



VANAPRASTHA AND SANNYASA ASHRAM IN INDIAN TRADITION

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The general meaning of Vanaprastha is to move towards the forest. According to Mitakshara, Vanaprastha means living in the forest in the best possible way (following the strict rules of life). While mentioning the entry into Vanaprastha Ashram after Grihastha Ashram, Yajnavalkya has said that the householder should leave his wife under the protection of his sons or take her along with him and go to the forest along with the spiritual fire and worship (Griha Agni) and attain Vanaprastha while adopting celibacy. Hove. It is also said in Manusmriti that while following the scriptures as per the scriptures, a householder should become Jitendriya and live in the forest, performing religious rituals regularly.

In ancient times, the word Vaikhanas was used for Vanaprastha, that is why the conduct of Vaikhanas has been depicted in the Dharmasutras like Gautam, Baudhayana etc. Baudhayana has considered the one who behaves according to Vaikhanasa Shastra as Vanaprastha. Gautam has also used the word Vaikhanas for Vanaprastha perhaps for this reason. At one place Manu has also used the word Vaikhanas for Vanaprastha. Kalidas has also used the word Vaikhanas Vritti for Shakuntala in Abhijnanashakuntal.

Some scripture writers have given the option for Vanaprastha to go to the forest, as per his wish, he can go to the forest alone or with his wife. Yajnavalkya has also nurtured Manu's tradition on this subject. The explanation given here of entering Vanaprastha with or without wife has been solved by the commentators on the basis of the age of the wife. If the wife is old then she can enter Vanaprastha with her wife. Manu Smriti's commentator Meghatithi has also commented that if the wife is young, she can live with her sons, but if she is old, she can follow her husband. The opinion of the

commentators of Dharmashastra that a young wife cannot accompany her husband in Vanagrastha seems very strange. Whether the wife is young or old, in both cases he should go. Yes, it is definitely necessary that he follows celibacy completely.

Purpose of Vanaprastha:-

This ashram is such a stage of human life, in which a person gives up worldly attachments and illusions and tries to attain spiritual progress through rigorous penance. It is the ultimate duty of the Vanaprasthas to give up all their material desires while living the most miserable life. Therefore, it can be said that the main objective of Vanaprastha is to control and purify the mind by enduring extreme hardships. Manu has also considered physical purification, increase in knowledge and penance as the aim of Vanaprastha. To fulfill this purpose, he used to perform Panchagni penance in summer season, slept on wet ground during rainy season and wore wet clothes during winter season. It is clear from these discussions that Vanaprastha is not just about running away into the forest. Rather, Vanaprastha is the name of retirement, renunciation and renunciation. Vanaprastha is not to leave the world under compulsion but to leave the world voluntarily.

It is clear from these discussions that Indian culture has never been solely a nurturer of mere materialism. In Indian theology, while man has been ordered to enjoy worldly pleasures, being completely dedicated to the society is also considered his ultimate duty.

Biography of Vanaprasthi:-

In Vanagrastha Ashram, it was necessary for any Vanaprasthi to continuously engage in Veda practice and worship. While propounding Vanaprastha Dharma, Yajnavalkya has said that one should be free from greed and take bath in all three seasons (morning, midday and afternoon), should not take charity, should be engaged in self-study (Vedabhyas), should donate and should always live for the benefit of all living beings. . This was his main religion.

His main duty was to perform the Pancha Mahayagyas for the welfare and spiritual upliftment of all living beings. Yajnavalkya, while discussing this, has said that the Vanaprasthi should satisfy the fires, ancestors, gods, guests and servants with the food produced by himself (Neevar Venu, Shyamak etc.) (Perform Panchamahayagya), keep beard, mane and body hair growing and remain self-conscious (engaged in worship). A Vanaprasthi should save money for one day, one month, six months or at most one year only. He should ask for food from the houses of Vanaprasthas only for small meals and for the whole journey of his life.

After bringing food from the village, one should eat only eight grams silently. In fact, he should eat only ripe fruits on time. These fruits should be eaten only after peeling them with the teeth or by crushing them on a stone. Shruta, Smartkarma, food and abhyajna etc. should be done only with the oil of the fruits and not with ghee. Apart from this, observe Chandrayaan fast and

Krichcha fast, naked at night. It was the duty of Vanaprastha to sleep on the ground, travel during the day and spend the day through yoga practice.

Vanaprasthi always lived in the shade of trees. Used to exploit the body through penance. During summer, he used to sit amidst the fire, during rainy season, he used to sleep on wet ground and in winter, he used to wear wet clothes. Hence it is clear that he was instructed to live a strict life in this ashram. Manu has also expressed similar views. Similar description is found in Mahabharata also like Manusmriti and Yajnavalkya Smriti.

Referring to the great journey of Vanaprasthi, Yajnavalkya has said that Vanaprasthi should keep moving towards the north-east direction, eating only air (while fasting) until his body collapses. But according to Manu, this rule of Mahaprayana was appropriate only when the aspirant was in such a state. Suffer from a disease whose treatment is impossible. In such a situation, the rule was to move towards the south by consuming water and air. Hence, it is clear that under normal circumstances this rule was not valid, because there was a fear of losing the importance of Vanaprastha Ashram. It is clear from the above discussions that Manu's views on the subject of nature were more appropriate than those of Yajnavalkya.

Like Yajnavalkya, Kautilya has also mentioned the dharma and duty of Vanaprasthi and said that while practicing celibacy, sleeping on the ground, wearing Jatajut, daily Agnihotra and bathing, service to gods, ancestors and guests etc. and self-birth in the forest. Vanaprasthi should consume tubers etc. Kamandak has also mentioned the duties of the forest dwellers in a similar manner. Similarly, it has also been done in Gautam Vashishtha, Vayu Purana and Garun Purana.

It is clear from the above discussions that the life of the forest dwellers was very harsh. It is difficult to say what was its practical form in a person's life, but it can definitely be estimated that there must have been some people in the society who would have been living their lives according to this system. There are many evidences of taking Vanaprastha in history also. Even in Ramayana, there is an indication of Dashrath's determination to take Vanaprastha. Over time, due to the strictness of the rule, its duration was reduced to twelve years, eight years or four years as per the power. Gradually this tradition ceased to exist and today is limited only to the pages of books.

Yeti state or sannyasa ashram

This ashram is the last stage of the ashram system and the last step to attain salvation. For Sannyasi, words like Bhikshu, Yeti and Parivrajaka etc. are used in ancient texts. Yajnavalkya has used the word "Yati" for Sanyasi, which is basically based on Vedic tradition. Yeti means ascetic. In this ashram, a person tried to attain salvation through penance, because as long as a person remains associated with a particular place - village, country and clan, religion, occupation and position, his intellectual development and areas of thought remain limited. Are. The arrangement of Sanyas Ashram might have been made to liberate the person from this limited area and to attain salvation through penance.

Although renunciation is acceptable even after celibacy, it would be better if a person moves forward by gradually eliminating his material desires. Yajnavalkya has allowed entry into Sannyasa directly after Brahmacharya Ashram. In fact, it is more preferable to enter the Sannyasa Ashram only after Vanaprastha, because Vanaprastha is the period of preparation for Sannyasa. After completing this Ashram through renunciation and penance, a person used to enter Sanyas Ashram.

Manu has clearly said that after reaching from one ashram to another and getting tired of performing daily rituals like alms, Balivaishvadev and Agnihotra etc., the one who finally takes renunciation and leaves his body, is a partaker of great welfare in the next world.

Only after getting freedom from the debt triad (dev, rishi, pitra) a person entered Sanyas Ashram. To get relief from these debts, it was necessary to enter Grihastha Ashram and to lead a good household life, it was necessary to enter Brahmacharya Ashram. Therefore, entry into any ashram in a sequential manner seems more appropriate. Yajnavalkya, after being a householder or a Vanagrastha, has considered the one who worships Prajapati Dev, studies the Vedas, becomes devoted to chanting, has a son, donates as much as he can to the destitute, and performs 'homa' and 'yajna' as the person entitled to salvation. Manu's views on this subject are also generally similar.

Sanyasi state:-

This is such an ashram, in which man used to do sadhana and penance to attain salvation by renouncing all the material things and worldly desires, doing welfare of the world. Yajnavalkya has said that a Sanyasi should be indifferent to all the living beings, dear and unloved, and should be calm (free from the anger and anguish of conscience) and should wear three sticks and (non-metal-clay; wooden etc.) Kamandalu. He should always live in solitude and should give up all egoistic vices and worldly goods and deeds and should enter the village only for alms.

Yajnavalkya has given the provision of wearing Tridanda for Sanyasi, whereas Manu has used only the word Danda for them. Although Manu has used only the word Dandi (one who holds the stick) in place of Tridanda, it was not that he did not accept Tridanda. At one place Manu, while defining Tridandi, has said that the one whose intellect (thoughts, mind) has the three punishments of speech, mental punishment and physical punishment, is called a true Tridandi (sannyasi with three punishments). That is, no person can become a monk just by holding three bamboo sticks. He has also said that a yogi person should adopt the physical punishment of speech, mental punishment and physical punishment i.e. silence, fasting and pranayama, and not Tridanda (three bamboo rods). The meaning of Yogiraj Yajnavalkya's trident should also be understood in the same way as Manu's words, because the bamboo stick is only a symbol. These statements etc. are possible only through knowledge and not through ignorance. Therefore, it would be appropriate to consider the Tridanda as a symbol of Vaagdanda etc. It is also said in Dakshasmriti that no one becomes a trident with a bamboo trident, but

only a person combined with spiritual stick is a trident. Hence it is clear that the mind, speech and The one who gives up the karma and strives towards spirituality is the one who actually wields the trident.

The monk was always travelling. He used to go out for alms only once in the evening. Yajnavalkya has said that he should beg alms from the villages just to survive. But it was prohibited to beg from a village where there were other beggars. Manu has also said that a Sanyasi should go to the village only for food. The statement of Shankha quoted in Mitakshara shows that a Sanyasi can stay at one place only for two months during the rainy season. The Sanyasi was prohibited from accepting anything by influencing anyone through ostentation such as astrology, angividya etc. The vessels of the Sanyasis were made of clay, bamboo, wood and alabu. These utensils of his were purified only by water and cattle.

It was necessary for a monk to have Jitendriya. Only by controlling the senses, a person is able to conduct pure and virtuous conduct. The path to his liberation was paved by renunciation of attachment and hatred and non-violence. Sanyasis should especially purify their conscience through Pranayama, because it generates knowledge and makes them independent (in introspection and perception etc.).

Yajnavalkya has considered truth, non-resistance, anger, shyness, prudence, patience (not getting distracted in sorrow), Dam (abstaining from alcohol) and control of senses and knowledge as the main religion of ascetics. Manu has also often accepted the same. Yajnavalkya has not considered any particular ashram as the reason for practicing any religion. He has said that it happens by practicing any religion. Therefore, one should never do for others what one does not like.

Sanyasis have to face the sufferings of pregnancy and the sufferings arising out of performing prohibited acts (Maharaura and hell etc.), mental sufferings, physical diseases, old age, deterioration of appearance, birth in the caste of small and dirty creatures and non-attainment of good and attainment of evil. One should always think. The main purpose of the Sanyasi to think about all these activities was probably to develop dispassion towards the world, because only in such a situation could he be single-minded and ready to achieve the ultimate goal of salvation.

Yajnavalkya has said that for attaining knowledge, service to the Acharya, wisdom in the Vedas, ritual of meditation propounded in them, company of good people, love words, giving up touch and sight of women, equanimity, giving up attachment (son, wife etc.), dilapidated Kashaya. Use of clothes, controlling the tendencies of senses in words and touch etc., giving up sleep and laziness, investigating the defects of impurity of the body etc., seeing sin in all tendencies (movement etc.), abandoning Rajogun and Tamogun, feeling through Pranayama etc. Through these measures, only a person who is properly pure and has Sattva Guna, attains salvation through purity of mind, lack of desire for things and Sham (control of external and internal thoughts).

