JOURNAL OF INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

September 2007 **Fourteenth Issue**

C.P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR INSTITUTE OF INDOLOGICAL RESEARCH
(affiliated to the University of Madras)
The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation
1 Eldams Road, Chennai 600 018, INDIA

Published by

Dr. Nanditha Krishna
C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of Indological Research
The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation
1 Eldams Road Chennai 600 018
Tel : 2434 1778 / 2435 9366
Fax : 91-44-24351022
E-Mail: cpraf@vsnl.com
Website: www.cprfoundation.org

Subscription

Rs. 150/- (for 2 issues)
Rs. 290/- (for 4 issues)

CONTENTS

printed on paper made from bagasse, an agricultural waste

EDITOR'S NOTE

The system of refreeing the papers is working well. This is the second refered of this journal. We thank those contributors who have revised their papers at our request.

The journal maintains an all India character not only in terms of contributions to it but also with regard to the themes it carries.

I have attempted to work on a paper on Environmental History with the help of Mr. M. Amirthalingam and Dr. P. Sumabala.

Papers by Dr. K. Venugopala Reddy on "Rise of Social Ficton in Colonial India", Dr. M. Valliammal on "Jain-Buddhist Conflict in Early Tamilnadu" and Dr. Shankar Goyal on "The Myth of the Vakataka Coins" cover new areas. We also have erudite presentations by Prof. A. Chandrasekharan, Prof. P. Govinda Reddy and Dr. L. Selvamuthu Kumarasami.

Scholars from Orissa deserve special thanks again for their continued contribution to the Journal. A scholar from Bihar has also contributed a paper for the first time.

Dr. Prema Kasturi and Dr. P. Sumabala deserve our thanks for reviewing the books.

Dr. Nanditha Krishna and Mrs. Malathy deserve our appreciation for publishing the Journal in spite of their busy schedules.

Dr. G. J. Sudhakar

JAIN - BUDDHIST CONFLICT IN EARLY TAMILNADU AS SEEN FROM MANIMEKALAI

Dr. M. Valliammal
S.G. Lecturer in History, Lady Doak College
Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Introduction

India is one of the ancient cradles of human civilizations. Many languages, religions and philosophical systems have emerged and flourished here. Indian civilization has often been praised as a great experiment in living together. It has been a fertile ground for religious pluralism from the very beginning of civilization. Four major religions of world and many sects and sub sects of different world religions have originated in India. Almost all world religions had their days and roots in the country since their inception. India's culture has been greatly enriched by these different religious traditions and practices. Her ideas, thoughts and aspirations are shaped and improved by them. The spirit of tolerance and accommodation, mutual acceptance and assimilation among the various religious traditions made India to stand uppermost in the list of countries, which are pluralistic in their religious heritage. This is true about the Tamil country as well. But this has not been a constant or uniform factor in history. It varied from time to time. There was more openness and tolerance at certain times and there was acute intolerance, closed pattern, imperial tendencies, struggles and conflicts at other times. So, the nature of pluralism and co-existence of different religions were not perpetual; they changed from time to time. At times even violent clashes had occurred.

Since history helps the present society to learn more from it to handle the very delicate and volatile conditions, an attempt has been made in this article to focus and examine the relationship between Buddhism and Jainism as expounded in *Manimekalai,* a post Sangam literature.

Manimekalai is an epic describing the circumstances under which *Manimekalai*, the daughter of Kovalan, renounced the world and took the vows of a Buddhist nun. The work is especially valuable as a record of the extent to which Buddhism, a missionary religion, had spread in South India, Ceylon and Sumatra in the early part of the second century. V. Kanagasabai describes this work and the period to which it belongs, in the following terms: "It is the earliest record extant in any language, with the exception of the Buddhist sacred texts, which furnishes information regarding the objects of worship, the peculiar beliefs and superstitions, and the abstruse philosophy of the followers of Buddha. We learn from the poem that Buddhist monks were numerous in the Tamil land."[1] The dating of *Manimekalai,* the first Tamil Buddhist epic, still continues to be indeterminate. However, it is assumed that it belongs to the post-Sangam – pre-Pallava-Pandya period i.e., the third, fourth and fifth centuries A.D.

Religious harmony in the Sangam Age

The Sangam age was marked by a remarkable spirit of tolerance, since the Sangam society was an open society and it welcomed new ideas, thoughts and changes from outside. It was able to evolve a grand vision of "every village as their village and all people as their relative/kin person".[2] Buddhism and Jainism spread to the Tamil country during the Sangam period itself. The Sangam literature is replete with references for the

spread of Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamil country during the Sangam age. *Madurakkanchi*[3], *Purananuru*[4], *Pattinappalai* etc. offer references for the existence of the Jain and Buddhist temples and monasteries in the Tamil country. The literary evidences for the spread of these religions are supported by epigraphs and archaeological evidences. The rock-cut beds and the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions reveal the presence of strong Buddhist and Jain influences even in the Sangam period. This trend continued during the post-Sangam period also.

Religious harmony in the post - Sangam Age

In the beginning of the post-Sangam Age, there was a spirit of religious tolerance. Though people practiced one particular religion, they not only tolerated but also respected the other religions. This is well brought out in *Tirukkural, Silappadikaram and Manimekalai*. The first ten couplets of Tirukkural do not mention the name of anyone particular God but it tries to present a universal God. They portray God in a manner, which is acceptable to people of all faiths. Tiruvalluvar, the author of *Tirukkural* has used only common terms to denote God. The first chapter of Silappadikaram also starts with the invocation of not any particular religious deity but with praise of all natural objects like sun, moon, rain etc.[5] The epic *Manimekalai* itself begins with the word *Ulagam* i.e., the world.[6] This confirms the eclectic tradition of the period. There are many other evidences in *Manimekalai* and *Silappadikaram* to prove the fact that different religions and sects co-existed.[7] The kings constructed temples for different Gods and patronized them. Silappadikaram mentions about ten temples in the city of Puhar namely the temple for the divine *Kalpaka* tree, the white elephant, the beautiful *naga* god, the sun who rises in the east, the city-god, Vajra deity, deity who dwells outside the city,

Nigranthas and the moon.[8] Apart from them "temple of the great Lord who was never born (Siva), temple of the six- faced red Lord (Subrahmanya), temple of the *Valiyon* (Baladeva) whose complexion was like white conch shell, temple of *Netiyon* (Vishnu of the dark colour) and the temple of Indra of the victorious umbrella and pearl garland, could be seen in the city.[9] During this period, the kings themselves promoted inter--religious relations. They organized healthy debates and discussions among the followers of different religions and encouraged them to respect the procedure to be followed in debates at public halls.[1O] They also advised people to avoid any kind of conflict, anger even against enemies and not to provoke confrontation. [11]

Manimekalai shows the happy co-existence of different religions and sects. There are evidences for this in the days of *Manimekalai***.** The very fact that these sects were present in Kaveripumpattinam, the capital of the Cholas, may prove this point. People of different sects came together and decided to organize the Indra festival at Puhar for the city's prosperity and protection.[12]The worship in different temples went on according to the tradition of those temples. Further, there were expositions of different religions and sects in public places. It was also advised not to rage confrontation. What link everyone may be the wise words of the public announcer who beats the royal drum: 'May hunger, disease and hate cease. May rains and prosperity increase".[13]

Archaeological evidences also clearly establish that in the beginning of the post-Sangam Age, all religions co-existed without any open conflict. The city of Kanchi is the best example for this. "It was a major centre of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism right up to sixth century A.D. A Buddha *vihara* with a metal image of Buddha in the *dhyana* pose and a Buddha-*pada* in

lime stone slab was discovered in the excavations conducted at Kaverippattinam.[14] Pulankurichchi inscription is another good example for religious tolerance during this period. According to it, there were officials to protect and look after the religious establishments. There are also references in this inscription to *devakulam, palli, kottam.* It reveals that there were Hindu, Jain and Buddhist temples and people of all faiths lived amicably.[15]

Manimekalai explains in depth the philosophy of Buddhism. It also mentions (in Canto XXVIII] ten other religions and sects and a number of deities (at least some of them belong to the older folk religious tradition). The sects other than Buddhism mentioned by Manimekalai are 1) Alavaivada, 2) Saivavada, 3) Brahmavada, 4) Vaisnavavada, 5) Vedavada, 6) Ajivikavada, 7) Nigandavada (Nigranthas-Jains), 8) Sankhyavada 9) Vasesikavada and 10) Bhudavada.[16]

Religious conflicts as revealed in Manimekalai

Differences in opinions and views, doctrinal differences among people were treated with mutual respect. There was no sectarian spirit. But this trend had undergone a change even in the period of Silappadikaram and Manimekalai. One could see the struggle for supremacy among Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. While *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* explicitly express the spirit of tolerance, they also represent a new trend of inter-religious frictions and attempt to establish the supremacy of one's own religion by making exc1usive claims. *Manimekalai* subtly criticizes the religious principles and practices of other religions especially Jainism and the Vedic religion. It condemns the practice of sacrifice followed by the Vedic religion. It not only condemns but also tries to prevent it. The history of Aputtiran is a classic example for this. Aputtiran was brought up according to Vedic

customs and was provided with education suitable for a Brahmin child. When he was a boy, he saw a cow in the house of a Brahmin decorated and kept ready for a Vedic sacrifice. Aputtiran felt the pain of the cow and released it. But he was caught, severely beaten and driven away from the home. He was laughed at and teased by the Brahmins. He begged for his food and fed the blind, the deaf and the lame. The Vedic sacrifice and the caste system, which were a part of the Vedic religion, were strongly criticized in *Manimekalai* through the character of Aputtiran. [17]

There are also references in *Manimekalai* for conflicts between the Buddhists and the people of the native religion. i.e. the Nagas, which ultimately resulted in the conversion of the latter to Buddhism. When Caduvan, husband of Adirai, was drifted by the waves of the sea to an island which was ruled by the Naga tribe, Caduvan tried to explain to them the Buddhist doctrines. Manimekalai criticizes the 5 day-to-day practices and habits of the Nagas especially their way of worship. It says that the Nagas were meat-eaters and the stage of the leader was spread with dried blood and bleached bones. Caduvan told the Naga chief to follow the right path and he was ready to show him an appropriate way. He also explained to him and his people the Buddhist philosophy. He advised him to avoid violence towards any life. The Naga chief accepted them and made them their law. [18]

Conflict between Buddhism and Jainism:

The post-Sangam age marks the growth of Buddhism, Jainism and probably Ajivakas. The Saiva-Vaisnava Bhakti movement was yet to emerge, though there were some morning stars in the horizon. In the struggle for supremacy, Buddhism and Jainism

clashed with each another. *Manimekalai*, being a Buddhist epic, presents this conflict from the Buddhist viewpoint.

Buddhism was the first major missionary religion in the true sense of the term. Jainism also had these characteristics. The various sects of Hinduism learnt the missionary zeal from Buddhism.

Manimekalai, the Buddhist nun and heroine of the epic, first listens to the exposition of the theology and philosophy of the ten religions and sects mentioned earlier, then rejects them with her arguments and thus establishes the supremacy of Buddhism. Though listening to the views of different scholars represents a genuine attempt in inter-religious dialogue and understanding, the attempt to establish the supremacy of Buddhism over others is "anti-dialogue" and indicative of a tendency to dominate. This may lead others to follow the same pattern.

Manimekalai expresses its contempt and rejection of Jainism in other ways as well. It makes elaborate references to all religions, which existed in that period. Though it does not make any direct or open attack on other religions, it expresses its hostility in a subtle way. It attacks the doctrines of Jainism. According to *Manimekalai*, the Jain monks held the view that whatever is done even unconsciously or without forethought is sure to bear the fruit as opposed to the firm conviction of the Buddhists that if anything is done without preoccupation, it will never bear fruit.[19]

Manimekalai also makes critical remarks on the lifestyle of the Jain ascetics in a subtle way. For example, it says that Manimekalai and Sutamati were going to a garden to pluck flowers. On the way to the garden, they happened to see a

Jain monk with a drunkard following him and disturbing him. When the author describes this scene, he criticises the lifestyle of the Jain monks. The Jain monk was having a begging bowl and a bamboo staff in his hands; he had given up his dress and sense of shame; he had taken bath like an elephant, which had some fear. The author has also used the character of the drunkard to criticise the religious practices of the Jain monks. The drunkard says that the Jain monk melt in pity even for invisible things while his own soul which is in the dirty physical body suffers like the people who are suffering in stuffy room.[20] The drunkard also makes a sarcastic remark about the Jain concept of non-killing. He invites the monk to drink the intoxicating drug to get relieved of the suffering of his soul. According to the drunkard, the intoxicating drug has not involved killing. There are many differences in the description of a Jain monk and of a Buddhist monk in *Manimekalai*.[21] Manimekalai tries to show Jainism as inferior on intellectualism and service. This is one of the earliest indications in Tamilnadu of a clash between Buddhism and Jainism from a Buddhist source.

Manimekalai points out indirectly the cultural alienation of the Jains in Tamilnadu. The Tamils took delight in bathing and they gave great importance to hygiene and cleanliness of their body. Those who did not take bath were considered as insane and degraded persons. The Jains, here, were placed in that category. This may be a serious misunderstanding. The Jains cleaned their body with a wet cloth and they did not use flower and incense for worship in the period of *Manimekalai*. On the other hand, the Buddhists like the people of the native religion offered flowers and incenses when they performed rituals. This is yet another departure of the Jains from the local Tamil culture.

The Jains over-emphasised non-killing of all life forms and took meticulous care not to harm even small insects. This type

of extreme behaviour became a subject of ridicule and contempt. But the Jains are today appreciated for their "reverence for all life and their essential character of self-restraint". The ecological movement today appreciates the Jain vision of being in tune with nature respecting water and even all other inanimate matter. They see a great vision in this. But Manimekalai ridicules such behaviour. *Manimekalai* takes advantage of the cultural alienation of the Jains.

Manimekalai tries to show that there were lapses in Jainism in their doctrines and practices. The author of *Manimekalai* explains this through the life-story of Sutamati. Sutamati was abducted by a *vincayan* and later left by him in a Jainapalli. Later she left the monastery when she found her father. But when her father was attacked by a cow that recently calved, holding his blood-dripped entrails in his hand, she went with him back to the monastery seeking emergency help. In that hour of crisis, the Jain monks refused to help them and turned them out. Even they got angry with them. Sutamati was crying for help. At that time, a Buddhist monk by name Sanghadharman came by that way. He helped them, relieved Sutamati's father of his pain and suffering and saved his life. Due to this, Sutamati became a Buddhist nun. One can also find lot of differences in the description of the Jain monk and that of a Buddhist nun. Thus, the author of *Manimekalai* tries to depict Jainism as inferior on intellectual, philosophical and service (practical) grounds. This is one of the earliest indications of a clash in Tamilnadu between Buddhism and Jainism known from a Buddhist source.

The Jainapallis served as places where women thrown out of society could take refuge and lead lives afresh. Sati, widowhood, prostitution, exile from homes were the only options to destitute women in those days. The Jainapallis served as happy places

of escape for affected women. It seems this was well known to everyone. Vincayan left Sutamati, whom he abducted earlier, in a Jainapalli.

Another great aspect of the Jainapalli was that it allowed Sutamati to go with her father, once she found and rejoined him. But she returned to the same Jainapalli in utter despair

with her father who was struggling for life. Why the Jainapalli had refused timely help? One may think of the following reasons:

1) There was hesitation to help Suamati since she had left the Jainapalli earlier. 2) The Jainapalli would have had no facilities to treat such a wounded person.

Though the Jains had developed herbal and other medicinal remedies, their notion of ahimsa probably would not have allowed them to treat such accident cases.

Manimekalai does not give any reason for the Jainapalli's refusal to entertain Sutamati with her severely wounded father. Probably it focuses only on the harsh nature of the Jainapallis and the service nature of the Buddhist Sanghas. One is left with the impression that the Jains, in spite of their stress on ahimsa (non-killing) to the extent of doing no harm even to insects, failed to serve a dying person. This may primarily be a limitation due to their lack of "emergency medical service facilities". This is true even today. The Svetambara Terapanth is a progressive modern Jain sect and their monks and nuns cannot treat such an accident victim in their monastic places.

Manimekalai assumes the form of a male before she goes and listens to the exposition of the leaders of various religious

sects. One could understand that such an exposition might not have been made available to a young woman. Though it is a general criticism directed against all the religious preachers, it seems to have a particular target namely the Jains who regarded women unfit for spiritual pursuits.

Conclusion

In *Manimekalai*, many clever ways were used by utilizing every opportunity to draw a gloomy picture of Jainism. There were doctrinal clashes, ideological and relationship conflicts between Buddhism and Jainism and between Buddhism and the Vedic religion. There are many reasons for intensive but subtle conflicts between Buddhism and Jainism though Hinduism also existed predominantly in the post-Sangam period. 1. Both of them made attempts for conversion. The debate contained in Canto 27 of Manimekalai clearly shows the usage of anti-dialogical approach which was born out of the intention to establish asymmetrical relationship between these two religions. 2. They could have also competed with each other in making attempts to secure royal patronage in which Jains were more successful. 3. They also had competition in trade and commerce. The Jains were agrarians and they were also involved in inland trade. On the other hand, the Buddhists were engaged in overseas trade. Naturally, the Jains were able to enjoy the support of the local people.

Manimekalai criticizes Jainism more than Hinduism, probably because it did not consider Hinduism as a potential enemy during this period. Moreover, the process of institutionalization of Hindu religion was not yet over and the Bhakti movement had yet to emerge.

References

1. V.Kanagasabhai, *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1989, p.162
2. *Purananuru*, 192
3. *Madurakkanchi*, 453-492
4. *Purananuru*,362
5. *Silappadikaram*, 1, 1-10
6. *Manimekalai*, I, 1
7. *Ibid*., 1: 54-57; 60-68 & 70-71; *Silappadikaram*, 11, 35-53
8. *Silappadiikaram*, 9: 9-14
9. V.R.Ramachandra Dikshidar, *Silappadikaram*, South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tirunelveli, Ltd., Madras, 1978, pp. 169-170
10. *Manimekalai*., 1: 60-68
11. *Ibid,*. 1: 70
12. *Ibid*, 1:13-18
13. *Ibid*, I: 71
14. S.R.Rao, *Kaverippattinam Excavations*, Transactions of Archaeological Society of South India, 1969, pp. 164-165
15. Avvai. Natarajan and Natana Kasinathan. *Art Panorama of Tamils*, State Department of Archaeology, Madras, 1992, pp.64-65
16. *Manimekalai*., 27
17. *Ibid*., 13 : 21-90
18. *Ibid*., 16: 84-123
19. *Ibid*., 3 : 74-77
20. *Ibid*., 3 : 84-99
21. *Ibid.,* 5 : 54-75

Books Referred:

1. Avvai. Natarajan and Natana Kasinathan, *Art Panorama of Tamils*, State Department Archaeology, Madras, 1992.
2. Balusamy, N., *Studies in Manimkalai*, Madurai, 1965.
3. Kailasapathy, K., *Pandai Tamilar Valvum Valipadum* (Tamil), New Century Book House, Chennai, 1999.
4. Kanakasabai, V., *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1989.
5. Kandaswamy, S.N, *Buddhism as expounded in Manimekalai,* Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1978.
6. Krishnaswamii Aiyangar, K.R., *Manimekalai in its Historical Setting*, London, 1928.
7. Nilakanta Sastri, K.A., *Sangam Literature: Its Cults and Cultures*, Swathi Publications, Madras,1972.
8. Pandian,P., *Cattanar's Manimekalai*, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevelly Ltd., Madras,
9. Ramachandra Dikshidar, V.R., *The Cilappadikaram*, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevelly Ltd., Madras, 1978.
10. Ramaswami Ayyangar, M.S., *Studies in South Indian Jainism, Part-I*, Sri Sattguru Publications, Delhi, 1982.
11. Subramanian, N., *Sangam Polity*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1980.
12. Vasudeva Rao, T.N., *Buddhism in the Tamil Country*, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1979.

DHOLAVIRA'S GEOMETRY: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

Michael Danino
80, Swarnambika Layout
Ramnagar, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Background

Discovered in the 1960s by Jagat Pati Joshi and excavated in the 1990s under the direction of R.S. Bisht, Dholavira (in Kachchh district of Gujarat) is Harappan city which is spectacular by any standards. The monumental architecture, the massive fortifications, the use of dressed stones, and the elaborate water management system are some of its hallmarks. However, the one striking feature from its map (Fig. 1) is its highly geometric planning, involving multiple enclosures (the citadel, the middle and lower towns) laid in what appears to be deliberately chosen proportions.

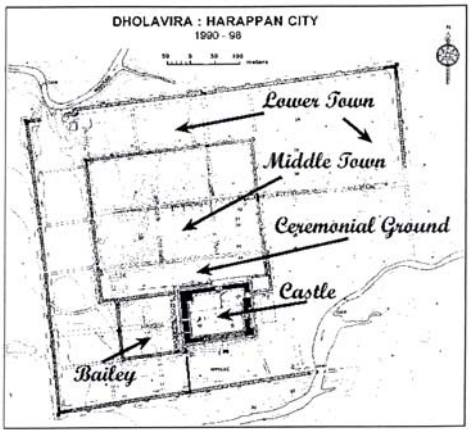

Fig. 1 : General map of Dholavira (adapted from R.S. Bisht 1999)

In several papers, R.S. Bisht[1] has described this Harappan city in detail and highlighted a few of those proportions. To quote his chief findings (re-formulated here following the system of notation spelt out in Table 1):

Table 1: Re-formulated city details of Dholavira

Abbreviation	Meaning	Actual Measurement	Mnemonic clue (in metres)
L_1	Length of city	771.1	Subscript 't' stands for 'town'
W_1	Width of city	616.85	
L_m	Length of middle town	340.5	Subscript 'm' stands for 'middle town'
W_m	Width of middle town	290.45	
L_{ci}	Inner length of castle	114	Subscript 'ci' stands for 'castle inner'
W_{ci}	Inner width of castle	92	

L_{co}	Outer length of castle	151	Subscript 'co' stands for 'castle outer'
W_{co}	Outer width of castle	118	

A. The city's length (east-west axis) and width (north-south) are precisely in the ratio of 5:4 (L_t/W_t = 5/4)

B. The middle town's length and breath are in the ratio of 7:6 (Lm/Wm = 7/6) including the ceremonial ground, or 7:5 excluding it; this naturally implies that the ground's proportions are 6:1.

C. The castle's proportions follow the city's ratio of 5:4 (Lci/ Wci = 5/4)

D. The castle's outer length is one fifth of the city's length, while the castle's inner length is one seventh of it (Lco / Lt = 1/5, Lci/Lt = 1/7)

E. The castle's north-western corner is aligned with the city's main northeast-southwest diagonal; so too, the castle's north-eastern corner is aligned with the city's as well as the middle town's north-western corners

F. The citadel (castle and bailey together) is of ratio of 1:2.

Clearly, such proportions can only be the result of a deliberate planning. Having said that, we are faced with two major questions: (1) As one proportion may inevitably be the logical

consequence of another, what were the initial principles that Dholavira's architects decided to adopt? In mathematical terms, what are the basic assumptions (or axioms) we need in order to work out the totality of Dholavira's geometry? (2) Can we attempt to guess some reasons for such initial choices and the significance behind adopted proportions – and, do we find such proportions used in other cities or reflected in other aspects of Indian civilization?

Before we proceed, we should mention Bisht's estimate of a maximum error margin of 0.5% on measurements, which more likely was "on the higher side". Whatever the precise ratios the Harappans may have adopted, the irregularities on the terrain (its gradients as well as the two now seasonal rivers in the north-west and south-east) and alterations over the centuries have certainly introduced small deviations from the 'ideal' proportions. If we find specific ratios to fit actual measurements (either provided above by Bisht or read on Dholavira's map) within 1% or 2%, it will be legitimate to consider them as potential deliberate choices. Let us now adopt the following additional definitions (Table 2 below, to be studied in conjunction with Fig. 2):

Table 2	
Abbreviation	**Meaning**
F	The castle's outer north-western corner, a major 'focus' of the city
A	Distance from the city's northern wall to F
B	Distance from F to the city's southern wall
C	Distance from the city's western wall to F

Table 2	
D	Distance from F to the city's eastern wall
P	Distance from the city's western wall to the middle town's western wall
Q	Distance from the city's northern wall to the middle town's northern wall
L_{m1}	Western portion of L_m up to F
L_{m2}	Eastern portion of L_m up to F
K	Width of the Castle's western and eastern fortification
R	Ratio of 5/4 or 1.25

Basic choices for Dholavira's geometry

After studying Dholavira's geometry both empirically and mathematically, certain conclusions can be reached regarding its fundamental principles (which are not all identical with those outlined above by Bisht). We should however bear in mind that the city in its 'classical' form as shown in Fig. 2 did not appear overnight. It evolved from early stages and through several alterations and expansions (detailed in Bisht's papers). For instance, the dimensions of the castle (the earliest part of the city) were altered when the middle town was added, so as to bring them in line with the desired proportions; it was a back-and-forth process. Therefore, more than the precise sequence proposed below, it is the choices and their consequences that matter.

1. The architects, as pointed out by Bisht, decided to have the city's as well as the castle's lengths and widths in the ratio

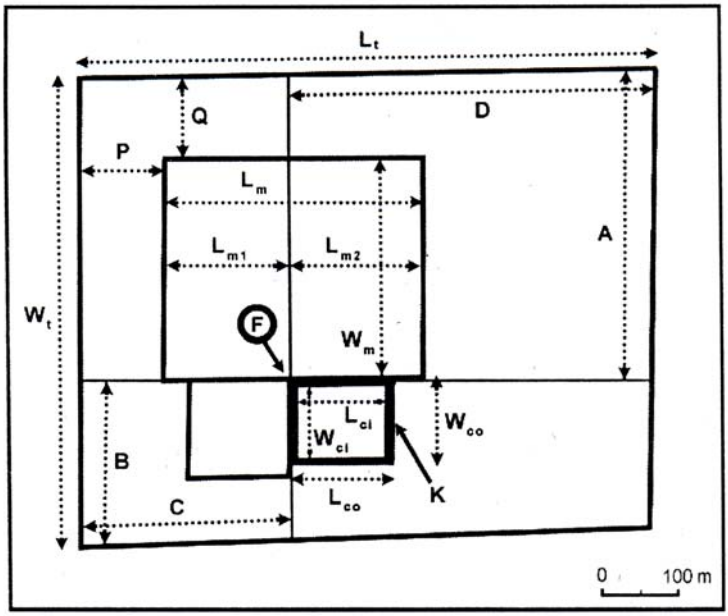

Fig.2 : Simplified plan of Dholavira, with definitions

of 5:4 ($\mathbf{L_t/W_t = L_{ci} / W_{ci} = 5/4}$). What is so special about the ratio r=5/4 (= 1.25), we will probe later. (Of course, the length of the city was dictated by the actual topography and clearly by the space available between the two rivers enveloping it – a factor crucial to Dholavira's water management.)

2. Then they had to choose the castle's location and for that, they saw its outer north-western corner (F) as a focal point, probably because it would overlook the ceremonial ground below not far from the latter's centre. To maintain the ratio *r* as far as possible, the natural way was to keep F on the city's northeast-southwest diagonal, since all points located along this diagonal would exhibit the same ratio *r* between their distances to the city's northern and eastern boundaries.

This can be expressed algebraically by **D=*r*A**(D is five fourths of A) or again **C=*r*B**. (The actual ratios, measured from the published map of the city, are 1.23, within 1.6% of the ideal ratio of 1.25).

3. It is now necessary to determine F's precise location on this diagonal. This amounts to choosing a fixed ratio between A and B or C and D or again between A and C or B and D (any one of those four choices would be enough to fix F). Measurements taken on the map show that A is exactly1.5 times C: **A/C=3/2** must have been the architects' choice in choosing F's location. (Note that 3/2 can also be expressed as *r*+1/4.)

4. Now they had to choose the actual dimensions of the castle (or alter the earlier ones). But if we look for simple ratios, we find that they first decided on the middle town's dimensions, for its length is very nearly 4/9 of that of the town (the error margin is only 0.6%): **L_m/L_t = 4/9)** (Note that 9/4 = *r*+1.) As pointed out by Bisht, they also chose for the middle town a width equal to six seventh of the length: **L_m/ W_m=7/6**. We will see later a possible reason for this choice.

5. We now find that the architects chose to have an internal length for the castle equal to precisely one third of the middle town's length (the error margin a mere 0.4%): **L_{ci}/L_m= 1/3.**

6. The middle town's dimensions now fixed, its position within the city had to be determined. The decision seems to have involved a choice to have the middle town's north-west corner equidistant from the city's northern and western boundaries: **P=Q**. This is precisely the case as far as the map shows (and is also pointed out by Bisht).

7. Returning to the castle, with an error margin less than 0.7%, we find its inner length to be three quarters of its outer length: $\mathbf{L_{ci}/W_{co}=3/4}$. The width of the eastern and western fortification walls, K (half of L_{co}—L_{ci}=7/6), being irregular, Bisht takes care to note that the dimensions for L_{ci} and W_{ci} are averages; nevertheless, this ratio is unlikely to be due to chance; it can moreover be expressed as r–1/2. (Note that Bisht's proposed L_{co}/L_t=1/5 and L_{ci}/L_t=1/7 result in L_{ci}/L_{co}=5/7; but taking his measurements of 114 and 151 m respectively for L_{ci} and L_{co}, the error margin for 5/7 is over 5%, which is hardly acceptable over such a small distance; however, with our proposed ratio of ¾, the error margin is below 0.7%, which is more satisfying.)

8. Finally, the architects chose the proportions indicated by Bisht for the bailey and the ceremonial ground (1:6 for the latter).

Calculations

With these 'raw data' in hand, we can now work out the calculations. However, we must stress that the Harappans certainly knew no algebra but only some geometry. Indeed all the above ratios can be easily applied to the ground possessing nothing more than a rope and a few sticks. Our calculations are only intended to bring out a few other underlying features of Dholavira's geometry. (We do not explain them in detail as they require only the most basic knowledge of algebra and are entirely based on the first seven principles outlined above; results have often been expressed in terms of L_t as a convenient reference).

General proportions

A. A/L_t=12/23; C/L_t=8/23; D/L_t= 15/23. We therefore have A/W_t = 15/23 which is within 2.2% of 2/3, a proportion that

may have stimulated the architects' hunger for perfect ratios, especially as it applies to the location of F, thus nearly two thirds down the width of the city, and two thirds down its length (since D/L_t has the same value).

B. A/B = D/C = 15/8. (Note that 15/8 can be written as 3r/2.)

Middle town

C. L_{m1}/L_{m2}=75/86, the ratio is very close (by 0.3%) to 7/8.

D. P/L_t= Q/L_t= 68/483. A fair approximation (within 1.5%) of this fraction is 1/7.

Castle

E. L_{ci}/L_t=4/27. This is just 0.2% away from the ratio supplied by the actual dimensions, an excellent agreement (far closer than Bisht's L_{ci}/L_t = 1/7), which is 3.4% off)[3]. (Note that the inverse ratio, 27/4, is 5r+1/2).

F. L_{co}/L_t=16/81, verified within 0.9%; Bisht's proposed L_{co}/L_t=1/5 is 2.1% off, although this is an acceptable approximation and a ratio that might indeed have appealed to the architects.

G. $K=L_{co}/8 = L_{ci}/6$. These are attractive proportions, the latter yielding K=19m (again, the castle's fortification wall being irregular in width, this should only be taken as an ideal average).

The question of units

Clearly Dholavira's engineers must have used some unit of length to measure or calculate the various dimensions involved.

It is tempting to try and correlate those dimensions with one of the three known Harappan scales, with the nearby Lothal suggesting itself as the more appropriate candidate. Its basic unit being 1.77mm (as 27 diving lines, or 26 divisions, cover 46 mm on Lothal's ivory scale), we find that the castle's inner width (W_{ci} = 92m) is precisely 52,000 times this unit and the error margin, of 0.04% is remarkably small. The castle's ideal length ($L_{ci} = 5W_{ci}/4$) would then be 65,000 units (i.e. 115m, or 1 m more than Bisht's average length'), while the ideal width of the castle's fortification wall (east and west), $K=L_{ci}/6$, would be 10,833 units, just 0.3% off the sacred number of 10800.

We are unable to assert whether this is a mere coincidence, but it does seem likely that the Lothal unit, or a unit closely related to it, may have been used as a standard to work out the castle's and therefore the rest of Dholavira's dimensions.

Other cities

Another obvious question is whether some of Dholavira's proportions are reflected in other fortified Harappan cities and towns. Here we should point out that the accurate data required to answer this question (precise measurements or good maps) are not easily available; indeed we often find substantial differences for the same dimensions from one publication to another. The following observations are therefore no more than a brief random sampling, subject to correction. They are also intended to stress the need for a more thorough study:

H. The ratio 1:2 for Dholavira's citadel, is in conformity with the common norm. We find it in the citadels of Mohenjo-daro (roughly 380 x 190m)[4], Harappa (415 x 195m)[5] and Kalibangam (240 x 120 m)[6]. It is rather pertinent that this

ratio should be common to at least four major citadels. In addition, it is found in Surkotada's overall dimensions (130 x 65 m)[7].

I. The ratio 1:3 for Dholavira between L_m and L_{ci}, is used in Mohenjo-daro's so-called 'college' (69 x 23.4 m)[8].

J. The ratio 1:6, used for Dholavira's ceremonial ground, is reflected in Lothal's docking yard (average dimensions 216.6 x 36.6m)[9].

K. Finally, Dholavira's prime ratio, 5:4 is the same as Lothal's overall dimensions (280 x 225 m).[10] This is an important observation in view of Lothal's relative proximity. But we also find it further afield, for instance in Harappa's so-called "granary" (50 x 40 m).[11]

Dholavira's ratio's: A case for continuity

The basic ratios adopted in Dholavira's plan, r = 5/4 or 1.25 (for the castle, the town, and a few other internal proportions) and 7/6 (for the middle town), must have held a special and most likely an auspicious significance in the Harappan mind. Indeed, it is quite remarkable that these same ratios are widely prescribed as auspicious proportions for houses in various traditions of *Vastu Shilpa*.

Varahamihira, for instance, writes in chapter 53 of his *Brihat Samhita*: "The length of King's palace is greater than the breath by a quarter. The length of the house of a commander-in-chief exceeds the width by a sixth[12]". These two ratios (1+1/4 and 1+1/6) are better expressed as 5/4 and 7/6 — very precisely Dholavira's basic proportions! This seems too much of a

coincidence: while *Vastu Shastra* as codified in Varahamihira's time (or possibly earlier) was clearly not in existence during the Mature Harappan phase, it is wholly possible that specific proportions regarded as auspicious in Harappan times were carefully preserved and later integrated in a systematic approach to architecture.

It may be objected that Dholavira's architects preceded Varahamihira by some three millennia; if a tradition of auspicious ratios was thus preserved, should we not have some trace of it in between? Indeed we do: the *Shulba Sutras* provide one such missing link. For instance, Baudhayana's *Shulba Sutra* (4.3) lists detailed dimensions for the trapezium-shaped sacrificial ground (*mahavedi*), where the sacred fire altars are to be arranged; its longer (western) side must measure 30 *prakramas* (a unit roughly equal to 54 cm) while its shorter (eastern) side will be 24 *prakramas* — exactly our ratio r=5/4. We find r again embedded in Baudhayana's system of units (spelt out in 1.3): for instance it is the ratio between the *pada* (= 15 *angulas*) and the *pradesha* (= 12 *angulas*), and between the *purusa* (5 *aratnis*) and the *vyayama* (4 *aratnis*). More research is likely to bring out similar examples from the Brahmanas and the Puranas. In the meantime, is it not fascinating that proportions deliberately adopted at Dholavira Lothal should have such a central importance in the *Shulba Sutras* as well as *Vastu Vidya*?

