur political arena is not different. They prefer the association with the political party which has influence in the specific area or locality. For example, Ansari Baradri has always been attached with PML-N (Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz Group)) for its worth among the people of Kasur. PML-N always preferred Ansari Baradri of Kasur while distributing their tickets for provincial elections. Ansari Baradri is linked with business of Power looms and prepares cotton and canvas. Kasur is famous for its production of cotton, lungis, leather goods and carpets (*Gazetteer of Lahore*, 1989: 251). Elections of 2008 presented a clear picture of the political camps of different Baradris. Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmad represented Arain, Wasim Akhtar from Sheikh while Ansari group could not agree upon one name so consequently they contested elections with a split mandate as three candidates<sup>6</sup> contested elections. On the other hand, a major portion of Ansaris was siding with non-Ansari candidates. Wasim

---

<sup>6</sup>Ghulam Ahmad Ansari, Amanullah Ansari, Maqbool Ansari were the prominent candidates.



Akhtar<sup>7</sup> having a few votes of Sheikh Baradri in the Kasur city constituency defeated Chaudhry Manzoor<sup>8</sup> twice. Wasim Akhtar utilised the patron-client relationship and his personal connections with different families of Kasur that paved the way to win the seat of National Assembly. The most important factor behind his victory was a good relationship with the most prominent and populous Ansari Baradri of Kasur who unleashed a big share of votes in his favour. Ansari Baradri had commercial stakes with the Sheikh Baradri. Ansari Baradri depended on Sheikhs because they take raw material relating to power looms. So both Ansaris and Sheikhs are interlinked because of the same business. Sheikh Baradri used to help them out in their business through purchasing raw material of cotton and hand it over to Ansari Baradri. They prepare cotton and canvas and give the profit to Sheikhs after the sale of the cloth (Interview, 2014).

Ansaris to some extent depend on the Sheikhs and consider them trustworthy and kind friends. The commercial stakes can crack any identity and this happened in the case of Sheikh-Ansari blocs during elections.

In 1977 elections, though the element of Baradrism was not prevailing in Kasur but Arain Baradri had strong footing in politics of district Kasur. With support of populous Baradris, Yaqoob Mann<sup>9</sup> defeated Ghulam Rasul Sabri<sup>10</sup> a candidate of Pakistan National Alliance contested election for provincial seat politics from Kasur PP-111 (Election commission Report, 1977). Sabri was a social worker and member of *Tanzeem Shehri Difaa*<sup>11</sup> Kasur before joining politics and had good reputation among the people of Kasur city by serving vigilantly natives of his land with the zeal of patriotism. He always supported the idea of implementation of true spirit of Islam in the country.<sup>12</sup> Being part of the official organisation, he was a figured eye among his Baradri. Although at that time, Ansari Baradri was not politically well aware and united but all the people have political sense and vision definitely. Sabri was urged to come to the provincial politics by Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali<sup>13</sup> because of his social services for the people and also the strength of votes of his Baradri especially in the urban areas of Kasur. He was against the slogan of Islamic socialism presented by Bhutto. Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) gave him ticket to contest election against Yaqoob Mann, a strong PPP candidate.

---

<sup>7</sup>A candidate from Sheikh Baradri became member of National Assembly twice from NA139 Kasur defeating rival in the elections.

<sup>8</sup>A candidate from Arain Baradri who remained member of the National Assembly from 2008 till 2013 from NA 139

<sup>9</sup>A candidate from Arain Baradri who was victorious in 1970 election from PP-111 Kasur. Mann is a Jatt caste but Mr. Yaqoob adopted it as a village name, village Mann tehsil Kasur.

<sup>10</sup>The first Ansari from Kasur to contest Provincial Assembly election in 1977.

<sup>11</sup> An organisation started in 1939 for safety of people of Kasur in war days.

<sup>12</sup>*Qandeel* (Weekly). (1939). Lahore, p. 59.

<sup>13</sup> Ex- foreign minister of Pakistan during Benazir Bhutto's 2<sup>nd</sup> term (1993-1997).

Kasur politics seemed sympathetic to PNA so Ghulam Rasul Sabri was more popular candidate than Yaqoob Mann. Supporters of Sabri started election campaign with full passion and devotion. Though not so many processions were organised by Sabri but all the depressed and labour class were happy that first time a candidate from their own community was representing them. Arain, Kambo, Mayo and Sheikh Baradris of Kasur always ignored Ansari Baradri. They could never bear a candidate from *Kammi* class. Even they could not think that any Ansari could dare to stand and contest against them (Interview, 2014).

Bhutto visited Kasur in 1977 elections to support his candidates for provincial and national assemblies. Bulk of people came to see Bhutto at Kasur Cantt<sup>14</sup>, but internally they all were fed up of the fake slogan of Islamic socialism and rule of PPP. When Bhutto came for speech, supporters of Sabri started saying "*Bhutto Murdabad, Sabri Zindabad.*" Bhutto assumed agitation and grudge of people against PPP. For the misbehaviour of the people, he immediately ordered for the change of DC and SP of Kasur before his departure (Interview, 2014).

The supporters of PPP candidate Yaqoob Mann planned to threaten Sabri. On 5 February 1977, Sabri was coming back from the election campaign; he was forced to stop his car (Mazda) by the supporters led by Yaqoob Mann's brother near village Mann. They blocked his way by using a truck trolley and started firing. They forced Sabri to get down from car and started beating him with bamboo (danda). Sabri's arms and legs were broken because of severely beaten. His car was blown off by the violent supporters of his opponent. Police came after some time and Sabri and his supporters were taken to the hospital near Baldia Chowk Kasur. Sabri had close attachment with the labour and weaving class of the city as they came to know about the incident, they rushed towards the hospital. Police was unable to control the crowd; they started throwing teargas and used lathi charge to disperse the crowd. Sabri being seriously injured was taken to Mayo Hospital Lahore wherein he was admitted for seven days. Mian Jamil Ahmad Sharaquri, Arain by Caste, having close association with Ghulam Rasul Sabri especially came to see him in the hospital (Ibid).

On the other side, Tehreek-e-Nizam-e- Mustafa<sup>15</sup> was launched against Bhutto throughout the country. As Sabri was recovered, he became an active worker of Tehreek-e- Nizam-e Mustafain Kasur. He vigilantly served the people of Kasur during this movement. He daily managed food and a lot of other eatables for the workers of TNM in Kasur. His cousin Ghulam Sabir Ansari also financed during this movement through providing every kind of assistance. When protests and agitations against the government rose to a simmering point,

---

<sup>14</sup>Fauji Chhauni is a place near Thana Sadar Kasur where military regiment is based.

<sup>15</sup>Tehreek-e-Nizam-e- Mustafa was launched to topple Bhutto government with slogan to have Islamic laws in the country.

the police started arresting the workers. Approximately 359 people of Ansari Baradri were arrested during this protest (Anjum, 2014: 141).

