



'Gold Rush' in Nilgiris-Wayanad: Colonial Gold Mining in South India (1879-1892)

Dr. Joshy Mathew

Head, Department of History
Pazhassiraja College Pulpally
Wayanad (Kerala) India

The colonial expansion of the metropolis in the world was chiefly driven by their economic motive. The British established various colonies in Asia including India for exploitation of wealth and valuable natural resources by the end of the eighteenth century. Along with the extraction of the timber wealth and introduction of the mono crop plantations, they tried their luck in the mining of gold in the hill tracts of South India. The hilly regions of Malabar and the Nilgiris-Wayanad were the chief centres of gold extraction in South India.¹ Even before the intervention of the British, some native landlords tried to extract gold from the land with the help of the tribal people. The aim of this paper is to analyse the gold mining activities in this area and examine the maniac rush for gold in Wayanad by the European capitalists between 1877 and 1892.

Gold Extraction of Natives

The hill tracts of Wayanad in Madras Presidency containing reefs of auriferous quartz were gold bearing since time immemorial. Natives had been working at them for untold ages. The King Solomon in Jerusalem had received many valuable things from the land of Ophir including gold, silver, ivory, ape and

¹ The Wayanad taluk, which is a part of the Western Ghats was originally consisted of three divisions known as North Wayanad, South Wayanad and South East Wayanad in colonial period. North and South Wayanad were known as Malabar-Wayanad and South East Wayanad was called Nilgiris-Wayanad. It was called Nilgiris-Wayanad because the three *Amsams* of South-East Wayanad-Nambalakov, Munnar and Cherankod were transferred to Nilgiris district with effect from 31st March 1877. See William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Vol-II, New Delhi, 1887, p.cccxxxiv .

peacock once in three years.² It is generally assumed that in the names of various places such as Ponnani, Ponmudi, Ponmana and Ponnorkode the prefix *Pon* denotes gold. *Ponnarippu* or tax on gold washing was one of the sources of the revenue of the early Malabar Rajas.³

Even before the coming of the British the Landlords of Wayanad had engaged in gold extraction from the earth. The hilly regions of Wayanad and surrounding areas in the South East Wayanad under the Nilgiris like Devala and Cherambadi were the significant gold mining centres. Pookood, Vythiri, Thariode, Thalappuzha and Meppadi areas of Wayanad were identified as the gold rich places of Malabar Wayanad⁴. The Nair landlords and Mappila Muslims of Malabar had engaged in gold extraction. The Mappilas leased land from the landlords for the collection of gold even if in a very limited scale. They had employed large number of tribal people like Kurumbar and Paniyas for the gold extraction work. A wooden washing dish known as *murriya* was used for washing gold from the sand by the Kurumbar and Paniyas. They swift gold particles from the surface soil on the hill sides, the stream sands and gravels and alluvial flats in swamps. The dish, '*murriya*' was made out of hard heavy wood. The washing of dish continued one after the other until gold was obtained. The Paniyas were paid four *annas* a day for each man for washing gold from the sand. The European plantation owners of Devala and Cherambadi employed large number of Paniyas and Kurumbar in their estates to wash for gold.

The Kurumba's skill in washing gold was very great and they were also painstaking and patient in the gold fields⁵. Nicolson mentioned that the workers in mines were treated most inhumanly⁶. According to the information furnished by Alexander Wright in 1857 around 400 persons worked in the gold mines of Wayanad⁷. But in the course of time Europeans realized that gold mining was not profitable in Wayanad. The government imposed Rs. 18 from each gold extracting *Taras* (land) of the landlord as tax. But many landlords were not able to pay the

² *The Bible*, 1 Kings 9:26-28. Many historians strongly believe that the location of Ophir was Malabar and the main reason was the presumption that no other location in the world but Malabar can provide all five articles above.

³ *Graeme's Report on the Revenue administration of Malabar 1822*, Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010, p. 91

⁴ In 1831 the Madras government appointed Lieutenant W. Nicolson as the superintendent in search for gold.

⁵ *Report on the Gold Mines- Southern Eastern Portion of Wayanad and the Carcoor Ghat*, Madras, 1880, p. 11.

⁶ *Reports of Lt. Nicolson and Other Papers Relating to Gold in Malabar*, Calicut, 1831, p. 72.

⁷ *Report on the Gold Mines 1880.... op.cit.*, p. 15.

tax to the government and the tax arrears increased up to Rs. 3156. 80 by the year 1860.⁸

Statement Exhibiting Income from Selected Sources of Revenue from Wayanad 1827-1856 (In rupees)

Years	Land Revenue	Akbary	Cardamom	Gold Dust	Upland Farm	Hill
1827	33,414	2,625	13,355	1,260	1,301	
1830	33,744	3,845	42,505	1,260	2,190	
1833	31,308	2,600	19,500	1,260	1,153	
1836	33,150	3,115	20,250	1,134	1,238	
1842	34,382	1,320	6,505	1,008	1,446	
1845	34,862	3,105	6,505	1,008	1,560	
1848	33,814	3,485	13,005	1,008	1,634	
1851	33,441	4,335	13,005	1,008	656	
1854	30,542	5,405	18,75	882	922	
1856	28,685	3,868	18,775	792	77	

Source: W. Robinson, *Report on the History, Condition and Prospects of the Taluk of Wynad 1857*, Calicut, 1917, p. 16.

Since the beginning of the British period in Malabar many reports confirmed the existence of gold and mining of gold in Malabar. The Joint Commissioner's Report on Malabar in 1792 and the Report of Francis Buchanan in 1807 brought attention British rulers to this fact. The information on gold in South East Wayanad provided by Dr. Aimslicie in 1813 and the T. H. Baber in 1830 also maintained the interest of Europeans administrators not only in India but in Europe. Later in 1831, W. Sheffield, Principal Collector of Malabar submitted an interesting report on the gold mining in Malabar.⁹ In 1865-66, Australian gold expert Mr. Sterns also visited Devala region of South East Wayanad in search for gold.¹⁰ The long asserted prolific and remunerative character of gold bearing quartz had attracted the interest of many enterprising Europeans and they reached Wayanad in search of gold. Besides, some of the planters who had lived in Australia previous to their coffee experience in Wayanad had acquainted with quartz reefs bearing gold.

While the coffee plantations of the Europeans declined they tried their luck

⁸ To avoid this non-payment of tax by the landlords, government strictly imposed license system and compulsory advance payment of tax by the landlords for extracting gold. See, T. B. Seluraj, *Innelakalile Kozhikode (Mal.), (Yesterday, s Calicut)* Mathrubhoomi Books, Kozhikode, 2015, p. 130.

⁹ W. Sheffield, *Report on the Gold Mines in Malabar 1931*, Calicut, p. 72

¹⁰ William King, 'Preliminary Note on the Gold Fields of South East Wynad', in Thomas Oldham(ed.), *Records of the Geological Survey of India* Vol. III, Calcutta, 1875, p. 30.

in gold mining. When they found out the gold reserve in Wayanad the Europeans expected great profit from Wayanad¹¹. Rocks have been collected from different localities during the process of the survey of gold fields. The Europeans calculated a profit of six *shillings* and eight *pens* while extracting gold from each ton of gold ore from Wayanad but the same was 3 *shilling* at the Victoria Mines in Australia during that time¹².

Alpha Gold Mining Company was the one of the earliest European gold mining companies established in 1874 with a capital investment of 10,000 pounds. A well experienced gold mining expert from Australia, Mr. Withers was appointed as the manager of the company.¹³ In the early years company made profit because of the systematic management of Mr. Withers. One of its principal reefs was the well known Skull Reef, so called because the remains of a native miner were found in the mine. Raja of Nilambur has leased a block of 15 acres of land near Devala to the promoters of Alpha Gold Mining Company for twelve years at an annual rent of Rs. 225.¹⁴ After the visit of William King, Deputy Superintendent of Geological Survey of India in 1878 and Brough Smyth, Secretary for Mines in Victoria in 1879 many gold mining companies started functioning in Wayanad. Moreover, the rush for gold by the European capitalists was influenced by many national and international events. Low rates of return on British government stocks, the shift of many European countries from silver or bimetallic standard to monometallic standard gold currency and subsequent scarcity of gold and decline of coffee plantations contributed to the establishment many gold mining enterprises in Wayanad.

The 'Gold Mania'

The mania for obtaining gold began by the end of 1879 when a company with a capital 100,000 pound was launched. In the next two years not less than 41 companies with a capital of over five million sterling were started in Nilgiris-Wayanad region.¹⁵ Most of these companies were floated in England and of the English companies 33 went to allotment and the sum obtained by them for investment in the industry amounted nominally to 40,50,000 pound.¹⁶ Of this,

¹¹ According to one report 'gold is almost universally distributed throughout the soils and quartz veins of Wayanad'. *Report on the Gold Mines of South East Portion of Wayanad and Carcoor Ghat*, Madras, 1880, p. 7.

¹² K. K. N. Kurup, 'Adhunika Keralam: Charitra Gaveshana Prabandhangal'(Mal),(Modern Kerala: Historical Research Articles) Thiruvananthapuram, 1995. P. 18.

¹³ C. Gopalan Nair, *Malabar Series-Wynad: Its People and Traditions*, (1911), New Delhi, 2000, p.6

¹⁴ William King, *Ibid.*, p. 45

¹⁵ A detailed list of main gold mining companies established in Wayanad was given in appendix.

¹⁶ W. Francis, *Madras District Gazetteers- The Nilgiris*, New Delhi, 1984, p.16.

however 23,75,500 was allotted for payment for the land in which the supposed mines were located and the balance amount was used for the working expense of the company. The price of land for mining ranged from 70 pound to not less than 2,600 pound per acres.¹⁷ The wild speculation in the stock market led to high spurt in the shares of the concerns and price was quoted at 50, 75 and even 100 per cent premium before the starting of the actual operation of the companies.¹⁸ The sensational reports of the company agents and so called 'mining experts' inflated the price of the shares of the company. In the Feverish excitement in 1881 the price of Alpha Gold mining Company's £ 1 share went up to £ 15.¹⁹

More and more coffee planters were attracted to this new industry on account of the heavy devastation of coffee plantation in Wayanad. The attack of borer, *Xylotrechus Quadripes* and a fungal attack of *Hemeleia Vastatrix* severely affected the coffee plants. Simultaneously, the condition of coffee planters became worse because of the heavy fall of the price of coffee in the international market. So, most of the planters in Wayanad began to look up the reefs in their estates to try their luck in mining gold. In the words of Francis Ford " In 1880 the district became the scene of the wildest, maddest and grossest speculation. Gold fever raged throughout the district. Planters threw aside the pruning knives, and seized the hammer and went to the hills chipping boulders in their search for visionary nuggets."²⁰ The owner of the Glenrock estate was one of the early planter started gold mining in the reefs of auriferous quartz. Suddenly, Devala and Pandallur, main location of gold mines blossomed into busy centres with rows of substantial buildings, post and telegraph offices, a hotel, bungalows of mining captains and a big race-course. To the mines large scale industrial machinery were imported from Europe for crushing stones and mining staff was also arrived from foreign countries.

Collapse of Gold Rush

Unlike the Australian and American gold-fields, the Indian mines did not yield large nuggets, but the gold which had been seen in the reefs is only in minutes strings and grains. The yield obtained by the companies up to the first quarter of 1883 was 9641 dwts. (pennyweight) of gold from 3597 tons of stone, or an average of 2.7 dwts. per ton). The actual crushing was slow to begin, all the companies made huge loss. The experts sent out were often impostors, even circus-clowns landed in Wayanad as 'mining expert'. In two years 15 of the 33 companies had passed into the hands of the liquidators. So the operations of many

¹⁷ Ibid, 17.

¹⁸ C. A. Innes and F. B. Evans, *Madras District Gazetteers- Malabar*, Vol. I, Madras, 1951, p.16

¹⁹ Ibid, 18.

²⁰ Francis Ford, *The Wayanad and the Planting Industry of Southern India*, Madras, 1895, p.6.

of the companies were suspended and eventually shut down in the course of two to three years. By the turn of the twentieth century mine centres had turned into nothing but ghost towns.

W. Francis narrates the piteous plight of post gold rush phase of South-East Wayanad as follows “ At Pandalur three or four houses, the old store, and traces of the race-course survive; at Devala are a grave or two; topping many of the little hills are derelict bungalows and along their contours run grass-grown roads; hidden under thick jungle are heaps of spoil, long-forgotten tunnels and lakhs worth of rusting machinery which was never erected. The great road to Vythiri was overgrown with grass and lies more machinery which never even reached its destination. Coffee estates existed on the sides of the road from Gudalur to Cherambadi were acquired by the gold mining companies and thenceforth utterly neglected and now not a single one of them all is kept up. Wayanad is now perhaps the most mournful scene of disappointed hopes in all the Presidency”.²¹ So, the Europeans stopped the mining activities in Wayanad and the companies were closed down and some of the mine owners committed suicide. In Churani near Thariyode European entrepreneur Smith and his wife Lissie Smith mined gold for several years but failed to make it successful. He had took 300 acres of land for gold mining from the Nairs of Pozhuthana *Edam*. Due to severe loss of the company Smith committed suicide in 1792.²² In short the gold rush of Europeans in Wayanad was a complete failure.

²¹ W. Francis, *Ibid.*, p.19

²² Joshy Mathew, *Tradition, Migration and Transformation: Agrarian Migration to Wayanad-A Socio-Historical Perspective*, Thalassery, 2011, p.88.

Appendix
List of Gold Mining Companies in Nilgiris-Wayanad during the ‘Gold-Rush of 1880s’

Sl. No.	Name of Company	Year	Capital (Pounds)
1	Alpha Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1874	10,000.00
2	Devala Moyar Gold Mining Company	1880	200,000.00
3	Devala-Central Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	100,000.00
4	Indian Glenrock Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	100,000.00
5	Indian Gold Mines Company	1880	187,490.00
6	Indian Grange Gold Mining Company	1880	100,000.00
7	Indian Mammoth Gold Mines Ltd.	1880	100,000.00
8	Indian Phoenix Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	150,000.00
9	Needle Rock Estate & Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	125,000.00
10	Rhodes Reef Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	190,000.00
11	South East Wayanad Estates & Gold Mining	1880	100,000.00
12	Wala-Wynaad India Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1880	75,000.00
13	Wynaad Perseverance Estate Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	1880	80,000.00
14	Dingley Dell Estates Gold Mining Company	1881	100,000.00
15	Indian Consolidated Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1881	100,000.00
16	Indian Kingston & Sandhurst Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	1881	150,000.00
17	Indian Trevelyan Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1881	150,000.00
18	Nilgiri Gold & Cinchona Company Ltd. India	1881	120,000.00
19	South India Gold Mining Company	1881	150,000.00
20	South Wynaad Gold Mining Company Ltd.	1881	100,000.00
21	Tambracherry Estate & Wynaad Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	1881	160,000.00
22	The Central Wynaad Gold Mining Company	1881	100,000.00
23	The Cherambadi (Wynaad) District Gold Mining Co.Ltd.	1881	100,000.00
24	The Parcherry Indian Gold Mining Company	1881	150,000.00
25	The Wentworth Gold Mining & Indian Estates Co. Ltd.	1881	120,000.00
26	The Wynaad Glen Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	1881	60,000.00
27	Wynaad District Gold Mining Company Ltd	1881	100,000.00
28	Wentworth Gold Mining & Indian Estates Co. Ltd.	1882	120,000.00
29	Wynaad Reduction and Smelting Corporation Ltd.	1882	250,000.00
30	Mysore-Wynaad Consolidated Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	1896	150,000.00
31	Nilgherry & South Indian Gold Mining Syndicate Ltd.	-	100,000.00
32	Ophir Gold Mining of India Ltd.	-	100,000.00
	Total in Pounds		3,897,490.00

Source: Amalendu Jyothishi, *Informal Gold Mining in Nilgiri-Wayanad Region of India*, Australian National University, 2015, p. 15-16.

When we analyse the industrial phase of the entire colonial period this type of a mad rush for establishing industry cannot be seen anywhere in the world. In this gold mania thousands of acres of flourishing coffee in Wayanad had been thrown out of cultivation when the estate owners were seized with gold fever. When the gold mining ended in failure the European entrepreneurs lost both coffee plantations and gold mines in Wayanad. The lack of patience, extravagance and avariciousness of some European capitalists spoiled the very name of Wayanad among the investors in Europe.



State and the transfer of agrarian resources: a case study of Early Medieval Chamba (600-1200 a.d.)

Roshi Charak

Ph.D. Scholar
Department of History,
University of Jammu
Jammu (J&K) India

ABSTRACT

The paper seeks to understand the aspects of the process of donation of land in the early Medieval Chamba on the basis of the study of some of the land charters. The issues which have been taken up for examination in the paper for are the nature of authority behind the grant and also the nature of the rights and privileges which were transferred in favour of the donee/receipients. The analysis aims at understanding if there was any correspondence between the authority behind the grant and the nature of rights and privileges transferred in favor of the donees. The understanding of such issues becomes important not only to understand the changes in the realm of agrarian economy but also the extent and the level had the differential authorities within the state had role in it. The study would also bring out the stratification that existed within the authority structure and also the manner it bore upon the agrarian system of the early medieval Chamba.

Keywords: State authority, land grants, agrarian resources, rights and privileges, subjugation.

INTRODUCTION

Land is the primary natural resource of wealth and economy for a state. It is the fundamental asset of mankind, is one of the crucial natural resources on which the base of agriculture and other increasing variety of human activities depends.

Land grants have played a very important role in invigorating the socio-economic history of early medieval northern India and have been assigned a key role in historical transformation from ancient to the medieval period. There are various views of the historians about the assignment, allocation, retention, impinging and its impact on the life of the people. Nevertheless, there is equal consensus among the scholars that land grants was the common practice of the period. R.S. Sharma suggests that the origin and development of political feudalism lies in the land grants made to the brahmanas from the first century A.D onwards. R.S. Sharma documented that the two features of the land grants, which became frequent from the fifth century A.D, were the transfer of all sources of revenue, including pasturages, hides, forced labour, all hidden treasures and deposits and the surrender of police and administrative functions.

²³The rise of the class of intermediaries through the state action of giving grants to them²⁴ is the crucial element in R.S. Sharma's construction of Indian feudalism. The existence of forced labour and serfdom indicates the existence of feudal structure in ancient India²⁵. Land grants by generating a landed aristocracy are supposed to have brought about the fragmentation of political power and subjection, degradation of the artisans etc²⁶.

Thus, in the present paper an attempt is made to study and analyse the land charters, which is a textual document itself make us cognizant about the state authority and the transfer of agrarian resources with the land rights and the privileges in the early medieval period is really valuable for the construction of the history of Chamba (a district now in Himachal Pradesh).

The total number of inscriptions found in Chamba amounts to one hundred and thirty, of which fifty are of the pre-muhammadan period and eighty of the muhammadan period.²⁷ Among the first fifties, we have six copper-plate charters (out of which one is spurious) denotes the grant of land belongs to the early medieval period. The first charter that we have is the Brahmor copper-plate issued by Yugakara-Varman²⁸ (A.D. 940)²⁹. He has been described as *Pramabhataraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeswar-Shrimad Yugakarvarmn-dev*,³⁰ which is indicative of

²³R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism*, 3rd ed., Haryana, 2006, p.2.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.321.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.204.

²⁶ Om Prakash deny the ideas of the scholars while explaining the nature of land grants; Om Prakash, *Early Indian Land Grants and State Economy*, Allahbad, 1988, p.1.

²⁷ J.Ph.Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba*, part 1, Archeological Survey of India, Government of India, p.1994, p.27.

6. J.Ph.Vogel, *op.cit.*, plate xvi, fig.15 no.14, p.159.

²⁹ J.Hutchinson & Vogel, *The History of Punjab Hill States*, 1933, vol.2, p.278.

³⁰ J.Ph.Vogel, *op.cit.*, plate xvi, fig.15 no.14, p.162.

his sovereign status. The grant was issued in the year A.D.950³¹.It speaks of the grant to the temple of Narsimha.It intends to be a rent-free grant³² which has been described as:-

2 *bhu* of *kohli*³³ land of the Khani hospice³⁴ in the *purva*³⁵ belonging to the *grama*³⁶ of Vidavika belonging to the Brahmapura district³⁷ of his domain. Out of these a field, Sabdabagga by name, which was enjoyed (lit. entered) by the son of Harihalla Rankila, is given in exchange. Also in the village of Grima one *pitaka*³⁸ of rice is given from the *vapya*³⁹ land of Kutika which was [previously] enjoyed by the sons of Rahanka collectively and belongs to the Akutanagavika. Further in the vicinity of the Khani hospice is the Yamalika kitchen-garden⁴⁰ out of the *vapya* land there, two, in figures 2, *pitakas* [are given]. [These] together with that of Kutika [make] three *pi*. And further, half the kitchen-garden.

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the following immunities and administrative rights in favour of the donee/recipient in the form of tax-free land grant and transfer the resources like kitchen garden out of the *vapya* land with the immunity of no obstruction⁴¹.

The second charter that we have is the Sungal copper-plate,issued by Vidaghdavarman⁴² (A.D.960)⁴³.He has been described as *Pramabhatraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeswar-Shrimad Vidaghda-dev*,⁴⁴ which is indicative of his

³¹ Exact date is not given,rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession of Yugakaravarman in A.D.940+issuance of the land charter in the 10th year of Yugakaravarman's reign=A.D.950.

³² J.Ph.Vogel,,*op.cit.*,plate xvi,fig.15 no.14,p.164.

³³ Wet land ;irrigational land.D.C.Sarcar,*Indian Epigraphical Glossary*,Motilal Banarsidas,Delhi-7,1966,p.no.159

³⁴ Khani is name of a village which still retains its name [mapKhani(means a "mine")] and hospice is the "matha", J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,p.1994, ,plate xvi,fig.15 no.14,p.160.

³⁵ "The above", D.C.Sarcar,*op.cit.*,1966,p.no.267.

³⁶ Field, D.C.Sarcar,*op.cit.*,1966,p.no.119.

³⁷ *Mandal*, J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xvi,fig.15 no.14,p.162.

³⁸ A measure of capacity, D.C.Sarcar,*Indian Epigraphical Glossary*,Motilal Banarsidas,Delhi-7,1966,p.no.251.

³⁹ *Vapya*, a land measure;an irrigation well,a step well, D.C.Sarcar,*op.cit.*,p.362; 'land watered from tank', J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,p.160.

⁴⁰ *Shakvatika*, J.Ph.Vogel,*Antiquities of Chamba*,part 1, Archeological Survey of India,Govt of India,p.1994, ,plate xvi,fig.15 no.14,p.163.

⁴¹ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xvi,fig.15,no.14,p.164.

⁴² J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xvii,no.15 p.164.

⁴³ J.Hutchinson &Vogel,*The History of Punjab Hill States*,1933,vol.2,p.290.

⁴⁴ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xvii,no.15 p.166.

sovereign status. The grant was issued in the year A.D.964⁴⁵. It speaks of the grant to the Brahmana Nandu. It intends to be an *agrahara* land, which has been described in the following terms:-

[there is] one *bhu* of land, Seri by name, of which the boundaries are these: on the east side the limit of the rent-free land (*agrahara*) of [the village] of Patala, on the south side the limit known as “the great slope,” on the west side the limit of the slope of the Khanibagga [field] on the north side the limit known as Prahabagga. One *bhu* [of land] thus bounded, together with the houses and kitchen-gardens situated thereon. Further in that same village [there is] another half *bhu* [of land] Lavala by name, of which the boundaries are: on the east side the precipice, on the south side the large rock, on the west side the rivulet⁴⁶ (?) Majvalika by name, on the north side the limit of the path to the pasture-ground⁴⁷ of Puskari. Half a *bhu* thus bounded together with the above described *bhu* [to wit] one and a half *bhu* as far as its limits, grass⁴⁸, grazing⁴⁹ and pasture-ground, together with fruit-trees and with the water-courses and channels⁵⁰, with approaches, ingress and egress, with fallow-land and cultivated land, with [the fine for] the ten offences, to be enjoyed by the succession of sons, sons’ sons, and so forth, uncurtailable, unopposed. [with the privilege that it is] not to be entered by district-officers or their servants, free from tax, inalienable, for as long a time as the moon, the sun, the ocean and the earth shall endure .

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the transfer of the following administrative rights:-

It speaks of the transfer of all sources of revenue including pasture-grounds, rivulet, fruit-tress, water-courses and channels. The donor not only abandoned his revenues but also the rights to govern the inhabitants of the village, that was granted. Enough administrative rights were given up in the grant made by the donor including with approaches, ingress and egress with fallow land and cultivated land, with the ten-offences to be enjoyed by the donee and his successors uncurtailable, unopposed and could not be entered by the royal officers

⁴⁵ Exact date is not given, rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession of Vidaghdavarman in A.D.960+year of grant of land by Vidaghdavarman in the 4th year of his accession=A.D.964.

⁴⁶ *Kuppto*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op.cit.*, plate xvii, no.15 p.167.

⁴⁷ *Gocara*, J.Ph.Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba*, part 1, Archeological Survey of India, Govt of India, p.1994, plate xvii, no.15 p.167; , D.C.Sarcar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi-7, 1966, p.no.116.

⁴⁸ *Tr na*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op.cit.*, plate xvii, no.15 p.167; , D.C.Sarcar, *op.cit.*, p.344.

⁴⁹ *Goyuthi(gavyuti)*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op.cit.*, plate xvii, no.15 p.167; , a distance of about four miles, D.C.Sarcar, *op.cit.*, p.113.

⁵⁰ *Kullaka-paniya*; *kullaka*, a kind of channel and *paniya* denoted water, so, *kullaka-paniya* means water-channel, D.C.Sarcar, *op.cit.*, p.165.

and could not be disturbed and inferred by the government officials and their servants⁵¹.

The third land charter that we have is the Spurious-sai copper-plate, issued by Vidaghdavarman⁵² (A.D.960)⁵³. He has been described with the title as *Dharmapratipalaka -shri-Pramhatraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeshwar-Shrimad Vidaghdvarm-de*,⁵⁴ which is indicative of his sovereign status. The grant was issued in the sastra year 27⁵⁵It speaks of the grant to the Brahmana Kalasi-sarman. It intends to be an agrahara land, which has been described in the following terms:-

It is to be enjoyed by him and his offspring for as long as the moon, the sun and the earth shall endure. These are the boundaries. On the east side the boundary is as far as the rock; on the south side the boundary is as far as the hoe-marked rock behind [the village of] Salo; on the west side the boundary is as far as the cattle-tract of Sumangala (i.e. Sungal); on the north side the boundary is as far as the Cali Nali including house and shop, the boundary as far as the Muredi Khad, the boundary as far as [the hamlet of] Balyare Kasyarota(?).

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the following immunities and administrative rights in favour of the donee/receptient:-

This land grant transfer the rights of cattle tract;house and shop with the right to enjoy the it for the unlimited time period by the donee and his successors⁵⁶.

The fourth land charter that we have is the Kulait copper-plate,issued by Somavarman⁵⁷(A.D.1060)⁵⁸. He has been described with the title *Pramabhatraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeswar-Shrimad Somavarm-dev*,⁵⁹ which indicates his sovereign authority. The grant was issued in the year A.D.1067⁶⁰It speaks of the grant to a Brahman⁶¹.It intends to be an agrahara⁶² land which has been described in the following terms:-

⁵¹ J.Ph.Vogel,op.cit.,plate xvii,no.15,p.168.

⁵² J.Ph.Vogel,*Antiquities of Chamba*,part 1, Archeological Survey of India,Govt of India,p.1994, ,plate xviii,no.16 p.169.

