

ISSN: 0975 - 7805

**JOURNAL
OF
INDIAN HISTORY
AND
CULTURE**

**September 2019
Twenty Fifth 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

Editor : Dr. G. J. Sudhakar

Editorial Board

Dr. Nanditha Krishna

Dr. K.V. Raman

Dr. V. Mohan

Dr. G. Balaji

Dr. V. Sandhiyalakshmi

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

E-Mail: cpriir@gmail.com / cprafoundation@gmail.com

Website: www.cprfoundation.org

Layout Design : R. Sathya Narayanan

Subscription

Rs. 150/- (for 1 issue)

Rs. 290/- (for 2 issues)

CONTENTS

- 1 **Preservation and Conservation of Archival Materials
at the Library of C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of
Indological Research**
- Nanditha Krishna 1
- 2 **Archaeological and Epigraphic evidence of
early Vasudeva-Krishna worship**
- Meenakshi Jain 13
- 3 **Early Icons of Agni**
- V. Sandiyalakshmi 31
- 4 **Romance, Escape and Divine Rewards:
Popularisation of *Satī* in Early India, as echoed
in the Sanskrit Texts**
- Benudhar Patra & Punit 49
- 5 **Sources for Early Āndhradēsa**
- D. Mercy Ratna Rani 65
- 6 **Coinage in Ancient India – As Gleaned From
Sanskrit Literature**
- V. Yamuna Devi 94
- 7 **The Concept of Ardhanarisvara with special
reference to Tamil Literature**
- T. Kausalya Kumari 104

8	Advaita and Problems in Indian Metaphysics - Godabarisha Mishra	115
9	Colonial Despotism and British Judicial Intervention in the Bengal Presidency, 1772-1798 - Om Prakash	133
10	Porto Novo Iron Works- Retelling the Story of a Failed Industrial Enterprise of 19th Century Madras and its Impact - Dolly Thomas	157
11	History of the New Architecture of Colonial Madras - G. Balaji	184
12	Gandhi's Visit to Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh during the Non-Cooperation Movement - P.C. Venkatasubbaiah	203
13	Dr. R.M. Alagappa Chettiar (1909-1957): Far-sighted Industrialist and Philanthropist - Prabha Ravi Shankar	220
14	The Madras City Council for Child Welfare in the Early 1960's - G.J. Sudhakar	236
15	Immoral Trafficking in Women: The Indian Scenario - B. Pramila	249

16	The Historian at Work: A Sreedhara Menon and the Practice of Kerala History	
	- Sreerekha P.L.	265
17	Book Review 1	290
18	Book Review 2	296

EDITOR'S NOTE

The 25th issue of the Journal is in your hands. It has been a long journey since 1996, encompassing a time of learning and facing new challenges.

We are coming out with a new editorial policy of encouraging only brilliant young scholars. At this juncture, we also request senior scholars in the field to contribute to the Journal, thereby enriching it and would also like to inform our readers that we are continuing with the blind peer reviewing system.

I would like to sincerely thank all our referees for finding time for us.

The papers range from archaeological and epigraphic evidence of early Vasudeva-Krishna worship to immoral trafficking in women, thereby giving due weightage to all periods in history. We also have papers on Advaita and problems in Indian metaphysics and animal welfare movements.

We thank Dr. P.C. Venkatasubbiah from Dravidian University and Professor S.N. Arya from Magadh University for reviewing books for this issue.

We remind all our contributors to send abstracts and key words in their papers,

I would like to thank wholeheartedly Dr. Nanditha Krishna, President, the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Mr. Narayan Onkar, Dr. G. Balaji, Dr. M. Jyothimani, Mr. R. Sathya Narayanan and Mrs. T. Pichu Lakshmi and all the members of the Foundation who have helped in bringing out the Journal.

Dr. G. J. SUDHAKAR

1

**Preservation and Conservation of Archival Materials
at the Library of
C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of Indological
Research**

Presentation made on behalf of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) at the Summer School 'Cultures of Archival Research in Germany and India' held in Marburg and Berlin from May 15 to 21, 2019, organized by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), German Research Foundation, New Delhi.

Nanditha Krishna, Ph.D., D.Litt.

The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Chennai

C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of Indological Research has excellent reference library facilities with a good collection of books on various areas of Indian history, philosophy and religion, art and culture, literature, sociology, economics, biography, autobiography and on the humanities from India and the world.

There are also some paper and palm-leaf manuscripts in the Sanskrit, Tamil, Arabic and Telugu languages in our collection. They are all old and rare collections, numbering about 5000. They have been under constant preservation and are conserved periodically. The library possesses nearly 50,000 books, including 15,000 old first prints and nearly 5,000 rare books.

An important section of the library is the archival records of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, numbering about 50,000 documents, including manuscripts and typescripts. They include important correspondence, notes and memoranda of the pre-independence period in the then Madras Presidency and Travancore, as well as correspondence with leaders of the national movement. Archival records of Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar include material pertaining to his tenure as Secretary of the All India Home Rule League; Advocate-General for the Presidency of Madras; Member of the Legislative Council, Delhi; Law Member of the Executive Council, Government of Madras during Lord Willingdon's and Lord Goschen's Governorship; Constitutional Adviser to the Maharaja of Travancore; Dewan of Travancore; Founder and first Vice-Chancellor of Travancore (now Kerala) University; Vice-Chancellor of Annamalai University; Vice-Chancellor of Benares Hindu University; Member (later Chairman) of the University Grant Commission; Chairman of the Standing Committee on University Education, Government of India; Chairman of the Hindu Religious and Endowment Commission; Chairman of the National Integration Committee on Regionalism, Government of India; Press Council; etc.

As the Dewan of Travancore, Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar has maintained administrative and political records of his period. These documents form the major source of his archives which have important data for writing history.

To protect the historical documents, rare books and other archival materials in our library we follow both traditional

and modern methods of preservation and conservation. The original correspondence to and from national leaders are becoming old and brittle and affected by insects. It is essential that they should be preserved continuously. However, we are also undertaking digitization to preserve the soft copies of these documents for future study.

The library is situated in Chennai, formerly Madras, which is famous for its weather – “hot, hotter and hottest”. The average maximum is 30° Celsius in winter and 40 (and more) Celsius in summer. The average humidity is 80% but can go up to 95%. None of this is good for paper.

In our library we primarily use traditional methods to conserve and preserve books, paper and palm leaf manuscripts by using plant parts such as leaves, seeds, bark and vegetable oil and other natural products. The most common biological agents to damage books are aerobic bacteria, fungi, insects and rodents. To protect the books and paper documents from fungal growth and damages caused by insects, natural substances were used in India since ancient times. In many old books and documents, one finds *neem* leaves and turmeric paste on the corner of the books and documents. The *neem* leaves have anti-microbial activity and turmeric powder acts as a fumicide and germicide.

It is believed that by spreading dried *neem* leaves on the surface of the last shelf of the almirah or cupboard, insects will not attack the books. Similarly, the leaves of *Adathoda zeylanica*, *chrysanthemum* (*Chrysanthemum*

cinerarifolium), tobacco (*Nicotina toaccum*) and *tulasi* (*Ocimum bacillum*) can also be used like *neem* leaves to preserve library materials (Sambamurthy and Subramanyam, 1968). In later scientific methods of preservation, the extracts from neem like nimbin and nimbiol, nicotine extracted from *Nicotiana tobaccum* and Ocimene obtained from the leaves of the *Tulasi* are used as insecticides (The Merck Index). The dried green leaves of these plants are most suitable for use against insect attack. The dried green leaves, being effective for four months only, must be replaced at intervals of four months. They can control fungus, insects, moths and cockroaches (Amirthalingam 1996).

Another traditional method followed in our library is that of powder prepared from plant parts, seeds and spices. The macerated powders are prepared with the following materials: *milagu* (pepper / *piper nigrum*), *vasambu* (sweet fig / *acorus calamus*), *lavangapattai* (cinnamon / *cinnamon zeylanicum*), *karunjiragam* (black cumin / *Nigella sativa*) and *kirammbu* (clove / *eugenia caryophyllus*). The mixed powders, along with a small amount of green camphor, are placed in a new white or red cloth, without any dust or moisture, and tied tightly, to be kept on the book shelves and in palm leaf containers / cradles (Perumal, 1996). They act as an insect repellent and control deterioration for about six months. They must be replaced every six months.

The fumigation chamber helps to preserve our books and documents from deterioration caused by biological agents. The thymol crystals are used for fumigation. Thymol is

extracted from the *Thymus vulgaris* and *monarda punctata* (Amirthalingam 1996). The powdered leaves of these species can be used for destroying fungus and preserving documents and art objects. We keep our books and documents for twenty-one days inside this chamber.

Handling the archival documents is another important step, particularly the paper manuscripts which are hand-written and need a lot of care. To avoid them from being exposed to the dust and humid weather conditions, they are kept inside a closed steel almirah. Rough handling, keeping them carelessly on the shelves, etc. are some of the common methods by which paper documents can be damaged. The cellulose acetate lamination, tissue lamination and chiffon lamination, methods followed to laminate the paper documents and rare books, have their own advantages and disadvantages. Because the paste in these methods is water-based, utmost care has to be taken while laminating water soluble ink-written documents (Ranganathan and Pichamuthu, 2008). Problems arise while reversing the document. Hence, the archival documents are protected by means of Japanese tissue and specially processed polyester film encapsulation (Indian Patent No.214408). While encapsulating the documents inside these materials, only the corners are sealed with acid free adhesive using handmade paper as tag. During the reversibility, by simply cutting the guard portion, the original document can be removed without any damage. This method adds strength to the documents and avoids deterioration caused by human handling, water and environmental pollutants. The rare books and hand-written

paper documents are laminated with Japanese tissue after stabilizing them with chemical conservation processes like de-acidification, ink consolidation, mending, etc.

The historical significance of the archival documents with CPRAF Library is as follows:

Some important uses of the historical records in the Archives of the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation

- The documents pertaining to the case between Tamilnadu and Mysore (Karnataka) regarding the Kaveri waters dispute have been referred to frequently by the Government of Tamilnadu. Sir C.P. was the Law Member of the Executive Council, Government of Madras, also in charge of Irrigation. He initiated the construction of the Mettur dam in the year 1923.

He argued and won the case against the erstwhile Mysore state in the dispute over the Kaveri waters. These papers are referred to by the Government of Tamilnadu during the frequent cases against Karnataka over the Kaveri waters.

- In 1940, he appeared for the State of Travancore in the Periyar arbitration case and was opposed by Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, Advocate General of Madras. The Umpire gave the award in favour of Travancore. The Periyar project was enlarged thereafter. This is also

frequently referred to in the High Court from the documents in our Archives.