In itself, the preservation of ratios and units right from Harappan times is nothing to be surprised at; it has long been noted that Harappan units of lengths and weights resurfaced in historical times, and there has been a steadily mounting body of evidence[13] of Harappan techniques, crafts, ornaments, art forms, customs, rituals and religious beliefs being transmitted virtually unchanged down the ages. It will take systematic research to bring out such a transmission in the fields of town

planning and geometry. Let us venture to advance that the findings will very likely uphold Jim Shaffer's thesis of a strong connection between Harappan urbanism and the urbanism of later historical times, which he finds connected by "a unique cultural tradition traceable for millennia"[14].

Postscript

As this article was getting ready for the press, I happened to notice two more correlations between Dholavira's geometry and later traditions; the second observation may prove to be especially important. These are briefly stated below.

The first point is that the proportions mentioned in the *Shulba Sutras* for the *mahavedi* (the main sacrificial ground) appear earlier in the *Shatapatha Brahmana* (I.1.2.23, quoted in *The Shulbasutras,* ed. S.N. Sen & A.K. Bag, New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy, 1983, p. 170). In this ancient text, instead of specific units as in the *Shulba Sutras*, steps are used as units: the vedi's western side is 30 steps long, while the eastern side is 24 steps. The result is the same even when stated in terms of proportions—5:4, our Dholavira ratio. This is not only one more link in the long transmission from Dholavira's architects to the codifiers of *Vastu Shastra*, but also one more connection between the Harappan and the Vedic worlds.

The second observation concerns the actual unit of length that Dholavira's planners may have used. One system of units described in Kautilya's Arthashastra (usually dated 4th c. BC) seems to be related to Lothal's unit of 1.77 mm, as does the average breadth of the castle's eastern and western fortification walls, K(about 10800 times 1.77mm). One system of units described in Kautilya's Arthashastra (usually dated 4th c. BC) seems to be very pertinent in the Dholavirian scheme. In a

section on measures of space and time (2.20.19, see R.P. Kangle's translation, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, part II, p. 139) we are told that "108 *angulas* make a *dhanus*, measure for roads and city-walls…" The actual measure of an *angula*, related to the width of a finger, has probably varied with time and space, as have most other units; common estimates include 17.78mm (V.B. Manikar, Metrology in the Indus Civilization, in *Frontiers of the Indus Civilization*, eds.B.B, Lal & S.P. Gupta, New Delhi: Books and Books, 1984, p. 147) and three-fourths of an inch or 19 mm J.R. Fleet), among others. Mainkar's value is obviously of interest to us, since it is very nearly 10 Lothal units, and we know that Harappans commonly used multiples of ten. Let us therefore assume a '*Harappan angula*' of exactly 17.7 mm and see whether it makes any sense in Dholavira's actual geometry.

With such a value, *dhanus* or 108 *angulas* as defined by Kautilya would be about 1.91m. Since we have noted that K is close to 10800 Lothal units, we may infer that K=1080 *angulas* = 10 *dhanus*. This certainly looks like a convenient number and all the more striking as Kautilya states that the *dhanus* is to be used as a "measure for roads and city-walls." As a confirmation that this is not mere wishful thinking or a happy coincidence, we find that we can easily express the city's other main dimensions in terms of the *dhanus*. Following our earlier formulas, the castle's inner length (Lci/K = 6) becomes 60 *dhanus* (just like the southern side of Lothal's 'acropolis,' incidentally) while its inner width is 48 *dhanus*; the castle's outer length (Lco/K= 8) and width become 80 and 64 *dhanus* respectively; the middle town's length (Lm = 3 Lci) is now 180 *dhanus*, while the city's overall length (Lt/Lm = 9/4) and width are 405 and 324 *dhanus*. All these numbers are within 1% of actual figures.

Such a system, based on a 'master unit,' equal to 108 times the basic Lothal unit multiplied by 10, appears to be the key to Dholavira's metrology. This has clearly survived the collapse of Harappan urbanism, probably because such units remained in use for sacred or ritual purposes (such as fire altars). Further, verifications of dimensions of streets, large buildings etc. are certainly called for (keeping in mind however that different units can be used for different purposes), as is a systematic study of dimensions and proportions in major towns and cities of the Indus-Saraswati civilization and their transmission to the historical period.

References

1. Bisht, R.S. 1997. Dholavira Excavations: 1990-94. In *Facets of Indian Civilization — Essays in Honour of Prof. B.B. Lal* (Ed. J.P. Joshi). Pp. 107-120. New Delhi: Aryan Books International.
   Dholavira and Banawali: Two Different Paradigms of the Harappan Urbis forma. *Puratattva* 29: 14-37.
   Urban Planning at Dholavira: A Harappan City. In Ancient Cities, Sacred Skies: *Cosmic Geometries and City Planning in Ancient India* (Ed. J. McKim Malville & Lalit M. Gujral). Pp. 11-23. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts & Aryan Books International.
   The last two papers delve more particularly on Dholavira's geometry.
2. I do not discuss here the appropriateness of terms such as 'citadel,' 'castle,' etc. Very likely, the actual purposes of those parts of the city were different from what the terms imply.
3. Incidentally, Bisht (1999:25) proposes that the total area of the town is 49 times that of the castle; this appears to be

a calculation error. Our formulae lead to a precise ratio of 729/16 (the square of 27/4). This is about 45.56, which is rather different from 49. Verifying with the actual measurements provided by Bisht (which lead to a city area of 47:57 ha and a castle area of 1.05 ha), we get a ratio 45.3, less than 0.6% off our theoretical value.

4. Lal, B.B. 1997. *The Earliest Civilization of South Asia*. Pp. 106. New Delhi: Aryan Books International.
5. *Ibid.* p. 112.
6. *Ibid.* p. 122.
7. *Ibid.* p. 135.
8. *Ibid.* p. 108.
9. My calculations of those average dimensions are based on: Rao, S.R. 1979. *Lothal*, *a Harappan Port*. Pp. 123. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
10. Lal 1997 (*op.cit*.): 129.
11. Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark. 1998. *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization*. Pp. 64. Karachi & Islamabad: Oxford Univesity Press & American Institute of Pakistan Studies.
12. Bhat, M. Ramachandra (tr.). 1981. *Varahamihira's Brihat Samhita* Volt. 1. pp. 451-52. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas.
13. See for instance: Kenoyer 1998 (*op.cit*);
    Lal, B.B. 2002. *The Saraswati Flows On*: *The Continuity of Indian Culture*. New Delhi: Aryan Books International; Danino, Michel 2003. The Harappan Heritage and the Aryan Problem. *Man and Environment*. XXVIII (1): 21-32.
14. Shaffer, Jim G. 1993. Reurbanization: The Eastern Punjab and Beyond. In *Urban Form and Meaning in South Asia; the Shaping of Cities from Prehistoric to Precolonial Times* (Eds. H. Spodek and D.M. Srinivasan). pp. 54. Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art & University Press of New England.

THE MYTH OF THE VAKATAKA COINS

Dr. Shankar Goyal
Department of History
JNV University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

The Vakatakas constituted the greatest political power in the Deccan and Central India during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D[1]. It is generally believed that they launched their political activity somewhere in the Vindhyan region of Madhya Pradesh[2]. Eventually they shifted southwards as there were dim prospects for expansion in the North in view of the growing supremacy of the imperial Guptas and the Nagas. In the Deccan, however, there was no such potential threat at that time. They carved out, in course of time, a substantially large kingdom comprising of the area of Madhya Pradesh to the south of the river Narmada (viz., Betul-Chhindwara and Siwani-Balaghat region)[3], the Vidarbha-Khandesh-Marathwada region of Maharashtra and, perhaps, some areas of northern Karnataka in the proximity of Bidar[4],which they annexed at a comparatively later stage of their political activity. Their neighbours, with whom they maintained more or less cordial, though at times hostile, relations included the imperial Guptas and the Nagas in the North[5], the Vishnukundins in the eastern Deccan[6] and the Kadambas in the western Deccan[7]. According to some, they were initially hostile towards the early Rashtrakutas of southern Maharashtra but later became cordial[8].

Excepting the early Rashtrakutas, the neighbours of the Vakatakas and some other contemporary powers including a few unimportant ones are known to have left significant numismatic evidence of their regimes. Of them, the coins of the Guptas

are numerous and varied in nature[9], while the coins of the Nagas[10], Ikshvakus[11], Vishnukundins[12], Kadambas[13], Traikutakas, Bodhis[14] and Nalas[15] are not so numerous and are artistically much inferior.

Till recently, no coins of the Vakatakas were known and it was believed that they had not issue their own coins[16]. But lately, A.M. Shastri (1990 and 1992), A.H. Siddiqui (1996) and Prashant P. Kulkarni (2001-2002) have claimed to have read on some small base-metal coins predominatly made of copper, the broken legends of (*Sri-Ma)haraja Prthivi*[17], (*Na*)*rendra*[18], *Jaya*[19], *Vrddhi*[20], *Vrddhah*[21], *Sarva* (*sena*)[22], Vijhasati[23], and *Pravara* (*se*) *nasya ra* (*jya?*)[24]. The coins mentioned by Shastri have reportedly been found in the Wardha region which was included in the Kingdom of the main branch of their dynasty and in Paunar which is believed to represent the site of Pravarapura, the capital of their later years. The coins reported by Siddiqui were found in Nanded district and those by Kulkarni have been found in Paunar and Yawatmal regions. Then, there are some other uniface coins found in Paunar, which appear to closely resemble the coins attributed to the Vakatakas in respect of fabric and devices, but they do not contain any legends[25]. Further, the discovery of the Vakataka lead coins of two denominations from Paunar has also been reported recently[26].

This paper begs to differ from these scholars and believes that the Vakatakas did not strike any coins at all.

(1) It does not find any reference, direct or otherwise, to the Vakataka coins in their fairly numerous inscriptions. Not that these inscriptions did not have any occasion to mention them; they could have referred to them in connection with the land-grants recorded in them. There is no reference

to the coins of the Vakatakas in the inscriptions of the contemporary dynasties also.

(2) There is not a single word mentioned about the Vakataka coins in the contemporary literature or in the literature of the succeeding ages.

(3) The coins attributed to the Vakatakas have been studied by the above mentioned scholars only with the help of photographs which were supplied to them by the coin-collectors; nobody seems to have ascertained whether these photographs were doctored or genuine. We have seen the photographs along with the paper entitled 'Vakataka Coins from Washim Excavation' by Pradip Meshram and B.S. Gajbhiye submitted to the 90th Annual Conference of the Numismatic Society of India held at Santiniketan from December 1-3, 2006. One of these photographs seemed to us patently doctored. We would like to submit that for obvious reasons one should take the claim of the coin-collectors, about the antiquity and genuineness of the ancient coins in their possession, with a grain of salt.

(4) As the coins, under discussion, bear no clear legend displaying the full name of any Vakataka ruler, it will always remain debatable whether they may be indubitably attributed to the Vakatakas; legends and devices of these coins are only subtle and not definite pointers to the identity of their issuers.

There is a marked difference in the attitudes of Shastri and Kulkarni towards this problem. While reading the legends, Shastri observed that "even though the Vakatakas had issued their own coins made in cheap metals, costlier metal coins must have also been in use for costlier transactions"[27]. But, while

referring to Shastri's readings, Kulkarni opines that "as no coin bears a clear legend displaying the full name of any Vakataka ruler, it was always debatable whether these coins could be attributed to the Vakatakas authoritatively[28]" and he adds "now that a coin has come to light bearing the full name of the Vakataka ruler Pravarasena, this wait has finally ended[29]." It is interesting to note that Kulkarni doubts the readings of Shastri and claims that his own reading has finally settled the issue.

However, even if Shastri's conclusion is accepted, the main question still remains unanswered. We continue to remain in the dark about those Vakataka coins used for the costlier transactions in their kingdom. After all, what happened to them if at all they were issued? Scholars like Shasri and Kulkarni adopt two contradictory positions. On the one hand, they opine that the Vakataka period truly represented the classical or golden age and on the other hand, explain the non-availability of their costlier coins by arguing that earlier and contemporary costly metal coins were in circulation in the Vakataka kingdom and they served the purpose of their costlier dealings. We, however, think that this whole reasoning is illogical. The conventional definition of a classical age is 'it is an age when political culture, literature, architecture and fine arts reach a high level of excellence to form a standard for later times'[30]. From this point of view, there is nothing to prove that the Vakataka period may be regarded as the golden age. Usually the age of the imperial Guptas is equated with the classical age of India but the characteristics of their age - such as the imperial ideal of the *chakravartin* rulers, the cultural florescence when norms or standard of values were laid down in different walks of life and the Smrti law which formed the basis of socio-political organization - were absent in the kingdom of the Vakatakas. It is well-known, no silver or gold coins of the Vakatakas have been found

so far. Even the copper coins attributed to them are artistically inferior, minute in size, irregular in shape and light in weight. For a dynasty which ruled the Deccan for more than 250 years and whose neighbour were the mighty imperial Guptas who abundantly minted coins in every type of metal, this fact is not easy to believe and accept. This situation must have forced Shastri and Kulkarni not to elaborate their views on this issue[31]. On the basis of the Mahayana caves of Ajanta and Saiva sculptures of Mansar and Mandhal they especially think so. But all this must be seen as the extension of the Gupta influence on the Vakataka territory. That this cultural florescence had its origins in the influence of the Gupta Kings is also conceded by Walter M. Spink[32]. However, his observation that Indian classical culture reached the very highest point in its development during the reign of Harishena who ruled from c. 460 to 477 A.D. is not correct. By the early years of its rule the Gupta dynasty was already on the course of disintegration[33]. Here he conveniently forgets that the traditions of any culture never die immediately; it takes centuries to loosen their impact on society. As shown by us elsewhere[34], a cultural trend might have a long history before it finally emerges in a definite form and likewise might continue to exist in a changed form for sometime even after it apparently ceases to exist. That being so, we may concede that the age of the Guptas marked of efflorescence and culmination of earlier tendencies many of which go back to the Mauryan period and that much of its glory continued for about two centuries more after the fall of the Gupta rule but the culmination of a process that began earlier[35]". He is also of the view that in the Deccan and South India, it was the post-Gupta period that saw the evolution of a high level of civilization[36]. We, therefore, feel that the observations of Shastri and Kulkarni are their own wishful thinking and nothing else; a deliberate attempt to prove the existence of the Vakataka coins! The

present state of our knowledge compels us to believe that the Vakatakas did not mint their own coins in any metal[37]. It is a well-known fact that the comparative paucity or complete non-availability of coins is generally deemed as an indication of economic decline or backwardness.

The difficulty with Kulkarni seems to be that when he reads the legend of a coin he lets his imagination run wild and in his eagerness to suggest something which no one else had suggested earlier, he overlooks other evidences which go against his suggestion. He has committed the same error here[38]. His theory of the existence of the Vakataka coins revolves around a solitary copper coin, with the legend on the obverse and the humped bull on the reverse, which, according to him, belongs to Pravarasena II. The legend on this coin consists of two lines and, though, the last two letters of both the lines are worn out, he restores it as *Pravara* (*se*) */ nasya ra* (*jya ?*). But the legend of this coin may be interpreted differently. However, on the basis of his reading and device on the coin, Kulkarni not only attributes all other copper and lead coins of questionable character, mentioned earlier, to the Vakatakas but also finds 'a common thread' in their execution[39]. After comparing the known weights of these coins, he infers that 'some metrology was intended' in making them[40]. Obviously, no comment is necessary on such observations. We would rather prefer to wait for some more discoveries of coins which may be attributed to the Vakatakas indubitably. But Kulkarni is keen to claim the credit of the discovery of the coins of the Vakatakas. Commenting on Shastri's reading of 1992 of the legend of as solitary copper coin of Prthivishena (II?) he states that "When Shastri wrote this paper the legend drawing was done by me and I felt that his eyesight was very weak at that time[41]". We take it as a most uncharitable comment about a scholar who is not alive.

Mrs. Yogeshwari Shastri, the wife of late Professor A.M. Shastri, however told us that the eyesight of her husband did not deteriorate any further since the days he was a post-graduate student. We should also not forget that the eyesight of Shastri was good enough to read the inscriptions of the Vakatakas and other dynasties till he expired in 2002. Further, to the best of our knowledge, no numismatist of repute has verified the genuineness of the coin attributed to Pravarasena II by Kulkarni. Therefore, if the name (*Sri-Ma) hara ja Prthivi* is readable on the coin attributed by Shastri to Prthivishena and the coin indeed belongs to Prthivishena (I to II), Shastri should get the credit for discovering the first such coin of a Vakataka ruler, something which Kulkarni obviously does not like. Anyway, these two coins, even if the reading of their legends is accepted, cannot conclusively prove that the Vakatakas had issued their own currency. After all, the question of the existence of the currency of an extensive kingdom, such as the Vakataka kingdom, cannot be decided by the mere existence of one or two copper coins.

But it can hardly be doubted that like any other kingdom, the Vakataka kingdom also needed coins made of both precious and non-precious metals. The coins made of precious metals were needed for high-value trades and land transactions. The inscriptions of the Vakatakas refer to such transactions. For example, the Indore plates of the twenty-third regnal year of Pravarasena II records the purchase and grant of half of a village (*vakataka*) by a merchant named Chandra[42]. The Ramtek fragmentary stone-slab inscription mentions the purchase of a piece of land by Prabhavati Gupta's son for the construction of a temple called Prabhavatisvamin and also the excavation of a tank named Sudarsana in her memory[43]. Such transactions must have required costlier coins made of either silver or gold. Therefore, there could have been no paucity of silver coins in

the Vakataka kingdom. In ancient India, coins issued continued to circulate in the market for centuries until they lost weight due to their use for a long time. It is a well-known fact that punch-marked silver coins were in circulation till at least the early medieval period. They are referred to by the name *purana* in inscriptions and literary works of the second century A.D.[44] and as *nila-kahaspana* at least up to the fifth century A.D[45]. At a village called Chik Sandogi in the Kopal taluka of the Raichur district in Karnataka, a hoard of 5,534 silver punch-marked coins was found in a copper pot bearing a Brahmi label datable to about the third century A.D[46]. The presence of a hoard of 440 silver punch-marked coins, associated with Indo-Sassanian coins, in the Lucknow Museum establish the popularity of these coins in the early medieval age[47]. V.S. Agrawala has very rightly concluded that the silver punch-marked coins and the *karshapana* tradition continued right up to the medieval period[48]. The Satavahana silver coins might also have been in circulation in the Vakataka territory as it was formerly under the Satavahanas. Quite a few Satavahana silver portrait coins have also been reported from Vidarbha[49]. The Western Kshatrapa coins were also highly valued and hoards and stray finds of these coins have been reported from various sites included the Vakataka kingdom. From places as far as Ranjangaon near Pune in Maharashtra, Petlurapalem in Andhra Pradesh and some places in Karnataka, hoards of Kshatrapa coins have been reported, while stray coins and moulds for counterfeiting them have been reported from several ancient sites[50]. A treasure- trove of 36 silver coins of the Kshatrapas has also been reported from Dahigaon in the Malkapur taluka of district Buldhana in Maharashtra[51]. Further, the Gupta gold and silver issues must have been available in abundance. They have been reported from some sites in the Vakataka territories, such as Harda (district Hoshangabad), Sakaur (district Damoh), Ganeshpur (district

Jabalpur) Pattan {district Betul), Seoni {district Seoni), Ellichpur and Dhamori (district Amaravati), Khairtal {district Raipur), Tewar {district Jabalpur) and Bhandara {district Chanda).[52] The Traikutakaka silver coins were also in use during this period as a hoard containing ten specimens of Dahrasena' s coins has been reported from the village of Dahigaon in Malkapur taluka of the Buldhana district[53]. All these coins must have been in circulation during the Vakataka period.

In view of the availability of these coins issued by earlier or contemporary dynasties, it is generally believed that the Vakatakas probably did not feel the necessity of issuing coins of their own in either gold or silver. It is also believed that they did not feel the need to issue coins in even cheap metals and the people of their kingdom depended, for their day-to-day ordinary transactions, on the coins of non-precious metals of the earlier and contemporary dynasties which they probably supplemented with the *cowrie*-currency as was done even during the Gupta period. We know that the immediately preceding period was characterised by an extensive use of base metal coins for ordinary market transactions in the Deccan as in North India. We have the Satavahana base metal (copper, lead and potin) coins which have been found in thousands in the whole of the Deccan including the territory later occupied by the Vakatakas which has yielded enormous quantities of coins, especially in potin[54]. Further, the Kushanas and the Maghas as well as other ruling powers of Northern India are known to have issued base metal specie on an extensive scale[55]. The Chinese traveller Fa-hien, who visited India during c.400-11 A.D., refers to heaps of *cowrie* shells in the markets of the cities of the Gupta empire[56]. Even if the Vakatakas had issued their own coins in cheap metals, the coins of other dynasties in cheaper metals must also have been in circulation because the Vakatakas obviously did not issue cheaper metals in any copious measure.

That the Vakatakas permitted the circulation of older or other contemporary currencies in their kingdom was conceded by A. M. Shastri. Commenting on the coin finds from Pauni excavation in 1972, he had remarked, "It is likely that the Vakatakas, having no coins of their own, allowed the use of the coins issued by other contemporary dynasties such as the Western Kshatrapas, the Guptas and the Vishnukundins[57]". In this context, K. M. Shrimali argues that 'the archaeological evidence is against such a supposition' - for 'Bhokardan, Arni, Pauni, Peddabankur, Dhulikatta, Ter, Malhar, Kahali, etc., have not yielded any noticeable evidence of the post-Satavahana settlements' and that there are no indications, at least in the present state of our knowledge, that the coins of the Satavahanas, Western Kshatrapas, Kushanas and Guptas, which have been reported from sites belonging to the Vakataka territory, '*remained in circulation during the two centuries of the Vakataka rule as well*[58]". According to him, "a viable and meaningful explanation of this characteristic economic phenomenon of the reign of the Vakatakas, viz., the absence of money, may be sought in the large scale mechanism of land-grants, growth of small village settlements and the relative non-urban economy[59]". Actually, these are very important conclusions of Shrimali drawn after a careful study of all the known Vakataka inscriptions. But to argue for the total absence of money for such a dynasty, which ruled the Deccan and Central India for about 250 years, does not seem reasonable. How could any dynasty function without currency? Such a situation is not possible. Further, Shrimali recognizes that earlier and other post -Satavahana powers 'have indeed left significant numismatic evidence of their regimes'[60]. Furthermore, the fact that the Vakatakas did not strike any coins is in itself a proof that earlier and other contemporary currencies were in circulation in their kingdom. His argument that there is no 'noticeable evidence' of the post-Satavahana settlements in some areas of the Vakataka kingdom

does not prove anything, for, as he himself believes, the territory under their jurisdiction 'comprised of a vast land of over thirty districts of the present Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh[61]'. Also, the list of the Vakataka territories provided by him is highly exaggerated and going by the extant evidences, the Vakatakas had nothing to do with many of them[62]. However, as his inscriptional study suggests, there is no denying the fact that the Vakataka rule in parts of Central India and Northern Deccan exhibits growth of small village settlements and relative decline of urban economy[63]. The genesis of this economic phenomenon may be sought in the large scale mechanism of land-grants of the Vakatakas, most of which were given to the Brahmanas[64]. While huge cash donations and gifts of cows, elephants, houses, etc., as well as donations of villages with privileges, are known from the Satavahana inscriptions of the second century A.D.,[65] almost complete dissociation between money and land-grants that one notices in the Vakataka inscriptions indicates the comparative paucity of coins during their rule. All the known Vakataka grants numbering 40/41, record donations of at least 25 villages of which 11 figure in the inscriptions of Pravarasena II (c.410/15 to 445/50) alone[66]. Further, that many charters also record donations of land[67] which vary from 20 *nivartanas* to 8000 *nivartanas* by the royal measure[68] suggest that the pressure on land was not much in the Vakataka kingdom. This resulted in the obvious growth of agriculture-based rural settlements. This evidence is indicative of the fact that in the Vakataka kingdom the growth of self-sufficient economic units precluded the use of coins by the rural peasantry thereby making the use of money less important. It is against this economic background of the Vakatakas that the problem of their currency should be studied. Also, in the light of this economic condition, the comparative paucity or the complete non-availability of their own currency may be understood. It is also possible to connect

the paucity of coinage in the Vakataka kingdom with the increasing feudal trends in the political and economic life of the country.

To sum up, the problem of the Vakataka coins is passing through the same stage as in the age of K. P. Jayaswal, who attributed a coin to Pravarasena and raised the edifice of the Vakataka coinage on that basis. For sometime his suggestion was widely discussed but ultimately it was proved that the particular coin belonged to Virasena, a non-Vakataka ruler. In the same way, A. M. Shastri has attributed two copper coins to Narendrasena and one copper coin to Prthivshena and Prashant P. Kulkarni has attributed one copper coin to Pravarasena. The example of the coin of Virasena attributed by Jayaswal to Pravarasena shows how hazardous it is to hypothesize on the basis of meagre evidence.

Thus, we observe that the question of the existence of the currency of an extensive kingdom, as the Vakataka kingdom was, cannot be decided by one or two copper coins. In fact no credence should be given to these coins unless they are obtained from regular archaeological excavations or unless their authenticity is proved by detailed investigation. Further, it is to be borne in mind that the coins of earlier and contemporary dynasties were in circulation in the Vakataka kingdom. A study of their known inscriptions indicate the comparative paucity of coins resulting in the large scale mechanism of land-grants, growth of small village settlements and relatively declining urban economy.

References

1. We, however, do not agree with the view of A. M. Shastri that the Vakatakas rose to power with a pan-India image and impact during the fourth- fifth centuries A.D. Cf. his *Vakatakas-Sources and History* (henceforth *VSH*), New Delhi, 1997, pp. 136,149,213.
2. In a few Puranas, the Vakatakas are mentioned along with Central Indian dynasties and are styled as Vindhyakas or 'the Vindhyan people'. The first king of the dynasty is meaningfully called by the name VindhyaSakti, (the power of the Vindhyas). Cf. F. E. Pargiter, *The Purana Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, Oxford, 1913, Reprint, Varanasi, 1962, p. 50.
3. As pointed out by A. M. Shastri, they initially (up to the time of Prthivishena I) controlled the Vindhya region of Madhya Pradesh as well (VSH; p. 178).
4. A copper-plate record of Devasena, the penultimate member of the Vatsagulma branch of the dynasty, has been reported from Bidar and appears to record the grant of a village situated nearby. For details about this record cf. A.M. Shastri, *Early History of the Deccan: Problems and Perspectives*, Delhi, 1987, pp. 71- 74.
5. In fact, there are only two matrimonial alliances involving the marriages of the Naga and the imperial Gupta princesses with two Vakataka kings that are mentioned in the inscriptions of the main branch. Yet another matrimonial alliance involving the marriage of a Vakataka princess with a Gupta prince is known from the recently discovered Ramtek Prabhavatigypta Memorial Stone Inscription in which it is said that Ghatotkachagupta, a son of Chandragupta II, married a daughter of his sister Prabhavatigupta (*bhagineyi*), i.e. his own niece. However, the name of the mother of Ghatotkachagupta and Vakataka wife are not known.

6. Many Vishnukundin inscriptions aver that King Vikramendravarman I had adorned by his birth the twin families of the Vishnukundins and the Vakatakas.
7. That the King of Kadamba, Simhavarman was anointed by the Vilitaka King Sarvasena II has been clearly stated in the Mudigere copper-plate grant of his fifth regnal year.
8. V. V. Mirashi, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. V: *Inscriptions of the Vakatakas*, Ootacamund, 1963, Introduction, p. xxv.
9. A.S. Altekar, *Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard*, Bombay, 1954; ibidem, *The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, Banaras, 1957; S. R. Goyal, *An Introduction to Gupta Numismatics, Jodhpur*, 1994.
10. H. V. Trivedi, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Naga Kings of Padmavati*, Gwalior, 1957.
11. R. Subrahmanyam, *A Catalogue of the Ikshvaku Coins in the Andhra Pradesh Government Museum*, Hyderabad, 1962.
12. M. Rama Rao, *Vishnukundin Coins in the Andhra Pradesh Government Museum*, Hyderabad, 1963.
13. Cf. *VSH,* p. 136.
14. E. J. Rapson, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, the Western Ksatrapas, the Traikutaka Dynasty and the "Bodhi" Dynasty*, New Delhi, Reprint, 1975, pp. clviii-clix.
15. 'The Edenga Hoard', Cf. JNSI; I, pp. 29-30.
16. Among the early historians, it was only K. P. Jayaswal (History of India: c. 150 A.D. to 350 A.D., extension of the Vakataka rule north of the Vindhyas during the reigns of the early Vakataka rulers Pravarasena I and Rudrasena I. Again, even supposing that the readings of the dates on these coins are correct, they may not refer to the era of 248 A.C. That era was not started by the Vakatakas and

has not been used in dating any Vakataka grants. All inscriptions of the Vakatakas are dated in regnal years. As a matter of fact, the era was introduced in Vidarbha after the downfall of the Vakatakas. Thus, according to Altekar and Mirashi, these coins can not be attributed to any Vakataka king.

Lahore, 1933, pp. 71- 73, Pl. III) who believed that the Vakatakas had issued their own coins. He attributed some coins of north Indian fabric to the Vakatakas. The coin with the legend *Pravarasenasya* bears, according to Jayaswal, the date 76, and that having the legend Rudra, the date 100. Jayaswal referred these dates to the so-called Kalachuri-Chedi era commencing in 248 A.C., which, according to him, was really started by the Vakatakas. But Jayaswal's readings and interpretations have been disputed by other scholars. A. S. Altekar (JNSI, V, pp. 130-31) has shown that the coin attributed to Pravarasena is really that of Virasena. The symbols which Jayaswal supposed as the date 76 are really the branches of a tree in railing. As for the coins of Rudrasena I, what he considered to be the letters Rudra is really the triratna symbol. The symbol supposed to denote the date 100 is clearly a *svastika*. As pointed out by V. V. Mirashi also (op. cit., p. xiv), if Jayaswal's readings of the legends and dates and the identification of the era are correct, then these coins may indicate the

17. A. M. Shastri, 'Unique Coin of Vakataka Prithivishena (II?)', in *Indian Coin Society Newsletter*, No.4, Nagpur, October 1990, p. 2.
18. A.M. Shastri (ed.), *The Age of the Vakatakas*, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 287-88. Some copper coins of Narendrasena in the collection of R. C. Thakur have also been reported recently (H. D. Pathak and R. C. Thakur, 'Rare Variety Coins of Vakataka Dynasty', JNSI; LXVII, 2005, pp. 85-

87). These are found from Ujjain and Mahidapur which were included in the territory of the Vakatakas. According to Pathak and Thakur, the availability of the full legend *Narendra* on these coins allays the doubts of Shastri. Prashant P. Kulkarni also refers to a paper of Ellen M. Raven which brings to light a coin of Narendrasena with a better legend ('Coins of the Vakatakas', Numismatic Digest, Vol. 25-26, 2001-2002, p. 70).

19. Shastri, *op. cit.,* p. 289.
20. *Ibid*., After A. M. Shastri Pathak and Thakur (*op. cit*., pp. 85-86) have also claimed to have acquired some copper coins of *jaya* and *vrddhi* legends which, according to them, were used for Prthivishena.
21. *Ibid.,* pp. 289-90.
22. A. H. Siddiqui, in *Oriental Numismatic Studies*, Vol. I, 1996, pp. 99-105. But, according to Devendra Handa, the editor of the journal, "The coins attributed to the Vakatakas in this paper (of Siddiqui) do not admit of averred readings and differ in fabric, devices and palaeography from the Vakataka coins published by Professor Shastri. The author has recalled Sebaka coins for similarities but seems to have missed the palaeographic evidence to consider the coins under consideration as the Vakataka coins" (Editorial Note, p. 105). Also see Shankar Goyal, *Ancient Indian Numismatics: A Historiographical Study*, Jodhpur, 1998, pp. 183-84.
23. Kulkarni, *op. cit*., pp. 66-69.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 69- 70.
25. Shastri, *op. cit*., p. 290.
26. Kulkarni, *op. cit*., pp. 74- 75.
27. *VSH*, p. 144.
28. Kulkarni, *op. cit*., p. 65.
29. *Ibid.*

30. Romila, Thapar, *A History of India*, Vol. I, New Delhi, 1966, p. 157.
31. *VSH;* pp. 137, 213; Kulkarni, *op. cit*., p. 66.
32. Walter M, Spink, "The *Vakataka Caves at Ajanta and Their Successors'*, in Reappraising Gupta History for 5. R. Goyal, eds. B. Ch. Chhabra, P. K. Agrawala, Ashvini Agrawal and Shankar Goyal, New Delhi, 1992, p. 248.
33. *Ibid*.
34. Shankar Goyal, *Harsha : A Multidisciplinary Political Study*, Jodhpur, 2006, p. 239.
35. Romila Thapar, *The Penguin History of Early India*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 281.
36. Thapar, *A History of India*, I, *op. cit*., p. 136.
37. K. M. Shrimali, '*Some Aspects of the Economy of the Vakatakas'*, in Shastri (ed.), *op. cit*., p.103.
38. Cf. Shankar Goyal, 'Historiography of the Vakataka-Gupta Relations', App. in S. R. Goyal, *A History of the Vakataka-Gupta Relations, Jodhpur*, 2006, pp. 141-42.
39. Kulkarni, *op. cit*., p. 78.
40. *Ibid*., p. 75.
41. *Ibid*., p. 71. Shastri also published this coin of Prthivishena (II?) earlier in October 1990. Cf. fn.17.
42. Mirashi, *op. cit.,* pp. 38-42; *VSH*; pp. 23-25.
43. *VSH*; pp.125-35; S. R. Goyal, *Ancient Indian Inscriptions: Recent Finds and New Interpretations*, Jodhpur, 2005, pp. 221-25.
44. The name is mentioned in the Mathura inscription of the Kushana King Huvishka and the Manusmrti - both of which are usually dated to the second century A.D.
45. Buddhaghosha's *Samantapasadika* refers to the punch-marked silver coins as *nila-kahapana* for their bluish accumulation in course of time. Cf. C. D. Chatterjee, 'Some Numismatic Data in Pali Literature', *Buddhistic Studies*, ed.

B. C. Law, Calcutta, 1931, Ch. XV; idem, 'Some New Numismatic Terms in Pali Texts', *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society,* VI, 1933, pp. 156-57.