⁵³ J.Hutchinson &Vogel,*The History of Punjab Hill States*,1933,vol.2,p.290..

⁵⁴ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviii,no.16 p.171

⁵⁵ Exact date is not given,rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession

⁵⁶ J.Ph.Vogel,op.cit.,plate xviii,no.16,p.169.

⁵⁷ J.Ph.Vogel,*Antiquities of Chamba*,part 1, Archeological Survey of India,Govt of India,p.1994, ,plate xviv,no.24 p.182

⁵⁸ J.Hutchinson &Vogel,op.cit.,p.291.

⁵⁹ J.Ph.Vogel,*Antiquities of Chamba*,part 1, Archeological Survey of India,Govt of India,p.1994, ,plate xviv,no.24 p.185.

⁶⁰ Exact date is not given,rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession of Somavarman in A.D.1060+ the grant of land in the 7th year of Somavarman's reign =A.D.1067.

⁶¹ Brahmana of the house of Kasyapa,the decendant of three prominent sages and adherent of the school of the Vajasaneyas,J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xxiv,no.24,p.185.

has granted one *bhu* in Kulika-gostha, which belongs to the Trighatta (ka) district of his domain and was occupied by Rangu(ka)'s son Ranaditya and belonged to the latter's son Udma—in figures 1 *bhu* occupied by Rangu(ka)'s son— as far as its limits with grass, grazing, and pasture-ground, with fallow land large and small, with fruit-trees *and water, with* ingress and egress, together with gardens and resting-places⁶³, for as long as the moon and the sun.

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the immunities and administrative rights in favour of the donee/receptient like the transfer of the rights of all revenue sources which includes grass⁶⁴-grazing,⁶⁵ pasture-grounds;with fallow land-large and small,fruit-trees and water,gardens and resting-places⁶⁶ as long as the moon and the sun.It means that the land grant gave the right of inheritance of the same land for the unlimited time-period.Apart from this the land charter also provide the donee with the immunity in form of ingress and egress in the donated resources⁶⁷.

The fifth land charter that we have is the Chamba copper-plate,issued by Somavarman and Asata⁶⁸ (A.D.1060).He has been described with the title *Prambhatraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeswar-Shrimad Somavarm-dev,*⁶⁹ which indicates his sovereign authority. The grant was issued in the year A.D.1071⁷⁰.It speaks of the grant to Lord Vishnu, cook and watchman. It intends to be an agrahara land, which has been described in the following terms:-

Be it known unto you, that within the domain under our sway in the Panthila district there are four *bhumi* of land belonging to Kuloti, enjoyed by the queen, the illustrious Rardha of divine descent, and at Mungala two *bhumi* belonging to the cook Surambhata, and at Vata there are two *bhumi* belonging to the *Chonneraka-gosthika*, and in the Tavasaka district at Bhadravarma there was one *bhu* held by Vijjaula of Bhadravah, and at Sarahula there waa one *bhu* held by Bhatta Vasanta, and at Dhalyaka two *bhumi* in Lartuka which belong to the watchman the son of Denna, and in the same village two *bhu* in Jaudhaka, belonging to the second watchman, the son of Ramanjaya, and in the Pārakamata district at Mangala in Dhjaulika two *bhumasaka* belonging to the son of Lutthuka

⁶² Agrahara,a rent free land given to Brahmanas;a rent free village,D.C.Sarkar,*op.cit.*,p.10.

⁶³ *Vishramopetam*, J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviv,no.24,p.182.

⁶⁴ Tr na,J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviv,no.24,p.185;D.C.Sarcar,*op.cit.*,p.344.

⁶⁵ Gocara,J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,platexviv,no.24,p.185;D.C.Sarcar,*op.cit.*,p.116.

⁶⁶ *Vishramopetam*,J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviv,no.24,p.185.

⁶⁷ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviv,no.24,p.187.

⁶⁸ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,plate xviv,no.25 p.187.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*,p.193.

⁷⁰ Exact date is not given,rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession of Somavarman in A.D.1060+grant of land by Somavarman in the 11th year of his reign=A.D.1071.

and two *bhumasaka* belonging to the son of Humrtaka, both together making one *bhu*. In figures: of Kuloti 4 *bhu*, at Mungala 2 *bhu*, at Vata 2 *bhu*, at Bhadravarma 1 *bhu*, at Sarahula 1 *bhu*, at Dhalyaka 4 *bhu*, at Mañgala I *bhu*, thus 15 thus *bhu*, thus on the previously established terms of occupancy, as far as their limits, grass⁷¹, grazing⁷² and pasture-ground⁷³, with fallow land large and small, with ingress and egress, with fruit-trees and water, together with houses, kitchen.gardens⁷⁴, orchards⁷⁵, and resting-places⁷⁶; also from the storehouse of Bhadravarma annually one *khari* of grain, in figure 1 *kha*, of grain. Out of these [lands] the two *bhumasaka* of the son of Lutthuka on the road to Mangala in Parakamata are bestowed as an *agrahara* on the Lord Vishnu, founded here by order of the illustrious Pasata the son of the Maharaja. The remaining 14 *bhu* 2 *ma*, and 1 *kha*, of grain are granted by me for as long as moon and sun shall endure, uncurtailable, inalienable, unopposed, as an *agrahara* by a formal libation of water. Here again is written that, in exchange for the four *bhumasaka* of Mangala in Phrakamata, four, in figures 4, *bhumasaka*, belonging to the sons of Savayika, are given as an *agrahara* in apportionment (?) to the two gods.

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the following immunities and administrative rights in favour of the donee/receipient :-

It speaks of the transfer of maximum resources of revenue to the donee including grass-grazing & pasture grounds, wiyh fallow land large and small, with fruit-trees and water together with houses, kitchen garden, orchards⁷⁷ and resting places. Here, the donee also get the immunity by getting the right to ingress and egress in all the above revenue sources⁷⁸.

The sixth land charter that we have is the Thundu copper-plate, issued by Asata⁷⁹ (A.D.1080)⁸⁰. He has been described with the tittle *Pramabhatraka-Maharajadhiraja-Parmeswar-Shrimad Asata-dev*,⁸¹ which is the indicative of his

⁷¹ *Tr na*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193; D.C.Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p.344.

⁷² *Goyuthi(gavyuti)*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193; a distance of about four miles, D.C.Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p.113.

⁷³ *Gocara*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193; D.C.Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p.116.

⁷⁴ *Shakvatika*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193.

⁷⁵ *Variksharam*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193.

⁷⁶ *Vishramopetam*, J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.193

⁷⁷ *Variksharam*, J.Ph.Vogel, *Antiquities of , Chamba*, part 1, Archeological Survey of India, Govt of India, p.1994, , plate xviv, no.25 p.193.

⁷⁸ J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xviv, no.25, p.196.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, plate xxvi, no.26 p.197.

⁸⁰ J.Hutchinson & Vogel, *The History of Punjab Hill States*, 1933, vol.2, p.292..

⁸¹ J.Ph.Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no.26 p.198.

sovereign status. The grant was issued in the year A.D. 1085⁸². It speaks of the grant to Brahmana Maca. It intends to be an *agrahara* land, which has been described in the following term:-

Be it known unto you that within the domain under our sway, in the Bhattara district there is one *bhu* of land belonging to Dalima which has been enjoyed by Uddhara, the son of Canna, and six *bhumi-masaka* of Vanjillika, together in figure 1 *bhu* 6 *ma*. [This land], on the terms of its previous occupancy, as far as its limits, grass⁸³, grazing⁸⁴ and pasture-ground⁸⁵, with fallow-land large and small, with fruit-trees and water, with ingress and egress, with houses, kitchen-gardens⁸⁶ and so on, trees, gardens and resting places⁸⁷ together with all that is attached to it, has been granted as an *agrahara* to the Brahman Maca, the son of Purnaraja, the grandson of Dhananjaya of the house of Kasyapa, after a formal libation of a handful of water, for as long a time as the sun, the moon and the earth shall endure. This grant is to be observed by all the above-named royal officers, to be enjoyed by the succession of his sons and sons' sons, inalienable, uncurtailable, unobstructed. Let no hindrance whatever be caused [to him]. Let him, on the authority of the copper-charter, issued by us, live and make [others] to live, enjoy and make [others] to enjoy. Let him act as he pleases. Let no one offer obstruction.

Apart from these the charter also speaks of the transfer of the king's control over almost all sources of revenue, including grass-grazing and pasture-grounds together, with fallow-land, large and small, fruit-trees, gardens and resting places together with all that is attached to it. Administrative rights were also transferred that the land must be enjoyed by the donee and his successors without any hindrance. The donee is authorized to live and make (others) to live, enjoy and make (others) to enjoy; act as he pleases without any obstruction, completely signify the transfer of all the administrative rights to the donee, therefore, the right of sub-infeudation. The privilege was fortified by the provision that government officials were not ordered to create any disturbance in the enjoyment of the village or getting it enjoyed by others, in its cultivation or getting it cultivated by others.⁸⁸

⁸² Exact date is not given, rough date is estimated on the basis of the date of accession of Asata Deva in A.D. 1080+ grant of land by Asatadeva in the 5th year of his reign=A.D. 1085.

⁸³ *Tr na*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 197; D.C. Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

⁸⁴ *Goyuthi (gavyuti)*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 197; a distance of about four miles, D.C. Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p. 113

⁸⁵ *Gocara*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 197; D.C. Sarcar, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

⁸⁶ *Shakvatika*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 197.

⁸⁷ *Vishramopetam*, J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 197.

⁸⁸ J.Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, plate xxvi, no. 26, p. 199.

Conclusion

The above mentioned inscriptions were issued by the king suggests that the king had many claims over the village land and exceptionally powerful indicates a centralized authority. The above mentioned land grant inscriptions firstly indicates the unequal distribution of land in the villages among the recipients in particular and the peasant class in general which obviously clear that certain people enjoyed a greater share in the sources of production which directly leads to the unmanagement of land further got cultivated by petty peasants either through lease holding or share cropping. Peasantry get divested more and more of its homogeneous and egalitarian character because of the lack of labour power and plenty of land among the donees create conditions for introducing an element of compulsion i.e., forced labour.⁸⁹ Secondly, the rights and privileges generates the superior rights for the recipient in the land. In the above said land charters the recipient enjoyed the rights and privileges over the kitchen-gardens, rivulet, pasture-ground, fruit-trees, water-courses and channels along with approaches ingress and egress with fallow land and cultivated land, orchards and resting places while some land grants with the inclusion of the privilege of ten-offences to be enjoyed by the succession of son's, son uncurtailed and unopposed with no hinderance, no obstruction, act he(recipient) pleases on the authority of the copper-charters issued by the king. All these rights and privileged empowered the recipient to work according to his own will and to form a straightedge system to rule the people, to enjoy the sources and to manage the socio-economic system which ultimately led to a new socio-economic formation. Large and small rights and privileges led to the emergence of small and big landlords with difference in their political power and authority which automatically leads to the emergence of feudalism. And once the feudalism begins all the rights and privileges over the donated land make the agrarian production dependable on the recipient because of the transformation of all the agrarian resources to him, and curbed the freedom to act and process of peasant production. For instance, plough agriculture depend upon the use of cattle always and for the continuous supply of food to the cattle there is need of fodder which is available only in the common pasture grounds. The right over the common pasture-grounds by the recipient restrict its usage freely without his permission. So, what the peasant could do? Similarly the use of water also by the consent of the donee of that land create a tough situation which hinder the peasant's control over production. Non-existence of the legal norm in the land charters restrain the peasantry to appeal in case of dispute or violation leads to the forcible imposition of obedience i.e., subjugation of the peasantry class and the new sources could be exploited by the donee according to their needs as the royal

⁸⁹J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,p.166.

officers were not allowed to make any obstruction in the territory of recipient. No land grant lay down the obligations of the religious/secular ,which empowers the donee to do anything and the unlimited time period to enjoy the donated land till the existence of moon and sun made the recipient free from every fear and this is strengthened more when the donee and his successors are privileged with uncurtailed and unopposed rights. These rights and priveleges of the recepients affected immediately towards the theoretical ownership of the soil,acted as a puppeteer over the artisans,cultivators and merchants living in that village which specify that the grant really bear with it a legal claim over the people inhabiting the village land further clearly marks the agrarian rights of peasants under the strong hold o the recipient in general and state in particular. In this process, those who were in ‘low occupation’ were considered “impure”, were assigned the status of untouchables⁹⁰,kept out of the temples and were ordered to live at the fringes of the village because in land grants to temples, land came to be administered by the Brahmanas or by the temple executive committees. So, the temple land was in the supervision of Brahmana or non-Brahmana landed elite. The new landed elite also consisted of local peasant clan chiefs or heads of kinship groups. Hence, different land grants raise different strata of intermediaries between the king and the people on the basis of the endowments. Therefore, it is this variation which comes out led to the partial change in holding, organizing and managing the rights and priveleges by the donee/recipient. Thus, under the shadow of the authority in the land charters in the form of rights and priveleges, the recipients’ exploit the state peasants economically in an effective manner.

⁹⁰ J.Ph.Vogel,*op.cit.*,p.168.



Rigid theories and flexible realities: The inclusion of Indo-Greeks to the Indian social structure

Shareena Jasmin P K

Parakkadan House
Palliyarappadi, Pulpatta
Malappuram (Kerala) India

The post Maurya period witnessed a series of movements from across the north western borders of India. With these movements Indian society came into contact with new set of people and new set of ideas which were hitherto unknown and untouched the social, cultural and political life of India. Indo-Greeks, the first group of people who crossed Hindukush and entered in to India were politically strong and economically sound. The presence of Greeks in India created social tension, because the four fold distinction of Indian society which was established and enforced by Brahmanical ideology had reluctance to absorb these new set of people as a part of caste hierarchy. The later adaptation and assimilation of Indo-Greeks can be viewed in terms of theoretical rigidity and practical flexibility of Indian caste system.

This paper entitled "Indo -Greeks and Indian social structure", as the title itself shows is primarily concerned about the question of how Indian social structure based on varna system, which was established and enforced by brahmanical ideology responded to the presence of Greeks in India who were both politically powerful and economically sound. Here I am emphasizing the aspect of theoretical rigidity and the practical flexibility of Indian caste system. I also examine the existence of Greeks outside the cast society i.e. the nature of relationship between Greeks and Buddhism. So this paper on Indo -Greeks is mainly focused on four

main aspects like the term 'Yavana', the coming of Indo- Greeks in to India, societal response and the incorporation of Indo - Greeks in to the existing social structure, and finally the Greeks outside the caste society.

¹

The Indo- Greeks were known in early Indian literature as 'Yavanas'. The word was derived from the old Persian word 'Yauna', signifying originally the Indian Greeks, but later all people of Greek origin.² We have also references denoting these group of people as 'Yona', 'Yonaka' etc. But historically the first known form in extant Indian literature is 'Yavana' and not 'Yona' and 'Yona' can be a normal replacement of Sanskrit term 'Yavana'.³ The earliest Indian form denoting Indo-Greeks as 'Yavana' attested in Panini. In much later periods, the term 'Yavana' gradually extended to include not only the local Greeks, but any group of people coming from West Asia or eastern Mediterranean. Even in south India the traders from Rome and later the Arabs were called as 'Yavanas'.⁴In this paper I am using the word 'Yavana' to denote Indo - Greeks.

" kings (subordinate to Mauryas) disappeared under the impact of Greek invasion; only the 'yavanas' appeared to command. The Maurya administration had completely broken down. The tax collectors of Demetrius having grown in numbers fearlessly devoured the people, since there was no authority left to bring them to book. In fact in the wake of Greek advance there was complete breakdown in the country of all order- social, religious, moral, economic and administrative. Social order as characterized by 'varnavyavastha' suffered a shattering blow. Sexual laxness prevailed. Friendships were made for the sake of women."⁴

The above cited example from the Yuga Purana of Gargisamhita shows the dominance of Yavanas in India and it makes clear that the Brahmin authorities vehemently opposed the presence of Yavanas, because these new set of people challenged the social order, culture and values raised by the Brahmin authorities. Above all the invasions and innovations of foreign people like Yavanas shook the foundation of Indian society, which was deep rooted in the four fold distinction of varna system. So this initiated a phase of crisis referred as 'Kali yuga' in puranas. This paper is an attempt to show how did Yavanas were incorporated to Indian society, which was bounded by caste rules.

It is important to go through the political history of Indo - Greeks to have an understanding about the establishment and existence of Greek power in India. The

¹ Mohan, M.V.D. "The Greeco- Sunga Period of Indian History". Ludhiana; 1960, p.122

² Jha, D.N. "Early India - A Concise History". New Delhi; 2004, p.119

³ Narain, A.K "The Indo - Greeks". New Delhi; 1957, p.169

⁴ Thapar, Romila. "Ancient Indian Social History - Some Interpretations". New Delhi; 2010, p.165

end of the Achaemenid rule in Iran and death of Alexander gave rise to kingdoms ruled by Alexander's erstwhile generals, for instance, the Seleucid kingdom that was contiguous with the Mauryan. It was Demetrius, the son of Euthedemus took his armies to the south-east of Hindukush where he successfully acquired territory. He is said to have defeated the Subhagasena, the Mauryan ruler in 206 BC. Eventually a Demetrius who was probably the second king of this name came to rule large area in southern Afghanistan, Punjab and the Indus valley, thus establishing the Indo-Greek power in north Western India.⁵ The best remembered of the Indo-Greek king was Menander, who stabilized the Indo-Greek power in addition to extending its power in India. However, the Indo-Greeks in north western India did not survive for long. It succumbed to the nomadic tribes known as Scythians, referred as Sakas in India, coming from central Asia.

The penetration of Indo-Greeks influenced the government, society, religion, literature and art of ancient India. The very fact that India absorbed the influence of Greeks speaks then youthful nature of Indian civilization. In fact, Indian society known for its flexibility and the ability to adapt, accepted many of the Greek traditions like the western theories of astrology and medicine, and perhaps the development of Gandhara art can be viewed as the important impact of Greeks in India. So during the two centuries of their rule, the Indo-Greeks combined and blended Indian and Greek ideas, which can be seen in different arena, especially that of art and religion.

However, the presence of Yavanas in India, who achieved political and economic importance, posed a threat to caste system. The status and identity of 'Yavanas' was not easily to be part of caste hierarchy, why because they were not born in a caste based society. Hence their absorption to the existing social structure created social tension. Indians regarded Greeks as '*mleccha*'. As Romila Thapar argues the concept of 'barbarian' which was termed as '*mleccha*' in Sanskrit represent a cultural event. The essential difference between '*mleccha*' and '*Arya*' was their language. The Greeks spoke an alien language which was different from Indo-Aryan speech. So the cultural frontier was therefore not geographical one but demarcated by language.⁶ The language of Indo-Greeks was referred as '*mleccha-bhasha*'.

Moreover, the gradual incursion of Indo-Greeks to the '*Aryavarta*' i.e the heart land of Ganga plain was also raised serious issues to Brahman orthodoxy. Because this extension of territory is the extension of '*mleccha-desh*' which was hailed as 'impure land' for sacrificial performance. So in short, the growing supremacy of

⁵ Thapar, Romila. "Early India". 2003, p.214

⁶ Thapar, Romila. "Cultural Past - Essays in Early Indian History". New Delhi; 2000, p.538

'Yavanas' posed great challenges to the existing social system of India, which was based on varna distinction.

As per the puranic tradition the developments like mleccha dynasties coming to superior position is associated with the prophecy that ' *kaliyuga*', will see ' *mleccha*' dominance. This will result in the establishment of ' *mleccha dharma*', a barbarous ordering of universe, when vice will be rampant ... the authority of the sacred text neglected....and in short a complete reversal of world order.⁷

The *Yuga purana of Gargi Samhita*, an astrological work dating to the turn of Christian era mentioned five ' *mleccha*' kings, greedy and powerful, who will destroy the four varna. These kings are red eyed Amlata, Gopalobhama, Pushyaka, Savila and Viknayas. Jayaswal identified that the first four are Greek kings Amyntas, Apollophanes, Peucolaos and Zoilus. So the passage from Yuga Purana clearly shows that the presence of Indo-Greeks was challenging the existing social order.

The Brahman theorists could not dump them as out caste because the 'Yavanas' were valiant, knowledgeable and developed like Aryans. So they could not treat the 'Yavanas' as equal to other ' *mlecchas*' and to exclude them from caste order. In this context, 'Manu Dharma Sastra', the most conservative ancient legal text refers 'Yavanas' as ' *vratyasatriyas*'.⁸ Greeks became ' *vratyaksatriyas*' because of their non performance of the sacrificial rituals. There is also the mentioning of ' *vratyastoma*' by which the ' *vratyas*' are purified and accepted in to Aryan society. All these reference indicate a tension between social incorporation and exclusion. According to RomilaThapar, the giving of the fallen ksatriya status was a strategic concession to the new ruling dynasties.

As per the Indian tradition, in the early dharma sastras the 'Yavanas' were described as the off springs of Ksatriya men and sudra women and thereby treat them as mixed caste(*varna Samkara*). As per Mahabharata, the 'Yavanas' originated from Turvasu, the son of Yayati associated with very early and important tribes of northern India. But this may well be a later attempt to find the Greeks a respectable ancestry when their role in the history of northern India became more than marginal.⁹

One thing we can assume from this development is that in the practical level the distinction between ' *mleccha*' and ' *Arya*' had become blurred and the strict injunctions from brahman writers may viewed as an effort to protect the traditional varna order at least in the theoretical level. There were also efforts to admit them in

⁷ Thapar, Romila. "Ancient Indian Social History - Some Interpretations". New Delhi; 2010, p.166

⁸ Singh, Upinder. " A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India". New Delhi; 2009.p.418

⁹ Thapar, Romila. Op.cit. p.164

to the brahmanical order if they follow the 'brahmanical dharma'. Here the theoretical rigidity and the practical flexibility of caste system is very evident. The effort to assimilate 'Yavanas' in to caste society shows the dual ideological mechanism used by the Indian social structure for adaption and assimilation. However it was a difficult process and social order continued to be in crisis.

The adaptation of foreigners in to Indian society was made easier through the adoption of Buddhism, which is not emphasizing the caste and birth issues. To a great extent, 'Yavanas' were influenced by the vibrant ideas of buddhism and at the same time, they have made significant contributions to the development of buddhist school of thought, especially that of Mahayana Buddhism. Intense multi cultural influences have indeed been suggested in the appearance of Mahayana Buddhism and many of the early Mahayana theories of reality and knowledge can be related to Greek philosophical school of thought. So the Buddhist faith, which is more flexible than the brahmanical ideology attracted the attention of 'Yavanas' and they became the patrons of Buddhism.

More profoundly, the record of 'Milindapanha' or the question of king Menander, which is a theoretical discussion on Buddhism between king Menander and Buddhist philosopher Nagasena. It is recorded that Menander was converted to Buddhism. Another Indo- Greek ruler Agathodes display Buddhist symbols on his coins.¹⁰ we should remember the fact that the history of 'Yavanas' has been reconstructed mainly on the evidence of their coins. We have many other recorded evidence that shows several individuals of Greek origin made gift to Buddhist monks. The votive inscription from the buddist site in the Deccan also registers the adoption of Buddhism by 'Yavanas'. In the north west areas the 'Yavana' kings made large patronage to Buddhism. So it is possible to assume that the linking point between merchants, monks and the political authority of the 'Yavanas' was that of the flourishing trade. The Buddhist records of Deccan region and the Sangam literature of far south provide information about the presence of 'Yavana' merchants. It is mentioned that the 'Yavana' traders had contact with the ports of Muziris, Kaveripattanam etc. Many 'Yavana' traders had made contributions to the patronage of Buddhism and for the development of Buddhist monasteries.

Though many of the 'Yavanas' converted to Buddhism, the Besnagarthe pillar inscription of 'Yavana' ambassador Heliodorus (120 - 100 BC) speaks himself as a Bhagavata – i.e., a worshipper of the god Vasudeva Krishna, and that he set up this pillar in honor of this god, suggest that in a laterperiod the 'Yavanas' were admitted in to the Bhagavata tradition, which made Brahmanical religion more flexible and more easily exportable. So the rigid theories of Indian caste society gave way to

¹⁰ Jha, D.N " Early India - A Concise History". New Delhi; 2004. p.138

flexible realities that can be well seen in this incorporation of Indo – Greeks to Indian social structure.

So to conclude, the attitude towards 'Yavanas' varied as per the ideology and purpose of Indian people. To the Brahman authority, 'Yavanas' represents an economically and politically powerful group, challenging the Brahman superiority, social structure and the culture preserved by them. This resulted in a theoretically rigid and hostile attitude towards 'Yavanas', but in the practical level only minor distinctions differentiated them. The flourishing trade and the lavish contributions made by 'Yavanas' to Buddhism was the connecting point between the two. So the context, purpose and ideology determined the inclusion and the exclusion of 'Yavanas' into Indian social structure.



A Note on few Important Muslim Monuments and Inscriptions of Champanagar

Shiv Shankar Parijat

Deputy Director (Rtd.)

Public Relations Department

Government Of Bihar

Dixon Road Bhagalpur (Bihar) India

Abstract:

Bhagalpur was no doubt the nucleus of political power, cultural life and religious activities of the famous kingdom of Anga. Champa, presently known as Champanagar, 5 km west of Bhagalpur district headquarter, was the capital of Anga, one of the maha-janapadas annexed by Bimbisara in the sixth century B.C. Like the ancient time, during the Medieval Period, Champanagar and Bhagalpur played an important role. Akbarnama has mentioned Bhagalpur as the chief town or 'mahal' or pargana . Padshahnama informs that there was a seat of an Imperial *faujdar* here during Shahajan time. Ain-i-Akbari has mentioned Bhagalpur for several times. During Muslim occupation this town was the seat of Pargana Officer and it being the only convenient route leading to expeditions or their return journey to the subah, or provincial capital. Akbar crossed through Bhagalpur for two times during his Bengal expedition. While on his Bengal campaign Humayun was held up by his astute rival Shershah in the narrow defile of Teliagarhi, called by historian as 'Gateway of Bengal', which is located between Ganga and Rajmahal Hills, about 50 km away from Bhagalpur.

Unfortunately, the Medieval History of Champanagar and Bhagalpur has not been discussed seriously as yet. As we know, where monuments and architectural

traditions focus on the cultural, social and religious life and hidden pages of history, inscriptions are our only dependable guides in the less frequented bylanes of history on the basis of which we may endeavour to review the political history. This paper tries to trace the less known aspects of the history of Champanagar and Bhagalpur through important monuments and architectural traditions and inscriptions located here.