During TNM movement, an important incident took place when the police misbehaved with an old Ansari, the Ansari youth attacked the police and even the SP was not spared and who returned with many wounds. He gave orders for lathi charge near place Bulanda Khooh<sup>16</sup> Kasur but the situation was going worse. Consequently, FSF<sup>17</sup> with 14 police vans full of soldiers was called to arrest Ghulam Rasul Sabri from his house in Abu Ayub Ansari Town (Interview, 2014). Police surrounded Sabri's house but could not enter the house. After breaking the doors, FSF threw Sabri into the police van. During travel, a policeman uttered the words, '*Parh le Kalma Tumhey Border Pe le ja ke Mar den Ge*' but he was taken to the hospital. After recovering, he was put into jail where he spent three months. TNM was going on during his jail time. PPP continued arresting people in Kasur especially the supporters of Sabri. Some politicians tried to give him bribe with the offer of 25% share in Pepsi if he cooled down his supporters. He replied that this movement would continue till the end of Bhutto rule (Ibid).

On 5 July 1977, Gen. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Arain by caste, took over the charge as martial law administrator by overthrowing the democratic government of Bhutto. The political circumstances were changed. The next day on 6 July 1977, Ghulam Rasul Sabri was released from jail. Brigadier Hayat Ahmad Ansari came to take charge of administration of district Kasur. He reviewed the case of Sabri, all the cases against him were dismissed and his opponents were declared guilty. Sabri became financially weak enough during the movement but on the other side, he became very popular among the people of Kasur because of his financial and social support during Tehreek-e- Nizam-e Mustafa (Ibid). PPP won 155 seats, more than two third majority; Pakistan National Alliance<sup>18</sup> (PNA) did not accept the results and blamed the government to be involved in rigging (*Dawn*, 1977: 7).

The election results created agitation environment throughout Pakistan and PNA leaders launched protest against Bhutto government who tried to convince the leaders to sort out the problem through table talk. Many meetings were held and finally Bhutto and PNA reached a conclusion. Bhutto announced in a press conference about the agreement with PNA likely to be signed next day. But the same night, a military took over the government and declared Martial Law in the country. Gen. Zia-ul-Haq promised the people of Pakistan to hold elections within 90 days but he postponed the elections again and again because of the excuse of accountability of the PPP leaders. The Lahore High Court gave capital punishment to Bhutto on charge of conspiracy of murder.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> A place near railway station Kasur, where Ansari Baradri is populous.

<sup>17</sup> In fact Federal Security Force founded by Bhutto to counter his opponents.

<sup>18</sup> An alliance of nine political parties against Bhutto

<sup>19</sup> Ahmad Khan Kasuri also belonged to Kasur.

He was executed on 4 April 1979. Bhutto's death changed the political scenario of Pakistan. To restore democracy in Pakistan, PPP and other parties made an alliance to counter Zia's dictatorship. Demands presented by the alliance included end of Martial Law, restoration of the 1973 Constitution, elections and transfer of power to the civil government (Bhutto, 1994: 313).

In 1985, in elections Ghulam Rasul Sabri chose his cousin Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari, a cloth merchant, for the seat PP-111 on which he lost election in 1977 against Yaqoob Mann. Ghulam Sabir Ansari had already got sympathy of the people of Kasur because of the brutality of Yaqoob Mann against his cousin during 1977 elections. In 1985 non-party elections, Ghulam Sabir got an overwhelming support of the people and especially of his Baradri. First time the Ansari Baradri planned to be united for the elections. They conducted meetings at the house of Ghulam Sabir Ansari where they planned to launch an effective election campaigns (Interview, 2014).

Dr. Khurshid Ahmad Ansari, the President of Jamiat-ul-Ansar, played a decisive role to unite the whole Ansari Baradri under one flag in 1985 elections. Hanif Zafar, the General Secretary of Jamiat ul Ansar, was already exerting a lot for Ansari Baradri in Kasur through the financial support. Ghulam Ahmad Ansari Advocate was leading Ansari Baradri in the urban areas and conducting election campaign successfully. The middle and labour class was vigilant in supporting Ghulam Sabir Ansari because for the first time a candidate from a weaving class was representing all the low level and depressed classes of Kasur. They assumed as there would be a good change in their lives. Even Kambo, Sheikh, Bhatti, and Arain Baradris were ready to support Haji Ghulam Sabir in the elections. The results of elections declared Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari's success with 21534 votes. He became the first Ansari to be the member of Provincial Assembly from district Kasur. His victory in non party elections proved the strength of Ansari Baradri in city Kasur. Sabir Ansari maintained his victory in the forthcoming elections of 1988, 1990, 1993 and 1997 (Report, 1977).

His five times win as member of Provincial Assembly cleared the factor that Baradrism counts a lot in success of a candidate in Kasur. Either the election on party or non party basis, populous Baradris anywhere in Punjab have strong impact on the electoral politics. Caste factor remained a major factor in the electoral politics. Parties give great weightage to the Baradris in selecting their candidates and canvassing support for their nominees in elections (Mahmood, 2000: 374).

Caste affects the planning, decision making during elections (Amin, 1993:25). Political parties plan their manifesto regarding the interests of the populous Baradris. The elections of 1985 were held on non-party basis and it changed the political culture of Pakistan. First time in electoral politics, the role of feudalism and Baradrism was introduced especially in Punjab.

Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari cousin of Ghulam Rasul Sabri was nominated for the seat of Provincial Assembly from PP 145. In 1985 elections, first time the local Baradris of Kasur were very active politics especially Ansari and Arian Baradri. Most of the local Baradris supported Ansari Baradri. In 1985 election, the strength of the voters had increased due to increased population and the turnout was very high than the previous elections of 1970 and 1977. It was the major fact that the first time in the history of Pakistan, the local Baradris especially in Punjab was so much committed with their candidates that they decided to cast vote at any cost for the success of their candidates. In Kasur, the working or labour class was already attached with Ansari Baradri because of their profession of power looms. . They actively took part in the campaigns and tried their level best for making Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari victorious. Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari took 21104 defeating Saeed Mann<sup>20</sup> of Arain Baradri who got 8498 votes. His father Chaudhry Yaqoob Mann had been two times victorious in 1970 and 1977 elections from PP 111 and 145. Haji Muhammad Bloch was also defeated by Ghulam Sabir Ansari who had been victorious in 1977 elections from PP 112 (Report, 1985).

1988 elections were held in a very unusual way because Zia was not assuming comfort after the experience of transferring power to civilians in 1985 elections. The civilians were impatient to have complete power in their hands. Having the apprehension, he dismissed the elected assemblies and announced the fresh elections. But fate could not much give him time and he died in plane crash in Bahawalpur before the date of elections (*Dawn*, 1988).

Dismissal of Assemblies, incident of air crash of Zia and most importantly scheduled date of fresh elections these all were a challenge for the military. The Muslim League made an alliance with other political parties against PPP that was called Islamic Democratic Alliance. This alliance was crafted by military to run of 1988 elections. But once IJI was created, it filled the gap between social and political powers (Mahmood, 2000: 376).