46. A. M. Shastri, his 'Presidential Address', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1978, II, pp. 968-69; cf. also his *VSH*; p. 143.
47. P. L. Gupta, 'Fabrication of Ancient Punch-Marked Coins', *Indian Numismatic Chronicle*, III, p. 133.
48. V.S. Agrawala, 'Coin Data in Divyavadana', *Indian Numismatic Chronicle, III*, pp.148-150.
49. Cf. *VSH*; p. 146. Also see I. K. Sarma, *Coinage of the Satavahana Empire*, Delhi, 1980, pp. 37-38; Mala Dutta, *A Study of the Satavahana Coinage*, New Delhi, 1990, Chs.2 and 4; S. R. Goyal, *The Coinage of Ancient India*, Jodhpur, 1995, pp. 299-300,310-14.
50. Ibid.
51. Cf. *Indian Archaeology-A Review*, 1972- 73, p. 55.
52. Bal Chandra Jain, *Inventory of the Hoards and Finds of Coins and Seals from Madhya Pradesh*, Varanasi, 1957, pp. 11-14; S. R. Goyal, *op. cit*., p. 360.
53. V. V. Mirashi, '*Dahigaon Hoard of Kshatrapa and Traikutaka Coins'*, *JNSI; XXXV*, pp. 118- 22; idem, *Literary and Historical Studies in Indology*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 180-84.
54. *VSH*; p. 146; K. M. Shrimali, op. cit., p.102; S. R. Goyal, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. In S.B. Deo and Jagatpati Joshi, *Pauni Excavations* (1969-70), Nagpur, 1972, p. 34.
58. Shrimali, op. cit., p.103. Also see his 'Pattern of Settlements under the Vakatakas', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 44th Session, Burdwan, 1983, pp.101-12.

59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. *Ibid*. p. 101.
62. A. M. Shastri's 'Editorial Note' in Shrimali, *op. cit*., p. 112, n. 4.
63. For details cf. Shrimali, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-15; also see his Agrarian Structure in Central India and the Northern Deccan (c. A.D. 300-500): A Study of Vakataka Inscriptions, New Delhi, 1987, App. VII.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 104; also Nandini Sinha Kapur, 'State Formation in Vidarbha : The Case of the Eastern Vakatakas', *The Indian Historical Review*, XXXII, 2, July 2005, pp. 21-25.
65. Nasik Cave inscriptions of Gautamiputra Satakarni (years 18 and 24=c. 124 and c. 130 A.D. respectively); Karle Cave inscription of VasishthIputra pulumavi (year 7 = c. 137 A.D.) and Nasik Cave inscription of the same ruler (year 22= c.152 A.D.).
66. Inscriptions of the main branch of the Vakatakas, which explicitly record donations of villages, include the following: Mandhal plates (year 5) of Rudrasena II; Pune plates (year 13) of Prabhavatigupta; Jamb plates (year 2), Belora charter :(year 11), Mandhal plates (years 16 and 17), Chammak plates (year 18), Siwani plates (year 18), Miregaon charter (year20), Indore plates (year 23), Tirodi plates (year 23) and Balaghat plate all of Pravarasena II; Bamhani charter of the time of Narendrasena; Mandhal plates (year 2), Mandhal plates (year 10) and Mahurjhari plates (year 17) of Prthivishena II. Among the inscriptions of the Vatsagulma branch of the Vakatakas, which mention donations of villages, are included: Washim plates (year 37) of Vindhyasakti II; India Office plate and Bidar plates (year 5) of Devasena; and Thalner grant (year 3) of Harishena.

67. Masod plates (year 19), Dudia plates (year 23), Wadgaon plates (year 25), Yawatmal plates (year 26), Pat tan plates (year 27), Tigaon plates (year 29) and Pauni plates (year 32) of Pravarasena II and Thalner grant of Harishena (year 3) record donations of land in different villages of the Vakataka kingdom.
68. One nivartana of land was about 3/4, 2, 2 1/4, 3 or 4 3/4 acres according to different authorities (EI; XXVIII, p. 245). It differed in different parts of the country and at different periods of history.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KOSI REGION FROM LITERARY SOURCES

Dr. Anjana Pathak
Senior Lecturer
Department of History, R.M.College, Saharsa, Bihar

The Kosi region enjoys a pride of place in ancient Indian History. The Kosi region has been adequately discussed in the ancient Sanskrit literature. Detailed information about the importance of Kosi region are available in religious literatures such as Balmikiya Ramayan, Anushasana Parva, Vana Parva, Adi Parva, Bhishma Parva and Sabha Parva of Mahabharata, Srimad Bhagwat Gita, Vishnu Purana, Brahamand Purana, Matysa Purana, Kurma Purana, Varah Purana, Nardiya Purana, Padma Purana etc.

The ancient name of the Kosi River was Kaushiki. One reference with respect to the origin of the Kaushiki had been mentioned in the Balmikiya Ramayana. It has been mentioned that when Vishwamitra, along with Rama and Lakshmana, was going to Mithilapuri from Sidhashram, he narrated the history of his dynasty at the Bank of Sona. In this context, he also related to them the story of his elder sister Satyawati. Satyawati got married to Richikmuni and after the death of her husband, she bodily went to heaven and changed her physical form into a river called 'Kaushiki'[1]. Vishwamitra further pointed out, that on account of his being affectionate to his sister, he began to reside in an ashram at the bank of the Kaushiki[2]. Balmiki Ramayan also states that Vishwamitra remained in deep meditative position for one thousand years on the bank of the Kaushiki and as a consequence of this, the entire creation trembled[3].

Vishwamitra again went from Kaushiki ashram to Sidhashram for doing yajna and took the help of Rama and Lakshman in completing the yajna[4]. After listening to the history of Vishwamitra's dynasty, all the saints present openly admired the Kaushiki[5].

The story about the origin of the Kaushiki as mentioned in the Balmikiya Ramayana is corroborated by the Vishnu Purana – though with a different narration as regards the context. Vishnu Purana mentions that Richik, who belonged to Bhargava dynasty, was very aged and describes him as a short-tempered man. It is for this reason that Satyawati's father Gadhi was not ready to offer his daughter in marriage to Richikmuni. So, Gadhi imposed a very hard condition for offering Satyawati in marriage. After fulfilling the said condition 'Richik married Satyawati[7]. It is said that due to his old age Richikmuni died and Satyawati followed her husband and transformed herself into a river called 'Kaushiki'[8]. There is a different story in the Mahabharata regarding the origin of the Kaushiki. Mahabharata claims that the great saint Vishwamitra, to facilitate his answering the calls of nature and performing his daily ablutions, constructed a river near his ashram, and this river was thus known as Kaushiki[9]. From references to Kaushiki found in the Mahabharata, it appears that Vishwamitra himself constructed the Kaushiki river[10]. In another reference of the Mahabharata, it has been said that after the birth of Shakuntala to Menaka, Vishwamitra went to his ashram situated on the bank of the river Kaushiki[11]. In the Adi Parva of Mahabharata, it has been mentioned, in another context, that once when there was a famine, Vishwamitra came to his Ashram, situated on the bank of the Kaushiki, and named Kaushiki as 'Para'[12]. Due to his hard meditation on the banks of Kaushiki, Vishwamitra acquired the position of a 'Bramharshi' from 'Rajarshi'[13]. This fact stated in Balmikiya Ramayan is further confirmed by the Mahabharata. In the Bhishma Parva of Mahabharata there are references to many rivers among which Kaushiki is one[14].

There is a detailed reference to Kaushiki and the places of pilgrimage under its areas in the Van Parva of Mahabharata. The main places of pilgrimage in the Kaushiki region are Kushikashram, Kaushiki, Champakaranya, Jyeshthil, Kanyasamwed, Nischirasangam, Vashisthasmam, DeokutShikhar, Stankund, Tamraruntirtha, NandiniKoop, Kalikasangam, UrvashiTirtha, Kumbhakarnashram and Kokamukh[15]. According to the Mahabharata, the aforesaid places of pilgrimage, under the region of the Kaushiki, begin from Nepal and serially end at Kokamukha. Detailed information about the importance of these places of pilgrimages referred by the Mahabharata authenticates the fact that places attached with these shrines must have been the centre of glorious cultures. The present day Varaha Kshetra would have been the Kokamukhshene in the past, since here the worship and visit of Vamanashram Lord is of great importance. In the Mahabharata rules have mentioned for visiting Kushikashram, a holy place where all sorts of sins are washed away. Thereafter is the reference to visiting the holy place of the Kaushiki[16]. It has been said that by visiting the Kaushiki shrine even the most heinous sins are washed away[17]. After mentioning the holy place Kaushiki, there are references to Champakaranya shrines. It has been pointed out that by staying overnight at this holy place is equivalent to the donation of one thousand cows[18]. The meaning of Champakaranya, (Champaran), is quite elusive. In the ancient time, Champa was the capital of Anga Rajya. Bhagalpur of today was Champa during the ancient period. The forest of Champa on the Northern side of the Ganga was known as Champaranya. This region, till the advent of the Britishers, was a vast forest and was full of 'Kash' and 'Paters'. Reference of Champakaranya together with Videh Rajya has been made in the 'Shakti Sangam Tantra'. It has been clearly stated here that Videh lands (i.e Mithila) were spread up to Gandak in the west; up to the last point of Champakaranya in the east; up

to the bank of the Ganges in the south; up to the border of Nepal in the north[20].

In the north western point of this Champakaranya, there was a holy place dedicated to Saraswati. Even to this day, there exists a Champakeshwar Mahadev temple. The idol of goddess Champawati in Singhashwar block of Saharsa division is a proof of this and that in no way this area was having any affiliation with Champaran. In the Van Parva of Mahabharata, it has been said that there was a holy place known as Vashisthashram near Nischira River, where at the peak of Deokut mountain stood[21]. Probably the Nischira River was the Indrawati of the present day Nepal and Deokut top of the Himalaya was Gaurishankar top. In one Parva of the Mahabharata after referring to the Deokut top, rules of visiting Kaushiki religious places are mentioned. In course of mentioning the significance of this holy place, it has been said in the Mahabharata that it was a royal shrine and one who resides here reaps the benefit of having completed Ashwamedha yagna[22]. The confluence of Sun Kosi, Arun Kosi and Timar Kosi must have been known as Kaushikihrid,. Some people are of the view that Kushha village of Birpur subdivision under the Kosi division was Kaushik Ashram and it is possible that this Kaushik Ashram was itself the Kaushikihrid. After Kaushhikihrid comes the Veerashram holy place which has been known also as Kumartirth. Veerashram may be the Birpur sub-division of the present Kosi division and Kumartirtha may be the KumarKhand block of Madhepura district.

The importance of Kosi has been adequately explained in 'Padma Purana'. In one of the chapters of the Padma Purana, it has been pointed out that after worshipping Vishnu in Baman Asharam, one should undertake a journey to Bharat Asram[23]. Kaushiki region has been mentioned in the Padma Purana. Even

in many other Puranas, references to the Kushiki region are available. Varah Purana has mentions about Kokamukh Tirtha and other adjacent areas[24]. This indicates that, as mentioned by the Varaha Purana, they are situated in the mid-valley between the Dudh Kosi and Arun Kosi[25]. One holy place named 'Badami' has been mentioned in the Varaha Purana which is considered as a rare place even for the gods as this shrine helps one to cross the vast sea of worldly attachments to reach the heavens[26]. In the second chapter of the Matsya Purana, reference to some rivers including Kaushiki has been made[27]. In the 51st chapter of Matsya Purana, specific reference to Kaushiki is available[28]. In the 16th chapter of Brahmanda Purana, Kaushiki has been referred to[29]. In the 13th chapter of this Purana, Kaushikihrid has been metioned[30]. Likewise, the 45th chapter of Vayu Purana speaks about the Kaushiki[31]. In Vamana Purana, the confluence of the Ganga and the Kosi has been regarded as a great holy place[32]. In the same Vamana Purana, reference has been made to Hansa Mahadeva on the bank of the Mahakosi[33]. In the 47th chapter of the Kurma Purana, Kaushiki has been referred to[34]. The importance of the confluence of the Kaushiki has been mentioned is the Uttarakhand of Naradiya Purana[35]. It has been said here that one attains 'Indraloka'(a realm in the heavens) after taking a bath at the confluence of the Kaushiki[36].

In the first chapter of Shrimad Bhagawata, reference to Kaushiki is available[37]. In Anushasana Parva of the Mahabharata, the significance of taking a bath in the Kaushiki has been mentioned[38]. In another context, it is said that the Parva team of saints and kings, under the leadership of Lord Indra, started a journey from Pravash Tirtha and after visiting various religious places finally went to Kaushiki Tirtha. The team consisted of saints like Bhrigu, Vashistha, Galava, Kashyapa, Gautama, Vishwamitra, Jamadagni, Asthaka, Bharadwaja, Arundhati and

Kings like Shibi, Dilipa, Nahusha, Ambarisha, Yayati and Dhundhmar Puru.[39]. In the Sabha Parva of Mahabharata it has been said that the king of Paundra state, Vasudeo together with all the kings of alluvial lands the Kaushiki defeated by Bhima[40]. In the Vana Parva of the Mahabharata, it has been written that by the side of the Ashram of Vishwamitra situated on the banks of Kaushiki the Ashram of Vibhandaka Rishi, a descent of Kashyapa Rishi, also existed. Shravyashringa, the son of that Vibhandaka Rishi, was a devoted hermit and a personification of celibacy. At that time, Romapada was the King of Champa and he had only one daughter Shanta. After being impressed with Shrabyashringa, he wanted to offer his daughter in marriage to Shravyashringa who however was not ready for marriage. Rompada sent a team of fairies to the Ashram of Vibhandaka Rishi on the bank of the Kaushiki, for impressing Shravyashringa in order to make him accept the marriage. The team of fairies might have come to the confluence of the Ganges and the Kaushiki through water ways of the Ganges and reached the Ashram of Vibhandak Rishi with the help of currents of the Kaushiki. The team of fairies succeeded in pursuing Shrabyashringa. Shrabyashringa reached Champa the capital of Anga along with the team of fairies by sailing in boats and married Shanta and after the birth of a son he returned to his father's hermitage[41]. The ashram of Shrabyashringa was at Singheshwar under the present district of Madhepura and the place has been re-named as Singheshwar.

In the ancient literature, Kokamukh, the holy place, and it's confluence have been specifically mentioned. The confluence of Kokamukh is at that place where a rivulet named Ishi unites Kosi on its left side. On the south side of the Kokamukh confluence, at a short distance, is a Varaha shrine. The most ancient reference about this shrine is available in Mahabharata[42].

It has been mentioned in the Varaha Purana that no other place on the earth is as sacred as the Kokamukh[43]. According to Varaha Purana, there was one place in the Varaha region where all sins are washed away and the water stream here directly falls in the Kaushiki[44].

It has also been said that at the confluence of one water resource falling in the Kaushiki, there was a holy place namely Matang. It has been further pointed out that the religious place Bajrabhaw was at that site where another water resource unites with the Kaushiki. But among all these religious places, the confluence of Koka has been treated as the most sacred one. In the region Matasya Shila is the place where water resources from three sides fall in the Kaushiki. The jurisdiction of Kokamukh as has been pointed out was within the circumference of more than 5 'yojan'. In the 1500 year-old records of the Gupta period one finds reference to the legendary glory of Kokamuk Varaha Shrine. In the year 543 Deogupta of Gupta period one copper plate was carved out which is known as Damodarpur copper plate. In this copper plate, a white statue of Lord Varaha has been explicitly displayed. Through this plate information is available that Deogupta donated a big portion of land for constructing the temple of Lord Swet Varah in the Kokamukh forest[45] for enhancing the virtues of his mother.

It is fact that the ancient name of Purnea was Pundravardhan. Kulputra of Ayodhya Amritdeo issued this communiqué on this copper plate[46]. In Damodarpur one copper plate carved out by the Gupta King Budha Gupta was found though in this plate the script about the definite date is destroyed. Even then the archaeologists have considered the date to be between 165 and 180 of the Gupta era, meaning thereby that this copper plate is older than the plate of Deo Gupta by 50 to 64 years. The

plate in question might have been written when Pundravardhan Bhukti was under the charge of one man named Uprik Jaydutta. This copper plate was written by Prabhupal Seth under the orders of Jay Datta. Lands near Donga village were donated for construction of the temple and installing the statue of Sweta Varaha of Kokamukh probably at the time of carving out both the copper plates. RibhuPal was alive and he played role in issuing both the communiqués. Prabhupal Seth appointed by JayDatta was Adhikarnik of 'SandakAdhisthan' and 'NagarSeth' there[47].

In the above copper plate the names of Uprik Jayadatta, "Nagar Seth, RivuPal, Sarthvah I Vasumitra, PrathamKulik, Vara Datta, Prathama Kayastha, Vipra Pal, Pundravardhana Bhukti, Kotiwarth Vishay, Kokamukha Swami, Sweta Varaha Swami, Dongagram" etc are so clear that there is no doubt that this copper plate is related only with the Varaha region of the Kosi. It has been proved from this plate that both Kokamukh and Sweta Varaha's temples were in the area and both the shrines were famous. It is also clear that the statue of Varaha was established on the bank of the Kaushiki in the same way as statues of Varaha were erected at different places during the Gupta period[48].

From the Sabha Parva of Mahabharata, it is known that Pandavas had to cross the Kosi river for coming down to Biratpur and as such it may be inferred that Biratpur was situated on the western side of the Kosi river at that time. Even today, Viratpur village exists in the district of Saharsa[49]. Some persons are of the view that Biratpur is situated in Haryana. But there is no truth in this assertion. The capital of Kauravas was at Hastinapur near Delhi and Haryana was adjacent to it. As such for the purpose of remaining on exile, this place might not have been safe for the Pandavas. Biratpur of Saharsa situated at

a very far distance from Hastinpur would have been a safer place for Pandvas for remaining on exile.

The Kosi region was enjoying special importance during the Buddha period. It is confirmed from Buddhist literature that Buddhism was spread sufficiently in the Kosi region. In Angutar Nikay, it has been said that at Angotara Japad, there was one 'ApanNigam' which Buddha visited for preaching[50]. In the ancient times, Anga Pradesh was consisting of areas of Bhagalpur and Angotarap i.e the areas in the North were the Kosi region where ApanNigam existed. It is just possible that ApanNigam might have been the capital of Angotarap Janpad[51]. In course of studying economic history of the ancient India, it becomes clear that Nigam, shrines etc were used to be the centre of economic activities. Apan Nigam was the centre of economic activities of 'Angotarap'. In the neighboring areas of Saharsa, there were thickly populated villages and for regulating economic activities these thickly populated villages and towns were established around the centres[52].

The history of the Kosi region is full of glory. Due to geographical factors, this region has played roles in the political, social, economic and cultural history of India since ancient times. The region is situated on the bank of the highway which goes from the east to the west. The means of communication had not been only this highway. There were also a large number of rivers in the region. There rivers were used for some simple means of transportation. This was the main reason why the coming down to Tirhut from Bengal was very easy by crossing Kosi and Gandak on the bank of the Ganges. For moving the army and bringing commercial goods from one place to another the water ways were the most suitable and the safest. Due to this importance of the Kosi region in the entire medieval

periods, Kosi River remained the undisputed border between Bengal and Tirhut[53]. On the same highway and water ways north Bhagalpur i.e. the present Kosi Division, North Munger and present Purnea Division existed and all these places were collectively known as the Kosi region. In his book 'Eastern India', Martin calls the Jalalgarh part of Purnea division as the frontier outpost[54]. The highway road between Bengal and Tirhut passing through the Kosi region was not only important for commercial purposes but also useful against external aggression. This is the main reason why this region has been referred to in all important political happenings[55].

The Kosi region was ravaged and devastated by the Kosi river. The holy places and ashrams which have been discussed in the Mahabharata and Puranas may be identified even today. This is a great challenge for cultural researchers and investigators. In this reason, there are large remains of Mathas, Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas found underground and they have become the landscape of the Kosi soil and waiting for the shovels of the archaeologists. If serious efforts are made the face of the rich cultural heritage of this region will positively emerge.

References

1. *Balmiki Ramayan*, Kand-1, Sarg 34, Shlok 7-11.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Balmiki Ramayan*, Kand-1, Sarg 63, Shlok - 15.
4. *Balmiki Ramayan*, Kand-1, Sarg 34, Shlok - 12.
5. *Balmiki Ramayan*, Kand-1, Sarg 34, Shlok - 21.
6. *Vishnu Puran* — Ansh-4, Chapter 6, Shlok — 12-16
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid*.

9. *Mahabharat, Adi Parva*, Chapter 72, Shlok – 30
10. *Balmiki Ramayan*, Kand-1, Sarg 63, Shlok - 15
11. *Mahabharat, Adi Parva*, Chapter 73, Shlok – 16
12. *Mahabharat, Adi Parva*, Chapter 72, Shlok – 32
13. *Mahabharat, Vana Parva*, Chapter 88, Shlok – 13
14. *Mahabharat, Bhishma Parva*, Chapter 9, Shlok – 18
15. *Mahabharat*, *Vana Parva*, Chapter 84, Shlok – 131 to 158
16. *Mahabhara*t, *Vana Parva*, Chapter 84, Shlok – 133
17. *Ibid*.
18. *Ibid*.
19. *Shakti Sangam* Tantra, Parichhed – 7, Shlok – 27.
20. *Ibid*.
21. *Mahabharat*, Vana Parva, Chapter 84, Shlok – 142 to 143
22. *Ibid*.
23. *Padma Purana, Swarga Khanda*, Chapter 38, Shlok – 49 – 67.
24. *Varah Puraan*, Chapter 141, Shlok – 1 to 20.
25. *Ibid*.
26. *Matsya Puran*, Chapter 114, Shlok – 22.
27. *Matsya Puran*, Chapter 22, Shlok – 63.
28. *Matsya Puran*, Chapter 51, Shlok – 14.
29. *Brahmanda Purana*, Anushargapada, Chapter 16, Shlok – 26.
30. *Brahmanad Purana*, Upodghatapada, Chapter 13, Shlok – 109.
31. *Vayu Purana*, Chapter 45, Shlok – 96.
32. *Vamana Purana*, Parishitha – 2 – 735.
33. *Vamaan Purana*, Chapter 57, Shlok – 60.
34. *Kurma Purana*, Chapter 47, Shlok – 30.
35. *Naradiya Purana,* UttaraKhand, Chapter 41, Shlok – 46 – 47.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Shri Mad Bhagwata*, Prathama Skandha, Chapter 18.

38. *Mahabharata*, Anushasana Parva, Chapter 25, Shlok – 31.
39. *Mahabharata*, Anushasana Parva, Chapter 94, Shlok – 5 – 6
40. *Mahabharata*, Sabha Parva, Chapter 30, Shlok – 22.
41. *Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, Chapter 110 to 113.
42. *Mahabharata*, Anushasana Parva, Chapter 25, Shlok – 52.
43. *Varaha Purana*, Chapter 140, Shlok – 12 to 20.
44. *Ibid*.
45. *Prachin Bhartia Abhilekhon Ka Adhayayan* – Ed. Dr. Vasudev Upadhayay, page 81.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid*.
49. Saharsa District, Gazetteer – P.C. Ray Chaudhary, page – 16.
50. Ibid.
51. *See Buddha Charya* – Rahul Sanskritayan
52. *Ethnic Settlements in Ancient India* – S.B. Chaudhary, page – 164.
53. See – *History of Muslim Rule in Tirhut* – R.K. Chaudhary.
54. See – *Eastern India*, Volume – III, Martin.
55. See – *History of Bihar* – R.K. Chaudhary.

TEMPLES AND TREE CULT IN GAJAPATI DISTRICT

Dr. N.P. Panigrahi
Lecturer in History
M.K. Degree College, Gurandi, Gajapati

Indian Civilization since its inception has been in the Forests. Our rishis and sages led austere lives in Tapovan. Atharva Veda mentions that flora and fauna were parts of the Indian culture. From the earliest times, the herbal plants were identified. The great men of ayurveda like Charaka and Shushruta have written their treatise on the medicinal value of the herbal plants. In China, where herbal medicine is being practiced from times immemorial, the Chinese botanists have identified nearly 3,000 medicinal plants[1]. Now, of course, the Government of India has taken up, on a massive scale, the identification of herbal plants. About 10,000, years ago agriculture was born and man learned to recognize specific plants[2].

From the beginning of history, man has had an economic interest in the plants which formed part of his environment. This interest has been indispensable for his survival and the subsequent development from the early civilizations to our present urbanized societies. As civilization developed, men began to arrange and record their knowledge and started worshipping them. Moreover, from the earliest times since man learned to cultivate plants, the study of plants embraced the dropper methods of feeding, growing and propagating and the breeding and selection of better kinds.

Tree worship is the oldest religious concept of human society. This is a very early Indian cult and probably existed long before

the Indus Valley Civilization[3]. The sanctity of the tree is possibly to be associated with the beliefs of the Negrito inhabitants who appeared to have formed the earliest population of India[4]. During the Indus Valley Civilization worship of tree personified in human shape was in vogue. The representations on several seals give evidence to the prevalence of tree worship. Trees were worshipped because they were considered to be the abode of Gods and Goddesses. It is generally believed that the superior and powerful Gods live in groves and the demons in single trees. Temples were erected in some of the places where the tree had been regarded as the abode of the deity[5].

Gautam Buddha got his enlightenment under a Pipal tree which was thenceforth called "Bodhi Tree". The third Maurya Emperor Asoka sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to Ceylon with a branch of 'Pipal' tree to propagate Buddhist principles[6]. Tree worshipping is even now common in Orissa.

It is not possible to determine the origin of tree-worship in Orissa. The references in Oriya epics or purans like Laxmipuram, Mastya Puran, Vishnu Purana, Padma Purana, Bhagvat Gita, Brindavati Purana, Savitri Vrata Katha clearly show that the worship of trees must have appeared long back.

Of all the plants, few selected ones are considered as sacred by the Hindus. These are Ashwata, Bel, Banyan, Tulasi, Neem, Kadamba, Kusho, Apamarango, etc. The Hindus are of the view that a man who plants trees inside the boundary of temples or outside, attains salvation. The Hindu Purana like Agni Purana says "the plantation of trees and construction of temples are conducive to purgation of sin and enjoyment of prosperity". Vayu Purana states "He or she, who plants a banyan tree or an aswatha tree, never goes to hell". According to Matsyapurana,

if anybody plants at least one tree, he will be able to stay in the heaven of Indra for 30,000 years. Padmapurana states "Plants are like sons to a man without a son; therefore, plant aswatha tree, for it does the work of thousand sons[7]. Thus, people of Orissa worship trees and deities in temples seeking good luck, wealth, fortune, prosperity, driving away ghosts or evil spirits, warding off curse, recovery from diseases, for getting a good husband, for getting a place in heaven etc[8].

It is very difficult to pin-pointedly say the exact period when building temples started. At the beginning, Gods had no temples or shrines. Almost all of them were worshipped in the form of trees. There are numerous stories regarding the construction of temples. Gods or goddesses appeared in the dreams of the king or chieftain or priest or the village head man and demanded the building of temples in that particular area very close to the sacred tree. Accordingly, they built temples spending personal money and from the contribution of other subjects[9]. Some trees are worshipped as the representative of some of the deities.

Lord Krishna in Bhagavat Gita[10] says, "Among all the trees I am the Aswatha" (Ficus religiosa), which is the tree of God. The Aswatha is the Lord Vishnu and the Vata is Rudra or Lord Siva and Patasa is Brahma[11]. In most of the Siva and Vishnu temples of Gajapati district, we find the above mentioned trees near the temples. The Buddhists specially honour the tree as the species under which Buddha attained his enlightenment. The twigs of this are indispensable in all sacred fires or 'Homo' sacrificial offerings to the Gods[12]. Worship of this tree is presently found in Blunkewar Temple, Ramalingeswar Temple, Panchu Lingeswar Temple and Dhabaleswar Temple. Before entering into the temple, devotees pour water at the roof of the tree, throw flower, rice, turmeric and milk on it. In the month

of Kartik, the women worship these trees and circumambulate them 21 times with folded hands and adhonis. The Brahmins assert that untold blessings will be showered upon anyone who is willing to endure the discomfort of fasting[13].

Like Aswatha, Banyan (Ficus indica) and Bel (Aegle marmelos) are considered sacred trees. These trees are worshipped on Mondays and people offer its leaves to Lord Shiva during workship[14]. On the day of the Maha Sivarathri, the people of this region offer 1001 bel leaves to Lord Siva at various Siva temples. Thus, this tree is closely associated with Lord Siva. Similarly branches of Banyan tree with bearing fruits worshipped during solemn Trinath Mela or ceremony of the three Gods - Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara[15-] is common. It is mainly observed on Sunday evenings in the Trinath temple. An offering of a single leaf of bel tree is believed to annihilate the sins committed during the previous births.

The devotees of Lord Vishnu very commonly worshipped Tulasi (Ocinum Sanctum). This plant is most carefully tended in front of the Vishnu Temples and Hanuman Temples of this district. The marriage of the Tulasi with the God Vishnu is celebrated in every Hindu Brahmin family during the month of Kartik[16]. The devotees of Vishnu wear garland of Tulasi and carry the rosary of Tulasi. It is very common custom in Parlakhemundi and its surroundings to place a sprig of Tulasi near the head of the dying person [17]. This Tulasi worship is found in the following temples of Parlakhemundi namely Bada Radha Kanta Math, Sano Radhakant Math or Nrsingha Math (Karan Street), Devi Math (Deo Street), Patharabaji Math (Sundhi Street), Chaitanya Math (Big Brahmin Street), Rashik Raj Math (Karan Street), Gundhicha Math, Loknathsahu Math (Rajguru Street), Patro Math (B.B. Street), Parichha Math, Adhikari Math

and Panigrahi Math (Gopini Street). In the above mentioned places, trees are planted in the centre of the courtyard or in front of the temples on an elevated basement called Tulasi Math.

Similarly, Kusha grass (Egragrostics cynosuroides) is very sacred and used in many religious ceremonies. It is worshipped in water and food during solar and lunar eclipses. When Aswtha and Banya trees are worshipped as the representatives of Hari and Hara, the neem tree or numba (Melia azadinachte) is considered very sacred and said to represent Sakti Goddess namely Durga, Kali, Laxmi, Saraswati, Thakurani, Uma and Parvati. In Parlakhemundi, the district headquarters of Gajapati District, there are '8' Sakti centres where neem trees are mainly found. These eight Sakti centres are Neelamani Durga (inside the Maharaja's Palace), Manikeswari (Beborta Street), Kanak Durga, Phool Sundari, Mritialuni Maa (Sundhi Street), Dedhiyayama (Dhoba Street), Pollamma Durga (Government Hospital), Hatibadi Van Durga (Hatibadi, near the new bus stand) [18]. Besides these temples, many other small and big temples are found in Gajapati District like Ranaghata Thakurni Temple (Chandragiri), Langaleswar temple (Ramagiri), Dharmalingeswar temple, Taratarini temple (Gurandi), Gumma Radhakant temple (Gumma), Bal Deve temple (Jeerango), Markateswar temple (Katal Kaitha), Neelakantheswar temple (Machumara), Nakati Bhabani Mandir (Uppalada)[19] etc. The sacred trees are found in the surroundings of these temples.

In short, the tree cult or worship of sacred trees in and outside the boundary of temples is a Dravidian practice and popular among the people of different parts of Orissa including the Gajapati district. As a shelter to the pre-historic people, the trees were associated with day to day life. The manifold uses and immense utility of the trees forced the people to adopt

the trees as the centres of social and religious activities. With the passage of time the sacred trees became the objects of worship and rituals were performed to realize material benefits. Subsequently images of deities were installed under the trees and when temples were consecrated around the images, the trees became an integral part of temple worship[20].

References

1. B.N. Pande, "Plant Kingdom" in: *On Development and National Integration*, Bhubaneswar, 1984, p. 517.
2. *Ibid*.
3. E.G.H. Mackay, *The Indus Civilization, London*, 1935, p. 97.
4. J.H. Hutton, *Caste in India*, Bombay, 1981, p. 231.
5. R. Ponnu, "Tree Worship in South India" in: *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, July-December, 2003, Vol. XCIV, Vol. XCIV, Nos. 3-4, Bangalore, p. 161.
6. A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, New Delhi, 1969, p. 265.
7. S.B. Padhi, "*Samkhipta Padmapuram*" (In Oriya) Aska, Ganjam, 1968, p. 265.
8. S.S. Gupta, "*Sacred Trees across culture and Nations*", Calcutta 1980, pp. 31-32.
9. N.,Venkata Ramanyya, *An Essay of the Origin of the South Indian Temple*, New Delhi, 1985, p. 5.
10. Padma Purana, *Utkalakhanda* Ch. X. 26.
11. *Ibid,* Ch. IX.
12. Cf. Monier, Williams, "*Hinduism*", Calcutta, 1951, p. 119.
13. J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners Customs and Ceremonies*, New Delhi, 1973, p. 653.
14. S. Paricha, "Bael Nature's Most Natural Medicinal Fruit" in Orissa Review, Buubaneswar, September 2004, p. 16.

15. R. Das, 'Trinath Puran' (in Oriya) Bani Bhandar, Ganjam, 1981, p. 7.
16. H.J. Wilkins, *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic*, Calcutta, 1988, p. 471.
17. *Ibid*.
18. B.N. Malik, *The Temples of Orissa*, Bhubaneswar, 1999, pp. 10-11.
19. *Ibid.*
20. R. Ponnu, *Op.cit*., p. 173.

TANK IRRIGATION IN SOUTH INDIA : A CASE STUDY OF KOLAVOY TANK

Dr. G.J. Sudhakar
Hon. Professor
C.P.R Institute of Indological Research and Reader,
Loyola College, Chennai

M. Amirthalingam
Research Officer
CPR Environmental Education Centre, Chennai

Dr. P. Sumabala
Assistant Professor
C.P.R Institute of Indological Research, Chennai.

Environmental history has been defined as "the story of the life and death, not of human individuals, but of societies and species … in terms of their relationships with the world about them." The earliest appearance of a tome on the subject was probably "Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth" edited by W.L.Thomas in 1956[1]. But it was the naturalist, Rachel Carson, whose "The Sea Around Us" and "Silent Spring[2]" created the new discipline of environmental history.

Subsequently, several works which have tried to reconcile the history of civilizations and the interaction of people with their environment have been published. Among the major contributions from India are D.K.Bhattacharya's "Ecology and Social Formation in Ancient History[3]", Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha's "This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India[4]", and "Nature and the Orient" edited by R.H.Grove, V.Damodaran and S.Sangwan[5].

The last two hundred years have seen a rapid acceleration of the development processes and we see it continuing to this day. In Tamil Nadu, for example, much of the land has turned into wasteland, unfit for use, because of the soil erosion caused by deforestation and intensive agricultural production; water pollution caused by chemical pesticides and fertilizers; and water scarcity caused by excess withdrawal. This, in turn, has led to a major exodus to the cities, creating a breed of refugees and inter-state quarrels over sharing of river waters. It is estimated that over 60% of the state's population will be living in cities during the beginning of the new millennium.

Instead of respecting and conserving the environment as necessary for human survival, people have treated the natural world as an exploitable commodity. Some have even attempted to subject nature to human control for their own selfish ends. By putting excessive pressure on the environment and by destroying complex ecosystems, they have degraded the land and natural resources which sustained them. Fossil fuels have been exploited oblivious to the fact they are not replaceable. Non-biodegradable waste is heaping into new mountains.

Today, the environmental problems have increased and they have also become more complex. Deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, loss of biodiversity, pollution of air, water and land, mounting toxic and non-biodegradable wastes and new problems like global warming and hole in the ozone layer - are all accelerating the rate of degradation. Ancient societies worshipped mother earth and those aspects of nature elemental to our existence - such as the sun, air, earth, waters, trees and animals. When we disrespect and exploit nature for narrow ends, she becomes helpless to protect us and imperils in the process, the welfare of an entire society and its people[6].