- Mr. B.S. Raghavan, former Director, Political and Security Policy Planning in the Union Home Ministry and the Secretary, National Integration Council, for the first four Prime Ministers referred to the archives since Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar (Sir C.P.) was the Chairman of the National Integration Committee on Regionalism, Government of India in 1962. Referring to the report, Mr. B.S. Raghavan drafted a bill, which was passed by the Indian Parliament, making the demand for secession an offence.
- A Report on the Hindu Religious Endowment Commission was prepared by Sir C.P. on temples, *muths* and *pūja vidhis* between 1960 and 1962. This is frequently referred to by the Government of Tamilnadu, to answer queries from the Hon'ble High Court.
- Mr. K. Kamaraj, former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, requested for papers pertaining to the free midday meals scheme for school children, which Sir C.P. introduced for the first time in 1940 in the state of Travancore.
- Mr. M.G. Ramachandran, former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, also referred to the archives for the free midday meals scheme papers which he successfully implemented in 1982.

The Travancore papers have been referred to by the following historians whose books have been published:

- ***Sir C.P. Remembered*** by **Shakunthala Jagannathan**, (Vakils, Feffer and Simons Ltd., Mumbai, 1999).
- ***Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar – A Biography*** by **Saroja Sundararajan** (Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd, Chennai, 2002)
- ***A Short Biography of C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar*** by **A. Raghu**, (Prestige Books, New Delhi, 1998)
- ***Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar – A Short Biography*** (Malayalam), Translated by A. Raghu and K.P. Nandakumar, (Imprint Books, 1999).
- ***Duty, Destiny and Glory – The Life of C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar*** by **A. Raghu**, (Orient Blackswan Private Limited, 2014).

Publications by Professor A. Sreedhar Menon

- ***Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore***, (Current Books, 2001).
- ***Sir C.P. Yum Swatantra Thiruvithanmkooram*** (Malayalam), (D.C. Books, Kottayam, 1999).

- ***Swathantra Thiruvithamkoor Vadavum Sir C.P. Enna Villanum*** (Malayalam), (D.C. Books, Kottayam, 2000).
- ***American Model Arabikkadalil Sir C.P. Yute Parajayappetta Bharanaparikshkkara Nirdesam*** (Malayalam), (D.C. Books, Kottayam, 2000).
- ***Punnapra Vayalarum Kerala Charitravum*** (Malayalam), (D.C. Books, Kottayam, 1999).
- ***Sir C.P. Thiruvithamkoor Charithrathil*** (Malayalam), (Current Books, Kottayam – 2003).

Others:

- ***Educational Development in South India***, K.G. Vijayalekshmi, (Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1993)
- ***Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar and his Contributions to the Constitutional, The Socio-Economic and the Educational Life of Travancore*** - Sheila Antony (University of Kerala, 2004).
- ***Role of Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar in the modernization of Travancore (1931-1947)*** - Sumi Mary Thomas (Maharshi Dayananda Saraswathy University, Ajmer, 2013)

The Foundation also signed a MOU with the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), Government of India for

protecting its archival collection of palm leaf manuscripts. The Foundation's library has a good number of palm leaf manuscripts in its collection which includes Valmiki's *Ramayana*, Sriharsha's *Naishadhacharita*, texts on *Nyaya*, texts on *Vedanta*, texts on *Vyakarana* (grammar), texts on *Agamas*, *Tattvachintamani* of Gangesa of the Nyaya School of Philosophy, *Bhattikavya*, texts on Horoscope, *Purvamimamsa*, work of Cakra Kavi, *Upanishads*, *Srauta Sutra*, texts on worship, *Tarkasangraha*, *Rahasyatrayasara*. The manuscripts were written in Grantha, Tamil and Malayalam and the languages used are Sanskrit, Tamil, Malayalam and Manipravalam.

In order to safeguard the palm-leaf manuscripts, our ancestors used two seasoned wooden boards generally made of *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) or teak (*Tectona grandis*) or jack fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) or neem (*Azadirachta indica*) to cover the front and back in a position of binding. The most effective conventional practice of protecting manuscripts was wrapping the manuscripts in red or yellow (white cloth dipped in turmeric powder) or white cotton cloth, and occasionally silk cloth (Jeyaraj, 2008). Traditionally, palm-leaf manuscripts were preserved in the loft of the kitchen because the heat that is produced while cooking and the fumes which come out of the fire made of fuel wood served as a fungus and insect repellent. The palm leaf manuscripts are protected in our library by applying oil extracted from plants such as *Cinnamomum zeylancium* and *Cymbopogon nardus* (Amirthalingam, 1996). This gives flexibility to the palm leaf and also keeps away insects. Citronella oil, a plant-based

insect repellent, is used for preserving the palm-leaves. They are also preserved by mending the broken leaves, filling up the holes, and re-inking the incised matter.

The cleaned palm-leaves are bundled and wrapped in a red coloured cotton cloth and the bundles are kept individually in a wooden almirah with suitable clearance between shelves. The storage arrangement is designed in such a way that each bundle can be retrieved without disturbing the other.

We are now moving forward to digitalizing the paper documents and manuscripts, so that they can be used without touching the original.

The usage of plant materials is not new. It is an old Indian tradition formerly used in several libraries of the Indian sub-continent. With the growing emphasis on environmental protection and health care, this tradition requires a revival.

Bibliography

1. Amirthalingam, M., 1996, "Biological Preservation of Library Materials", in S. Sumatra (ed.), *Conservation of Books and Paper Manuscripts*, CPRAF Publication, Chennai, pp. 38 – 43.
2. Agarwar, O.P., and Sinha, S.N., 1992, *Conservation Status of Manuscripts, Books, Archival and Alike Material*, INTACH, Indian Conservation Institute, Luknow.
3. Harinarayana, N., 2007, *Heritage: Essays on Museology and Conservation*, New Era Publication, Chennai.

4. Jain, S.K., 1994, *Medicinal Plants*, National Book Trust, India.
5. Jeyaraj, V., 2002, *Āvanangal pāthukkāppu* (Tamil), Government Museum, Chennai.
6. Kishore, R and Mehra, C.P., 1972, "Requirements of Paper for Docket/File Covers", in O.P. Agrawal, (ed.), *Conservation in the Tropics*, CCL, National Museum, New Delhi.
7. Nair, S.M., 1987, "Bio deterioration of Paper and other Allied Materials", in Perti, R.K., (ed.), *Conservation of Traditional Records, Paper and Allied Materials*, Proceedings of the International Seminar, December 16 – 19, 1985, Delhi.
8. Nair, S.M., 1974, "Evaluation of some Common Fungicides Used for the Protection of Museum Materials", *Conservation of Cultural property*, Vol. VII, New Delhi.
9. *Repair and Preservation of Records*, 1978, National Archives, New Delhi.
10. Sambamurthy, A.V.S.S., and Subhrahmanyam, N.S., 1989, *A Text Book of Economic Botany*, Wiley Eastern Ltd., New Delhi.
11. Senapati, S.K., 1983, "Education in Preservation and Conservation of Library materials in India", *ILA Bulletin*, Vol. XXIX, No. 1-2, Pp.39-46.
12. Sundara Raj, M., 1999, *A manual of archival systems and the world of archives*, Chennai.
13. The Merck Index, 1989, *An Encyclopedia of Chemicals, Drugs and Biologicals*, Susan Budavari, (ed.), Merck & Co., Inc., USA.

Archaeological and Epigraphic evidence of early Vasudeva-Krishna worship

Meenakshi Jain, Ph.D.

This paper surveys the extent to which archaeology and epigraphy have validated sacred traditions in India, with reference to the worship of Vasudeva-Krishna. The evidence attested relates to the prevalence of Vasudeva-Krishna worship well before the commencement of the Common Era.

Besnagar

The earliest epigraphic reference to the cult of a Vaishnava deity found so far comes from the Garuda Pillar Inscription at Besnagar (Vidisha, renowned in ancient literature as the capital of Akara and Dasarna). The column, mounted with the image of Garuda, was erected in honour of Vasudeva, god of gods, by Heliiodorus of Takshashila (Taxila.)

An inscription on the column described Heliiodorus as ambassador of king Amtalikita (r. ca. 115-95 BCE) to Kasiputra Bhagabhadra (RY 14). Bhagabhadra has been identified with Bhadraka, fifth king of the Sunga dynasty, according to the *Bhagavata Purana*. The inscription dated to the first half of the 2nd century BCE (Luders List No. 669).

Alexander Cunningham, first Director- General of the Archaeological Survey of India, who examined the column in 1877, noted that it was still an object of veneration: “The place is visited by numbers of pilgrims, as the pillar is esteemed holy.... It may be inscribed, but the whole shaft is so thickly smeared with red lead, that it is very difficult to find the stone under the crust of vermilion” (Cunningham 1880: 42).

He thought the column belonged to the period of the Imperial Guptas. In 1909, H. Lake, superintending engineer of Gwalior State, removed some of the paint and found a fragmentary inscription, *Prasadottama* (the best temple). The entire inscription was first translated by Dr. Theo Bloch, and later by J.F. Fleet and Lionel Barnett. When John Marshall wrote his report in 1908, the column was still smeared with vermilion by pilgrims “who generation after generation have come to worship at the spot” (Marshall 1909: 1053-1055).

D.R. Bhandarkar, who carried out extensive excavations at Besnagar in 1914-15, wrote, “... the important shrine of Vasudeva which, in the middle of the second century BC, was so renowned and regarded with such veneration that even a Greek Ambassador setup a costly Garuda pillar in honour of the deity” (Bhandarkar 1917: 187).

Bhandarkar further claimed that the first of seven coins found at the site showed that the temple was in use till the mid-6th century CE. It was probably so even a century later, as was proved by the characters of the pilgrims’ names incised

on one of the railing pillars found stacked in trench C (Bhandarkar 19s17: 208).

The Garuda Pillar Inscription

The Garuda Pillar Inscription is in two parts. Part I is the main epigraph; a briefer inscription (Part II) appears on the opposite side of the pillar.

Part I

- Line I. Devadevasa Vasudevasa Garudadhvaje ayam
- Line 2. Karate ia Heliodorena Bhaga-
- Line 3. Vatena Diyasa putrena Takhkhasilakena
- Line 4. Yonadutena agatena Maharajasa
- Line 5. Amtalikitasa upamta sakasam rano
- Line 6. Kasiputrassa Bhagabhadrasa tratarasa
- Line 7. Vasena chatudasena rajena vadhmanasa.

Part II

- Line I. Trini amuta-padani (iya) su-anuthitani
- Line 2. Neyanti svagam dama chaga apamada (Sircar Vol. I 1942: 90-91).

Part II is striking as its two lines summed up the basic tenets of *Bhakti*: “the three immortal precepts of self-restrain, self-denial and vigilance, when practised well (in this world) lead (one) to heaven” (Banerjee 1968: 8).