Again element of *Baradrism* gained inclusion easily in politics. In 1988 elections, political parties preferred the contesting candidates of populous *Baradris* all over Punjab. IJI gave ticket to Ansari Baradri considering them the most populous and influential *Baradri* in Kasur politics. Sabir Ansari contested again for member of Provincial Assembly from PP 145. This time Ansari Baradri was well organised and politically aware as compared to last elections of 1985. The supporters of Ansari Baradri launched election campaign throughout city Kasur. This time they used manifesto including implementation of Islam, the development of roads, share of jobs for their Baradri etc (Interview, 2014).

---

<sup>20</sup> Son of Yaqoob Mann (Arain by caste) who brutally broke legs of Ghulam Rasul Sabri during election campaign in 1977.

When the elections of 1988 were held, people of Kasur casted vote to Sabir Ansari. He got 29982 votes against Saeed Mann of Arain Baradri (10417 votes) who independently contested in this election. Another Ansari also contested against Sabir, named Chudhary Khushi Muhammad Ansari securing (445 votes) (Report, 1990).

The leader of IJI Main Muhammad Nawaz Sharif made Sabir Ansari as parliamentary Secretary for Industries. First time, an Ansari became provincial minister. As a minister he took keen interest in development of Kasur through his government funds. He played a vital role in existence of schools in Kasur. Taid-ul-Islam High School Kasur, Government High School Kasur, Hanfia School Kasur and Islamia School Kasur came into existence because of his efforts (Ibid).

Sabir Ansari fulfilled his promise and did a lot for his Baradri. He founded Small Industries Kasur which provided an opportunity for employment for the natives of Kasur especially for Ansari Baradri. In 1990 elections, he was again successful against the same previous political opponent. He contested this time on the ticket of IJI under the leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif. Because of his close attachment with his Baradri, he won his seat securing 28702 votes. He not only defeated Saeed Mann (18992 votes) but also Robina Ansari who could bag only 6151 votes (Report, 1990).

In the elections of 1993 and 1997, Ansaris achieved tremendous victory but their success was undermined by PML-N leadership who did not give any share in provincial cabinets. Once Haji Sabir asked Main Nawaz Sharif during Hajj days, “*Mian Sahib Sada Vi Kuch Krain*” (do something for our inclusion in cabinet). He politely replied, “*Chhado Haji Sahib Tusi Vi Looman (Power looms) Laiyan Nain Te Asi Vi, Koi Looman da Kum Hovey Te Dasna*” (leave it Haji Sahib, we have same profession of looms so talk about that). Haji Sabir assumed that Main Nawaz Sharif was completely ignoring him and his previous record. Although, he had close relationship with Nawaz Sharif not only on political basis but on business lines as he used to prepare sugar bags for the sugar mills of Nawaz Sharif (Interview, 2014).

Till Nawaz Sharif’s second term (12th Oct 1999), Ansari Baradri remained united under the banner of Jamiat-ul –Ansar and accommodating personality of Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari. But in Musharraf era, in 2002 elections, the graduation condition for contesting elections pushed Haji Sabir Ansari away from the electoral politics which caused split in the Ansari Baradri. The Jamiat-ul- Ansar raised a question of nominating the next candidate to contest the elections. Sabir Ansari announced Gouhar Inayat Ansari<sup>21</sup> as the candidate but the senior members of Jamiat- ul- Ansar did not approve this decision. They shared apprehension against hereditary politics and walked out

---

<sup>21</sup> Son-in-law of Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari

of the meeting. Therefore, Ansari Baradri was divided into different groups. Four candidates<sup>22</sup> appeared to contest the elections (Interview, 2014).

These divided groups of Ansari Baradri launched their election campaigns to defeat each other. Gouhar Inayat Ansari belonged to a financially strong and politically acknowledged family; he was more popular as compared to other candidates among the people of Kasur during the election campaigns. He used to conduct meetings at his dera (sitting place for supporters and voters). He was favourite against other candidates because he was contesting in the elections on PML-N ticket. His opponents were also busy in advertising themselves to be the loyal if Baradri made them successful in the elections. Amanullah Ansari Advocate was not popular in the Baradri but he used patron client relationship to convince the Baradri for support. He was depending on one Councillor<sup>23</sup> Support. Hanif Zafar Ansari the General Secretary of Jamiat-ul-Ansar being relative supported him. He made the Baradri realise to come out of Sabir family centric politics (Ibid).

In the general elections of 2008, Ansari Baradri was totally split. Two candidates of Ansari Baradri contested in MPA election that belonged to two most strong Ansari families. Baradri was divided into two groups Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari and Haji Safdar<sup>24</sup> Ansari. Both nominated his sons<sup>25</sup> to contest the election. Prominent families of Ansari Baradri were not willing to support Maqbool Sabir Ansari<sup>26</sup> because of his decision of joining PML-Q. Musharraf operation against Jamia- Hafsa was severely criticised by all communities of Pakistan and this factor also weakened the position of PML-Q especially in Punjab. PML-N leadership was back in Pakistan before elections. Haji Safdar met them and was able to get ticket of MPA. Naeem Safdar contested election on PML-N ticket and his rival Maqbool Sabir on PML-Q ticket. Naeem Safdar was pairing with Sheikh Wasim Akhtar<sup>27</sup>. This blend of Baradris was not new in Kasur politics. This group was able to unite all Baradris of Kasur especially Ansari Baradri under the ceiling of Baradri and PML-N leadership. Maqbool Sabir Ansari was pairing with Syeda Nelofar Mehdi<sup>28</sup>. Being financially very strong and having good social interaction with the common people of Kasur, she effectively launched her election campaign. PML-N factor was in full swing in the election of 2008. All Baradris of Kasur especially Ansari Baradri voted Naeem Safdar Ansari and Wasim Akhtar. They both won from their constituencies. Naeem Safdar secured 30,677 votes. He defeated PPP candidate

---

<sup>22</sup> Amanullah Ansari, Ghulam Ahmad Ansari, Hanif Zafar Ansari and Gouhar Inayat Ansari

<sup>23</sup> Akhtar Ansari ex- vice chairman of TMA Kasur

<sup>24</sup> Relative of Haji Ghulam Sabir Ansari who remained his loyal till 1999

<sup>25</sup> Naeem Safdar Ansari son of Haji Safdar and Maqbool Sabir Ansari son of Ghulam Sabir Ansari

<sup>26</sup> son of Ghulam Sabir Ansari

<sup>27</sup> A candidate of Sheikh Baradri

<sup>28</sup> A candidate of Syed Baradri whose father had been very close to Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Muzafar Shah Kazmi (9712 votes), Chudhary Ashfaq Kambo (independent, 8698 votes), PML-Q candidate Maqbool Sabir Ansari (8067 votes)(Anjum, 2013: 201).

There are different factors for success of Ansari Baradri in electoral politics of Kasur. Starting from personal character and worth of family of candidate in a constituency, the development in his last tenure as a politician and most importantly the political party to whom he is representing. Different candidates in different territories use different tactics during elections to be successful. They organize rallies; make attractive slogans, and held corner meetings, dera or mohalla meetings to make sure their success in elections. The senior or aged people of Baradri play an important role during election campaign. On the other end, the supporters of the participating candidate go door to door and interacts voters personally.