Historical background

The history of tank irrigation goes back to the 4th and 5th centuries AD. It was developed during the medieval period. It is known from the previous studies, that prior to the advent of colonial rule, tanks were constructed by local landlords, local chieftains, and sometimes urban traders. They were maintained and managed by local communities. In Tamil Nadu, for instance, under the *mirasi* system of land tenure, maintenance of tanks was one of the community activities for which a part of the produce of the village was allocated. There were well-defined rules regarding repairs and water allocation and *mirasidars* had the authority to ensure that these were enforced. Often there were functionaries specifically assigned the task of handling tank-related matters. The village community entrusted the responsibility to a person or group of persons who were granted a certain amount of land or tax benefit for carrying out the tasks. Battles, which led to the British acquiring control over this region, saw considerable damage to tanks. Several changes in the land-tenure systems and the socio-political structure of village society took place with the advent of colonial rule. For instance, in the old Madras Presidency, the replacement of *mirasi* system by the *ryotwari* system weakened the earlier socio-economic structures which took care of the community activity. In some areas the recognition of local chieftains or rulers as *zamindars* with title over land and tanks seems to have had the same effect[7].

The poor and deteriorating state of tanks was a matter of concern for the colonial government mainly because they were an important source of irrigation and contributed substantially to land revenue. This led the government in the Madras Presidency to introduce legislation to enforce community contributions for maintenance and repair. When this failed, government assumed direct responsibility for these functions and maintenance.

Government also took up investments for restoring and improving irrigation works wherever they were likely to augment revenues substantially.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed efforts to improve tank irrigation partly by undertaking repairs to existing tanks which were in a poor condition, partly by construction of new tanks and partly by construction/remodeling of anicuts across rivers to augment the supplies to the existing system tanks and increase the number of system tanks. In Tamil Nadu such works were undertaken in Palar, Vaigai and Tamraparani basins. It is important to note that these investments were taken up only when the government was satisfied about earning a minimum rate of financial return in the form of additional land revenue.

Following the recommendations of the Famine Commission of 1878-80, the government of the then Madras Presidency initiated a tank restoration scheme in 1883 - with a view to surveying the tanks, laying down the standards for bunds, sluices, surplus-weirs and other structures to which each tank should conform and for taking steps to see that the tanks were brought up to the specified standards. But this scheme suffered from financial stringency and retrenchment.

By the time of Independence, most PWD tanks in the old Madras Presidency (except those under the control of zamindars) were reported to have been surveyed. The technical details of the tanks covered by the survey have been published in a series called *Tank Memoirs*. These *memoirs* – though printed – are not easily accessible and the few copies which can be located are often in an unusable condition. There has been no systematic collation or analysis of the *memoirs* data, nor any mechanism to follow up or update the information in the light of changing

conditions of water supply and use patterns in the tanks. Nor do we have details of the programme taken up during this period to bring them to certain minimum specifications. It is not known exactly how many tanks had been covered by this scheme, how many of these were brought up to the specified standards and when.

Post-independence developments

The post-Independence period, as in the rest of the country, witnessed a substantial endeavor at irrigation development in the three southern states, though largely centred on large scale reservoir-cum-canal projects. During the four decades ending 1997, Andhra Pradesh spent Rs.72 billion, Karnataka Rs.51 billion and Tamil Nadu Rs.19 billion under the public sector plan on all forms of irrigation. About 30-32 per cent of the total outlay in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka was spent on minor irrigation. The relatively low outlay in irrigation and the exceptionally high proportion (65 percent) devoted to minor irrigation in Tamil Nadu reflects the fact that the potential for large scale canal irrigation had been more or less fully exploited.

In Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu the main thrust of minor irrigation was ground water development, rather small surface works. In Tamil Nadu, a total of Rs3.5 billion was spent on these works between 1980 and 1997, which constitute barely 25 per cent of the direct state outlays and a sixth of the total outlays on all minor irrigation. The pattern is likely to be the same in the other two states. Nearly 60 percent of area under tank irrigation in the country is accounted for by Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Together they have nearly 120,000 tanks (out of the 208,000 in the country as whole) irrigating 18 million hectares[8].

Disappearing water bodies in and around Chennai

According to the environmentalists, even as residents of Chennai have had to grapple with acute water shortage most of the time, hundreds of water bodies in and around the metropolis are fast disappearing due to rampant encroachment, dumping of garbage and gross apathy by officials. The Tamil Nadu government, exploring various options, including setting up of a desalination plant, should concentrate on preserving these bodies.

Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation are the main cause of these shrinking water bodies. But the encroachers are doing most of the damage as they not only construct houses in places where these lakes are located, but also complexes, blocking the flow of water. The two districts surrounding Chennai - Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur - are called 'lake districts' as the Pallava and Chola kings dug a lot of lakes and ponds there. Most of the 3,000 water bodies, big and small, in and around Chennai are fast disappearing, the environmentalists contend. While industries occupy huge tracts of lake lands, many private engineering and dental colleges have come up around the city usurping hundreds of acres, encroaching water bodies and their catchment areas, environmentalists point out[9].

Kolavoy lake

Kolavoy lake is situated about 200 m north east of Chengalpattu and close to the Pulipakkam village in Chengalpattu taluk abutting the Chennai-Tiruchi railway line. The town is presently fed from infiltration wells of river Palar. About 18 mld of water is extracted at the rate of 55 lpcd. It receives the drainage from its free basin besides the surplus of 25 upper tanks and surplus into Palar river through Neenjal maduvu. The tank is classified as Railway affecting tank, since the bund carries

the Chennai-Villupuram Railway line. The registered ayacut under the tank is 254 Ha (627 AC) and is irrigated by 4 Masonry sluices and a vent in the regulator at the right flank.

Present status

Though the original ayacut under the tank was 254 Ha (627 AC) the present ayacut under the tank is 323 AC. The maximum ayacut is irrigated in Pullipakkam village.

Pullipakkam village	= 188 AC
Natham village	= 135 AC
	323 AC

Due to urbanization and conversion of ayacut into housing site and formation of bypass road, the present ayacut is reduced to 323 AC. Out of 323 AC, the average cultivation for the past five years is 145 AC.

Since the ayacut under sluice No1 and 2 has been converted into house site and commercial plots, the sluice No3 and 4 alone are presently functioning besides the vent in the regular which feeds the high level lands in Pulipakkam village.

A portion of sewage from Chengalpattu town is discharged into the Kolavoy tank through six inlet points as the town is situated in higher elevation. Now the Government has formulated a proposal for providing under-ground drainage system to Chengalpattu town and the raw sewage now let into the lake will be plugged.

During 2001, the CMWSSB has drawn 8.16 M.cft (234 ml) from Kolavoy tank through tankers to meet the demands of

industries in Manali area. The water was drawn from 9.8.2001 to 4.11.2001 and necessary royalty charges were paid by them. The Government had permitted M/S. Mahindra Industrial Park Ltd to draw 0.60 mgd from Kolavoy tank (35 M.cft per year) to meet the demands of the industries to come up in the industrial park. The MIPL has not yet started drawing water from Kolavoy tank.

Interception and diversion of sewage leading to pollution of Kolavoy lake

Since there is no proper underground drainage in this municipality, the sewage and the sullage water let out by the residents finds their way into the storm water drains which ultimately, discharges into the Kolavoy lake. It is estimated that daily about 2.0 lakhs litres of sewage from the town is conveyed through 22 km length of open drains and finally reaches the lake. The lake is polluted and is a breeding place for mosquitoes and growth of water hyacinth mostly near the sewage entry points. The pollution has also caused contamination of ground water in and around the area. The Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation has developed a boating facility in the Kolavoy Lake[10]. This has further polluted the waters of the Kolavoy Lake.

Lack of a proper sewage disposal system in this town adversely affects the sprawling Kolavoy Lake. A fresh water lake that serves as a collection area for rainwater from dozens of villages dotting the area, the lake at present has been contaminated by the discharge of unchecked sewage into it. For residents of Chengalpattu and nearby places it has always been a question of "so close and yet so far." The lack of Palar water supply is a problem facing the people of the villages adjacent to this town. According to residents while government agencies

supply water from this sub-terraneal river to places that are far off, they are not extended the same facility. Some years ago, more than five people died after consuming contaminated water at Natham village near Chengalpattu. Residents also complain of rapid depletion in the groundwater table due to the indiscriminate mining of sand from the Palar riverbed[11].

In the year 2003, the then Chief Minister Ms J. Jayalalithaa announced that pipelines being laid for the Veeranam water scheme would be linked to the Kolavoy lake in Chengalpattu to enable the city to get both the Veeranam and Kolavoy waters and she ordered the cleaning up of the "beautiful lake[12]".

For developing the Kolavoy Lake as a drinking water source for Chennai city, the following points should be considered for improving the water quality:

- A comprehensive underground sewerage scheme comprising collection, transmission and treatment of sewage is required to prevent the pollution of the Kolavoy Lake. The scheme further envisages, protecting the public of the town from epidemic diseases.

- As an immediate measure, the sewage entering the lake is to be intercepted, diverted and conveyed to the proposed treatment plant.

- Restoration of water quality of the lake by suitable bio-remediation technique.

References

1. Thomas, W.L., (ed) *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*, Chicago, 1956.
2. Carson, Rachel, *The Sea Around Us*, New York, 1952; *Silent Spring*, Boston, 1962.
3. Bhattacharya, D.K., *Ecology and Social Formation in Ancient History*, Delhi, 1987.
4. Gadgil, M. and Guha,R., *This Fissured Land, An Ecological History of India*, New Delhi, 1992.
5. Grove, R.H., Damodaran, V., & Sangwan,S., (ed.) *Nature and the Orient*, Delhi, 1998.
6. Nanditha C. Krishna, *Ecology and History,* Journal of Indian History and Culture, Chennai, 1999.
7. Vadyanathan, A. & Sivasubramaniyan, K. *Tank Irrigation in South India: An Overview, Tanks of South India*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, 2001.
8. Ibid.
9. Agencies, July 8, 2006 .
10. The Hindu, March 23, 2002.
11. The Hindu, May7, 2006.
12. The Hindu, April 30, 2003.

CASTE ASSOCIATIONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TAMIL NADU: A STUDY

Dr. A. Chandrasekaran
Former Professor of History, IDE
University of Madras, Chennai
and
Dr. P. Govinda Reddy
Professor of Anthropology
University of Madras, Chennai

Introduction

The word "caste" is of Portuguese origin, being a derivative of *casta*, meaning race or breed, a word which the early Portuguese settlers in India used to describe the different sections of the Hindu community (O'Malley, 1976:1). Caste is not merely a social institution but a part of Hinduism, which for this reason, has been described as a socio-religious system. Hinduism is partly a social organization based on caste and partly a religious belief, or congress of beliefs. Caste is, in fact, the steel frame binding together the many beliefs meshed together in Hinduism. So, it is an integral part of Hinduism that a Hindu without a caste is almost a contradiction in terms of Hindu social structure (O'Malley, 1976:19).

"Caste" is a confusing word; in different contexts it has been used to convey different meanings and different social classes. It is generally mentioned as *jati* to denote an endogamous community with a more or less defined ritual status and some occupations traditionally linked to it (Dube, 1992:52).

The most developed form of the caste system is found in India. Traditionally, it consists of relatively closed status groups,

each possessing a distinct name. The members of the group may eat to-gether. Each caste has within itself a number of sub-castes. The sub caste is endogamous and has a traditional occupation associated with it. The members of a sub-caste have a particular style of life and enjoy specific rights and privileges, and are subject to certain duties and obligations. There are many sub-castes in any cultural region (Jayaraman, 1981:90).

The need for mobilization and organization of members of respective caste and the necessity for developing unity and solidarity among the members within each of the respective caste had arisen in India in the early period of the last century, particularly after the First World War. Out of the elitist concerns for the welfare of the members of their kin and for the philanthropic outlook, the caste system had been reinforced periodically. Initially, this process was confined mainly to the upper castes occupying higher layers of caste system characterized by social hierarchy, particularly those castes having trade and agriculture as their traditional occupations. The post-Independent India had witnessed more of the emergence of organizations and associations on the basis of caste and sub-caste groups reinforcing caste consciousness and caste solidarity in such proportions which had been hitherto unknown. Yet, some of the recent caste organizations bearing political affiliations do not have a clean vision, unlike the earlier ones, about the social, economic and educational development of their castes (Venkateswarlu, 2001).

Any study of caste groups and associations today is faced with a complex of forces and phenomena like modernity and tradition, progress and retrogression invoking challenges of transformation (Jose Chandar, 2001). Caste feeling and an emotional attachment to it by members of respective castes had made great impact on society in recent decades. This had also

led to serious clashes among the different caste members which were the regular occurrences since the latter half of the 19th century. These disturbances had greatly affected the peace of the areas where they occurred.

It is quite known that inequality had been the characteristic feature throughout the length and breadth of India. Manifold manifestations of caste have already evolved and will continue to evolve in a volcanic landscape characterized by instability and intermittent eruptions. The sub-castes with various aspects of inequality, typical of earlier centuries, will also thrive and grow to create more and more complexities to confound the administrators and restrain them from arriving at amicable solutions for caste conflicts. After solving one, the administrators will have to face another and the hydra will never be controlled by the present human efforts (Alice Thorner, 2002).

Dream of casteless society

The architects of the Indian Republic fervently hoped that as secular ethos took roots, democratic institutions spread and secular scientific outlook consolidated itself, the Indian society would outgrow the evil of caste system. But they under-estimated the resilience of the age-old caste system. So, they did not launch an all-out war against the caste system. They assumed that it would wither away in course of time and die a natural death (Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu, 2001). But this did not happen and to their dismay, the caste system in India has taken still deeper roots and affected every spheres of human activity. In the context of political democracy, caste remains a central element of Indian society even while adapting itself to the values and methods of democratic politics. Undoubtedly, it has become one of the chief means by which the Indian mass electorate has been attached to the processes of democratic politics (Rudolf and Rudolf, 1960)

With the passage of time, a political engineering to perpetuate caste domination has gained gradual ascendancy over the liberal secular ideal of an egalitarian society. Today, people are struck by the question whether the war against caste is winnable. The secular minded elite had always believed that the extinction of the alien rule would pave the way for the development of the ideals of secularism in the minds of people and hoped that this would gradually lead to a casteless society. But incidences of caste rivalry and conflicts had every now and then taken place in their own way frustrating the noble attempts of secular-minded men.

Many feel that the roots of caste system are not religious. Caste system, as Dr.B.R.Ambedkar identified and all social scientists agree has two main roots: the prohibition on inter-dining and the ban on inter-caste marriage. It is believed that social intermingling through meals and marriage are experiences of the best proximity and kinship. Dining is a projection and affirmation of belonging together, an implicit recognition of the equal worth of all who share the meal. Ceremonial dining has played a key role in all cultures in the formation of communities. Equal respect to all was established by this activity. But this was not truly practiced. The ban on inter-dining is therefore a powerful means of keeping social segments and religious sects apart. The taboo against inter-dining seeks to foster a mindset of prejudice and rejection.

Even more powerful than inter-dining as a tool of reformative and affirmative social engineering is inter-caste marriage. Marriage is the foremost institution of mutual intimate acceptance. It has the potential to dismantle all walls of division and alienation. The alternative to intimacy is alienation of social, cultural and mental distance. Multi-faceted distance is the essence of caste. Exponents

of social justice such as Swami Dayanand and Bimarao Ambedkar were convinced that so long as inter-dining and inter-caste marriages were not practiced, the Indian society could not be exorcised of the anathema of caste mentality. The institution of caste survives along with the other institutions of society. Inter-dining and inter-caste marriages are hated as evils by many even in this age of science and technology. Excepting the cities, the punishment for inter-caste marriages even today is excommunication or death (Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu, 2001).

It is to be remembered that men belonging to high-caste feel that marriage should take place between equals and they strongly hate inter-caste marriages in order to perpetuate inequality between castes. This mindset further deepens the economic and cultural divide between the upper castes and lower castes. Also, merit is involuntarily equated with caste superiority. Thus, the prospect of inter-caste marriages in such a social climate is assuredly bleak. More stress towards caste leads to keenness to perpetuate the developmental disabilities of lower castes. Dalits and backward communities are quite often marginalized and relegated to the background and penalized. This only shows that the evil of caste system has not withered away. Everyone should know that the basic goal should be to heal the Indian society of its social leprosy, and not merely to offer an escape route of questionable merit to many of its victims (Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu, 2001). As long as this is not realized by the people, the dream of a casteless society will be an unattainable goal.

Development of caste associations: The Indian scenario

Development of caste associations is mostly a twentieth century phenomenon. The British rule in India had led to the

formation of several political associations from the middle of the nineteenth century. Their oppressive measures and repressive rules were also instrumental for various political and social movements like Indian National Movement, Labour Movement and Peasant Movement. The upsurge of people and their movements were strongly suppressed by the imperialists during their rule. But there were also certain movements, which were the outcome of the emotional upheavals of the people in response to the evils and back-wardness of society and deplorable conditions of the people. While Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj and such other organizations emerged as a response to the social challenges in India on a broader scale, their impact on Tamil Nadu was not much. But the non-Brahmin movement, Self-Respect movement and such other movements in Tamil Nadu made a great impact on the social sphere of Tamil Nadu. This further led to the evolution of various caste organizations in Tamil Nadu with the objective of uplifting the members of each and every communi-ty scattered all over Tamil Nadu.

The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 introduced separate electorates that gave a fillip to non-Brahman castes in their quest for self respect. They began to organize themselves as "Backward Classes" and "Depressed classes". This gained momentum from 1917 onwards and various Depressed Caste Associations began in different parts of India (Dipankar Gupta, 2005).

The Kurmi Caste Association, for example, was set up as early as 1890 in Lucknow, and the Ahir-Yadava Mahasabha began in 1919. In 1933, the formation of the All India Yadav Mahasabha (AIYM) brought together various Yadava Associations under one roof (Dipankar Gupta, 2005). These developments resulted in the formation of various other caste associations in different parts of the country at different times.

In the twentieth century, many caste atrocities had been reported in the media. Particularly, the press quite often reported injustice done to the Dalits and backward classes by the oppressive upper-caste people. In several parts of India, Dalit families had been punished by upper-caste Hindus with social and economic boycott for drawing drinking water from the village tanks to which they had been denied access for decades. For this "crime" the Dalits, mostly agricultural labourers were removed from work by their land lords and barred to go to ration shops and even to flour mills. Several violent acts were committed by the upper-castes against these depressed castes in order to humiliate them (Divya Gandhi, 2006).

The old religious texts like the Rig Veda, the Vayu Purana, the Bhagavad Gita, the Manu Sastra and the Maha Bharata have different views and opinions on the origin of caste system. But all of them agree on the common notion on the Brahmanical superiority. The Brahmans occupied top positions in ritual and social hierarchy. But all along the position of Dalits had been very low. However, in recent times because of education there was awareness among the Dalits. This led to their protest against the upper classes and for their struggle against inequalities. The depressed classes who had been generally agricultural labourers began to fight for their rights and proper wages from their upper-class masters. This had become the root cause for all caste clashes. However, due to the abolition of Zamidari system, there had been some improvement in the living conditions of Dalits and backward castes. Further, there has been a sense of awareness developed among Dalits through education. Organized resistance was also developed through their associations and there had been a strong retaliation from them to any act of injustice and atrocity (Sudhir Hindwan, 1996).

Many feel that India's political parties mobilize people on the basis of caste, sect, ethnicity or linguistic group to gain popularity. The ascriptive identities – groupings to which people belong by birth or by choice – further shrank the space available for non-partisan civil society. They claim that India's associational life was weak and this drew intense criticism from many quarters. It is also said that informal associations- those in which there are no office-bearers or codified rules - did not qualify for inclusion within a narrow definition of civil society. Ethnicity-based organizations such as caste associations, religious brotherhoods and groups that seek to politicize linguistic identity are considered part of the Indian civil society. Caste associations are anomalous; they are intentional associations, hybrids that combine voluntary with ascriptive characteristics. Caste associations representing various segments of the Jat community in North India have established scholarship programmes and student hostels promoting internal reforms of the community's social practices and demanding representation in government service. Many community associations had sometimes endorsed their candidates or parties at election time. Caste identity becomes more significant during these situations and this trend seems to increase more in recent years.

If caste associations, demand groups, issue-based and movement politics, and non- governmental organizations are taken into account, India could be read as having a pervasive and extraordinarily active associational life, perhaps one of the most participatory in the world. Particularly, during the post-independence era, India had witnessed the emergence of a large number of associations on the basis of castes, linguistic groups, religious denominations, intense political and economic activities and cultural identities. But many associations exist in theory and are shells of their former selves, lacking organizational substance. In some

regions, the better part of the local civil society consists of associations founded during the middle of the twentieth century. This is an institutional inheritance from an earlier era of organizational building. Also, the memberships of most associations do not generally extend beyond state borders.

In the later decades of the 20th century, the members of the fourth "varna" strongly developed a feeling on the basis of their larger numbers, that they could achieve rank and position in the Indian society. They were inspired by the examples of Chandragupta, the Mauryan king who established the Mauryan empire in north India and Shivaji, the great Maratha ruler of the western India who founded a mighty Hindu empire against the onslaughts of the great Mughal empire. These rulers neither belonged to the upper caste nor to the Kshtriya class. Further, the lower caste people believed that they could conquer power and replace the Kshatriyas, the ruling class on the basis of their numerical strength. Historically, low caste groups have explored avenues for upward mobility through bhakthi movements and sectarian models. However, the traditional caste system was more directly challenged during the British rule and that was a good beginning made in the right direction. It is only in this direction that the caste associations had carried on their work to take the members to acquire better positions in the society.

Caste associations and the resilience of Sanskritization

In modern times, people migrate to different parts of the country either in search of jobs or on transfer to these places by government orders. As per today's norms of all India services, people of one region go and settle in another region due to employment opportunities in the new region. Their long

time settlement in the new region often cuts off their caste connections in their native places. In such cases, endogamous marriages become not possible unless some threads of relationships are maintained by the migrant employees with their native caste men living in a distant region. Many may feel that space and distance had been shortened and the world had shrunk in size. According to them, the world had become a global village and they state that anybody could contact any one at any time and at any distance. But this is only glibly talked about and when it comes to experimenting, nothing happens. It is in this kind of situation, the caste associations play a vital role in connecting the caste members living in distant parts together. Transfer of people working in different organizations far away from their native places often led to breakdown of linkages with the home town and with their kith and kin and made the finding suitable matches for endogamous marriages more complicated. As indicated, it is in this way that the idea to create associations, which could link members of the same caste came into being.

In 1901, the census commissioner, Risley decided to give the ranking of the "jatis" in their local context and varna which was a much more delicate enterprise. People of various castes immediately organized themselves and as Ghurye pointed out that they even formed councils to take steps to see that their status was recorded in the way they thought that it was honorable to them (Ghurye, 1957:169-170). Thus, it may be seen that caste associations had always made it a point to uphold the honour and prestige of their respective castes. Triggered by the instincts of caste members of the associations, people had always fought for equality and respect in society.

Caste associations were therefore created as pressure groups, whose aim was to improve their rank in the census. This process

was especially prominent among the low castes and therefore gave "an indication of the widespread desire for mobility among the backward castes" (Srinivas, 1966:100). Each census provided castes with an opportunity to petition to the government for getting the higher place in order of precedence and for being recorded under the new sanskritised names. In North India, many castes like Kurmis and Gadalias wanted to be recognized as Kshatriyas. This move was in keeping with the logic of sanskritization since the objective was not to opt out from the system but to rise within it according to its rules and values (Blunt, 1969:227).

Caste associations gradually came to be secularized and slowly became mutual aid structures in charge of founding schools for the children of the respective caste members, creating co-operative movements and claiming new advantages from the state. However, the caste associations by passage of time became interest groups. They behaved like a collective enterprise with economic and political objectives. They had their head office, publications, list of members and organizational chart. Generally, their leaders did not come from the most prestigious clans or families but from those of the caste men who were the most educated, able to negotiate with the State and often as ambitious as the political entrepreneurs. In many cases, they came from the younger generation. But generally caste associations were not for social change (Karen, 1994: 293). Studies on social groups reveal that still many members of different castes are interested more in conservative practices than for drastic changes. This is manifest in the practice of endogamous marriages and persisting with the age-old traditional customs.

The associations representing upper castes were very conservative like the Kanya-Kubja Brahmans, a "jati" found

more in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The Kanya-Kubja caste association was created in Lucknow in 1884. It became an all- India association in 1901. It was founded for helping Kanya-Kubja Brahmans to compete with other castes of North India for acquiring education and administrative jobs. It supported the development of educational institutions and boarding schools, sponsored grants and started newspapers which were intended to foster solidarity within the caste. It grew tremendously till the mid 1930s. Later, it declined because of the opposition to caste movements by the Congress. It rose again in the 1950s in order to protect the Kanya-Kubja Brahmans against the threat that represented affirmative action in favour of the lower castes (Khare, 1970: 32).

In North India, caste associations often served as vehicles for sanskritization among the non-"dvijas". The Kayasthas of north India were the first to show the way in this direction. The Kayasthas claimed that they were the descendents of the Emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Kayastha Samachar, a fortnightly magazine, Kayasth Dharma Sabha, an institution and Kayasth Educational Organization were started by them to uplift the members of their caste. The Kayastha Dharma Sabha established mutual aid programmes for the needy Kayastha families to enable them get financial assistance for the education of their children and to meet the marriage expenses of their daughters and for such other important purposes. The Kayastha conference held in 1920s and in 1930s attempted to sanskritise caste rituals and they appealed to its members to emulate the dvijas (Rowe, 1996: 201-207).

The most important social change that caste associations have achieved is probably concerned with the unity of caste-groups. They have successfully incited the sub-castes to adopt the same name in the census and broke the barriers of

sub-caste endogamy to show increased numerical strength of the caste. These steps had really paved the way for strengthening the caste-groups and in later times similar methods were followed by other caste groups also.

Caste had intermittently played a notable role in politics. Congress leader N.V.Gadgil was aware that the nationalist movement could acquire a mass-base only if it attracted lower caste people. So he contacted K.Jedhe and made an alliance with him in the early 1930s (Omvedt, 1974:207). This move attracted many caste associations towards the Indian National movement since they believed that the members of the caste associations will be greatly benefited by involvement in the national struggle.

In the Madras presidency, the non-Brahman movement was instrumental in engineering caste fusion and succeeded in endowing the lower castes with an ethnic identity. It is because of such practices that the Brahmans in the pre-Independence period practically monopolized almost all positions in society as well as in administration. Ayodhi Das, a Dalit converted to Buddhism pointed out that ancient India had been prosperous and most humanly governed under Buddhist kings. But they were dislodged from power by Brahman invaders who imposed the caste system. The Buddhists were then marginalized and considered as unclean and low. This original civilization, he asserted was none other than Dravidian civilization. Das chose to call its caste-mates as Dravidas.

Further, the non-Brahman movement claimed that the lower castes were the original inhabitants of India (Barnett, 1976: 315-316). Reverend Caldwell (1819-1891) was of the opinion that Sanskrit had been brought to South India by the Aryans and

the original inhabitants were Dravidians speaking Tamil, Telugu etc. (Ram, 1979:381). Gradually, the non-Brahman South Indian associations adopted the prefix Adi – initial and primordial – in their titles. The Pariah Mahajana Sabha founded in 1890 thus became the Adi Dravida Mahajana Sabha which in 1918 appealed to the government to replace the pejorative word "pariah" by Adi Dravida denoting the original inhabitants of Dravida land (Kshirsagar, 1994: 72). In 1917, the Adi Andhra Mahajana Sabha had come into existence in the same way. Initially, this association was called Andhra Panchama Conference. But the Chairman of this association, M.V. Bhagya Reddy (1888 – 1939) in the 1917 session of the association declared that the so called "panchamas" were the original sons of the soil and they were the rulers of the country. Hence, in the 1931 census, the Malas and the Madigas gave their identities as Adi Andhras.

Caste association: Tamil Nadu scene

It is found in government records of the Madras Presidency that the ethnicization, of caste had begun first in South India. The Nadars of Tamil Nadu whose caste association, the Nadar Mahajana Sangam was founded in 1910 and promoted caste fusion as the unit of endogamy expanded (Hardgrave, 1968). This kind of fusion tended to transform castes into ethnic groups. The Kondaikkatti Vellalars, who do not represent a large number of people, were influential since many of them were land lords. From 1920 onwards, the caste association has encouraged them to expand endogamy in new territories and to other Vellalars in order to make up for their numerical weakness. It is one of the first examples of caste federations (Barnett, 1977: 401). This was soon followed by other caste groups. It is to be pointed out here that the caste associations were strong in Tamil Nadu in the late colonial period and grew thereafter (Subramanian, 2002).

One of the most influential proponents of the Dravidian ideology in the Madras Presidency was M.C.Raja (1883-1947) who was the Secretary of the Adi Dravida Maha- Jana Sabha and a nominated member of the Madras Legislative Council since 1920. He moved the resolution in 1922 to delete "Panchama" and "Paraya" from the Government records and substitute them with Adi Dravida and Adi Andhra. This identity building process was led further by E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker alias Periyar, a great social reformer of Tamil Nadu during the twentieth century. He launched a self-respect movement in order to uplift the lower castes. He was always for "sama dharma" – social equality and social justice. He was also for a separate Dravidian identity and his Dravidar Kazhagam which he founded in 1944 endeavored to fight for social justice. His organization was for non-Aryan and non-Sanskritic ethos. He compared the condition of the depressed classes to that of the Blacks in South Africa. He appealed to the Tamils to come together irrespective of their faiths and castes. Many Christians, Muslims, depressed class Hindus, Nadars, Vellalars, Mukkulathavars and Chettis were inspired by his appeals. Moreover, this ethnicization process was fostered by the political reforms since the British were much willing to recognize ethnic and caste groups as legitimate units for representation in the political arena.

Chennai Vanniya Kula Kshatriya Maha Sangam was established as far back as 1888. One notable feature of the development of the Vanniar Sangam is that right from the beginning, its demands have been for a larger share in education, jobs and power as there had been a sizable section of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers among the Vanniars. These demands were initiated by the elitist Vanniar sections (Raman, 1994).

The formation of caste federations and ethnicization of caste, two inter-related processes, were fostered by the British policy of compensatory discrimination based on the reservation of seats in the bureaucracy and in the assemblies. The very decision to grant such statutory representation to the caste groups in these assemblies contributed to crystallization of new groups which resented their non-representation. The State was therefore indirectly reshaping the society and indirectly inducing the caste groups to form associations for their own upliftment. Caste groups, often with low status, were prominent among those which mobilized against the State's decisions.

The second half of the twentieth century was a significant period which had witnessed the emergence of a large number of caste associations in Tamil Nadu. The Nadar Mahajana Sangam, the Vaniga Vysia Sangam, the Maharashtra Association, the Kulalar Sangam, Association for Dalits, Telugu Chettiar Association, Thevar Peravai, Nagarathar Association, the Kammavar Association, the Vanniyar Sangams, the Sourashtra Association, the Tondamandala Tuluva Vellalar Association, Mutharaiyar Sangam and many more such associations were established with the objective of improving the conditions of the respective communities and offering them with educational and employment opportunities. Moreover, matrimonial alliances among the community people and their professional progress were also finding a place in their organizational agenda. The pamphlets of the Tamil Nadu Brahman Association (TAMBRAS) reveal that the Brahmins of Tamilnadu were subjected to all kinds of inhuman treatment since the inception of the Justice Party and so they were forced to form an association in 1980 to maintain their status of equality in the society (The Hindu, 27.12.2004).

Most of these associations had been holding annual conferences to bring their respective caste members together

and rally them to demand more concessions and positions from the Government. The Nadars whose condition in the Tamil society was not very much satisfactory in the late 19th century, rose up in the economic ladder by their associations and "Mahamai" system. Every member of the Nadar caste contributes an amount towards the mahamai system for the well-being and development of their own members. The system enjoins that a member of this caste should offer financial assistance and other kinds of possible help to other members of his caste if he had come up to a better position after his hard labour. Consequently, this had helped many of the caste members to come up well in various spheres of human activity. In the 20th century many of the members of the caste had become affluent by dint of their hard work and enterprising nature. This caste had produced many significant politicians, industrialists, businessmen, founders and proprietors of news papers and software firms and film artists. Similarly, the Maharashtrian Association, established in the middle of the 20th century, had been straining to weld its members together for their all-round development and for matrimonial purposes (Chandrasekaran and Govinda Reddy, 1997). The Vaniga Vysia Sangam in Tamil Nadu had been established in the early part of the 20th century to rally the members of the Vaniar caste for their social and educational development.

In the same way, other associations such as Vanniar Sangam, Nagarathar Association, Dalit Association, Devar Peravai, Mutharaiyar Sangam, Kammavar Association and Telugu Chettiar Association had been periodically holding meetings, annual conferences and get-together functions in order to gather all the members of their respective castes for their various essential needs and demands. Some of the associations had founded and developed banking and commercial organizations, educational

institutions, marriages bureaus, choultries, philanthropic institutions and such other institutions for the upliftment and welfare of their caste members.

The formation of caste associations in course of time has also created some tensions in rural Tamil Nadu. The caste with good numerical strength began to aggressively push its way through to the detriment of the minority castes. Particularly, from the later part of the 19th century, frequent caste clashes and eruption of violence had become unavoidable. Amity and peace among the residents were on the wane. Festivals that were used to be conducted with the co-operation of the people of all castes were increasingly getting disturbed or cancelled or forcefully stopped because of the mutual misunderstandings and the majority community had also been working to force its will upon others. Caste consciousness was becoming acute and aggressive posture of the majority castes was an eternal threat to other castes (Raman, 1994).

On several occasions in the past, the self-esteem of a community was offended by individuals or by the press. In such a situation, the affected community members were not in a position to project their grievances. Similarly, disrespect towards some religious communities was shown by others when their way of life drifted from societal concepts. Further, differential treatment or attitude was displayed by one community towards the other. On such occasions, it is the associations of the respective communities which rose up to the occasion and expressed their protest (Rajeev Bhargava, 2002). On many occasions, these protests had turned out to be violent affecting the peace and tranquility in society resulting sometimes in the breakdown of the administrative machinery.

Dalit organisations in recent times had engaged in violence to resist the dominance and violence of more powerful castes. Besides, some caste organizations also engaged in violence to protect themselves. Some times, they also entered into negotiations to reinstate peace after periods of violence (Subramanian, 2002). In the later part of the 20th century Caste violence is more often reported in southern Tamil Nadu. In spite of efforts taken by Government and private organizations the caste gap has not yet vanished, rather it still looms as a new menace in Tirunelveli and Ramnad districts among the rival caste groups. This development is due to the vigorous activities of the caste associations which resolved to maintain the self-prestige of their members (Sudhir Hindwan, 1996).

Commonly practiced atrocities against the Dalits such as forcing them to consume inedible substances from dirty water sources used by them, dispossessing them of their land, committing sexual offences against the Dalit women and denying the Dalits the right to access to public places are practiced to this day. In spite of strict government policies and instructions, oppression is continued and injustice is committed to these communities. There were reports of crimes against the Dalits in recent decades almost in many parts of the country (Divya Gandhi, 2006). The Dalits were greatly frustrated due to this ill-treatment and harassment and on many occasions they were prepared for conversion to Islam or Christianity to escape this serious caste discrimination (Asghar Ali Engineer, 1997:264-69). This never-ending story continues to haunt the victims of communal fury even in this age of information revolution. Superior knowledge and greater wisdom of people had failed to put an end to this obnoxious issue. It is in these circumstances that the caste associations had taken initiatives to protect the caste members from the atrocities of their rival groups.