Noted historian, H.C. Raychaudhuri has pointed out the marked similarity between Part II of the inscription and

the *Striparva* (7. 23-25) of the *Mahabharata* (Dutt Vol. 5 1988: 169); the terms *dama*, *tyaga*, and *apramada* occurring in both. It seems to indicate that Heliodorus had actually heard and utilized the teachings of the Great Epic.

Interestingly, the *Mahabharata* itself explicitly states that it was first recited at Takshashila by Vaisampayana (one of the five disciples of Vyasa). The *Adi Parva* (1. 19-21), says: “.... it was beautifully narrated in the great Snake-sacrifice of Raja Janamejaya by Rishi Vaishampayana as directed by Krishna Dwaipayana himself (Vyas)” (Dutt Vol. I 1988: 1; Dutt Vol. V 1988: 555).

The audience at the recital included Ugrashravas Sauti (a disciple of Vyasa), who would later narrate the Epic to a group of sages at Naimisha Forest, from where it was further disseminated. Indeed, Raychaudhuri believed the city of Takshashila had something to do with the spread of Vaisampayana’s version of the *Mahabharata*.

No less significant, the grammarian Panini’s *Ashtadhyayi* contained some of the early references to the *Mahabharata* (*Sutra* IV.3.98; Katre 1968 Part II: 512). Panini was a native of Salatura, not far from Takshashila, which formed part of the Gandhara kingdom. Panini’s testimony showed that the *Mahabharata* was known to the people of Gandhara well before the time of Heliodorus (Raychaudhuri 1923: 269-271).

The evidence of the *Svargarohanaparva* (Book of the Ascent to Heaven) suggests that the *Mahabharata* was recited by *Vachakas* or *Pathakas* in the presence of the great men of Taxila (Raychaudhuri 1923: 271). It stated that

at the conclusion of the snake sacrifice of king Janamejaya, Ugrashravas Sauti addressed the assembled gathering: “I have now told everything the Vaisampayana narrated, at the command of Vyasa, unto the king at his snake sacrifice. That learned man who recites this history of sacred days in the midst of a listening auditory becomes cleansed of every sin, conquers Heaven, and attains the status of Brahma. Of that man who listens with rapt attention to the recitation of the whole of this Veda composed by (the Island born) Krishna, a million sins.... are washed off...” (Ganguli 2002: 8).

The *Mahabharata* (1, 33.16-17) has enunciated the relationship between Garuda and Vishnu. It stated that Garuda, in return for boons granted to him by Vishnu, offered himself to Vishnu. Hence Vishnu asked Garuda to be his vehicle and made him the emblem of his flag saying, “Thou shalt stay above me.” The mention of *Garudadhvaja* in connection with Vasudeva in the Heliodorus inscription demonstrated that at the time of the erection of the column, the identification of Vishnu with Vasudeva was an accomplished fact (Chanda 1920: 152). [It is important to note that instances of Garuda-*dhvaja* banners were also represented at Bharhut in the mid-2nd century BCE; one held by a male rider and another by an Amazonian rider; Bachhofer Vol. I 1926: Plates 17, 22].

The Heliodorus inscription also supported the statement of the Roman historian, Quintus Curtius (1st century). In his *Histories of Alexander the Great*, he recorded that an

image of 'Hercules' (Krishna) was carried in front of the army of Porus as it advanced towards Alexander:

"An image of Hercules was borne in front of the line of infantry, and this acted as the strongest of all incentives to make the soldiers fight well..." (Majumdar 1960: 119-120).

Megasthenes (350-290 BC), the Greek diplomat and historian, in his book *Indika*, had also mentioned Hercules (Krishna) in connection with the Saurasenas and Mathura (McCrindle 1877: 201).

The British classical scholar, W.W. Tarn was of the view that the similarity with passages from the *Mahabharata* could not be regarded as definite proof of Heliodorus's personal acquaintance with the *Mahabharata*. The passages could have been found for him by an Indian assistant. However, if the inscription meant that Heliodorus pledged himself to the three virtues, then it was conclusive evidence of his familiarity with the Great Epic.

Professor Tarn presented another instance of Greek familiarity with the *Mahabharata*. The name Pandava occurred in Ptolemy's account of India (McCrindle 1885: 121) as well as in Dionysius's *Bassarica* (the earliest poem on the conquest of India by the god Dionysus). The Pandavas were not known to have played any part in, or been mentioned in, history in the period when the Greeks were acquainted with India. The Pandavas were a people of the Epic, and the ultimate common source for Ptolemy and Dionysius

could only have been a Greek who had read the *Mahabharata* and taken the name directly from it (Tarn 1922: 380- 381).

Other shrines of Vasudeva at Besnagar

The Heliodorus Pillar Inscription was not the only early epigraphic evidence of Vasudeva worship in the region. A fragmentary inscription on the shaft of another octagonal Garuda column found in a narrow street of Bhilsa by H. Lake, which was evidently from Besnagar, has confirmed the existence of other votive columns. The inscription, in Brahmi of the late 2nd century BCE, records,

“this Garuda column of the excellent temple (*prasadotama*) of the Bhagavat was erected by Gautamiputra (Gautami’s son)..., a Bhagavata (Vaishnava), in the 12th year after the installation of Maharaja Bhagavata” (Chanda 1920: 152).

Maharaja Bhagavata has been identified with the Sunga king of the same name, who may have been ruled around 100 BC. Both the Garuda pillars have affirmed the existence of one, if not two, temples of Vishnu at Vidisha at the time of their erection.

Capitals of columns – *tala* and *Makara*

Two other column capitals were found at Besnagar, though their shafts remain untraced. They were shaped as a *tala* (fan palm), and a *makara* (crocodile); and were clearly parts of votive columns *taladhvaja* and *makaraketana*, dedicated

to Samkarsana and Pradyumna of the five Heroes of the Vrisni clan (which also included Samba and Aniruddha). The cult of the five Heroes was the first stage in the development of the Bhagavata religion; it was followed by the doctrines of *Vyuha* and *Avatara*. The discovery of the *garuda*, *tala*, and *makara* capitals suggest that shrines dedicated to three *Vyuhas* of the five worshipful Vrisni-*viras*, namely Vasudeva, Samkarsana, and Pradyumna existed in the locality (Banerjea 2016: 104).

Temple structure at Besnagar excavated

During excavations between 1963 and 1965, M.D. Khare of the Archaeological Survey of India, found traces of an elliptical structure adjacent to the Heliodorus pillar, dated to around the 3rd-4th century BCE. It had all the basic components of a temple, *garbha-griha*, *pradaksina-path* (both elliptical), *antarala*, and *mukha-mandapa*, a brick plinth, and superstructure of wood, thatch and mud, proved by the availability of bricks, iron nails, and post-holes. Nothing of the superstructure has survived. After it was damaged by floods, another temple was constructed on a raised platform, the rubble retaining walls of which were preserved.

Khare's excavations exposed seven pillars to the east. They revealed that there were eight pillars in front of the Vasudeva temple of the 2nd century BCE, six of them in alignment with the Heliodorus pillar and the seventh in front of the central pillar. All were firmly set on thick stone basal slabs and fixed by steel wedges. The temple was contemporary with the pillars (Khare

1967: 22; Khare 1975: 92-96, Khare 1989: 62). The purpose of the pillars was religious, not decorative as argued by John Irwin (Irwin 1975-76: 166-176). Each pillar had a capital associated with the Vrisni cult (Khare 1975: 95). Khare made a conjectural drawing of the temple.

According to Herbert Hartel, however confusing the existence of several capitals of similar size at the same site could be, it was undeniable that other pillars with capitals were installed besides the Garuda pillar. Khare's excavations, which provided "evidence of the pillars for three of the *pancaviras* makes it obvious that in this temple at Besnagar also all the five heroes were worshipped" (Hartel 1987: 579-580).

The excavations showed that the cult of Vasudeva was popular in Vidisha, well before the installation of the Heliodorus pillar. It was also significant that of the five types of columns used in Indian architecture, the octagonal one is called *Vishnu-Kant* (Acharya 1956: 534-536). The Heliodorus pillar was basically octagonal; more than half its height being octagonal.

Though no archaeological evidence has survived to indicate instalment of images in the temple, they, like the superstructure of the temples, were likely made of perishable material, like wood. The slightly raised flooring in the *garbhagriha* of the elliptical temple could have served as a low platform for images. The Besnagar *Yaksha* and *Yakshis*, now in Vidisha District Museum, were retrieved from

river beds; which showed the damage floods caused in those times (Khare 1975: 95).

Patanjali, who flourished around the time Heliodorus erected his column, in his comment on Panini (IV. 3.98), clearly stated that the Vasudeva contained in the *Sutra* was the name of the “worshipful,” i.e., of one who was pre-eminently worshipful i.e., God. That indicated the worship of Vasudeva was at least as old as Panini (Bhandarkar 1982: 4). It was evident from Patanjali’s *Mahabhashya* that temples dedicated to Kesava (Vasudeva-Krishna), Balarama, and Dhanapati Kubera were in existence in the 2nd BCE (*prasade dhanapati-Rama-Kesavanam*, II.2.34) (Agrawala 1951: v).

Nagari

Not far removed in time from Besnagar, an epigraphic reference to the worship of Samkarsana and Vasudeva came from Nagari (ancient Madhyamika), eight miles north of Chittorgarh in Udaipur, Rajasthan (Luders *List* no. 6). The site was first visited by A.C.L. Carlleyle, assistant to Alexander Cunningham, who failed to notice a unique structure now called Hathi-bada and Ubh-dival.

During his survey of Nagari in 1904, D.R. Bhandarkar found an inscribed slab, originally stuck inside the entrance of a step-well in village Ghosundi, nearly four km north-east of Nagari. The fragmentary Ghosundi inscription read,

1. ... (Bhagava) [t](e)na Gajayanena Parasari-putrena sa...

2. ...[ji]na bhagavabhyam Samkarshana-Vasudevabhyam
3. ...bhyam puja-sila-prakaro Narayana-vate ka(ritah)
(Bhandarkar 1920: 119).

It recorded the erection of a worship stone enclosure (i.e. a stone enclosure round an object of worship to distinguish it from enclosures surrounding it, like palatial buildings) on a site called Narayana-vata by Gajayana, son of Parasari, in connection with the divinities Samkarsana and Vasudeva. The language of the inscription was Sanskrit and the inscription was assigned to the period between 350 and 250 BCE. It was the first inscription in Sanskrit, and indicated that the language was being still spoken (though not widely), along with Prakrit dialects of that period (Bhandarkar 1920: 119).

Narayana-vata appears to be the name of the site on which the temple of the divinities stood. It suggests that Vasudeva had come to be identified with Narayana as early as the 4th century BCE. Bhandarkar found that Hathi-bada was originally an enclosure around a shrine of Samkarsana and Vasudeva of 300 to 250 BC, who continued to be worshipped there till 700 CE. That made it the first remnant of a Vasudeva temple discovered so far, after Besnagar. The Hathi-bada enclosure and the railings around all stupas were *puja-sila-prakaras* (Bhandarkar 1920: 129-130).