On completion of Yoga, the Yogi becomes capable of attaining Brahmatva by abandoning the body. Yajnavalkya has considered inner vision, memory (recollection of extrasensory objects), beauty, vision (knowledge of past and future), leaving one's body and entering another's body and creation of things as per one's wish as the symptoms of Yogasiddhi. In the context of attaining Paramasiddhi (liberation), he has further said that if one is unable to perform Yagya, charity etc. then one who gives up all the lustful and prohibited deeds, practices the Vedas, resides in the forest and consumes food without begging for food. The person attains ultimate perfection. Apart from these discussions, Yajnavalkya. An attempt has been made to explain in great detail to the Sanyasis about the impermanence of the body and the bondage of virtues and deeds and many esoteric subjects related to the soul. Due to the abundance of topics, it is impossible to discuss these topics here. Therefore, for specific information, "Yati Dharma Episode" of Yajnavalkya Smriti can be seen.

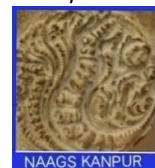
There is mention of four types of ascetics in Mahabharata and Brihatparashar Smriti – Kutichakra, Bahudak, Hans and Paramahansa. But in Sanyasopanishad, apart from these, there is mention of a total of six types of ascetics including Turiyatit and Avadhoot. There is mention of 'Kutichakra' Sanyasi in Manu Smriti, but Manu has used the word 'Kutichar' for it. Manu has considered the one who renounces all the activities of the Grihastha Ashram and destroys the karma-related defects through Pranayam etc., becomes Jitendriya, practices the Vedas from the scriptures and meanings and lives in the opulence of his son, as a cottage monk. This type of Sannyasi sits in one world and remains absorbed in the contemplation of God. He has no objection in begging alms from his wife, son etc. It is known that by the time of Yajnavalkya, this distinction between ascetics must have either ended or such types of ascetics must have dominated the society. Whatever may be the reason, Yajnavalkya has only used the word 'yati' and discussed their qualities and deeds only.

Manu, Kautilya, Vyas, Kamandak, and Vashishtha have also given similar interpretations of the virtues and duties propounded by Yajnavalkya. Similar mention is also found in Garun Purana, Vishnu Purana and Matsya Purana. Whatever may be the case, it can definitely be said that this ashram had importance in the society even before or after Yajnavalkya, which can be estimated from the later literary sources.

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PROBLEMS FACES BY THE MALAYALI TRIBES IN YERCAUD

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INTRODUCTION

The people of the hills are subsistence farmers and till recently, sold forest produce for a living. Now there is a trend of mass migration for several months in a year, when tribal people go as hired contract laborers to neighboring states. This has lead to them being exposed to substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases from the plains. Children who accompany their parents don't complete their immunization, and miss a large number of school days.

KEY WORDS: subsistence farmers, Children, immunization, Shervaroys hill, Yercaud, yeri and kaadu, Malayali, elementary school, Agriculture

YERCAUD

Yercaud is located in Shervaroys hill range in the Eastern Ghats, Salem district. It is a delightful destination for romantic honeymoon, family vacations and friends groups. Yercaud is nestled in lush green grass plots, luxuriant hills and breathtaking scenic beauty. Yercaud has several hills and numerous areas to explore and tourism attractions to visit in. Yercaud are filled with natural beauty and abundance of flora and fauna, making this hill station a mesmerizing and enthralling holiday destination. The name Yercaud is due to

Tamil word yeri and kaadu, which means lake and forest. That means the place is with Lake and dense forest Shervaroys Hill, Yercaud – A delightful hill station.

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SHERVAROYS HILL, YECAUD A DELIGHTFUL HILL STATION.

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A hill station with mild weather, fine game stocked jungles, and lots of exhilarating sightseeing spots, Yercaud makes for a fine holiday getaway. Being pocket friendly, the place is affectionately known as 'poor man's Ooty'. groomed garden, Anna Park, nearby. Lady's Seat offers a spectacular view of Salem. Shevaroy Temple is the highest point in Yercaud at 5,326 ft. Also check out the Small Lake, Killiyur Falls and Botanical Garden. Tiny Yercaud, a very affordable hill station, is rich in natural charm. 'Yercaud', Tamil for 'lake-forest', lies in the Eastern Ghats which, unlike the lush Western Ghats, are generally dry and feature short and rocky hills. It is thus a wonderful aberration. Tucked away in the Shivaroy Hills in Northern Tamil Nadu, Yercaud surrounds a soothing placid lake. There are coffee plantations and orange groves as you approach and the town itself is comfortably small and rewardingly pretty.

MALAYALI TRIBES IN YERCAUD

The tribal people of the Yercaud are known as Malayali. These people live on the plateaus and sloppy regions of the Shervarayan hills. The Malayali population is approximately 40,000. The main occupations of these people are agriculture and collection of forest products.

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE MALAYALI TRIBALS IN YERCAUD SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The mean age at marriage for boys is 15 age and for the girls is age 13. Premarital sex, elopement, plurality of sex, extra marital sex are commonly accepted, which leads to number of social and health problems. Around 70%

Tribals are illiterates marriage are strictly from their tribal community. If any marriages taken place with other caste, they will be immediately excommunicated. People will not go to those homes even for births and deaths.

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

The children have to walk for around 5 kms to reach the elementary school. Because of this, school enrollment is not much and the drop out from the schools are very high. Very few children are going to school beyond 8th standard. Female education is neglected. Even few people who are educated are unemployed in the hills and so others get no motivation for their studies.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Around 80% of the tribal people are living below to poverty line. Agriculture is their major occupation. Rain water cultivation is possible. There is no check dams and so water is a major problem during summer. The rain water is not harvested due to the land shape. So, six months, they stay in a tribal area and for other six months they migrate to Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh states for their livelihood. Because of their migration, the families are disintegrated.

PROBLEMS WITH LAND ALIENATION

Land as a prime resource has been a source of problem in tribal life because of two related reasons, first, Dependency, i.e. tribal dependency on land and second, improper planning from government agencies. Tribal people in India can be classified on the basis of their economic pursuits in the following way: Foragers, Pastoral, Handicraft makers, Agriculturists, Shifting hill cultivators, Labourers and Business pursuits. All of these occupations involve direct or indirect dependency on land. Land rights and changes in rules go unnoticed.

Tribal are unaware or are made unaware about the rules which governs India's land rights. The tribal's do not have access to land records, not even the Record of Rights. This lends them to a higher probability of getting exploited, by the non-tribal's and in some cases by the local officials. Wherever lands are given yet the pattas are not given, or pattas handed over yet the land is not shown. There is a discrepancy in demarcation of Scheduled Areas. In some places it is village wise and in some places it is area wise. There should be a clear village-wise demarcation of the Scheduled Area to avoid ambiguities and exploitation of tribal lands.

HEALTH PROBLEMS

More than 70% of the Adult men and women have venereal diseases. Reproductive tract infection is one of the major health problems for women. 80% of the children are malnurtitious. Infant Mortality rate and maternal mortality rate is around 5 times higher than the national average. The traditional faith healers are playing an important roles. Their health seeking behaviours and health practices are harmful. Government has acknowledged this health problem and started some health project. But is was failed due to non-availability of qualified doctors in primary health centres. Almost 100%

women are anemic. Anemia among pregnant women and home delivery are the major reasons for the increased mortality of infants and mothers. Communicable disease like diarrhea, Jaundice, typhoid, venereal diseases, sexual diseases, tuberculosis, AIDS , HIV etc., are mostly due to the unawareness on the preventive measures and poor hygiene and sanitation. This can be controlled and prevented by proper health education.

CONCLUSION

The people of Yercaud hill area are known as “Malayalis” meaning “people of the hills”. Culturally, the tribal people distrust people from the plains due to frequent confrontations with forest guards and the police over smuggling of sandalwood and red sanders. They seek health care only when very sick, leading to higher morbidity and a lower life expectancy. The overall health, literacy and development indicators across age groups as poor, as compared to those living in the plains. This is primarily due to poor health care infrastructure, limited health services, low literacy, lack of quality education, lack of local employment opportunities, dependence on subsistence farming, migratory labor, and poor relationship with the administrative structure.

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PHILOSOPHY OF BHAKTHI BHANDARA BASAVANNA TO ERADICATE SOCIAL EVILS

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Abstract:

During the 12th and 13th centuries A.D., the Veerashaiva movement spread the philosophy of Sri Basavanna, a Hindu reformer. Basavanna founded the Veerashaiva school or veerashivanism. He rejected the caste system, denied the supremacy of the Brahmins, condemned ritual sacrifice and insisted on Bhakthi and the worship of the one of the god Shiva. Philosophy of Basavanna is an essential ingredient for eradicating social evils and creating social peace and harmony. This sort of social changes is possible when the basic education system is filled with elements of value system and Bhakthi culture from the childhood. The Philosophy of Bhakthi Basavanna can be once again regenerated by including his values in society who need to lay emphasis of bringing back the culture of having devotion. Such a society will be free of evils and social harmony and peace will prevail as a natural course of development.

Introducton:

From the down of the vedic period to contemporary period, one deserves that there is no social equality in Hindu society to emerge a global society in which an integral part of human life and at the most it is only in the books. Particular sects of the people of their own intellectual power were intentionally exploited the down trodden communities physically mentally and spiritually. They discarded and neglected the oppressed and suppressed section of hindu people in our holy land. That is Hindu Sanathana Dhrarma in those days and therefore there is no place to discuss on castles society.

The Social conditions before saint Basavanna having plunged in deep darkness had become a victim of lifeless tradition and society. The people were superstitions and victims of traditions caste system prevailed all over India. There was a gulf between Savarna and avarna communities. The savarna communities framed their own code and conduct in the name of god, which proved barren for the progress of individual motto and any advancement of the society.

LIFE OF BASAVANNA

Basavanna known as Bhakthi Bandari Basavanna or Basaveshwara was born in 1134 an orthodox Shaiva Brahmin at Basavana Bagevadi in Bijapur district of Karnataka state. His father was madarasa, mahana or gramini of the Bagevadi Kalamukha matha in Bijapura district. He studied extensively Vedas Upanishads, Agamas, Puranas, the great epics Ramayana, Mahabharata and various religious faith and philosophies. At the age of childhood he was developed some sort of aversion for Hinduism which had been dunghill of castism intolerance and untouchability. After the death of his father Basavanna elder brother Devaraja was denied the right of gramani or post of Mahajana this led to the migration of his family, consequently he left Bagevadi and spent the next twelve years studying at Sangameshwara temple the then Shaivite school of learning at Kudala Sangama

PHILOSOPHY OF BASAVANNA

Basavanna said that the roots of the social life are embedded not in the cream of the society but in the scum of the society. It is the witty saying that the cow does not give milk to him who sits on its back. But it gives milk to him who squats at its feet with his wide sympathy, he admitted high and low alike into his fold. The Anubhava Mantappa established by Basavanna laid down the foundation of social democracy. Basavanna believed that man becomes great not by his birth but by his conduct in society. This means faith in the dignity of man and the belief that a common man is as good part of society as man status.

He proclaimed that all members of the state are labourers. He placed practice before precept and his own life was a rigid rectitude. Basava brought home to his countryman the lesson of self-purification. He tried to raise the moral level of public life, and he insisted that the same rules of conduct applied to the administrators as to the individual members of society. He also taught the dignity of manual labour by insisting on work as worship. Every kind of manual labour which was looked down upon by people of high caste, should be looked upon with love and reverence he argued. Thus arts and crafts flourished and a new foundation was laid in the history of the economics of the land.

The Sharanas had no caste divisions and accepted everyone as equal, Jedara Dasimayya was by profession a weaver, Shankar Dasimayya a tailor, Madivala Machideva a washerman, Mydara Kettaya a basket maker, KInnari Bommaiah a goldsmith, Vekkalumuddaiah a farmer, Hadapada Appanna a Baber, Jedara Madanna a soldier, Ganada Kannappa an oilman, Dohar Kakkayya a tanner, Madar Chanayya a cobbler and Ambiga Chowdaiah a ferryman. There were women followers such as Satyakka, Ramavve and Somavve with their respective vocations. The curious thing was that all these and many more have sung the Vachanas (saying) regarding their vocations in a very suggestive imagery. Mahathma Gandhi spoke thus at all the Belaguam session of the Indian National Congress in 1924.

“It is not been possible for me to practice all the precepts of Basaveshwara which he taught 800 years ago and which he also practices.... Eradication of untouchability and dignity of labour were among his core precepts. One does not find even shades of castism in him. Had he lived during our times, he would have been a saint worthy of worship.”