Keynote:

Champanagar, Arabic, Persian, Inscription, Bhagalpur, Monuments

Introduction:

The ancient city of Champa, presently known as Champanagar, 5 km. west of Bhagalpur district headquarter was the capital of Anga, one of the maha-janapadas annexed by Bimbisara of Magdha in the six century B.C.¹ This area was under Pala dynasty. But by means of conquest the Senas became the legal successors of the Palas in Bengal and Anga. Lakshmana (1185-1206), the son of Ballalsen, and an important and powerful king consolidated the Sena kingdom. But the last days of his rule were unhappy and tragic.² After the attack of Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji Vanga and Anga brought under the sway of Muslim rulers of Delhi, and were ruled by the Turco-Afghans, Saiyyads, Lodis and the Mughals in chronological succession. Bhagalpur forms the part of *Sarkar* Monghyr (Munger), one of the seven *sarkars* into which Bihar was divided at the time of Muslim conquest. Towards the close of the 14 th century, Bihar was incorporated to the kingdom of Jaunpur and remained as its appendage for about a century when it was conquered by Hussain Shah of Bengal and later by the rulers of Delhi.³

According to R.R. Diwakar the administrative history of Bihar during Turco-Afghan period (1206-1526) was inextricably connected with and conditioned by the fluctuations of the political fortunes of the country. Except for the short-lived Lohani (Nuhani) dynasty, early medieval Bihar hardly ever enjoyed independent status, being always linked either with Bengal, or with Delhi or with Jaunpur.⁴ Shri Diwakar further says, "The Sharqui rulers of Jaunpur ruled over the greater part of North and South Bihar, controlling the approaches to Bengal, in the first half of the fifteenth century. But the Ilyas Shahi kings of Bengal came to control the admistration of Bihar (Bhagalpur and Tithut), while the districts west of Monghyr (Munger) remained under Jaunpur. The Habshi rulers of Bengal also ruled over a part of Bihar (Bhagalpur)."⁵ Prof. Radhakrishna Choudhary states in this regard, "Sharqui dynasty continued to rule when Bahlol Lodi established a new dynasty in Delhi. Hussain Shah of Jaunpur extended his authority upto the east. He made a truce with Bahlol Lodi. He invaded Tirhut. According to R. D. Banerjee his authority extended upto Bhagalpur."⁶ Prof. Chaudhary further says, "Hussain Shah was defeated by Bahlol Lodi, who wrested Jaunpur from him. Hussain Shah fled to

Bihar and saved his dominion in Anga and Magadha.⁷ Prior to this, after the death of Qutubuddin Aibak, the king of Delhi, in 1206 Hisamuddin-i-waz asserted his independence in Bengal and assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyasuddin. Hisam exercised control over Bhagalpur district and he re-annexed South Bihar.⁸

The whole northern India in about 1342 was in a state of turmoil owing to the violences and caprices of Mohammad Bin Tugluq. Samsuddin Ilyas Shah of Bengal took advantage of this opportunity and he established his sway over Bihar. He was succeeded by his son Sikandar Shah. Firoj Tugulak invaded Bengal in 1359 but he had to conclude a treaty with Sikandar Shah favourable to the latter. Rukmuddin Barbak (1459-1474) brought under his sway some portions of Bhagalpur and Monghyr (Munger).⁹

Hunter says that during Muslim occupation at the time when the Company assumed the '*diwani*', or Revenue Administration of Bengal, the District Bhagalpur formed the eastern part of Mohamddan '*sarkar*', or chief Revenue Division of Mungir (Munger) and lay entirely to the south of the Ganges with the exception of pargana Chhai.¹⁰ Bhagalpur was a seat of *Pargana* Officer and that it being the only convenient route leading to expeditions or their return journey to the subah, or provincial capital. In the fourth decade of the sixteenth century, while on his way to Bengal campaign, Humayun was held up by his astute rival Shershah in the narrow defile between the Ganga and the Rajmahal Hills. The District Gazetteer confirms this, "Humayun, no doubt, passed through Bhagalpur on that occasion."¹¹

Bhagalpur with its adjoining areas like Kahalgaon, Teliagarhi, Munger and Surajgarh (presently known as Surajgarha) have witnessed the strategic conflict between Humayun and Shershah. Emperor Humayun had stayed at Kahalgaon (Bhagalpur District) while on way to Gaur. 'Humayun-Nama' narrates, "When the Emperor (Humayun) had spent three or four days in Kohlganu (Kahalgaon), it became advisable for him to march on and halt near Garhi (Teliagarhi), Sher Khan (Shershah) and Khwas Khan fled by night and he entered Garhi (Teliagarhi, about 20 km away from Kahalgaon) next day. Thence he went to Gaur Bangala, and took it."¹² The narrow pass of Teliagarhi near Rajmahal was Bengal's strategic point of defence against any land attack from western side.¹³ Akbarnamah mentions that during the tussle between Humayun and Shershah, when wounded ruler of Bengal Nasib Shah came to the Court and implored help against Shershah "His Majesty (Emperor Humayun) out of consideration for this oppressed one, and from the plausibility of his statements, gave orders for the advance. In Bhagalpur he divided the army, sending M. Hindal across the river with 5000 or 6000 men to march along its bank on that side."¹⁴ Due his calculated movements Shershah won the battle of Surajgarh, which had far-reaching consequences in Idian history. Quoting Dr. Qanungo R.C. Majumdar has rightly observed, "But for the victory of

Surajgarh, the son of a non-descript *jagirdar* of Sasaram would perhaps never have emerged from his obscurity in the quest of a crown.”¹⁵

According to Martin the name of Bhagalpur is occasionally mentioned in the Akbarnamah. Akbar's troops marched through it, when invading Bengal in A.D. 1573 and 1575. In the second Afghan war, Man Singh made Bhagalpur the rendezvous of all the Behar contingents, which in A.D. 1591 were sent thence over Chutia Nagpur to Bardwan, where they met the Bengal levies. The united army then invaded Orissa. Again in 1580 when the military revolt of Bengal against Akbar commenced, Todar Mall, the Minister-cum-General, marched down to meet the rebels as far as Munghyr (Munger). With a cavalry of 30,000 the insurgents were incamped in Bhagalpur. Todar Mall prevailed upon the local Zamindars to cut off all supplies to the rebels and thus forced them to retreat.¹⁷ Bhagalpur is mentioned in the Ain-e-Akbari as the chief town of 'mahal' or *pargana* Bhagalpur, which was assessed 4,696,110 dams, equal to the rate of 40 dams to one Akbarshahi rupees, to 117,403 rupees.¹⁸ In fact, this amount seems to be the highest in the comparison with the revenue that was realised from the other 21 *parganas* that constituted *Sarkar* Monghyr. Subsequently, Bhagalpur was made the seat of an Imperial *faujdar*, or Military Governor. We learn from Padshahnama that in A.D. 1639 this office was held under Shahjahan by one Atish Dakhoni. About the beginning of Aurangzeb's reign there lived a certain Shaikh Razi-ud-din, regarding whom the Masir-i-Alamgiri notes that he belonged to the gentry of Bhagalpur and was one of the compilers of the Fatwa-i-Alamgiri the great Muhammadan Code of Law.²⁰ Not far from Bhagalpur towards its southern direction lies Umarpur which is associated with the name of Prince Shah Suja. Situated near the range of hills, full of dense forests infested with tigers and other games, the place became an object of attraction to the prince. Besides buildings for his own residence and that of his staff that he constructed, he excavated a tank and a masjid, that still bear his name.²¹

Thus, the vicinity of Champanagar and Bhagalpur has played an important role in the Medieval History of Bihar and India as a whole. But it is not properly discussed as yet. As we know, Inscriptions are our only dependable guides in the less frequented lanes of history on the basis of which we may endeavour to review the history of a region. Likewise, monuments and architectural traditions, which focus the cultural, social and religious life of a certain period, may be a source to reveal the hidden pages of history.

Mausoleum of a Muhammadan Saint:

This mausoleum is situated in the *mohalla* of Mirgyas Chak of Maskan-i-Brari in Champanagar. This is one of the important monuments not only of Champanagar but also in Bhagalpur district. W.W. Hunter in his 'A Statistical

Account of Bengal' says that based on an inscription, it was built in 1622-23 by Khwaja Ahmad Samarkandi, *Faujdar* of Sarkar Mongir (Munger).²²

Built on a squarish platform on an elevated mound, the sepulchral chamber of the mausoleum contains a stone slab and two brick tombs, which is covered by a big dome, with three flat bands over it. The western part of the building, including a portion of the dome, the wall and the platform, has fallen down partly due to the erosion of the Champanala which flows beneath it. Qeyamuddin Ahmad has mentioned a tradition related with this monument, according to which the *nala* flows is an old, discarded, bed of river Ganges, and big merchandise boats, which sailed down it often got drowned at this spot. A wealthy merchant, therefore, built the mausoleum, after which, according to the legend, accidents would have been stopped. Blochmann, who published the text with a translation calls the site an *Maskan -i - Brari* or 'domicile of virtues'.²³ In front of the mausoleum, there are graves of pet horse and parrot of the saint.²⁴

Scholars like W.W. Hunter and Qeyamuddin Ahmad and the District Gazetteers Bhagalpur have written about this monument, but nowhere have mentioned the name of the saint. Blochmann says that the saint buried here was a 'Sunni Makhdum'.²⁵ However, Saiyyad Manzar Hussain Shah calls it the mausoleum of a great Pir named Mohamed Makhdum Saiyyad Allauddin.²⁶

On the top of the entrance of the chamber of the mausoleum there is a stone slab measuring 2'.3"X1'4" which consists four lines. Qeyamuddin Ahmad, who has deciphered the text of the slab, says that on the top is the Kalma, followed by the names of the first four Khalifas. Each of the name is written inside a lined panel. The last two lines, in Persian, records the construction of the mausoleum by Khwaja Ahmad Samarquandi (Samarkandi) on his appointment as the *faujdar* of the *sarkar* of Monghyr (Munger) in 1032 (1622-3).²⁷ The text reads as, When this weak one among the slaves of God, Khwaja Ahmad Samarquandi (Samarkandi), was appointed by the order of the Nawab of sanctified titles, the prince of the peoples of the world, Shah Parviz (son of) Jahangir, to the service of the *faujdari* of *sarkar* Monghyr (Munger), he had the good fortune to build this structure of the illumined mausoleum; year 1032. One thousand thirty - two (1622-23).²⁸

Tuzuk- i-Jahangir mentions that Parviz, the first mughal prince of royal blood to govern Bihar, was appointed as the Governor of Bihar in 1030 (commencing march 1621) in succession to Muqarrab Khan, and Sazwals were appointed to conduct him from Allahabad to Bihar.²⁹

This mausoleum is considered as one of the oldest monument of Champanagar as well as Bhagalpur district.³⁰ But due to utmost neglect this is on the verge of destruction.³¹

Champanagar Jami Mosque:

This four storied mosque is located near *Hazi Khaliq Chowk* at Champanagar, is considered as one of the oldest and biggest mosque of Champanagar and Bhagalpur.³² The central hall and *varandah* of the mosque are bigger in size. The artistic arched pillars give it a majestic look.

The most important thing is the inscription found here which relates the date of its construction and focusses on the contemporary history. Qeyamuddin Ahmad says about this, “The inscription was first brought to light by S.H. Askari who found it lying detached in the *Jami* mosque at Champanagar in Bhagalpur. The slab measures 2’5”X10”, and is damaged at few places. The text, in two lines of Arabic prose, records the construction of a mosque by Khan - i- Azam Mutabar Khan, the *Karfarman* (officer in charge?) of Bazurai Hat (?), in the reign of Muzaffar Shah on the 10 Muharram 897 (13 November 1491).³³

This inscription depicts that the last Habshi Kings of Bengal held sway over Champanagar and proves that the Abyssinians also ruled over a part of Bihar. R.R. Diwakar in his book ‘Bihar Through the Ages’ mentions about this, “The last of the three Habshi Kings of Bengal, Sidi Badr Diwana, held sway over a part of Bihar, including Champanagar in Bhagalpur. This is evident from a very beautiful inscription in the Tughra style recording the erection of a mosque in 1491 by Mutabar Khan during the reign Muzaffar Shah. His Vizir, the great and good Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, who replaced his master, has left numerous inscriptions, including six in Bihar. These inscriptions prove that Abyssians who ruled Bengal also ruled over a part of Bihar, and that their successor, Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, reigned control of South Bihar and trans-Gangetic area of North Bihar, probably after Sikandar Lodi’s withdrawal from the East.”³⁴

Local resident Fakrulla informed that this mosque is also known as *Markazi Maszid*, which is related with the *Dawat-e-Tablique* of Delhi. This mosque is so spacious that 15 to 20 thousand people assemble here on its annual function.³⁵ Due to regular maintenance this mosque is in better condition and is regarded as the biggest mosque of Bhagalpur district.³⁶

Dargah of Neelmahi:

This Dargah is located on the bank of Champanala at Neelmahi Ahmadnagar *mahalla*. This area is also called ‘Baes Bhighi’. Syed Shah Manzar Hussain Alig says that this is the dargah of Syeds.³⁷ Local people believe that this is the dargah

of Hazrat Hare - Bhare Shah. There are ruins of a watch-tower of ancient Champa and an English indigo factory near this dargah.

Mazar of Naogaza Pir:

This Mazar is located at Narga area in Champanagar. Buchanan, who had visited this mazar, narrates in his Bhagalpur Journal, "At Champanagar is a small mosque, and the monument of a tolerable great saint, who his nine cubits(15) long."³⁸ Syed Shah Manzar Hussain Alig believes it to be a grave of martyrs buried at one place, "According to the tradition of the battle of Al-Ohad in Mecca the Muslims who were SAHED were buried in one grave. In Saharanpur, a Mazar Nao Gaza Pir and at Ayudhia the Mazar so called, Shees & Nooh Prophets are about 20 & 16 ft. long."³⁹ It is said that the old name of Narga, where this mazar is located, was Naogaza, where dead bodies of soldiers in a war during Khilzi - period, were burried.⁴⁰

Mazar of Hath Katora Pir:

The Mazar of Hath Katora Pir is located at Kabirpur on Bhagalpur-Nathnagar Road beside University Press, just 1 km. south from Champanagar. The name of Hath Katora Pir was Khowan Nasrat-Ullah who was a Fakeer like Kabir (Shah).⁴¹ He was desciple of Sufi Pir Hazrat Pir Shah Bandagi⁴² who came Bhagalpur in 1599 and was contemporary of Hazrat Maulana Shahbaz (1549).⁴³ This Mazar is a living example of communal harmony where both Muslim and Hindu come to bow their heads.⁴⁴ To the North of Hath Katora Pir's Mazar there is a tank. It is said that people used to come on the bank of the tank to beg some crookeries at the time of their children's marriage and then returned it after the function. Once someone did not return the cookerries, since then this system is dead.⁴⁵

Khanquah-e-Shahbazia:

Khanquah and Madrasa of Hazrat Shahbaz Muhammad is located near Bhagalpur Railway Station, 2 km. away from Champanagr. Martin mentions it as a 'place of worship that in general is considered as most holy by the moslems is the brick monument (Durgah) of Maulana Shahbaz.⁴⁶ Hazrat Shahbaz Mohammad was a man of great piety and vast learning, and was held in high respect by all classes of people.⁴⁷ He was a great Sufi saint and conversant in Hadis and holy Quaran. He was born in 1549 in a village named Usas Devra in Gaya district. His ancestors shifted to Mecca from Bukhara, from where his father came to India and settled in the village Usas Devra (Gaya).⁴⁸ There is a Madrasa in the Khanquah premises which is considered as a premier institution for imparting knowledge. This Madarasa was founded in the reign of Jahangir by Maulana Shabaz. He was succeeded in the superintendentship of the college by his sons, one by one, who

kept up the tradition of their father and ran the institution on an efficient footing.⁴⁹ The expenses of the institution were defrayed from a fund which was established from the bounty of the Emperors Jahangir and Shahjahan and the generosity of the wealthy. Later Prince Shah Shuja, Alamgir, Bahadur Shah, Farkukshiyar and others granted land and funds to the Madrasa.⁵⁰ This Madarsa is considered as one of the two famous Madrasa of Bhiar.⁵¹ The followers of Hazrat Shahbazia are spread not only in Bihar and Bengal, but in the whole sub-continent.⁵²

In the Dargah premises there is a splendid historical 'Shahi *Jama Masjid*', which was constructed during Shahjahan period. There is a '*Shahi Hauz*' (Imperial Tank) near the entrance which was constructed by the then officer Mirza Ibrahim Hussain Khan.⁵³

A slab, measuring 3'9"X1', is fixed over the entrance of the tomb of Maulana Shahbaz containing an inscription. Qeyamuddin Ahmad says about this inscription that 'the text consists of a single line of Arabic prose, recording the construction of a mosque by *Sar-i-Lashkar*, Majlis Mahmud, son of Yusuf, in the reign of Alau'd-Din Hussain Shah on the 12 Rajab in the year 907 (21 January 1502).⁵⁴

Dargah of Pir Shah Jangi:

This monument is situated on a hill to the west of Bhagalpur station at Shahjangi *mahalla*, 2½ km. away from Champanagar, below which a very fine tank has been excavated. Hunter⁵⁵ and Bhagalpur District Gazetteer⁵⁶ call this a place of interest as a Muhammdan Shrine. Buchanan has also mentioned about this tomb in his Journal.⁵⁷ It is an important monument from religious and historical point of view with scenic beauty.⁵⁸ It is said that the name of the Pir is Hazrat Lal Muhammad Khan and he was famous by the name of Lal Saheb Pir. He is said to be contemporary of Khwaja Nizam Uddin Aulia.⁵⁹

Describing its religious value Martin informs, "About 1000 people from the vicinity assemble on the day of the saint, and no less than 20,000 on the day Kurbula, when all the gaudy pageantry, used in celebrating the memory of the grandsons of the prophet, are thrown into a large pond at the bottom of the hill."⁶⁰ This tradition is followed still now.

Mosque and *Baradari* of Quazi Chak:

This monument is located in *mahalla* Quazichak in Bhagalpur town, 3 km. south-west from Champanagar. There is a mosque and Qadi *Baradari* which is of historical importance. In the facade of the mosque there are inscriptions which inform about the construction of the mosque. This mosque was built by Quadi Abad. According to Qeyamuddin Ahmad, "To the south of the mosque, a short

distance away, there is a small, domed, building, locally called the Quadi's *baradari*. According to local tradition this building served as the Quadi's *kachahri* or court. It seems likely that this area was the seat of a Quadi's court, as also their residence, and that one of the Quadis of the family, named Quadi Abad, built the mosque".⁶¹ Quadi Abad was the Quazi of Bhagalpur who looked after judicial affairs during the rule of Muslims. Quazi was the most important post next to Diwan with *sadr*.⁶² The Quazi of Bhagalpur had under him four principal assistants, who resided at Bhagalpur, Colgong (Kahalgaoon), Bihpur and Gogri.⁶³ Quazi -e- Abad means 'Quazi for ever'.⁶⁴

Qeyamuddin Ahmad states about inscriptions fixed above the central entrance in the facade of mosque, "The inscriptions, fixed one above the other, seem to record the date of the commencement and the completion of mosque, respectively. The top one, measuring 1'.1"X10", contains the *Kalma*, a Persian couplet and the date 1095 (1683-4) in figures and partly in words."⁶⁵

He further says, "The second one, just below, contains a Persian couplet and the date in figures. The slab measures 1'.2"x8" and the text has been read as follows:"The invisible Angle from God uttered the year of its construction, 'May the mosque of Quadi Abad remain habitated for ever, 1097 Hijri (1658-6)"⁶⁶

Tomb of Ibrahim Hussain Khan Fatehjang:

A seventeenth century monument, the tomb of Ibrahim Hussain Khan Fatehjang, is situated on the bank of Ganga at *mahalla* Khanjapur in Bhagalpur City, 5 km. south from Champanagar. The dimension of the tomb measures roughly 80'x70' and lies on a platform about 20' high. All the four sides have entrances respectively with five domes-four small and one large atop. Inside the tomb, 13 other graves, presumably of his family members, are located.⁶⁷ During Jahangir period after governor Jafar Khan, Ibrahim Khan, a brother of Nur Jahan was despatched to Bihar in 1665, as succeeding governor. His most notable achievement was the conquest of Kukradesh (Chotanagpur) and the acquisition of the diamond mines which lay in the river beds of that region. He was promoted, given the title of Fateh Jang and raised to the governorship of Bengal (1617).⁶⁸ He proved to be trustworthy officer in Bihar, and during the period of the rebellion of the prince Khurram (Shahjahan) in Bihar and Bengal, he was deputed by the emperor to bring the rebel prince to the right path.⁶⁹ The rebel prince Shah Jahan (Khurram) proceeded through Burhanpur and made a triumphant entry into Akbar Nagar (Rajmahal). On hearing this, Ibrahim Khan hastened from Jahangirnagar (Dacca) with a body of troops and a fleet of war boats to oppose the rebel prince at Rajmahal.⁷⁰ Ibrahim Khan fought bravely till he was slain after a desperate

struggle near Rajmahal on the 20th April, 1624. His head was sent to prince Khurram at Rajmahal, 120km away from Bhagalpur district headquarter. His body was however sent on his wounded horse which brought the headless corpse to the bank of Ganga here.⁷¹

Regional Historian Syed Shah Manjar Husain Alig in his book 'Eminent Muslims of Bhagalpur' says in this regard that according to the family tradition of Ibrahim Khan, whose family members are settled in *mohalla Moghalpura*, Bhagalpur, after the death of Ibrahim Khan his head was sent to prince Khurram which was buried besides his son's tomb at Rajmahal; but the rest of his body was brought to Bhagalpur and was buried here in Khanjarpur.⁷²

The tomb of Ibrahim Hussain Khan-Fateh-Jang is architecturally so attractive that it catches the eyes of all passersby. Buchanan says about this, "The monument near Konjorpur (Khanjarpur) is handsome square building with five small domes and in a far better style than any Muhammdan structure that I have seen in three northern districts of Bengal. It is not encumbered with any minute ornaments, but in a neat well-formed edifice of brick covered with plaster."⁷³ Likewise, Martin observes that it is built in a style of plain neatness, so that the grace of its proportions is not as usual frittered away in awkward search after ornament.⁷⁴ This tomb, built in 17th century, is an excellent historical heritage.⁷⁵

Mosque & Mazar of Shaikh-ul-Mashiak:

This monument is located near tower chowk of the town at Mashaikh chak⁷⁶ *mohalla*, 4½ km. south-east of Champanagar. A mosque, situated within the premises, is said to be of Khilji period with minarets from four side. There is a *Huzra* (Prayer Room) of 8'x8' size. The pillars of the mosque are built of black stones with geometric designs. Just south of the mosque, there is mazar of Shaikh-ul-Mashaikh who was a great Pir of his time. Pir Shaikh-ul-Mashaikh came Bhagalpur in 1190.⁷⁷ This mosque is famous for its great well (90' deep and 16' wide) built by the orders of Emperor Akbar at the east side. There was a step from the *Huzra* of the mosque to the well where there is an iron gate, which is now closed, with an inscription. Syed Hasan Askari reads it as "Allah-o-Akbar".⁷⁸

Tomb of Pir Damaria:

This monument is located near Bhagalpur station below Lohia Bridge beside railway line, 4 km. south of Champanagar. Pir Damaria is regarded as the first Pir who came in Bhagalpur during Mughal period.⁷⁹ His shrine has become centre of communal harmony where both Hindu and Muslim come for prayer.⁸⁰ Makhdum Syed Hasan, father of Makhdum Syed Hussain alias Pir Damaria, migrated from Hasanpura, Saran to Pargana Banahara (Banka Distt., Bhagalpur Division) at the

village Sultanpur.⁸¹ Makhdum Syed Hassan was a famous Sufi Saint during Jahangir period, whose all grandsons and sons are known as Pir Damaria.⁸² According to Prof. A.S. Askari Makhdum Syed Hussain, a contemporary of Humayun and Shershah, after whom Hasanpura, Saran is named, and his sons and grand sons, Syed Ahmad of Hajipur, Syed Muhammad of Mansurganj, Patna and Syed Hussain in Bhagalpur all are called 'Pir Damria' were Suharwardia saints and were linked in the chain of spiritual discipleship to Makhdum Jahnian.⁸³ The ancestors of Pir Damaria migrated from Wasit, Iraq to India via Bukhara in the reign of Sultan Balban and afterwards settled down at Hasanpura, Saran from where to Sultanpur (Banka, Bhagalpur division).⁸⁴

According to a member of Pir Damaria family Syed Shah Manzar Hussain Alig, "The family traditions and later family documents established the fact that when Humayun after an interlude of about fifteen and half years (after defeat in Chausa), became the emperor of Delhi, he allotted some lands as royal grant to the families of Pir Makhdum (Makhdum) Syed Hassan. When Akbar ascended the throne of Delhi, in the year 1575 A.D., ordered for the renewal of Seyurghal grants of the people of the empire strictly on the basis of previous records. In the name of Syed Ali Mohammad Pir Damaria, son of Syed Hussain, a Sanad was issued under the seal of Khan-e-Jahan, Khan-e-Zaman. On the basis of the previous records, this Sanad granted 25,000 bighas of land to Syed Ali Mohammad Pir Damaria of Sultanpur as per previous allotment (Husb-e-Sabique Bahal Shundand). Syed Ali Mohammad Pir Damaria moved from Sultanpur to Bhagalpur after the receipt of a royal Sanad in 985/1576."⁸⁵

Dr. Syed Hasan Askari and Dr. Qeyamuddin Ahmad also mention that Humayun in the course of his journey towards Gaur, had made grants to several Sufi saints of North Bihar amongst whom one important name was the family of Makhdum Shah Hasan of Hasanpura in Saran whose family members are known as Pir Damaria.⁸⁶ Likewise R.R. Diwakar informs, "Prince Salim appears to have made extensive grants of land in Bihar during his stay in those parts. Two of his Firmans, dated 1601 and 1604, are known, where under the title of Salim Shah he made grant of Madad-i-Mash land to the descendant of the famous Pir Damaria family."⁸⁷ These all Firmans are preserved in Pir Damari Kutubkhana (library), located at Shah Mazil, Sujaganj, Bhagalpur. There are 100 Firmans with 700 manuscripts and 7500 books and magazines collected in this library.⁸⁸

Inscriptions from Mandroja and T.N.B. College Campus:

Except, Inscriptions discussed earlier with monuments of Champanagar and Bhagalpur, there are two more inscriptions found in Bhagalpur which should must

be mentioned to focus the Medieval History of this region. The first inscription, which was found fixed on a tomb in a garden belonging to Rani Bibi situated at *mahlla* Mandroja, was first noticed by Blochmann. The inscription written in Naksh script consisting mixed Arabic and Persian prose records the construction of a mosque By Khan-i-Mua'zzam Khurshid Khan, who is designated as Sar-i-ghair mahallian (commander of the guards outside the palace, in the reign of Mahmud Shah (1442-59) in 1446-7.⁸⁹

In later Ilyas Shahi dynasty in Bengal, Mahmud, a descendent of Ilyas, was chosen by the people the new sovereign, who styled himself Nasiruddin Abdul Muzaffar Mahmud. Jadunath Sarkar mentions that his main interest probably lay in the arts of peace. A large number of inscriptions found all over his kingdom recording the erection of mosques, khanquas, gates, bridges and tombs, testify not only the prevailing prosperity but also the enthusiasm for public works and interest in the building art, which he inspired.⁹⁰ According to R.R. Diwakar the political situation of the eastern provinces during this period was somewhat complicated and confused. Bengal was once again eclipsing Bihar, with Bhagalpur acknowledging the rule of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1442-59).⁹¹ Dr. Qeyamuddin Ahmad informs about this inscription that it is the earliest inscription mentioning the name of Khushid Khan, who is mentioned in three more inscriptions of the succeeding Sultan, Barbak Shah (1459-74). The latter have been noticed by several writers, but none of them, even Blochmann or Horn, has attempted to co-relate them with the present one. Among the subsequently discovered inscriptions of Khurshid Khan, the two inscriptions belonging to Gaur and Peril, Dacca district, show that Khurshid was an interlaid and successful General who achieved notable success in the eastern and northern parts of the kingdom during sixties of the ninth century A.H. Dr. Ahmad says, "The importance of the Bhagalpur inscription lies in the fact that it is the earliest one of Khurshid Khan, and traces back his career to the previous reign of Mahmud Shah (846-64 or 1442-59). It also shows that the beginning of his distinguished military career took place on the western border of the kingdom."⁹² The second important inscription was found from the T.N.B. College campus, Bhagalpur which was removed there from a place called Kohin-ka-Bagh in the town. This inscription comprises four lines of Arabic prose commemorating the construction of a bridge which was completed on 21 March, 1450.⁹³ Like the inscription found from Mandroja, Bhagalpur, this inscription also indicates the prevalence of peace and prosperity in the kingdom, which is so

essential for undertaking such work of public utility. Dr. Ahmad comments, “This epigraphic testimony also fits in the general history of the region.”⁹⁴

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TILKA MANJHI – A MYTH OR REALITY

Dr. RAMAN SINHA

Professor of History
Sunderwati Mahila College, Bhagalpur
Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University
Bhagalpur (Bihar) India

ABSTRACT

This research paper is based on available historical literatures and references relating to a myth or reality on existence of a so-called freedom fighter – *Tilka Manjhi* – which has been prefixed with the name of Bhagalpur University in 1992 by the Government of Bihar. The myth is that Tilka Manjhi was a freedom fighter who fought against the rules of East India Company and murdered an English Collector of Bhagalpur-Rajmahal region namely Mr. Augustus Cleveland. But the reality is different. Mr. Cleveland died in 1784 due to illness and Tilka Manjhi was no where in the available historical literatures. Actually there was a *Paharia* soldier in *Bhagalpur Hill Rangers* formed by Mr. Cleveland who played an important role in restoration of peace and harmony in the hillocks of Bhagalpur-Rajmahal region. He was called as "JABRA *alias* JAURHA*alias*JAORA. The word Manjhi is brought from the Pahariasociety. But there seems to exist no mention of Tilkamanjhi whatsoever – not even in the books or reports that came into existence after 1788. If at all the English writers like Captain Browne (1788), L.T. Shaw (1795), Buchanan (1810-1811), Sutherland (1819), Sherwill (1851), Hunter (1877), J.R. Hand (1894), Buchanan (1901), Bradley Wart (1905), McFersson (1905), O'Mally (1910), Murphy (1912), Harnsley (1929), Oldhmer (1930), Ganger (1936) and John Houltan (1946) never gave out a single phrase describing Tilkamanjhi or his contributions in their literary works, why did the

famous litterateurs of Bihar like R.R. Diwakar, K.K. Datta, P.C. Roy Choudhary, Sacchidanand, A.R.N. Srivastava and J.C. Jhafari to do the same ? In this regard, it is to be quoted here that " History provokes no conflict. It simply records what Happens. It must be distinguished from the mythology as well as theology. Accurate history serves the nation in the same manner as accurate memory serves the individual". (*Irfan Habib, The Times of India, Patna, 14 September 2015.*)

Moreover, this paper has been prepared into two parts viz. I & II. Section – I deals with sequential historical descriptions about the rules of East India Company and historical writings of those periods and Section – II covers consequential historical myths about the *TilkaManjhi*. Conclusively, it requires an in-depth study about the existence of *TilkaManjhi* and there of with the help of proven facts, glorification of *TilkaManjhi* be either true or not.