The ground plan of the Nagari temple dedicated to Vasudeva was not fully recovered. It seemed like other contemporary elliptical structures, and also had a wooden superstructure.

Thereafter a stone edifice was built which stood at the site till 700 CE. The *Ubh-dival* (vertical lamp), was also associated with the temple of Samkarsana and Vasudeva, most probably as a *Garuda-dhvaja*. It possibly had an image of Vishnu on its upper most layer. A worn out inscription on the western wall of the Hathi-bada had the words, *Sri Vishnupadabhyam* in the characters of the 7th century CE (Bhandarkar 1920: 131-132).

Mathura

Some epigraphic evidence from Mathura of the early CE attested to temples dedicated to Vasudeva, and heroes of the Vrisni clan to which he belonged.

The Vasu door jamb, dated to the time of Mahaksatrapa Sodasa (an Indo-Scythian king ruling in Mathura in 15 CE), was an impressive eight and a half feet in height. It once formed part of what must have been a grand Vishnu temple. On the side of the jamb was a fragment of an inscription, which stated that the doorjamb was donated by Vasu, for a temple to Vasudeva. R.P. Chanda, who first translated the inscription, read it as,

“By...Vasu a quadrangle enclosed by four buildings (*catuhsalam*), a pillared gateway (*toranam*) and a square terrace in the middle of the courtyard (*vedikah*) have been built (at the shrine at) the great place of the Bhagavat Vasudeva. May Vasudeva be pleased. May (the dominion) of the lord, the *mahaksatrapa* Sodasa, endure” (Chanda 1920: 169-172).

Mora doorjamb

The Mora doorjamb was dug out of an old well in Mathura (Muttra) Cantonment in 1913, along with an inscription carved on a stone slab, which states it was made in the reign of Mahaksatrapa Sodasa. In its unbroken state, the Mora doorjamb was 8 ½ feet (2.5 meters) in height. According to H. Luders, it likely formed part of the entrance of the Bhagavata shrine that housed the five images of the Vrsni Heroes mentioned in the Mora Well Inscription.

The inscription recorded the gift of a *torana*, *vedika* (railing), and another object (variously read as *catuhsalam*, *devakulam* or *sailam*) in the *Mahasthana* (a large temple or sanctuary) of Bhagavat Vasudeva during the time of Mahaksatrapa Sodasa (Chanda 1920: 169-171).

Mora Well Inscription

The Mora Well Inscription, also of the time of Mahaksatrapa Sodasa, was recovered by Alexander Cunningham from Mora, a small village near Mathura, in 1882. It was edited by J. Ph. Vogel (Vogel 1910: 109). It refers to a Vasudeva shrine with images of the Pancaviras of the Vrsnis,

“...The images of the holy *pamcaviras* of the Vrsnis (*Bhagavatam vrsnina[m] pamcaviranam pratima[s]*)... the stone shrine (*sailadevagr [he]*)... whom the magnificent matchless stone house of Tosa was erected and maintained ... five objects of adoration (*arcadesam*) made of stone, radiant,

as it were with highest beauty (*paramavapusa*)..." (Luders EI Vol. 24: 194-202; Quintanilla 2007: 261).

The Mora Well Inscription was one of several indicators of beliefs prior and leading to, the formation of Vaishnavism. Vaishnavism was preceded by the Bhagavata religion, of which the first stage was the cult of the Pancavira Vrisnis (Srinivasan 1997: 211).

In 1911, sculptures of two male torsos were dug up from a mound adjacent to the well where Alexander Cunningham had found the Mora Well Inscription (Vogel 1910: 110). The male torsos were likely contemporaneous with the inscription. J.N. Banerji and V.S. Agrawala identified the male torsos as among the five *Vyuhās* (Vasudeva, Samkarsana, Pradyumna, Samba, and Aniruddha), described as 'heroes of the dynasty of the Vrsnis' in the *Vayu Purana* (97.1-2) (Quintanilla 2007: 211-212).

An image of a female figure carved in the round, along with the pedestal of a standing image of which only the feet remained, and the pedestal and lower half of a standing female statue, were also recovered. The female image was probably a goddess or *yakshi* (the name Tosa was mentioned in the inscription). It appears to have been carved later than the two male torsos. The inscription on her base could include the name of the Kusana king, Kaniska (Vogel 1910: 109). Heinrich Luders held that the Mora Well Inscription was about a century older than the inscription on the base of the female statue (Luders EI Vol. 24: 199-202; Quintanilla 2007: 211). Doris M.

Srinivasan speculated that the female could well be Ekanamsa, a Vrsni and sister of Samkarsana/Balarama and Vasudeva-Krsna (Srinivasan 1997: 213).

A newly acquired Bharhut medallion in the reserve collection of the National Museum (Acc. No. 80-751) depicts a pillared structure housing a *Yaksha* statue. The structure was an oblong hall with an entrance porch. The main hall was elliptical in plan. A circular *Bodhi – Ghara* depicted in a panel from the same place also shows similar features (Barua 1937: pl. XXXVII). As per excavated evidence, structures having elliptical or similar plans were popular during the early historic period. Most of them were religious structures of the Vaishnavas, Buddhists, and Jains. Their assigned date ranged from the 5th century BCE to 1st-2nd century CE. The plan of the Besnagar Vishnu temple was identical with the conjecture plan of the structure in the Bharhut relief, and roughly belongs to the same period (Hegde 1987: 37-30). That presented an interesting perspective on early religious structures in the Indian subcontinent.

References

1. Agrawala, Vasudeva S. 1951. *A Catalogue of the Brahmanical Images in Mathura Art*, U.P. Historical Society, Lucknow.
2. Bhandarkar, D.R. 1917. *Excavations at Besnagar, Annual Report, 1913-1914*, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi.

3. -1920. *The Archaeological Remains and Excavations at Nagari, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, Number 4, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi.
4. Chanda, Rama Prasad. 1920. *Archaeology and Vaishnavism, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 5, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi.
5. Cunningham, Alexander. 1880. *Reports of Tours in Bundelkhand and Malwa in 1874-75 and 1876-77*, Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. X, Office of the Superintendent Government Printing, Calcutta.
6. Dutt, M.N. 1988. *Mahabharata*. Translated into English from the original Sanskrit text, Parimal Publications, Delhi.
7. Katre, S.M. 1968. *Dictionary of Panini*, Part II, Deccan College, Pune.
8. Khare, M.D. 1967. *Discovery of a Vishnu temple near the Heliodorus pillar, Lalit Kala*, 13, Delhi.
 - 1975. "The Heliodorus Pillar – A Fresh Appraisal," in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 36th session, Aligarh.
 - 1989. "Besnagar," in A. Ghosh ed., *An Encyclopaedia of Indian Archaeology*, Vol. II, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi.
9. Luders, Heinrich. 1912. *A List of Brahmi Inscriptions from the Earliest Times to about 400 AD (with the exception of those of Asoka)*, Superintendent Government Printing, Calcutta.
 - 1937-38. "Seven Brahmi Inscriptions from Mathura and its vicinity," *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. 24, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi.

10. Majumdar, R.C. 1960. *The Classical Accounts of India*, Firma K.L. Mukhopdhyay, Calcutta.
11. Marshall, J.H. 1909. "Notes on Archaeological Exploration in India, 1908-9," in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, October, Great Britain.
12. McCrindle, J.W. 1877. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Trubner & Co., London.
- 1885. *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy, being a translation...*, Trubner & Co., London.
13. Sircar, D.C. 1942. *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Vol. I, University of Calcutta, Calcutta.
14. Vogel, J. Ph. 1910. *Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum at Mathura*, Government Press, United Provinces.

Bibliography

1. Acharya, Prasanna Kumar. 1956. *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Architecture*, Manasara Series, Vol. VII, Oxford University Press, London.
2. Banerjea, Jitendra Nath. 2016. *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Munshiram Manoharlal, first published in 1941, Delhi.
3. Barua, B. 1937. *Barhut, Aspects of Life and Art*, Vol. III, Indian Research Institute Publications, Calcutta.
4. Bachhofer, Ludwig. 1929. *Early Indian Sculpture*, Vol. I, The Pegasus Press, Paris.

5. Bhandarkar, R.G. 1984. *Allusions to Krishna in Patanjali's Mahabhashya*, in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. III, first published in 1874, Delhi.
6. Bhandarkar, R.G. 1982. *Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
7. Hartel, Herbert. 1987. *Archaeological Evidence on the Early Vasudeva Worship*, in *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata*, Istituto Italiano Per Il Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, Rome.
8. Hegde, Rajaram R. 1987. *New evidence on early India Elliptical structures*, in *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute*, Vol. 46, Pune.
9. Irwin, John. 1975-76. *The Heliodorus Pillar at Besnagar*, *Puratattva*, No. 8, Delhi.
10. Mairs, Rachel. 2014. *The Hellenistic Far East: Archaeology, Language, and Identity in Greek Central Asia*, University of California Press, California.
11. Raychaudhuri, H.C. 1923. *The Mahabharata and the Besnagar Inscription of Heliodorus*, in *Journal and Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, Vol. 18, Calcutta.
12. Srinivasan, Doris Meth. 1997. *Many Heads, Arms and Eyes. Origin, Meaning and Form of Multiplicity in Indian Art*, Brill, Leiden.
13. Tarn, W.W. 1922. *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain.
14. Quintanilla, Sonya Rhie. 2007. *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura, CA. 150 BCE-100 CE*, Brill, Leiden.

3

Early Icons of Agni

V. Sandiyalakshmi, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor,

C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Institute of Indological Research,
Chennai

Abstract

Agni, the God of fire, is the supreme manifestation of energy in the universe. The number of hymns that are dedicated to him in the Ṛig Veda indicate his importance. This paper discusses, through literary and agamic traditions and art forms, the concept of Agni as the God of Fire, when and where his cult began, its Iranian origin and how it evolved.

Keywords: *Agni, jātaveda, Athsho, Hephaistos, dikpalās*

Agni the God of fire is the supreme manifestation of energy in the universe. The number of hymns that are dedicated to him in the Ṛig Veda indicates his importance. Agni means one who moves upwards (*angati ūrdhvam gacchanti*)¹, the actual movement of the flames. He is one of the most prominent of the Vedic gods. He is resplendent (*bhuri-teja*) all pervader (*vaiśvanara*), all knowing (*viśvaviḍ*), possessed of all knowledge (*viśva vedas*) and all knower (*jāta veda*)²

The birth of Agni is described in various ways. The Ṛig Veda mentions that by rubbing a piece of wood vigorously

with another, the fire is formed and it consumed the very own parent wood. In another passage, Agni is said to have been brought down by the sky, generated by Indra between two clouds by Dyaus and in water. He has a triple existence. **Agni** is thought to exist on earth as fire, in the atmosphere as lightning and in the sky as sun³. The Vedic *rishis* had conceived Agni as an important God for the sacrifices who played the prime role in their rituals.