Ansari Baradri in Kasur always nominated those candidates who had Personal influence in their constituency, their past performance as politician, and standing of their political party in national politics are seen as the foremost factors determining the success of a candidate. However, majority of the people under observation considered that Baradris and print media always played an important role in success of the candidates. Voters in Kasur always voted to the candidates to whom their personal interests are attached. They also focus on the national level politics while casting their votes. It has always been important for a candidate to discuss national issues and international politics influencing Pakistani society along with discussing local and constituency based problems (Interview, 2014). It was suggested that, alongside personal influence and past performance of a candidate and standing of his/her political party, it will be important for the candidates to consider that they will be dealing with politically much more aware people in elections.

In all elections, Ansari Baradri's political campaign and manifesto were based on some important message or ideology of some political party. Everywhere in Pakistan, political manifesto is seen as a primary document through which it characterizes its differences with other political parties on a political system or reforms. As one of the respondents told that manifesto was the pre-requisite for designing an electoral campaign. If the manifesto was attractive and people oriented, the people might participate in the electoral campaign and vote for that party. However, a majority of the respondents did not give much importance to manifesto and considered that in Pakistan's socio-political scenario manifesto does not play important role. It was suggested that other factors e.g. popularity of a candidate, financial position, social status and affiliation with political party were a decisive push behind a successful election campaign. In this regard, argument put forward by one of the respondents is that during the previous elections, people used to consider manifestos of the parties but for general elections in 2013 manifesto did not play any important role.



Nowadays, people consider policies and political stance of parties as their manifesto. In addition to that media has also increased the importance of manifesto that is taken up in the TV talks also. In forthcoming elections, manifesto will not impress upon the people, candidates and parties.

## **CONCLUSION**

The voting trends in Kasur politics are prevailed by the dominant factors of Baradri and commercial stakes. The political culture of Punjab is dominated by violence, purchase of votes and threats but in Kasur, the Ansari Baradri had been playing a positive and wise role throughout the political and electoral history. It is a big change and surprise when a candidate of any other Baradri defeats the Ansari Baradri but this success of the non-Ansari candidate proved to be timely and temporary win. The losing candidate of Ansari Baradri restores his position in the next election through utilising the slogan of Baradri and commercial stakes. The futuristic political scenario of the political panorama of Kasur city seems unchanged and Ansari Baradri will play crucial role but as the identity consciousness on the basis of castes will emerge it will bring a revolutionary change in the politics and many families will have to readjust the political affiliation. This political alignment will be observed in the coming decades because primary record of the castes can no more be denied that will realign the political forces of the city Kasur. Nevertheless, the strength of the Ansari people who have been knitted in kinship now and business will be a major political force in the politics.

## **Bibliography**

- Afaqi, Qadir. (1996). *Tareekh-e-Punjab Lahore*: Printing Press, Lahore.
- Ahmad, Mughees. (2011). 'Social System,' *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol.1.
- Almond, G.A. and Bingham, G. (1978). *System, Process and Policy: Comparative Politics*. Lahore: Ferozsons.
- Amin, Tahir. (1993). *Ethno National Movements of Pakistan Domestic and International Factors*.Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies.
- Anjum, Riaz. (2014). *Bara-e-sagheer diyan Tehreekan wich Kasur da hissa*, {Punjabi} Lahore: Punjabi Khoj Garh.
- Anjum, Riaz. (2013). *Sayasi Tareekh Zilah Kasur*, {Punjabi} Lahore: Punjabi Khoj Garh.
- Bhutto, Benazir. (1994). *Daughter of East: an Autobiography*. London: A Mandarin.
- Daily Dawn (Lahore). (1988).
- Daily Dawn (Lahore). (1977).
- Election commission Report of 1977 elections on district Kasur.
- Election Commission Report of 1985 on district Kasur.
- Election commission Report 1985 on district Kasur.
- Election commission Report of 1990 on district Kasur.
- Heywood, Andrew. (1997). *Politics*: London:Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Mahmud, Safdar. (2000). *Pakistan Political Roots and Development: 1947-1999*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Niaz, Lhan. (2013). *The Culture of Power and Governance of Pakistan: 1947-2008*. Karachi : Oxford University Press.
- Sandhu, Akhtar. (2014). 'British injustice with Punjab,' Lahore: Journal of Research Society of Pakistan, Vol.51.



## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BUNDELKHAND REGION IN CENTRAL INDIA**

**DR. PURUSHOTTAM SINGH**  
**Assistant Professor of History**  
**V.S.S.D. College**  
**Kanpur U.P. India**

History and culture of Bundelkhand region were designed by geographical features. Far away from Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, Bundelkhand is situated in ranges of Vindhya with river Yamuna as northern border. It is mandatory to know about geographical features of the region because historical water bodies are deeply associated with surface, topography, soil and drainage pattern of the region.

There are four prominent systems related to structure of the region. The Archaean system is the oldest one which can be recognized by the presence of granite and gneiss. Bundelkhand granite is of many types as per composition and colour. Pink and gray colored granite is important. The second system is known as Gwalior Series or transitional system. This system is composed of sand stone, lime stone and quartzite commonly found in Datia district. Third structure is known as rocks of Vindhya range spread in middle part of Bundelkhand featuring layers of sand stone. According to Professor R.L. Singh tectonic activities in southern Bundelkhand region has greatly influenced this system. The fourth structure is made of river deposits in northern belt of region due to presence of Yamuna, Pahuj, Betwa, Dhasan, Ken, Bagain rivers. Therefore geomorphology of Bundelkhand region consists of oldest to modern structures which decides the topography, soil and underground water of the region.

**TOPOGRAPHY :** Topography is always important in Historical studies because it gives surface to human settlement and cultural evolution. Bundelkhand is subject of interest among Historians due to presence of all three major forms i.e., hill, plateau and plane. The southern part of Bundelkhand is

hilly area of Vindhyachal range with hillocks and scattered hills while northern part is plane attracting human settlement. Basically slope is towards south to north resulting in to plane. Thus the study area consists of the following three while discussing topography-

1. Southern high land
2. Middle Transitional Belt
3. Northern deposited plane

The southern high land has slope towards north. It can be separated from middle transitional plateaus belt by contour of 250 meters having average height from sea level 300 to 500 meters. It contains hillocks of Bhandar and Kaimur .

The middle transitional belt is most important regarding tank construction. This fact is one of the major conclusions found during the survey. In this transitional belt , Hard rocks are hidden by river deposits showing ideal condition for water collection .This part has slope towards north & north-east. Generally this belt is decided between contours of 150 m and 250 m. This belt has small rivers like Shahzad, Sanjana, Jaimini, Bagain & Payaswini. The average height from sea level varies between 100 meters to 280 meters as 280m in Babina, 255.15m in Jhansi, 174.6m in Garutha, 149.4m in Gohand, 210.3m in Mahoba, 121.8m in Akauna, 129.9m in Chitrakoot and 102.6m in Rajapur, the eastern point. This transitional belt has scattered hills and small plane which converts in to big plane tending towards northern belt.