I rise to present my paper entitled " Tilka Manjhi – a myth or reality ", but before my presentation, I wish to introduce myself, which will reveal my professional curiosity towards the historical facts for Tilka Manjhi. I had been a student of Bhagalpur University (BIHAR), established on 12th July 1960 and became a teacher in History in the same university in 1996. Four years before my joining *i.e.*, in 1992, the nomenclature of this university became as "*Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur*". Since then I inspired to visit the historical facts about Tilka Manjhi, but I am disgruntled to submit before this august gatherings that available historical literatures and references do not ensure about the existence of Tilka Manjhi. Despite this myth, our university prefixed the word Tilka Manjhi with Bhagalpur University. It may be surprising and astonishing as well for these learned gatherings. But this is the fact.

This paper is presented into two sections *viz.* I & II. Section- I deals with sequential historical descriptions and Section- II covers consequential historical myths. The myth is that there was a person named as "*TilkaManjhi*", a freedom fighter who lived during 1750 to 1780 and killed the then Collector of Bhagalpur Mr. Augustus Cleveland.

Section - I

History tells that , the Mughal Empire was unable to gain control over the Hill Tribes in the densely forest and hillock areas of Eastern and Southern regions of Bhagalpur, falling under Rajmahal – Santhal Parganas administrative unit called as "*Jungle – Tarai*" ; and so it was impossible to collect revenue from them. This turned out to be a major headache for The Mughal Empire and The East India Company. On the other hand the East India Company found the need to gain the trust of these Hill Tribes to be extremely urgent. It resulted to form a small troop of skilled archers called "*Bhagalpur Hill Rangers*" wherein the brave Jabra (also known as *Jaurahalias Jaora*) was appointed its their commander-in-chief. It was with the help of Jabra the then district collector Mr. Cleveland was able to sow the

seeds of East India Company in the lands of the Hill Tribes. Unfortunately, Mr. Cleveland had to rest on his death bed at an early age of 29 due to some illness.

The tract had dense forests and the hills which were the biggest obstacle between the Mughal Emperors and the *Jungle-Tarai*.¹ Even Emperors Shershah Suri and Akbar were unable to invade the territory successfully.² Emperor Akbar, during his reign, could only gain control over the outer fields touching the banks of river Ganga. This stubborn behavior of *Jungle-Tarai*'s became a matter of great concern for the Mughals.³

In 1765, the East India Company got the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orrisa, which led to spreading the roots of its reign. The Military General of the Company, Robert Barker enrolled a special troop of 800 strong soldiers (Special Corps) to the Company and Captain Robert Brooke was appointed the commander-in-chief of the troop. He was asked to conquer the dominions of the dacoits, thugs and the Company's long wanted turncoats in the hillock areas of the 'Jungle-Tarai'. He was also asked to inspire the traitors to be loyalists and live peacefully. Under the supervision of Governor General Warren Hastings, Brooke successfully restored the peace in the hillock areas of Rajmahal.⁴

Captain Brooke resigned from the post in July, 1774⁵ and was replaced by Mr. James Browne, author of the "*India Tract*" who pulled out the job till 1778.⁶ On May 4, 1773 the supervisor of Rajmahal-Bhagalpur, William Harwood was directed from the headquarters of East India Company (Fort William, Kolkata) for immediate transfer of control over the district and treasure to *James Barton* who over the charge of the Collector of Rajmahal-Bhagalpur and informed to Fort William on the very same day.⁷ He also became the Collector of Greater Bhagalpur and so I also believe that Greater Bhagalpur was established on May 4, 1773 and James Barton was its first official Collector.

After taking over the charge of District Collector on May 4, 1773, James Barton requested, Augustus Cleveland to be his assistant⁸ who replaced him after Barton's resignation⁹ on November 20, 1779¹⁰ and thus Cleveland was the second official collector of Rajmahal-Bhagalpur.¹¹

In order to gain control over the Bandits of the densely forested areas of Rajmahal, the East India Company decided to form another troop of soldiers namely *Corps of Light Infantry*. The infantry included the locals and trained the troop formed in 1772 to combat the bandits' menaces.¹²

On July 11, 1777, James Browne was further requested to submit strategic plan for peace in hillocks.¹³ In fact, Browne was the Commander-in-chief of the Light Infantry soldiers at that time and was well aware of every historical and geographical aspects including the day to day scenario of *Jungle-Tarai*. The strategy prepared by him included the following important suggestions:-¹⁴

1. The Head of the Hillocks shall be recognized as “Chief”. Similarly, the Mukhiyas of the villages shall also be honored as “Manjhi”.
2. The Head of the Tappa(village) located adjacent to the main road shall be given the responsibility with remuneration of the Company’s post and treasure in that region.
3. To set up market in the plains with the help of the respective Chief and the Manjhi in order to strengthen the relationship between the people of Hillocks and the plains.
4. To provide Jagir Lands to the Invalid Sepoys of the Company.

On March 10, 1778, the Supreme Council (situated at Fort William) ordered James Browne to take immediate steps towards provision of Jagir Lands to Invalid Sepoys.¹⁵

Augustus Cleveland, informed to the Supreme Council on February 25, 1780 that he is going to be out on a tour of *Jungle-Tarai* for a duration of two weeks in order to promote friendly relations with Hillocks.¹⁶ While coming back from his tour, Cleveland appraised to the Council on April 21, 1780 from Sakrigali (at present it is located in the Sahebganj district of Jharkhand), about superb hospitality extended to him by the Hillocks and addressed his absolute satisfaction. He also sent a proposal¹⁷ for developing a close relations with the Hillocks. The list included the following salient points:-¹⁸

1. At least one or more member from each group of a Chief or Manjhi shall be included to the Corps of Archers.
2. A Chief on each group of 50 archers may be appointed who will be under the control of the Collector of Bhagalpur.
3. Every member of the Archer Group will be responsible for pursuing exploitation to the rivals alike enemies.
4. Every Hill Chief and each member of his troop shall receive a monthly salary of Rs. 5/- and Rs. 3/- respectively.
5. Each archer shall be given one pair of turbans, belts, shirts and pajamas and a purple coloured jacket every year.¹⁹

Subsequently on the advice of the then Collector Mr Augustus Cleveland, Governor-General Warren Hastings formed the *Corps of Archers* with 1300 archers in the troop in 1782. Where in a local dacoit named Jabra *alias* Jaurah *alias* Jaora was appointed as the commander of the troop. According to Cleveland, Jabra was the first among the Hillocks who choose to serve the East India Company and protect its interests.²⁰

Bishop Reginald Heber said, “Jabra was a nightmare for the plains but a Hero to his own people.” He could very well be touted as the Don of Rajmahal. He was quick, powerful, agile and also hard working – pretty much everything that the Company looked for in a commander.²¹

In February, 1783, Augustus Cleveland reported that he witnessed three times that the archers became victorious against fighting with their own brothers.²²

Later, Lieutenant Shaw following the noble features of Cleveland's "*Hill System*" changed the name of the army to "*Bhagalpur Hill Rangers*"²³ and it continued to be recognized as the same until the First War of Independence *i.e.* 1857.²⁴

After the war of 1857, the Company's revenue department transferred the complete control over the Hill Rangers to the military department. It was also the time when Hill Chiefs were recognized as subordinates to the Collector of Bhagalpur-Rajmahal and the company started making pension plans for them.²⁵

The prime objective of *Bhagalpur Hill Rangers* was to build a stable relation between the hill residents and the government.²⁶ Thus, Augustus Cleveland's successful reign became an extraordinary example for the district and provincial administration. Not only he brought an entire community under the control of the Company but also managed to teach them how to live peacefully under one roof. This was something that the Mughals could only dream. Precisely, Cleveland's administrative strategies laid the roots of British rule in India.

Cleveland also played an important role in suppressing the revolts made by Chait Singh of Banaras against the Company. Governor-General *Warren Hastings*, before setting out on his mission to eradicate the rule of Chait Singh, had a guest in the Collector's residence (at Bhagalpur presently under the TMBU campus) for a week, July 16, 1780 – July 23, 1780.²⁷

One of the noblest features of Cleveland's Hill System was that the families of the deceased soldiers were given financial support. The Manjhis used to assist the Magistrates in the judiciary processes. They also used to make small decisions for their own communities (decisions worth a maximum of Rs. 100/-).²⁸

Cleveland had won the hearts of the Hillocks by displaying his dexterous administrative skills. Because of this, he became famous as '*Chilimili Saheb*' among them.²⁹ On January 13, 1784, Augustus Cleveland had to rest on his death bed due to a fatal disease. He was just 29 then.³⁰ His successful administrative career (November 20, 1779 – November 30, 1783) has been depicted in the books '*India Tracks*'³¹ and '*The Journal of Francis Buchanan*'³² by James Browne and Oldham respectively.

Cleveland was buried at the South Park Street Cemetery (near Malik Bazar Crossing in Kolkata). In June, 2011, I had the opportunity to visit his graveyard with one of my Research Scholar Nilesh Kumar Rai. In appreciation of his loyalty towards the Company, they had some beautiful verses carved on this tombstone. (see **Photo- 1**)

Due to the lack of historical evidences, Tilkamanjhi has always remained a mere story for people. Facts clearly state that there was no patriotic tribesman

called "Tilkamanjhi" who revolted against the East India Company. We all know that stories are derived from history. It is not the other way around. This is why Tilkamanjhi could never secure a spot in the pages of history.

Evidence plays a major role in the study of historical facts. Historical facts are both ancient and literary even though historians describe them in their own words. After a period of time, the verbal sources of these historical facts are also depicted as records in chronological order.

Careful investigation of the historical events is a continuous process that gives rise to new evidences and facts – replacing the old(outdated) ones sometimes. Many books on historical studies deal with important events of the past like the battle of Plessey (1757), the battle of Buxar (1764), the famine of 1770, etc. purely based on evidences and facts. Apart from these, some cases of marauds executed by the *Fakirs and Sannyasis* in some parts of Purniya, Malda and Rajmahal - Bhagalpur between 1750 and 1800 (before Warren Hastings accepted the post of Governor-General) have also been described in the books. In June, 1784, the collector of Rajmahal-Bhagalpur was informed about the maraudsexecuted by the Sannyasis under the direction of MujnooShaw and was asked to send the Hill Rangers to Malda in order to bring this under control.³³Anand Bhattacharya in his book "*Sannyasi and Fakir Rebillion in Bihar (1767 - 1800)*" has stated that the Sannyasis had their den situated somewhere inLokmanpur (Kahalgaon in Bhagalpur district.)

But there seems to exist no mention of Tilkamanjhi whatsoever – not even in the books or reports that came into existence after 1788. If at all, the English writers like Captain Browne (1788), L.T. Shaw (1795), Buchanan (1810-1811), Sutherland (1819), Sherwill (1851), Hunter (1877), J.R. Hand (1894), Buckland (1901), Bradley Wart (1905), McFersson (1905), O'Mally (1910), Murphy (1912), Harnsley(1929), Oldhmer (1930), Ganger (1936) and John Houltan (1946)never gave out a single phrase describing Tilkamanjhi or his contributions in their literary works, why did the famous litterateurs of Bihar like R.R. Diwakar, K.K. Datta, P.C. Roy Choudhary, Sacchidanand, A.R.N. Srivastava and J.C. Jhafail to do the same ?

The book entitled "*Bharat kaMuktiSangram*" written by Ayodhya Singh (Year of Publication: 2004 ; Place of Publication: 4715/21 – DayanandMarg, Dariyaganj, New Delhi) illustrates many minor revolts such as The Sannyasi Revolt (1763-1800), The Medinipur Revolt (1766-1767), The DhallBhoomi Revolts (1766-1777), The Revolt of the Weavers (1770-1800), The Revolt of the Silk Industry Workers (1770-1800), The Revolt of the Opium Farmers (1770-1793), The Noniyan Revolt (1770-1800),Chakma Revolt (1776-1789), The Rangpur Revolt (1783), The Revolt of the Paharias (1788-1790), The Subandiya

Revolt (1772), The Choadh Revolt (1798-1799), The Chero Revolt (1800) and many such. Yet we see no mention of Tikamanjhi anywhere.

Due to the lack of any historical evidence, the name "Tilkamanjhi" is a hoax per se. Second of all, the story about the assassination of Augustus Cleveland by Tilkamanjhi is also based on a story. In honor of 'ChilimiliSaheb', a few reverential words have also been crafted near the Collector Cleveland 's house in TilhaKoti, Bhagalpur (see **Photo – 2**). It surprised to me as a great surprise that the assassination of an administrator who had played such a great role in strengthening the very roots of the East India Company could not secure a spot in the pages of history.

Section – II

In above historical references 'TilkaManjhi' was no where. Then from where he came ? It boggles our mind. Despite that the stories about him are quite famous. Tilkamanjhi was one of the prime characters in one of the three stories of an anecdote (story, narrative) collection called "*ShalGirah Ki Pukar Par*" (1998) written by Mahashweta Devi, a Magsaysay, Shahitya Academy, Bhartiya Gyanpith Awardee and a well known Bengali fiction writer. There are no significant context that can justify this tale, but also the writer herself fails to claim that it is based on a historical research. The anecdote collection was published in 1998 by Radha Krishna Prakashan Pvt. Ltd. 2/38– Ansari Marg, Dariyaganj, New Delhi. After the publication of this collection the story about Tilkamanjhi might have gained some grip, but not on the grounds of history.

Local history cognizant Rajendra Prasad Singh, in his book "*Tilkamanjhi*", states that '*ShalGirahkiPukar Par*' is purely a literary work and that the truth had to be veiled in order to preserve the elegance of the art form. So the question that is bound to arise here is whether history keeps room for such "imaginary events" and if not then whether one may be allowed to mess with the historic evidences and facts that lay the very roots of the study. The answer is, "Probably not!" So how is it possible that there are so many controvertible loopholes in what is presented as a historic art form? Isn't it possible that the writer simply based her entire work on a "hearsay fabrication" of the local newspapers?³⁴

In the same book, Mr. Singh, with the help of Ramdulal Dehri (a scholar from the Pahariya Community), says – "*The actual name of the hillock 'Jaurah' mentioned in the Gazetteer was 'Jabra' and in later days he got recognized as 'Tilkamanjhi'. According to Dehri, 'Tilka' meant saturnine and blood-red eyed and 'Manjhi', as we know, meant head of the village in the local language of the Pahariyas. The two words combined perfectly to describe his character and role.*"³⁵

According to the first Chairperson of the Adim JanJatiJagriti&VikasSamiti,(Dumka, Jharkhand), KalicharanDehri, it was indeed the brave Mal Paharia '*Jabra*', who came to be known as '*Tilkamanjhi*' later.³⁶

In July 5, 2009, the Deputy Commissioner of the Pakur district in Jharkhand recognized the supremacy of the great icon. Also, the Adim Jan-JatiPahariaSamiti had organized a program in which he was asked to unveil a statue made by the people in honour of *Baba JabraPaharia*.³⁷

On August 15, 2007, daily newspaper from Kolkata, "*The Telegraph*" published an article submitted by Journalist GautumSarkar which mentioned that the Chief Minister of Jharkhand Mr. ArjunMunda had also recognized the preeminence of *Jabra* on the 152nd anniversary of the Santhal Community. A few days later, a social worker from Dumka named Anup Kumar Vajpayee gave out a new calendar commemorating the brave deeds of the Paharia hero. Also, the monumental bronze coin (see **Photo – 3**) created during the British reign (in around 1894) was also publicized.³⁸

The coin makes it quite evident that the English were pretty impressed by the loyalty, sincerity and bravery of *Jabra* and were absolutely satisfied to have him as the commander of the Hill Rangers. The impression of *Jabra* carved on the flipside of the coin resembles the iconic statue of *Tilkamanjhi* situated at the *TilkamanjhiChowk*, Bhagalpur (Bihar) and in the *Tilkamanjhi Bhagalpur University*, a similar one situated in Pakur district in Jharkhand to a very plausible extent.

The Company even named one of the land Mouza as *The Jabaripur*, Tax to honor his (*Jabra's*) successful reign as commander of the Hill Rangers and his loyalty. In fact, there is a locality named *Jabaripur* in *Bhagalpur Sadar*.

The "alter ego" of *Jabra* led to the recognition of a new locality called *Tilkamanjhi*. Gazetteers such as *Bhagalpur Gazetteer*³⁹ and the *SanthalParagana Gazetteer*⁴⁰ by P.C. Roy Choudhary and the *Bengal District Gazetteer* by L.S.S. O'Mally⁴¹ have portrayed *Jabra* as a ferocious dacoit. On the other hand, he was touted as the Robin Hood of the Hill Community because of his deeds which, even today, the *Pahariyas* take pride in. In order to save his community from a catastrophe, he devoted his sweat to the Company and if we think about it now, that was indeed a very brave thing to do.

But my research is based purely on historical facts and evidences and intends to dig in until the true identity of *TilkaManjhi* is revealed. I'd like to make it absolutely clear at this point that my intention is not to offend any community or a section of society but rather to base the truth on historical facts. I would like the students of historical studies to take an initiative towards finding authentic evidences on *Tilkamanjhi*. Because without searching the historical facts Bihar Government changed the name of *Bhagalpur University* (established on 12th July

1960)vide the Notification No. 15 / v3-109 / 92 HRD 502 dated August 03 1992. I would also urge the 'TilkaManjhi Bhagalpur University' for searching their own historicity.

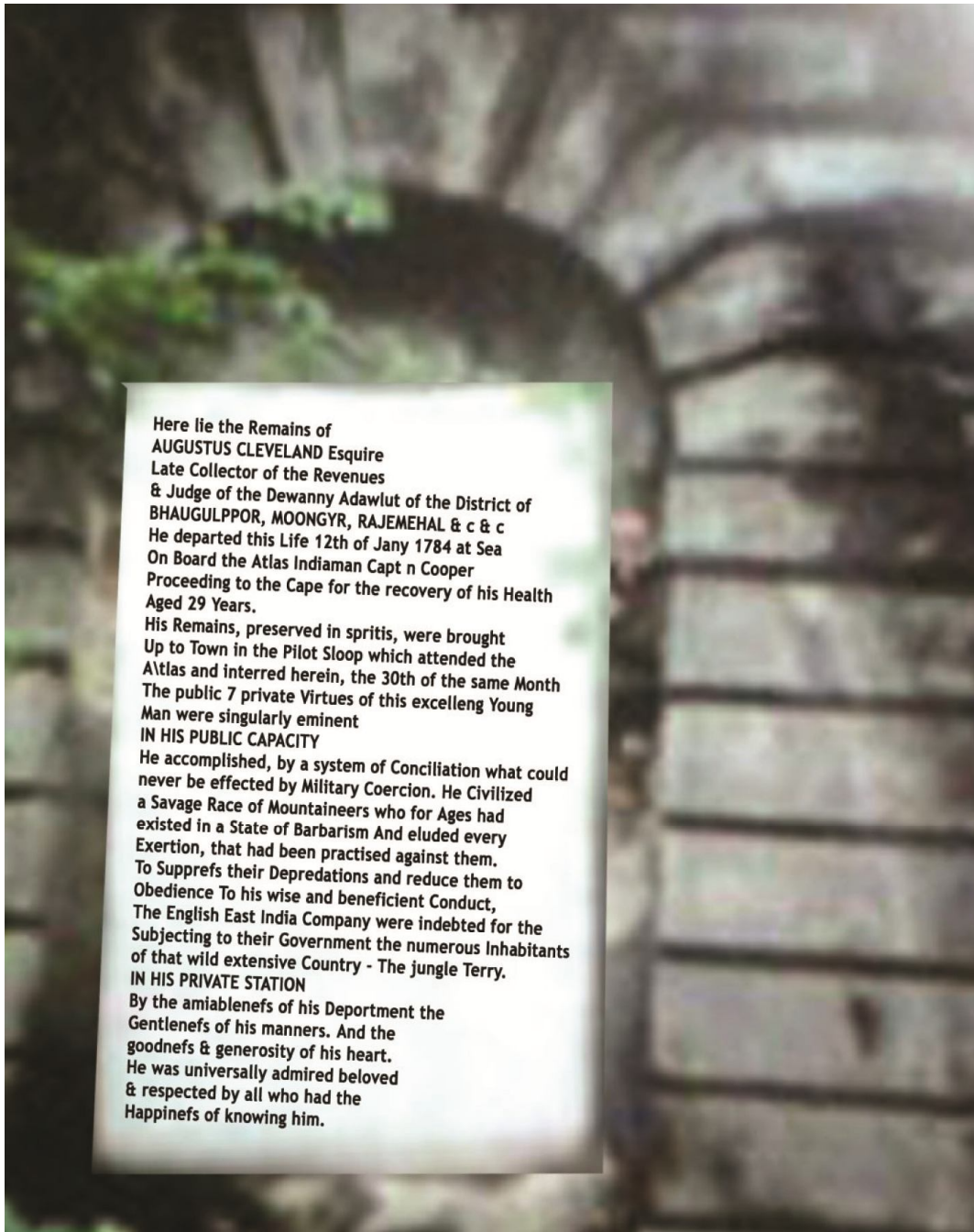
About this change no one say any thing. Even senior teachers of history thinks that our saying may be frame the subordination of the university. How can this intellectual debates made unlawful ? Officials of the university keep mum for their known reasons. Leaders of the various parties are also silent for vote. Newspapers who glorified himself to publish the different type of scams, public problems etc., are silent on this intellectual debate for TRP of newspapers. Some persons said that British historians deleted the movement of Tilka. So, Indian historians could not said any thing in this matter. Is it possible that after Independence Indian historians can not search this historical fact ?

Indian historian point out that, an English Officer Mr. G.F.Cherry was murdered at Benaras in 1799 by the attendants of Wazir Ali, Ex-Nawab of Oudh. An account of the murder was published in the Asiatic Annual Register, 1799.⁴²

Indian historians writes about Dacoity & Crime of early colonial period of Bengal. No one writes any thing about TilkaManjhi and murder of Collector of Bhagalpur Mr. Augustus Cleveland.⁴³ If Indian historians does not write any thing about this fact, why not University is searching their own historicity as university being an autonomous institution.

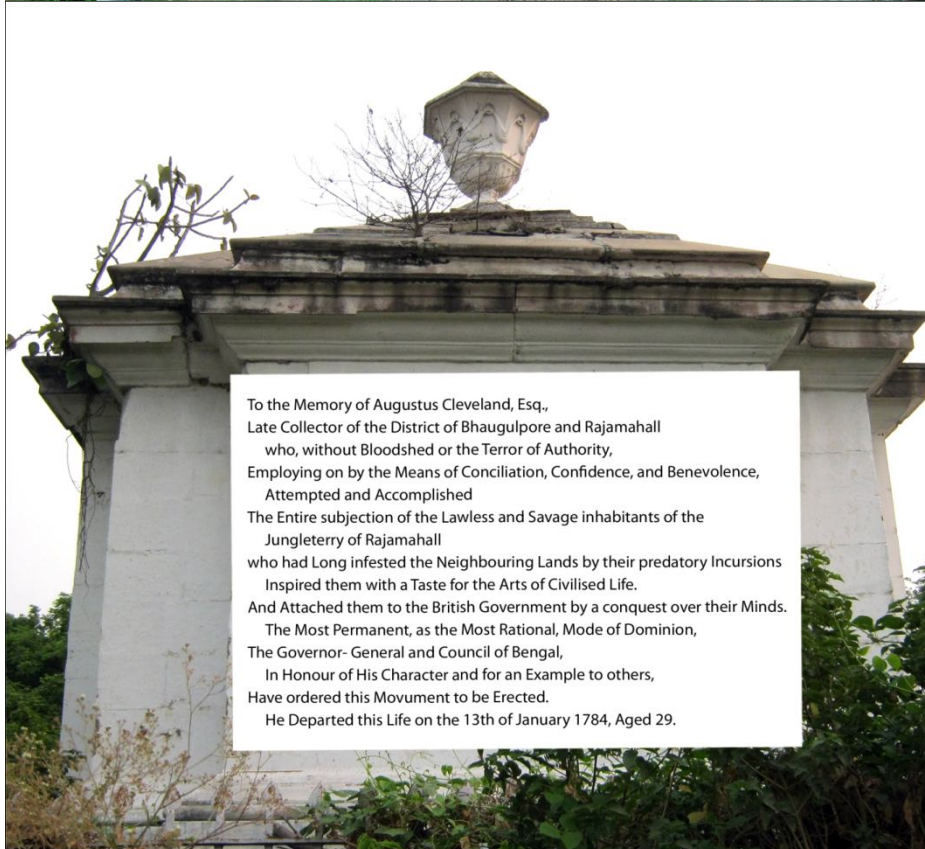
Based on facts and evidences, my research proves that *Jabra/ Jaurah /Jaora /Tilka Manjhi spent his entire life serving the East India Company as the commander of the Rangers*. Hence Hill, the establishment of a University in the name of an English loyalist can neither be approved nor be considered fair to a liberated and self-dependent India. As *Prof. Irfan Habib* has said that "History provokes no conflict. It simply record what happened. It must be distinguished from the mythology as well as theology. Accurate history serves the nation in the same manner as accurate memory serves the individual".⁴⁴

Photo – 1



Epitaph of Late Cleveland at Calcutta (Park Street)

(Photo – 2) Cleveland House & Inscription



To the Memory of Augustus Cleveland, Esq.,
Late Collector of the District of Bhaugulpore and Rajamahall
who, without Bloodshed or the Terror of Authority,
Employing on by the Means of Conciliation, Confidence, and Benevolence,
Attempted and Accomplished
The Entire subjection of the Lawless and Savage inhabitants of the
Jungletrry of Rajamahall
who had Long infested the Neighbouring Lands by their predatory Incursions
Inspired them with a Taste for the Arts of Civilised Life.
And Attached them to the British Government by a conquest over their Minds.
The Most Permanent, as the Most Rational, Mode of Dominion,
The Governor- General and Council of Bengal,
In Honour of His Character and for an Example to others,
Have ordered this Movement to be Erected.
He Departed this Life on the 13th of January 1784, Aged 29.