Agni is the personification of fire which had such immense prestige in the esteem of the Indo-Europeans, especially the Iranians. It started as the instrument of the cult and became its object⁴. The anthropomorphic transformation of Agni scarcely started, but his ritualistic descriptions occupy a privileged place in the *Veda* and the *Brāhmaṇas* - the face smeared with butter, the wild hair, swift tongues, sharpened jaws and golden teeth are all aspects of the flames on which the oblation is thrown. In the Vedic pantheon, Agni is the mediator between human devotees and the divine protector.

In the *Mahābhārata*, Agni is identified with Rudra and is, therefore, the father of Kartikeya. This episode is depicted in the Kushana art of Matura⁵. The gradual decline in the popularity of the Vedic sacrificial cult affected adversely the status of Agni in the hierarchy of gods and in the position of a *lokapāla*. Agni is one of the eight *dikpālas* and is the guardian deity of the south eastern quarter of the universe⁶. There is a separate shrine for *dikpalās* from the Chola period onwards. The inscription states that during the 29th regnal year of Rajaraja, the priest Isanasiva has given one copper pot (*stupi kudam*) coated with

ten *Kalanju* ($1/6^{\text{th}}$ of an ounce, thus 1 ounce = 28.349 grams, therefore 47.25 grams) of gold for the Agni deva shrine which is in the southern side of the second gopura of the Rajarajesvara temple at Tanjavur⁷.

The following main table describes, the iconographical features of Agni from various literature which are as follows:

Literature	Iconographical Development			Attributes	Vāhana	Other descriptions
	Face-tongue-horns	Arms	Leg			
<i>Ṛig veda</i> ⁸	Three flaming heads, three tongues, four horns	Seven arms	Three feet	-	-	Facing all directions
<i>Mahābhārata</i> ⁹	Seven faces, Huge mouth, red neck, tawny eyes, bright gleaming hairs, fangs	Four arms	-	Spear, <i>sruk</i> (Ladle) trident, <i>akshamālā</i> , <i>kalasā</i> , <i>abhaya</i> and <i>varada hasta</i>	Chariot is drawn by horses; the wind (Vāyu) is the wheels of his	

					chariot. Agni is	
	Protruding from his mouth			.	often shown as riding a ram seated in a <i>paryak āsana</i> .	Pot belly (<i>pinā nga jatha -ra</i>)
<i>Harivaṃsa</i> <i>10</i>				Spear	Similar to the <i>Mahāb hārat</i> , a chariot drawn by red coloured horses. The wheels of his chariot are the wind (<i>Vāyu</i>). Agni is often shown as	He is draped in black clothes and adorned with all ornaments.

					riding a ram.	
<i>Purāṇas</i> ¹¹	Long beard, halo of flames, three eyes, four fangs protruding from his mouth;	Two arms		<i>Akshamālā</i> , water vessel, trident, <i>jvala</i>	Mesha. Chariot is drawn by four parrots driven by the wind (Vāyu)	He is also shown embracing his wife Svaha who is sitting on his left lap. Svaha is clothed with red garments, and smeared with saffron and carrying gems pot.
<i>Bṛhat Saṃhitā</i> ^{12*}	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Āgamas</i> ¹³	Beard and	Two or		<i>Sruk</i> , <i>sakti</i> ,	Ram	He is draped

	mousta- che	four arms		<i>kamaṇ alu, aksham ālā, varada and abhya hasta</i>		in red garm- ent and <i>yajñop avīta</i>
<i>Hayasīrṣa Pāñcarāta Āgama</i> ¹⁴	Beard			<i>Kamaṇ ḍalu, aksham ālā</i>		Midst of <i>jvala- mandal a</i> in <i>yogāsa na</i> posture .
<i>Vaikhānas a Āgama</i> ¹⁵	Flaming hair			Spear	Red colour- ed - horse (Rohi- ta)	He is accomp- anied by his consor- ts Svaha and Svadha
<i>Devata Murti Prakarnam</i> ¹⁶					Ram	

Aparājita parichcha ¹⁷				Spear, lotus, sacrific ial ladle, water vessel ,and <i>varada hasta</i>	Ram	Flam- ing body
<i>Chaturva- rga Cintā- maṇi</i> ¹⁸		Four arms		<i>Jvala</i> , trident, rosary		Embrac ing his wife Svaha who is sitting on his left lap
<i>Rūpa- Maṇḍana</i> ¹⁹	Three eyed, four horned	Four arms	Three feet	Spear , lotus , water vessel and <i>varada hasta</i>	Ram	He is full of blazing flames (<i>jvala – punja- nibha</i>)
<i>Kasiyapa silpasāstra</i> ²⁰	Two faces, four horned, golden eyes	Seven arms four in the right side and				He is draped in a white dress , <i>jaṭabh</i>

		three in the left side				<i>āra</i> and seated on <i>padmās</i> <i>ana</i>
<i>Sri-tattva- nidhi</i> ²¹	Two headed, seven tongued four horned	Seven arms				

As the god of fire, Agni may well have been of Iranian origin and this would explain his early predominance and Indra's rivalry. The Iranian fire God Athsho is depicted in the Kanishka and Huviska coins of the Kushana period. He is bearded, and is standing with two arms with flames emanating from his shoulders. In the Kanishka coin (Plate1a) he has a fillet in his right hand and his left hand rests on his hip, whereas in the Huviska coin, he carries tongs in the left hand and a hammer in the right (Plate1b). Athsho, the god of fire, metals and the forge, was the Iranian equivalent of the Greek god Hephaistos.



Plate 1a



Plate 1b



Plate 1c

The fully flaming shoulders recall Kushana images of Agni from Mathura. Apart from the tongs and hammer, the implements used for the kindling of a sacred fire include a broom, tongs, bellows, axe and saw²².

Nevertheless, the icon must have been derived from a classical image of the Greek fire god Hephaestus who has been depicted in the Sythian Azes II coins, with scepter, tongs and hammer, the personification of terrestrial fire, of which

volcanoes were the most terrifying manifestation (pl.1c). The first clear expression of fire in the visual arts may have been made by the Kushanas. In India, subjects of the Kushans may well have interpreted the royal flaming shoulders as a sign of the presence of the *tejas* or majesty of a great monarch, the fiery energy and vital power which he possessed in abundance²³.

Agni in Sculptures

Agni from Panchala (pl. 2)	Agni Mitra coins , Mitra period
Agni with Skanda from the Mathura Museum (pl. 3)	Kushana period
Agni, Mathura Museum (pl. 4)	Kushana period
Agni from the Indian Museum, Calcutta	Kushana period
Agni from Badami cave no. 3 (pl. 5)	Western Chalukyas
Agni from Svarga Brahma Temple, Alampur (pl. 6)	Western Chalukyas
Agni from the Visva Brahma Temple ,Alampur	Western Chalukyas
Agni from Ellora cave no. 16 (pl. 7)	Rastrakutas
Agni from the Raja Rani temple, Bhuvanesvar (pl. 8)	Kalinga
Agni from Sun temple, Konark (pl. 9)	Kalinga

Agni from Darasuram (pl. 10)	Chola period
Agni from the Lakshman temple, Khajuraho (pl. 11)	Chandella
Agni from the Buddha museum (pl. 12)	20 th century CE

The earliest anthropomorphic representation of Agni is found in the Agnimitra coins, where Agni is standing with two arms and the flame is emerging from his head. His right hand is raised in *abhaya mudrā* and the left hand rests on his lap (Plate 2)



Plate 2

In Kushana art (Plates 3 & 4), Agni is represented with simple iconographic features. He stands with two arms: the right hand raised in the *abhaya mudrā* and his left hand holding a water vessel. The hair is arranged in long strands, combed back and forms a knot in his left side. Flame emanates from his shoulders. The eyes are wide open, the

ūrṇā indicated by a raised dot between the thick curved eyebrows.



Plate 3



Plate 4

The expression of the face hints at a smile, while some stiffness is suggested by the posture. The chest is prominent, the navel deep and pot belly is that of a *yaksha* of the Kushana period. The ornaments – earrings, torque, armlet, flat triangular necklace and bracelet, all typical of Kushana art - adorn the image. A faint trace of a *yajñopavīta* is also seen. The upper part of the body is bare. The twisted *uttarīya* is thrown at the back with one end passing through the left shoulder and hanging at the left wrist. The lower garment reaches below the knee with a wrist band fastening into a double knot to the right or the left side, with two fillets from the knot hanging down on the thighs.



Plate 5

In the Chalukyan art of Badami (Plate 5) Agni is riding on his ram mount with two arms. In the Alampur sculptures (Plate 6) Agni is standing with two arms with *akshamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu* in his right and left hands. The hair is arranged in the form of a *jaṭāmakuṭā* and a few long strands fall on the nape and shoulder. The lower garment reaches up to the ankle. In Rastrakuta art at Ellora cave no. 16 (P 7) Agni is riding on his ram mount, with two arms.



Plate 6



Plate 7

In Kalinga art from the Raja Rani temple (Plate 8,) Agni is standing on a lotus pedestal and his ram *vāhana* is carved at the base of the pedestal. He has a long and tapering beard and moustache. In Chola art Agni is standing, with four arms holding the *akshamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu* in his upper two arms, the lower arms in *anjali* pose. The upper part of the body is bare and the lower garment reaches up to the mid-thigh and all the Chola ornaments adorn the image.



Plate 8



Plate 9



Plate 10



Plate 11



Plate 12

Conclusion

In Kushana art, Agni is neither with beard nor is he is accompanied by his vehicle. Like the Mathura Buddha, Agni stands in the frontal pose but the plain halo behind the head of the Buddha is transformed into a halo of flames by carved lines on the stone disc behind the head of Agni and making the deity slightly flabby. In the early sculptures, Agni is depicted standing with two arms. In Chalukyan art, Agni is represented with a slender waist, not a pot belly. In north India, in sculptures from the medieval period onwards, both standing and seated forms of Agni are seen. Agni is depicted like Brahma with four arms holding a sacrificial ladle, manuscript, water vessel and lotus or in *abhaya* pose but with a single head (Plate 11). The rare representation of Agni holding a flame in his hand can be seen in (pl.9). In a

sculpture from the Buddha museum, Agni is represented with four fangs protruding from his mouth, four horns, golden eyes, and seven arms, four arms in his right hand side and three arms in his left. The lower two arms are in the *anjali mudrā* while the rest are in *lola hasta* and standing with three feet (pl. 12). Thus, the depiction matches precisely with the Vedic, literary and agamic tradition and thus Agni's portrayal becomes splendid in icons.