The northern deposited plane is formed by great river Yamuna and its tributaries . This part is spread over datiya, jalaun, Hamirpur, Banda & Karvi districts. This belt is most fertile land of the zone because Yamuna and other rivers form DO-AAB(catchment area between two rivers) like between Pahuj & Betwa ; Betwa & Dhasan ; Ken & Baghain etc.

While discussing drainage system of the region , we must discuss tributaries of river Yamuna like Kali Sindh, Pahuj, Betwa, Dhasan, Ken, Bagain & Mandakini etc. because these rivers are life line Bundeli people . Kali Sindh is the river flowing in western part of Bundelkhand originating from Sironj. Kali Sindh meets Yamuna after a distance of 300km from origination at Jagammanpur in Jalaun district. Pahuj is the main tributary of Kali Sindh. Betwa is most important river of the Bundelkhand region. Dr. Rajendra Singh proceeds his Thesis that personality of Bundelkhand is the resultant of river Betwa

<sup>1</sup>. Betwa originates from village Barkhera (district- Raisin, M.P.) and travels 564 km up to its confluence with Yamuna at Hamirpur. Betwa flows 184 km in M.P., 225 km in U.P. and 145 km at common border of U.P. & M.P. Dams of Rajghat, Maatatila and Parichha are associated with Betwa. Dhasan is the

---

<sup>1</sup> Singh, Rajendra, "Water resource and its management :A case study of river Betwa", Indian journal of Landscape systems and ecological studies, Vol.13 No.1,june 1990, pp80-85

biggest tributary of Betwa. Besides Dhasan, Ajar, Halali, Burman, Sagar, Kaliyasoat, Bina, Nian, Narayani, Gunchi, Arjun, Parwaha, Jaimini & Birma are tributaries of river Betwa. The ancient name of Betwa was Betrawati (i.e. flowing through Bamboos). The catchment area of Betwa between Kali Sindh and Dhasan is almost 43542 square kms, which is biggest among all rivers of Bundelkhand. Ken is important river in middle east zone of Bundelkhand having ancient name Karnawati (B.C. Law & Rajendra Singh have supported this fact). Ken originates from district Damoh of M.P. and ends at Chilla in Banda district with river Yamuna. Urmil, Chadrawal & Sunar are main tributaries of Ken. Bagain and Mandakini are the rivers in eastern Chitrakoot zone of Bundelkhand. Water in both rivers comes from natural sources of Vindhychal range as well as small flows of Ranj, Madrar, Barar, Kareyhali, ban-ganga, barua and Payaswini. Flow of water in above mentioned rivers became maximum in rainy season in zone of religious importance. In above mentioned scenario of drainage pattern of Bundelkhand, Yamuna is a river of national importance which decides the northern boundary of Bundelkhand region. The matter of strange while discussing drainage of Bundelkhand is that flow of all rivers except Yamuna is from south to north. Yamuna separates this zone to Kanpur zone and proved as important means of travel since ancient times.

### **BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The early history of the region may be tracked back to the Paleolithic age as evidenced by the discovery of choppers, hand axes and the pebble cores made by clipping hard stones of convenient size at Lahchura in the region. Polished stone Celts of Neolithic age have also been excavated<sup>2</sup>. In primitive times the major part of the region was covered with forests and would have been inhabited by Gonds, Kols, Bhils etc.<sup>3</sup>. The cultural zone of Bundelkhand was known through different names since ancient times. According to Puranic tradition the earliest known Aryan people who settled in this region, lying between Yamuna and Vindhychal were known as Chedis<sup>4</sup>. The Mahabharat describes the Chedis as being blessed with knowledge of the eternal law of righteousness. The Chedi kingdom was one of the principal janapadas flourished about 600B.C. Very little is known of the subsequent period about the history of this region till the fourth century B.C. when Mahapadma Nanda who is described as exterminator of the entire Kshatriya race uprooted the Vitihotra dynasty and extended his own rule over the region<sup>5</sup>. After the Nandas were overthrown, the region became the part of Mauryan

---

<sup>2</sup> Ghosh, A., "Indian Archaeology-1963-64-A review", New Delhi 1967, p.45

<sup>3</sup> Atkinson, E.T., "Statistical, Descriptive and Historical account of the north western provinces of India, Vol. I, Bundelkhand division, Allahabad, 1874, p.524

<sup>4</sup> Raychaudhury, H.C., "Political History of ancient India", Calcutta, 1953, p.126

<sup>5</sup> Sastri, K.A.N., "The age of Nandas and Mauryas", Banaras, 1952, p.17

empire. A minor rock edict of Ashoka was found at Gurjara(district Datiya) in the region<sup>6</sup>. The Sungas succeeded the Muaryas confined central portion of old Mauryan empime including Bundelkhand. During the rule of Pushyamitra Sunga (184-148B.C.). Greek invasion took place probably under Menander , whose coins have been found in abundance at Pachkhura in Hamirpur district by Cunningham in 1878. Towards the end of first century A.D. the region came under the domination of Kanishka(78A.D.)<sup>7</sup>. After him , History of the zone was shrouded in obscurity till about the middle of the third century A.D. when Vindhyashakti(255-275A.D.) rose to power near about eastern Malwa and occupied large tracts of northern M.P. Vindhyashakti is probably not the personal name but the title of the founder of Vakataka dynasty<sup>8</sup>. Vidhyashakti's son and successor Pravarsena I (275-335A.D.) is the only ruler of the dynasty, who assumed the title of Samrata or emperor. He succeeded in extending the Vakataka hegemony and performed ashwamedha Yajna. It seems that the zone partly came under the vakataka sway and partly under the Bharsivas , a branch of Nagas, whose sphere of influence extended at the time from Gwalior and Mathura in the west and probably Varanasi & Mirzapur in the east<sup>9</sup>. About the middle of the fourth century A.D. ,the zone under the political domination of Samudra Gupta (321-375A.D.) and continued to be part of Gupta Empire still the beginning of sixth century<sup>10</sup>. In Budhagupta's reign(477-500A.D.) the feudatory family of the Parivrajaka Maharaja in Bundelkhand rose to prominence under Hastin, whose record mention a general reference to Gupta sovereignty. During the middle of sixth century this region appers to have come under the sway of Tivara(563-580A.D.), a Punduva king of south Kosala<sup>11</sup>. The next reference about the History of Bundelkhand is gathered from the description of Huien Tsang, who visited the region in 641-642A.D. He mentions the tract of which this zone formed as "Chi Chi To"<sup>12</sup>, which was about 4000 li in circuit. Its capital was about 15 li in circuit lay more than 1000 li to the north east of the Ujjain. The history of the zone is again developed in darkness for about half of a century after Harsha's death. During the period of instability , a branch of Gaharwara , might have to come at Mahoba and its immediate neighborhood. The massive embankment at Vijay Sagar lake and the construction of the lake itself in addition to lakes at Bilki and Pawa in Mahoba are assigned to Gaharwaras<sup>13</sup>. The construction of Kanduara Taal situated in the townships of Thana and Paswara, is credited to one Kandaur Singh , an officer under the Gaharwara Raja. In addition to these some other lakes and tanks in the zone are also ascribed to Gaharwara rulers. The antique origin of these lakes is