Inscription in the Memory of Cleveland in front of Cleveland House, **Bhagalpur**



(Photo – 3) Statue of Tilka Manjhi

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wood's dispatch (1854) and the organization of educational policy

Dr. Atul Kumar Shukla
Associate Professor
Faculty of Teacher Education
Pt. J. L. Nehru PG College
Banda (U. P.) India

Wood's Dispatch came to be known after the name of Sir Charles wood, who was the President of the Board of Control. The Dispatch imposed upon the Government the task of creating a properly articulated scheme of education from primary school to the University. The instruction in State schools and colleges was to be 'exclusively secular'.

'Among many subjects of importance, none can have a stronger claim to our attention than that of education. It is one of our most sacred duties, to be the means, as far as in us lies, of conferring upon the natives of India those vast moral and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge, and which India may, under Providence, derive from her connexion with England.....'

We have, moreover, always looked upon the encouragement of education as peculiarly important, because calculated 'not only to produce a higher degree of intellectual fitness, but to raise the moral character of those who partake of its advantages, and so supply you with servants to whose probity you may with increased confidence commit offices of trust.....'

'Nor, while the character of England is deeply concerned in the success of our efforts for the promotion of education, are her material interests altogether unaffected by the advance of European knowledge in India; this knowledge will teach the natives of India the marvellous results of the employment of labour and

capital, rouse them to emulate us in the development of the vast resources of their country, guide them in their efforts, and gradually, but certainly, confer upon them all the advantages which accompany the healthy increase of wealth and commerce; and at the same time, secure to us a large and more certain supply of many articles necessary for our manufacturers and extensively consumed by all classes of our population, as well as an almost inexhaustible demand for the produce of British labor'.

objects of educational policy: diffusion of european knowledge:

'The system of science and philosophy which forms the learning of the East abounds with grade errors, and Eastern literature is at best very deficient as regards all modern discovery and improvement' and concludes the discussion with the following declaration:

'We must emphatically declare that the education which we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short, of European knowledge'.

The Dispatch had the following objective in view:

To confer upon the natives of India those vast and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of Western knowledge; Not only to produce a high degree of intellectual fitness but also to raise the moral character of those who partake of the above advantages; To supply the East India Company with reliable and capable public servants; and To secure for England a large and more certain supply of many articles, necessary for the manufactures and extensively consumed by her population, as well as an almost inexhaustible demand for the produce of British labor.

medium of instruction: english and vernacular languages:

'In any general system of education, English language should be taught where there is a demand for it; but such instruction should always be combined with a careful attention to the study of the vernacular language of the district, and with such general instruction as can be conveyed through that language; and while the English language continues to be made use of as by far the most perfect medium for the education of those persons who have acquired a sufficient knowledge of it to receive general instruction through it the vernacular languages must be employed to teach the far larger classes who are ignorant of, or imperfectly acquainted with English. This can only be done effectually through the instrumentality of masters and professors, who may, by themselves, knowing English and thus having full access to the latest improvements in knowledge of every kind, impart to their countrymen, through the medium of their mother-tongue, the information which they have thus obtained. At the same time and as the importance of the vernacular languages becomes more appreciated, the vernacular literature of India will be gradually enriched by translations of European books or

by the original compositions of men whose minds have been imbued with the spirit of European advancement, so that European knowledge may gradually be placed in this manner within the reach of all classes of the people. We look, therefore, to the English language and to the vernacular languages of India together as the media for the diffusion of European knowledge, and it is our desire to see them cultivated together in all schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a schoolmaster possessing the requisite qualifications'.

grand-in-aid: gradual transfer of government institutions to the management of local bodies:

'The consideration of the impossibility of Government alone doing all that must be done in order to provide adequate means for the education of the natives of India, and of the ready assistance which may be derived from efforts which have hitherto received but little encouragement from the state, has led us to the natural conclusion that the most effectual method of providing for wants of India in this respect will be to combine with the agency of the Government the aid which may be derived from the exertions and the liberality of the educated and wealthy natives of India, and of other benevolent persons.

We have, therefore, resolved to adopt in India the system of grants-in-aid which has been carried out in this country with very great success; and we confidently anticipate by thus drawing support from local resources, in addition to contributions from the state, a far more rapid progress of education than would follow a mere increase of expenditure by Government; while it possesses the additional advantage of fostering a spirit of reliance upon local exertions and combination for local purposes, which is of itself of no mean importance to the well-being of a nation.

We look forward to the time when any general system of education entirely provided by Government may be discontinued, with the gradual advance of the system of grant-in-aid, and when many of the existing Government institutions, especially those of the high order, may be safely closed or transferred to the management of local bodies under the control of, and aided by, the state'.

voluntary religious education in government institutions:

The Dispatch observed, 'Considerable misapprehension appears to exist as to our views with respect to religious instruction in the Government institutions. Those institutions were founded for the benefit of the whole population of India; and in order to effect their object it was, and is, indispensable that the education conveyed in them should be exclusively secular. The Bible is, we understand, placed in the libraries of the colleges and schools and the pupils are able freely to consult it. This is as it should be; and, moreover, we have no desire to prevent, or discourage, any explanations which the pupils may, of their own free will, ask from the masters upon the subject of the Christian religion provided that such

information be given out of school hours. Such instruction being entirely voluntary on both sides, it is necessary, in order to prevent the slightest suspicion of an intention on our part to make use of the influence of Government for the purpose of proselytism, that no notice shall be taken of it by the inspectors in their periodical visits'.

Training of teachers:

For securing properly qualified teachers the Dispatch observed, 'We cannot better than refer you to the plan which has been adopted in Great Britain for this subject, and which appears to us to be capable of easy adaption to India. It mainly consists in the selection and stipend of pupil-teachers (awarding a small payment to the masters of the schools in which they are employed for the instruction out of school hours ()); their ultimate removal, if they prove worthy, to normal schools; the issue to them of certificates on the completion of their training in those normal schools; and in securing to them a sufficient salary when they are afterwards employed as school masters. This system should be carried out in India, both in the Government colleges and schools, and, by means of grants-in-aid, in all institutions which are brought under Government inspection.....'.

'Our wish is that the profession of school master may, for the future, afford inducements to the natives of India such as are held out in other branches of the public service'.

education of women:

The Dispatch stressed the importance of female education and stated, 'The importance of female education in India cannot be over-rated; and we have observed with pleasure the evidence which is now afforded of an increased desire on the part of many of the natives of India to give a good education their daughters. By this means a far greater proportional impulse is imparted to the educational and moral tone of the people than by the education of men. We have already observed that schools for females are included among those to which grants-in-aid may be given; and we can not refrain from expressing our cordial sympathy with the efforts which are being made in this direction. Our Governor General-in-Council has declared, in a communication to the Government of Bengal, that the Government ought to give to the native female education in India its frank and cordial support; and in this we heartily concur and we especially approve of the bestowal of marks of honor upon such native gentlemen as Rao Bahadur Magahunbhai Karamchand who donated Rs. 20,000/- to the foundation of two native female schools in Ahmedabad, as by such means our desire for the extension of female education becomes generally known'.

Establishment of universities:

'The rapid spread of a liberal education among the natives of India since that time, the high attainments shown by the native students in private institutions in

the success of the Medical Colleges, and the requirement of an increasing European and Anglo-Indian population, have led us to the conclusion that the time is now arrived for the establishment of Universities in India'.

Expansion of mass education:

'Our attention should now be directed to a consideration, if possible, still more important, and one which has been hitherto', we are bound to admit, too much neglected, namely, how useful and practical knowledge, suited to every station of life, may be best conveyed to the great mass of the people, who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts, and we desire to see the active measures of Government more especially directed, for the future, to this object, for the attainment of which we are ready to sanction a considerable increase of expenditure'

a) the clientele of indigenous schools:

The sacerdotal class - Sanskrit schools

The Amla or subordinate government employees who wanted to learn Persian or Persianised under for their work in the courts - Persian schools

The upper classes of society - mainly landed gentry who disliked to allow their sons to go to school with the common people - Persian and Arabic schools

The traders who wanted a little special teaching in bazar accounts- Hindi schools

The department of education had considerable towards both the accounts and peculiar scripts of the trading and Munshi classes and for the literary fare of Bagh-o-Bahar, Yusuf-Zuleikha etc. of the Persian schools. In contrast the syllabus of the Halkabandi schools was as follows:

1) 4th Class (Lower class):

1. Akshara Dipika or vernmala
2. Balbodh
3. Map of district or pergannah
4. Multiplication tables.

2) 3rd Class:

1. Surajpur ki Kahani
2. Partramalika (Letter Writing)
3. Gyanchalisi (Moral Precepts)
4. Ganit Prakash
5. Map of India

3) 2nd Class:

1. Vidyankar
2. Bharat Varshiya Itihas
3. Ganit Prakash (Arithmetic up to cube root)
4. Mansuration
5. Map of India

4) 1st Class

1. Gramya Kalpadrum (Village and accounts)
2. Kisanopadesh (a dialogue on rights and obligation of land holders and cultivators)
3. Ishnartani Darshan (elements of natural theory)
4. History of India (Muslim era)
5. Decimal fractions
6. Mansuration

With the syllabus of this kind, the Halkabandi schools did not satisfy even a part of the very specific vocation and cultural needs that the indigenous schools fulfilled.

c) the data of indigenous schools in oudh:

Year	No. of schools	Pupils	Pupils/Schools
1870 – 71	507	4257	8
1871 – 72	568	4604	8
1873 – 73	758	5440	7

d) corresponding figures for n.w.p. in 1872 - 73 for schools other than the teaching accounts:

1. English	572
2. Sanskrit	4909
3. Persian	8053
4. Arabic	828
5. Sanskrit and Hindi	2060
6. Persian and Urdu	16019
7. Arabic and Persian	282
8. Hindi	5896
9. Urdu	1610
10. Bengali and Marathi	234
11. Keran	4115
12. Mahajani	11083
Total	55665 [1] ¹¹

e) analysis of pupils studying different languages in government schools in 1873-74 :

1. English and other languages	6353
2. Hindi	117644
3. Urdu	47801
4. Hindi and Sanskrit	565
5. Urdu and Persian	17727

f) the class composition of middle and lower schools in N.W.P. and Oudh:

1. Land owners	22.2%
2. Cultivators	37.5%
3. Priests	04.0%
4. Teachers	1.1%

¹¹ North West Province education Report 1859-60, page 44

5.	Bankers and Traders	9.5%
6.	Professions	7.7%
7.	Government and private services	5.3%
8.	Labourers and servants	9.8%
9.	Artisans	2.8%

The number of people educated in government schools who succeeded in securing government employment rose very slowly as show below.

a) government employment:

1869 -	70	348
1870 -	71	243
1871 -	72	286
1872 -	73	348
1873 -	74	325
1874 -	75	300
1875 -	76	299
1876 -	77	Figure not available
1877 -	78	
1878 -	79	353
1879 -	80	443

An interesting sidelight on the language policy of the education department somewhat later is provided by the attitude of schools in the pattern areas across the Indus. The department was in favour of introducing Urdu which however was found rather difficult. Persian was rather nearer to the Pushto spoken by the pathans. The attempts of schools and books not getting even moderately popular¹²

b) syllabus of the schools in 1879 - 80:

upper primary education

1. Urdu reading and grammar
2. Writing from dictation in a clear and legible hand
3. Arithmetic up to compound interest
4. Geography
5. Menstruation

Lower Primary Examination

1. Reading and writing
2. Arithmetic up to compound division
3. General knowledge of the maps of Punjab and India

A) SYLLABUS OF THE SCHOOLS:

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Arithmetic
4. Accounts - Mahajani and Jamidari
5. Practical Surveying and Menstruation
6. Geography of the district - Bengal, India and outlines of the map of the world
7. History of Bengal Part II

B) Class of People Receiving Education¹³:

Occupations	No. of students	Age
-------------	-----------------	-----

¹² Punjab Education Report 1869-70

¹³ Bengal education report 1870 - 71, Page 75

1. Cultivators	345	26
2. Lower professional man	283	21
3. Higher professional man	157	12
4. Holders of religions endowments	121	9
5. Petty shopkeepers	99	7
6. Holders of small estates	70	5
7. Others	248	20
Total	1323	100

division of schools and their syllabus

The students begin in the junior schools with the rudiments of English and rise to the 7th class by which time they have acquired to tolerable command of English language have mastered its Grammar have advanced in Arithmetic to vulgar fractions and have some acquaintance with the elements of Geography.

On promotion to the upper school they proceed with some studies with the addition of History and Poetry in the succession of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Algebra and Mathematics. They also translate Bengali into English and the reverse.

a) division of school in seven classes:

The school is divided into seven classes and the following is syllabus:

1st Class 1. Shakespeare 2. Clift's political economy 3. Writing 4. Plane and Analytical trigonometry 5. Spherical geometry 6. Conic sections 7. Parabola and Ellipse

2nd Class- Mocullock's elementary course of reading, All the problems of the terrestrial globe, Principles of Astronomy, Translation from and into English Writing, First four books of Euclid, Algebra as far as quadratic questions

3rd Class -

Chambers History of England as far as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, History of the Marathas. Grammar. Latin and Greek Roots. General Geography of the world, Translation from and into English, Writing, First book of Euclid, Algebra Simple equations

4th Class -

1. Reading and translation from moral class book 2. Grammar 3. Geography of Asia and Europe 4. Writing from dictation 5. Latin roots 6. Writing the whole of decimal fraction 7. Algebra as far as division

5th Class -

1. Reading and Translation from Mokullock's series of lessons 2. Principles of geography 3. Rules of syntax 4. Prefixes and affixes 5. Writing the whole of vulgar fractions 6. Mental Arithmetic

6th Class -

1. Mokullock's 3rd Reading Book 2. Translation 3. Grammar 4. Writing simple and compound proportions 5. Mental Arithmetic

7th Class -

1. Division 2. Reading and translation from Mullock's first reading book and 3. Simple division

High Schools 1871

Province	Govt.	Aided	Unaided	Total
Madras	14	38	1	53
Bombay	10	8	2	20
Bengal	53	80	—	133
Punjab	4	10	—	14
C.P.	2	2	—	4
Miscellaneous	2	—	—	2
	85	138	3	226

High Schools 1872

Province	Govt.	Aided	Unaided	Total
Madras	22	47	12	81
Bombay	19	14	15	48
Bengal	60	97	61	218
Punjab	11	12	—	23
C.P.	1	4	—	5
Miscellaneous	3	—	—	3
	116	174	88	378

Middle Schools 1871

Province	Govt.	Aided	Unaided	Total
Madras	67	405	28	509
Bombay	137	12	37	186
Bengal	217	1,320	—	1,537
Punjab	97	37	—	134
C.P.	44	8	—	52
Miscellaneous	45	—	—	45
	607	1,782	65	2,454

Middle Schools 1872

Province	Govt.	Aided	Unaided	Total
Madras	133	205	299	637
Bombay	128	30	51	209

Bengal	212	1,309	222	1,743
Punjab	178	22	—	200
C.P.	38	10	—	48
Miscellaneous	30	—	—	30
	719	1,576	572	2,867

OBSERVATIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS:

'The commission failed to see that Boards were going to do justice to their charge. The government Shifted their responsibilities to the newly formed Boards and left them to experiment with such a vital subject as the education of the people'.

(A.N. Basu : Education in Modern India,P.54)

'This disregard of the financial implication of the problem robs the recommendations of the Indian Education Commission of a large part of their utility'.

(Nurrullah and Naik - A History of Education in India, P. 356)

'Although they fixed their hopes upon the system of instruction becoming more thorough and scientific, they had no measures to recommend where by it could be made so'.

(Report of the Calcutta University Commission, Vol. I, Page 59).

'The net result achieved by the commission practically reiterated the principles which had already been accepted years ago in Wood's Dispatch'.

(A.N. Basu - Education in Modern India, P. 56)

'The enquiry of the commission led to a great educational awakening in India and its main findings dominated educational policy till 1902'

(Nurrullah and Naik : A History of Education in India, P. 226 227)

syllabus of elementary schools in different provinces

Madras

1. Geography of Asia
2. Not more than two subjects from following list may also be taken up at the option of the candidate -
 - a. English
 - b. Vernacular poetry
 - c. History
 - d. The Sanitary Primer
 - e. Agriculture

Bombay

1. History and geography of India
2. One of the following subjects may be optionally added-
 - a. Drawing

- b. Agriculture
- c. Handicrafts

Bengal

1. History and geography of Bengal
2. Euclid part of book I
3. Menstruation (added in 1885)
4. Elements of Physics
5. The sanitary Primer together with another work of hygiene (All compulsory subjects).

N.W.P.

One of the following subjects

- a. History
- b. Geography
- c. Sanitation
- d. Menstruation

Punjab

1. English of Persian
 2. Geography
 3. Menstruation
- (All compulsory subjects)

In the first three provinces arithmetic includes native methods of accounts in the last two it is generally confined to European arithmetic the standard in which is much the same in all the provinces.

EXAMINATION SYSTEM

Madras

The examination in Madras underwent a modification in 1889 (the first examination being held in 1890).

Bombay

In Bombay the examination was established in 1887 - 88 for the award of scholarships to middle schools.

N.W.P.

It appeared to have added Rent Revenue Law. Geography was extended to cover Asia and Europe too besides India. The examination did not function as a test for government service.

Punjab

In Punjab the test had apparently been modified to comprise 3R's plus not more than four of the following

1. Geography (Punjab, India, Asia and a general knowledge of the map of the world).
2. Menstruation
3. Common things defined as the subject matter of the set of subject lessons
4. Persian
5. Sanskrit or Arabic
6. English

Assam

In Assam it was frankly recognized that the teacher would not be able to teach the new subjects due to which the new subjects were not introduced

INDIAN EDUCATION COMMISSION (1882-1883)

Lord Ripon appointed the first Indian Education Commission, known as Hunter Commission, on February 3, 1882, with William Hunter as its Chairman. (The commission is sometimes termed as 'Hunter commission' after the name of its Chairman). The commission consisted of 20 members excluding the Chairman. Syed Mahmud, Bhudev Mukherjee, Anand Mohan Bose and K.T. Telang were the representatives of India. Dr. Miller from Madras represented the missionaries. Mr. B.L. Rice, the then Director of Public Instructions, Mysore, was appointed the secretary of the commission.

President The Hon'ble W.W. Hunter, LL.B., C.I.E.

Members

1. The Hon'ble Sayed Ahmed Khan Bahadur, C.S.I.
2. The Hon'ble D.M. Barbour, C.S.
3. The Revd. W.R. Blackett, M.A.
4. Mr. Anand Mohan Bose, B.A.
5. Mr. A.W. Croft, M.A.
6. Mr. K. Deighton, B.A.
7. Mr. J.T. Fowler
8. Mr. A.P. Howell, M.A., C.S.
9. Mr. H. P. Jacob
10. Mr. W. Lee Warner, M.A., C.S.
11. Mr. P. Rangananda Mudaliar, M.A.
12. The Revd. W. Miller, M.A.
13. The Hon'ble Baboo Bhudev Mukherjee, C.I.E.
14. Mr. C. Pearson, M.A.
15. The Hon'ble Maharaja Jotendro Mohan Tagore, C.S.I.
16. Mr. Kashinath Trimbuk Telang, M.A., LL.B.
17. Mr. G.E. Ward, C.S.
18. The Revd. A. Jean, D.D.

19. Mr. Colin Browning, Inspector General of Education, C.P.
20. Mr. Haji Ghulam of Amritsar

Secretary Mr. B.L. Rice

Terms of Reference of the commission:

'It will be the duty of the commission to enquire particularly into the manner in which effect has been given to the principles of the Dispatch of 1854: and to suggest such measures as it may think desirable in order to the further carrying out of the policy therein laid down'.

'It is the desire of the Governor General-in-Council that the commission should specially bear in mind the great importance which the Government attaches to the subjects of primary education. The development of Dispatch of elementary education was of the main objects contemplated by the Dispatch of 1854...., The principal object, therefore, of the enquiry of the commission should be the present state of elementary education throughout the Empire and the means by which this can everywhere be extended and improved'.

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RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AFTER SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Dr. Purushottam Singh

Associate Professor of History
V.S.S.D. College
Kanpur (U.P.) India

The Ramakrishna Movement is a force to be reckoned with all over the world today – a force to direct the energies of men and women for their own spiritual uplift and for bending their energies for the amelioration of the material condition of the less privileged. Swami Vivekananda, who gave formal Shape to this movement, placed these twin ideals before it – *Atmano Mokchartham Jagaddhitaya cha* (“for one’s own spiritual salvation and for the welfare of the world”). The movement has kept this ideal undimmed before it during the past eight decades and more, and acquired the recognition it has today by the dedicated workers of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission in diverse fields of activity – social, intellectual, moral and spiritual.¹

The Math and Mission spread mainly as a result of personal effort and initiative. Almost all the centres in the initial stages grew out of wants felt and co-operation extended by the people of the locality – no matter whether it was a province, a district, or even a village. Through the underlying ideas were the same everywhere, there was no central planning, and this led to a concentration of centres in some regions, while other areas remained untouched. The remedy was not easy; for the Belur authorities had no central fund and had perforce to rely on local enthusiasm and co-operation. And this local enthusiasm – so valuable in the early stages – created difficulties later. The inaugurators tended to become narrow and self – satisfied in their outlook, and their personal lives became too much influenced by the tastes and opinions of local friends. As a result, they were unwilling to allow any freedom of action or to agree to any improvements

suggested either by the Math and Mission authorities or by the workers deputed by them. We faced such a situation at Varanasi in 1921. Some other places also told the same tale. It was altogether a complex problem. Nobody would suggest outright that the older people ought to be replaced; that would be outrageous, for to discredit the genuinely self – sacrificing workers on whose life-blood those institutions sprouted and thrived, would be cutting at the very roots of the organization. At the same time, the followers of Swami Vivekananda could not reconcile themselves for all time to outmoded methods of work. This is just illustrative of the difficulties that the authorities would have become involved in if they had accepted the resolutions as they were for immediate execution. They could only be accepted in principle, to be given effect to by stages and at the proper time. This is exactly what was done by the Trustees of the Belur Math, who in another capacity are also the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission. They “adopted” the resolutions, with only one real modification, viz, that in Resolution 7 the limits of six and four years for the heads and the workers were raised to eight and five years respectively.²

In this Mission, there are ideological solutions of some global problems of man which have baffled thinkers and revolutionaries down the ages. Its stand is clear, simple and bold. The central theme of existence is the proven fact of God existence being one and homogeneous, individual soul and the supreme spirit are identical. Problems of existence arise and multiply when this plenary identity is forgotten or ignored. All problems in the world can be solved only by working out the implications of the supreme identity in all human contexts, physical, mental and spiritual. We may start anywhere, tarry as long as we may like on the way. However, the destination of the pilgrimage being God, we must remember to move onward and forward, inward and God-ward. But He is not far away for there is no where He is not going about. Therefore, this Movement gives a most daring answer in the form of a challenging question; if God can be worshipped through a clay image, why not through man? This Movement brings home the most refreshing message of classical Vedanta in terms understandable and agreeable to everybody: ***“Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is stranger, my child; the whole world is your own.”*** The Ramakrishna Movement is dedicated to making these ideals workable in the brass tacks of life so that the twin ideals of ***“Highest freedom of the self and good of the world”*** may become the reality of experience.³ The year 1939 witnessed a new Mission Centre at Lahore. In August of the same year, the Ramakrishna – Vivekananda Centre of New York moved to its five-storeyed permanent home in a residential section of the city at 17 East 94th street. Successful extension work of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, carried on for a number of years by Swami Ashokananda at Oakland, led to the opening on the 22nd October, 1939, of a permanent centre in the adjacent University town of

Berkeley, called the Vedanta Society of Northern California, East Bay Centre, which was later placed under the active charge of Swami Shantaswarupananda, who was sent to assist Swami Ashokananda in March, 1948. Swami Yatishwarananda, who had been carrying on his usual work in central Europe and gradually extending it to other cities, when to Stockholm in August, 1939, on preaching work. But while he was there, Scandinavia was invaded by Hitler, which forced him to leave Europe for the U.S.A. in April, 1940, by the last ship leaving Bergen before the occupation. The year 1940 saw the leaving Bergen into the Mission of the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya and Boys' Home at chingleput and the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Salem. In the same year the centre at Port Louis, Mauritius, inaugurated in 1939, was placed on a permanent basis. The year also witnessed the death of Swami Paramananda on the 21st of June, followed by the defection of his Western devotees along with his centres at La Grescenta, Boston, and Cohasset. But in April, 1941, another centre was started at Boston under Swami Akhilananda. In March, 1942, the centre dedicated its own commodious house on Bay State Road, at Deerfield Street, situated on the Charles River in a very respectable quarter of the city, for which Mrs. Rasalia Abreu supplied the necessary funds.⁴

The earliest activities of the Mission in the life time of Swamiji were: the famine relief work in Murshidabad, Dinajpur, and Santal Parganas (Bengal) in 1897; the drought relief work in Kishengarh (Rajputana); the plague relief in Calcutta in 1899-1900. The Ramakrishna Home of service at Varanasi was started in 1901 by some enthusiastic young men, inspired by Swamiji's message. Swamiji himself wrote an appeal to help the cause. In the very year (1898) the Mission went forth and undertook plague and famine relief work, sister Nivedita was helped to start her school; *Prabuddha Bharata* was taken from madras to Almora under the direct management of the order; the Bengali organ of the Order, *Udbodhan*, was started in 1899 by Swami Trigunatitananda under the direct inspiration and financial help from Swamiji.⁵ In 1941 was started the Vidyamandira, a residential Intermediate College, at Belur under the newly constituted Ramakrishna Mission Saradapitha. With the Vidyamandira, the Mission entered the field of collegiate education, it having confined itself to education upto High School standard so far. Another new-comers was the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama of Jalpaiguri in North Bengal. Still another addition was the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama of Kalady, the birth-place of Sankaracharya in Travancore. The Ashrama was started by Swami Agamananda on the bank of the river purna, on May 20, 1936. He handed it over to the Ramakrishna Math in 1941, after adding to it a Sanskrit School, a Gurukula, and a Harijan orphanage. The Sanskrit School was developed into a High School and a Sanskrit Middle School in 1947, and a Home for College students were added in 1948. The Ramakrishna Ashrama of Malda, existing from