References

1. Ramachandra Rao, S.K., *Pratima Kosha: Descriptive Glossary of Indian Iconography*, Volume 1, IBH Prakashana, 1988 .p.4 also see *Ṛig Veda Darshana*, Introductory, Kalpatharu Research Academy, 1998
2. *Ṛig Veda*, I. 70.1-3; I. 96.1; II. 5.3; VII.91.8; IV. 11.3; VI. 15.3; X. 21.51 ; VI.15.13;
3. *Ṛig Veda*, II. 11; III. 14.4; VI. 91
4. *Larose encyclopedia of Mythology*
5. Sandhiyalakshmi.V, *Iconography of Karttikeya*, C.P.R. Insitute of Indological Research, Chennai, 2015, pp. 20-22.
6. Sathyanarayana Rao,G., *Myths and Deities Some Aspects Of Hindu Iconographic Traditions*, New Era Publications, 1993, p. 114
7. *South Indian Inscription*, vol. II, (part,III, IV, &V). no. 90, p. 414
8. *Ṛig Veda*, II.3.1; IV.1.11, also see Mac Donell, *Vedic Mytology*, pp.88.

9. *Mahābhārata*, I. 228.37; I. 232.5
10. *Harivaṃsa*
11. *Vishnudharmotrara Purāṇa*, 3.56, 1-4; *Agni Purāṇa*, 51. 14; *Matsya Purāṇa*, 260-.9-12; *Skanda Purāṇa*, 2.9.27;70-71
12. *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* *
13. GopinathaRao, T. A., *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, p. 522
14. *Hayasīrṣa Pāñcarāta Āgama, Ādi kānda*, 25. 3-4
15. *Vaikhanasa Iconography*, Ananthacharya, *Indological Research Institute series*, no. XXVII, P. 355
16. *Devata Murti Prakarnam*, 4. 60
17. *Aparājita parichcha* 60.20; 149.3; 213. 10; 13th century CE
18. *Chaturvarga Chintamani*
19. Ramachandra Rao, S.K., *Encyclopedia of Indian Iconography*, p. 693
20. Subrahmaniya Sastri, K.S, *Kasiyapa silpasashtra*, Tajire Sarasvati Mahal,,chapter, 46 pp15-16; 2.32
21. *Sri-tattva- nidhi*
22. *Sacred Books of the East* Vol.IV, p.168 (venidad XIV.7)
23. Rosen Field John, *The Dynastic Art of the Kushana* , Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1967&1993, p.200

**Romance, Escape and Divine Rewards:
Popularisation of *Satī* in Early India, as echoed in
the Sanskrit Texts**

Benudhar Patra, Ph.D.

Associate Professor,
PG Department of History, PG Govt. College, Sector 11,
Chandigarh.

&

Punit

Research Scholar,
Department of History, Punjab University, Sector 14,
Chandigarh.

This paper aims to study the practice of satī by widows in early India as reflected in Sanskrit texts. Belonging primarily to the genres of drama, poetry and stories, works utilised for this study are Dūta-Ghatotkacam, Pratimā-nātakam, Madhyama-vyāyoga and Avimarka of Bhasa, Panchtantra of Vishnu Sharma, Ṛtusamhāram, Meghadūtam, Kumārasambhavam and Abhijnāna Śākuntalam of Kalidasa. The objective of this endeavour is to find out the circumstances and the gradual process by which widow-immolation gained popularity, especially in that section of society at which these works were targeted i.e. kings, courtiers, higher officials, etc. The paper also delves into the beliefs and rationale utilised for justifying self-immolation. This study

covers a period beginning from c. 2nd century BCE to c. 5th century CE as, during this period, the above-mentioned texts are supposed to have been composed. This paper attempts to achieve its objectives by examining the following aspects from the Sanskrit texts: (i) prevailing thoughts about a husband in a woman's life, (ii) notions about widowhood and the status of widows, and (iii) logic and expectations behind the acceptance and growth of self-immolation.

The reason for undertaking this investigation is that the dominant scholarly views regarding *satī* do not satisfactorily explain its acceptance by the influential and affluent groups. One view points out that following a belief in the after-life, women used to burn themselves in the funeral pyre to meet the departed in the other life and attain his company¹. Another opinion considered self-immolation as a mechanism of saving honour for the women². These provide some understanding into the overall development of this practice; however, these do not elucidate why people, who were not weak, backward, uneducated or barbaric, became early patrons and practitioners of the custom of *satī*. One major reason responsible for this limitation is that while explaining *satī*, diversity in economy, social norms, religious beliefs, morals and notions about gender were not recognised to the desired extent. As we know, these factors vary from society to society as well as among different groups of a society. Consequently, insights into a phenomenon and its interpretations vary significantly among people. Recognising these variables, this paper argues that in choosing this path, widows were influenced by the difficulties of life without

a husband and elements of honour, splendour, romance, escape etc. which were attached to this act.

An enquiry into a practice like *satī* becomes fairly complex because of its different perceptions and multiple interpretations by people. The Sanskrit texts are of immense help by reflecting on the manner in which their authors observed it. However, it is important to note that in these works nowhere was the word *satī* used as a synonym for burning oneself in fire. These texts reveal not only the perceptions of their composers, but also provide insights into the contemporary ideologies as well as the tastes of audience. If self-immolation found its way into these compositions, then it is sufficiently clear that their audience was familiar with the phenomenon of *satī* and had different interpretations of this act. Such interpretations included recognising this act as a symbol of devotion to spouse, a test of love and faithfulness, a path for winning admiration for performing it, an act for reaping rich rewards in the after-life, etc. In the following pages, the role of these diverse insights along with other factors in the growth of the practice of self-immolation is discussed.

Sanskrit literature represents the times in which it was being composed. Various features of life including social and household affairs were included in these works. One of the most important aspects we find towards understanding self-immolation is the importance given to husbands. A woman had a meaningful existence as long as she was with her husband. The position of husbands was exalted to such an

extent that they were raised to the status of gods. Wives were expected to follow their spouses through all miseries and pain. *Pratima-natakam* depicts a scene in which Lord Rama prepares for exile. His wife Sita requests for permission to accompany him. While justifying the request, Lakshmaṇa says, ‘...moonlight follows the moons even in eclipse. When the forest tree falls the creeper lies on the ground. The lord of elephants is not deserted by his mate though bogged in mire. Let her make her pilgrimage practising virtue, for husbands are as gods to women’³.

Other instances from literature also appear to be glorifying such virtues. The devout are shown ready to give up their life if there was any danger to their husbands. As narrated in the *Madhyama-vyāyoga*, ‘...a true wife exists for her husband only...’⁴. In this narrative, a wife offers herself to a demon because if her husband dies, her meaningful-life would end automatically. Because of such ideas, absence of a husband would be a catastrophic event. Literature represents widows as well as wives living separately from their spouses; and, in both the cases, their condition was not much different.

From the sources of this study, widowhood appears to be intolerable and inglorious. At the same time, widows are shown as the symbols of sadness and isolation. Widowhood caused fear for a woman as well as for her family. The extent to which it created anguish is reflected from an act of the *Duta-Ghatotkacam* composed by Bhasa. After the death of Abhimanyu, Arjuna vows to kill Jayadratha the very next day (Abhimanyu was the son of Arjuna). The vow of Arjuna

creates panic among the Kauravas, especially for King Dhṛitarashtra. The king declares that Jayadratha is no match for the skills of Arjuna and his death was certain. Duḥsala, wife of Jayadratha and daughter of king Dhṛitarashtra, was scared on hearing it. The king laments the war as well as the death of his grandson Abhimanyu. He rues the actions of the Kauravas and addresses Duḥsala, ‘Do not weep, my child... Your constant freedom from a widow’s state no longer satisfies your lord, so he needs must make himself the mark for Arjuna’s arrows...’⁵. While speaking to Duryodhana, the king says, ‘In this house, rich in many sons, there was but one daughter dearer to me more than a hundred sons. She, thanks to you, her kinsmen, will gain inglorious widowhood’⁶. In the poem *Meghadūtam*, the narrator describes the loneliness of his wife who constantly mourns her separation from her husband. In this description, he makes the following comparison, ‘...lone as the widow ‘Chāravaci’ mourns, her faithful memory to her husband turns sad, and silent, shalt thou find my wife...’⁷. In the *Ṛtusamhāram*, Kalidasa illustrates the beauty of different seasons and the ranges of emotions they generated. Portraying the beauty of the moon in autumn and its impact, the poet states, ‘...adorned with rays giving joys to the eyes and stealing away minds, the dew-powring moon, ever producing the delight of the mind, is assailing the persons of women assailed with the poisonous shaft of the death of their husbands...’⁸.

These examples indicate that constant mourning and sorrow marked the fate of widows. Literature also provides glimpses into the life of widowhood. *Dūta-Ghatotkacam*

shows that in the times of Bhasa, widows were to wear clothes which denoted their status. In the words of Duhsala, ‘... then, permit me, father, I’ll go to my daughter-in-law Uttara...I shall tell her, father, that for to-day and for ever I too will don widow’s weeds like her’⁹. The widows were not the only one who had to follow these specific rules. Women who were living separately while their husbands were still alive, also had to face challenges largely similar to that of the widows. Apart from suffering a loss to the social standing, their life would be a highly controlled affair. From the manner of appearance to the choice of clothes and the routine of daily life, all these aspects were managed by regulations. These aspects related to the separated women are depicted in the *Abhijnāna Śākuntalam* of Kalidasa. In this drama, Kalidasa refers to the isolated life of Sakuntala following the inability of Dusyanta to recollect the event of their marriage. As a consequence, Sakuntala had to live separately from her husband as well as from her paternal family. Towards the end, when Dusyanta recognises his wife, he presents her plight in the following words, ‘...dressed in plain dusky grey garments, her face fined thin observing strictest vows, and wearing her hair in a single braid; pure and upright she continues to keep the long and cruel vow of separation from me who acted with heartless cruelty towards her’¹⁰.

These Sanskrit works reveal that women in both these categories i.e. widows as well as women living in separation were distinguished from other women by their appearance, choice of clothes and prescribed duties. This also validates

the husband-centred lives of women. Death and separation from husbands were a clear end to their prestige in society. In this context, it is not surprising that women are shown willing to immolate themselves in fire on account of their separation. Thus, it is necessary to have a look into the justifications of such acts as put forward in the literature. Before that, it is important to survey various view-points which have tried to trace the origin and justifications of the practice of self-immolation.