Basava Sketched and boldly tried to work out a large and comprehensive programme of social reform with the elevation and independence of womanhood as its guiding point. Neither social conferences which are usually held in these days in several parts of India nor Indian Social reformers, can improve upon that programme as to the essentials. The Present day social reformer in India is but speaking the language and seeking to enforce the mind of Basavanna.

Basavanna Says that, all are equal in the eyes of the god. The greatness do of a person depend on the accidental birth or caste. Human society is a democracy of a souls. With inherent respect and affection for all living beings. He says kindness is the essence of Dharma (Virtue) and work is worship (Kayakave Kailasa), No work is inferior and no work is superior. Kayaka is Kailasa(The work is heaven)

Basavanna also mentioned with a score of examples of sages and seers and showed that caste by birth could never be the criteria for the worth of a man. Guru Basavanna message is that man’s worth should not be judged not by his birth but by his thoughts and deeds, by his conduct and character, Basavanna illustrates to show that birth could never be the criterion for the worth of man “ Vysa is a fisherman’s son; Markendya of an outcaste borb; Mandodari the daughters of frog; Agastya was fowler; Durvasa a shoe maker’ Kasyapa a blacksmith; the sage Kaundilya a barber mark, Basavanna condemns the compartmental caste system. Further Basavanna says that there are only two classes among human beings – i.e., good and bad (Bhaktha and Bhavi).

Basavanna wished that, humanity should get freedom peace, and happiness in their moral world.... The disparities between rich and poor or man and woman, should be ceased. Social equality for all. He advocated equal status to all human beings and gave promise of salvation to every one who

leads a various life. He lead the movements which was a revolutionary and democratic for the emancipation of the down trodden.

According to Basavanna there are seven codes of conduct to achieve they are; Thou shall not steel nor kill, nor speak lie, Be angry with no one, Nor scorn other man, No glory in thyself, Nor Others hold to blame, This is your inward purity. This is your outward purity. He says, 'Compassion is the root of all religions'. His heart melted for poor, down trodden and all living being.'

Basavanna rationally illumined true nature of religion and human being. He says that " the man who slays is a pariah. He says "The man who eats the carrion is a low caste person.

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WOMEN SILENCED INTO SUBMISSION : A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper talks about Edna, the heroine of Kate Chopin's 'The Awakening' in particular and reviews the other women, through historical perspectives, in general who are silenced into submission. History, mythology and fables have all shown women better at silence and worst at speech. Rani Padmini of Mewar was targeted for her beauty with brain. Her exceptional oratorical skill invited the attention of Allaludin Khilzi who wanted to possess this gem of rare excellence. Sita too was highlighted to force Laxman by bitter words leaving her alone to support Ram for killing of demon. Woman in history are shown with limited intellect and with a bitter tongue which resulted in wars, for instance, Draupadi's words "A son of a blind is blind too" took a toll on entire mankind. It may be truth, may not be, but the message has only one that women should be beautiful but silent on the bright side, it is true as women have been deprived of education, employment, exposure, experience and consequent enlightenment; their insecurity, hurt ego, bruised self-respect and over dependence on man forced them to speak with unsound deliberation and unreasonable point of view but the solution is not their silencing but sensibility. This paper will show the treatment of women in historical perspectives and discuss the psychological inhibitions on their minds.

Keywords : unsound deliberation, oratorical skills, stupor, slumber.

Introduction :

A historical approach employed to literary interpretation, understanding and analysis explores the past responsible for present. New historicism evaluates literary worked as cultural artifacts that reveal and relate the discourse in social framework operating in the time and period of composition of text.

Going by this conviction, historical references help us locate how Edna, right instance in modern context, suffers as she fails to relate her emotions, priorities or even taste and choice and even to the closest person. Chopin's '*The Awakening*' was banned in her times as she portrayed a woman far ahead of time and whose background was of very restricted and constricted type of coercion in undue submission and involuntary compliance to conventions. Modern women openly practice for what Edna was punished with death. Historical approach to literature tells us how time is a very important factor, a catalyst for evolution or devolution, progression or regression of a particular society.

This paper shows the itinerary of Edna, the heroine of '*The Awakening*' from silence to submission and to find surrender to the sea. There is a need to evaluate this in historical perspectives because this imposition of silence on women is since time immemorial and powerfully prevalent cutting across the limits of time, place and people. Women are either silenced or their articulation is misinterpreted; they are either mute or speak a language which none, nobody understands or try to understand. In India and in America women were not allowed to earn for themselves; for their needs, they had to depend on men. All the finances even now, are kept with men even the earnings of women go to man's kitty. Dependence snatches away the right of expression; man in authority need not respond to the reason of women.

History reveals before us in genuine chronology how women were subjugated and subjected to inhuman treatment in infanticide, foeticide, sexual abuse and physical abuse. Draupadi was married to five pandavas, Sita was banished for her stay at Ravan's place. So many women suffered for their gender and cowardice of her folk. History relates the atrocities of partition and also the physical and mental injury on women in war. Women were not allowed to educate themselves, to employ themselves, to fend for themselves; they were marginalized. They were forced to perform Sati, married to old man without their consent, killed for dowry or any other pretext. The only problem, history relates, of women that they were never allowed free expression.

In America, chosen place for Chopin, women were allowed only one profession – novel writing and after Chopin wrote controversial '*The Awakening*' she lost her livelihood by novel writing because her novel gathered a storm, upheaval of criticism as her heroine, Edna represented "an energy that threatened to contravene the stability of the family on which society depends an energy frequently embodied in the adulterous woman" (Tanner 4).

Draupadi was hailed as adulterous by Karna for her relations with five men; disrobing was attempted on her and she was beyond measures disgraced. Edna is perceived as adulterous because she goes for swimming in the sea naked. Edna transcends her circumscribed status as sensual entity, "as the object of other's desires – and stands before us as her own subject, as a blissfully embodied being" (Yaegar 197).

Edna loses her respect in estimation of readers as in Chopin's time women were clad from toe to throat, they used to wear heavy gowns to restrict their movements.

Edna in her ultramodern stance, cast the unpleasant, pricking garments from her, and for the first time in her life she stood naked in the open air, at the mercy of the sun, the breeze that beat upon her and the waves that invited her (Chopin 113).

History has established the power of men over women through war and outdoor jobs, it also asserts that women thrive on sanction of man and their beauty and purity, fidelity is their own interest. History has always focused on obsessed valorization of male hegemony and has also registered woman's instinct toward cruel intentions of men. Marriage, history has witnessed, is a contract "by which society attempt to bring into harmonious alignment patterns of passion and patterns of property" (Tanner 15).

There have been so many revolution personal, social and psychological in which women vent out their anger; our freedom struggle too registers exceptional contribution of women. History showcases with its numerous instances, how women are targeted for their slight deviation and man go scotfree despite alleged adultery.

If society depends for its existences on certain rules governing what may be combined and what should be kept separate then adultery ... offers on attack on those rules, revealing them to be arbitrary rather than absolute (Tanner 13).

Edna behaves like a woman of today she transcends the limits of time and place & exercises her autonomy to survive on her own, all by herself but being inexperience and unexposed to worldly wise people, she leads herself to such an oblivion from where no exist other than death is possible.

History has even been a mute witness of mode of strict social acquiescence.

Without anything or anyone necessarily having changed place or roles, infidelity portends the possible breakdown of all the mediations on which society itself depends and demonstrates the latent impossibility of participating in the interrelated patterns that comprise its structure (Tanner 17).

The Awakening is a historic revolution as the novel gives a radical awareness about its heroine:

Edna who inhabits a world of limited linguistic possibilities, of limited possibilities for interpreting and reorganizing her feelings and therefore of limited possibilities for action. (Yaeger 200)

Women were limited to fourwalls, forced to wear veil and it exposes how society has been cruel to them since ages.

Edna's silence offers a new dialogic ground from which we can measure the systematic distortion of her old ground of being and begin to construct a new, utopian image of the emergence of women's antithetical desires (Yaeger 200).

Women were denied the right to education and forced to receive what was given to them, they were unaccustomed to the taste of candor of free expression or self expression. Edna like other women was speechless and

cocooned in her own sphere because her species is silenced into submission since centuries.

If we consider Edna in historical perspectives we find that women are conditioned to compliance to convention; they can practice precaution and prevarication, compliance and concealment but cannot exercise their choice and will. Edna is one such woman who is honest in her transactions; she does not want to cheat on anybody and deals fairly with every relation. She succumbs to the subtle touch of Arobin only in her own house, the pigeon house when she has announced her freedom for herself.

Chopin finds the compulsion, necessity and historical evidence of speechless women in commensuration to one another and purposely showcases through Edna, how women enjoy the right of expression and how exhilarating it is for them. Edna feels the unhabitual taste and flavour of expression. Chopin mentions :

She was flushed and felt intoxicated with the sound of her own voice and the unaccustomed taste of candour. It muddled her like wine or like a first breathe of freedom. (20)

Imagine the heights of speechlessness that a woman is not familiar with her own voice and this state of her has been since centuries.

Patriarchal agencies, male hegemonical dictates and male chauvinism have conditioned women to some anchor in form of father, husband and son. *Sati System*, abolished with efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy allowed women to be burnt alive when her anchor, her husband is consigned to flames. Swami Dayanand Saraswati and other visionaries who had been working and worked for cause of women since time immemorial raised the issue of women education with the idea that it will lend them expression and consequent enlightenment. Chopin shows how expression leads Edna to think, meditate and reflect over her position in entire setup of society. Edna has become a failure, a history for modern woman but she has left behind an idea that expression, emulation, education and employment can be shared by women, acquired by them as equally as by men.

Today's modern woman is liberated partially if not wholly and still striving. Edna is embedded in history but her documentation has unfurled the idea that women are not in need of anchor and they can also liberate themselves from it. Edna experiments with it and realizes her strength.

Edna felt as if she were being torn away from some anchorage which had held her fast, whose chains had been loosening ... leaving her free to drift whithersoever she chose to set her sails ... (Chopin 35)

Edna drives herself and unleashes the idea that women can drive themselves without any succor and anchor which provided safety & support in past now conscript and contain the liberty of women. Edna conceived the idea in Chopin's times that guardianship by man can be converted into companionship and mentorship of man can be monitored into management by man. Various revolutions are registered and documented in history which

became the witness of women's struggle and highlight how a woman has shaped up career, life and future by constant struggle against her limitations.

Women are stupefied in a slumber of smugness they are never allowed to be on their own. In name of facilities and leisure, belongings of husband, they are always blocked from arduous, fastidious task which could tone down their suppleness but polish their skills of worldly wisdom. Security is the chief for of mortals and need is security. In name of security, the ability of women is compromised and curtailed. Various examples are there in history which portray the dilution of talent of women by pseudo-allegations. Razia Sultan was targeted for being a woman, she was a chosen heir of her father. Nur Jahan was also defamed. Murabai was given poison. History has been a witness to all such talented women who were marginalized, annihilated despite tremendous talent only because of their gender.

This smugness, doctored, induced or inculcated in women culminates into a stupor which intoxicates them and injects in them a sleep of pseudo satisfaction of being queens but with no identity and at pleasure to king.

Edna, realizes how she had been in a deep slumber, an animalistic satisfaction with bare minimum of life, with embellishment and entitlements of life but at expense of elegance, exuberance and exceptional energy of life. Chopin relates the growing awareness and individuality of Edna who gradually realizes her worth and position in social setup.

Edna asks :

"How many years have I slept" The whole world seems changed. A new race of being must have sprung up, leaving only you and me as past relics ... He (Robert spoke : You have slept precisely one hundred years. I was left here to guard your slumbers ... (Chopin 38)

Here, it is very clear that induced sleep about rights of women in women is historical and alertly guarded by men for centuries as intellectual ability of women can issue threats to men. Women were given utopian vision since ages about children, household light works, leisure and perks of jewellery, dance, music, dresses and other light task in contrast to man's tough, colourless, grey and challenging lives. Foucault explains it in "The order of things", he says such utopias generally afford us very special consolation.

Although they have no real locality, there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold; they open up ... countries where life is easy, even though the road to them is chimerical ... (Foucault 18).