Conclusion

The caste associations during the last few decades had come a long way in their developmental activities. By passage of time and due to the impact of political developments and fluctuations in social hierarchy, many of the caste associations developed concepts to expand their activities in various fields with the aim of achieving higher positions. They had aspired to establish mastery not only in politics but also in economic and cultural spheres. This resulted in the development of industries, business, private educational institutions etc. It should be noted here that these kinds of attempts led only to the improvement of their respective community individuals and not the members of the society as a whole. Hence, the objectives for which the caste associations were established were based on self-interest and restricted their communal ideals only to their respective castes. It is feared that this development would lead to the growth of fissiparous tendencies among people and would result in dismemberment of the nation into weak and emaciated parts. This is certainly a great danger to the integration and solidarity of the nation. If all castes work towards the objectives based on public interest and national development, not only all communities will improve and prosper but also the nation will have its social goals achieved. Moreover, social harmony will be attained if only the leaders of the caste associations are determined to work for this goal with commitment.

Bibliography

1. Alice Thorner, "Caste and History", *The Hindu* (Chennai), 4.4.2002.
2. Asghar Ali Engineer, "Case Studies of Five major Riots from Biharsharif to Pune". In Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.) *Communal Riots in Post-Independence India.* Hyderabad: Sangam Books, 1997.

3. Barnett M Ross, *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.
4. Barnett, S., "Identity Choice and Caste Ideology in Contemporary South India". In K.David (ed.) *The New Wind – Changing Identities in South India.* L Haye, Mouton, 1977.
5. Blunt, E.A.H., The *Caste System of North India. Delhi*: S.Chand & Co., 1969.
6. Chandrasekaran, A. and Govinda Reddy, P., *The Maratha Brahmans in the City of Madras during the post-Independence period: A Socio-Economic Study,* UGC Minor Research Project, University of Madras, 1997 .
7. Dipankar Gupta, Caste and Politics: Identity Over System. Durham, W.H., Camaroff Jean and Hill Jane edited *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 34: 409-427. California: Palo Alto, 2005.
8. Divya Gandhi, "Caste Atrocities in Karnataka", *The Hindu* (Chennai), 25.11.2006.
9. Dube S.C., *Indian Society*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 1992.
10. Ghurye, G.S., "*Caste and Class in India*", Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1957.
11. Hardgrave, Jr. R.L., "Caste: Fission and Fusion", *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 1968, pp. 1065-1070, 1968.
12. Jayaraman, R., *Caste and Class - Dynamics of Inequality in Indian Society*. Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation (India), 1981.
13. Jose Chandar, "Modernization of Caste Groups and the role of Caste Associations: A Study with reference to the Nair community in Kerala", Presented at UGC seminar on Caste Organization: Social and Economic Dimensions in South Indian States, at Chennai in January 2001.

14. Karen I.Leonard, *Social History of an Indian Caste – The Kayasthas of Hyderabad.* Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1994.
15. Khare, R.S., *The Changing Brahmans, Associtions and Elites among the Kanya-Kubjas of North India.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970.
16. Kshirsagar, R.K., *Dalit Movement in India and its Leaders (1857-1956).* New Delhi: MD Publishers, 1994.
17. O'Malley, L.S.S, *Indian Caste Customs*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 1976.
18. Omvedt G, Non-Brahmans and Nationalists in Poona. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Annual number, February, 1974.
19. Rajeev Bhargava, "History and Community Sentiment", *The Hindu*, (Chennai) 2.1.2002.
20. Ram N., "Dravidian Movement in its Pre-Independence Phases", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Annual Number, February 1979.
21. Raman,C.K., Inequalities in Society and Compensatory Discrimination: The Story of the Vanniars of Tamil Nadu. Seminar on Ethnicity and Nation Building, organized by U.S.Educational Foundation in India and Centre for South and South-east Asian Studies, University of Madras in Chennai during 21-23, March, 1994.
22. Rowe, W.L.: "Mobility in the Nineteenth Century Caste System", In M.Singer and B.S.Cohn (eds.) *Structure and Change in Indian Society*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1996
23. Rudolf, Lloyd I. and Rudolf Susanne Hoeber, "The Political Role of India's Caste Associations". *Pacific Affairs*, 33 (1): pp.5-22, 1960.
24. Srinivas, M.N., *Social Change in Modern India*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966.

25. Subramanian, N., Identity Politics and Social Pluralism: Political Sociology and Political Change in Tamil Nadu. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 40 (3): 125-139, 2002.
26. Sudhir Hindwan, The Psychology of Caste War. *The Hindu* (Madras), 23.9.1996.
27. Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu , Casteless Society and the India of Our
28. Dreams, The *Hindu,* (Chennai) 13.12.2001.
29. *The Hindu*, Bangalore, 27.12.2004
30. Venkateswarlu, B., Caste organizations in Andhra Pra-desh: A Critical Review. Presented at UGC seminar on Caste Organization: Social and Economic Dimensions in South Indian States, at Chennai in January 2001.

RISE OF SOCIAL FICTION IN COLONIAL INDIA: FOCUSSING ON MULK RAJ ANAND*

Dr. K. Venugopal Reddy
Reader, Department of History
School of Social Sciences & International Studies
Pondicherry University

Introduction

The discourse on the relationship between history and literature is dynamic and yet has always remained inconclusive and hence enigmatic[1]. Embedded in the theme is the most intriguing question whether literary genres such as social fiction can be regarded as a critical source for construction or reconstruction of historical or contemporary social reality. While some historians, as for instance William Speck and H. T. Dickinson have argued that the literature can be regarded as a useful source of information to understand the contemporary phenomenon, if its special character is taken into consideration[2], the literary critics such as Sharpe and Zwicker have denounced historians for intermittently using literature merely to shore up the conclusions arrived at from other sources. In their view, this approach denies the literary texts the status of being the primary historical evidence[3]. According to Hayden White, a structuralist, historians shape historical evidences into literary forms that make sense, have coherence or dramatic impact. The shaping of evidence is a fictive act, the construction of historical narrative a discursive act. Much of White's work reinforces the central theme of the literariness of written history[4]. Thus, he advances the idea that literature and history are critically linked to each other in their exploration

of social reality. He maintains that every text can be equally representative and evidential of the 'mental climate' of its time of publication[5], an argument that however has not been accepted by some of the historians[6]. Roy Porter expressed his apprehension that the post-modernist directives run the risk of reducing history to commentaries upon texts. Yet, the notion that all sorts of written texts can be subjects for historical probing also seems to be increasingly common among historians[7]. Therefore, while it is generally argued that the two disciplines diverge from each other in their efforts to explain social reality[8], the notion that understanding historical meaning may require the consideration of both views has also been strongly advanced[9]. Thus, locating itself within the gamut of contending ideologies, this essay makes an attempt to delineate the close relationship that exist between the genres of social fiction and social history.

Rise of social fiction in colonial India

Before we proceed to explain the emergence of fiction as representing social reality, it is pertinent to take note of Albert Solomon's comments on the rise of fiction:

> The novel emerges as a new literary form, not because bourgeois patrician and people as such are different from the knights of chivalrous romance, but because of sociological awareness, the totally new factor becomes the focusing element of plot. In the simplest possible terms, society is now the destiny of the individual; the horizon

under which the individual lives is determined by the pressure, power and control of society[10].

In the history of the evolution of fiction representing social reality, the eighteenth century constituted an important literary period in England[11]. While the fiction in the nineteenth century had responded to the changes that occurred in the realm of ideas[12], the early years of the twentieth century in its development could be termed "post-Jamesian," since James's ideas critically altered the form and the dynamics of discourse of the fiction[13]. By the 1950s, the emphasis on fiction's relation to reality, informs Ian Watt's text (1957), is considered one of the most influential historical-critical studies of the period[14]. A later Marxist study by Raymond Williams treats novelists as those, who respond in very different ways to a new and varied but still common experience, an experience which Williams describes as "the exploration of community- the substance and meaning of community[15]. In other words, what is conveyed is that novel is an account of the social experience.

In India, the emergence of novel as a creative social fiction in English[16] and native languages[17] was largely due to India's interaction with colonialism[18]. The establishment of British colonial rule in India had brought about a discernible transformation in Indian awareness and subsequently in its literature[19]. However, toward the close of the nineteenth century, there were few Indians, who made pioneering contributions to literature in English language[20]. In the "vernacular languages", however, there were considerable creative endeavours to bring out novels of both historical and social significance[21]. In Bengal, Peary Chand Mitra's *Alaler Gharer Dulal* (The Spoilt Child, 1858) is in fact the first instance of original fiction of social realism with the free use of the colloquial idioms, and anticipated, though crudely, the later development of the novel. Nevertheless it was Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838- 94), who established the novel as a major literary form in India. His first published effort, *Rajmohan's*

Wife (1864), in English signified the real beginnings of the social fiction in India[22] To this novel may be added Sorabji's *Love and Life behind the Purdah* (1901) and S.B. Banerjea's *Tales of Bengal* (1910)[23]. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's work shows remarkable affinity with the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century English novelists attempts to combine the features of the romance with social fiction. However, stronger trends towards focusing on the social issues of the time -like sati, child-marriage, *kulin pratha,* widow re-marriage -became gradually manifest, as for instance Bankim Chatterjee's *Bishabriksha,* Kali Prasanna Singha's *Hutom Penchar Naksha* and Tagore's *Choker Bali* (translated into English as *Binodini* by Krishna Kripalani) in 1902, which presented a remarkable portrayal of the travails of a young widow Binodini whose love for Bihari stops at the threshold of fulfillment as, being a widow, she has no 'right' to love, no right to happiness in life[24].

The early years of twentieth century witnessed the emergence of creative fiction with history as a theme and driving force. T. Ramakrishna's *Padmini* (1903), Romesh Chander Dutt's *The Slave Girl of Agra* (1909), Sir Jogendra Singh's *Nur Jahan* (1909), and A.S.P. Ayyar's *Baladitya* (1930), are all historical romances written in colonial India (and of course Chatilrsen Shastri's *Vaishali Ki Nagar Vadhoo* was written in Hindi in 1948.) The decades of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s witnessed cataclysmic changes as discourses of nationalism and colonialism collided, even as India was thrust into modern conditions of living and thinking[25].

Indian fiction in the first half of the twentieth century witnessed the widening of the base of literary attention. The transference of literary focus from the upper classes to the masses was very striking[26]. Of all the novelists succeeding

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore in the early decades of the twentieth century, Sarat Chandra Chatterjee (1876-1938) was one novelist, who stands prominently in the world of creative social fiction. His works focused on the world of 'down-and-outs' and have fearlessly portrayed the "the tears and sweat of the lower middle and have-not classes"[27]. His literary creations in Bengali language and those of Munshi Premchand in Urdu and Hindi may be assumed to have foretold the best social fiction of Mulk Raj Anand in English[28].

With the dawn of the twentieth century, the novels depicting social protest began to emerge and focus more forcefully on the concerns of contemporary social relevance. The novel has become an effective instrument for social change at least in the hands of a few novelists. These novelists made bold attempts in the creative rendering of the contemporary social reality. They used novel as a form of social protest for a vigorous delineation of the truth of contemporary life[29]. Romesh Chunder Dutt's *The Lake of Palms* (1909), T. Ramakrishna's *The Dive for Death* (1912), S.K. Ghosh's *The Prince of Destiny: The New Krishna* (1909), Sir Jogendra Singh's *Nasrin* (1915) and *Kamni* (1931), Firoz Khan Noon's *Scented Dust,* Hari Singh's Gour's *His only Love,* Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940) and Kumara Guru's *Life's Shadows* and *A Daughter's Shadow* were all interesting works of social fiction on diverse aspects of colonial Indian society[30].

The 1930s in India witnessed a forceful articulation of anti-colonial sentiments. It was a decade of widespread political activity. The launching of Salt Satyagraha by Gandhi in 1930-32, the three Round Table Conferences, the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935, the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1937, the Gandhian movements for Harijan upliftment

and basic education, the rise and growth of radical forces (the Communists, the Congress, the Socialists, the Royalists), the involvement of British India in the World War II in 1939, the fissure in the Indian National Congress culminating in the expulsion of Subhas Chandra Bose and his subsequent escape to Germany and Japan —all left their inerasable marks on the ideological terrain of colonial India[31]. Thus, the politics of colonial India seemed to have exercised a perceptible impact on the expression of creative literary endeavors. As a consequence, there was a notable upsurge in the release of the creative energies, which was authentically reflected in the growth of literature both in English and the vernacular' languages[32]. To mention a few remarkable texts of this period: Mulk Raj Anand's *The Sword and the Sickle;* K.A. Abbas's *Inquilab;* K.S. Venkataramani's *Kandan the Patriot;* Raja Rao's *Kanthapura N.S;*. Phadke's *Leaves in the August Wind;* Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers.* These were outstanding commentaries on the extant political and social environment of colonial India[33].

In the regional languages too, the similar trend of reflecting the themes of social concern was visible. The realistic novels in the regional languages deal with themes that can be called "pan-Indian" - the landlord-tenant relationship, the economic exploitation of the peasant/bonded labourer, the untouchability factor, natural calamities, the urban capitalism and its intrusion into rural life, Gandhian and other revolutionary pre-independence political activities[34]. In the Assamese language, the epoch-making novel of *Jivanar Batat* (On the Road of Life, 1945) by Birinchi Kumar Barua was an excellent comment on the decline of the traditional social life in the face of the emerging industrialization and urbanization. It presents the painful search for a new ideal in the changed industrial and commercial setting[35]. In the history of the evolution of novel in Tamil language, the first half of the

twentieth century was marked by the concern for social problems. The novel established itself as a serious literary form depicting and describing the life of the people as individuals and as members within a social group[36].

Hindi entered its modern literary phase rather late. Yet, the works of Bharatendu Harishchandra, Chaudhari Pandit Badari Narayan, Upadhyaya Premghan and Radhacharan Goswami during the later nineteenth century reflected the contemporary social, economic and political concerns[37]. Later on, in the first half of the twentieth century, the portrayal of social reality and the spirit of social protest were amply expressed in the writings of Munshi Prem Chand, who delved deep into the soul of the peasants. In *Godan,* he explored the complexity of village life while presenting the characterization of authentic individuals[38]. In course of time, this new mode of portraying characters from the social reality gathered strength. Writers no longer resorted to fanciful imagination; they did not invent incredible situations to befool or entertain their readers. Instead, they rendered the familiar in intimate terms, closely, intensely, and faithfully[39].

Similarly, towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century, the novels in Oriya began to respond to the crucial social changes that were taking place as a consequence of the gradual decay of family life as seen in the larger context of the corrosion of village life and a gradual and distressing transition from a traditional culture to an industrial culture with its attendant complexities, contradictions and anachronisms. Fakirmohan Senapati's *Chhamana Atha Guntha* captures this changing social landscape in urban and rural areas. The other interesting works of creative social fiction include Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* (1945), Kanhu Charan Mohanti's *Shasti* (1945) and Kalindi Charan Panigrahi's *Matira Manisha*[40].

The evolution of social fiction in Malayalam owes a great deal to the immortal contributions of Chandu Menon and C. V. Raman Pillai[41]. The thirties were considered a period of interregnum. However, P.Kesava Dev's *Odayil ninnu* (1942), *Bhranthalayam* (1946), Vaikkom Mohammed Basheer's *Balyakala Sakhi* (1944), which appeared in the forties, are considered outstanding works of social fiction in Malayalam before 1947[42].

In the early phase of the rise of novel in Telugu language, those who campaigned for social reform also contributed to the growth of social fiction exposing through their immortal literary creations the existing social malaise in the contemporary colonial Andhra[43]. However, they were not many. Kandukuri Veerasalingam's novel *Rajasekhara Charitra* (1876), modeled on Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*[44], was an outstanding work of contemporary times, which portrayed the social mores and modes of the Telugus for the first time[45]. His purpose in writing this work was to fight superstition and obscurantism in contemporary society[46]. Nonetheless, the novel as a mirror of contemporary reality emerged in Telugu only during the early decades of the twentieth century[47]. Although the writers urged social reform, they did not look to the experience of the socially deprived for their fictional subjects[48]. Hence, Unnava Lakshminarayana's *Malapalli* (The Hamlet of Untouchables, in 1921) was the first novel in Telugu to present the social evil of untouchability in a fictionally compulsive manner. In the novel, the writer depicted the emerging social forces urging immediate correcting of imbalances with remorseless objectivity[49]. *Malapalli* is a trend-setter in a number of ways. For the first time, the social underdog becomes the subject of a literary work in a regional language. The life of the inhabitants of a Harijan hamlet is rendered in the local dialect used by those people. It was

a work of fiction that has been turned into a powerful forum for highlighting social tension and ideological conflicts[50]. Another important writer, who was motivated by a strong sense of rejection of the existing socio-cultural institutions, was Gudipati Venkata Chalam (popularly known as Chalam). His works, *Daivamichina Bharya* (1923), *Maidanam* (1927), *Aruna* (1935), and *Ameena* (1942), all offer a critique of patriarchal power structures, including family and marriage that reduce women to a subordinate position. These novels celebrated female sexuality and aroused resentment among the orthodox circles[51]. Thus, the social fiction in colonial Andhra had come to be mostly identified with the agenda of social reform and loudly voiced the need for social transformation[52].

Of the numerous languages of India, perhaps Marathi was, after Bengali, the most vigorous in its response to the spirit of the new age. Baba Padmanji's *Yamunaparyatan* (1857) is considered to be the earliest of the Indian novels resulting from the interaction between the western culture and the native Hindu culture during the colonial period[53]. Among the novelists, who laid the foundation of its modern literature, may be mentioned the novelist Hari Narayan Apte. Apte's novels stimulated the development of the novel in some other languages too, particularly in the the neighbouring language Kannada[54].

In Kannada literature also, the novelists began to respond to the humanist and secular concerns. M.S. Puttanna's *Madiddunno Maharaya* (As you sow, so shall you reap) published in 1915 was considered as the first novel, that appeared in Kannada language. And through the medium of novel, Shivarama Karanth explored the values of life. His early novels, *Devaduthahru, Chomana Dudi* (1933), *Marali Mannige* (1942) and *Bettada Jeeva* (1942) are regarded as significant

novels in Kannada literature. The rising revolutionary temper found its expression through the novels of A.N. Krishna Rao, who wrote more than a hundred novels on diverse themes. He demanded that literature should become an instrument of social revolution and unveil the naked truth of contemporary life. *Nagna Satya,* (The Naked Truth) was the title of one of his novels[55].

Social fictions of Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) belonged to that group of socially conscious novelists who explored through his novels the life of the oppressed and marginalized social classes. He gained global recognition as an Indian novelist, short-story writer and art critic writing in English and has been ranked as one of the 'founding fathers' of the Indian English novel along with Raja Rao and R K Narayan. Born in Peshawar as son of Lal Chand, a coppersmith and soldier, and Ishwar Kaur, he' received his education at Lahore, London and Cambridge. He obtained his doctoral degree in philosophy from London University in 1929 and lectured at the League of Nations School of Intellectual Cooperation in Geneva. Between 1932 and 1945, he lectured occasionally at Workers Educational Association in London. He maintained friendship with such eminent writers as E.M. Forster, Herbert Read, Henry Miller, and George Orwell. However, it was Gandhi, who shaped his social conscience and exerted the most vital influence upon him. The Bloomsbury intellectual was transformed into "a more emphatically self-conscious Indian" [56].

With the appearance of the novels *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936), Anand achieved wider recognition. About *Untouchable,* reflecting after three decades, he wrote "The book poured out like hot lava from the volcano of my crazed imagination, during a long week-end" [57]. *Untouchable* narrates

a day in the life of Bakha, an unfortunate outcaste, who suffers a number of humiliations in the course of his day. So, it was this social oppression of "the poorest of the poor human beings" [58] that pricked the social conscience of Anand and awakened his humanist spirit. Reminiscing why he created a character like Bakha, he evocatively explains: "Superficially, it seems that a rare human being, whom I had known from my childhood and adored as a hero because he was physically like a god, played all the games superbly and could recite whole cantos from the epic poem *Heer Ranjah* of Waris Shah, was knocking at the gates of my awareness[59]. Therefore that an individual like Bakha, who, due to his low birth, destined to work as a latrine sweeper, had tremendously impacted his conscience. He writes, "Even at the level of commonsense reality, I was aware of his tragedy. That this otherwise near-perfect human being was a sweeper who was always being humiliated by most of our elders on account of his low caste, was not allowed to go to school even if his father had sent him (which he would not have), flawed his excellence, for no fault of his... The contradiction between the inborn qualities of this youth and the down and out status to which he was condemned, may certainly have been the obvious cause for my broodings about him"[60].

Anand's success, as a creator of social fiction representing "the so-called lowest dregs of humanity, living in utmost poverty, squalor and degradation"[61] unquestionably stemmed from his accurate depiction of their social reality. His was a voice protesting against all kinds of oppression and exploitation[62]. His inexhaustible concern for the under-privileged and the downtrodden had been amply demonstrated through his works[63]. Thus, *Untouchable* is the perfect example of Anand's deep involvement with the social realism as the novel is centered on the harsh world of oppression and endurance of the subaltern class. That

the British colonial domination of India had not alleviated the sufferings of outcastes, such as Bakha, has also been thoroughly suggested by the powerful critique of the octopus-like Indian caste system through his work.

In *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), Anand continued his exploration of the Indian society. The narrative is about a poor Punjabi peasant Gangu, who is inhumanly exploited in a tea plantation and killed by a British official who tries to rape his daughter. The socially- conscious novel communicates the similar fundamental humanist ethos, which the proletarian novels published in Britain and the United States during the 1930s espoused[64].

Anand's celebrated trilogy, The *Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940), and *The Sword* and *the Sickle* (1942) was a fervent protest against social injustices. The story depicts the life of Lalu Singh from a state of adolescent rebellion, through his experiences in World War I, to his return home and revolutionary activities. Nevertheless it is through the shocks of the escalating political situation that Lalu graduates into manhood and maturity. The Lalu trilogy, though it lacks the concentrated power of *Untouchable,* the vast comprehension of *Coolie* and the spirited championship of the social cause by protagonist of Two *Leaves* and a *Bud,* is nevertheless an impressive work set against the prevailing social and political environment[65].

In Anand's early novels, his social and political analysis of oppression grows clearly from his involvement with the leftist ideology in England. His early Marxist leanings find expression in *Marx* and *Engels* on *India* (1939)[66]. The *Big Heart* (1945) reproduces the terrific intensity and concentration of *Untouchable.* The theme is not one of social oppression of untouchables by the upper castes but of the economic exploitation of the *thathiars*

(the hereditary coppersmiths) by the capitalists (Lalla Murli Dhar and Seth Gokal Chand). The factory set up by the latter throws the coppersmiths out of employment -a situation that recollects that of Hauptmann's The *Weavers* (1892) and Ernst ToIlers's The *Machine-Wreckers* (1923)[67].

Mulk Raj Anand wielded his pen uncompromisingly to highlight the sufferings of the socially meek and oppressed community. He wrote with burning desire for transforming those who were insensitive to the travails of these lowly and the downtrodden in India. In the process, the social tyranny and cruelty of the caste Hindus on the untouchable community is meticulously exposed.

To conclude, Mulk Raj Anand for the first time through his inspired texts in English portrayed contextually the travails of the socially oppressed and marginalized in colonial India. Particularly through *Untouchable,* he exposed the inhumanness that in fact characterized the traditional social relations embedded in Hindu society. He conveyed to the world much more effectively, through the medium of his highly authentic and influential social fiction, that a section of humanity has been kept under degrading conditions for such a long period in Indian history. This trend of realistically representing the subalternity of the untouchable community continued throughout the twentieth century and in post-colonial India. It is therefore quite significant to note that Mulk Raj Anand's masterpiece *Untouchable* presaged the upsurge of genre of critical works on the various dimensions of subaltemity of the untouchables in India[68]. Literary texts at once reflect and enact history[69]. The text acquires a definite historical significance, as it can be located in a contemporary context of social conventions[70]. Thus, Anand's fictions mirrored the contemporary social environment in colonial India[71].

References:

1. Michael I. Carignan, Fiction as History or History as Fiction? George Eliot, Hayden White, and Nineteenth-Century Historicism.' (CLIO, Vol.-29, 2000) see *http:// www.questia.com;* Note: 'In 1973, Hayden White's Metahistory inaugurated a critical movement that challenged the historians to think of historiography as a kind of literature that is subject to new forms of literary analysis, especially structural and post- structural readings. While the historical profession as a whole has been slow to incorporate White's perspective into mainstream thinking about the nature of written history, more historians in the last decade have foregrounded the literary condition of their history in their works. A few that come to mind are Simon Schama, Gabriel Spiegel, and Dominick LaCapra'., see also Pasi Ihalainen, 'Language and Literature in Intellectual History,' in David Robertson, (ed), *English Studies and History,* Tampere English Studies 4 (Tampere 1994), pp. 223-244;
2. Pasi Ihalainen, *op. sit.* Note: Romila Thapar forcefully articulates the notion in her work *"Cultural Pasts,'* that the ancient Indian literature can critically be made use of as a valuable source in the construction or reconstruction of India's past, if their limitations are kept in view. See Romila Thapar, "Society and Historical Consciousness: The Itihasa-purana Tradition', pp 123-154, "Historical Consciousness in Early India,'pp.155-172, "The Historian and the Epic' pp.613-629, *Cultural Pasts:* Essays in Early Indian History, (New Delhi, 2000).
3. *Ibid*
4. Michael I. Carignan, *op.sit.*
5. Pasi Ihalainen, *op.cit.*

6. *Ibid.* see also for criticism of White, Wulf Kansteiner, "Hayden White's Critique of the Writing of History', *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History,* 32, 3, 1993, pp. 273-95.
7. *Ibi.,* For instance, Ranajit Guha makes a suggestion that 'All historians from now on should situate historicality in a paradigm that shall go beyond the reach of the ordinary academic historian of today.' However, it has been severely criticized thus: 'This impulse to go beyond the confines of history has been a familiar charge among the novelists and the poets who have had a traditional quarrel with the expectation of critics of their unmediated relationship with history; to find a historian making a similar complaint, as Guha does here, is both unique and extraordinary.' See Rosinka Chaudhuri, "Historicality in Literature: Subaltemist Misrepresentations,' *Economic and Political Weekly* (hereafter EPW), (16-22 October 2004), pp. 4658-4663.
8. *Ibid.,* see also Rosinka Chaudhuri, "Historicality in Literature',
9. *Ibid.* see also Lisa Lowe, 'Decolonization, Displacement, Disidentification: Asian American "Novels" and the Question of History' in Deidre Lynch and William B. Warner, (eds), *'Cultural Institutions of the Novel',* (Durham and London, 1996); Martyn P. Thompson, 'Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning', *History and Theory,* 32, (3) 1993, pp. 248-272; Pramod K. Nayar, 'The Sublime Raj: English Writing and India, 1750-1820,' *EPW,* (August 21, 2004), 3811-3817; Note: 'In this essay I focus on the manner in which aesthetics and colonial ideology imbricate in early descriptions of Indian landscape. I argue that 18th century aesthetics of the sublime furnished a ready tool with which the traveller articulated specifically colonial themes in her/his narrative. My concern is the rhetorical transformation of the Indian landscape from the site of sublime desolation

and danger to potential improvement in the 1750-1820 period. The aesthetics of the sublime, common to 18th century Europe embodied terror and vastness, darkness and obscurity, danger and challenge. What is interesting is that this rhetorical transformation of India cuts across many different kinds of English writing -travelogues, administrative reports, letters from officials, memoirs and so on. That is, there appears to be an entire discourse in operation here, as I shall demonstrate using sample texts from these genres.' Thus, a remarkable attempt has been made through the article to articulate on the aspect of how the various genres of literary texts delineate the history of the eighteenth century India;

10. Quoted in Radhakrishnan, N., 'Theme of Class Exploitation and Capitalistic Injustice in the Indo-Anglian Novel' *Social Scientist,* Vol.2, No.23, June, 1974, p. 47.
11. Much of eighteenth-century critical discussion of fiction was shaped around the opposition between romance and the social novel. Therefore, the prefaces attached to the fictional works of this period claimed either to be "true history" or "romance." Henry Fielding (1707-54), who outlined the eighteenth century's most explicit theory of fiction, strove for socio-historical comprehensiveness in all his novels. Fielding's novels establish one main tradition of English fiction: the broadly comprehensive narrative that places the protagonist's career against a panoramic social backdrop. This approach of Fielding's provoked a critical response from Samuel Johnson (1709-84) that Fielding depicted "low life". Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), the other remarkable writer of novels, despite his didactical nature of writings, did not waver in his commitment to evoking and disturbing the ambiguous truths of human psyche. Clara Reeve (1729-1807) in her *Progress of Romance* (1785), which was the first book-length critical discourse on fiction in the eighteenth

century, explained that the novel was a picture of real life and manners and of the times in which it was written. Thus, she sought to reconcile the opposition between the romance and the novel that underlined eighteenth-century critical discussion of fiction. For Reeve, the novel was not repudiation but an evolution from romance even though its involving realism and immediacy marked the novel as distinct; See for detailed discussion of the critical discourse that centered on the distinction between the nature of Romantic and Social fiction in the eighteenth century, John J. Richetti, 'Fiction Theory and Criticism: 1. Seventeenth-and Eighteenth-Century 'British,' in *http://www.pressjhu.edulbookS'/hopkins - Guide_to_literary _theory/ fiction_theory - and criticism-3.html*

12. Note: The ideas of realism and naturalism dominated the novel. The emerging new ideas consequent on the rise of revolutionary temper, romantic movement, individualism and the theory of evolution had all exercised a profound impact on the creative energy of the novelists. Consequently Sir Walter Scott's historical realism was re-stated and made contemporary by his successors. They undertook to treat the present social order itself as history. Scott's conflicts of cultures across time were redefined as the contemporary conflicts between the economic and ethical orders of "two nations"-the middle class and the working class. The self-contradictions of the social totality became the focus of representation. In shifting their attention from the past social contradictions to the immediate ones, the realists endeavored to fuse the novelists with the historian's vocation. Thus, Balzac's *Lost Illusions* (1837) and Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (1864) are remarkably interesting dramatic representations of nefarious economic forms of life. The legacy of romance in realism was enlisted as both an

intensifier of realism and a facilitating medium for the novelist's impartial and yet critical address to social actuality. Dickens' *Bleak House* (1852-53) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851-52) are the classic articulations of social realism influenced by romance. The rise of naturalism in France at once influenced the novelists and re-focused the aims of realism. Quite significantly, Emile Zola's *Therese Raquin* (1867) is an outstanding exposition of the ideas of naturalism in fiction. And, Frank Norris's *McTeague* (1899) was structured as a debate between the realist and the naturalist theories and explanations of the world. Norris's work showed the relative rather than the absolute differences between the theoretical paradigms that inspired the nineteenth century's novelists - see for a critical analysis of the nature of nineteenth century novel and its response to emerging social reality, Robert L. Caserio, 'Fiction Theory and Criticism: 2. Nineteenth-Century British and American,' in *http://www.press.jhu.edu/books/hopkins guide to literary theoryl fictiontheory and criticism- 3.html.*

13. Note: Hemy James's example in his essays and reviews, and especially in his 1907-09 prefaces to the New York edition of his novels, permanently arranged the form and terms of the discourse on fiction; see for a discussion the evolution of novel in early twentieth century, Michael Groden, 'Fiction Theory and Criticism: 3. Early Twentieth-Century British and American,' in *http://www.press.jhu.edu/books/hopkins guide to literary theorylfiction theory and criticism- 3.htm/;* Hemy James, as the author of the most influential work, *The Art of Fiction,* defines the existence and the purpose of the novel thus: "the only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life", simultaneously emphasizing that novel, as an art, must be interesting. In fact, James endeavored to reiterate that novel,

as a fiction, was not only an art but also one that was solidly rooted in the social reality. Henry James, *The Art of Fiction,* published in Longman's Magazine4 (September 1884), and reprinted in Partial Portraits (Macmillan, 1888), in *http:1* 1 *guwe b* 2. *gonzaga. edu/facultyl campbelll eng* 14621 *artfiction. html*

Also the works of Christopher Isherwood, an Anglo-American novelist, and John Steinbeck, an American novelist, represent the best critical efforts at producing social fiction in early half of the twentieth century. Isherwood's *The Berlin Stories* in the 1930s is a best-known fictional work. His two works about Berlin, *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939) provide a vivid picture of the everyday lives of ordinary people in pre-Hitler Germany. The depiction of the glittering and grotesque metropolis of Germany, its cafes, people and their nocturnal vices, was based on his observations in the decadent Weimar Republic. *Goodbye to Berlin* is considered among the most significant political novels of the twentieth century. So, the underlying theme of both books is the decay of a civilization and its tragic effects on the lives of individuals. John Steinbeck produced a social fiction, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), which is widely considered to be a twentieth century classic. Steinbeck's fiction is about the migration of the Joad family, driven from its bit of land in Oklahoma to Ca1ifomia and it generated a wide debate about the hard lot of the migrant laborers. It was considered simply "an epic chronicle" by the Swedish Academy, which awarded Steinbeck the Nobel Prize; see *http://www. kirjasto.sci.fi/isherwoo.htm;* and *http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/ johnstei.html* .

14. Note: Ian Watt offers an account of the growth of the novel in terms of what he calls "formal realism," a term that includes "the premise... that the novel is a full and authentic

report of human experience". Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defor, Richardson, and Fielding,* (Berkeley, 1957), p.32.

15. Quoted from Raymond Williams's *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence(1971),* pp.10,11, in Michael Groden, 'Fiction Theory and Criticism: 3. Early Twentieth-Century British and American,' *op. sit.*
16. Sujit Mukherjee, 'Indo-English Literature; An Essay in Definition,' in M.K. Naik et al., (eds), *Critical Essays on Indian Writing in English,* (Madras, 1977), p. 19; Note: 'Besides the railway system, the civil service, the game of cricket and a host of other distinctive aspects of Indian life today, the British bestowed upon us the aspiration of creating literature in the English language.'
17. Krishna Kripalani, 'Modern Literature', in A.L. Basham, (ed), *The Cultural History of India,* (New Delhi, 2002), pp.406-422.
18. Nalini Natarajan, 'Introduction: Regional Literatures of India -Paradigms and Contexts,' in Nalini Natarajan et aI, (eds), *Handbook of Twentieth-Century Literatures of India,* (London, 1996), p. 9.
19. Krishna Kripalani, *op. sit,* pp. 414-15; Note: Romesh Chunder Dutt, a distinguished litterateur and historian, who was himself one of the builders of the renaissance in 19th century, writes in the first edition of his *The Literature of Bengal* (1877) thus: "The conquest of Bengal by the British was not only a political revolution but ushered in a greater revolution in thoughts and ideas, in religion and society, in habits, in tastes, in feeling, freedom and vigour and patriarchal institutions, our literature therefore has undergone a corresponding change. From the stories of gods and goddesses, kings and queens, princes and princesses, we have learned to descend to the humble walks of life, to sympathise with a common citizen

or even a common peasant. From an admiration of a symmetrical uniformity we have descended to an appreciation of the strength and freedom of individuality. From admiring the grandeur and glory of the great, we now willingly turn to appreciate the liberty and resistance in the lowly." Kripalani observes that it was true of a very limited intelligentsia in the city of Calcutta. It was hardly true of the rest of Bengal and India. However, it was this limited intelligentsia that was the main vanguard of the moral and intellectual upsurge of the 19th century. In any case, the passage indicates the fundamental trends which are still operative; also see, Nalini Ntarajan, *op. sit.,* p.9; Note: The English literary influence on Indian literature is unmistakable, for the history and influence of the discourse of English literature and western humanism cannot be easily written out of literary history.