A.S. Altekar tries to trace the origin of this custom. He suggests that it owed its presence to a belief according to which the life and needs of the dead in the next world were more or less similar to those of that on earth¹¹. V.N. Datta argues that in the upper strata of society, the burning of women was supposed to add to the splendour of the funeral ceremony and it also served as an example for others to follow. He also adds that customs like widow-burning were utilised as a mechanism of saving honour for women on the side of the vanquished so that they did not fall into the hands of the victors¹². Andrea Major takes up the issue of savagery and inhumanity versus the version of romantic *satī* in which death of a widow represented a spectacle of courage and devotion¹³. No matter how vast a horizon these views cover regarding the origin of *satī*, these do not satisfy the questions about its prevalence among the people on whom this enquiry focuses. As pointed out by Jorg Fisch, different societies as well as different sections of a society have diverse standards and values¹⁴, which always leave scope for diverse interpretations of a phenomenon. An analysis of our sources

reveals that people belonging to the focus group of this study had different opinions about married life, love, honour, sacrifices and widowhood. As a result, there emerged various thoughts which could have supported one's decision of self-immolation. Glimpses into these are provided by the literature.

From Sanskrit literature, it is evident that for some people, *satī* was a majestically romantic act. They interpreted it as an act which could not only certify one's love for the beloved, but could also enhance the status of the performer. This element of romance as well as the romantic fascination is hard to miss when we scrutinise the literature. The romance is enhanced to such an extent that a couple found it hard to live in separation. At this juncture, leading characters in these compositions are shown not only thinking about giving up their lives, but their performance of this act is also depicted in great details. It is to be noted that both males and females are shown to have the desire of immolating themselves in fire. In the *Avimarka* of the dramatist Bhasa, Prince Avimarka (living as an outcaste) fails in his attempt to meet the Princess Kuraṅgi. The disappointment of the Prince is reflected in the following words, '...what is the use of this living death? I shall abandon life... I will drown myself in this forest pool. Nay, for shame this death of mine were ignoble. In a moment of pride, I forgot the right path. I must try another way... Yonder forest fire seems fairly near. I will offer up my life in that...Blessed Fire- If Agni will bring to pass the wish of those devoted to one thing, in the next world, too, let her be my love, bringing fame to me alone...' ¹⁵.

This example also shows that this mode of giving up life was considered more prestigious as compared to the other methods. It was a symbol of bravery and the performer of such an act was perceived as a hero. In the case of women, by performing this they could expect to win admiration of people as well as recognition as a faithful wife.

On the other hand, contrary to the romantic fascinations, some women resorted to *satī* because of the escape it offered. This escape was from the difficulties caused by widowhood and the altered social-status of a woman. This drastic change in social-status can be attributed to the fact that there was no provision for a meaningful social-existence of a wife without her husband. Death of a husband had a direct impact on a woman's self-esteem, pride, authority, social-respect etc.¹⁶ Loss of these would erode meaning of one's existence resulting in hopelessness. All of this is reflected from a narrative in the *Panchatantra* of Vishnu Sharma. According to its plot, in order to satisfy the hunger of a fowler, a male-dove kills himself in the fire. The fowler was moved by this sacrifice and releases the female-dove from his captivity. She mourns the death of her partner saying, '...My lord! My love! What shall I do with life that drags, apart from you? What profit has a wretched wife, without a husband, of her life? For self-esteem, respect, and pride, the family honour paid a bride, Authority with all the brood of servants, die with widowhood'¹⁷.

The helplessness over the loss of a husband was combined with the assumption that an ideal wife was

supposed to follow the path of her husband, even to death. This is echoed from the works of Kalidasa. His composition *Kumārasambhavam* captures the lament of Rati, the widow of the Kamadeva. Kamadeva was reduced to ashes when he disturbed the meditation of the Lord Shiva. Through the lamentation of Rati, the poet covers three aspects i.e. the condition of a widowed lady, her desire to meet her husband in the other world and her reasons for embracing death. While addressing Vasanta (personification of spring season), she says, ‘...by destroying Kama and sparing me, fate has done half the slaughter...Taking the next step now, do your friend the service needed; give me service who am helpless, unsupported, to the fire that is the escape from this world, and help me to reach my husband’s side. Moonlight departs with the moon; lightening vanishes with rain clouds; even things that lack consciousness show that women go the way their husbands went...’¹⁸.

Thus, loss of status and respect along with the belief that women were to follow their husbands, there emerged a rationale for the act of self-immolation.

Another way in which the act of self-immolation was justified, was inspired from the visions of after-life. It was assumed that this act of self-sacrifice would certainly bring perpetual unity with their beloved. In short, devotion and sacrifices in this world were expected to be blessed with heavenly rewards. In her justification for following her husband, Rati addresses Vasanta saying, ‘...for you know only too well that the Lord of Memories cannot bear to be without

me even for a moment...'¹⁹. This episode featuring Rati is equally important for narrating various aspects of the process of preparation for self-immolation.²⁰ Through the following address of Rati to the Vasanta, we can have glimpses of the event, '... colouring my breasts solely with these ashes of the beautiful body of my beloved I shall lay my body on the fire as on a bed of tender young leaves. Many a time you come to our aid, O, gracious friend...now lose no time in preparing the funeral pyre that I beg with folded hands. Once I am offered to the fire, pray urge the south wind to fan the flames briskly and make it blaze... Having done that give the two of us a single offering of water in the cup of your palm, and the friend of yours shall drink with me that water undivided in the world beyond...'²¹.

Literature also attests the fact that there were prevailing not only the hopes regarding the fruits of such actions but there were also the glamorous imaginations of these results. The *Panchtantra* narrates such aspects in significant details. In the *Self-Sacrificing Dove*, the she-dove laments the death of her partner and enters into the fire. As described in the text, '...now after this lamenting sore, this sorrow bitter anymore, she went where lay her heart's desire, walked straight into the blazing fire...'²². More interesting in this narrative is the portrayal of the aftermath and the attainment of rewards. As narrated by this text, '...and lo! She sees her husband shine - oh wonder! - in a car divine; Her body wears a heavenly gown; And heavenly gems hang pendent down. While he became a God addressed True consolation to her breast...'²³.

The address made by the male-dove provides a direct look at the prevailing philosophy about the expectations of rewards for the sacrifices made by the wives. The address goes as follows, ‘...The deed that you have done, is meet in following your husband, sweet. There grow upon a man alive some thirty million hairs and five; So many years in heaven spend wives following husbands to the end...’²⁴. At the end of this narrative, the couple joins each other in a state of perpetual unity. This example also reflects the belief that such acts always forced open the gates of heaven to receive the performers²⁵. An analysis of these instances from literature shows that there was presence of a philosophy which showed hope of a blissful and glamorous life after the event of *satī*. Its believers expected bountiful of rewards in lieu of sacrifices made during one’s life on earth. Among such sacrifices, the act of following one’s husband even to death was the most praise-worthy.

Descriptions by Kalidasa and other writers establish that the practice of self-immolation by widows developed with different factors in the background. The findings of this paper suggest that even in this small section of early Indian society, there prevailed no universal ideology for performing the act of self-immolation. Within this section, under diverse circumstances, widows resorted to *satī* for different reasons, expectations and validations.

References

1. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, pp.115-16.
2. V. N. Datta, *Satī: A Historical, Social and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow Burning*, p.207.
3. *Pratima-naṭakam*, Act 1. Woolner and Sarup, *Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, p.165.
4. *Madhyama-vyayoga*, Act 1. Woolner and Sarup, *Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, p.147.
5. *Duta-Ghatotkacam*. Woolner and Sarup, *Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, p.21.
6. *Ibid*, p.23.
7. *Meghdutam*. Wilson, *Megha Duta*, p.89; Rajan, *Complete Works of Kalidasa*, p.312. Rajan translates this stanza from the *Meghdutam* in a different manner. He translates it as follows, ‘...alone, speaking little, mourning like a cakravaki her companion far away...’ The noticeable difference is that H. H. Wilson uses the word ‘widow’ while Chandra Rajan exempts its use. The Chaeravaci is the ruddy goose, more commonly known in India as the Brahmany Duck or Goose. Imagery of this bird in the poetry is used for constancy and connubial affection; see notes, Rajan, p.360.
8. *Rtusamharam*. The Society for The Resuscitation of Indian Literature, *Ritu-Samhara*, p.11; Rajan, *Complete Works of Kalidasa*, p.90. Chandra Rajan translates it as, ‘...the moon, the eye’s delight, captivates all hearts with aureoles bright: Bringer of joy, showering beams as

- snowflakes, it consumes the limbs of women pierced by the poisoned arrows of separation from their husband.’
9. *Duta-Ghatotkacam*. Woolner and Sarup, *Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, pp.21-22. Uttara was the wife of Abhimanyu.
 10. *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, Act 7. Rajan, *Complete Works of Kalidasa*, p.337.
 11. A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, p.115.
 12. V. N. Datta, *Satī: A Historical, Social and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow Burning*, p.207.
 13. Andrea Major, *Pious Flames: European Encounters with Satī: 1500-1830*, p.17.
 14. Jorg Fisch, ‘Satī and the Task of the Historian,’ p.362.
 15. *Avimarka*, Act 4, Scene 6. Woolner and Sarup, *Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, p.88.
 16. *Panchatantra*, Book 3, *The Self-Sacrificing Dove*. Ryder, *Panchatantra of Vishnu Sharma*, p.340.
 17. Ibid.
 18. *Kumarasambhavam*, Canto 4. Rajan, *Complete Works of Kalidasa*, p.149.
 19. Ibid, p.150.
 20. It is necessary to point out that in the poem *Kumarasambhavam*, the immolation by Rati was prevented by a divine intervention.
 21. Ibid, pp.149-50.
 22. *The Panchatantra*, Book 3, *The Self-Sacrificing Dove*. Ryder, *Panchatantra of Vishnu Sharma*, p.340
 23. Ibid.
 24. Ibid.
 25. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Ancient India*, p. 386.

Bibliography

- *Abhijnanasakuntalam*. Rajan, Chandra, trans., *The Complete Works of Kalidasa*, vol. 2, New Delhi, 2002.
- Aiyangar, S. Krishnaswami, *Ancient India*, Madras, 1911.
- Altekar, A. S., *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, 2nd ed., Delhi, 1959.
- *Avimarka*. Woolner, A. C. and Lakshman Sarup, trans., *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, vol. 2, London, 1931; Menon, K. P. A., trans., *Complete Plays of Bhasa*, vol. 3, Delhi, 1996.
- Datta, V. N., *Satī: A Historical, Social and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow Burning*, New Delhi, 1988.
- *Duta-Ghatotkacam*. Woolner, A. C. and Lakshman Sarup, trans., *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays Attributed to Bhasa*, vol. 2, London, 1931; Menon, K. P. A., trans., *Complete Plays of Bhasa*, vol. 1, Delhi, 1996.
- Fisch, Jorg, 'Satī and the Task of the Historian,' *Journal of World History* Vol. 18, Number 3, December 2007, pp. 361-368.
- *Kumarasambhavam*. Rajan, Chandra, trans., *The Complete Works of Kalidasa*, vol. 1, New Delhi, 1997; Griffith, Ralph T. H., trans., *The Birth of War God: A Poem by Kalidasa*, 2nd ed., London, 1879.
- *Madhyama-vyayoga*. Woolner, A. C. and Lakshman Sarup, trans., *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays attributed to Bhasa*, vol. 1, London, 1930; Menon, K. P. A., trans., *Complete Plays of Bhasa*, vol. 1, Delhi, 1996.