Edna's failure despite her talk to herself, her waking from slumber lies in the fact :

Her temptation to think are repressed by the moody discourse of romance the novel's explicitly utopian constructs partake of their romance framework; they don't function transgressively. (Yaeger 202)

Edna enjoys speech but in a romantic framework. She has a history of repression but not of guidance and mentorship by grandmothers, mothers in issues of realization of self. Her love for herself deviates into her romance with Robert and instead of realizing herself under able guidance of Robert, she

falls for his love and makes him an integral part of her life, focus of her life. Her journey from love to libido is explained by Lacan, he says: Through the effect of speech, the subject always realizes herself more in the other ... she will simply find her desire even more divided, pulverized in the circumscribable metonymy of speech ... (Lacan 188).

Chopin knew that in her times women were speechless and appreciated for it but she was also apprehensive that her conception was out of place and frame of reference in her times but would be documented in history as her idea might be nonsensical but gain momentum of sensibility with course of time. The opening of novel portrays an exotic and gaudy image of a green and yellow parrot which hung in a cage outside the door, kept repeating over and over : “Allez vous-en! Allez vous-en! Sapristi! That’s all right! (Chopin 3).

This speech is in a language beyond comprehension and nonsensical but it kindles a light of its presence and illuminates the world in an intriguing and mysterious way. This parrot inhabits a diverse multilingual culture and hints at a babble but lyricism of the maddening persistence of parrot forces Edna’s husband to leave its society and dismiss it from his association. Edna undergoes the same treatment at the hands of her husband.

Repetitive, incomprehensible, discontinuous babble of Edna is a language which nobody in her families, never understood. The polyvocal discourse leads us to a potential lack of meaningfulness in articulation. Such speech of parrot and Edna exert their presence but fail to relate the content of thought Kristeva also suggests that “the feminine is said to be synonymous with the a-linguistic ... which is unspoken, that which is left-out of namings and ideologies” (166).

Chopin here shows that Edna requires a more passionate personal and intersubjective speech that may allow her to revise, review and rearticulate her indulgence with her desires and social compulsions which may thwart her desire. Chopin filled her novel with seductive voice of the sea, babble of parrot, buzzing of honeybees to register the presence of discordant voice to showcase concordant feelings of Edna who possessed no meaningful challenge to relate her story to the world.

The Awakening becomes a historical text :

That asks for another idiom to fill in the unspoken voices in Edna’s story : an idiom that contemporary women writers and feminist critics have begun to provide. (Yaeger 205)

Edna displeased with her conventional and restricted lot fails to curb her human emotion to explore and chart the forbidden terrains, “to swim farout, where no woman had swum before” (Chopin 28).

Edna’s articulation to herself is very poor. She acknowledges:

A thousand emotions have swept through me to night. I don’t comprehend half of them ... people about me are like some uncanny, half human being. (Chopin 30)

Here, Chopin raises the issue of existential crises. People, coerced into compliance to conventions are humans in form not in spirit. Choice, freewill—

the individual and human rights, Edna tries to claim and asserts in her chosen death. Edna is forced to be attentive to club activities of her husband narrated by him in her disturbed sleep and she is reprimanded by her husband for neglect of children ; misplaced, undue and inhuman anger of her husband induces in her “an indescribable oppression which seemed to generate in some unfamiliar part of her consciousness filled her whole being with a vague anguish” (Chopin 8).

Here, it seems very clear how Chopin portrays a woman who simmers inside, plays a dual role with inward dissent but outward compliance. This tumult of unredressed grievances force Edna to try her energy in her own way but lack of experience and wayward caprice lead her to shores of seductive sea. Reflecting on death of Edna in the sea Cynthia says :

Edna had an infantile, orally destructive self, a limitless void whose needs can be filled, finally ... only by total fusion with the outside world, a totality of sensuous enfolding. (Wolff, 208,211)

Edna falls from social prescription because she regresses to her childhood, naked go into the sea as a child, finds solace in folds of a mother; she feels the warmth of seductive sea & succumbs to it.

Conclusion :

This paper has shown how women are doctored in their inability to handle the tasks fit for male bastion. Edna is not an ordinary woman but a thinking individual who tries to liberate herself from age- old traditional role of mother- women and tries to raise her income and make a home on her own steam and sail. Gender here, proves to be a handicap and she is silenced into submission. The paper through various historical facts and inductions has proved that women are silenced since age; either they are silent or shriek to give vent to their pent-up anger. Journey of women from helpless sati, widow and deserted woman of ancient times to a responsible, aware, educated woman of modern times has never been an easy one rather it has claimed numerous sacrifices of multiple hues and has also tarnished the image of kind and compassionate man; women are quoted in history for their unbridled tongue and evil of man too is imposed on them. Edna dies inarticulate, naked and with a badge of an adulterous woman, history documented her as a woman of loose morals and impulsive mindset.

Ironically what she conceived as an idea, is beautifully being executed by modern woman.

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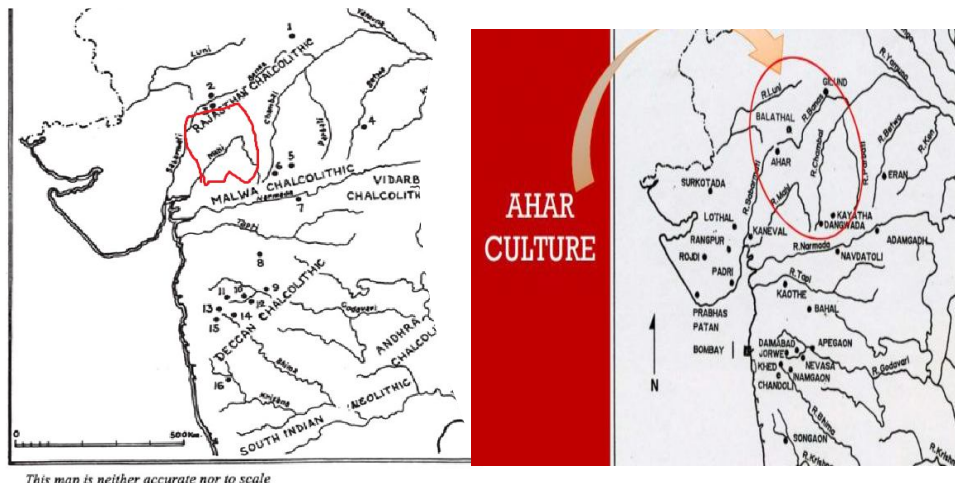
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**THE NEGLECTED ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF
AMJHARA AND KARHAL MATA TEMPLE: THE
ARCHEOLOGICAL WONDER OF LATE GUPTA PERIOD**
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The remnants of the Ahad civilization, obtained from the Mewar region, are a sign of 4000 years old civilization. The Ahar civilization developed towards the other center of the southeast part of Rajasthan, in which part of the present Dungarpur and Banswara district is included.

The Vagad region of southern Rajasthan, which was known as “Mahiya” region by the Puranakars this region extended all the way down Gujarat, the glory of this region is mentioned in the Skanda Purana in the name of Mahi Sagar Sangam. In this region the grand river like Mahi is constantly flows so it is called Maheya. The name itself is very pleasant and picturesque, very similar to Gangayeon the banks of the Ganges, the Narmadeya on the banks of the Narmada, the Yamuneya near the Yamuna and the Vitasteya near the Vitasta This unique feature of naming the names of region by the name of river flowing in that region is a unique and beautiful is a great tradition of Bharat Varsh and this region is unique and named on this tradition . The places of confluence of rivers on have an important place in the civilization like the Pryagraj and many others , similarly 'Venya' is also in Mahiya region , which has been named as Veneshwar This name also appears in Mandan's 'Devatamurtiprakaranam'.



According to Sri Krishna Jugnu, in the Markandeya Purana, edited around the Gupta period, the introduction of the West Indian territories has been given very generously. Mahi originating from the Aravalli mountain which was then called Pariyatra has opened the doors to the possibilities of settlement and statehood in this region... Its territories include Sopara, Kalibal, Durg, Anikat, Pulinda, Sumini, Rupapa, Shvapat, Kurumin, Kathaksha. With is Mahey's calculation. This Vagad country spread north across Parsaula Somanad: Salumbar of Chunda, Nagan village of Meval, Aad village of Kuravad, Chhappan's Jhadol, Parsad, Rishabdev and Peepal of Kharag and Babalpara of Nichli Bhomat west of Ghoradar (Vijaynagar) of Gujarat.), peacocks of Pal Idar (Sabarkandha): , Meghraj, Devgadadhar (Sawlaji) and Modasa, Lunawada, Degalwara of Kadana, Jhalaud of Panchmahal, Jhabua of Malwa, North: Part, Sailana Ghata of Malwa in the east, of Ratlam and was till the western part of Pratapgarh. The extension of Vagad was up to Devanmori. Many evidences of Buddhism have been found from there. Again, it is a great fact that it was a great foundation for Shaivism. The area was under Markandya Rishi

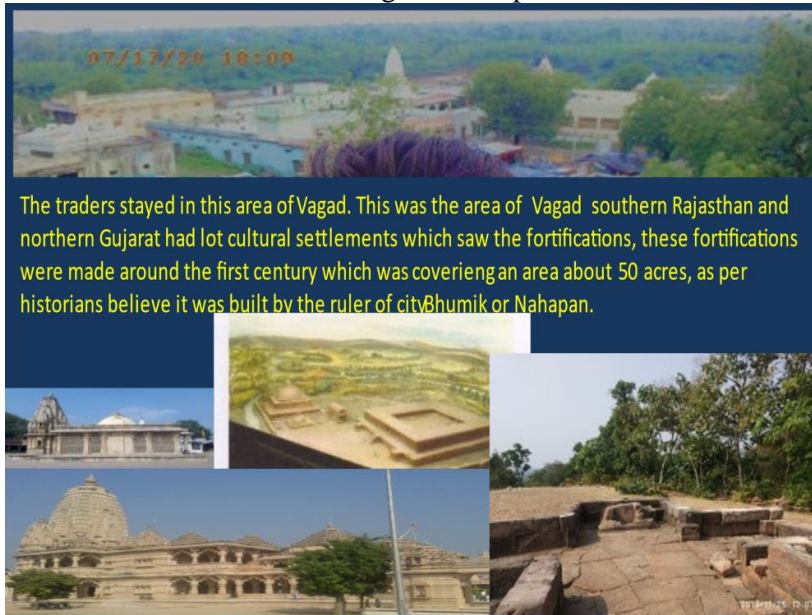
The Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang, in his description of his India visit in the 6th century, has said that this region of Mahi river is also connected with Malwa, where Buddhists as well as non-Buddhists have settled in equal numbers and live in harmony and moved progressed in the area of river. His description is so live, as if he was writing with live commentary and gives us a live word picture of the area. It seems that till that time the Buddhists where here and they did not see much scope for religious conversion among the forest dwellers.

According to Sri Krishna Jugnu, Vagad is defined as a country in the Skanda Purana. It was governed under the Asharm of Matang Rishi that extended till Kutuch. Later its present form was edited till the lifetime of King Kumarapala

of Chalukya dynasty. Till then this entire region was considered as one country, like Mewar, its name was written in Sanskrit as well as Vagad, but the aforesaid copperplate of King Bhojraj of Dhara shows that this name may have been occurred due to 'Vatpadrak'. This thus Vagad region being a country or a state, was a rich area where there were many types of trades and commerce had grown and developed. An important information available from this copper plate states that this region of Vatpadrak, called 'Sthali Mandal'. Thali area. – (meaning a very well developed land area which is UNION of different regions)

The evidence emerging out from the earth speaks of the fact that some two thousand years ago, the Vagad region had cultural and trade connections with different countries and regions of the world, not only Rajasthan and Gujarat (the Spread of the region was till Kutch Later which could have intrusion of other factors and today we have 2 Wagd (Wagd Kutch Wagd Rajasthan). The Vagadwasis (the people of Vagad) can be astonished by the fact that region had abundant connection with Rome in trade and commerce.

All artifacts discovered in 1967 excavations on some mounds near Shamlaji near Dungarpur suggest a deep relationship of the Vagad region with Rome. This relationship existed till the 6th century. Various goods from Rome used to come here and were also taken away (export and import of goods and exchange of goods). The remains of dice, bangles, bowls, pots and utensils made with advanced technology have been found, they reveal this fact. These remains have been found during the third phase of the excavation of Shamlaji.