1924, added a Mission branch in August, 1942. In December of the same year, Swami Yatishwarananda, then in the U.S.A., started Vedanta work in Philadelphia. The Sevashrama of Calicut was integrated with the Mission in May, 1943. Another new entrant in 1943 April was the Ramakrishna Yogadyna of Kankur gachhi, which was a significant fact. The place, it may be remembered, was a retreat built by Ram Chandra Datta, and a portion of the Master's ashes was interred there. Later a temple was built on the spot, which was completed in 1931. Now with a view to ensuring permanence for the holy place, the Management handed it over to the Trustees of the Belur Math. Yet another addition in 1943 was the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, a student's Home at 18 Judulal Mullick Road, Calcutta. The Sarda Kutir of Barlowganj, near Mussoori and the Ramakrishna Ashrama of Kalimpong, in the Darjeeling District, were added in March and April, 1944, to serve mainly as retreats.⁶ India was not an actual theatre of war; but as she was a base for the eastern front, the threat of Japanese invasion was there for a pretty long time, and the Indian army of liberation under Subhas Chandra Bose actually entered Manipur and the Naga Hills. These factors led to vigilance everywhere and strict control over all phases of life, to such an extent that when a dreadful cyclone and consequent tidal waves hit the coasts of Bengal and Orissa in October, 1942, washing away miles of human habitation and taking a heavy toll of life, the news took a considerable time to escape through the military iron curtain; and even when the people got an inkling of the disaster, its full magnitude remained unknown to those who could bring succor. At long last the nation knew enough to rise to a man to save their surviving sisters and brothers. The mission was naturally in the forefront of this humanitarian work, which commenced in the last week of October 1942 and continued upto June, 1944, during which period 60,280 persons were helped variously. Along with other relief organizations, the Mission entered the field in June, 1943; and the work was formally closed in April, 1945. The total expenditure in cash amounted to nearly Rs. 11,66, 500, in addition to goods worth about Rs. 25,00,000. The then Ramakrishna centre of Karachi co-operated by collecting and sending 1.240 tons of rice. At its peak, the Mission had 75 centres for distribution of help, spread over 19 districts and covering 1,169 villages and 22 towns.⁷

The Mission constitution underwent some more important changes in 1946, though the line of development was not entirely different from what was implied in the 1937 Rules. One important change was the explicit provision for loans from the headquarters to the branches, and from one branch to another with the approval of the headquarters. This helped many institutions to grow quickly. As for loans from the Government, banks, or any other outside agency, the matter was left in the hands of the Association to decide. Another innovation was the designation of the Secretary at the headquarters as General Secretary to distinguish him from the

branch Secretaries. He was also vested with more executive power. The Local Committees, of the branches now came to be termed Managing committees and the chief supervisor's post was abolished, his function having been taken over by the inspectors and branch secretaries. To be brief, society and Government did all they could, once they were conscious of the calamity. But, alas, the consciousness came rather too late! The measures that were taken succeeded only in saving the situation, already tragic, from becoming catastrophic. Even so, as the aftermath of the tragedy, society was faced with a thousand problems, not the least baffling of which was the care of the orphans. Fortunately, at this critical hour, a munificent gift of money and houses at Rahara, 12 of the late Satish Chandra Mukherjee, proprietor, Basumati, Calcutta, enabled the mission to start in September, 1944, an orphanage called the Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, with 37 boys. Soon the government recognized the service of the Home and undertook to support more boys at the institution, so that the total strength rose to 158 at end of 1945. The Mission could not accept more responsibility just then, since accommodation was insufficient.⁸

The year 1946 saw the happy realization of a dream of Swami Vivekananda. Half of the land of the garden-house at Cossipore together with the historic building in which the Master had passed his last months and trained his apostles, and which, in Swamiji's opinion, was really the first monastery of the Order, was purchased in August, 1946. The other half, consisting of vacant land, was also secured in April, 1949. So the garden house at 90 Cossipore Road was reinstated in its pristine glory and it soon began to draw numbers of devoted pilgrims. There were new developments in other fields. Swami Shrivasananda had created in 1938 a trust called the Holy Mother's Trust, Mysore, with a corpus valued at Rs. 1,00,000, from the income of which the Trustees of the Belur Math were to provide, among other things, for the training and support of Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Order. The Swami himself experimented with his scheme at various places, till in May, 1947, Mangalore in South Kanara, was selected by the Math authorities for the permanent Ashrama under the Trust, the training section being organized much later at Belur. One notable incident of 1947 in the U.S.A. was the purchase in December, by the Ramakrishna – Vivekananda centre of New York, of the historic cottage at Thousand Island Park where Swami Vivekananda had lived in 1895 for seven weeks. After remodeling, it was dedicated as an Ashrama in July, 1948. By the end of 1947 the mission attained a definite stage in its development; during the succeeding decade it did not practically sponsor any new and permanent centre. The three seeming exceptions were the Ramakrishna Math at Rajahmundry in the East Godavari District, the Matribhavan in South Calcutta and the centre at Srinagar, Kashmir. The Rajahmundry centre was

outcome of an old and oft repeated offer of land and buildings from a munificent local devotee.⁹

Though the going has never been easy-as perhaps it should not have been – still through all the difficulties, trials and travails the Ramakrishna Movement has always been expanding, so much so that even in a conservative way it may now be called a World Movement. In the days before India attained Independence in 1947, the motivations and the activities of this organizations, deeply committed to the all round welfare of the country but avoiding any involvement in politics, incurred the banter and ire of the nationalists on the one hand and on the other, had to bear the brunt of the foreign rulers suspicion because of Swamiji’s powerful influence on all classes of nationalists. By the sheer power of its characters, its fidelity to its declared creed, it proved its bona fides to both sides, and earned the respect of all who at last began to understand the superiority of Swamiji’s wisdom in directing this movement to have nothing to do with politics.¹⁰ A few words need to be added about the spiritual and cultural work. For the sake of convenience, we quote from the general report for 1947-48 : “The Math and Mission centres, particularly the former, laid special emphasis on the dissemination of the spiritual and cultural ideas and ideals of the Hindus, and through various type of activity tried to give a practical shape to the teaching of Shri Ramakrishna that all Religions are true. The centres established real points of contact between people of different denominations through public celebrations, meeting, classes, publications, etc.” Over and above conducting libraries, reading rooms and Sanskrit Schools, some Math centres published books on religious subjects and six magazines in different languages. The Math centres at Mayavati, Calcutta, Madras, Nagpur, and Mysore in particular had to their credit a considerable number of useful publications in different languages. Special mention should also be made of the Institute of culture in Calcutta, which tried to bring eminent men and women of India and other Lands into cultural fellowship. This then is a sectional representation of the activities of the Math and Mission as they stood on the verge of great event following the country’s attainment of independence in August, 1947. Swami Achalananda, the vice-president, passed away on the 11th March. He was a disciple of Swamiji and was one of the builders of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of service, Varanasi, where he spent his closing years. The vice-president’s post was now jointly occupied by Swamis Sankarananda and Vishudhananda, and Swami Nirvanananda stepped in as the Treasure. Another change took place in March, 1947. After sounding the general opinion of the organization, Swamis Abhayananda, Dayananda, Sambuddhananda, Shashwatananda, Pavitrananda and Gambhirananda were appointed Trustees – and members of the Govering body.¹¹

Without Swami Vivekananda there would have been no Sri Ramakrishna Movement. It would certainly not have been the Ramakrishna Movement as it is

and as it has contributed to modern Indian History. But equally, without Sri Ramakrishna there would have been no Swami Vivekananda. Certainly there would have been no Swami Vivekananda as he is known to us, an undoubtedly charismatic personality, and a man overpowered by the personality and presence of Ramakrishna. There would, of course, have been Narendra Nath Dutta, a member of a Calcutta bhadralok family, a brilliant young student, well-acquainted with the works of the major contemporary European philosophers, and an eloquent and accomplished speaker, a young man destined no doubt to play an outstanding part in the nationalist struggle against British imperial rule in India. But there would have been no Swami Vivekananda. One famous participant at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 would, in that case, have been unknown and the event itself by now have been virtually forgotten. Certainly it would have been a duller and less famous event than it was in fact, from the moment Swami Vivekananda began to make his distinctive contributions.¹²

Independence came on the 15th August, 1947. But the early months kept the people so busy with the settlement of communal wrangles, the housing of refugees and the making up of shortage of the bare necessities of food and raiment, that they had no time to turn their minds of constructive programmes. The British administrators had done much for the good of India. But they had done very little for the masses. They had only skimmed the surface for their own economic benefit and political stability; they had thought as little as was convenient about the lower levels of the society, leaving them to the care of petty merchants, industrialist, professionals, and landowners – all in their own leading strings. There were, therefore, poverty and squalor, disease and death, ignorance and superstition galore everywhere. It was no easy task for the national Government to show any tangible result even in a few years, not to speak of months. Whatever immediate result may have been, the people were glad that independence had come at last. The British, finding it too not for them, gracefully walked out while it was still possible to retain the friendship of India by that gesture of goodwill. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Swami Vivekananda that India would be liberated in an inconceivable way; and thus came freedom, which, according to Swamiji was the precondition of real growth for any country. By an undying vitality, India had survived hundreds of years foreign occupation; and now independence afforded her an infinite scope for planned development along her own lines. Naturally, with all the hindrances besetting her on every side, the growth could not be spectacular. Still the main condition of freedom being guaranteed, India could now advance with firm, confident steps. As she progressed, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission extended their fields of activity also through storm and stress, the twin institutions had stood by the nation and now the nation proceeded with faith to entrust them

with greater responsibilities. After the entire mission could not suddenly outgrow itself; it had its own ideology, method of work and standard of efficiency.¹³

After the attainment of independence by India in 1947, suddenly descended on the organizations - the Math and the Mission-massive patronage from the central and State Governments, now manned by nationalists who had known through the years its tested dependability and dedication. And this help caused phenomenal expansion of the work to the organization and brought in new challenges and stresses which are being squarely faced by the new generation of monks, to whose hands the leadership of the order is imperceptibly but steadily passing. The socioeconomic forces operative in the country and the altered terms of references have added new dimensions to the thinking and actions of the order in regard to its scope of service. It is well to remember that there as many other organizations, small and big in the country, which though legally or institutionally unaffiliated to the organization directed by the Headquarters at Belur Math, are yet inspired by the life and teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. Some youth movements and movements of dedicated lay-people are directly traced to their teachings. In this sense, the Ramakrishna movement has long since spilled out of the original container of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, and bids fair to start rolling off as new waves, releasing human energy in channels conducive to human welfare and advancement. From its humble beginning in a haunted house in Calcutta in 1886 with a few begging monks who did not have a square meal every day, and a few lay followers, the movement which bears the name of Sri Ramakrishna has grown into a world organization within about a century. With its branches in several countries this organization with in calculable potentiality for good of humanity, is a phenomenon to reckon with in the contemporary history of mankind. The interesting story of the development of this organization through various vicissitudes unfavorable and favourable upto the year 1956 has been authentically recorded.¹⁴

We referred earlier to a similar relief operation that was necessitated by the heavy migration from East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh) in consequence of fratricidal violence. As there was a lull in 1949 owing to strong measures taken by the government to check the unruly elements, the exodus seemed to stop for a while. So the Mission has a respite. But in 1950 East Pakistan politics took a new turn, and in spite of the assurances of the Government that minority would be protected and receive equality of treatment, that fear of the Hindus was not allayed. The recrudescence of riots, economic pressure, and social ignominy in East Pakistan combined with the prospect of a more solvent and honourable life in India, led to such a heavy rush for evacuation at all cost that the West Bengal Government and people stood aghast at the colossal problems that unexpectedly raised its head. All voluntary organizations, existing or formed on the spur of the

movement, were mobilized to make arrangements, for the reception, feeding and lodging of thousands upon thousands. The Mission entered the field in the middle of March, 1950. The main work at the beginning was to feed the people, the cost of food and transport being borne by the Government and that of administration by the Mission. First, they started feeding about 12,000 refugees daily at the Sealdah railway terminus in Calcutta. Gradually, as the exodus gained further momentum and public contributions became available, the Mission extended its activities by opening nineteen centres on its own resources as also in co-operation with the local and central governments, in other places in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Tripura, and East Pakistan. While on this topic, it has to be stated that though this service of the Mission was being appreciated by the Government and the people in general and though the Mission would have much liked to continue this humanitarian work, some political and other considerations cropped upto embroil the Mission unnecessarily with the innocent public.¹⁵

However, if in 1947 Indian Nationalism was largely the nationalism of an elite class, the work of the Ramakrishna movement since that times has been as clearly in the direction of nation-building as in the pre-independence period it was in a nationalist direction. Nor is this narrow nationalism, for the horizons could hardly be wider. To maintain those wide horizons, to preserve the unity of India and to develop a sense of nationhood has an importance in the contemporary world which can be understood by comparing the Indian situation with the Balkanized nature of a comparable region, that of mainland South-East Asia, and the international problems which that has produced.¹⁶

An important change in the field of education was the introduction of multipurpose higher secondary system, which was taken advantage of by many of the existing High School run by the Mission. Working as a branch centre of Deoghar Vidyapith since 1958, the Vidyapith at purulia got the status of an independent branch centre in 1963 with a residential multipurpose Higher Secondary School and a few subsidiary feeder institutions. In course of time, it developed itself into an ideal educational institution with various units. The rural sub-centre of Bankura Ashrama at Ramharipur, with a few educational institution including a multipurpose Higher secondary school, was made a full fledged branch centre in 1966.

The period starting with 1966 was laden with problems both political and social. The Math and Mission had to struggle hard to keep their banner flying, inspite of the debacles and setbacks at many places. The twin organizations showed their vitality by not only keeping the institutions in full working order, but also making improvements at many places. The necessity of the situation called for consolidation, but past momentum and commitments could not be ignored; and there was public pressure also for more expansion. As a result, some new centres

were either build up or affiliated. Besides, some temples and institutions were added.

Two other prominent operations this period are the Earthquake relief in Satara and Koyna Nagar of Maharashtra, and the flood relief in Surat and Bhavnagar of Gujarat, both followed by rehabilitation work in the form of constructing pucca huts in different villages. These two works at different stages were separately and jointly shouldered by the Mission centre in Bombay and the Math centre at Rajkot. The Rehabilitation project in Surat and Bhavnagar of Gujarat is a remarkable one which covered 23 villages by way of constructing 1,400 pucca houses, complete with community halls, electricity, and water supply system at an expenditure of about Rs. 21,00,000.¹⁷

Without going into other relief operations undertaken by the mission during this period, we may conclude by saying that independence and the reorganization of India as a welfare state brought to the mission not less but greater responsibility and more scope for work in this field. The permanent institutions, both educational and medical, expanded, thrived, and developed due to support and co-operation received from the government. Now-recurring and recurring grants released by governments, either central or state, helped many of the institutions to build up commodious houses with necessary furniture and fittings and meet the running expenses, which helped the monks to devote their time and energy to more systematic and constructive work.¹⁸ The Ramakrishna movement is verily a movement of the divine in the world. Since its inception, in the 19th century in the life of Sri Ramakrishna, it has been expanding and leavening history like the gentle dew silently bringing about blossoming of the fairest of roses, Like the sap of the earth nourishing corns, like sunshine ripening fruits. Being the movement of the divine, it concerns all, its work is for the total regeneration of man king. It has good news for every one in the world, however great or small, affluent or indigent, happy or miserable one may be. Being a global movement its ministration is of central importance for the progressive development of mankind. In all humility it claims that everyone always belongs to this movement, and there is no way of disowning it.¹⁹

However, in charactering the movement as innovative, simply. One might incur the criticism that an important, stabilizing factor had been overlooked and that is the extent to which the Ramakrishna movement, besides the innovative character of its nation-building activity, also emphasizes certain traditional elements in Indian culture, most notably Vedanta. The movement's ability to meet in a constructive way the totally new situation presented by Independence and the coming into being of an India that has no precedent in any historical period, renders assessment in terms of 'revivalism inappropriate. For what is 'revivalist' simply re-affirms received tradition without adapting that tradition to the changed

circumstances of a different time. The Ramakrishna movement, however, appears instead to have affirmed certain aspects of received Indian tradition, but also to have adapted that tradition to the circumstances of a new, enlarged, and much more diverse India than was known previously. Such adaptation of tradition to meet the needs of a newly emerging. Social and cultural situation is properly characterized as one of revitalization.²⁰

present condition of Ramakrishna Mission

When it started in 1897, the Ramakrishna Order consisted of a dozen monks or so and had practically no assets. Even now with its 137 centres and barely a thousand monks, it is small compared with the Christian organizations, but it is a name that commands respect all over India and even outside. What is the secret behind this? What exactly do its monks do in India and abroad? It must be made clear at once that the Ramakrishna Mission does not believe in conversion in the sense of the world as understood in common parlance. If anything, these monks try to make 'a Hindu a better Hindu, a Moslem a better Moslem, a Christian a better Christian' and so on. In other words, they ask people to go to the root of religion, which is trying to reach God somehow or other and not merely talking about Him. Because of this approach, they feel as much at home among non-Hindus as among Hindus. Because of this approach, non-Hindus also feel at home in their company; as a matter of fact they like these monks and often invite them to their services. Today ecumenism has become an active force in the Christian world. It must not be forgotten that long before pope John gave official blessings to this, Ramakrishna had preached and practiced it. His ecumenism was much broader though, for it embraced not some denominations but all denominations of all religions.²¹

Today the Ramakrishna Movement has become a great power for peace and happiness in this country as well as outside. In India where different religious sects and communities live, the idea of tolerance and brotherly feelings towards each other has great relevance. Another factor which contributes much to its popularity is the rational approach it brings to bear upon every vital problem of life. People who are influenced by Ramakrishna believe religion to be a kind of science open to study and investigation. They do not agree that religious truths have to be accepted on trust, they rather declare that nothing need be accepted as final unless it has been tested and found true. Experience personal and immediate, is the only acceptable proof of religion. The fact that the movement lays great store on selfless service as a means of God-realization also attracts many people. The service it gives is open to all, irrespective of caste or creed or language. Not only the Ramakrishna Mission but hundreds of institutions which have sprung up all over the country today give this kind of service. Since the time of Buddha this is almost

without parallel in India. What is significant is that most of them bear the name of Ramakrishna and draw inspiration from him.²²

The Ramakrishna Sangha and the Ramakrishna Movement are now universally accepted facts of history. The Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission form the nucleus – nay, the centre and omphalos of a world-wide spiritual empire. They had faced and successfully passed through the stage of indifference of opposition form and acceptance by, the public. Strangely, they now facing an external situation arising from a very recent inexplicable type of ideological misunderstanding and misinterpretation of history, on the one hand, and a parochial fanaticism and intolerance, on the other. In order to overcome this impediment in the path of its progress, the Sangha has to stand united, with more solidarity and cohesion among its monastic members, devotees and friends, and think deeply and deliberately. At the same time, the Sangha has to be more and more active in rendering all possible help to the oppressed and ignorant masses all over the world. The masses need spirituality, education, and means of livelihood. The consolidation of our Sangha is the first step in uplifting the masses, educating the women, rebuilding India, and regenerating the world on the basis of spirituality.²³

As time passes, the Ramakrishna Movement is growing from strength to strength. People all over the country want the Mission to open more branch centres – schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages, etc for they know that the quality of service they will get from the mission will be better than what they may get elsewhere. Their requests are almost always accompanied by offers of money, land, buildings, but the Mission proceeds cautiously and avoids proliferation unless there is a compelling reason in its favour. Apart from the fact that it suffers from shortage of manpower, it prefers that people themselves come forward to start such institutions, imbued with the spirit of selfless service. Happily, the present trend clearly shows that this spirit is fast spreading. As the movement spreads the attitude of the common people towards religion is also changing. Previously, religion was equated with rituals but now people realize that religion is essentially a science of ‘being and becoming’, something that concerns man’s inner nature. The habit of prayer is good but if this is not accompanied by a corresponding improvement in one’s nature, it is not worth much. Another change that is noticeable today is respect for religions of others, but there is now humility and a spirit of enquiry if not also reverence.²⁴

The strength of the Ramakrishna Movement is not in money or men or organization but in the ideas it tries to present. These ideas are fast spreading, and wherever they are spreading they are producing a great impact. Silently but inevitably, they are changing the minds of the people who come under their influence. They act like a catalytic agent transforming their personalities.²⁵

The followers of Ramakrishna – Vivekananda never forgot the poor and never will. Indeed those who are in the Ramakrishna Movement are the people who are most dissatisfied and critical of their record of work for the poor. They always feel that they have not done enough. They must do much more. This is only indicative of the movement's deep commitment to the service of the poor. But this can be conveniently misread and misrepresented by the detractor of the movement, if there is any. But they want to do "a good work on" the Lord too. This is an amazing thing Christ said. When the Lord is come he must be done a good work on. This has been the religious history in the world, that when God came to the world, he was adored and glorified. No one can resist this. In the Ramakrishna Movement glorification of the Ramakrishna has kept pace with the concern for service to the poor. Indeed, who are the poor? Ramakrishna, in other forms. So, as Ramakrishna-worship spreads, works for the uplift of the suffering people, also continually grow in intensity and extensity. And this can be proved on the basis of statistics to take an example, during the last two decades when the largest numbers of big temples have been dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna, intensive work has also been undertaken for integrated rural development.²⁶ Ruskin once said, '*An idea is more powerful than an army*'. There must be much truth in this; else it is difficult to explain the influence Ramakrishna and the Order of monks bearing his name have had over people all over the world.²⁷

Thus, the ideas that Ramakrishna left are now reaching out to the far corners of the world, not because of any patronage from any quarter, but because of their inherent strength. A new turn has come in the religious outlook of man since the day he was born. It is a turn that makes for unity, peace and blessedness.²⁸

Though both the Math and Mission take up charitable and philanthropic activities, the former lays emphasis on spiritual development of people and the latter give priority to welfare work.

Relief : The Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission have been from their very inception doing relief services in times of natural calamities like flood, famine, drought, etc. Public support is the principal resource of which relief work depends. During the period 1996-97, the Mission spent Rs. 52.6 Lakhs on relief and rehabilitation measures and distributed relief articles worth Rs. 11.33 Lakhs.

Medical Service : As part of their programme to the sick and the ailing, the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission run indoor hospitals, out patients dispensaries, mobile health units, etc. the Mission also runs a T.B. clinic in Delhi, 5 nurses, training centres and a **Medical Research Centre** attached to the hospital in Calcutta for postgraduate degree and diploma students. In 1996-97, they conducted altogether (1) **14 hospitals** with 2067 beds which served 88,185 indoor patients and 23,82,628 out patients; (2) **93 out patient's dispensaries** which treated

27,13,482 cases and (3) **29 mobile dispensaries** providing medical facilities for 8,18,239 patients. The Mission has also a **T.B. Sanatorium** at Rachi in Bihar State.

Educational Activities: A nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence are spread among the masses, said Swami Vivekananda. He urged that 'Education, education, education alone' was the panacea of the problems of India. Therefore, the Math and Mission, with their limited resources, try their best to provide education for people so that they may play their due role in the making of a better India. Among the educational centres they run at present, there are five **Degree Colleges, five teachers, Training Colleges, 13 Higher Secondary Schools, 32 Secondary Schools and 134 Schools of Different denominations, 7 Junior Technical Industrial Schools**, two institutes of Agriculture, two schools of Languages, one Sanskrit College, two Sanskrit Schools, four Polytechnics, one computer centre, and 152 non-formal education units. Besides, they have 97 student's homes and hostels, five orphanages and also a Blind Boy's Academy. The total number of students who had education in these Institutions during the year 1996-97 was 1,25,326 of which 89,141 were boys and 36,185 girls.²⁹

Work for Women : 'All nations have achieved greatness by paying proper respect to women' and a country cannot progress by neglecting its womenfolk, just as a bird cannot fly only on one wing, said Swami Vivekananda'. Therefore, the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission do not neglect or look upon women. Relief and medical services are rendered to men and women alike. A woman can visit the shrine of a centre, attend its public celebrations, classes and meetings, enjoy libraries facilities just as a man does. Besides, some of the centres have units working exclusively for women. To name only a few of them: (i) **Maternity sections at the hospitals** in Calcutta, Trivandrum and Vrindaban, (ii) **the Domiciliary and Maternity Clinics** at Jalpaiguri and Khetri, (iii) **the Invalid Women's Home** at Varanasi, (iv) **the Sarada Vidyalaya** at Madras, (v) **three Girl's High School** at Jamshedpur, (vi) **the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha** and (vii) **four Training Schools for nurses** at Trivandrum, Vrindaban, Itanagar, and Calcutta. Though literature and preaching, the monks of the Ramakrishna Order keep the male folk reminding of their duties toward women, of the respect they ought to show them. But keeping in mind Vivekananda's views that the women's problems could be handled best if they were taken care of by women themselves and that male interference in women's affairs might do more harm than good, they work for women only in a limited way. The major portion of this task they leave to be accomplished by the Ramakrishna Sarada Math and Sarada Mission, which is exclusively a women's organization, having the same ideals but completely separate from the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission.³⁰

Work for the youth : Vivekananda's hope and confidence lay in the Youth of the country. The math and the mission, therefore, pay special attention to the

youth, to their moral uplift in particular. Apart from the good number of school and colleges they run the monks always try to keep in touch with the youth. Through study circles, seminars and youth forums, the youth are made acquainted with the message of Swami Vivekananda. Special mention should be made in this connection of the Vivekananda study circle of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of culture, Calcutta. It is a youth forum which meets once every fortnight at the Institute and organizes youth conventions in Calcutta and rural areas at weekends. **Attention to weaker sections:** while providing education, medical services and distress relief the Ramakrishna Math and the Mission pay special attention to those who are weak from both material and cultural points of view. The centers at along, Narottamnagar, Itanagar and and Narainpur are fully dedicated to the welfare of the tribal people and a few more centres do the tribal welfare work as part of their activities. The Pallimangal section of Ramakrishna Math, the centres at Belur, Narendrapur, Ranchi, Purulia and Raipur are engaged in rural development work on a large scale. The aim is to make the poor and the backward people stand on their own feet to expose them to the mainstream of Indian Culture and to raise them to a status of equality with the rest of countrymen. All these services are done in no spirit of pity but in a spirit of worship, the receiver being considered God while the giver as the blessed worshipper. Another distinctive feature of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission is that they are serving. To this order of monks, all religions are equally true and therefore religious, the conversion is unnecessary and undesirable.³¹

Spiritual and cultural work : Both the math and the mission lay emphasis on the dissemination of the spiritual and cultural ideas of India. They do this through regular classes, meetings, public celebrations, publications of books, etc. Attempts are made by these means to make people aware of their moral and spiritual legacy, of the fact that life becomes worthwhile when one lives for others. In the case of religion, they Preach only the universal truths of the Vedanta as exemplified in Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings. People are made to understand that they are potentially divine and they have immense possibilities. They are also taught to respect all religions as valid paths to the same God and Love all beings as their own selves. These messages are carried to a larger section of people through the publication of books and journals on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, Vedanta and Indology. More than ten centres publish books, in English, Bengali, Hindi, and other Indian languages, and at present the Math and Mission have about 700 titles and 12 monthly journals.