<sup>6</sup> Majumdar,R.C., "Ancient India",Delhi,1964,p.106

<sup>7</sup> Majumdar & Pusalkar, "The history and culture of the Indian People",Vol.II, Bombay,1962,p.99

<sup>8</sup> Majumdar & Altekar, "The vakataka Gupta age, Delhi,1960,pp.96-97

<sup>9</sup> Majumdar & Altekar,op.cit.,pp.25-28

<sup>10</sup> Majumdar & Pusalkar, "History and culture of Indian People",Vol.III,3<sup>rd</sup> ed.,Bombay,1960,p.64

<sup>11</sup> Majumdar & Altekar,op.cit.,p.90

<sup>12</sup> Cunningham,A., "Ancient geography of India", Indological book house Varanasi,1963,p.405

<sup>13</sup> Atkinson, op. cit.,p.524

attested by the rudeness of their construction .During the first half of eighth century Yashoverman the vigorous ruler of Kannauj brought the region under his sway. After the death of Yashoverman mist again gathers over history of the zone and not lifted till the rise of Pratihar in the last quarter of eighth century. The Pratihar ruler Vatsraja established his supremacy over the large part of the northern India.The other important ruler of the dynasty was Nagbhatta II who extended the kingdom far and wide. During the troublous days of conflict among Pratihar, Pala & Rashtrakoota to win Kannauj, a new power knowmn as Chandel emerged in Bundelkhnad region under Nannuka who stablished an independent chiefship. The Khajuraho inscriptions mentioning him as Pripa & Nahipati, confirm this fact<sup>14</sup>.Nannuka was very brave as verse 15 of Khajuraho inscription no.4 refers to him as one whose skill in the use of bows and arrown reminded people of great epic hero Arjun. It is said that Mahoba was brought by Nannuka under his control by driving away the Pratiharas. The region was known as Jejakbhukti after the name of Jeja or Jejak the second chandela ruler of the region.<sup>15</sup>

Nephew of Jeja named as Rahila as mentioned in Khajuraho records, was a great warrior and undertook works of public interest. The village Rahila about three kms. South west of Mahoba and old lake with granite temple on its bank near Mahoba called Rahilasagar are ascribed to him<sup>16</sup>.After the death of Rahila , his son Harsha who succeeded the throne and ruled approximately from 900 to 925, began to enhance his political power by entering in to matrimonial alliances with other contemporary powers. The reign of Harsha's son Yashoverman who also marked with significant political developments. According to Khajuraho inscriptions he was “a scorching fire” to the pratiharas and gave a great blow to their prestige. He made Chandelas independent and made them one of the strongest power of the northern India . Yashoverman was the first winner of Kalinjer fort. He defeated the Kalchuri ruler to win the fort. Kalchuris were the first known ruler of Kalinjer having title “Kalinjerpurwaradhiswar”.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Mitra, S.K., “The early rulers of Khajuraho”, Calcutta,1958,pp.27-29

<sup>15</sup> The Madanpur inscription(1184A.D.) of famous Prathvi raj III of chauhan dynasty indicates the region as Jejakbhukti.

v: .k jktL; iK-sk Jh I k'oj I quIA  
t t kd HQR nswl; allFohjktu yfurIAA

<sup>16</sup> Majumdar & Pusalkar, op. cit. Vol.IV, pp.82-83

<sup>17</sup>  
r=%dkyã jkske rnk fxfjojBreA  
rs dkyã jkske Hfo'; fr l %ioŕ%AA  
rr%dkyã tj xRok ioŕ ykdfJreA-  
rr` nãrsLukRok xld gL= Qy yHrAA

After this significant win , Yashoverman declared his new title “Kalinjeradhipati”<sup>18</sup> . Yashoverman was succeeded by his son Dhanga (950-1008A.D.) who was one of the greatest ruler of his times and the Chandel kingdom achieved great prosperity under him<sup>19</sup> . The important event of his reign was severance of all connections with Pratiharas. He attained the supreme leadership after inflicting a defeat over the king of Kannauj. Undoubtly the mantle of Imperialism fell from the Pratiharas upon the shoulders of Dhanga<sup>20</sup> .The boundaries of Chandel Kingdom under Dhanga extended up to Chedi country on one side and Bhilsa on the other. To the east he retained his hold on Ganga-Yamuna Doab upto Prayag where he ended his life when he attained the age of one hundred years by drowning himself in the sacred waters of the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna. Dhanga was credited to build Kandariya Mahadeva Temple at Khajuraho , the apex of Nagara style in the world. He was not only builder of empire but he also had the welfare of people at heart . Historical tanks and lakes are living proof of this fact. In order to dispense proper justice to his subjects he granted revenue free lands to learned Brahmins so that they might settle into his kingdom and their services might be utilized by the King<sup>21</sup>. Dhanga was succeeded by his son Ganda(1008-1017A.D.). There is no epigraphic record of any other contemporary account of his short reign. He was succeeded by Vidyadhara who was undoubtedly one of the greatest rulers of this dynasty. His greatness is not based on conquests but on heroic part he took in the defence of his country against the Muslim invasion, a fact even praised by Muslim historians. In 1017 Rajyapala , Pratihara King of Kannauj was defeated in an encounter with Mahmud of Gazni and forced to make humiliating treaty. Vidyadhara attacked Kannauj and Killed Rajyapala. It resulted in Mahmud’s invasion on Chandel kingdom in 1019<sup>22</sup>.This time Vidyadhara , perfering strategy to war , adopted “scorch earth” policy and retreated before Muslim army without engaging in any big fight and Mahmud being afraid of penetrating much into interior , had to return Gazni without much gain. Thus Vidyadhara happened to be only Indian ruler of those times who distinguished himself by containing Mahmud’s triumphant career and saving his kingdom from unprovoked destruction by the ruthless invader. After his death his successors lacking the ability of their illustrious predecessors. The Kalchuris defeated the Chandelas in the reign of Devaverman (1050-1060). Chandelas did not remain under the subjugation of the Kalchuries for long as Kirtiverman(1060-1100), the brother of Devaverman revived the fortunes of his

---

<sup>18</sup> Tiwari, Gorelal, “Bundelkhand ka samshipta Itihas”in hindi, Kashi Nagri Pracharini Sabha, 1934,p.34

<sup>19</sup> Mitra, op. cit.,p.54

<sup>20</sup> Bose, Nimai Sadan, “History of Chandelas of Jejakbhukti”,Calcutta, 1958,p.50