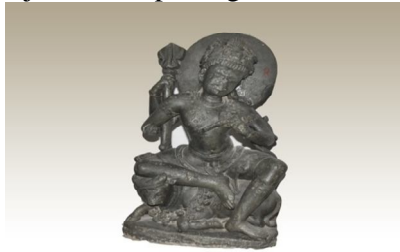


The remains found during the second phase of excavation in Shamlaji area have proved that iron smelting technology had developed in this area in the first century AD. Industrial settlements had been developed along with human

settlements in the area. On the basis of the remains, it has been concluded that during that period about three thousand people had been settled in this area who were associated with trade and other activities. Laterite and hematite were being extracted from here and the mines spread over an area of 45 km around. Traders accessed this area by means of the Meshvo river flowing near Vagad and Shamlaji which flowed down to the coastal port of Arabian Sea and used water way for trade and commerce of Vagad.

The traders stayed in this area of Vagad. This was the area of Vagad Southern Rajasthan and northern Gujarat had lot cultural settlements which saw the fortifications, these fortifications were made around the first century which was covering an area about 50 acres, as per historians believe it was built by the ruler of city Bhumik or Nahapan.

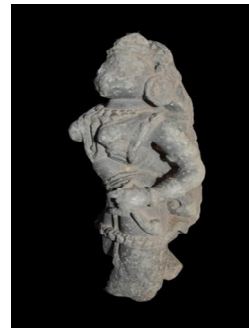
The tradition of building temples in this rich region of Vagad dates back to a very old era. Where Amjhara was a major center of sculpture. It is certain that the green Subhaja stones found in mountain range of Aravalli in the Dungarpur region of South Rajasthan, were used in the initial statues. Statues made from this stone are found not only in South Rajasthan, but also in Saurashtra of Gujarat, Dashpur region of Malwa.



Lord Shiva is seated on his mount Nandi. He is seated in Ardha-Paryank Mudra. He holds a veena (musical instrument) with two hands. Some part of veena is broken but only shaft is visible. In third hand he holds trident is visible. Fourth hand is vanished. Seated Nandi has a girdle of bells in his neck



4. India, ca. 950-1000 A.D., Carved.



This sculpture is of unknown goddess is broken from legs. Sculpture is facing on the right side and a hand is visualized on left side. Probably this goddess was carried by other male goddess. Face is eroded completely but head gear and long ear rings are notable. She wore a big necklace. She is holding a dagger on left hand.

It is a coincidence that the earliest images from this kind of stone have been found from the Gupta period. These sculpture and statues started to be made from about 4-5th century and most sculpturers and crafts man adopted these principles of iconography along with the form of the statue, these sculptures proved to be very useful later various sculpturaresas the reference and artesian from different regions of Somnath, Osian, Tanesar, Dhar, Dhangdhra, Ujjain, Brajmandal adopted the styles and them. Their center of these sculpture technique was **Amraj and Kishkinda**. **Amraj** can be identified as 'Amjhara'

of the present and Kishkindha is Kalyanpur. Kalyanpur had emerged as a center of great crafts (3) There was a large range of craftsmen, and their crafts were in demand till Mandsaur. The art of Gandhara also got a new meaning and dimension from this area. A craftsman like Nagnjit is credited with the creation of a treatise like '**Chitralakshanam**' the conceptualization is on the measurement and perception of human organs in sculpture, and these are related to this area. It is not surprising that Varahamihira has also quoted the same in his opinion. There are many statues of Shiva's Mukhalinga. The remains of these statues with different heads, faces are found in abundance in this area.

Both these cities were later considered under the **Vagad Mandal**, but this belief is not older than the 12th century, before that it was the Mahi flow area. It may sound very strange that what was in this, in this hilly region. But the truth is that the craftsmen of Alora got their source of inspiration and ideas from here, the connection of the craftsman of the Sanchi are from here and especially the Vipra and Shilpi residents of Himachal, in the flowing area of Ganga, during the period of the decline of the cities in the region of Ganges, these craftsmen started to move in this region. It is mentioned in the Puranas by the name of "Yuga Varnan" that they considered the areas of 'Lavanambhasa' fit and sustainable for habitation. This area points to the region of the Arabian Sea (Lavan Sagar). Again, such similarities can be traced to regional crafts. It is also worth considering that the initial statues were made from the stones of this mountain. It has a special mention in Khil Harivansh of Mahabharata.

The ancient site of Âmjhara, in district Dûngarpur and situated 60 miles away from Udaipur on Udaipur-Ahmedabad National Highway No. 8, has yielded a number of post-Gupta (VIth century A.D.) sculptures of great interest these sculptures have been duly preserved in the newly started Archaeology Section located within the premises of Development Block Office at Dûngarpur or Durgapur museum during his discovery R.C. Agrwala discovered more sculptures of the contemporary period from the site of . Âmjhara) which have been since then been preserved in the main Museum at Udaipur Most important of these sculptures are the statues of seated female deities (Mâtrkâ), the heads of which are completely missing still they are of great iconographic and artistic interest. All these sculptures are from Gujrât and Dûngarpur, (Vagad) have been carved out of the greenish-blue schist locally called as Pârevâ.

Goddess worship in Rajasthan is an ancient practice. Images of female-male deities have from various era have been found dating back to 1st and 2nd century B.C. have been found from various places and in 5th Century A.D the goddess worship in Rajasthan became systematic and consistent. From the sixth century onwards the goddess worship in Rajasthan had been well institutionalized. Group of images found in Amjhara-Dungarpur of Rajasthan consists of the Images for Camunda and Mahishasuramardini and many

Matrika images have been found in this area not only sculptures large amount of pottery and terracotta have been discovered and found till the day at Amjhara. Many of these Sculptures are at UDIPUR, VADODRA, DUNGARPUR MUSEUMS

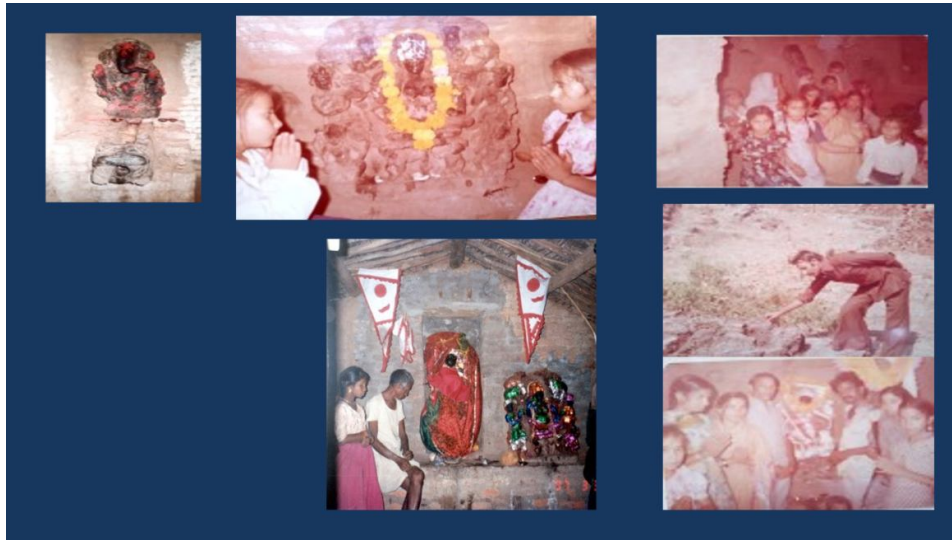
IN all his discoveries there existed a living temple in thatched hut in the village of Amjharahowever now new structure has taken over the hut but importance of the site remains same. The Goddess in this temple is known as Karharmata (Mihisurmardini) along with her sits a rare image of Gajalxmi after discovery by R.C. Agarwala went in the darkness of time though published in many articles she always remained unknown to many till now even the site of Amjhara which is very important archeological site has been in pice of neglect for long time. Along with various archeological places and mounds the place also held live temple containing the images of goddess, shiva, bhirava, Ganesh as Dwarpal the temple wasn't structural built up but was in a thatched hut known as the name of Karhar Maa. It is in the famous city of Amjara of that period. This temple was hidden in the darkness of time for many years. This temple of Karhari Mata, which is known as Amjara Mata. Came to light when Smt Rajkumari Zaveri and people of Shrimal community especially in Dungarpur searched and found it and made it public to people.

Sara Schotak has made study on sculptures of Shamalaji region which is very closed to region of Amjhara I her study she points to various matrakas sculpture found at Amjhara standing figure of Chamunda with fragements of Brahami and Kumari , VinadhariShiv among seated figures at Udipurmuseum Aindri. Maheshavari, and Varahi, they also have figures of Vindhari shiva, ganesha , the matrikaAgneyai and vasihmavi, the above all images are from different groups of matrika, there is on more image of brahmi that is not part of the same group. There are other images of Vaisnavati, Shivatie as well as jains with fragments on display in Government Galleary of Dungrpur, which also refelects broader sectarian activity in the region of Amjhara. Though the images seems to be related they are not similar to each other, Agrewala also has notes unusual asana and the damaged animal may be peacock. Although the seated matrikafiguars at Amjhara are similar to shamlajifigures not only style but in combitnation of heptad concepts exmplified by the unusual presence of Agnaeyi at both sites.



The temple which was found by the people of Shrimal Samaj. The idols which are found there are the idols of Gajalakshmi Maa and Mahishasur Mardini Maa. Gajalakshmi Maa is in the form of Padmamalini..Elephants with her who is seated on Padma and Malini means gardener who protects and takes care of the garden (mother also protects and takes care of her devotees in the same way , even today in region of Karnataka and Konkan, Vidrabha and many places Gajalakshmi is worshiped as the protector goddess) The idol of Amjara mother, the mother is seated on a lotus and her service mother are four elephants.. also Shri Krishna and Balarama are in her service and tow attendants (Jai and Vijay are her service along with and two Apsaras Looking at idol it feels like she is holding the veena in her hands which I have never such idol of her like this till today, it is said there is one such idol at Dhod found by R.C. Aggrawal, however we have seen mentions in papers never seen image of her, There is also in Idol of Mahisasurmardini its 4 handed mostly 4 handed have been found in middle belts of INDIA which also points towards development of ICONGRAPY of her from 4 hand to 18 handed Along with these two Shakti idols, the idols of Shiva and Ganesh, Bhiravas are also in thistemple.

Goddess Mahishasura Mardini Maa, who is also known as Karhar Maa, has four hands and she is killing Mahishasura with a trident with one hand, holding a khetak (sword) in the other right hand. The head of Mahishasura is held with one hand and the other is holding a bell in the left hand ... This idol is called Karhar Mata on her right and her lion (Babbar Lion) is with her. Mahishasura Mardini Maa Statue with 4 hands in India Very few places. In many Mahishasur Mardini Pratims found after the Gupta period, the mother's 6. to 18 hands are shown.



Idols of Ganesh Bhirava and Shiva are also found in the hut the temple was in hut till many years and had great Archeological value , in the village, spread over an area of about two square kilometres, even today, at different places, pieces of old bricks or bricks of the shape and age that came out during excavation and similar kind are found in various places during excavation or in fields a through excavation and study are required to learn about this area. In the village, there are three important places named Nachan Baw, Supada Talab and Kaleydera, more statues have been found from this place and its surroundings. About one kilometer away from the temple is Nachanavav(a stepwell) , which has become grounded excavation can lead to interesting finds , the Supada talab is located behind the primary school, which is being used in agriculture by the local cultivators due to lack of water storage on both the sides of the road we can find old bricks excavation on both sides of the road.



शिवे की साथ नन्दी वगेरा की प्रतिमा है.. //



Pic Credit Yogesh and aishrShrima (Dungarpur)

Apart from this, Barsati Nala which is called Kaliyadara on banks of which we can find pieces of pottery, bases of houses are seen or come out repeatedly in form of ruminants. It is necessary that this heritage should be protected and a museum should be constructed in which there is a surrounding. The damaged idols and other relics found from the fields of K.K., etc., should be kept and protected and the Nachan Bawadi, Supda Talab and Kaleydera should be excavated under the guidance of the experts of archeology so that the treasures hidden in the earth's womb should be exposed and this site should be preserved. Established as an important archaeological place.. Under this scheme, a new temple has been established.