Foreign Centres : The Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission have a network of branches all over the world with their faith in the inherent divinity of man and equal validity of all religions taught by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, the Math and the Mission are inspired by the principle of give-and-

take in their dealings with the West. As Swami Vivekananda said- ***“India has to learn from the West the conquest of external nature while the West has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature.”*** The two cultures are thus complementary to each other. The Math and the Mission have centres in the U.S.A., England, France, Canada, Fiji, Japan, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and Argentina (South America). The nature of work in the foreign countries is mainly of preaching. The stress is given on leading a sincere spiritual life and along with this is taught and how one can respect other religions without losing one’s one religious faith.³²

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First all India Communist Conference in Kanpur: a historical outline

Dr. Adesh Gupta

Associate Professor of History

Pt. J. L. Nehru College

Banda (U.P.) India

During the Kanpur Conspiracy case the idea for founding a ‘legal’ communist party came from the side of left Congressmen like Satyabhakta, Singaravelu and Hasrat Mohani. The first Indian Communist Conference for organizing the communist party held in Kanpur on December 26, 1925, concurrently with the annual session of the Indian National Congress. The conference was held at the initiative of Satyabhakta (real name Chakhanlal) a former terrorist revolutionary and journalist. Satyabhakta met Gandhi in Kumbh fair at Haridwar in 1916. He stayed at the Sabarmati Ashram between 1918 and 1920, leaving it on account of his differences over the creed of non-violence. In 1923, Satyabhakta came to Kanpur and began to work among the workers. He took a keen interest in the Kanpur case and conducted a vigorous campaign in the Hindi Press for the release of the Communist prisoners. From the proceedings of the trial he concluded that to advocate communism was not in itself illegal and that a Communist Party could exist without engaging in activities which the government could regard as treasonable. The result was the formation of the Indian Communist Party by Satyabhakta, which started functioning from 1st September 1924. Its formation was duly announced in the *Bande Matram*, an English daily of Calcutta, *Pratap*, a Hindi daily of Kanpur and *Aaj* of Banaras. In the “Fututre Programme of the Indian Communist Party” Satyabhakta asserted that his aim was “to establish the right of forming Communist Party in India openly.”

Satyabhakta issued two leaflets one in Hindi and the other in English in which he declared that the object of the party was “establishment of complete Swaraj and the system of society based upon the common ownership and communal control of the means and the instruments of production and distribution of wealth by and in the interest of the whole community of India.” These leaflets were immediately banned by the U.P. Government. In fact despite the publicly proclaimed ‘open’ and ‘peaceful’ character, the Indian Communist Party could not save itself from troubles at the hands of British authorities. The police raided the Kanpur office of the party in July and seized a number of books on communism from the Socialist Bookshop run by Satyabhakta. M. N. Roy was trying to get information about Satyabhakta’s organization as early as 1924. Satyabhakta’s correspondence with Shapurji Saklatvala, British Communist M.P. was quite disturbing to Roy who treated the Indian Communist movement as his exclusive preserve. Therefore, he did not react favourably to the organization of Satyabhakta. He thoroughly criticized it in his paper *The Masses of India*. Roy and his followers had even gone so far as to suggest suggesting that it was possibly a ruse of government to attract people of communist tendencies in order to warm out their secrets.

Despite the Government’s repression, by June 1925 Satyabhakta claimed to have enrolled 250 members from every province in the country. In September 1925, Satyabhakta announced that an Indian Communist conference would be held at Kanpur in December along with the congress session. Wide publicity was given to the conference and all members and sympathizers were invited to attend the conference. Shapurji Saklatvala was requested to preside over the conference. Satyabhakta was not opposed to the Indian national congress. He described the Congress as “ a well established and influential institution,” but since the Congress was under the influence and control of the capitalists and landlords, it should be reformed in the “ best interest of the country.” The members of the party were requested to get membership of the Indian National Congress with the intention of changing it “into an instrument of service to our people.”

There has been some confusion about Satyabhakta and his party’s attitude towards the Cominterns as he did not for the time being favour formal affiliation with the Comintern. On this ground some of the Indian Communists have charged him with counterpoising national against international communism and even with ignorance about Communist ideology. But Satyabhakta’s opposition to affiliation with the Comintern appears to be based more on tactical grounds of avoiding British repression than on nationalists principles. It is clearly demonstrated in the programme of the party. He wrote: “Indian Government is much hostile to the Third International and it has sentenced several Indian Communists for being in communication with it.” He even asked: “Why should the Indian Communist parties in the government for this right,” he said, “and hope that

final victory will be ours.” Thus Satyabhakta did not counter pose national communism against international communism. He maintained that “our relations with the Communist International is of the nature of friend and mutual sympathy as followers of the nature of friendship and mutual sympathy as followers of the same principle.” His proclamation that his “Indian Communist Party is absolutely an independent body” was not a denial of inter-nationalism but his refusal to accept the binding character of decisions taken by those who were away from India. Satyabhakta wanted to shape his tactics according to Indian circumstances. He wrote:

This is what the scientific socialism enjoins upon its adherents. The strength and vitality of scientific socialism lies in its creative adaption of its universal laws to specific national condition. As has already been noted the object of the Indian Communist party was “establishment of complete Swarajya and the system of society based upon the common ownership and communal control of the means and instruments of production and distribution of wealth by and in the interest of the whole community of India.” In the light of this passage Muzaffar Ahmad’s charge that there was no mention of full independence or that there was no mention of full independence or that there was not the faintest of communist ideology in his Communist Party seems to be unjustified. Thus one cannot but agree with the opinion of Dr. Devendra Kaushik and Dr. L.V. Mitrokhin that Satyabhakta did not advance the notion of Indian peculiarity as a cover to water down the universally applicable basic principles of scientific socialism.

The conference started on 26th December 1925 under the presidentship of Singaravelu Chettiar. Some 50-60 delegates, besides 1500 observers, participated in it. Prominent among those who attended the conferences were Muzaffar Ahmad, Ghate, Joglekar, K.S. Iyenger and R.S. Nimbkar. In his Presidential Address Singaravelu Stated that the aim of the party was emancipation of workers from the state of economic bondage. He declared that Indian communism was not Bolshevism and that Bolshevism was a form of communism which the Russians had adopted in their country and “it may not be needed in India.” Despite this reference to Indian communism, Singaravelu proclaimed that “we are one with the world communists.” Muzaffar Ahmad, Ghate, J.P. Bagerhatta and other communists who had long been in contact with Roy and the Comintern knew nothing about the convener of the conference and were suspicious of his motives. Soon a dispute arose between this group and Satyabhakta over the question of the name of the party and its relationship with the Comintern. Satyabhakta was anxious to call it the “Indian Communist Party,” while others insisted on calling it as the “Communist Party of India” and retaining contact with Moscow. Ultimately Satyabhakta left the conference. After his departure, the CPI was organized and an

Executive Committee was elected. J.P. organized and an Executive Committee was elected. J.P. Bagerhatta and S.V. Ghate were chosen as its joint secretaries

The Kanpur Conference in 1925, where the decision was taken to establish the Communist Party of India, took place just 8 years after the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia that shook the foundations of the whole capitalist world. The October Revolution was a source of great inspiration to the Indian working class. Inspired by this revolution, communists emerged all over India among the fighting workers and toiling peasants, putting forth the vision of reorganizing society to get rid of capitalism, feudalism and all forms of exploitation of labour. The Soviet Union served as the concrete example that working people could indeed build their society without any capitalists or landlords to rule over them, a society without exploitation of any kind.

The Kanpur Conference of 1925 was a historic landmark because it showed that the Indian working class had matured to the extent that it recognized the need for its own political party. In concrete terms, this was the recognition that the workers and peasants could not seek their emancipation by following the *bourgeoisie* and its Congress Party, who advocated political independence without social revolution. Communists from all parts of India, as well as Indian communists from abroad, decided to get together in Kanpur in 1925. Their common aim was to form one party of the working class, a party that would fight for the aim of socialism and communism, through the elimination of colonial rule and the capitalist system. In other words, the significance of the Kanpur Conference is the recognition by the advanced section of the Indian working class that only communism could save India from continued bondage and plunder.

However, if a sober assessment is made of what was achieved and what was not achieved by the Kanpur Conference of 1925, it must be admitted that a clean break was not made with social-democracy, that is the ideology and politics of the Congress Party, of conciliating with the status quo. Right within that conference there were those who advocated the view that Indian communists should hide their aims and adopt a policy that would be acceptable to the colonial rulers. There were those who argued against the Communist Party of India building close links with the international communist movement, arguing that this would inspire the colonial rulers to attack the communists. There was also the view put forward that the communist party should be a loose federation, not organised on the basis of democratic centralism like the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Stalin.

In spite of such serious shortcomings in the sphere of ideology and organisational principles, the Kanpur Conference of 1925 was, in political terms, a historic landmark. It is a landmark because it heralded a new period in India, with the working class emerging on the scene with its own all-India party.

The birth of the communist party in India was inspired by the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. The October Revolution of 1917 opened a new epoch in the history of society. The victory of the proletarian revolution and the rise of the Soviet Union proved the basic thesis of Karl Marx that capitalism would inevitably be overthrown by the exploited masses led by the working class, who would establish socialism, the next stage in the development of society. It proved the thesis of Lenin that capitalism had reached its final stage of imperialism and was ripe to be overthrown. It established the fact that socialism was not merely a future prospect but a problem to be taken up for solution on an immediate basis. The Great October Socialist Revolution showed that the door to end all forms of exploitation could be opened up if the working class organised itself under the leadership of its vanguard communist party, to lead the struggle to establish a new state, the state of dictatorship of the proletariat. It showed how the working class could use such a state to eliminate capitalism, step by step, and construct socialism, the first stage of communism. Marx established, with the precision of science, the economic law of motion of capitalist society. He proved that capitalism was a crisis ridden system. He analysed the Only communism can save India

Fundamental contradiction of capitalism and showed that capitalism would not be able to get out of this contradiction. On the contrary, capitalism inevitably intensifies this contradiction, leading to repeated crises and massive destruction of human life and material assets. The fundamental contradiction of capitalism is that between the social character of production and the private character of ownership of the means of production. The private owners advance the capital to invest in factories and hire workers, not for the sake of serving society and producing what society needs. They do so in their own private interest of pocketing the surplus value as private profit. The source of the profit that the capitalist owners pocket is the exploitation of labour. The labour power of the workers is bought as a commodity by the capitalists. As a result, the value that is paid to the workers as wages is less than the value that is created by setting them to work. The private owner of capital pockets the difference. Marx showed that such a system, based on the exploitation of collective labour for private profit, inevitably leads to periodic crises. And with each crisis, social productive forces are destroyed. Workers are thrown out of work and machines lie idle and rot. One section of capitalists gets ruined while another section buys up their assets and becomes even bigger. Production becomes increasingly social but the ownership of wealth remains private and becomes increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. The capitalists shut down the factories when the rate of private profit goes down, no matter how terrible the consequences are for the workers and for society as a whole. Right here in Kanpur, the destructive results of the laws of capitalism can be clearly seen. Textile factories lie idle and workers are out on the streets without

work. And At the same time, there are people on the streets without adequate clothing to protect them from the cold! Why then are the mills closed down? Who is responsible for this? Who is responsible for the miserable plight of the working class and people of Kanpur? It is capitalism and the bourgeoisie that are responsible for destroying the textile industry and the livelihood of thousands of workers in this city, and all over India. First, it was the capitalists who amassed enormous profits through the exploitation of the textile workers in Kanpur. Then, technology in the industry advanced and new investment was required. While a few big corporations undertook such investments, most of the capitalists in Kanpur decided to shift their capital to some other sphere of the economy, rather than face a falling rate of profit. The government stepped in to bail out these capitalists and assist them to shift their capital. The State bought up the mills, paying handsome amounts from public funds to the capitalists. At that time it was said that this was being done to protect the interests of the workers. The real motive was to enable the private mill owners to shift their capital elsewhere. Today, the Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Government of India want to completely close down the mills in the state sector, clear the workers out and sell the land to private companies once again. This is part of the first phase of the program of public sector reform and privatisation, which has been initiated by the Government of UP with technical and financial assistance from the World Bank. So, the illusion that intervention by the bourgeois state can protect the workers has been completely shattered. Today, it is clear to all the workers of Kanpur that the State and government machinery work for the capitalist class. The State intervenes in the economy when the capitalists want it to do so. It withdraws from the same sphere when the capitalists want it to withdraw. It is a state of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Capitalism, which has reached its highest and last stage of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, is a man-eating system. It destroys the productive forces of society, both the human forces and natural resources. Lenin concluded that in this epoch of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, crises and the destruction of productive forces is not just a periodic phenomenon. It is a permanent feature of the capitalist system. Not a single moment passes when capitalism is not destroying some productive asset or natural resource or human life in some part of the world. In India, the capitalist system has spread to all parts of the country. It has ruined tens of thousands of small producers and thrown them into the ranks of the proletariat, the class which has no property except its own labour power. Indian capitalism is characterised by a very high degree of monopoly and concentration of capital. It is a system where the entire resources of the country are at the disposal of monopoly houses, multinational corporations and financial oligopolies, Indian and foreign. The entire process of social production is oriented towards enriching the monopoly bourgeoisie and enabling it to reap the

maximum rate of profit. The monopoly bourgeoisie controls the State and the State intervenes in the economy according to whatever suits the greed of the monopolies. Lenin and Stalin taught the working class that this is the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. One of the features of this epoch is that the bourgeoisie has ceased to be a progressive force in society. Capitalism and the bourgeoisie have become roadblocks to social progress. Whether it is the agrarian question or the only communism can save India national question, or the question of wiping out the remnants of feudalism and colonialism, only the proletarian revolution can provide the solution. Nowhere is this more evident than in India, where capitalism has developed while preserving the remnants of feudalism, including the hated Brahmanical caste system. Capitalism preserves the caste system because caste based oppression facilitates maximum exploitation of labour. The bourgeoisie also organises inter-caste wars to divide the toiling masses and make them fight one another.

The productive classes of society the working class, toiling peasantry and other working people are demanding that the advances of science and technology be used in their interests, to ensure their well-being. Why all the toiling masses of India, for instance, not enjoy a level of living that can be considered human by modern standards? The bourgeoisie is unable to hide the fact that capitalism does not provide human conditions for all. The objective conditions are demanding that society be lifted to its next higher stage, the stage of socialism, a society that provides for all.

The fulfilment of the aspirations for human conditions of life for all members of society is possible today. It is possible not only to feed, clothe and house everyone, but also to provide everyone with modern household articles and reliable electric power supply, along with universal education, a healthy environment and basic health care services. It is possible to do all this with the given level of human and material productive forces and the potential for their further enhancement. What stands in the way is a mode of production based on the exploitation of labour by capital. What stands in the way is a system where the greed of a rich minority of exploiters dominates decision. The exploiters are the masters of society, while those who work day and night are the slaves. The solution lies in suppressing the exploiters and eliminating the economic basis of the present system in which the private greed of a minority is the driving force in society. The solution lies in creating a new system of economic relations, based on the principle that the wellbeing of each member of society is the condition for the well-being of society as a whole. To do so, the working class has to champion the outlook that we, the producers of wealth, are the masters of society. It has to lead all the toiling and oppressed masses in a revolution to establish a new political power and, step by step, carry out the transformation from capitalism to socialism.

To ensure that political power lies firmly in the hands of the toiling masses, the revolution must smash the existing Indian State, which is one of the remnants of colonialism, an organ of national and class oppression. It must consolidate the new state power to create socialism and enable its advance. The establishment of social ownership of the means of production, in place of private capitalist ownership, is a profound transformation that can only be brought about by building and consolidating the state of dictatorship of the proletariat. The new state power is essential to ensure that labour triumphs over capital. The proletarian revolution will resolve the fundamental contradiction of capitalism and lift society to the next higher stage. Everyone can be provided with human conditions of existence, and the economy can be reproduced on an extended basis without crises or destruction of the environment. The objective conditions are crying out for the proletarian revolution. The conditions in India are crying out for the working class and communist movement to come forward to lift society out of the crisis. Only communism can save India! The proletarian revolution is not some future prospect or an empty slogan. It is an immediate problem to be taken up for solution. The conditions exist for the reorganisation of Indian society to provide for all. The task is to organise the working class to fulfill its historic mission. This is the call of the times. This is the meaning of the slogan that *only communism can save India*. There are many parties, including some within the communist movement, that are promising to end the miseries of the people if only they are voted to power, But life experience has shown that whichever party runs the government, it is only the program of the big bourgeoisie that gets implemented. It is capitalism that One working class, one program, one communist party Resolution adopted at the Kanpur Communist Conference, keeps growing. It is the big bourgeoisie that wields political power. The State that is , the bureaucracy and armed forces, the courts and jails, etc. serves to preserve the rule of the capitalists and suppress any challenge to this rule. The multi-party democracy and party dominated political process serve to keep the toiling masses out of power. The solution to the problems of growing exploitation and oppression of the workers and peasants lies in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by socialism. Such a transformation of society is possible only if the working class leads all the oppressed in one united struggle to smash the oppressive Indian State and establish a new state of the workers and peasants. To do so, it is essential that the working class is united as one political force around this single aim, with one revolutionary communist party at its head. What the Indian working class needs today is not any parliamentary party that is interested only in their votes. Those in the communist movement who have merged themselves with bourgeois parliamentary democracy have reduced communism to a policy objective, which is always out of reach. The

working class needs a revolutionary communist party that would arm the class ideologically and organisationally to consistently battle and defeat the bourgeoisie.

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Sacred Geographies

A study of Counter Social Structure in Multan Shrines

Syed Hussain Murtaza

Department of International Relations
Bahauddin Zakariya University
Multan Pakistan

& Muna Khayal Khattak

Department of International Relations
Bahauddin Zakariya University
Multan Pakistan

Abstract

The paper aims to examine the psychological, social & cultural dimensions of sacred geographies such as shrines. The study will focus on the symbols in form of rituals performed by the pilgrims and significance of these rituals in the life of pilgrims on Multan shrines. The paper will highlight the importance of the main shrine in overall ecology of Multan as a landmark. The argument of the paper is that these landmarks are in effect /in practice counter social structures that are beyond the binary of sacred and profound. The rituals performed by the pilgrimage are not only significant due to an element of religiosity but have psychological nuance also as these are hopes giving substance to performers to mitigate the negative impacts of social order on one's life.

(Key Words: *Sacred Geography, Shrines, Counter Social Structure, Pilgrimage*)

Introduction

Multan's biosphere holds the place of sacred homeland for the Sufis and saints of the Indo-Pak region. Many of them came from far off places and secured their

resting place in the land of dirt, beggars, heat and symmetries¹⁴; while others belong to the land as the land was their mother land on which they were born. One such family is of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya's who was the son of the soil, although his father had migrated from Mecca, he born here and stayed here for life and life after. This family was the harbinger of the Islamic teachings for the people of this region over more than a century. After Bahauddin Zakariya, the order continued with the birth of his grandson Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam, who was also an eminent Sufi Saint born on the land. His mother was also the prominent figure for the cause as she was the torchbearer for the women of the region. In the times of religious conformity she was the sign of hope for the women. Her name was Bibi Rastii renowned as 'Pak Mai' and alternatively known as the 'Rabia Sani'¹⁵ (second Rabia) for his wisdom and velour. (Smith 2010)The study will focus on shrines of this family located in Multan city.

A shrine can be defined as a sacred place that is spiritually and emotionally tied to the religion. Different cultures of the world have their own particular meanings to the concept of shrines. Some mark them as the signs of remembrance of some important religious event or some consider them as the grave mark of some important religious figure, however all the shrine around the globe share some aesthetic qualities and spiritual ambiance. In the case of Multan's shrines one among all stand unique, which has attained the status of a landmark for the city, the shrine of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam Multani. The land mark has its own significance in city geography. It brings a sacred status to city itself. Many have named the city as Madin-a-Tul-Aulia (city for saints) which shows the sacred status of the land for devotees. Others have named it as "Multan Sharif"(the sacred Multan) yet another way of giving homage to the land itself. There is some sort of sacred feeling attached to the land that is evident in the case of Multan giving it the status of sacred geography for the devotees. Devotees came from all sides of the country to the sacred land to pay their homage to the Sufi saints who are considered closer to the Almighty God. These shrines give them hope for their life. The devotees perform different rituals in order to have their desires fulfilled by Allah Almighty with the help of these saints considered to be nearer to Almighty than ordinary creatures. As there is a common myth that Sufi saints are special to God himself hence God acknowledge prays and grant wishes of devotees.

Every individual comes with their own set of desires: men come with the desire to have a good career opportunities or business venture; students come with the

¹⁴ Multan is popularly known as city of dust storms with abundant beggars, scorching heat and symmetries. A Persian proverb depicts it as Gard, Gada, Garma o Goristan, the Four Gs for Multan

¹⁵ She got the title in line with the famous female Muslim mystique from Baghdad Hazrat Rabia Basri.

desire to get good grades; women come with the desire to have a male child. In a repressive societal order, shrine becomes an open space with limited social constraints, and shrines offer the pilgrimage an environment of openness in every aspects. There is no gender bias, no discrimination and no social obligation applied here. A lot of devotees pack their bags and move from their native places to perform pilgrimage on the day of Urs (mostly the death or birth anniversary of the saint). The set of rituals observed during this pilgrimage resemble Hajj (a religious proper precision for the Muslims. (V. W. Turner 1969) Most of the rituals performed on the shrines directly resemble the practices that are performed religiously during Haj. These rituals are not discussed in the religious testaments but are performed by the devotees as a sign of their devotion towards the Sufi's teachings and become a part of their belief. Performance of rituals is also a sign of showing their loyalties towards the shrine. Hence these shrines are providing a counter social structure for the society. This counter social structure has its own definition of sacred and profane. It's a parallel route that goes side by side with the religious discourse of fulfilling their desires and attainment of a desirable social status in a society.

Shrine as Counter Social Structure: A place beyond the Dichotomy of Sacred and Profane

One of the ancient towns in Pakistan, Multan has its own historical importance, as the city is land of Sufis and Saints. The city is also named as 'the city of shrines and saints'. Within the 25km radius of Multan city one can find hundreds of shrines of the Sufi saints who were propagator of Islam as a religion of love, peace, tolerance and harmony, in this part of sub continent.

The most prestigious family of saints is of Hazrat Sheikh Bahauddin Zakaria Multani often known as Bahawal Haq. He settled in Multan around the era of 1222A.D after his return from Iran and Jerusalem. He also started his preaching and teaching from Multan. His grandson Hazrat Shah Rukne Alam continued spreading his message to the public at large. Thousands of people accepted Islam due to the teaching of these two saints. They have a large number of followers in the region of Southern Punjab (Pakistan) and Sindh.



¹⁶ The image of Shrine of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Multani and Hazrat Shah Ruken e Alam built by Muhammed Shah Tughlaq of Slave Dynasty.

The family itself wasn't male-centric apart from this pair of grandfather and grandson. The mother of Hazrat Shah ruk n Alam was also known for her teachings to the people. Her name is Hazrat Bibi Rasti (Pakmai) daughter of Hazrat Sultan Jamal-Ud-Din who was the governor of Ferghana Region in North of Uzbekistan. She also devoted her life for the devotees of the family. This whole family put their heart and soul for the preaching of Islam in the region of Multan. (Kosnarskaya 2014) On the other hand in the 10th century the city of Multan was under the influence of Ismaili's also known as Qarmatians, who were expelled from Egypt and Iran and wrested control over the city and established the 'Amirate of Multan'. Afterwards the land was attacked by Mehmoodof Ghaznavi in 1005 A.D. During these several episodes of attack most of the Ismail's were killed and many of them later converted to Sunni HanfiFiqa of Islam. (Al-Bairuni 2006) Ghaznavi also destroyed the Sun temple and broke its giant idol into pieces. As Alberuni, an Arab traveler who visited Punjab in 11th century writes about a famous idol of Hindus at Multan named as Aditya. In words of Alberuni, "A famous idol of theirs was that of Multan, dedicated to the "Sun" and therefore called Aditya". (Al-Bairuni 2006)

Following the footsteps of his predecessors Sultan Mehmud Ghouri attacked the Ismaili Sultans of Multan in the northern part of Sindh; massacred the people and conquered the land. During that era, on one hand the Sufi saints were working on spreading Islam by giving the message of love and peace, and on the other Ghaznavis and Ghouris were spreading Islam by conquest of the land (sometimes even with Muslim Rulers of other sects). (Habib 2011) A Sufi can offer symbolic transformation to the people who suffer, by a sacred exchange between the two symbolic worlds in which they live. Sufi order is different from practicing of *Shariah*. One is moving on the course of *Sharia* where you have to follow the teachings in true letter and spirit, as it is and as they were. One has no right to question or alter the subjectivity of the teachings. On the other hand in *Tariqat* (the Sufi order), Sufi saint can alter the course of *Shariah* by contextualizing and amending the secondary teachings of religion in accord to their subjective realities. These sacred personals provide an alternative temporal and non-administrative ethical order to the people of this sacred land.

All the things that are prohibited in the main stream religious subjective lines, are allowed in the counter social structure provided by the Sufi saints and these shrines. (Werbner 1998) These shrines over the centuries became the metaphorical identities of that saint's particular teachings. For example women and men are not allowed to sit together in public gathering but it is allowed in the shrine of a Sufi saint who sees all his devotees as one beyond gender discrimination. Similarly people following different religions don't visit each other's places of worship but in a Sufi shrine devotees from every religion are welcomed. It's a place beyond

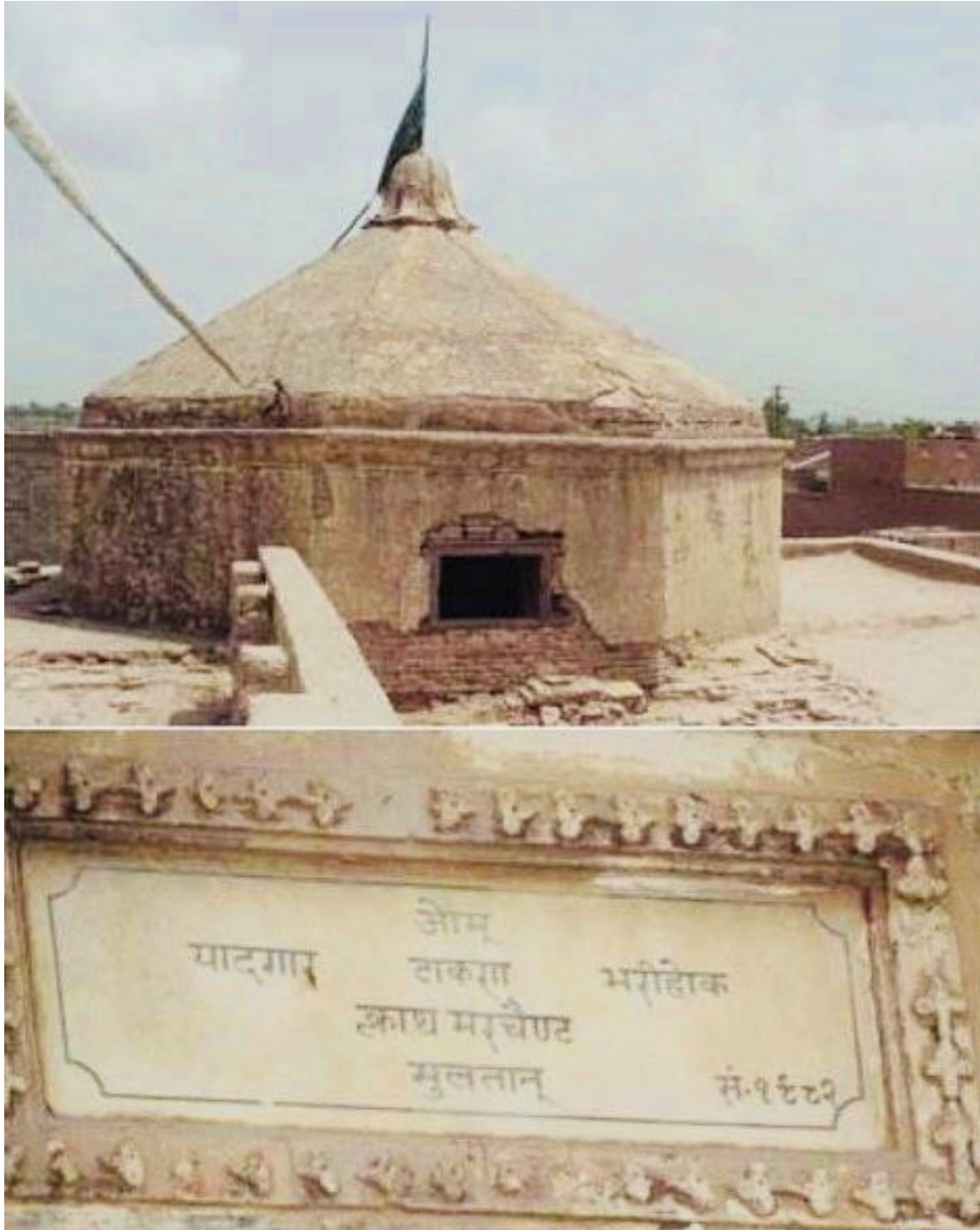
gender, religion, ethnicity, cast and creed. It has provided the society a counter social structure to practice its old cultural patterns and testaments present since the pre-Islamic history. Shrine of a Sufi saint has stood still in paving the path for the people of Multan to breath in the air of openness and selflessness. Sacred things are those which have become symbol of religious beliefs, practices and sentiments for the people. If you look closer at the environment of a shrine you will feel everything sacred there but if you look at them through the lenses of prevailing social culture they will look profane that is unholy or negative strong taboos. A shrine is a place that is beyond sacred and profane it's a place providing a free and relaxed counter social structure to the society. (Habib 2011)

Shrine as a sacred geography in ecology of Multan

Shrine remained an icon of transcendentalism, continuity and culture in Multan despite the mega events that led to rupture in history. One can trace the genealogy of Multan to be approximately 5000 years old. The city is situated in proximity of many historical sites like Harappa which belongs to the Indus valley civilization. According to the Hindu religious mythological epic "Mahabharata", Multan was the center of worship for the Surya Dev, whose idol was present in the ancient Multan sun temple (remains of which are still present).