20. Sujii Mukherjee, *op. sit.,* pp. 19 and 28. Note: Edward Farley Oaten's prize- winning essay of 1907 at Cambridge did not actually discuss any Indian writing, but the appendix provided at the end of his book lists eleven Indians among the authors of 'Anglo-Indian Works'. The names are: H. Dutt (fiction); G.C. Dutt, H.C. Dutt, S.C. Dutt, TofU Dutt, B.M. Malabari, P .C. Mitra and V.C. Nowrosji (Poetry); Michael M. Dutt and P.V. Ramaswami Raju (drama). These works were published between 1871 and 1888; also see Alpana Sharma Knippling, *op. sit.,* p.88.
21. Krishna Kripalani, *op. sit.,* pp. 413-14.
22. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R, *Indian Writing in English,* (New Delhi, 2001), p.314- 15, *Note:* The first creative social novel written in Bengal was *Alaler Gharer Dulal* ('Spoilt Son of a Rich Family) (1858). It was a pioneering work. However, Bankim is known as the father of the modern novel in India and his influence on later writers is phenomenal. Social fiction also continued to appear in Bengali literature. In English, Raj

Lakshmi Devi's *The Hindu Wife* (1876), TofU Dutt's *Bianca* (1878), Kali Krishna Lahiri's *Roshinara* (1881), H.Dutt's *Bijoy Chand* (1888), and Khetrapal Chakravarti's *Sarata and Hingana* (1895) appeared in India; also see Sudhir Chandra, Literature and Colonial Connection, *Social Scientist,* Vol, 11, No. 121, June 1983, pp. 3-47; Krishna Kripalani, *op. sit,* p. 410; Alpana Sharma Knippling, *op. sit.,* pp. 88,89.

23. Alpana Sharma Knippling, *op. sit.,* p.89.
24. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* pp, 317-1.8. Note: Tagore's *Yogayog* is also another memorable social fiction revolving around the theme of frustration in marital life. The heroine Kumudini deserts her husband and in the end returns to him hoping to find happiness.
25. Alpana Sharma Knippling, *op. sit.,* p.89.
26. Rajan, P.K., ed. *The growth of the Novel in India 1950-1980,* (New Delhi, 1989), p. X.
27. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* p. 318.
28. *Ibid., Note:* The best works of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee are *Srikanta, Grihadaha, Pather Dabi, Bipradas* and *Ses Prasna. Srikanta* has been translated into English by K.C. Sen and Theodosia Thompson and some others.
29. Radhakrishnan, N., *op. sit.,* p. 47.
30. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* p.325: Note: *The lake of Palms* by R.C. Dutt is a study of social life in Bengal towards the close of the 19th century. It portrays the action climaxes in the marriage of the young widow Sudha; The *Dive for Death* by T. Ramakrishna is knit around the certain superstitions, which make cowards of the characters; Sir Jogendra Singh's *Nasrin* presents the self- indulgence of the Nawabs and Taluqdars of yester years. And *his Kamni* is about the pathetic life of a barber's daughter; Hari Singh Gour's *His only Love* is a study of the consequences of the emancipation of Indian Women; Ahmed Ali's *Twilight*

in Delhi is a narrative of Muslim life in modern Delhi; The theme of Kumara Guru's narratives unusual psychological studies set against the backdrop of a changing Hindu society - changing but not necessarily for the better.

31. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* p. 332.
32. *Ibid.,* pp. 323; also see. Kesavanarayana, B., 'Social Refonn and Telugu Literature, 1920-1947' Presidential Address, Socio-Economic History Section, *Proceedings of South Indian History Congress,* (Kalady, 1998), p.137; Note: Two best novels were written in English on Gandhian Civil Disobedience Movement in the early thirties. They are K.S. Venkataramani's *Kandan the Patriot* (1932) and Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938); In Telugu language, the works of social relevance were: Doma Venkataswamy Gupta's *Malapilla* (The Mala Girl) (1936), Karlapalem Krishna Rao's *Mallepuvu* (1935), Madduri Annapuranayya's *Mala* (1936), Somanchi Suryanarayana Sarma's *Malavadu* (1938).
33. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* pp. 323 -324; also see for critical analysis of themes of the novels in pre-independent India, N. Radhakrishnan, *op. sit.,* pp. 45-58.
34. Nalini Natarajan, *op. sit.,* p. 11.
34. Govinda Prasad Sarma, 'Assamese,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *The Growth of the Novel in India,* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 1,2.
35. K. Sivathamby, 'Tamil,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* pp. 12, Note: K.S. Venkataramani's *Desabhaktan Kandan,* (1932), Ku.Pa. Rajagopalan's *Verottam* (1944) are particularly representative of this trend. Also Subramania Bharathi who ushered in the modem era in Tamil literature wrote *Cinnaccankaran Katai* to comment on many social problems of the day. Venkataramani's *Desabhaktan Kandan* is the first political novel in that it discusses the manner in which Gandhi and his reforms were received in Tamilnadu.

36. Sudhir Chandra, *op. sit.,* pp.3-47: Note: Harishchandra's plays *Bharat-Janani* (1877), *Bharat Durdasha* (1880) not only detail the destructive consequences of British rule in India but also dwells on its regenerative possibilities. The drain of wealth of India appears almost obsessively in Harishchadra's work. In *Nil Devi* (1881), also a play, he listed growing irreligion, ignorance, lethargy, superstitions, cowardice and proneness to slavery as the evils that plagued contemporary Indian society. In *Andher Nagari Chaupatta Raja* (1881), a farce, he exposed the reality of corruption, arbitrary lawlessness and exploitation that lay behind the facade *of Pax Britanica.* Premghan's play *Bharat Saubhagya* (1889) illustrates the inextricable fusion of faith in and condemnation of British rule. It provides commentary on the disastrous consequences of British rule. It shows that Indian industry, commerce and agriculture fall on evil days. Poverty grips the people. Goswami too was inspired into expanding his social concerns by Harishchandra. In his monthly Journal, *Bharatendu* (1883-86), there was not a single issue in which some aspect of British policy and administration was not assailed.
37. Sharma, I.K., 'Hindhi,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* pp. 32, 33. 39. *Ibid.*
38. 40. Jatindra Kumar Nayak, 'Oriya,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* pp. 51-53;
39. Fakirmohan's *Chhamana Athaguntha* reveals the traces of resentment against British rule. Dr. Harakrishna Mahatab's *Prativa* articulates anti-British feelings but does not go beyond the feudal framework when it has to project itself into the future. Gopinath Mohanty's *Harijan* (1948) deals with the sufferings of the untouchables and dramatizes the contrast between the two ways of life: the life of the rich and the life of the poor untouchables. The novel is full of

bitterness, of direct social criticism but it ends in the defeat of the untouchables.

40. K.M. Tharakan, 'Malayalam,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* p. 57; Note: *Indulekha* and *Saradha,* the two master-pieces of the social novel, appeared in 1889 and 1890. Also, Raman Pillai's first great historical romance *Marthanda Varma* appeared in 1891. His last finest work *Rama Raj Bahadur* was written in 1920. These social as well as historical works are considered as creations of high standards of excellence.
42. *Ibid.* pp. 58, 60.
43. Kesavanarayana, B., *op.sit.,* p.134.
44. See: *http://wwwobibliomania.com/O/O24/52/framesetohtml;* Note: *The Vicar of Wakefield* is Oliver Goldsmith's most enduring novel. It was published in 1766. The novel follows Vicar's fruitless search to find his daughter, his chance discovery of his son George, and the wretched Thornhill's vulgar treatment of women. The tale is notable for Primrose's strength of character in times of great difficulty and for its rejection of the ostentatious style of other novels of that time.
45. Prabhakar Rao, 8.8., 'Telugu,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* pp. 93, 94.
46. Subbarayudu, G.K., and. Vijayasree, C., 'Twentieth-Century Telugu Literature,' in Nalini Natarajan et aI, (eds) *op. sit.,* p. 319.
47. *Ibid.,* p. 320; Note: The social novels of this period, such as *Matru Mandiram* (1920) by Venkata Parvateesa Kavulu and *Ganapathi* (1920), by Chilakamarti, focus on the customs and cultural conflicts of Telugu Brahmin families during the transitional period.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Prabhakar Rao, S.S., 'Telugu,' *op. sit.,* pp. 93-95; See also Kesavanarayana, B., *op. sit.,* p.137.
50. Subbarayudu, G.K., and Vijayasree, C., *op. sit.,* p. 321.

51. *Ibid.*
52. Kesavanarayana. B., *op. sit.,* pp.135-138 ; Note: Brahrnabhatta Pattabhi Sarma's *Malamu* (1920), Cherla-Narayana Sastry's *Adimandhrulu* (1926), Kama Veera Nageswara Rao's *Asprusyula Vijnapti* (1936), Puripanda Appalaswamy *Panchama Vilapam* (Wails of the Panchama, 1925), Doma Venkataswamy Gupta's *Malapilla* (The Mala Girl, 1936), Karlapalem Krishna Rao's *Mallepuvu* (1935), Madduri Annapuranayya's Mala (1936), Gurram Jashuva's *Anadha* Orphan, 1934), Somanchi Suryanarayana Sarma's *Malavadu* (1938), and G. Joseph's *Kanneti Gadha* (Story of Tears, 1943) were all important works which voiced the need for social transformation.
53. Balachandra Nemade, 'Marathi,' in Rajan, P.K., (ed), *op. sit.,* pp. 119,120.
54. Krishna Kripalani, *op. sit.,* p. 412.
55. Seshagiri Rao, L.S., 'Kannada' in Rajan, P.K., ed, *op. sit.,* p. 111-113; The progressive writers introduced rural life into literature in a big way. The literature turned its eyes and heart towards marginalized groups such as the factory worker, the farmer, the compositor in the printing press, the prostitute and the begger; Note: A.N. Krishna Rao believed "Only humanist values can save the world from exploding; and the writer is the prophet of humanism." When he wrote *Nagna Satya, Shani Santaana* and *Sanje Gaththalu,* that threw light on the issues of prostitution, the conservative writers were shaken and called him a "vulgar writer" for writing such a subject. "If telling the truth is vulgar, then I am vulgar; if the act of covering with a cloth, a downtrodden, helpless, naked woman on the street is vulgar, then I am a vulgar writer" was Anakru's reply (A.N. Krishna Rao was popularly known as 'Anakru'). It is an irony that the very same people who criticized Anakru, wrote on the same subject later. *(http://www.baraha.com/anakru.htm)*

56. Mulk Raj Anad, 'The Story of My Experiment with a White Lie', in M.K. Naik, *et al* (eds), *op. sit.,* p. 13.
57. *Ibid.* p.5.
58. *Ibid.* p.13.
59. *Ibid.* p.5.
60. *Ibid.* pp. 5-6.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Khan, A.G., 'Mulk Raj Anand: Crusader for the downtrodden', *The Journal of Indian Writing in English* (hereafter JIWE), Vol.33. No.1. January 2005, p. 6.
63. *Ibid.,* p.7.
64. Christopher Isherwood's two works about Berlin, *Mr. Norris Changes Train')* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939) provide a vivid picture of the everyday lives of ordinary people in pre-Hitler Germany. So, the underlying theme of both books is the decay of a civilization and its tragic effects on the lives of individuals; John Steinbeck's fiction, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is about the migration of the Joad family and depicted the hard lot of the migrant laborers.
65. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op.sit.,* pp. 347 to 350; for a critical analysis of Anand's Trilogy - see also Meenakshi Mukherjee, 'Beyond the Village: An aspect of Mulk Raj Anand,' in M K. Naik et al, (eds), *op. sit.,* pp. 236 to 245.
66. Balarama Gupta, G.S, 'Remembering Mulk Raj Anand,' *JIWE,* p.2.
67. Srinivasa Iyengar, K.R., *op. sit.,* pp.331-350; *Note: The Weavers, a* play in five acts published in 1892 by Gerhart Hauptmann, is a compassionate dramatization of the revolt of the Silesian weavers of 1844 and depicts in a starkly realistic way the human cost of the Industrial Revolution. The work demonstrates how, reduced to destitution as a consequence of the introduction of power looms, the weavers are driven to revolt as their elders starve and their children

faint from hunger. The play caused a major stir on its presentation; *The Machine Wreckers,* a play written by Ernst Toller (tran. 1923), is based on the Luddite riots in England. His other plays of social protest are *Masses and Man,* (tran. 1924) and *The Transformation,* (tran. 1935). All of them spoke on the workers cause and against the exploitation of big business. When Hitler came to power in 1933, Toller's books were banned and burnt.

68. See also for a critical analysis of the emergence of Dalit literature in Tamil Nadu; GJV. Prasad, 'Tamil Dalit Literature: A Brief Overview', in I. Thirumali, (ed), *South India: Regions, Cultures and Sagas,* (New Delhi, 2004), pp. 157-162; For Andhra region see, P. Kesava Kumar, 'Emergence of Dalit Novel in Telugu: An Overview', Thirumali, *'South India',* pp. 163-170;, Also see, A. Satyanarayana, 'Dalit Protest Literature in Telugu: A Historical Perspective,' *EPW,* January 21, 1995, pp. 171-175; Also see, Veena Deo, 'Dalit Literature in Marathi,' in Nalini Natarajan et al, (eds), *op. sit.,* pp.363-380.
69. Steven N. Zwicker, *Politics and English Literary Culture,* 1649-1689, (Ithaca and London, 1993), p. 1.
70. Henry James, *'The Art of Fiction,'* Note: Referring to the analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist, he writes thus: 'As the picture is reality, so the novel is history. That is the only general description (which does it justice) that we may give the novel. But history also is allowed to compete with life, as I say; it is not, any more any more than painting, expected to apologize. The subject-matter of fiction is stored up likewise in documents and records, and if it will not give itself away, as they say in California, it must speak with assurance, with the tone of the historian.'

71. Brunton, T.D., 'India in Fiction: The Heritage of Indianness,' in M.K. Naik *et al*., (eds), *op. sit.,* p.219; Note: The caste system is here shown not as a static structure, but as a system of social intercourse. Its cruelty is harshly apparent. In this book, we learn something both about ourselves as human beings and more generally, about the quality of social life in India. Dr. Anand has stuck to the novelist's prime task of depicting the limited, the specific, and the concrete.

VAIDHYANATHA IYER AND THE PROCEEDINGS OF MADURAI TEMPLE ENTRY EVENT - 1939-1945

Dr. L. Selvamuthu Kumarasami
Senior-Lecturer in History
LN.Government College, Ponneri, Tamil Nadu.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the role played by A. Vaidhyanatha Iyer in the Madurai temple entry event inspired by Rajaji and Gandhiji and the subsequent opposition raised by the Sanatanists. It also explores the whole episode of the Madurai temple entry, the legislative measures, the court proceedings, the odds faced by Vaidhyanatha Iyer in the noble cause of the untouchables, the significance of Madurai temple entry event in the records of the temple entry movement and the subsequent opening of all the major Brahminical temples to the outcastes in Tamil Nadu. Exactly sixty-six years ago, on July 8, 1939 a bright, new chapter opened in the annals of Hinduism. A short bespectacled Brahmin wearing a typical tuft and holy-ash, A. Vaidhyanatha Iyer, led the outcastes into the hollowed precincts of the Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple. Thus, July 8 is the anniversary of this epoch-making event in the history of Tamil Nadu as well as the nation. Custom has all along prohibited the entry of outcastes into Hindu temples but on this historic day history was rewritten.

A true follower of Gandhi

A. Vaidhyanatha Iyer was one of those great leaders who threw himself into the various freedom movements initiated by Gandhi and was jailed several times. He took part in the

Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha in 1931 and suffered imprisonment. He founded the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh in Tamil Nadu in 1932 along with N.M.R. Subbaraman, T.S.S.Rajan, Ramachandran, L.Krishnasamy Bharathi, Sivaramakrishna Iyer, L.N. Gopalsamy and P.K. Ramachari, as part of Gandhi's Harijan movement. He did pioneering work for the removal of untouchability and Harijan uplift. He was the President of the Tamil Nadu Harijan Sevak Sangh from 1935 until his death. His burning zeal was to involve in the constructive programmes of Gandhi- like khadi and village industries, prohibition, communal harmony and above all eradication of untouchability. He dedicated his life particularly to the cause of Harijan welfare, which was dear to the heart of Gandhi. He felt that entry of Harijans into temples would go a long way in helping them join the social mainstream.

Allowing temple entry to people belonging to the depressed classes formed an important phase in the movement for the removal of untouchability. For long, the temples have played a vital role in the social life of the Tamil people. It is generally believed by the people that they should not dwell in a place, which has no temple. However, it is very sad to point out that a certain section of the Hindus, who were treated as untouchables, were denied the privilege of entering the temples for worshiping the Gods and Goddesses.

The members of Nadar community spearheaded a movement for temple entry in Tamil Nadu in the nineteenth century. For a while, the Nadars were prevented from entering the temples on the grounds that they indulged in the profession like toddy tapping which was considered one of the *Pancha maha patakas:* (five major sins). The temples in Tamil Nadu were constructed to the Brahminical deities and were opened only to the upper

caste- Hindus. The intellectual attainments and economic well-being never helped the lower-caste Hindus to enter the prohibited areas in the temple[1].

Preparation in Madurai

During the third decade of the twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the people to give up the practice of untouchability and leaders like Kelappan of Malabar, Periyar E.V.Ramasami and Subbarayan gave a clarion call to allow the depressed people into the temples. Temple entry by untouchables was on the social agenda of the national movement, especially during the 1930s. Deliberations were held on several occasions within the Indian National Congress[2]. Polls were conducted to elicit public opinion. In Tamil Nadu, for instance, polls were conducted at Kanchipuram, Srirangam, Kumbakkonam and Madurai - all places steeped in Brahminical orthodoxy. In all these four places, the people were in favour of the temple entry proposal. In Madurai, 5732 caste- Hindus voted in the poll. Out of them, 4,746 supported the temple entry[3]. Further, in 1933, the election to the Trustee's Committee of the Meenakshi temple was fought on the issue of temple entry. Brahminical orthodoxy, which was opposed to temple entry, set up its own candidates. However, out of the seven elected members of the Committee, six were from the group favouring temple entry[4]. This committee later passed a resolution in favour of temple entry[5].

Between May and July 1939, the Tamil Nadu Congress carried out a temple entry campaign. A Temple Entry Conference was held in Madurai on June 13, 1939 at the Victoria Edward Hall to mark its beginning[6]. It was presided over by Romeswari Nehru, Vice-President of the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh. The speeches of the leaders like Rajaji, T.S.S Rajan, A.Vidyanantha Iyer and N.M.R. Subbaraman emphasized the necessity of

temple entry to the untouchables. When it was resolved in the conference to request the Government of Madras to bring legislation for temple entry, Rajaji, the Premier said "Don't worry about temple-entry legislation, but prepare the way and arrange for the opening of temples for untouchables. If the law is preventing you achieving your goal, I will give you legislation within eight days"[7]. Rajaji also stated that in all national activities, Madurai played a leading role and expressed his hope that Madurai would do so in the temple entry movement also[8].

Public meetings were organised to propogate the issue and mobilise support. A signature campaign was also conducted. A group of fifty--four untouchables under the leadership of A.Vaidiyanatha lyer and other leaders of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, toured the Tranvancore region and visited various temples which had by then been thrown open to untouchables by the Tranvancore Temple Entry Proclamation. Around this, time, the Congress-dominated Municipal Council of Madurai passed a resolution in support of temple entry. A. Vaidyanatha Iyer and other Congressmen, in collaboration with R. S. Naidu, the Executive Officer of the Meenakshi Temple, started making elaborate plans for the temple entry event in Madurai. A group of about fifty Congressmen underwent training in the methods of *Satyagraha* (passive resistance)[9].

A Vaidyanatha Iyer of Madurai had close association with Premier Rajaji who offered him all his moral support to the proposed temple entry reform in Madurai. Moreover, Madurai had a number of earnest Congressmen - N.M,R. Subbaraman, P.K. Ramachari and a host of others who under the inspiration of national leaders came forward to offer their help and co-operation to achieve the goal of temple-entry in Madurai. In order to mobilise public support to this reform, the workers of

Harijan Sevak Sangh made laudable efforts. Arguments in favour of temple-entry were publicised in the form of notices everyday. Wall posters adorned every car with the following text: "Harijans are Hindus and please give them temple -entry"[10]. Public meetings became very common and not a day passed without their being at least two or three meetings in each and every corner of Madurai town[11]. A. Vaidyanatha Iyer spoke in many meetings and emphasized the urgency of the reform and requested the support of every individual in the town of Madurai[12]. N. Halasyam, M.L.A. of Tiruchi addressed many gatherings in Madurai. Theagaraja Sivam, L. Krishna Bharathi, Krishna Kunthu, P.K. Ramachari, Mangala Pattabhi Ramayya and many others also delivered stirring speeches about temple entry. All the meetings in Madurai were largely attended and in the course of a fortnight, public opinion was thoroughly mobilised in support of' temple entry. The workers of Harijan Sevak Sangh carried on house-to-house propaganda and met the leading people of all communities[13]. They also approached the executive officer, *archakas, sthanikas* and other servants of the temple and explained to them the need for temple entry[14]. Pasumpon V. Muthuramalinga Thevar who was at Madurai instructed the recalcitrant Hindus not to impede the temple-entry reform[15].

Temple entry in Madurai

The wonderful event of temple-entry by the untouchables in Madurai took place at last on July 8, 1939. On this day at 8.45 a.m., a batch of untouchables, numbering five and one Nadar, made their first entry into the famous shrine of Sri Meenakshi in the company of A. Vaidyanatha lyer and LN. Gopalasamy[16]. The names of the five untouchables were Kakkan, member, Madurai District Board, Swami Muruganandam, Alampatti, Madurai district, Muthu, Harijan Seva!aya worker, Madurai, V. S. Chinniah, Mathichiyam, Madurai, V.R. Poovalingam,

Virattipattu, Madurai Taluk and S. Shanmuga Nadar, Municipal Commissioner, Virudhunagar[17]. R.S. Naidu, the Executive Officer, A. Chidambara Mudaliar, a member of the Meenakshi Devasthanam Committee, the Superintendent, *Peishkar* and other servants of the temple were present at the entrance of the temple and they received the temple entry party. Nobody present in the temple raised any objection or protests when A. Vaidyanatha ryer and his party entered the temple and worshipped at the shrines in the temple[18]. Huge crowds of people witnessed this wonderful event and the news of this event spread at once like wildfire[19]. "The hearts of millions of Hindus must have throbbed with joy on reading the news of the peaceful realization of temple entry of the untouchables in the great Meenakshi temple at Madurai"[20].

Significance of Madurai temple entry

The temple-entry at the Meenakshi temple is a great landmark in the social reform movement of Tamil Nadu. It was a remarkable reform in the Hindu religion as it brought equality among the worshippers of God. A revolutionary change had taken place in Tamil land without violence and bloodshed. The whole scheme was executed non-violently without any breach of peace[21]. The temple-entry in Madurai, therefore, is called a 'bloodless revolution'. By leading the temple-entry, Madurai had made history in the annals of social change. The servants of Harijan Sevak Sangh under A. Vaidyanatha Iyer's inspiring leadership worked incessantly and indefatigably towards this consummation. R.S.Naidu, the Executive Officer and A.Chidambara Mudaliar of the Meenakshi Temple Devasthanam Committee also lent their support to this reform. Rajaji, the Premier, called the temple-entry in Madurai as a 'beautiful and historic event[22].

About the historic temple-entry in Madurai, Romeswari Nehru observed thus: "Mahatma Gandhi, Rajagopalachari, T.S.S. Rajan, Vaidyanatha lyer and others no doubt laboured hard but their labours would have been set at naught if they had not found favour with the people. The great change was accomplished by the people themselves as a result of propaganda and not by the exercise of any authority". P.K. Pushparaj, Councillor, Corporation of Madras and Member of Harijan Sevak Sangh, Madras remarked "The throwing open of the holy precincts of the ancient and historic temple of Sri Meenakshi at Madurai to the long afflicted and oppressed untouchables marks "a golden era in the history of Hindu India"[23]. G. Ramachandran, Kerala Congress leader observed: "While Tranvancore has undoubtedly led in Harijan temple entry, Madurai has gone further, in that the reformers did not have the support of or rely on the arm of any state authority. Harijans entered the Madurai temple entirely on the strength of love and assurance of the conversion of hearts of the so-called *savarnas* (caste-Hindus). In so far as the reliance was thus entirely on love, the Madurai miracle is an advance on the Tranvancore miracle. But it was the Travancore example which watered and manured the seed of temple- entry in Madurai"[24].

"The proclamation opening the state temples of Travancore was no doubt a very big step. But it was the prerogative of the Maharaja. The Maharaja, the Maharani and the Diwan C.P. Ramaswami Iyer brought about the transformation. But the opening of celebrated temple of Madurai is a greater event in that it is the popular will that has brought about the happy consummation. It reflects a decided conversion of the temple-goers of the Meenakshi temple. A. Vaidyanatha Iyer and his co-workers deserve all the praise for the ceaseless efforts they have put forth in educating public opinion"[25]. Gandhiji also sent

a long wire to A. Vaidyanatha Iyer urging him not to take to heart what the *sanatanists* might say or do. In his reply to Gandhiji's wire, A. Vaidyanatha Iyer thanked the former for his encouragement and support given to him towards the temple-entry reform in Madurai[26].

The Meenakshi temple in Madurai was the most famous one in South India and as Rajaji has put it "If the gates of Shri Padmanabha Shrine at Trivandrum and Sri Meenakshi at Madurai have been thrown open, the exclusion may be taken as automatically abolished"[27]. A. Vaidyanatha Iyer chose "the right time and place to drive the dagger deep into the heart of untouchability"[28].

Sanatanists' dissent

At first, the temple-entry event seemed to have passed off peacefully. On July 9, 1939 the *Madras Mail's* headlines read 'Pleasant surprise for Madurai: no opposition reported from caste-Hindus'. But on the same day the trouble also began. Temple priests, enraged by this sudden happening, abused the entrants. However, the regular *pujas* were not discontinued and everything went according to schedule on that day and the next. At once N. Natesa Iyer appealed to the *bhattars* and *sthanikas* of the temple that in view of the Harijans' entry into the *arthamandapam* and their receipt of *prasadams* under the direction of R.S .Naidu, it became necessary to perform *samprokshanam* (purification) and *suddhi* according to the *sastras* and until this performance, *abisheka* and *archanas* should be stopped to the Meenakshi Sundareswarar and other deities. He also issued an appeal to the orthodox people and temple *archakas* calling attention to the need for purification ceremony before worship was resumed. This appeal had some influence on the orthodox temple servants. There were reports about plans for

second entry on 10 July, this time on a much larger scale. Reacting to this, the sanatanists gathered in a house called Mangala Nivasam on Danappa Mudali Street. This group was led by K.R.Venkatarama Iyer and Natesa Iyer, well known lawyers in Madurai at that time. Natesa Iyer was the president of the All India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangam, an organization that advocated Brahminical orthodoxy. It was decided at the meeting that the Meenakshi Temple be closed from the night of 9 July, and daily worship be discontinued until a purificatory ritual was performed. Santhu Bhattar, a temple priest with hereditary rights to perform pujas and whose turn fell on 10 July, refused to accept the decision. In spite of his objection, Muttusubbar Bhattar and other priests, after finishing their day duties locked all the inner doors of the temple. In the evening they refused to unlock them and continue the daily worship until a *samprokshana* ritual, a purificatory ritual was performed. The Executive Officer could not extract the keys from Muttusubbar or his colleagues.

Irritated by these activities of R.S. Naidu and A.Vaidyanatha Iyer, K.R. Venkatarama lyer, a sanatanist from Madurai sent a telegram to Gandhi thus: "Armed Madurai temple peons opposing orthodox worshippers. This is waging war during world war. Pray issue immediate instructions such high-handedness. We have to after all live together." For his part, N. Natesa Iyer also sent a telegram to the Governor of Madras praying for his interference in the matter of' entry of Harijans into the Madurai Meenakshi temple. The other eminent sanatanists of Tamil Nadu who supported the cause of Madurai Sanatanists were Srinivasa Iyengar, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, T.R. Venkatrama Sastri, P.S.Sivasami Iyer and T.T. Krishnamachari. Through these obstructive tactics, A. Vaidyanatha Iyer was segregated from the orthodox Hindus especially among the Brahmins. It was

sanatanists also made with the aim to divert him from his work related to the Harijan temple entry. They excommunicated A. Vaidyanatha Iyer from their community in all possible ways. On the death of his father, no local Brahmin came forward to perform funeral ceremonies and priests from other places were called. They further raised anti-slogans against him surrounding his house and also burnt his pictures in public streets.

Early in the morning of 10 July, R.S.Naidu, who had anticipated such a move, had the locks broken, and reopened the temple with the assistance of Sandhu Bhattar and a magisrate, thus facilitating a second temple entry on a large scale. From July 10 onwards, most temple priests, except Santhu Bhattar, ceased performing the regular *pujas.* Other temple servants, however, continued to perform their duties. The Executive Officer suspended from duty Muttusubbar and two other priests. Within a few weeks all the priests who had failed to perform their duties except Sandhu Bhattar, were suspended and substitutes were brought from other temples. Initially, a priest was brought from the neighbouring town of Aruppukkottai, but he fell ill due to tuberculosis and was admitted to the Government Hospital. He passed away in the hospital the following day. The sanatanists interpreted this as a sign of the fury of the Goddess, and made propaganda that such fate would befall those who dared to undermine the sanctity of the temple. Later, about twelve priests came from Tirunelveli to replace those suspended[29].

From the day of the temple-entry, the sanatanists got together regularly at Mangala Nivasam. A golden pot to which the presence of the Goddess was believed to have been transferred was kept there and worshipped. They announced that the Goddess had left the temple, and was now present in this place. In a fairly short time, a plot of land was identified to build a 'new'

temple for Meenakshi. On completion of the construction, an idol was installed and regular *pujas* began. This new place of worship was situated close to where Venkatarama Aiyar lived. And the houses of the two women who wrote songs condemning the temple entry were located on the streets to the right and the left of his house. The two song books written by Brahmin women expressed their anguish over five harijans and a shanar breaking the caste norms and entering the Madurai Meenakshi temple. Bhagirathi Ammal's *Alaya Etirppu Kummi Pattu Pustakam* (1939) and S. Dharmambal's *Alaya Pravesa Kantana Pattu Pustakam* (1940) represented resistance to the Madurai temple entry event. Bhagirathi Ammal's book talks about the temple entry as an anomaly, a deviation from Hindu dharma. She vehemently condemns the ordinance issued by the Government, and the subsequent Act passed by the legislature. She also accuses the Congress and the Ministers for treachery and rebukes them for belying the expectation that the Congress and its ministry would not interfere in matters relating religion. She charges the Premier with bribing members of the Legislature in enacting the legislation. She cites the examples of Ravana, Duryodhana, Hiranya and Bhasmasura and warns the Premier against the fate that those embodiments of evil suffered. Subsequently, she urges the women to resolve themselves to work for the cause of their *svadharma:* to reclaim the Goddess, 'the daughter of the Pandiyas', whom they have lost to the untouchables, and to restore the ancient Hindu dharma. She urges the Premier to resign from his position as he has caused great damage to this dharma, and has proved to be an inefficient ruler. She depicted the untouchables, who entered the temple as thieves and their act as portending an end to *varnashrama dharma* and ushering in of *adharma*. Dharmambal's book is more pragmatic and lacks Bhagirathi Ammal's shrillness and immediacy. The text depicts an elaborate search for goddess Meenakshi,

who makes her exit from the temple upon the entry of untouchables, in a rather long march through the streets of Madurai and the premises of the temple. The text eventually locates her Mangala Nivasam, and invites the sanatanists to congregate there and become members of the All India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangam also known as Sanatana Sangam to fight for the restoration of *dharma.* The work explicitly mentions the names of R.S.Naidu and Vaidhyanatha Iyer while referring to the Madurai temple entry event. Dharmambal also refers to the sanatanists' decision to build a new temple. It is following such a decision that a new temple for Meenakshi was built[30]. The priests, who had quit the polluted temple performed the rituals there. Both their songs clearly indicate that caste could belong to women too and they too could emasculate lower caste men[31]. Thus, the works of the two women expressed the orthodox sentiments and also highlighted the prevailing tense and hostile-situation in which the temple entry event took place under the courageous leadership of Vaidhyanatha Iyer.

The priests who quit the temple were given strong support by the '*Sanatanists*' – the orthodox Hindus who vehemently opposed the Harijan temple entry and who were members or supporters of All-India Varnashrama Swarjya Sangh. The Sangh's President, N. Natesa Iyer, a Madurai lawyer, personally denounced Naidu and announced that the Meenakshi temple had been defiled and that the deities had left it; they would not return until the temple had been purified. On July 13, 1939, Natesa Iyer arranged for a suit, to be filed by the two priests and various other persons connected with the temple, in the Madurai Subordinate Judges Court, praying for an injunction to compel the Executive Officer to allow and pay for a purification ritual. On July 17, 1939, however, the Madras Government, in line with a threat made by Rajagopalachari, issued an indemnity ordinance

to block any legal action against those involved in admitting Harijans into the temple. The ordinance promulgated by the Government to address the urgency of the situation was a face-saving measure taken by Rajaji, the then Premier of Madras Presidency. The promulgation of the ordinance indemnified the Executive - Officer and other servants of the temples in the Madurai, Thanjavur and Tirunelveli districts from all liability in respect of all acts associated with temple entry. Rajaji was anxious to save Vaidhyanatha Iyer, his ardent supporter within the Congress. Being an urgent move of the Government, the ordinance was signed by the Governor of Madras at Ootacamund, where the latter was having his vacation. Before this ordinance came into vogue, A.Vaidhyanatha Iyer was brought before the Court for illegally taking the Harijans into the temple. For a while, the court scene was historic; it was a fully crowded courtroom tense with excitement. As soon as the Judge took his seat, the District Collector arrived at the Court and gave the government counsel a copy of the ordinance, which, the Madras Government had just then promulgated. The case was therefore dramatically dismissed. Consequently, Natesa Iyer's suit was dismissed, as was his appeal to the Madurai District Court.

The promulgation of the ordinance by the Madras Government was severely criticized by several sections of the sanatanist legislators who condemned it as 'unjustifiable and unconstitutional'. However, Rajaji justified his action as right by remarking that 'no reform in the world was achieved except by some persons who acted as law-breakers. Therefore, he pleaded that no one should find fault with the reformers who by their actions made reparation for a long-standing wrong; no one should pick holes in a matter of this kind; and nobody should find fault with the Government for extending its support and protection to them". In this way, Rajaji stifled the criticisms of the sanatanists against

the promulgation of ordinance with the solid backing by his party members. Indeed, he kept up the promise he had earlier made to Vaidhyanatha Iyer in the Madurai conference and fulfilled the great task placed before him by Romeswari Nehru, the Vice-President of the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh.