<sup>21</sup> Mitra,op.cit.,p.69

<sup>22</sup> Bose, op. cit.,p.56

dynasty defeating the Kalchuri king Karnadev. Besides being military genius Kirtiverman paid close attention to public works. In addition to other constructions in various parts his kingdom , He is credited with constructing Kirat Sagar lake to the west of Mahoba . He was also great patron of arts and letters. A highly philosophical drama like , the “Prabodhchandrodhayam” was composed under his patronage. He also issued several types of gold coins. Kirtiverman was succeeded by his son Sallaksana Verman(1100-1115) also mentioned as Hallaksana Verman in the coins issued by him. He is reputed to have gained success over the Parmaras and Calchuries. Not only he was able to stablish peace and order in the state but he also improved the living standard of the people and raised the reserves of the royal treasury . His successor Jaya Verman(1115-1120) having lost a portion of territory to the Gahadwala ruler Govind Chandra . His successor Prithvi Verman(1120-1129) did not succeed in restoring the lost glories of Chandelas. Prithvi Verman’s son Madan Verman (1129-1162) pursued a vigorous policy from very beginning of his reign, in reviving the strength and organization of Chandela power. He not only restored the lost possessions of his kingdom but even expanded his territories as far as Yamuna in north, Betwa in south west, Narmada in south and Rewa in the east. Besides being a great warrior he also patronized art and literature. He is credited to constructing a lake of Mahoba which bears his name as Madan Sagar and probably the great Belatal tank was also built during his reign and by his order. The site of fort at Mahoba near Madan Sagar founded by Madan Verman is now marked by a large mound covered with broken bricks and small mosque<sup>23</sup>. His many inscriptions near Nilkanth temple complex at Kalinjer are still found , starting with “Om Namah Shivay”. His son and successor Parmardi Dev(1165-1202) popularly known as PARMAL was the last great king of Chandela dynasty. Most important event of Parmal’s reign was his conflict with Prathvi Raj III, the famous Chauhan king of Delhi. The latter’s attempt to extend his territories led to a serious and sustained conflict between the armies of the two. Two folk accounts through light over struggle . these two are “Prathvi Raj Raso” written by Chand Bardai with “Parmal Raso” or “Alha Khand” by Jagnik. According to Chand Bardai , Prathvi Raj advanced towards Mahoba with a large force. He stationed another lagre force at Hamirpur. Tradition has it that Prathvi Raj held his camp at Sirsagarh on the bank of river Pahuj. A bloody battle ensued for eight days in which Malkhan, a Samant of Parmal, after killing eight generals of Prathvi Raj met a heroic death whereupon Prathvi Raj himself took the command. It is said that the fall of Sirsagarh was due to treachery of Mahil Parihar , the brother in law and Samanta of Parmal<sup>24</sup>. Mahilnourished a secret fellings of revenge against Chandelas and hence he

---

<sup>23</sup> Fuhrer,A., “the monumental antiquities and inscriptions in NW provinces and oudh”, Varanasi,1969,p.173

<sup>24</sup> Atkinson,op. cit.,p.132



sided with Prathvi Raj. He was also responsible for Alha and Udal, the two Banafar chiefs and the best warriors of the day, to have left Mahoba earlier to seek refuge in the court of Jai Chand, ruler of Kannauj. A number of localities are associated with the names of champion brothers and their fame has travelled far beyond the limits of Bundelkhand<sup>25</sup>. After the fall of Sirsawgarh Prathvi Raj marched towards Mahoba and camped on bank of Betwa. Realising the gravity of situation Parmal and his ministers, on the advice of Queen Malhan Devi, decided to seek temporary truce and in the meantime summoned the two Banafar chiefs from Kannauj. Prathvi Raj agreed to the proposal of having a truce for a few months but he remained camping on the banks of river. As the two Banafar chiefs had not been given a fair treatment by the Chandela ruler, they were unwilling to come back. According to Jaganika, Jai Chand, the ruler of Kannauj sent some of his best generals with a strong force with the Banafar chiefs to help Parmal. Bramhajit, son of Parmal along with Banafar heroes Alha and Udal started the battle of Mahoba. Thus Mahoba capital of Chandela kingdom was occupied by Prathvi Raj in 1182 A.D. He appointed Pajjun Rai, one of his generals as governor. Besides traditional accounts, the conflict between Chandela and Chauhan and the defeat of Parmal are also proved by inscriptions discovered in Shiv temple situated in Madanpur village. In one of these the names of Prathvi Raj and Parmardideva are given together while another mentions the conquest of Jejakhbukti Mandala by Prathvi Raj in 1182 A.D. Parmal had to face a greater enemy in 1202 in the shape of Turks under Qutb-Ud-Din Aibak who had penetrated into his kingdom. According to Hasan Nizami, the writer of Taz-Ul-Ma'sir, Parmal put up a gallant resistance against the Turks, but he was compelled to capitulate due to the failure of water supply. After winning the Kalinjer fort, Aibak appointed Hazbaruddin Hasan Arnal as governor of Kalinjer. The history of Chandela dynasty as one of the powers to be reckoned with in northern India ended thus in 1203 A.D. Chandelas regained the Kalinjer fort from Turks in 1229 but the glory of Chandelas was ended.

In medieval period, Bundelkhand was captured by Manmath Gaharwar of Benaras, Raja Bhar of Ujjain, Mewatis, Gayasuddin Tughlaq (1322), Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388) with Malik Us Sharq, Dariya Khan & Zafar Khan as Amir of Sultanate. With the collapse of political citadel at Delhi as a result of Timur's invasion in 1398-99, the administration of Bundelkhand was affected. Mahoba and Kalpi passed into hands of Mahmud Khan, son of governor of Kalpi. Sikandar Lodi had gained possession of few parts of Bundelkhand in 1489. The southern part of Bundelkhand became under the influence of Babur (1528), when he moved from Kalpi to Malwa. Finally Akbar gained the Kalinjer fort in 1569 by seizure of his general Majnu Khan Kaqs'al. Bundelkhand remained under Mughals upto the reign of Aurangzeb.