There are a lot of loose sculptures found in this area that points that there could have been a Matrika temple in and around area or a place of tantra worship however a detail study is required however it lies in sheer neglect by Concern Department and the Learners.

Worshiped in a dilapidated hutment near Amjhara Distt. Dungarpur. Carved out of the greenish-blue schist (locally known as Pareva stone) in the art of the 8-9th century A.D., The main sculpture inside temple is of Mahishurmardini (the idol is 4 handed. Holding sword, bell, killing the demon with trident and holding his head. It is under regular worship as "Karela Miita" (i.e., as goddess Hariti) by those who do not have any children whatsoever. In fact, here we notice the representation of Lakshmi seated on a lotus throne and flanked by a lady holding a pitcher each on both sides. Above the latter appear, on both sides, an elephant each holding a pitcher and passing it over further to the other elephant appearing above, the latter of course shown as pouring water and anointing the main goddess seated below. These details are noticed quite frequently in Gaja-Lakshmi reliefs from different parts of this

country, but the grave importance of the Amjhara Relief, under study, is mainly due to the depiction of four-armed and seated figures of Baladeva and Krishna as attendants appearing below the left and right knees respectively of Sri-Lakshmi who holds a lotus flower in the raised up right hand and probably some fruit (sriphal or bilva) in the left hand placed on her left thigh; the weapons of Baladeva include a gada (mace) and a hala (plough) in the left and right upper hands respectively; the lower hands have been kept on the respective thighs as also in the image of four armed Krishna seated likewise on the opposite side; the weapons in the upper hands of the Krishna comprising an identical type of mace in the right hand and a wheel in the left one. This association of Krishna and Baladeva with Gaja-Lakshmi is quite interesting in the realm of the plastic art of India.



In the Vrsnitriad SamKrishna/Balarâma, EkânamasaaandVâsudeva-Krishna are represented standing side by side since the Kushana period, but in none of such reliefs the two male deities are relegated to the attendant's position. The Amjhara relief is unique since Ekânmasais replaced by Shri Lakshmi and the status of the two male divinities has been turned to subordination. How the cults of Ekânamasaa and Shri Lakshmi were merged, is a subject of further research.

Amjhara relief is of greater importance as it presents additional details which clearly prove the close association of Lakshmi with Baladeva and Krishna, The Skanda-Purana : (VisnuKhanda, Chapter 19, explains that Subhadri is none other than Lakshmi; and she is the very sister of Baladeva and Krishna : The association of Krishna and Baladeva with Lakshmi is thus quite evident.



1. Gaja-Lakṣmī (with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa), Āmjhara (Dungarpur, Rajasthan), c. 8th-9th century AD.

The Amjhara relief also proves the truth of this statement to some extent. The sculptor of this image laid great emphasis on the abhiseka aspect of the goddess though he was equally conscious of her association with the male deities cited above.

It is hoped that scholars of Indian Iconography and Sanskrit Literature will take the trouble of furnishing some literary text in full support of the theme presented by the existing image of Gaja-Lakshmi from Amjhara (Rajasthan).

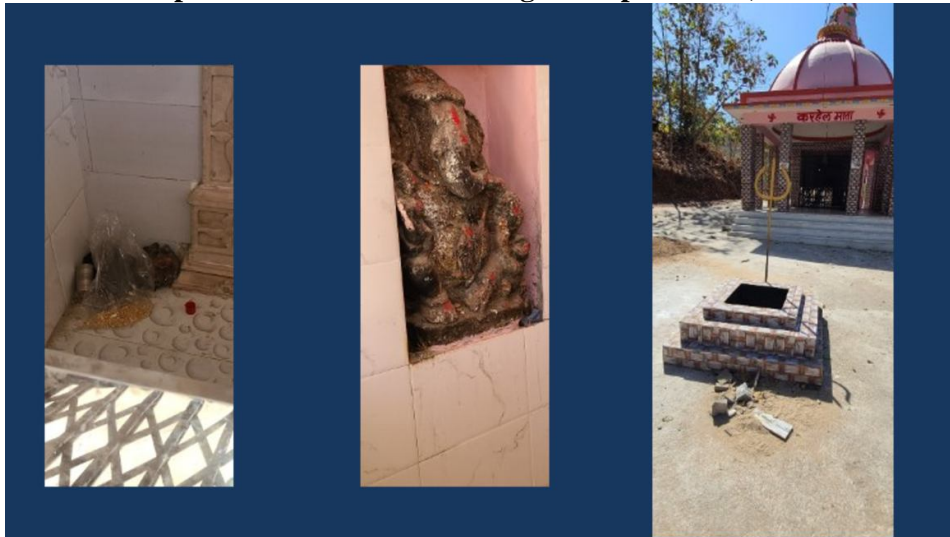
Another early-mediaeval Gajalkssmi panel, from Abaneri (Rajasthan) and now in Amber Museum, is also worth taking note of. Here the two-armed goddess takes her seat in the Lalitāsana pose and so also Dhanada- Kubera and Ganapati appearing to her left and right respectively in an identical pose. Here Lakshmi holds a lotus flower and citron-fruit in the left hand and a lotus flower in the right over which appears an elephant. Each on both the sides and in a mood to anoint the goddess seated below. Here we notice only one row of the elephants and the companion deities are absolutely different as also in identical sculptures from Mathura Museum and the University Museum at Philadelphia (U.S.A.). The existing Ganapati-Lakshmi-Kubera relief from Abaneri is also an important addition to the Gaja-Lakshmi representations from Rajasthan. Similar panels are also in Bhinmal in Varaha temple.

Looking to sculpture of Lakshmi the same style of Sri Lakshmi is adopted in many places of Rajasthan Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal some places of Andhra Pradesh in regular and Toran Lakshmi Sculpture.

The idols of Ganesh are also very different in shape and structure having two hands they were placed on a pranaala having lion face in HUT TEMPLE (present location and placement in temple is not known)

There were few lingas and nandi on side of hut in other room giving it look of separate shrine currently they are placed next to the new temple in structure

built . (Though the new structure is built since no expert was consulted the idols and temple have lost their archeological importance)



With passage of time sheer neglect currently a road is built in between the archeological site many artifacts have been reused for various purpose even villagers and other people have jointly built new temple and the hut temple has gone missing temple remains closed most of time with grill so not easy to view the sculptures and also they have not been properly put on display in temple and cemented which have made them lost their archeological value protected list when temple was in hut it was in protected list the current conditions situations are unknown.

This area needs thorough research and museum built to protect the artifacts that are frequently found in area **Shri Kamlesh Sharma** had initiated the

project during his tenure in PRO Dungarpur with view to protect site current status of the Project is still not known it seems no interest to protect the site is shown still time to protect this site and make people aware of the importance of site and we can protect dithering of this archeological place.



Adding about this place this was the place that my mother Smt Rajkumari Kalidas Zaveri had in dream when she was in her youth around the age of 14 or 15 and she had told to various elders of community and at later matured age in and around 1970 or 1974 the main people who helped to find place were Mahendra Shrimal, Pradeep K Shrimal, Minaxi Devi Shrimal and family, along people of our community searched and found and also prayed there their constant visit has brought the temple to lime light but lot needs to be done and the Archaeology department should also start creating awareness to such Places so they remain in protected and our nontangible Heritage does not turn to tangible due to Neglect.



The Mythological Story of Amjhara

In the pre-Vedic period, children were sent to the ashram to take education in the ashram, according to the Guru's disciple Parampara, this disciple used to live in the ashram, according to this tradition, the disciples used to go to the city to ask for alms, and after coming to the ashram, the alms were placed in front of the guru. and the guru used to distribute it to everyone, if there was food, he used to cook it and everyone used to eat it by distributing the fruit amongst each other. In this Vedic period, the student of Guru Shree Shankaracharya's ashram also had to go to the guru's ashram for education. According to a humble tradition, Shri Shankaracharya went to the city to ask for alms. He went to the door of a Brahmin and asked for alms. Seeing the Brahmin at her door, she was pleased and hurriedly went to her house.. and started looking for something to give alms, due to poverty, there was not a single food grain in the house, she searched the whole house, she did not find anything, she started thinking Today, the beggar who came to my courtyard will go empty-handed, thinking that I will feel his fault, she started feeling sad in her mind and started thinking what to give to a Brahmin, then she got a small pot from somewhere, got the dry fruit of a gooseberry in it, she was immensely happy and came out quickly and hesitantly placed the fruit of dried gooseberry in Shankaracharya's alms.

Shri Shankaracharya got jolted seeing the poverty of this Brahmin and on his way to the ashram, he started thinking this Brahmin family is suffering from so much poverty, I should do something to remove their misery, just with this pious thought he praised Goddess Bhagwati. sang 21 verses.. Praises to Goddess Bhagwati that the Goddess appeared after being pleased and asked Shri Sankracharya why did she remember me, then Shankaracharya asked the mother to remove the poverty of that Brahmin family. It is not possible to accept this because this Brahmani did not do any virtuous work in her previous birth and according to the law of Karma, she has been suffering in

this birth, I cannot do anything. Hearing this, Shankaracharya pleaded with Mother and said that today she has lost her life. No matter what happened in the house, selflessly donated this Amla to me, will it destroy all his sins, the mother said, hearing this, he will get its fruit in the next life, then Shankaracharya said, if I tell this, then I will give it to him. I accept and adopt her as my daughter and because of this, half of the father's fate wealth and pioussness will be in the name of my daughter

On hearing this, Goddess Lakshmi was very pleased and rained golden gooseberries from her urn at the house of that Brahmin, which removed the poverty of that Brahmin family. She is called Amjara Maa. And the verses and poetry due to which Kanak (gold) rained was known as Satotra Known as Kanakdhara Stotram - and the mother resided in this village, hence her name was Amrja, which in time became Amjara. The verses of Shankaracharya were heard in the ear (ear) of Mother Bhagwati, that is why she is known as Karnashwari, Karnahari Mata.

Later the country known as Jambudweep came to be known as Bharatvarsha and many different kings ruled this land and with passage of time the well developed city of Amjhrabecame a small village amid the forested area . The place started getting diffused. This temple of 6th century got buried somewhere amid the dark forest and there was no trace of till for many centuries.

In the pace of time and change Shrimalcommunity was dispersed and they almost had no clue about their kuldeviits Mother Goddess, even goddess also felt same emotion and kept herself away from the community but it is a saying that **God and civilization appear again when the time comes.** Such event occurred in pace of time, Shrmati Rajkumari Kalidas Zaveri - daughter Shri Devlalji Jadiya .. who resides in Javari Bulding of Sultanpura, Vadodara, Gujarat.. In the year 1958-60, she had a vision of a divine dream, that on her way fromin this she moved from Dungarpur to Udaipur. The vehicle in which she was travelling broke and needed maintenance and repair near Bichhiwada, the vehicle came to a standstill , the driver tried to fix the glitch and asked them to rest after fixing the vehicle they took an alternate short route to Dungarpur on the way they had to stop for while for some natural reasons and Shri Rajkuimari got out of the Vehicle and started walking she was walking and walking in deep mountains till and felt the mountains were moving away from her and she reached a place where there was lot of foliage leaves ,twigs, leaves, different material were scattered passing beyond this foliage mound she saw "kumkum" showing some path continuing on this path were the kumkum spray stopped , she saw a hut near the river and Through the small door of that hut, she had a vision of Mahalakshmi Mata wearing a White cloths on a White (elephant) Gaja, this picturesque image of goddess was installed in her mind and goddess whispered some words in her ears which she cant remember some kind of sound broke her perception of the dream and her sleep After that again and again the goddess used to appear in her dream and asked her to look for HER (IT)..

Once when Shri Rajkumari she went to Dungarpur, she told to two young lads Shrimal Community, Mahendra Shrimal and Pradeep Shrimal, as you people visit various villages during the canvassing work of election as well as other tasks do look for the temple of Goddess located in Bichhiwada and also described the location that she had viewed in her dream it was her dream to them and also some senior persons and leaders of the community in Dungarpur and Vagad who started searching of this place and all contributed a lot. For a long time the search for the Mother Goddess continued in and around Dungarpur, when Shri Rajakumari and other People were trying to find the location near the woods of Dungarpur Bichhiwada, they saw a saintly soul, who said that the God you are looking for is the mother. Is not in direction they were searching but on other direction and saying this, the sage Mahatma disappeared from there. Continuing the search when team was moving ahead in the direction mentioned by sage.