Another historical place related to the sun worshiping cult is Suraj-Kund' (the pool of Sun). It is located in south premises of Multan city. (Dhiloon 1988) Multan was a sacred land because this was the pilgrim place for Hindu devotees prior to 1947, where the two bi-annual fairs were held. One on the 7th of rising moon of 'Magha' and other on the 7th of vanishing moon of 'Badhon'¹⁷. (Habib 2011)

¹⁷ Seasonal Months: Magha And Badhon



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At that time it was the place of pilgrimage for Hindus, which make this land sacred to them. Many of the rituals were performed to pay homage to the ‘Sun god’ (SuriaDevta). SurajKund was the land mark for the city of Multan during that era.

¹⁸¹⁸The image of SurajKund Multan.

As the time changes the city has evolved his land mark too by protecting the cultural rituals associated to the land mark. (Mehta 1980)

Multan was a sacred geography for the people from pre-Islamic times in the region. This sacred land has now shifted its land mark from Surajkund to the shrine of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakaria Multani. The sacred geography of Multan has shifted its religious course to Islam but it would not have been done with the conventional rulings of Islam as a religion. The Sufis came up with a softer and moderate image of the religion that allows many of the rituals and practices to be followed from their predecessor religion. Pilgrims is one such example. (Habib 2011)

Pre-Islamic history of Multan provides us the evidence of pilgrims been performed in the sacred land and the post-Islamic history also has the same evidences where people from Sindh come in same manner like the old Hindu devotees used to come to perform a pilgrimage in the shrine of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakaria Multan. (Aala Hazrat n.d.)

Pre-Islamic landmark for the city was Suraj-Kund and post-Islamic land mark is now the shrine of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakaria Multani. The devotion of the people for the land remains the same. Multan was considered as one of the most sacred land of the subcontinent and it remains sacred for both major religions till date. The sacred geography of Multan has consolidated people over more than 5000 years of history.

The question that comes to the mind is that why this particular shrine is considered as the Landmark for the city? The answer to the question is that Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya and his whole family was the torch bearer of Islam for the people of Multan. The locality of the shrine is the most important factor behind the logic of Bahauddin Zakariya shrine being the icon for the City. As he was one of the most prestigious Sufi saint of all who are located in the area. The sacred geography of Multan is considered by the devotees as the sacred center to which they have to go and return back to home at least once in a year.

Pilgrimage is the journey of devotees to the sacred land, which is considered as the highest moral obligation and core value for the spiritual renewal of the devotees. This pilgrim and many other rituals when combined, gives us sense of sacredness attached to the land that is beyond any religion and any ruler that ruled out the city.

A spiritual journey to the sacred geography

The Sufi/mystic practice in Islam is a different paradigm. They follow a strikingly different set of beliefs. This difference can be noticed centuries later by observing the Pilgrimage (sacred journey) carried out by the Sindhis. Examining rituals and especially by studying the myths and legends associated to them. The current pilgrimage rituals have uncanny resemblance to the pre-Islamic Hindi pilgrimage. The journey begins from the faraway lands of Sindh where the deputy of Hazrat

Bahauddin Zakariya is resting in peace. It is compulsory for every devotee to pay a visit to the deputy as a token for thanks giving for his services to the Saint. It also shows the love of a Saint towards his devotee as he does not accept a visit of a devotee who does not pay regards to his deputy. It's symbolic message for all the devotees that how a Sufi pays regard to his devotees as he has given a prime status to one of his ordinary devotee of being his deputy.

As soon as they arrive in Multan their first stop here is the shrine of Bibi Rastii, who was the daughter in law of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Multani. She was known for his wisdom and piousness. The visit at the shrine of Bibi Rastii is the prime rite of the pilgrimage as it was the performed in the remembrance of the vow taken by Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya in favor of his daughter-in-law's acknowledgment of knowledge, wisdom and piousness.



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In the times where no one has the courage to talk about the women empowerment this Sufi saint has talked about the “second sex” of the society as bearer of equal dignity. Bibi Rastii has elevated the socially deprived to the level form where they can feel acknowledged or at least respected. The vow itself shows us the respect of women in the religious course of the history. The visit to the shrine of Bibi Rastii has also preserved the cultural ritual of women coming to a place of mixed gathering that is prohibited in mainstream Islamic culture. (Aala Hazrat n.d.)

¹⁹¹⁹The boundary wall of Shrine of Bibi Rasti built by small bricks.



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The pilgrims then proceeds on to take a bath in a well situated in the shrine. This well was located in the premises of the shrine back then now it has been situated some footsteps away from the shrine. As the legend tells that some men has taken bath in the well that was exclusively meant for women, so this prohibited act caused the water of the well to dry. Only women are allowed to take bath in here. The legend goes as whosoever takes a bath in the well bores a son. The desire for male child is another social cult attached to the social structure and fulfillment of this desire drags many of devotees to the shrine of Bibi Rastii. This bath taking ritual is also related to the purification of the body from impurities. Tradition is also reminiscent of bath taking at sacred rivers like Ganges for purity. This ritual is quite similar to the one when pilgrims used to travel from long distances to the Sun temple to take a bath in the Suraj Kund to purify them and after that praying with a pure heart to fulfill their desires or to achieve a higher level of spirituality.

²⁰²⁰The inside area of Shrine of BibiRasti where only women can enter. The blue tiles are representative of Multani Architecture



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Whilst in the shrine certain other cultural and social taboos speak for themselves in different form of rituals. A window in the shrine has colorful hangings outstretched on its bars; these hangings are bangles of different colors. The myth associated with it is that young girls who tie bangles to these hangings get married in time (getting married in a certain age is still a taboo in the society). This ritual bears resemblance with the rituals of tying bangles or threads in the Hindu temples for the same purpose. Another associated myth related to the shrine of BibiRastii is

²¹ Photograph taken by Syed HussainMurtaza exclusively for Kanpur Historiographer

dispensing of Fish and Bread in Niaz(Prasad) after the fulfillment of the votive.



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Then the devotees pay visit to the shrine of Shah Rukn e alam. Shah Rukn e alam is the grandson of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Multani and son of Bibi Rasti. Same rituals are performed there with a slight deference as here Daal (Lentils) and Roti is offered as niaz (thanks giving) to the devotees. All these rituals are performed because people have accepted the Counter-Social part of the society with full zeal and zest. This Counter-Social structure has provided the people to take a sideline from the orthodox religious beliefs. (Aala Hazrat n.d.)

Definitions always take toll but defining religion is one of the toughest tasks. But what many scholars agree on while defining religion is that it is a “set of beliefs”. Beliefs of what to do and what to refrain from. Belief of what is sacred and what is profane. Apart from the debate of sacred and profane these shrines provide people a place to fulfill their repressed desires in the society. The pilgrimage rituals

²²Photography taken at Shrine of Bibi Raasti for Kanpur Historiographer by Syed Hussain Murtaza

discussed above and the myths and legends associated to the shrines and the striking resemblance they have with Hindu rituals of Pilgrimage proves Turner's suggestion "Human beings require time and separation from their social belongings to process and adjust to change. When people spend this time together, divested of the trappings and responsibilities of their previous social positions, equal participants in the transitions to the new phase, deep bonds are formed which may be foundational to the new phase of life they are about to enter." (K. Turner 1999) Muslims in the subcontinent weren't separated from their existing social structure. Hence instead of transitioning into a new phase they devised another way out. This brings in Durkheim's theory of sacred and profane dichotomy that states "sacred represents the interests of the group, especially unity which were embodied in sacred group symbols or totems". Bahauddin Zakariya's shrine is the sacred landmark for the present group of people but keeping in view the sacred geography of Multan it's the landmark that is the totem which keeps the people united and fascinated. The said shrine also provides a breathing space to the people. In the male dominated sub-continent women suffer from different insecurities. The women who bathe in the well for a son are compelled by the society to do so. The sanctity of the shrine gives them faith and hope. Having a son would help them secure a better future this draws them to the shrine even though the pilgrimage is a tough journey. The young girls hanging their bangles for a good husband and marriage in a certain age shows the societal pressure on the young ladies to tie the knot as soon as possible. For men it is the place where they can open their heart out to get out of social pressure, material constrained and stigmas attached with all sort of stratifications. Mostly the devotees are coming from the Interior parts of Sindh where Feudal Lords still exercise power and influence in everyday life of common populace. The male are as marginalized as woman folk. The open space of shrine provides both a place to be free from all social cults and stigmas. (K. Turner 1999)

Conclusion

Multan remained a holy and sacred place through ages. Located at the main trade route it was not only a center for commerce but travellers from central Asia also brought with them the religious influences. As city was also known for its wealth, it attracted the conquistadors and warriors as well. But the most beautiful feature of city is its assimilative culture that blended the old with new in new assemblage. Hence despite the historical accidents like war that city went through its cultural patterns remain transcendental through ages. One rupture was demographic change from a predominant Hindu majority city to a Muslim majority city under the influence of Sufis and warriors from central Asia. The other major demographic shift was migration of city's population in 1947. But city continued to attract devotees since ages, whether for Sun worship at Suraj Kund and Sun temple or the

pilgrimage of three shrines of Hazrat Ghaus Bahauddin Zakariys, His daughter-in-law Bibi Rasti and Grandson Hazrat Shah Ruken e Alam. The three shrines still attract the devotees from Sindh province of Pakistan and serve as Counter Social Structure, beyond the dichotomy of sacred and profane. The counter social structure of the shrines serves as places of openness and symbol of hope amongst the woes of daily life. The shrine pilgrim gives hope to poor strata that are unable to perform Hajj of Sacred cities of Mecca and Medina due to financial constraints. As Sufi Islamic order is not rigid and treat female devotees also as equal beings, the places become more important for female, coming to shrine as dejected but leaving the place with hope and sustenance that their wishes will be granted by Almighty by invoking the saints. Shrines and Sufi way of *Tariqat* also helped to indigenize and blend Islamic teachings in context of sub-continent. The sacred geographies of shrine not only served as counter social structure for a rigid religious order but also saved the marginalized segments like women and poor from despair.

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Principles and Practices of Post- Zamindari Abolition in Madras: A Historical Analysis

Dr. K. Madhusudharsanan
Head, Department of History
Chikkaiah Naicker College
Erode (Tamilnadu) India

In Madras province 70% of the population depended on agriculture for their livelihood at the time of independence of the country. During the days of anti-colonial struggles, the Indian National Congress which spearheaded the agitation had committed itself to a number of radical agrarian reforms. The abolition of zamindari system, a ceiling for possession of land by an individual and family, provision of cheap credit facilities and grant of subsidies to farmers were some of the promises held out by the Congress in the pre-independence days.

The country gained independence in 1947, but a planned economy was introduced only from 1952. Since then the Congress as a ruling party both at the centre and the state had chalked out and implemented Five Year Plans until 1967. Though the Abolition Act of Zamindari System had been introduced as early as 1947, in view of the litigations in the Supreme Court, the Act came into effect only in 1952 after effecting two amendments to the Constitution

Zamindari Abolition

The ancient system of Zamindari system was continued even after independence. The rents collected were very high and the irrigation works were not properly maintained. The Indian National Congress laid great emphasis on land reforms, improvement of agrarian relations and the abolition of zamindari system as soon as the country became independence.²³

In order to introduce necessary reforms in the country, the Indian National Congress appointed a committee under the chairmanship of J. C. Kumarappa. The committee submitted its reports in 1948 and based on its recommendations, the state government passed Zamindari Abolition Act, to abolish Zamindari system. The Zamindars were assured compensation for their land²⁴. This act provided for payment of gradual compensation which was a function of two variables – annual net income of the estate and a – multiplying factor. The annual net income was defined as ½ of the gross annual Ryotwari demand less than 5 percent of the same representing the cost of maintenance of irrigation works which had been incurred by the Zamindars. All the Zamindari estates were classified in six categories.²⁵

In view of the discontent among the tenants in Zamindari tracts, the Madras government considered that the Zamindari system had outlived its usefulness. Accordingly, the Madras Estates (Abolition and Conversion into Ryotwari) Act, 1948 which came into force in April 1949 was passed. Out of 4,764 estates to which this Act applied 4,722 estates had been taken over by the state under the Act. The remaining 34 were Inam estates. The estates taken over were surveyed and settled in Ryotwari principles and these operations were expected to complete in 3 or 4 years. The Estate Abolition Act did not apply to whole Inam villages where both land and land revenue had been granted as Inam. There were 1,580 such villages and the question of abolition of this tenure was under consideration.²⁶

But the Zamindars were earning huge sums of money by exploiting the tenants and labourers. They acted as social parasites lived for themselves and perpetuating their own privileged position of revenue collectors working on large margins without any physical work on the field. They did not like the abolition move. They opposed it tooth and nail. They united together and challenged the land reform laws and fought up to the Supreme Court to preserve their rights over land.²⁷ The Government, put to a great test, was bent upon introducing certain radical reforms to put a stop to further exploitation and oppression of the rural poor. It went to the extent of making additions and amendments in the Constitution

to abolish Zamindari system. The constitutional amendments added two new arts 31- A and 31- B in the year 1952 to validate the Zamindari abolition law.²⁸

Criticism

Even though the Government passed the Zamindari Abolition Act and was taken over the Zamindari tracts, the maintenance of the irrigation tanks was neglected. It can be seen from the speeches of Ramesan, member of the State Legislative Assembly during the general discussion on the budget for the year 1952-53. He argued that the Zamindari Abolition Act was passed in 1948 and actually the estates were taken over on the 7th September 1949, and ever since, the Government have totally neglected even the minimum annual repairs which were formerly being taken up by the Zamindars. The zamindars in anticipation of this legislation neglected repairs even prior to 1948. The Government neglected the repairs after taking over those estates. Even silt clearance was not undertaken. On the other hand, the imposition of surcharge was going on. As a result, the burden was heavier and the peasants suffered much. Therefore, he demanded that there should be no surcharge until all the irrigation works were atleast completely repaired in the Zamindari areas.²⁹

The rate of compensation was very liberal. As a result of the abolition of intermediaries, the occupants had been brought into direct contact with the state and uncultivated lands, forests; etc had been acquired and administered directly by the states through the village Panchayats. The total compensation including rehabilitation grant and interest was estimated at Rs.640 crores at the national level.³⁰ However, in Madras State the rate of compensation was not paid quickly and adequately to the aggrieved. Raja Muthiah Chettiyar of Chettinad in the State Assembly highlighted this: 'It is not necessary to dwell now on the subject of the abolition of zamindars because the abolition has become a *fait accompli*. I am glad that provision has been made for the payment of compensation. But the compensation amount has not yet been disbursed and the process is going on very slowly. For estates acquired in August or September even interim payments have not been made'.³¹

In the State Legislative Assembly Venkateswarlu said, "In the village where the zamindari system had been abolished, the condition of the peasants had not at all improved. They have no house sites for building houses as most of the lands which stood in the name of the zamindars had been sold out. The agricultural

labourers and the poor peasant have no place for building houses. The Government must come forward and take over lands which are fit for house sites and hand them over to the poor peasants and agricultural labourers. In many villages there were no wells for supply of drinking water, not merely for Harijans but also for the ordinary peasants as well. There were villages where there were no wells at all particularly in the Zamindari areas”.³²

Shortcomings of the Act

Through writs in the High Courts or stay orders the Zamindars had been able to evade the provisions of the act for about 4 years. The provision regarding the private lands of the Zamindar was abused. This provision was exploited to claim three fourths of the land in certain villages as ‘private lands’. With the help of Karnams the lands, which should have gone to the ryots under the Zamindari Abolition Act, were shown as private lands and appropriated by the Zamindars.³³

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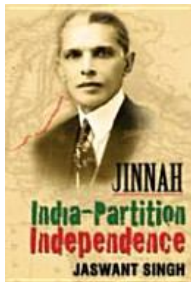


Book Review

Jinnah: India Partition Independence by Jaswant Singh

Mahendra Singh Vist

V.S.S.D. College Kanpur



published in 2009

Author: Jaswant Singh, **Page count:** 658, **Publisher:** Rupa & Co.

The partition of India, 1947, few call it vivisection as Gandhi had, has without doubt been the most wounding trauma of the twentieth century. It has seared the psyche of three plus generations of this subcontinent. Why did this partition take place at all, who was responsible Jinnah/ The Congress party/ or the British. Jaswant Singh attempts to find an answer, his answer, for there can perhaps not be a definitive answer, yet the author searches. Jinnah's political journey began as 'an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity' yet ended with his becoming the 'sole spokesman' of Muslims in India, the creator of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam. No Indian or Pakistani politician has ventured an analytical, political biography of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, about whom views necessarily get divided. The book attempts an objective evaluation. Jaswant Singh's experience as a minister responsible for the conduct of India's foreign policy had been uniformly challenging. The popular idea is to quote Jinnah's oft-quoted speech on August 11, 1947, where he held up Great Britain as an example, hoping Pakistan would

evolve to a state when in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state. When Advani glorified Jinnah, he was careful to stay away from Nehru. Singh, on the other hand, while playing safe by quoting Mahatma Gandhi's views on Jinnah and highlighting the 1916 Lucknow pact as the acme of his achievements, will draw more fire, because he holds Nehru as equally responsible for the creation of Pakistan as Jinnah. Nehru believed in a high centralised policy. That is what he wanted India to be. Jinnah wanted a federal polity. That even Gandhi accepted. Nehru did not consistently he stood in the way of a federal India until 1947 when it became a partitioned India. Singh has tried to insulate his party from the inevitable criticism by saying he was writing the book as an Indian. His critics however accuse him of having ulterior motives. They claim that the reason why Jaswant Singh wrote the book was to criticise Nehru. Bearing this in mind, the reader is filled with scepticism. In the first chapter Singh takes the reader back in time to the initial contact between India and Islam and describes how Muslims came to be part of the country. It is obvious that it is imperative for the author's argument to take a cursory look at the history of Islam and Muslims in India. He argues that even though Islam is not an indigenous part of India, it is an inseparable layer of its foundation. So how can it be that Muslims constitute a separate nation . He clearly states his views on the Two-Nation Theory, rejecting it and supporting the unity of the Indian nation enriched by its religious diversity. The arguments presented are well structured and free of any overt religious ideology, however, they are obviously still framed within the discourse of religious categories being the sole foundation of understanding Indian society and politics. Jaswant Singh criticises and defends Jinnah as he does the British, the Congress and Nehru. By no means does he apply any double standards. His vivid representation conveys the feelings that must have accompanied the events. He translates the mood that must have prevailed around the efforts Jinnah and Gandhi put into settling the Indian National Congress Muslim League disagreement, and the ensuing frustration due to being rejected time and again by the opposing side. In the end after all these years of debating, events flew by without pause, leaving no time to grasp their entire meaning: "Events now led men, not the other way around" (p. 335). The 10th chapter consists of less than ten pages. Therein Jaswant Singh only briefly clarifies that Jinnah leaves for Pakistan on the 13th of August 1947, and dies soon after in September 1948. Gandhi is assassinated in January 1948. This is an abrupt ending. India is independent, and Pakistan is born. In the final chapter titled "In Retrospect" Singh looks back and attempts to summarise "So in all this what have we resolved? I can't find any answer; for this entire episode of the breaking up of India in 1947 is one of those rare conundrums of history which appears to be an

answer but in reality is very far from it” (p. 418). This revisionist evaluation of the events taking place around 1947, already present among scholars, is brought into the public discourse by Jaswant Singh, Ayesha Jalal in her book *The Sole Spokesman* Jinnah comes to a similar conclusion on Jinnah’s position in the developments leading to partition. Her inquiry in 1985 along with Stanley Wolpert’s *Jinnah of Pakistan* published in 1984 was both welcomed among scholars of India and Pakistan. Both works break with the hagiographic representation of Jinnah as well as questing accounts depicting him as the principal villain of partition. Wolpert’s account is said to be an objective scholarly assessment, while the strength of Ayesha’s work is in her reinterpretation of Jinnah’s aims, and “the impact of his legacy on Pakistan’s later political history”. Jaswant Singh’s portrayal enriches the scientific body of knowledge on Jinnah from the perspective of an Indian politician. The book offers a new popular perspective on Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s public life and the pre-partition era. The author assumes that the reader is well acquainted with the official Indian historiography. He tries to reach out to the political Indian elite with his appeal for more understanding in political negotiations. The book is therefore recommendable to those readers who have some basic knowledge on the topic. Readers looking for an introduction to the subject may read it, but will need to read other books alongside in order to be able to understand some of Singh’s arguments.



Event

International Conference on Gender, Human Rights & Islam

Syed Hussain Murtaza

Lecturer Department of International Relations
Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan



The department of Sociology Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan conducted an international conference from 23rd to 24th of November 2017. The title of the conference was "Gender, Human Rights and Islam" (GHRI). The purpose of this conference was to provide a better understanding of gender discrimination; human rights violation; gender and psychological issues; women in decision making; leadership and women empowerment; issues of feminism and identity; gender representation in media; in context of Islam and Muslim societies. The conference provided an amazing platform to social scientists; for expression of different

dimensions of these important issues. The conference would not have been possible without the efforts of Dr. Imtiaz Warraich and Dr. Kamran; while the support of Dr. Niazam-u-din (Chairman PHEC) and The Vice Chancellor Dr. Tahir Amin was indispensable. The highlight of the conference was the participation of Dr. Anita M. Weiss from the University of Oregon (U.S.A) as the keynote speaker. There were number of prominent speaker from universities nationwide as well. The conference was attended by people irrespective of gender from all walks of life. It was interesting to see that the number of male students surpassing that of their female counterparts, keeping in view the nature of the topic which is considered an area of interest for women in Pakistan.



The conference gained momentum right on time opening with the keynote address of Dr. Anita's work. She discussed about her book she recently wrote on Pakistan with the title "Interpreting Islam, Modernity, and women's rights in Pakistan" . While addressing the audience she discussed three important issues written in her book. The importance of *IJTEHAD* in Islam? What are the ideas of the competing groups in Muslim society like Pakistan? How to gather all the groups on common ground? Dr. Anita's speech was followed by panel discussion where different speakers presented their ideas. The session on " Leadership, Decision Making and Empowerment " was very informative. The research paper presentations rightly pointed out the need to increase women's representation in Parliament. Another research paper focused on women's health and how important health is for women participation in public as well as private sphere. This brings to mind a quote by Napoleon " Give me a good mother and i will give you a good nation " At the end of day one , a musical night was arranged for the participants in which renowned music star " Munni Begum" performed in her melodious voice

On the second day of the conference multiple papers were presented in various venues inside the campus of Bahauddin Zakariya University. Department of International Relations hosted Dr. Anita Weiss on the second day. Students had an interactive session with Dr. Weiss where she guided students about the opportunities for them in universities of U.S.A. A question answer session was also held where Dr. Rafida Nawaz (Head of department of international relations) were accompanying Dr. Weiss. During this short and productive session students engaged Dr. Anita on various regional and global issues. The conference concluded on the second day with the messages of the honorable guests. While addressing the audience the vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Tahir Amin said “We as a nation must work on these five things to improve our image in International arena, i.e. Rule of law; Stable democratic Islamic political culture; positive movement towards justice; Decentralization of rights discourse in society; and Paradigm shift of foreign policy. He further appreciated the Department of sociology for hosting the event. Dr Anita in her good bye message left the audience emotional and it felt as if a friend is saying good bye to all of us. After the concluding remarks, a prize distribution ceremony was conducted and the guests were presented souvenirs, including the paper presenters and to the team behind the conference from the sociology department.



(Reporting & Minutes Taking by: Neelam Javed(M.A International Relations), Ali Temur (BS International Relations) and Meesam Ali (M.A International Relations)

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Photo Gallery

National Seminar on 160 years of Great Stuggle of India

P. B. Sahay

Secretary, B.R.I. Kanpur



Day -1, Inaugural session, P.B. Sahay, Dr. Chhaya Jain (principal), Dr. Dinesh Sharma (Deputy Chief Minister, Government of U.P.), Sri Virendrajit Singh (Secretary, Board of Management), Prof. Kuljit Singh (Key note)



Purushottam Singh welcoming Prof. Kuljit Singh (University of Jammu)



Day -1, delegates on ground Floor of Conference hall, V.S.S.D. College Kanpur



Release of Proceedings of Seminar by Dignitaries



Eminent Historian Prof. R. K. Gupta (on Left) with Prof. Avinash Mishra (Convener, Board of Studies in History, C.S.J.M. University)



Dr. Atul Kumar Shukla (Bundelkhand University Jhansi) delivering his address



Day -2, Sri Virendrajit Singh (Secretary, Board of Management), Dr. Arvind Dixit (Vice Chancellor Agra University), Mr. Sanjay Ji (Political Thinker)



Mr. Sanjay Ji memorizing the events of events of 1857-58, Historian of Nationalist School



Virendrajit Singh, the Patron of the Sanatan Dharm Institutions



Dr. Anil k. Misra, Dr. Chhaya Jain, Mr. P. B. Sahay, Sri Virendrajit Singh ,Sanjay Ji, Mr. Brajesh Kumar Pathak (Cabinet Minister, Government of U.P.), Dr. Arvind Dixit and Dr. Atul Kumar Shukla with prize winner