---

<sup>25</sup> Mitra, op. cit., p.122

Aurangzeb with the presence of Bundelas in the zone. Bundelas were warriors of Gaharwar branch originated from Benaras and the zone named after him as Bundelkhand. After Chandelas, Bundelas were only ruler having soft corner with local Bundeli people and were involved with public welfare works like construction of tanks and historical water bodies. Sohan Pal was first Bundela chief to be sovereign as he captured the famous fort of Garh Kunder from Khangars in mid of thirteenth century. Rudra Pratap, the seventh in descent from Sohanpal occupied Mahoba and all western parts of Bundelkhand. He constructed Orchha as new capital of Bundelas in 1531 on the bank of river Betwa. Rudra Pratap was succeeded by Bharti Chand contemporary to Akbar. Among Bundela rulers Maharaja Vir Singh Judev (1605-1627) was the finest ruler of Bundelkhand. His contemporary Mughal emperor Jahangir awarded him by title of “King of Bundelkhand” and primary mansab of 3000 jat. Vir Singh is still famous for public welfare works with prosperity. He started construction of 52 forts and 52 tanks at a time. Several people were employed during above mentioned construction. It is a matter of notice that Vir Singh Judev was credited for public welfare works after Chandelas at mass level. Vir Singh has credit to construct and renovate famous forts of Jhansi, Garh Kunder, Dhamoni, Datiya etc. He donated 81 monads gold to Keshav Rai Temple of Mathura in form of a Gold pillar, which was later on removed by Aurangzeb. His son Jujhar Singh became the next ruler of Bundelkhand. During 1636-41 Shah Jahan, Mughal emperor enraged at the preparations of Bundelas, who blocked up the route of Deccan, sent three separate forces into Bundelkhand – one under Mahabat Khan from Agra, a second under Khan-I-Jahan from south and a third under Abdullah from Allahabad. These forces soon reduced the zone under tranquility and punished severely all who had shown any opposition to Imperial authority. After this crush of Bundelkhand, a new hero from Bundelas named Champat Rai came in scene since 1641. He opposed Pahar Singh, representative of Mughal. Champat Rai helped Prince Aurangzeb in battle of Dharamt in 1658 during war of succession. Champat Rai became King of Bundelkhand in 1658 by order of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Champat Rai was assassinated by his wife Queen Sarandha in situation of revolt to Mughals. After Champat Rai, his fifth son Chhatrasal became the greatest leader of Bundelas. First he entered the Mughal army under Jai Singh commander in chief of Aurangzeb<sup>26</sup>. Seizing the opportunity of Aurangzeb’s long presence in Deccan, Chhatrasal extended his power over whole Bundelkhand. The Bundelas had become masters of whole zone to the west of Chambal and the Yamuna.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Haig W., & Burn R., “The Cambridge history of India”, vol.IV, Delhi, 1958, p.201

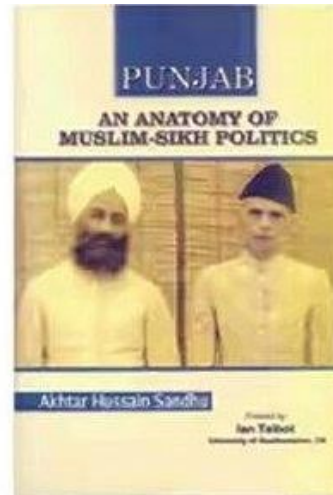
<sup>27</sup> The following couplet is famous in Bundelkhand regarding the frontiers of Bundelkhand

**br teqk mr uehk| br pcy mr Vld A  
N=I ky I syMu dh| jgh u dkgwgd AA**

## books

By Dr. Maria Isabel Maldonado Garcia

# Punjab politics under British Raj



**Title:** Punjab: An Anatomy of Muslim- Sikh politics | **Author:** Akhtar Hussain Sandhu  
**Genre:** Non fiction | **Pages:** 448 | **Price:** Rs 1500 | **Publisher:** Pak Institute of Regional Studies

**H**aving in consideration the fact that shelves are already bursting with accounts of the British conflict in India and there are many more to come, Dr. Akhtar Hussain Sandhu's terrific unique account of a nation suspended between peace and conflict, makes a fundamental undertaking for inclusion in any collection. The book entitled

Punjab: An Anatomy of Muslim- Sikh Politics explores the paramount years of the Muslim-Sikh conflict through a variety of social, cultural and political angles, ranging from friction and contentions-, strikes and the many different crisis – to more tranquil topics of culture, literature and poetry. It presents a fascinating drawing of a nation standing on an abyss, one that manages to salute key figures and themes while drawing on lesser-known connotations and events, all backed by the primary sources while depicting with utmost accuracy the Muslim point of view. We are provided with an epigrammatic embodiment of the political and diplomatic challenges that India faced in its seemingly unstoppable advance towards political, religious and cultural split.

The assortment of the accounts and the sheer multiplicity of the elements of society that it enfold, means that the story is fragmentary; the alluring historical glances of events leave the reader wanting more. In any case, this is indisputably the objective: no single study could hope to be absolute, as an alternative, should target to spark enthusiasms and stimulate awareness. Dr. Sandhu certainly achieves that. For example, Dr. Sandhu mentions the preliminary anxieties expressed by social and political reformers about the requirement of allotments, which it was thought might distract the lower classes from the central target of securing political restructuring. This was contrary to the upper and middle classes, who felt that allotments were essential to maintain workers away from the electoral process and other empowering activities. The tensions between the Sikhs and Muslims in British Punjab is an understudied topic of fundamental importance for a thorough

understanding of social relations in Punjab, where they were only a part of a bigger spectrum composed by two uttermost influential factors; the Hindus and the British. One of the most striking subthemes – which could perhaps have been drawn out even further to a separate chapter – is the recurrent constant tautness between social castes in relation to the role of religious rituals of both Sikhs and Muslims. From the mass of material that Dr. Sandhu has rigorously collected, fascinating accounts emerge: The torture inflicted on the Muslims by the Sikhs at the same time, the despotic rule of the foreigners who brought a meagre change in the educational, financial, political and social status of the common people.

The design of the book, the breathtaking image of its cover, is central to its attractiveness. While the figure of Qaid-i-Azam is familiar, the Sikh character is known as Bawa Bachittar Singh. Dr. Sandhu is brilliant at drawing attention to the crevices that anticipated the significant, dividing the events of the underlining conflict with its reductive dualistic antagonisms. The frictions within pre-war British society are presented through a reflection of the quarrels between two cultures and religions. The author reminds us of an unexpected end result as a sobering reminder of the fundamentalism of religious intolerance within the Sikh mentality of the time. The dexterous intertwining of acquainted premises with till now unknown aspects all through the book, makes this a perceptive and surprising study of Muslim-Sikh relations.

Prominent scholars from different universities and journalist have shared their opinion on the subjects relating to British Punjab, culture, Sikhs, Muslim struggle and Muslim-Sikh relations. They have appreciated the author on using wide range of primary sources and author's independent directions and new avenues of the subject.

*The reviewer is the author of Urdu: A Density Measure of its Etymological Components (Germany, 2014) and runs the Institute of Languages at University of the Punjab.*

### Subscription form

ISSN 2348-3814

KANPUR HISTORIOGRAPHERS

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY, INDOLOGY AND  
NUMISMATICS

Subscription Rate (annual only) please tick in your category

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| ₹ , ५५ , ५५ २०००  | For individuals of SAARC countries        |
| US dollars \$ 200 | Individuals Other than of SAARC countries |

For Subscription , make payment DD/ cash to HDFC Bank account no. 50200002911251  
Govind Nagar branch India in favopur of “New Archaeological & Genological Society”  
payable at Kanpur U.P. India (zip 208006) .IFSC : HDFC0000298

#### Particulars

Name (individual/organization).....

Father’s Name (individual only).....

Academic Qualification .....

Institution .....

Nationality .....

Postal Address .....

.....

.....ZIP.....

Mode of payment Net banking / cash deposit / demand draft

Amount paid.....for year.....

Mob.

Mail id.

Signature

(send form to secretary, New archaeological & Genological Society ,125/L/89,FF104  
,Govind Nagar Kanpur India 208006)  
used

photo copy of this form can be  
used