When the team of the people reached near the forest of Amjara village, Rajkumari and team saw a little Bhilkanya, that girl asked Rajkumari ji and team to follow her and when they reached near the banks of river she showed them hut and said go in the hut your MOTHER GODESS IS THERE when they all saw the idol of Mataji which was visible to them, The team along with Rajkumari turned to thank here and the young girl was gone and there was no trace of her in this way Amjara Mata again showed her form to Shrimal Samaj..

The idol of Goddess Mataji's is made from stone found in and around Dungarpur, these stones have name with names like Hara Subhaja etc. are found, they are made and probably it is from early or late Gupta period and this can be inferred from the Research and Excavation in the 1960's by Shri Ratan Chandra and Upendra Shah,. It seems that there existed Grand a grand temple of Goddess or Matrika at this place (which is my inference) even today the this idols and artifacts found in this area are located in the state museum of Dungarpur

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8 PursathliAmjhara Report by Kamlesh Sharma PRO DUNGARPUR

9 The Samalaji Sculptures and 6th Century art in Western India by Sara L Schastok

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- Dr Deboraha Stain
- All the Shrimal Families who have updated me with information of the Place especially Vagad Samaj time to time during their visits.



FARZANA TO BEGUM SAMRU: A NEW CHARADE

RAJ GOPAL SINGH VERMA¹

Introduction:

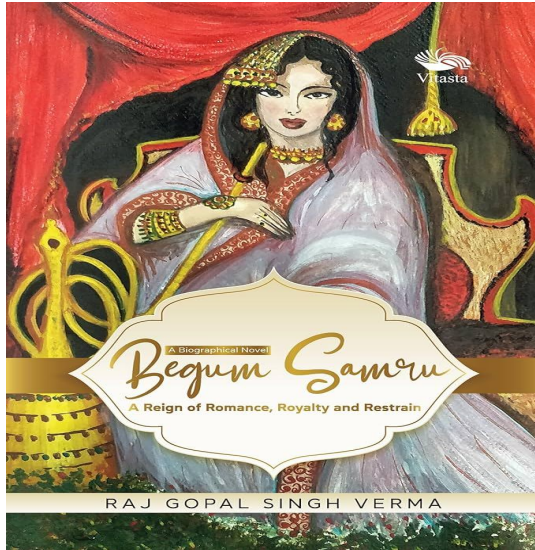
This is a leaf of the life of a sort of extraordinary tale of a seemingly ordinary nautch girl who ruled over the province of Sardhana for almost fifty-eight years. She cast a spell on the world with her beauty, intelligence, valor and diplomacy. This biographical account accompanies the matriarch in her transformative journey from a girl named Farzana to Begum Samru. Her story has its fair share of war, politics and diplomacy alongside love, betrayal, conspiracies and ruthlessness.

An eerie emptiness nestled in Begum Samru's womb. She could not become a mother. However, Sombre's first wife was a mother to a son. His name was Lord Balthazar Reinhardt. Upon the Begum's insistence, Shah Alam II had bestowed the title of Zafaryab on him. Unfortunately, the son couldn't follow in his gallant father's footsteps or live up to the legacy of his stepmother. He was known for being a man of weak character. He was so young, owing to which, Sombre hadn't burdened him with expectations. Neither the emperor nor his ministers had any reason to believe that he was capable of managing the administration of the province.

Zafaryab was not an intelligent man. His mother was rumored to have descended into a state of depression after his birth. She was never cured. *Badi bee*, as she was referred to, spent her days within the four walls of her abode. Just like Farzana, she was a Muslim woman. However, she hailed from a relatively respectable family. She also spent a significant chunk of her life in

¹ Author of 'Begum Samru: A Reign of Romance, Royalty and Restrain!' A book on life and times of Begum Samru of Sardhana.

the part of the palace in Bharatpur which had been gifted to Samru by the Jat king. Because she never stepped onto the battlefield and was terminally ill, she posed no threat to the second wife of her husband Farzana.



Finally, eighty-two European officers and four-thousand soldiers of Sardhana's army insisted that the Begum alone could manage the affairs of the army and protect Sardhana from hostile invasions. The authorities wanted Begum to step forward and fulfil her obligations in this crisis. Some officials even convinced a few Mughal emperors to allow Begum to take charge. The Begum had already made a lasting impression on them by accompanying Samru to the battlefield.

Even the Begum understood that it was imperative to command the army with prowess to keep the province and the soldiers in check. She requested a deferment as she needed some time to make a wise decision. She did not want to rush into anything. This woman, who had morphed from Farzana to Begum Samru, was clever enough to evaluate and weigh all possible repercussions of her decision on the province of Sardhana. But, there was another reason underlying her actions. Losing this province would effectively mean that she would have to return to her old troubled life. How could she tolerate such a possibility; at the hands of her marital rival that too?

Although Begum was in mourning for forty days, she wasn't oblivious to the flurry of activities surrounding her. She was so involved in the royal obligations and duties that sometimes even the secret messengers weren't permitted to present their findings to the chief of the division, Nawazuddin, before getting Begum's approval.

Finally, at the insistence of the populace, the battalions and counsels, the Begum realized that Commander Samru's ambitions couldn't be fulfilled

without her direct intervention in affairs of state. As soon as Begum said 'Yes', Shah Alam authorized a directive which proclaimed Begum Samru, owner and commander of the province of Sardhana and its army.

Farzana set up her court for the first time. She addressed the courtiers from the royal throne, which Samru had occupied once-

"I am forever indebted to all of you for supporting me in this time of need, just as how you once supported the late Samru Sahib. As you all know, this is a period of mourning. No one can anticipate when death is going to snatch one. Sooner or later, all of us will be summoned to the Almighty's abode. What is truly important is how much time and energy we devote to the service of the populace and the Almighty!"

As Begum finished her speech, her voice cracked and her eyes welled up with tears. She composed herself and said-

"All of you constitute my family. The doors of my palaces and homes are permanently open. I place my faith in you and I hope that you will also be able to trust me. That's all I have to say. Our mutual trust should remain intact."

Saying so, she slowly stood up. This was the first time that the public was able to see the Begum completely unadorned. Her lithe frame was devoid of the royal clothing and pearl and gold jewellery. Despite that, her simplicity and natural beauty exemplified her persona.

A courtier stood up in the back of the hall and shouted enthusiastically, 'Begum Samru...!'

'Long live... long life,' chorused the entire hall in unison, almost as though they had been waiting for this moment forever.

Begum remained standing for a few moments. As though she had suddenly remembered something, she closed her eyes and turned her head and hands towards the emptiness of the sky.

The assembly was adjourned.

The next day, Begum stood before those trusted and loyal officers and soldiers of different battalions, who had given her the strength to take charge of the troops. Her four-feet six inch tall physique was frail with grief. Yet, she stood unwavering, perhaps reasserting her strength and inner will. She said-

"My gallant warriors...! This jagir belongs to you. If you hadn't supported us, or if you weren't this strong, Sardhana wouldn't have existed today. After the Almighty, I am indebted to you people only. Please keep in mind that I am not saying this just to establish myself as the head of this province. I simply wish to ensure the wellbeing of the

common people. I have been entrusted with the task of carrying forward the late king, Samru's work..., uplift Sardhana's status, and enable the province and all of you to flourish. You have to work side by side to protect our land. I am ready to be tested and questioned at any point in time."

As soon as Begum ended this heartfelt and passionate speech and stepped down from the royal podium, the sounds of trumpets and *Ransinghas* blared in the background.

This was the beginning of a new dawn in Sardhana's history.

Begum simultaneously managed the activities of the mourning period with the administration of the kingdom. She had engrossed herself in the affairs of the state. She would frequently discuss ways to add value to her *jagir* with her courtiers.

On the fortieth day, Begum had a *Fatiha* for a peaceful afterlife for her late husband. After that, she distributed grains and clothes amongst the poor and the needy. She ensured that no one should leave the palace empty-handed.

The forty-first day saw the conclusion of another task. On that day, Begum took hold of the reins of her kingdom. She dressed in the royal robes and began wearing dresses and ornaments suitable for the commander of the army. A gold chain adorned her neck, pearl earrings dangled from her ear lobes, an embroidered belt, a nose ring, a fat gold ring embedded with a mirror, attractive flower jewelry, feet encased in shoes warped in gold wire embroidery. The Begum was earlier known for her beauty and charm. The shining embodiment and allure that she possessed had resurfaced again.

-Next Journey:

Farzana Christened Johanna Nobilis

Begum had drowned herself in the administration of the kingdom and the expeditions of the troops. She reminisced about Samru's memories ever so often. She regularly paid her respects to her late husband's grave in Agra. Exactly three years and three days after his demise, Begum took a historic decision which had far-reaching consequences.

It was on the 7th of May in 1781.

The Roman Catholic church in Agra had been decorated beautifully. Something unusual was destined to happen.

Begum Samru was the chief guest of the church that day. She bowed her head before the priest, Father Gregory, when he said,

"I, Gregory, proclaim that Sardhana's Begum Farzana Samru and her son Zafaryab now belong to the religion of Roman Catholicism. Henceforth, they will be known as Begum Samru Johanna Nobilis Sombre and Lord Balthazar Reinhardt. I hope that Christianity is fortuitous for them and guides them on the path of truth."

In honor of Begum, the priest even hosted a special program. Noblemen as well as commoners had been invited from distant areas. Several other priests also participated in the program and prayers.

Farzana turned into Johanna Nobilis and returned to her province. She not only performed numerous charitable acts for her people but also built several churches in due course.

People had divided opinions on Begum's decision to convert to Christianity. While some interpreted this as an act of boundless love and devotion towards her late Christian husband, others believed that she had taken this decision from a political perspective. This was the period when Muslim rule in India was collapsing. Begum had perhaps realized that adopting European cultures and traditions was in the best interest of her kingdom. In retrospect, this shrewd political decision proved to be favorable for her. Despite all this, not many people know about this figurehead named Johanna. She was neither known as Zeb-Un-Nisa nor Farzana and not even Johanna. History only remembers and recognizes her by the name Begum Samru.

Every evening, she lit candles beside her late husband's painting in her residence in Sardhana and prayed for him. She would often spend hours gazing at his pictures. Her moist eyes revealed the soft heart that hid underneath the strong, commanding exterior. When the time came, she entered the battlefield and commanded her troops with the utmost efficiency. The string of events that followed proved that the emperor Shah Alam II trusted Begum only because of the abilities which had become a part of her identity. She was a courageous woman; fearless on the battlefield. She had accompanied Samru in some of these battles earlier and had thus acquainted herself with the intricacies of warfare. Begum had become consummate in not just military tactics, but also politics and diplomacy.

In those days, General Paulie was the commander-in-chief of Begum's army. He remained the German commander of Samru's army, till his death, when they all lived in the province of Akbarabad. He was often involved in conspiracies and was not trustworthy. Owing to this reason perhaps, his head was found severed one day. Although the crime was a gruesome one, no one was particularly saddened by his death. Everyone was well-acquainted with his treacherous nature.

It is said that a woman has to protect herself from countless malevolent gazes, which search for something or the other... a conversation, company, sexual

pleasure or marriage... it can be anything. However, Begum Samru was different. General Paulie's brutal death had stunned her officers also. The other authoritative figure in the army, Em Montenegro also had lewd thoughts about the Begum. It was rumored that he wanted to woo and marry her to get his hands on her massive wealth. When he came to know that General Paulie's sudden death was a consequence of his desire to usurp Begum's property, he abandoned his malevolent ambitions.

Although Farzana had aged, she remained graceful. She managed to retain the charm and beauty of her early days when she had wormed her way into Samru's heart. Her beauty, charm, grace and clothing were always a subject of discussion and admiration. She wore a veil most of the time. However, those who had seen her claimed that the Almighty had blessed her with extraordinary beauty and grace.

Five years passed thus. She continued journeying to Agra to pray for her late husband's departed soul every year. On those days, she would distribute gifts amongst her people and would pray for the well-being of her province.