Early in the morning of July 29, 1939 the sanatanists, led by Natesa Iyer and accompanied by several priests, demonstrated in front of the Meenakshi temple, demanding to be allowed in so that the priests could purify the temple. The doors were locked against them. Two days later, some priests again tried to enter the temple and R.S. Naidu stopped them[32].

End of temple-entry dispute

By the end of July 1939, many temples in Tamil Nadu had been opened to Harijans, some after facing trouble and some without, but no large-scale incidents like the ones in Meenakshi temple seem to have occurred. The Government also decided to convene a special session of the legislature to get an indemnity bill passed to protect the temple officials, against whom legal proceedings had been initiated by the sanatanists. Rajaji, initiating a discussion on the bill, stated that temple entry reform was long overdue and the Government could not maintain a silence over the matter. He argued that the bill was circulated to enable the trustees of the temple to act in accordance with public opinion on the issue of entry of the Harijans into temples. It was also stated that the Malabar Temple Entry Act had not been abandoned and that it would certainly come into play where trustees were unwilling to act in accordance with the general public sentiment. The bill, despite many amendments, was moved by the members of the legislature, and was passed without much change[33]. The critics of the bill favoured the introduction of the principle of

referendum for ascertaining public opinion that had been followed in the case of the Malabar Temple Entry Act. Rajaji opined that it was not necessary to implement the same method for different legislations. He also certified that there was no political motive behind the bill and that it had been conceived from a purely religious point of view[34].

Subsequently, the bill, which had been passed in the Legislative Assembly, came up for discussion before the Madras Legislative Council. In defence of the bill, Rajagopalachari stated that he favoured temple entry of the Harijans and that the reform needed to be undertaken without any further delay. V.S.Srinivasa Shastri argued that the Congress had adopted a highly irregular and improper method to bring about social reform. At the same time, conservatives like T.S.Srinivasa Ayyangar criticized the Congress for interfering with the customs and traditions of the Hindus. The conservatives opined that it was out of sheer political compulsions that the Congress was hurriedly pushing through the temple entry legislation. Opposing these ideas, the Congress leaders asserted that by introducing such legislation, the Congress was trying to live up to the expectations of the people who had voted for it in the elections[35].

The Justice Party legislators criticized the Congress Ministry for neglecting the interests of the Harijans. They argued that rather than emphasizing the temple entry issue, it would have been better had the Congress fought for the socio-economic uplift of these classes[36]. The Justice Party leaders also felt that to gain political mileage the Congress had deliberately introduced such legislations. The Congress refuted the allegations made by the Justice Party and openly declared that the temple entry legislation was not being used as a smoke screen to cover up the failures of its ministry[37]. Rajaji made it clear to his non-

Brahmin critics in the Justice Party that his ministry would continue to support programmes for the uplift of the Harijans. He also reminded them that there would be no infringement of civil law if temple entry legislations were introduced by the Government. The bill, despite the opposition of the sanatanists, was passed in the Legislative Council[38].

On August 5, 1939, the Temple Entry Authorization and Indemnity Act (22 of 1939) was passed by the Madras Legislative Assembly (the lower chamber) and the Legislative Council (the upper chamber) followed suit a few days later. The Act, which specially stated that no one was to be prosecuted in connection with Harijan entry into the Meenakshi temple, received the assent of the British Viceroy in early September [39]. Natesa Iyer's appeals to the Viceroy and the Governor of Madras were ignored[40]. His efforts to persuade the Maharajas of Cochin and Mysore, and the Raja of Sivagangai, to suspend their endowments to the temple also seemed to have been unsuccessful. The Raja of Sivagangai was reported as not being against temple entry [41]. After October, 1938, active protests seemed to have died down.

Legal action was started too. Natesa Iyer's case, dismissed by the District Court in 1939, was re-opened in 1940 but was again dismissed in 1942. An appeal failed in the Madras High Court in 1944, as did a further appeal in the Indian Federal Court in 1946. Both the higher courts decided that the Indemnity Act was validly enacted and that the Executive Officer should not be ordered to allow a purification ritual.

Another case was filed in 1942 by most of the priests who had been dismissed. Naidu formally dismissed them from the service of the temple in November 1939 and the dismissal orders

were confirmed by the Hindu Religious Endowment Board in May 1940. In August 1945, it was resolved that the priests should be reinstated; on condition that they started work without performing a purification ritual and that they obeyed the officer's lawful orders. They returned in September 1945 and their long absence – six years and two months less the eight months in 1944 - was finally over[42].

Opening of temples after Madurai temple-entry

Under' the 'Temple-Entry Authorization and Indemnity Act' of 1939, all the temples in the Madras Province had to be thrown open for the untouchables. On July 9, 1939, the Soundararaja Perumal Temple at Valayapatti in Melur taluk, intimately associated with Saivite Meenakshiamman Temple at Madurai, was thrown open. On July 16, 1939, the great Brihadeswara Temple at Tanjore was opened after consultation, with its trustees[43]. Rajaram, the 16th Rajah and the hereditary trustee of the Tanjore Palace Devasthanam had also thrown open ninety temples under his control to the untouchables[44]. On July 26, 1939, the temple of Tirukurtalanathaswami near Courtallarm Falls in the Tirunelveli district was opened[45]. On July 27, 1939, Kasi Viswanatha temple at Tenkasi was kept open for the untouchables[46]. Thereafter, Kudulalagar temple at Madurai and Sri Kalamega Perumal temple at Tirumohur in Madurai district were also kept open[47]. Subsequently, the Murugan ternple at Palani, and Sri Renganatha Swami temple at Srirangam, and Andal temple at Srivilliputtur were also thrown open. All these temples were situated in the localities occupied by very orthodox Hindus[48].

The outbreak of the Second World War on September 3, 1939 and the clarion call for Quit India diverted the attention of the Congress leaders from the temple entry activities. Even

then, a few more temples were thrown open here and there[49]. On September 1945, on his birthday, the Maharajah of Ettaiyapuram opened his two family temples of Lord Siva and Vishnu to the untouchables[50]. Following this, the Theagarajaswami temple at Tiruvarur and Nelliappar temple at Tirunelveli were kept open for the untouchables. There, on January 11, 1947, Jagajeevan Ram, the Labour Minister of Interim Central Government entered along with untouchables and worshipped the deities. In fact, it gave great enthusiasm among the social reformers who advocated temple entry[51]. On February 3, 1946 in realization of his earlier promise, Gandhi entered the Meenakshi temple along with untouchable leaders like V.I.Muniswami Pillai[52].

One foreign scholar C.J.Fuller, has stated: "The Higher Courts in India have failed to uphold the authority of the orthodox texts, in so far as the temple entry cases were concerned"[53]. But it can be contended that the custom of excluding a certain section of Hindu people from entering the Hindu temples is highly unreasonable, inhuman and unjust and the temple entry reform was the result of advanced and well-reasoned public opinion. The reform removed a great wrong of centuries from the Hindu society only after many years of patient and earnest work done by the Tamil Nadu Harijan Sevak Sangh. This Sangh's workers paved the way for the opening of the people's hearts before the physical opening of the temple doors to the excluded classes. The Temple Act of the Government of Madras only supported the reform; it only recognized the latter's will. The Higher Courts in India held that the Temple Act was valid in so far as the constitutional provisions were concerned. The temple entry was a much needed reform and the Act passed in 1939 was perfected by another Act passed by the Government of Madras subsequently[54]. By leading the Temple Entry Movement, Madurai made history in the campaign for the removal of untouchability

in the country. In appreciation of the commendable role of the leaders of Madurai towards temple-entry, Gandhiji visited the Meenakshi temple in 1946.

The temple built by the sanatanists for the temporary purpose seems to have been in existence until 1945. Subsequently, regular pujas were discontinued, the temple closed, and eventually demolished. The gates of the Meenakshi temple were never again closed for the untouchables.

Conclusion

On account of the obstructive tactics of some people, Vaidhyanatha Iyer had to spend time and energy to ensure the smooth functioning of the temple in the aftermath of the entry by Harijans. Some even went to the extent of hauling up Vaidhyanatha Iyer before the court for taking Harijans into the temple illegally. Rajaji, the Prime Minister moved swiftly in the matter. In retrospect, if Vaidyanatha Iyer had not forced the legislation at that time, entry of Harijans into temples would not been possible for several years. It should be remembered that in October 1939, the Congress Governments resigned in protest against the British forcing India into Second World War and popular Governments were restored only in 1946.

References

1. Paramarthalingam, C." *Social Reform Movement in Tamil Nadu*, Madurai, 1995, pp.193-196.
2. Romeshwari Nehru, *Gandhi is My Star,* Patna, 1950, pp.1-30.
3. Gurusamy, M.P., 'Gandhiji's visit to Madurai Temple' in *Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple Kumbhabisekam Souvenir,* Madurai, 1974, pp.2.11-213.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Amarar Vaidyanatha* Aiyer *Nutt'randu Vizha Malar,* Madurai, 1990, pp.10-26.
6. *Harijan,* Vol. VIII, 16 September 1934, p.275.
7. *The Mail,* 16 June 1939.
8. Subramanian, R.T.P., *Jathipethathai Thahartha Rajaji,* (Tamil), Madras, 1968, p.44.
9. Paramasivan, *T.,* "The Temple Entry Event: Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, 1939', in *South Indian Studies* (bi-annual), Kochi, July 1997, pp.266--267.
10. *Harijan,* Vol. VIII, 16 September 1939, p.275. Also *'The Hindu,* 6 July 1939.
11. *The Mail*, 29 June 1939. Also *The Hindu,* 4 and 5 July 1939.
12. *The Indian Review,* Vol.4, Madurai, December 1939, p.774.
13. *Annual Report of the Harijan Sevak Sangh,* 1938-1939, p.29.
14. *Ibid.,*
15. Sasivarna Thevar, *Pasumpon Thevar Jeyanthi Viseda Chuvadi,* (Tamil) Madurai, 1960, p.67.
16. Ramasami, A., *Tamil Nattil Gandhi,* (Tamil), Madras, 1969, pp..623-624.
17. *The Hindu* and *The Mail,* 8 July, 1939.
18. *The Hindu,* 9 July, 1939.

19. *Ibid,* 8 July .1939, Also *The Times of India,* 10 July, 1939.
20. *Harijan,* Vol. VII, 15 July 1939, *p.203.*
21. *Fortnightly Reports,* 20 July 1939.
22. *Harijan,* Vol .VI, 15 July 1939, p.203.
23. *The Hindu,* 12 July, 1939.
24. *The Mail,* 15 July, 1939.
25. *Harijan,* Vol .VII, 22 July, 1939, pp.209-210.
26. *Ibid.,* Vol. VII, 23 September, 1939, p.280.
27. *Ibid.,* Vol .VII, 15 July, 1939,. p.203.
28. *The Mail,* 10 July, 1939.
29. Fuller, C.J., *Servants of the Goddesses,* Delhi, 1991: pp.117-119.
30. Pararnasivan,T., *loc.cit.,* pp.269-'273.
31. Anandhi, S., 'Caste and Gender in Colonial South India,' in *Economic and Political Weekly,* VoI.XL, No.15, Bombay, 9 April, 2005, pp.1521--1522.
32. *Fuller*, C.J., op.cit., pp.116-118.
33. Venkatraman, S.R" *Temple Entry Legislations,* Madras, p,47.
34. Raj Sekhar Basu , 'Congress, Gandhi and the Politics of Untouchability in Tamil Nadu in the 1930s' in *The Indian Historical Review,* VoI.XXX, No.1-2, January and July 2003, p.l06.
35. *Madras Legislative Council Proceedings*, VoI.IX, 1939, p.33.
36. *Ibid*., pp.33-34.
37. *Ibid*., pp.34-35.
38. Raj Sekhar Basu*, loc.cit,* p.l07-108.
39. Fuller, CJ., *opcit.,* p.119,
40. *Madras Mail,* 25 September and 6 November, 1939.
41. *Madras Mail,* 20 September, 1939.
42. Fuller, C.J., *op.cit.,* pp.117-119.
43. *Harijan,* Vol. VII, 5 August, 1939, p.225.

44. Rajmohan Gandhi, *The Rajaji Story,* 1937-1972, Bombay, 1984, p.34.
45. *Harijan,* 12 August 1939.
46. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. XIII, August, 1939, p.29.
47. 'Madras Act No. XXII of 1939', *Madras Acts in* 1939-1948, Madras, p4. Also G.O. No. 2.93 Legal Department, 11 September, 1939, p.30.
48. Fuller, C.J., *op.cit.,* Delhi, 1991, p.119.
49. Somayajalu, S, N., *Madurai Maavatta Sudanthira Poratta Varalaru,* Tirunelveli, 1980, p.272.
50. Nandabalan, *Kovilai' Thiravunkal,* (Tamil), Tiruchi, 1946, p.41.
51. Ramasami, A., op.cit., pp.626-627. G.O. No. 69, Legal Department, 4 June 1947, p.95.
52. *Ibid.,* pp.992-996.
53. Fuller, C.J., *op.cit.,* pp.125-127.
54. G.O. 53. Legal Department, May 13, 1947 (The Madras Temple Entry Authorization Act, 1947).

URBANIZATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN EARLY INDIA: A STUDY OF ORISSA

Dr. Benudhar Patra
Lecturer, Dept. of History
Government College
Sector-11, Chandigarh (U.T.)

Urbanization and social mobility are two inter-related and complementary concepts. Urbanization is the process and social mobility is an integral part of that process. Urbanization has been one of the major forces of change in society. It exercises a growing influence on social life, and along with economic prosperity brings about large scale and fundamental changes in different aspects of the society and social processes including demographic, ethnic changes etc. In other words, urbanization is a product of various kinds of changes taking place in a society, especially in the economic sphere. Although urbanization is one of the fascinating phenomenons of historical research, an inter-disciplinary approach and especially a sociological interpretation are required to trace out its salient features in the real perspective. In this paper, a sincere endeavour has been made to analyse the nature of urbanization and social mobility in ancient India in historical perspective with a special focus on Orissa.

Scholars have defined urbanization in connection with social mobility according to their own perceptions and ideologies. R.S. Sandhu[1], on the basis of his western experience, says 'urbanization means a breakdown of traditional and social institutions and values'. To him 'in the Indian context, this means, among other things, that the caste system will change into class system, nuclear families will emerge from joint families, and that religion

will become highly secularized'. According to Victor S.D'Souza[2], urbanization is one of the major forces in "changing and restructuring social reality in its own characteristic forms and throwing up social problems stamped with its own peculiarities". 'Urbanization' from sociological angle has been defined by Sudha Kaldate[3] "as a process in which a great impetus is given to the development of cities. In the city, the ratio of population to land is high. By its very nature, it throws people into close contact with strangers, facilitates the rapid diffusion of news and fashions, permits a high degree of individualization, stimulates invention, social mobility, secularization, and a complex economic system involving diversity and specialization of occupations'. Further, she also says that urbanization, in addition to reflecting technological change, creates a new form of economic organization and gives rise to a new way of life. Cultural uniformity and traditional patterns of belief and behavior tend to be broken and social change is accelerated"[4]. From a different point of view, some have used the word 'urbanized' in two ways, the meanings of which are frequently confused. The word is used, firstly, in a demographic sense to refer to being settled in a town, and secondly, in a more sociological sense to refer to the changes in social behavior such that migrants become "committed" to the town[5].

Urbanization, in general, represents a process of growth. Such growth, however, has both positive and negative impacts. On the positive side, it leads to an organically integrated form of development while on the negative side it may degenerate into a cancerously alienated form of mal-development. Both these sides may be discerned in the process of urbanization in India. From the sociological point of view, one has to assume that urbanization is strongly 'influenced by the existing socio-cultural conditions in a society. Economic transformation and its concomitant

social and spatial mobility, which result in urbanization, are largely channeled through the existing social structure[6]. Urbanization and social structure are, thus, inter-linked and inter-dependent. Large aggregation, fairly high density of population, predominance of manufacturing and servicing functions, monetization, large-scale segmental and diversified living, increasing dominance of formal regulation, atomization of the individual, shift from primary to secondary relations, intense mobility as a result of economic growth, growth of transport and communication as well as the emergence of numerous servicing agencies, relatively greater sophistication, and the rise of what has been called "upper cultural tradition", are some of the typical features of urban social life[7].

The emergence of early urban life in India is associated with the evolution of cities of the Harappan culture (Indus Valley civilization) around the 3rd millennium B.C. Indian civilization and culture, thus, began with urban centers as its foundation stone. Since then, over the years, especially from the 6th century B.C. (beginning of the second phase of urbanization) urban centers grew up at important strategic points - as citadels of government, centers of learning and culture, and as emporiums of trade and trans-oceanic commerce. While Pataliputra served as the capital of the imperialistic rulers, Ujjain and Taxila became the centers of learning and culture, and places like Tamralipti, Vaisali, Vidisa etc. flourished as trading settlements. Among various causes, the introduction and spread of iron technology (C.800 – 700 BC) and use of iron-tools which led to extensive plough agriculture and surplus production supposed to have produced far-reaching consequences so far as second phase (c.6th century BC – c.600 AD) of ancient Indian urbanization is concerned. Iron technology led to the emergence of towns and urbanization, and in the wake of it became a crucial factor in socio-economic transformation

in the early historic India. The use of iron, in fact, brought important changes in social formation and 'is perceived as the catalyst which transferred material life leading to the rise of states and complex society'[8]. It was, iron, we are informed, which led to agricultural ploughing, spread of new settlements, surplus generation, and the coming of towns culminating in a milieu of trade, money lending, economic inequities, and the rise of alienated categories including courtesans[9]. It was D.D. Kosambi[10] who for the first time attributed plough agriculture, clearance of densely forested plains of the Ganga valley leading to a surplus production, increased trading net-work, emergence of urban centers and even the success of Magadha as an imperial power to the iron technology. The use of iron paved the way for the advent of metal money and the use of metal money radically altered the mode of exchange, which in turn facilitated commodity production and long–distance trade[11]. In a nut-shell, iron technology led to the rapid growth of material culture.

As elsewhere in India, urban centers in ancient Orissa also developed due to different reasons and under varied circumstances. Though there is no concrete data regarding urbanization in Orissa during the pre-historic period, the dated evidence of the emergence of urban settlements in Orissa can be traced back to the period of Asokan invasion of Kalinga i.e. 3rd century B.C. which is tangibly attested to by the excavations at Dhauli and Jaugada, the two provincial headquarters (Kalinga province) of Asoka's empire. However, the existence of urban centers prior to this period cannot be ruled out. The excavation at Shishupalagarh provides further evidence of a well-planned early historical city of Orissa, which remained under occupation between C.3rd/4th century BC and C.3rd century AD. Besides, some others like Tamralipti, Palur, Chelitalo / Manikpatna, Kalingapatnam, Pithunda, Khalkattapatna, Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, Langudi, Bhubaneswar, Jajpur,

Cuttack, Puri etc. were flourishing either as religious centers or as political-cum-trading settlements.

The process of urbanization and emergence of urban centres encouraged the merchants of ancient Orissa to carry on trans-oceanic commerce with far-off countries of South-East Asia.

Urbanization and guild system

Although we have scanty evidence about the trade guilds of the merchants in ancient Orissa, unlike other parts of India, it can be safely said that with the growth of urban centers and port towns, local merchant guilds and associations emerged in ancient Orissa. It seems that at least from the Mauryan period guilds became a marked feature of Orissan economic life. With the growth of urbanization, the merchants and the artisans flocked to the urban centers in pursuit of profit, and better economic prosperity in their respective professions and formed various guilds. From the Somavamsi records of Janmejaya-I we have reference to a *Kamalabana-Banik-Samstha*[12]. The Ganga records also refers to a number of guilds such as the ones formed by gold-smiths, oilmen, milkmen, potters, copper workers, *Tambulika*, *Patakara*, perfumer, weaver, barber, craft men, washer men, workers in conch-shell etc. These guilds very often served as the local banks with their own rules and regulations, and provided assistance and opportunities to the artisans to thrive. In ancient Orissa, the merchants who deal with the maritime trade were known as the *Sadhavas*. The *Sadhavas*, however, did not form any particular caste but rather they belonged to a class drawn from different castes. It can be said that it was the urbanization and the profit motive that gave rise to a community called *Sadhavas* which was very much against the time-honoured traditional caste structure.

Evolution of a composite culture

Bhubaneswar, which is an ancient city, marks such fusion of different cultures. After different stages of history, inspite of coming under the sway of different cultures (Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaisnavism), there finally manifested a composite culture which did not ignore the importance of any individual culture. The ancient Orissans who even went to far-off countries of South East Asia in pursuit of trade developed their own culture without adversely affecting that of the natives[13].

It has been observed that almost all the urban centers of ancient Orissa whether it was a capital city, or a trading center or a place of pilgrimage were flourishing with the migrants from the rural set-up.

Urbanization Vs. Sanskritization, Aryanization and upward mobility

Owing to the spread of urbanization, different tribes were sanskritized in different degrees; those who were more prone to the process of urbanization were more sanskritized than the others. Different sections of the same tribe may not be uniformly sanskritized. For instance, the Khonds of Khondmals are less sanskritized than the Khonds in Puri who resemble an Oriya caste in their religious life because of the latter's proximity to the urban culture than the former's[14]. Pilgrim-towns became important centers of sanskritization.

Romila Thaper[15] has observed that ritual tradition gave the Brahmans a unique status. Though the recruitment was normally on the basis of birth, with the spread of Aryanization, the non-Brahmans were also occasionally recruited to the rank of Brahmans. For instance, a sub-caste called the *Malis* (gardeners) who are

considered as the Sudras were recruited as priests in the Saiva pantheons. The *Daitas* are the tribes who have the exclusive right to worship Lord Jagannath of Srimandira at Puri during the *Anasara* while even the high caste Brahmins are not allowed to see God during this period.

It is gleaned that almost all capitals of ancient Orissa were centered around the urban centres and vice versa [16].

Conclusion

To sum up, we can say that urbanization in ancient India led to multi-dimensional mobility in the social system. It transferred the stereotyped immobile society into an active, dynamic and progressive one. Almost every aspect of the social life received a positive touch under the aegis of urbanization, although its accountability for the genesis of some negative features cannot be ruled out. Urbanization gave an impetus to migration and accelerated the process of decline of many social taboos such as caste- ridden social structure, orthodox conservatism etc. Trade received great fillip and urbanization created the right atmosphere. Notwithstanding valued merits, urbanization also breeds some undesirable features like decline of rural set-up, emergence of sub-castes, prostitution etc. In a nutshell, it can be said that urbanization in its wake brought many significant changes converting a static, immobile society into a mobile and progressive one.

References

1. R.S. Sandhu(ed), *Urbanization in India: Sociological Contributions*, New Delhi (Sage Publications), 2003, p.34.
2. V.S.D'Souza, *Urbanization as a perspective for Social and Historical Analysis in Developing Societies*, in: R.S.Sandhu(ed), *op.cit*.,p.49.
3. S.Kaldate, *Urbanization and Disintegration of Rural Joint Family*, in: R.S. Sandhu (ed.). *op.cit*, p.173.
4. *Ibid*.
5. M. Chatterjee, *Stablization of Immigrants in Indian Towns: The Case of Bombay*, in:R.S.Sandhu(ed.), *op.cit*, p.185.
6. V.S. D'Souza, *op.cit*, p.53.
7. A.K. Desai, *Urbanization and Social Stratification*, in: R.S. Sandhu (ed), o*p.cit*, p.59. Upper cultural tradition refers to a class in the society which organizes the mode of production, establishes the norms for distribution of resources, shapes the culture of that society, decides the types of urban settlements, the quality of social processes generated in urban life etc. In other words, it is the class, which owns the means of production, controls the means of power as well as the means of culture within that society.
8. B.P.Sahu (ed.), *Iron and Social Change in Early India*, New Delhi, (OUP), 2006, p.14.
9. *Ibid*, p.4.
10. D.D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India: an Historical Outline,* New Delhi (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.), 1996 (Reprint),pp.88-91; *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, Bombay (Popular Prakashan), 1994 (Reprint), p.155.
11. R.S.Sharma, *The State and Varna Formation in the Mid Ganga Plains* (An Ethnoarchaeological view), New Delhi (Manohar), 2001 (Reprint), p.78.

12. *Inscriptions of Orissa*, vol. I, pp.96-98.
13. B.Patra, *Kalinga in South-East Asia*, in: *Orissa Reference Annual-2004*, Bhubaneswar, (Govt. of Orissa) p.156.
14. M.N.Srinivas, *India: Social Structure*, Delhi (Hindustan Publishing Corporation), 1991, p.20.
15. Romila Thaper, *Ancient Indian Social History,* New Delhi (Orient Longman), 2003 (Reprint),pp. 121 and 122.
16. F.R. Allchin, *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia, The Emergence of Cities and States,* Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 332.

SOCIAL HIERARCHY OF ANCIENT ORISSA

Bishnu Prasad Panda
Reader in History
Berhampur University, Berhampur, Orissa.

The society of Orissa during ancient times was based on Brahminical social structure. The social life of the people was stable and progressive. Changes and continuity were the general features in the social life of Orissa. There were no social tension and conflict in society. The rise and fall of the ruling dynasties had litte impact on society. Society and social conditions were the permanent structures. The rulers had almost no role to play in this regard. The Indian culture along with various religions had their lasting influence in the formation of society.

The social condition of Orissa during the early period is known from few scattered sources. We do not have direct information about the society of early Orissa. The separate Kalinga edicts available at Dhauli[1] and Jaugada[2] and the Hathigumpha inscription[3] of Chedi ruler Kharavela throw some information about the social conditions of Orissa. These records refer to Brahmins. This proves that the Brahmanas formed a sizeable population group in Orissa during the days of Mauryas and Chedis. We do not have any direct information about the existence of caste system in Orissa. Almost all the records beginning from the Hathigumpha inscription refer to Brahmanas. The conquest of Orissa by Samudragupta forms an important landmark in the growth of the Hindu social system in this region. The impetus which the Gupta invasion supplied towards the development of Brahmanism was accentuated in the 4th and

5th centuries of the Christian era. In the fourth century A.D., Brahmanism was patronized by the Matharas of Kalinga. It is known from their copper plate grants that they used to convert the villages into Agraharas and granted the same to the distinguished and learned Brahmins. The Korosonda grant[4] of Visakhavarman is the earliest land grant in Orissa. The Brahmanas began to claim superiority in society from this period. Their prestige and power began to rise. The rising power of the Brahmanas brought a revolutionary change in social structure of Orissa in ancient times.

Brahmanas

Society in Orissa was graded according to the Brahmanical social order, in which the Brahmanas took the leading place among the four *Varnas*. As they were well-versed in the *Vedas* and *Dharmasastras*, the Brahmanas acquired the prime position in society. Royal patronage to Brahmanas goes as far as back as the 4th c A.D. during the rule of the Mathara dynasty[5]. From that period onwards, patronage to Brahmanas by granting of land and villages continued in Orissa. They were patronized by the Early Gangas of Kalinga,[6] the Sailodbhavas of Kongoda,[7] the Bhaumakaras of Tosala[8] and the Somavamsis of Kosala[9]. However, the later eastern Ganga[10] and Suryavamsi Gajapati[11] period marked the zenith of land grants to the Brahmanas. The grant of land to Brahmanas led to the establishment of the new Brahmana Sasanas in Orissa. The rulers of Orissa took every possible step to establish new Brahmanical villages by inviting them from different parts of the country. The villages to be gifted were known as Sasanas as they were created by Tamra Sasanas. According to tradition,[12] Yayati of Somavamsis had brought ten thousand Brahmanas well-versed in the study of Vedas and Vedangas from Kanyakubj (the modern Kanauj) to settle in

Orissa. The Madala Panji[13] also says that King Anangabhimadeva had established 450 Brahmana Sasanas in Puri district. The mega or the Saka Dvipis who migrated from Persia, were a well recognized community of Brahmanas in Orissa. Tradition says that King Narasimhadeva I, under the influence of these Brahmanas, constructed the Sun temple at Konark.

Besides traditions, we have number of inscriptional evidences to show the migration of Brahmins to Orissa. The Bhubaneswar Prasasti[14] mentioned the migration of a Brahmin named Bhatta Bhavadeva of Savarna gotra from the village Siddhala in Radha to Orissa. The Gangas invited South Indian Brahmanas to settle in Orissa. The Bhubaneswar inscription[15] of Narasimhadeva refers to the ascetics of Chodadesa, Pandyadesa and Kanchidesa who were settled in Orissa. These Brahmanas were called Dakshinatya Brahmanas. In the 16th Century A.D., a number Brahmanas had migrated from Bengal to Orissa along with the Vaisnava Saint Sri Chaitnya and settled at Puri.

The Brahmanas were divided into various gotras, pravaras and charanas[16]. Of the various gotra names, mentioned may be made of *Vatsa, Atreya, Kasyapa, Bharadvaja, Aupamanya, Katyayana, Savama, Kausika, Devarata, Kamakayana, Bhrigu and Rama-Kasypa.* It is evident from the gotra names that ancient Orissa was a strong hold of Yajurvedin Brahmins. The Brahmins were divided into groups according to the Vedas they studied. Some were Chhandogya brahmacharin, some were Taittiriya brahmacharin and some others were Bhavrichha brahmacharin. There were still others and among whom some were Vajasaneya, some Kanva and some were Madhyandina brahmacharins. Some again were students of the Maittrayaniya School. The Brahmanas of Orissa used different titles which indicate their rank and scholarship. Among the titles, *Bhatta, Sarma, Svami, Upadhyaya,*

Acharya, Misra seemed to be more popular. The Brahmanas of Orissa was not classified according to their places of origin. Profession was taken to decide the status of the Brahmanas in Orissa. The Brahmanas performing priestly function were regarded as of the superior class. They were known as Sasani Brahmanas. Brahmanas who took to agriculture and trade were considered as inferior Brahmanas.

The Brahmanas were highly respected in society for their learning, wisdom, religiosity and sanctity. They were the leaders of thought and repositories of sacred learning and practices. They enjoyed great honour in society for their pious life and devotion to the study and teachings of the Vedas. They formed the educated elite in society. The spread of education, uplift of religion and culture, worship of deities in the temples and performance of religious rites were the main functions of the Brahmanas. They were getting land grants for worship in various temples for the attainment of religious merits of the donors. These land grants contributed to the rise of power of the Brahmanas in the society. Besides their function as priests, they used to perform a number of social functions of vital importance like conducting the coronation ceremony of the rulers, marriage, sacred thread ceremony and funerals. They also served as mediators in marriage settlements. Brahmanas also adopted the profession of astrology.

There were considerable section of Brahmins who entered into state service and we find them occupying every grade of governmental hierarchy. The reference to Brahmin officials in the inscriptions of Orissa[17] shows that they formed the main bulk of officials in Orissa. The Nagari plates of Anangabhimadeva III and Alalpur plates of Narasimadeva II refer to Brahmana officers. We have also inscriptions to show that Brahmanas

served as Ministers. Sadharana, the Chief Minister of Janmejaya I of Somavamsi was a Brahmin. Narahari Tirtha served as a regent during the minority of Bhanueva I and later became his minister. Gopinath Mahapatra was a minister of Kapilendradeva. Both he and his elder brother Narayana were the sons of the royal priest Lakshmana Purohita and were ministers under the King Kapilesvaradeva. The Purohita played a vital role in the day-to-day administration and was the chief counselor of the King on religious matters.

Due to elasticity of caste system, a number of Brahmins distinguished themselves in military service and we find them bearing titles as *senapati, camupati* and *vahinipati.* In Orissa, the State officers were generally expected to be equally adept in the wielding of the pen as well as the sword and in fact military service appears to have been the high road leading to the royal favour and coveted state service.

A number of Brahmana scholars adorned the court of the Ganga and Gajapati Kings. Viswanath Kaviraj and Yogisvara Patra were famous court poets in the times of the later eastern Gangas. Jalesvara Misra, Narayana Mishra and Narasimha Vajapeyi were reputed scholars who adorned the court of the Kapilendradeva. The author of Bhakti Bhagavata in Sanskrit, Kavidindima Jivadeva was the spiritual guide to the Gajapati King Prataparudradeva. Brahmanas were attached to the educational institutions and monasteries for the purpose of teaching and were being patronized and financed by the Kings.

Sources do not want to mention that the Brahmanas of Orissa adopted agriculture and trade as their profession. Sarala Dasa says that Brahmanas were personally tilling the soil. A group of Brahmanas had adopted trade as their profession

although their number seems to be very small. The inscriptions of Srikurmam refer to a Brahmana as a trader in horse. The Sobhaneswara inscription states that Savanna, a Brahmana by caste, was a great artist who constructed the Siva temple.

Brahminical sacrifices came to dominate the life of the people and brahminical learning came to be highly respected. Sanskrit became the language of the court. As suggested by the language of the majority of the charters, Sanskrit became the court language or at least the most respected language. The process of grant of lands to the Brahmanas helped to bring more lands under cultivation. Subsequently as the number of the Brahmanas went on increasing, they left their religious functions and turned to agricultural activities.

Kshatriyas

In the social hierarchy, the second position was occupied by the Kshatriyas. They are rarely mentioned in the Orissan records. This might be because of the fact that the practice of stating their caste was not popular in Orissa[18]. The royal family and the officials mainly belonged to the Kshatriyas. They occupied the main posts in the governmental administration and army. Hieun Tsang[19] saw the Kshatriyas as the race of Kings in India. He says the second order is that of the kshatriyas, the race of the Kings, this order has held sovereignty for generations". Their sacred duty was to fight gallantly in the battlefield. They were engaged in administration and public welfare during peace times.

The Sailodbhavas, the Bhaumakaras, the Tungas, the Bhanjas and the Sulkis were local tribal chiefs and they were elevated as respectable Kshatriyas.The period from the 7th C.A.D. to

15th C.A.D. marks the genesis of the process of Ksrhatriyasation in Orissa. Just like the tribal chiefs, the Gangas and the Gajapatis were not originally Kshatriyas but later on they claimed the status of the Kshatriyas. The acceptance of Kshatriya status was essentially an attempt to prove the status by birth and to acquire the appropriate and legitimate lineage. The dynasties of Orissa are classified into two categories, the Suryavamsis and the Chandravamsis.

The local militia of Orissa consisted of Paiks and Khandayats. They were actually cultivators. They used to take weapons at the time of war.

Vaisyas

The Vaisyas occupied the third position in the social structure of Orissa. Agriculture and trading were the main activities of the Vaisyas. Hieun T'sang describes trade as their calling in life. The economic development was mainly dependent on them. Agriculture production and overseas trade were conducted by them. The traders of Kalinga who were carrying trade in overseas countries like Burma, Ceylon, Siam, Suvarnadvipa, and Cambodia might be from the Vaisya community. The markets, the weekly market, the junction market i.e. Bazar, Hattas, Pentas were organized by the Vaisyas. The Nagari Plates records a list of Vaisya traders. The economic condition of the Vaisyas seems to be very sound. They were rich enough to donate lands to the Brahmanas and the temples. It is peculiar and unique that rulers donated agraharas to the Vaisyas. Perhaps, these villages were established for a community of professional people to fulfill the economic needs of the society. The *Srestis* belonged to this community and played a vital role in the development of trade and commerce. Some Vaisyas took active part in

military administration. They were trained in the art of warfare. Many Vaisya Senapatis and Dandanayaks were crowned with success. Many Vaisyas were also appointed in the civil administration. Posts like *Karanika, Padapa/aka, Pustapa/a, Akasasali and Mahakastapatala* were only occupied by the Vaisyas. Thus, the Vaisyas played a major role in the society.