ISLAMIC REFORM AND MAPPILA WOMEN: AN OVERVIEW

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Most of the approaches towards the question of Muslim women seem to emerge through the discourse of the critique of Islam. Muslim women are generally presented as silent, unreceptive victims of the patriarchal social system. According to official reports, Muslim women are among the poorest, economically susceptible, educationally disenfranchised, politically marginalised group in the country. Mappila women, like their counterparts in other communities, were the marginalised section in the patriarchal, male centered caste ridden social system in Malabar.

The marital relationships maintained by the Arab traders from the early days of their interaction with Malabar coasts lead to the emergence of a new heterogeneous community in Malabar. Religious beliefs deeply influenced nook and corner of the life of the Mappilas. The political authority also provided special privileges to follow their customary practices and civil laws. The early travelogues provide paucity of information about the women folk of the society. The later colonial records also neglected to detail the socio-cultural status of this marginalised group. According to the available sources, a Muslim girl was born and brought up within a secluded life prescribed the community. Each girl had to go through many local customs and practices. Most of this customs were acculturated from the indigenous practices of their counterparts. A ceremony called KathukuthKalyanam (Ear Boring Ceremony) was conducted when she attain puberty. She will be provided only basic, limited religious education. They were taught and practiced from the childhood to become a good house wife. The most leading concern of a Mappila parent was the marriage of their daughter which has to be conducted at the earliest after puberty. There was no system of asking permission or even providing chance to meet the supposed partner before marriage. Marriages were fixed and conducted by parents without asking permission of the spouses. Strict boundaries were there even inside the houses. Mappila women have to show utmost piety towards their husband and not call them

by name. Majority of Mappila women led their life within the boundaries throughout their life.

It is true to say that Mappila women never enjoyed the rights which were provided to her by Islam. But on the other hand, Mappila women traditionally enjoyed some basic privileges like property rights, widow marriage, rights to wear clothes, basic religious education, etc. Women did, however, enjoy comparatively better economic rights and social position in matrilineal families. Polyandry did not exist among Mappilas. Due to these peculiarities, a comparison of the social status of Mappila women with these counter parts would demand a revisit to the existing historical construction of the 'marginalised', 'abominable', 'pity' Muslim women. Simultaneously, the social status of Muslim women in different identity groups like the elite families, religious families, matrilineal families, and the situation of women in rural and urban centers, varied from each other. Thus, formulating a generalisation or reaching broad conclusions about the social history of Mappila women becomes a herculean task.

Muslim women's gradual empowerment cannot be studied in isolation as it is the socio-religious reform movements of 19th century that lead to a rethinking of women's rights. Issues of women were one of the prime concerns of the reformers. The Muslim reformist endeavors have some specific features and characteristics which make it unique from other similar awakenings experienced in Kerala. The efforts to revitalise the evils in religion and society were a part of the long lineage of Islamic tradition of Thajdeed. Islamic revivalism sought to invigorate the faith and customs, claiming that it had become stagnant, burdened by tradition, and corrupted by superstition and local rituals. The reformers condemned many of the existing practices as extraneous impurities which had led to the spiritual degradation of Islam and called for a revival of the pristine form of Islam to combat the problem. At the same time it has absorbed the motivating forces of the colonial modernity and the political vibrancy of anti-colonial struggles. The reformist movement that emerged in the Muslim community in Kerala from within the frame work of the colonial modernity but possessed the ideals of European enlightenment, along the modernist notion of individual freedom.

Islamic reformism was an intellectual debate as well as a popular movement. The issues addressed by these organisations and the institutions they found were based on a reformist interpretation of religious teachings of Islam. Though, we can see continuous internal disagreements within the reformists on various issues, especially on women. Locating the feminist consciousness in the Islamic reform is a complex process. While studying on the realms of women in Malabar, the questions like how Muslim reformism addressed the question of women in Kerala, how far the reformist movements were able to answer the discourse of gender relations, what were the forces which boosted the reformist endeavors and how the issue of the agency of women in her interactions to the social realities came to become vital concerns.

The efforts towards emancipation of Mappila women by the reformers have progressed through five broad phases. At the behest, between 1870 to 1920, individuals like SanaullahMakthiTangal (1847-1912), Sheik Muhammad MahinHamadaniThangal (d. 1922), ChaillakathKunjahammad Haji (d. 1919), C. Saidalikutty Master (1856-1917), etc. paved the way for the reform. The second phase, the period from 1920s to 1950s, can be considered as trend setting phase of women reform movement. Many scholars including female writers came forward to defend the rights of women. The formation of Kerala Aikya Sangam in 1922 provided a chance for those with similar concerns to join together to reform the

community and to fight against the orthodoxy. Apart from male led Aikya Sangam, the initiatives from the side of women also began during this period. Many ladies like M HaleemaBeevi, TC Kunjachumma, Aysha Mayan, etc. came forward to write and speak for women. Women organisations like ThalasseryMahilaSamajam and TiruvitamkurMahilaSamajam and journals like Nisaul Islam, Muslim Wanitha, etc. were influenced the masses.

During this period, the question of Muslim women raised by the reformers rose into the level of a human rights issue than a mere religious question. The orthodox dictum against teaching women the art of writing and entry to Mazjid led to a thread bare debate in the community. The scholarly intervention of MCC Ahmad Moulavi to uphold the rights of women based on Islamic texts provided an insight to Kerala Muslims. His arguments, especially on women's right to enter Mazjid evoked criticism even from the reformers. Many forums, clubs, Sabhasand Samajams, religious organisations and gatherings, social and political organisations, interventions by the individuals and educational institutions, publication of books and journals created a new wave in the society.

During 1950s to 1970s, with the foundation of Nadvathul Mujahideen and Jamath'eIslami, and also due to the changed political scenario, the Muslim reform also gained a structural form. Eventually, the call for female education found acceptance and the community came forward to open the doors of higher education for girls. Formation of exclusive women's Islamiya Colleges like Chennamangallur, Pulikkal, Areacode etc. as well as mixed, secular institutions like Farook College (Kozhikode district), Sir Syed College (Kannur Dist.), MES College (Malappuram and Palakkad Dist.) paved the way for Muslim girls to attain higher education. Issues like women's right to enter Mazjid, question of dowry, ear piercing ceremony, TripleTalaq, Arabikalyanam, etc. also came into the main agenda of the reformers. Number of women got engaged in organisational activities under the reformist organisations. It was during the same period that the need for an exclusive Muslim women's organisation was emphasised by both male and female writers. Muslim journals started to give more space to discuss issues of women. Reformist organisations began to hold special sessions for women in their conferences.

In the fourth phase, beginning by 1970s and strengthened by 1980s, Muslim community in general and women in particular experienced revolutionary changes. The first hand experiences through cultural exchanges and economic empowerment by gulf migration changed the outlook of the community. It widened their views and opened the doors to acculturate new ideas. Nadvathul Mujahideen and Jamath'eIslami formed exclusive women's organisations in 1980s. Journals like Aramam, Pudava, were started for women. This period witnessed a planned and gradual growth in female activism in Malabar. The role of individuals as well as socio-political organisations for the empowerment of Mappila women was also remarkable.

An overall change in all walks of life was experienced during this period. Changes in the dressing style are an example for this. The espousal of diversity in the attires such as Sari, Salwar, Dhavani, Churidar and Purdha from the traditional Mappila female dress of Kaachiis also not only an indicator of the apparel culture but indicates the socio-cultural changes experienced by the community. But, the popularisation of Purdha by the later part of twentieth century, which created positive and negative impact in the multi cultural society, was a twist in the apparel culture of Mappila women in Malabar. Hijab and Purdha became an issue in the public Malayali discourse and also became a topic for thread bare discussion in the academia. While

Purdha has been presented as a symbol of patriarchal domination, we can observe that it has provided a scope for women to break the orthodox restrictions of seclusion and legitimated her movements to the public sphere. When Purdha became the commonly worn attire among Muslim women, the secularist acquisition that Hijab is a restriction for their advancement and the orthodox view that women should be restricted to homes got curtailed. Muslim women proved that maintaining all the virtues and values of both religion and family she could serve the society at large. Thus we can say that Purdha turned out to be a blessing for her freedom and advancement.

The fifth and the ongoing phase of the Muslim reform, began by 1990s and enhanced during 2000s has some peculiar features. Many well educated, young female leaders as well as researchers and writers came forward to lead the movement. Women's agency and identity in the women's movements were raised. They came forward to register lawsuits of public interests to protect their rights provided by Islam. The positive judgment allowing Muslim women to enter Mazjids in two different cases from the court of the Munsif of Kuthuparamba in 1998 and The Wakaf Tribunal, Ernakulam in 2006 is remarkable in the history of struggles of Mappila women to achieve their lost rights. After a thread bare discussion based on the Islamic texts, both courts upheld the rights of Muslim women to enter Mazjid. Meanwhile, some of the Muslim Mahallu Committees under the control of Jamath'eIslami and Nadvathul Mujahideen like Shanthapuram, Chennamangallur, Shivapuram, Areacode, Randathani made historical steps by including women in the Mazjid governing bodies, called MahalluCommittees .

Popularisation of female education was the most visible change experienced by Muslim women in the second half of twentieth century. Mappilas developed a specific education system to provide basic religious education to all irrespective of sex and economic status. This system made all Mappilas literate in Arabi Malayalam. There was a group of female teachers called Mollachiswho engaged in providing religious education for Muslim girls.

Meanwhile, the British authority found education as a tool for 'reforming' the natives and 'modernise' the society. Educating women and 'civilizing' the Zenana became a chief 'colonial project' in the last part of 19th century in India. The evangelical zeal of the missionaries was another push factor to the introduction of western education. The introduction of secular modern educational institutions in Malabar during the British rule created an enigma among the Muslim community and they have shown reluctances towards modern education. While they were unanimous to provide basic religious education to girls, the Muslim scholars disputed on its references. The basics of the debates on female education are closely connected with the theological assumption towards the question of the position of women in society. Four core issues can be traced in the debate on female education; why to teach, what to teach, how to teach and how much to teach. Educating girls to write, the system of mixed education, approach towards secular education, aim of education, attainment of higher education after puberty and such issues categorically come into the debate. Apart from this, many were afraid that this education would negatively affect their religious beliefs and morals.

The position of the early reformers on the question of the aim and limits of female education was ambivalent. Majority of the reformist scholars considered female education as just a way to create educated house wives and learned mothers. The polemic, ideological discrepancy within the reformist side led by MakthiThangal, Vakkom Moulavi, PK Moosakutty Sahib, KM Moulavi, MCC Ahmad Moulavi, EK

Moulavi, Seethi Sahib, etc. reveals the internal dispute within the reformers on the aim and breadth of female education. A patriarchal concern can be seen in the position of the early reformers in the matter of providing education to Muslim girls. Professional development was not a concern for the early reformers in providing education to girls. At the same time, all of the reformers joined together to defend the basic rights of women to avail education and her right to learn.

In short, Muslim women have established an identity by challenging some old values of conservatism. The impact of secular education, gulf boom, the economic independence, socio-religious reform movement, expansion of trade and commerce, imparting of technology, interaction with outside world and many other factors made tremendous improvement affecting the social and cultural status of Muslim women in Kerala. In fact, a new generation of educated women that asserts their Muslim identity is ready to take on any obstacles. They are able to provide humanistic and apt interpretations of Quranic scriptures. Compared to their older generations, they have more choices for engagements and to represent their selves. Today, women interact in the public sphere to form organisations, and proclaim their opinions through the media. We can see the presence of Muslim women with Hijab and Purdha in all walks of life. They are able to connect with and even critique the nascent developments in Islamic feminism. The well educated, enriched with all modern possibilities, Muslim women shows an upward movement hopefully capable to tackle the challenges from her surroundings.

It has been observed that that women in Mappila community have experienced radical changes in all walks of life. Even though, the community has to walk more to attain the dream of gender justice. An eagle eye on Muslim community will reveal the fact that an invisible patriarchal public consciousness as well as a discourse of male chauvinism is being continuing in the social psyche of the community. This social psyche determines and designs the engagements of women and their 'independent' organisations. While the formation of the women's organisation caused for the creation of a common platform for women to discuss, plan and implement programs, we can reach into the conclusion that these organisations also failed to change the deep rooted patriarchal psyche of the community. Above all, in some occasions, the Muslim women's organisations became a tool to disseminate the patriarchal ideals to the society.

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