Sudras

Sudras, the fourth order in the Brahminical social system, formed the lowest strata of the society. Numerically, theirs was a very large group. Orissa records give us no information about the social position of the slaves. Most probably, the Sudras comprised of petty peasants, artisans, craftsmen, manual workers, servants, attendants and those pursuing low occupations. They were not permitted to read the Vedas, nor practice *Japa* or perform a *Homa.* The poorer among them carried out menial duties and some of them became wealthy through agriculture, trade and industry. Hiuen T'sang points out that the Sudras toiled in cultivation and were industrious at sowing and reaping. The poorer sections of the Sudras earned their livelihood by selling meat, hunting and fishing.

The economic condition of the Sudras was a remarkable feature of the society. Many Sudras were promoted to the Kshatriya status and many of them claimed the status of a Vaisya. The Arasavali plate[20] of Vajrahasta refers to a military officer who was a Sudra. The Sudras, as menial labourers attended to the temples and performed services to the deity. The artisans and the craftsmen who occupied the lower rungs got a higher status, patronized by the rulers.

From the accounts of foreign travellers, we know that there existed a section of people known as Chandalas. They might

have been a section of the Sudras. They rendered services to the higher castes. They were treated as outcastes and lived outside the villages. The hunters, butchers and leather-workers were also treated as untouchables. The drummers, basket-makers, and the meat-sellers might have also belonged to the lower castes of the rural society. There were also washermen (Rajakas), shoemakers (Charmakaras), and fishermen (Kaivartas) who belonged to this group.

Due to the rise of different religious movements, some Sudras gave up their duty or services and turned into wandering medicants. Many tantric teachers and siddhacharya of Orissa were fishermen, leather workers, wood workers and from damba communities. Similarly, Sarala Dash, a Sudra agriculturalist has composed the Mahabharata, a monumental work in Oriya literature. Balaram Dasa, another Sudra poet has composed the Oriya Ramayana.

Kayasthas/Karanas

Kayasthas were a hereditary class of writers. Kayasthas as a caste can be traced back, with the help of literary and epigraphic records, to the latter half of the ninth century AD. The constant transfer of land and revenue to the Brahmanas, officials and temples led to the growth of the scribes of the Kayastha community. In the beginning, the literates of the higher Varnas were recruited as Kayasthas or scribes to meet the fiscal and administrative needs of the State but gradually the scribes were recruited from other Varnas.

It is most noteworthy that like the Brahmins, the members of the Kayastha community occupied all cadres of posts in the government – starting from the village head man and accountant

to that of a Prime Minister and Army General. Dalama Peggada of Kayastha community served as a Mahapradhana or Prime Minister of Vajrahasta III. One of the Narayanapuram inscriptions[21] dated 1114 AD show Pota, son of Marttanadali Bhimanatha of the Kayastha Vamsa as a minister. The undated Parlakimidi plates of Vajrahasta show Vachchapayya of Kayastha Vamsa as a mantri. One Srikarana Mahanadha Senapati of the Vaisya Section of the Kayastha community is mentioned as a Senadyaksavara and as the Governor of the Southern or Kalinga province during the time of Aniyankabhima III.

We find a large number of the Kayasthas employed as Karanas or Srikaranas (writers and record keepers), Sistus (personal secretaries), Majjis (village heads) etc. These official positions, especially in the village and local administration, which the members of the caste originally held, later appear to have become hereditary and crystallized into many sub-sects of the caste, as Srikaranas, Sistus, Majis, Pattanayakas, Mahantis etc. We also find a number of these Kayasthas or Srikaranas appointed as Puravaris or revenue officials.

The Kayasthas of Orissa belonged to the Kashyapa gotra as known from the Arasavali plates. Individuals belonging to the Kayasthas caste also played a noticeable role in the spheres of learning and literature. Tathagataraksita who belonged to Orissa was a physician by profession and Kayastha by caste. He was a reputed Professor of Tantra in the Vikramsila University during this period.

Tribals

Orissa is populated mostly by tribes. Several tribal groups lived in the forests of Orissa. References to the tribals are not

found in any Orissan records. Most probably *Atavikas* of Ashokan edicts[22] referred to the tribal community. It is noticed from the epigraphs that Gonds and Savaras, were the two forest people who lived in early Orissa. However, this would not mean to proclaim the non-existence of the other tribes in Orissa. They might have lived in the forests along with Gonds and *Savaras* even though the epigraphic records are silent about them. We do not get even stray reference in the epigraphic records relating to the economic self-sufficiency of the tribals and about their way of life. They mostly depended on the forest products for their subsistence.

The Charjya poems which are said to have been composed from 9th to 13th C.A.D. mention the tribal groups like Sabaras and Bhils. The Sabaras of Orissa are referred to as one of the dominating caste of aboriginals in the Narasimhapur charter of Somavamsi king. The Mahabharata of Sarala Dasa provides sufficient information about the life of the tribes in the then Orissa. They were very simple in their life-style. The Savara men put on tiger skins and adorned their bodies with feathers of peacock, necklaces and earrings of *gunja* fruits. They dwelt far away from the human habitation. Hunting was their main occupation. Drinking was their usual habit. They baked their food on fire. They were fond of alcoholic drinks. Their festivals were in harmony with the agricultural cycle. However, the Brahmanas who settled in the forest area through land grants probably taught the tribes agriculture, religion etc.

Slavery

One of the oldest institutions of mankind was slavery which must have existed in some form or other in the social life of Orissa. It must have been a well recognized institution. Our

records are of little help to know the position of women or their life in general as in other parts of India, though reference to slavery is rarely found in the Orissan epigraphic records. It should be remembered here that our records give us no information about the social position of slaves. The ancient Indian literature is full of references to gifts, sales and purchase of slaves. It may be presumed that there existed different forms of slavery in the society, and it is evident from the Buddhist literature like the Dharmasatras, Arthasastra of Kautilya and the epics. The important groups among the various types of slaves were the prisoners of war, those who were either sold or given in gift by their masters, those who sold themselves during the days of scarcity for want of food and paying off debts, those who were born of slave mothers and were inherited as ancestral property. The criminals were also treated as slaves. They were mainly employed in manual work, sometimes as agricultural labourers in the land attached to the religious establishments. The slaves were also engaged in the temple building activities of the State.

Position of women

Our records are of little help to know the position of women or their life in general in early Orissa. Our knowledge is based on one or two stray references from which it is not possible to have an idea of the status of women-as a maiden, as a wife or as a mother or about her civic rights and responsibilities.

Women seem to have occupied a respectable position in society. The sculptural representation of Ranigumpha shows a dancing scene being witnessed by King Kharavela along with his two queens. Royal ladies, appeared in public in the company of their husbands, to witness dance and music performances.

They also participated in religious rites. Women were well-acquainted with military exercises, riding elephants, hunting, climbing trees, functioning as attendants to the royal ladies etc. From archaeological remains of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, it is known to us that woman had mastered the art of music and dance. Polygamy seems to have been in vogue in royal families. Paucity of evidence debars us from getting any clear idea regarding the social position of an ordinary woman. The Sailodbhavas[23] records are usually silent about the activities of the queens. The only queen who finds mention in the charters is Kalyanadevi, wife of Dharmaraja II who patronized the Jain saints. From the sculptural representations on the walls of the monuments of the period, we come to know that women excelled in the art of dancing and singing and their dress and jewels indicate their high standard of aesthetic sense.

With the ascendancy of the Bhaumakaras[24], women occupied a better position in the society of Orissa. Widowed queens and daughters of a deceased King ascended the throne and ruled with full royal status. The female rulers like the male ones were free to grant villages to the Brahmanas and religious establishments. There are several instances to show that queens occupied the throne several times in the absence of the male heirs. The Somavamsi queens have also patronised the construction of a number of temples and shown interest in politics. The mother of Balarjuna, Vasata had acted as his regent as he was very young at the time of coronation. The Sirpur stone inscriptions[25] suggest that the princesses were well-trained in the art of government to cope with the needs of the time. We know that Vasata, the mother of Balarjuna Mahasivagupta had constructed the temple of Hari at Sirpur. The mother of Udayatkesari, Kalavati had constructed the Brahmeswar temple. The Ganga and Gajapati queens were devoted more religious affairs than to the state administration.

Single minded devotion to husband, devotion to Gods, respect towards elders, kind reception of guests and charitable nature etc. were the qualities of women of Orissa during the Ganga and Gajapati rule. Thus, Gangadevi, a queen of Narasimha III described as one devoted to her husband, righteous-minded and devoted to Lord Hari. We find many house-wives were variously described as *Susila, Samastadhamaparikhi, Kulambonidees-chandrarekha* etc. We come across many instances of women making munificent donations on their own. In many of the records, Imperial Gangas mention their mother. We have numerous records wherein man making gifts to God for the welfare of their mothers and their wives.

We do not get any evidence about the practise of early marriage. The system of Kanyadana existed. We do not have any reference to Sati system. We have instances of widowhood in the society of Orissa. The widows continued to live after the death of their husbands. We do not have evidence of widow remarriage system. Higher castes generally did not allow widow remarriage. It might have been prevalent in lower castes. Many widows became nuns and lived in monasteries (mathas). In the Brahmana society, they remained confined to their homes, wearing white clothes, discarding all ornaments and by performing fasts and observing austerities. They spent their time in religious activities.

The custom of dedicating maidens to the Gods for services in temples also existed in society during this period. They were known as devadasis. Most of them remained unmarried. In the medieval society, they were assigned a respectable place in the social order and their profession did not carry any disapprobation with it. Records mention that women of good families adopted the profession of devadasis during this period. Thus, a record[26]

from Sreekurmam suggests that 30 (thirty) daughters of certain Nayaka families of Kalinga adopted the profession of devadasis and were dedicated to the temple Sreekurmam during the time of Narasimha I of Imperial Ganga family.

The Imperial Ganga records point out that the devadasis were divided into two classes (1) those that were attached to the temples and remained unmarried and (2) those that lived independently, married, but were employed by the temples on a part-time basis. The inscriptions refer to the former as Sampradayamuvaru and the latter merely as Sanulu. This practice was typical of South India and seems to have traveled to Orissa from there.

The socially hated practice of prostitution was also in vogue in Orissa. Very few references are there relating to the existence of prostitution in Orissa in the epigraphic records. The Taltali plate[27]of Dharmamahadevi of Bhauma family refers to the women of loose character. The Charter records women of loose character were absent during the reign of Dharmamahadevi of the Bhaumakaras. This evidently indicates that prostitution was in vogue in Orissa. The Sirpur stone inscription of the time also refers to prostitutes. It tells us that in order to inherit gift the descendant should not be addicted to gambling, prostitution and such other bad associations. This helps us to know that prostitutes were living in Orissa. Prostitution was definitely a rare practice and references to this are also quite inadequate. Most probably, it was confined to the women of the lower castes.

Food and drink

We come across different items of food in the inscriptions of Orissa that were offered to the deities in temples. The

inscriptions generally refer to luxurious food offered by the well-to-do people. It can be safely derived that the some items of rich food formed part of the daily menu of the upper class people. If the rich could afford to enjoy all the items of the rich menu daily or as and when it pleased them, the poor and the not so well-to-do had these items on their menu at least on festive occasions. The large variety of these edible items, most of them having sweet sounding names, point to the great interest evinced by the society. But all this rich variety of food included only the vegetarian fare, as no non-vegetarian food could be offered to the Gods in Brahmanic temples.

The staple food of the people was undoubtedly rice. The records refer to cooked rice offered to the deity as Madapali. A good number of records of Imperial Ganga family refer to the quantity of rice supplied to the temple for the preparation of Madapali. Even today, rice is the main item of the daily meal in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. A record from Simhachalam mentions ghee, pulse-soup and varieties of curries. Another record from the same place includes in the vegetarian menu, rice, ghee, pulses, curries, edible savories like *kudumus* and *bhandas,* curds and milk.

Another item which finds mention is Payasa or rice cooked with sweetened milk. An item that was rarely missed after the Indian meal was the betel, in combination with the areca nut and lime. This combination is called Tambula or Vithi in Sanskrit and Vidiyamu in Telugu. There is hardly an epigraph from the temples that does not include Tambula or Vithi in the items of naivedya or food-offering made to the deities by the devotees. A variety of this tambula was made spicy by the addition of cloves, cardamom, nutmeg, camphor etc. and is referred to as karpura-vidiyam and was considered luxury.

Besides, the records furnish the names of a large variety of sweet meats and savories, made mostly of flours. Among the sweets, we may mention such names as *Sarasetulu, ariselu, sadumanoharalu, cennamanoharalu, nandanabanam, hamsakalitu, monoharaladlu* etc. Among the savouries, we find mention of *pithalu, nadilu, apulu, badalu, leyyalu, kudumulu, pappu atikalu, atlu,bhondalu, pusula* etc. These savories are generally referred to in Telugu as Pindi-vantalu or edible made of flours and the word is still in vogue in the Telugu country and in some parts of South Orissa, particularly in Ganjam district. Coconut was also much in use and was called *narikelampu-kaya* or *tenkaya.* Sugar referred to as khandamu and jaggery called cerakum gudmu find frequent mention in the inscriptions.

Non-vegetarian food was, by no means, unknown. People used to hunt animals as we have sculptures in temples. It is thus obvious that meat was taken by the people, but we have no idea of the extent to which this practice prevailed. Fishing must have provided pleasure, as well as food. Thus rice, cake, sweets, fish and meat and milk probably constituted the chief articles of food.

Drinking was also prevalent in society. The drink that is frequently mentioned in the epigraphs is *Panaka* or *Panamu,* a beverage made of sugar and water or of jaggery and water, with spices added. It is also possible that the people took butter-milk and coconut water, especially during summer.

Dress and ornaments

Our sources contain very few references to the dress. The sculptures of Orissa indicate that men in Orissa generally wore *dhoti* as lower-garment and *chadar* or scarf as upper-garment.

The ordinary style of wearing dhoti does not differ from the mode of the present time. The mode of wearing chadar also appears to be the same as practiced now. It was invariably used either thrown over the shoulder or tied round the waist as a *kamarband*.

Saree was the ordinary dress worn by women. A record[28] from Sreekurmam mentions *Manjista Chiralu* or sarees of the colour of the Bengal or Indian madder and *Vella Chiralu* or sarees in white colour. There should have been many other colours. The figures of the amorous couples of the temples of Orissa[29] show that the sarees did not cover the upper part of the body and it generally remained exposed, though some times, it was partially covered by a long narrow scarf. The breasts were covered by a chauli and in a few cases by a bodice which covered the body above the navel and a portion of the arm. Sometimes women were dressed in a close fitting tunic. Gate keepers and Sanyasis used to wear turbans as per the sculptures of Bhubaneswar.

The Orissan inscriptions furnish a long list of ornaments offered to the deities by the devotees. It is easy to guess that these ornaments meant for the Gods were normally used by the people. The inscriptions refer only to costly ornaments which the well-to-do alone could afford. We come across ornaments worn on the head, ears, neck, hands, waist, chest and feet. Most of the ornaments appear to be the same for both men and women. We do not find any reference to the ornaments worn by the poor, but it is easy to infer that the poor wore similar ornaments made of inferior metals like tin, copper and of alloys like bronze and brass.

The sculptures of the period also show a variety of ornaments such as *karnapulu* (ear flower), *ratnahara* (necklace), *bajum,*

tabija and the *tab, khalu* (wrist ornament), *chandrahara* (necklace), *katibandha* (waist ornament), *kinkini* (leg and foot ornaments) etc. The most favourite ornament for the leg and feet was a chain band fringed with little bells called *kinkini,* worn by both sexes. It seems that jewels were extensively used in Orissa.

The sculptural representations demonstrate that most of the body such as ears, neck, upper and lower arms, waists and anklets had various ornaments. It is remarkable that the sculptures and the inscriptions of this period do not depict any ornament for the nose[30]. We may, therefore conclude that the nose ornament was not in general use.

Education and learning

Education in Orissa like India was caste-oriented and community-oriented and mostly vocational. Education was a community affair and the State supported it, without any direct involvement, by way of grants of lands and villages and by way of monetary concessions such as remission of taxes etc., to the teachers and scholars who established their own schools or to educational institutions which came into existence as a result of private or community munificence.

Agrahara

The evidence of inscriptions amply bear out that the monarchs, as well as some of the officers and viceroys created many agraharas which were inhabited by some of the best scholars of the age, besides many other Brahmin householders who were devoted to their six fold duty of *Adyapana, Adhyayana, Yajana, yajna, Dana* and *Pratigraha* (i.e. teaching, studying, sacrificing, conducting sacrifices, giving and acceptance). According to the

Madalapanji [31], a land settlement was made during the rule of Aniyankabhima III and from this land settlement, it is known that out of total cultivable land of 9,49,60,000 acres in the empire, 4,63,60,000 acres were tax free land gifted to Brahmins and to royal servants, which give us a measure of the liberality of the Imperial Ganga rulers in the creation of agraharas. In the Nagari plates , Aniyankabhima III claims that he donated to a Brahmin, Sankar Sanananda Sauman, a township consisting of four houses resembling royal residences and endowed them with compounds, *mukhamandapas* and *madhyamandapas* and also thirty houses inhabited by a number of citizens. Similarly, Bhanudeva I claims with great gratification and pride that he donated to Brahmins, one hundred Sasanas (Agraharas) for easy enjoyment of the yield like mangoes and coconuts.

Each Agrahara was a home university, the house of each scholar (Brahmin) being an academy or a Lyceum. Students flocked to these agraharas in large numbers from every nook and corner to learn at the feet of the scholars. Education was greatly fostered by the temples. In temples, provision was made for the study of not only the Vedas and other traditional Sanskrit learning but also for the study of several branches of knowledge including fine arts, music, dance and sculpture etc. Each major temple was a porch of higher education. The temple education was free, sometimes provisions were made for the boarding and lodging of both the teacher and the taught.

The society of Orissa was based on Brahminical social structure and divided into caste system. The rise and fall of ruling dynasties had a little impact on society. The social life of the people was stable and progressive. Changes and continuity in the social life of Orissa were the general features. The spread of education and upliftment and social mobility were the main

reasons for the absence of social tension and conflict. The society of Orissa was not static. Caste as a function hardly existed in Orissa. No profession was restricted to any particular caste. The people of the lower caste were doing the duties of the higher castes. So, the occupational mobility was prevalent in Orissa.

References

1. A.C. Mital, *Early History of Orissa*, Banaras, 1962, p.141,.
2. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hathi-Gumpha Inscription*, JBORS, Vol. XIII, Part-Ill-IV, 1927, p.233.
3. Ibid
4. G. Ramadas, *Korashanda Plates of Visakhavarma*, E.I, XXI, pp 23-25.
5. S.K. Sahli, *Rise and Fall of Matharas of Kalinga*, unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Berhampur University, 2003 , p.88,
6. S.N. Rajaguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol-I, Part-II P.I.
7. S.C. Behera, *The Rise and Fall of the Sailodbhavas*, Calcutta, 1982, p. 6.
8. B.K. Sharma, *Somavamsi rule in Orissa*, Calcultta, 1983, p.58.
9. U.K. Subudhi, *The Bhamakars of Orissa* , Calcultta, 1978, p.8.
10. B.P. Panda, *The History of the Imperial Gangas of Orissa*, Bhubaneswar, 2005, p.94.
11. S.K. Panda, *Medieval Orissa*, New Delhi. 1991, p.78.
12. B.P. Panda, note no.10, *op.cit*.
13. *Ibid*.
14. *Ibid*.

15. B.P. Panda, *Orissa History*, Bhubaneswar,2005, pp.137-143.
16. C.V. Ramachandra Rao, *Medieval Andhra*, Nellore, 1976, p.294.
17. B.P. Panda, (note no.15)
18. A.C. Mital (note no.1), p.21
19. T. Watters ,*On Yung Chwang's Travels in Ancient India*, p.53.
20. G.S. Gai, *Arasavalli Plates of Vajrahasta*, E.1, Vo1.XXXII, p.310.
21. A.P. Shah, *Life in Medieval Orissa*, Varanasi, 1976, p.130.
22. A.C. Mital (note no.1), p. 21
23. S.c. Behera, (note no.7).
24. U.K. Subudhi, (note no.9).
25. B.K. Sarma, (note no.8).
26. SII. VoLVo No. 1188.
27. SII.Vo1.V. No. 1172.
28. B.P. Panda, *Decorative motifs of temples of Orissa*, QRHS, Calcutta, 2003, p.46.
29. B. P. Panda, *Alasa Kanyas Temple of Orissa*, S.I.H.C., 1996.
30. 30. A.B. Mohanty, *Madala Panji*, Bhubaneswar, 1969, p.34.
31. D.C. Sircar, *Nagari Plates of Anagabhima*, E.1. Vol-XXVIII, pp.235-58.

BOOK REVIEW- 1

Dr. M. Rengaswamy, ***Tamil Nationalism - Political Identity of the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam,*** Hema Publishers, First Edition, August 2006, Chennai - 600050.

To strike a balance between the diversity and the need for unity, independent India adopted a policy of pluralism, recognising differences rather than suppressing them.

The reorganisation of the states on linguistic basis, a major aspect of national consolidation and integration, engaged the nation's attention almost immediately after independence The boundaries of provinces in pre-1947 India had been drawn in a haphazard manner as the British rule of India had proceeded for nearly a hundred years. No heed was paid to linguistic or cultural cohesion so that most of the provinces were multi-lingual and multi-cultural. The interspersing princely states had accentuated the heterogeneity. Language is closely related to the culture and therefore to the customs of the people. Besides, the massive spread of education and the growth of mass literacy can only occur only when knowledge was imparted through the medium of the mother tongue. Democracy can become meaningful to the common people only when politics and administration are conducted through the language they can understand. But this language, their mother tongue cannot be the medium of education or administration or judicial activity, unless a State is formed on the basis of such a predominant language. It is for this reason that Congress undertook the political mobilisation in the mother tongue and in 1921 reorganised its regional branches on a linguistic basis. Since then, the Congress repeatedly committed

itself to the redrawing of the provincial boundaries on linguistic lines. But the national leadership had second thoughts on the subject immediately after independence fearing threat to consolidation of national unity and dislocation of administration and economic development. Public opinion was not satisfied, especially in the south, with the reports of committees specially appointed to enquire into the desirability of linguistic provinces. Popular movements for States' reorganisation continued. A campaign for a separate Telugu state culminated in the death of a Telugu freedom fighter during a hunger strike in 1952. The resulting anger raised the specter of a Telugu insurrection and the Centre quickly divided the State into Madras (for Tamils) and Andhra (for Telugus). The process could not stop there and in 1956 State boundaries were redrawn in accordance with language.

"Events since 1956 have clearly shown that loyalty to a language was quite consistent with and was rather complimentary to the loyalty to the nation. Its result has been functional in as much as it removed what had been a major source of discord and created homogenous political units which could be administered through a medium that the vast majority of the population understood." Language has proved a cementing and integrating influence." (Rajni Kothari). "State reorganization did not of course resolve all the problems relating to linguistic conflicts. Disputes over boundaries between different states, linguistic minorities and economic issues such as sharing of waters and power and surplus food still persist. Linguistic chauvinism also finds occasional expression. But the reorganisation has removed a major factor affecting cohesion of the country". (Bipin Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee)

The above process has been amply substantiated by Dr. Rengaswami in his "Tamil Nationalism – Political Identity of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam." This book is essentially a study of the history of the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam (TAK), a minor political party in Tamil Nadu. TAK was the product of two contemporaneous movements – Tamil Renaissance and Indian National Movement. Arousing the cultural consciousness of the Tamils, the TAK made language as the political identity and rallying symbol. Tamil nationalism became a force to reckon with. Tamil nationalism is a blend of sensitive factors such as '*Ina Unarvu*' (ethnic sentiment), '*Mozhi Unarvu*' (linguistic sentiment) and '*Nattu Unarvu*' (national sentiment). *Mozhi Unarvu* was the most powerful of these. Factors such as delay in the formation of linguistic states, inter–state territorial disputes, imposition of Hindi and the demand for separate statehood by some political parties strengthened the forces of Tamil Nationalism. The formation of socio-political organizations namely the Justice Party, the Self Respect movement, the Dravida Kazhagam and TAK were the outcome of the intense feelings of linguistic and ethnic consciousness. With Periyar's demand for Dravidasthan, the political scenario in Madras presidency reached a high watermark of ethnic consciousness. Tamil Renaissance and the Indian National Movement coincided in early 20th century. Some of the prominent leaders of the latter were Tamil scholars and poets. Their scholarly works not only kindled Tamil consciousness but roused Indian patriotism too. Tamil Nadu Congress had to adopt a policy of restraint and moderation to ensure social harmony among multi-lingual communities of Madras.

Mylapore Ponnuswami Sivagnanam, popularly known as Ma. Po. Si, was a freedom fighter. He founded the TAK in 1946. According to the author, to Ma. Po. Si goes the credit of being not only the founder–leader of a political organization for the

creation of a Tamil state but also the champion for carrying forward the banner of Tamil Nationalism through the federal path. His study of Tamil classical literature intensified his love for Tamil language and Tamil culture. He was inspired by men like Veerapandia Kattabomman, VOC and Bharathi. He believed in political agitation as an effective instrument of arousing the masses. He was a member of the Congress from 1927 to 1954 and had to quit on the issue of dual membership. He held position as the Chairman of Education Council in the Corporation of Madras and was a member of the Madras Legislature during Rajaji's tenure as Chief Minister. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Madras in 1967 and supported the DMK government. He was the founder–editor of few periodicals in Tamil and a great orator in Tamil. He had authored 110 books in Tamil and was committed to women's liberation. He was the central figure of TAK and with his decline, the party lapsed into oblivion.

According to the author, the origin and organization of the TAK reveals its commitment to the cause of the Tamil language, the unity of the Tamils and national unity. An in-depth study of TAK reveals its monolithic structure with its organizational weakness and ideological strength and its perusal of a programme of agitational politics to achieve its aim. It participated actively in anti–Hindi agitation and border dispute struggle; it stood for Tamil as medium of instruction, renaming of Madras as Tamil Nadu, making Madras as the capital of Tamil Nadu and State autonomy. Supporting the federal fabric of the Indian democracy, its political identity was based on Tamil ethnic identity. Listing its accomplishments, the author credits TAK with the following:

Few parties other than TAK could claim to be a pioneer in promoting a language, culture and national unity in unison; TAK emphasised the need for publishing the proceedings of the

legislature in Tamil (which was accomplished later); TAK popularized Tamil literature through the medium of artistic expressions and journalism. It can be truly said that through assimilation of the "essence of Tamil renaissance, the TAK took forward the movement of Tamil nationalism".

This book is a welcome addition and it enriches the history of Tamil Nadu recognizing the commitment and services of a great patriot and a passionate lover of Tamil language and culture. It is an excellent topical study written in simple style that could target students, satisfy tamil-philes and provide extensive scope for research studies. Meaningful statistics, apt quotations, documental reproduction in the appendices and maps give the book an extra verve. Though repetition of concepts intended for emphasis tend to stem the free flow, the merit of the book lies in the author choosing and analysing an area so far neglected. He has brought into focus the impact of cultural consciousness and highlights the Indian ethos of unity in diversity.

Dr. Prema Kasturi
Former Prof and Head, Department of History
Women's Christian College
Chennai

BOOK REVIEW - 2

Dr. K.V. Raman, ***Temple Art, Icons and Culture of India and South - East Asia,*** Sharada Publishing House, Delhi, 2006, pp 290, Rs. 1950/-

This book presents a valuable collection of essays written over a period of forty years coinciding with the author's illustrious career as a distinguished art-historian and archaeologist. These articles were originally published in various national and international journals, volumes and seminar proceedings. They cover a wide range of topics, such as temple-architecture, iconography, folk culture, art and other aspects of history and culture of India and South-East Asia.

The themes of the papers are varied and include the evolution of gopura architecture, different types of mandapas, balustrade sculptures of Kerala, Hoyasala influences on Vijayanagara art, art heritage of Kanchi and also that of the Pandyas, the role of the temples in the socio-economic life, temples as great centres and patrons of art and dance, rare Chola sculptures from Kumbhakonam, royal portrait figures in south India, shrines and icons of Lord Rama in Tamil Nadu and the iconography of Vaishnava saints.

There are also articles dealing with ecological traditions, village deities and folk cults as undercurrents of the cultural unity of India. The other unifying factors are to be seen in the sacred tanks and in the Indian concepts and practices pertaining to pilgrimages.

There are two articles on the renowned Indologist, Ananda Coomaraswamy – one on his contribution as an art-historian and another on his views on early Indian architecture which the readers will find interesting.

The other major theme of the papers of this book pertains to cultural contacts between India and the South-East Asian countries. The nine papers in the compilation also dwell on themes like the influences seen in the place-names, personal names, names of temples and icons besides the other cultural and artistic linkages based on field-work and observation.

Professor K.V. Raman has clearly highlighted the unique cultural relations between India and the countries of South-East Asia like Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. The style of architecture, iconography and the numerous Sanskrit inscriptions found in these places show the close relations which these regions had with India since ancient times.

The studies are based on extensive field-work and are amply illustrated with a large number of beautiful photographs. This volume will be of considerable interest to both the senior scholars and the students of Indian culture.

This book is well-designed and wrapped in an attractive jacket with an impressive photograph of the stone sculpture of Sarasvati of 11th century A.D. from Gangaikondasolapuram. The photograph of Vettuvankoil from Kalugumalai adorns the first and last pages.

Dr. P. Sumabala
Assistant Professor
C.P.R.Institute of Indological Research
1, Eldams Road, Chennai - 600 018.

BOOK REVIEW - 3

Dr. Chitra Madhavan, ***History and Culture of Tamil Nadu,*** Volume 2 (C.1310-C 1885 A.D), D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 2007, pp 198, Rs. 400/-

The book under review is a sequel to Chithra Madhavan's earlier work, which dealt with the Sanskrit inscriptions of the Pallava, Pandya and Chola periods. The present work focuses on the Sanskrit inscriptions of Tamil Nadu of the subsequent period from about 1310 to 1885 AD covering the Vijayanagara, Nayaka, the later Pandya and Maratha periods. The importance of the present work lies in the fact that the advent of the Vijayanagar empire and later that of the other smaller dynasties, heralds an entirely different scenario as far as the use of Sanskrit in Tamil Nadu inscriptions is concerned. She has rightly pointed out that the Sanskrit inscriptions of this later period have not received adequate attention of the researchers.

This book is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is entitled *Administration.* A number of Sanskrit epigraphs of the period of this study provide data about the duties of the Kings as enunciated in the *Dharmasastras*, the principles which they adhered to, their crests and emblems and also the names and titles of numerous ministers who helped them in their administrative work. The second part of this chapter deals with military administration. The armies of the Vijayanagara Kings were very large and were made up of many divisions. Apart from the information supplied by the epigraphs, the accounts of the foreign travelers who visited the Vijayanagara Empire have also been mentioned in this chapter.

The next chapter entitled "Social and Economic Life" studies about the Brahmana scholars well-versed in the Vedic lore, and the Brahmanas employed as ministers, officials and generals by the Vijayanagara, Nayaka, Later Pandya and Maratha rulers. Mention is also made about the Vijayanagara queens like Ganga Devi, the queen of Kumara Kampana and Voduva Tirumalamba, the queen of Acyuta Raya, who were talented composers. This chapter also deals with the crops grown and the different means of irrigation like tanks and channels used by the agriculturalists.

The third chapter, "Education and Literature" focuses on the propagation of Brahmanical system of education and the encouragement given to the scholars who were proficient in the vedas, puranas, epics and other works. Many of the rulers of this period were very well- educated and some were outstanding scholars who authored books which are read even today. The gifts of land made to the *mathas* which were among the greatest centers of learning in ancient and medieval India are mentioned in some of the copper plate charters of the period. The beauty of the campu-kavyas, embellished with alankaras, composed in different metres by the poets, who were commissioned to compose the copper-plate charters, were also found mentioned in this chapter.

The contribution of the rulers, their ministers and other officials of the kingdom to the temples in the Tamil country are given in detail in the chapter on "Religion". It is quite interesting to note that the family of Uttamanambi, the manager and trustees of the Srirangam temple, Lakshmikumara Tatacarya, the manager of Sri Varadarajasvami temple at Kanchipuram, Govinda Diskshita, minister of Tanjavur Nayaka rulers played a very significant roles in the religious sphere. The spiritual preceptors of the Vijayanagar Kings, viz., Kriyasakti Pandita, Vidyaranya, Govinda Diskhita and

Tatacarya, and the role they played in the affairs of this empire are also studied in this chapter.

The author has ably studied the language and script of various Sanskrit epigraphs of the period. During Vijayanagara period, when Nandinagari was mainly used to write the Sanskrit inscriptions, it is interesting to note that in some of the copper-plate records like the Alampundi and Soraikkavur plates of Virupaksha, Sanskrit verses had been written in Grantha script. The same is the case in many of the copper-plate charters of the later Pandyas like the Srivilliputtur plates of Abhirama Pandya, the Pudukkottai plates of Srivallabha and Varatungarama Pandya and Dalavay agraharam plates of Ativirarama Pandya. In addition to this, there are a few interesting inscriptions of the Vijayanagar period in Tamil Nadu which are in the Manipravala style in which the scripts used are Grantha and Tamil.

It is interesting to note that various benefactions made by the kings to the famous Ranganathasvami temple at Srirangam in order to restore it after the Muslim attack on this temple-town are known from the numerous Sanskrit lithic as well as copper-plate records from this temple.

The references to the accounts of foreign travelers like the narrative of Domingos Paes and the chronicle of Fernao Nuniz, and the literary works in Sanskrit and Telugu of these ages make this study more holistic.

The intense study on composers of copper plate charters and the verses, viz., Mallanaradhyavrittika, Rajasekhara, Sabhapati, Krishnakavi, Cidambarakavi, Krishnakavi and Ramakavi of Vijayanagar period; Narayana, Abhirama Sabhapati Kamakshi and Rajanathakavi of Later Pandya period; the composers of

lithic records of Vijayanagar, Later Pandya and Nayak periods viz., Vyasa Bharati Yogi, Ahobila Dikshita, Bhatta Narasimha, Bhatta Devaratha, Srinivasa Dikshita, Govinda Suri (Govinda Diskshita), is remarkable. It is fascinating to note that the descendants of poet Sabhapati continued to be the composers of the royal documents of rulers of later period.

The author has made a meticulous study of invocatory verses of the copper plate charters. These verses reveal that the composers of these charters were great scholars and were well acquainted with the epics and puranas. Their knowledge of Vaishnava and Saiva mythology is revealed in their compositions.

The photographs of the copper-plate inscriptions of the Vijayanagara, Later Pandya and Maratha rulers found in this book are very clear and legible.

This book is well designed and wrapped in a beautiful jacket with impressive photographs of the stone sculptures of Lakshmi-Narayana of 16th century A.D. on the front, and the *gopura* of Vatapatrasayi temple at Srivilliputtur of 17th century A.D. on the back.

As a well-documented and comprehensive work, this book would contribute to the understanding of history and culture of Tamil Nadu.

Dr. P. Sumabala
Assistant Professor
C.P.R.Institute of Indological Research
1, Eldams Road, Chennai - 600 018.