- Major, Andrea, *Pious Flames: European Encounters with Saṭī: 1500-1830*, New Delhi, 2006.
- *Meghdutam*. Rajan, Chandra, trans., *The Complete Works of Kalidasa*, vol. 1, New Delhi, 1997; Wilson, Horace Hayman, trans., *The Megha Duta or Cloud Messenger: A Poem*, Calcutta, 1813.
- *Panchatantra*. Ryder, Arthur W., trans., *The Panchatantra of Vishnu Sharma*, Chicago, 1925; Rajan, Chandra, trans., *The Pancatantra*, Gurgaon, 1993; Olivelle, Patrick, trans., *The Pancatantra*, New York, 1997.
- *Pratima-nāṭakam*. Woolner, A. C. and Lakshman Sarup, trans., *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays attributed to Bhasa*, vol. 1, London, 1930; Menon, K. P. A., trans., *Complete Plays of Bhasa*, vol. 2, Delhi, 1996.
- *Rtusamḥaram*. *The Society for The Resuscitation of Indian Literature*, *Ritu-Samhara*, Calcutta, 1901; Rajan, Chandra, trans., *The Complete Works of Kalidasa*, vol. 1, New Delhi, 1997.

Sources for Early Āndhradēsa

D. Mercy Ratna Rani, Ph.D.

Asst. Professor

Dept. of History, Archaeology & Culture
Dravidian University, Chittoor

The paper discusses the sources of Early Andhra history relating to dynastic families like Śātavāhanās, Ikshvākus, Pallavas, Brihatphalāyanās, Ānanda-gotra, Śālankāyanās, and Vishnukundis. The source material for this paper can be classified under 1. Archaeology including inscriptions and coins apart from monuments and other ancient relics and 2. Literature - Indian as well as foreign. Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks and temple walls. Inscriptions recording land grants, made mainly by kings and chiefs are very important for the study of the land system and administration in ancient period. They are written in Prākṛit and Sanskrit. Like inscriptions, coins also help us to reconstruct the early history and culture of ancient period. The study of coins is called numismatics. These coins communicate the characters of the rulers, economic status of the kingdom, religious beliefs, foreign trade, etc. The Epics, Purānās, Manu Dharmasāstra, Buddhist and Jain Literature refer to historical persons and incidents. Brihatkatha of Guṇadhya, Hala's Gāhasaptasati, and the Kāmasutra of Vātsyana reflected the social and cultural life of the

Śātavāhana kings. We also get information from the writings of foreigners.

The present paper tries to analyse the sources for early Āndhradēsa, i.e. of dynastic families like the Śātavāhanās, Ikshvākus, Pallavas, Brihatphalāyanās, Ānanda-gotra, Śālankāyanās, and Vishnukundis.

Key words: *Śātavāhanās, Ikshvākus, Pallavas, Brihatphalāyanās, Ānanda-gotra, Śālankāyanās, Vishnukundis, Epigraphs, Numismatics, Historical Monuments, Literary sources – Indian and Foreign.*

The geographical division of the present study is normally taken to be the new state of Andhra Pradesh (Andhra and Rayalaseema regions) which is mainly populated by the Telugu speaking people. It is one of the twenty-eight states of India whose recorded history begins in the Vēdic period. It represents a distinct cultural zone although its contribution to the basic unity of Indian life and culture is as significant as that of any other state. This old and fairly stable landmass consisting of archaean rocks and drained by rivers as the Godāvāri, Krishnā, Nāgāvali and Vamsadhāra has been the homeland of man since the advent of the Pleistocene Ice Age. It is one of the South Indian states and is situated in coastal Āndhra towards the south eastern part of the country. Because of its location in the merging area of the Deccan plateau and the coastal plains, the state has varied physical features. Historically, Andhra Pradesh is known as the Rice Bowl of India, with a coastline of around

972 km. that makes it the third longest coast line in India. It lies between 12° 41' and 22° northern latitude, and 77° and 84°40' eastern longitude. It is bordered by the Bay of Bengal in the east, Karnataka in the west, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Odisha in the north, and Tamilnadu in the south.

The present state of Andhra Pradesh can be divided into two regions, namely coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. It has thirteen districts. Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa, and Kurnool in the Rayalaseema region and east Godavari, west Godavari, Guntur, Krishna, Nellore (Potti Sreeramulu), Prakasam, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam in the Andhra region. Anantapur is the largest district of the state and the seventh largest district in India with an area of 19,130 km. The coast line extending from the Lake Pulicat and the old port-town of Dugarājapatnam (off the island of Armagon) in the south of Kalingapatnam and the Lake Chilka in the north. Even though the coast of Āndhra was not split for providing ports, many ports flourished on the coastline since the time of the Śātavāhanās. They were Machilipatnam, Motupalli, Korangi, Kakinada, Pulicat, Krishnapatnam, Bhimunipatnam, Gopalapuram, etc. Foreign trade developed through these ports. The goods were exported to countries like Rome, China, etc. This lengthy coast has facilitated and encouraged the navigation and maritime activities of the Andhras.

Andhra Pradesh can rightly be called a riverine land. It is a gift of the five rivers in the State which flow down from the top of the Deccan plateau. The State includes the eastern part

of the Deccan plateau as well as a considerable part of the Eastern Ghats. To these natural gifts of rivers and a lengthy sea coast may be added favorable rainfall and other climatic features which make the land rich in agricultural production establishing trade contacts with other parts of the country since early times. There are three natural lakes in Āndhra. They are Pulicat lake, Kolleru lake and Chilka lake. Kolleru lake is a pure water lake and historically a famous one.

Historically, the region was known as Āndhradēśa, Āndhrapatha, Āndhravani and Āndhra-vishya¹. The earliest reference to Āndhra seems to be in the *Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa* (c. 600 BCE)². Epic literature knows them as the people of Dakshināpatha. The *Purānās* speak of the Āndhra *jātīyas*. It is stated therein that they enjoyed the same political status as Kambhōjās, Yavanās, and Gandharās in the north. Thus, the Andhras were an ancient race living in *Dakshināpatha* from at least the time of the *Brāhmaṇās*. In the Buddhist text *Sāmanta Pasadika*, Andhra and Tamil peoples together were referred to as *mlecchas*. Some of the Buddhist texts of c. 500 BCE mention *Andhaka Ratta*, situated in the Godavari valley, and refer to the rulers of this region as *Asmakulu* or *Alukulu* (*Mulakulu*). This suggests that prior to c. 500 BCE (the centuries before the spread of Buddhism), Andhra janapadas existed in the Godavari doab. Accounts that people in the region were descended from sage Viswamitra are found in the *Rāmāyana*, *Mahābhārata* and the *Purānās*. Assaka was one of India's sixteen janapadas. It was succeeded by the Śātavāhana dynasty (BCE 230-220 CE), who built the city of Amarāvati. The kingdom

reached its zenith under Śātakarni (*Dakshināpathapati*). In the *Mahābhārata*, Rukmi ruled the Vidarbha range, the present Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka and a little known (now submerged) archipelago in the Bay of Bengal. Rama is said to have lived in the forest around present day Bhadrachalam during his expulsion. While the ancient literature indicates a history dating to several centuries before the present era, archaeological proof exists only from the last two millennia.

The fifth century BCE kingdom of Pratipālapura, identified with Bhattiprōlu in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, may be the earliest kingdom in South India and inscriptions suggest that King Kubēra ruled Bhattiprōlu around 230 BCE. The Bhattiprōlu inscriptions were written in the Brāhmi script, which later diversified into modern Telugu and Tamil scripts. *Manu Smṛti* defines *Āryavarta* as the land between the Himālayās and the river Rēvā or Narmada and between the eastern and western seas. It further associates the Andhras with the *Niśādās* and declares that they should live outside the villages³.

The history of early Andhra, based on epigraphic sources, begins only from the third century BCE i.e. the time of the Mauryan Emperor Aśōka. The Andhras are mentioned in his Rock Edict XIII, which contains a list of subordinate peoples that lived in the dominions of the King. After the Mauryan Empire had waned, the people of Andhradēśa appear to have assumed independence. But the Andhras as a powerful race are met with even during the days of

Chandragupta Maurya, Aśōka's grandfather. Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, c.326 BCE, states that the Andhras were the strongest to be reckoned with by the Mauryas. In one of the Rock Edicts of Aśōka, *Andh* is referred to as *ajāti*. From the ancient textual sources (*Purānās*, *Itihāsās*, etc), it appears that Andhras were referred to as a *jāti* and later, in the Christian era, it was used to refer to the region. Some scholars state that the *Prākṛit* form of *Andh* is *Andhika* and that its Sanskritised form is Andhra. In the *Prākṛit* records of the Pallavās of c. CE 400, the country of the Andhras is referred to as Andapātha.

The word Andhra appears from the twelfth century CE. The word Telugu appears for the first time in inscriptions and literature from the beginning of the eleventh century CE (e.g. Telugu Bhupāludu, Telagala Mari, Telinga Kulakala, and Telunganādu). Based on these inscriptional and other literary evidences, it has been surmised that Āndhra / Telinga / Telunga are used synonymously to refer to the people and the country occupied by them. By around the middle of the eleventh century CE, during the time of Nannaya, the court poet of the Chālukya ruler Rājarāja Narendra, Telungu was used as a synonym for Telugu. By the time of Nannaya, the word Andhra was popularly used to refer to the Telugu language⁴.

Sources

Āndhradēsa was a part of South India within the Indian sub-continent. In this context, the historical sources of south

India and India may be useful for the study of Āndhra history. The source material for these works can be classified under (1) archaeology, including epigraphs and numismatics apart from monuments and other ancient relics and (2) literature, both Indian as well as foreign. Inscriptional evidences are useful for the early Āndhra history. They are numerous and authentic. Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks, copper-plates and temple walls.

There are a number of lithic records datable from the third century BCE to the ninth-tenth centuries CE. Most of these records have been collected from Amarāvati, Goli, Jaggayyapeta, Bhattiprolu, etc. of Andhradēsa. Among these, there are inscriptions which record the gifts of Āyaka pillars, Suchis, sculptured slabs *Pūrnakumbha* slabs, etc., to the Amarāvati *stūpa*, by lay worshippers like the *charamakārās* (leather workers) the *gopālakās* (cowherds), *srēshītis* (merchants), merchant guilds, bankers, etc.

The earliest are in the Brāhmi script of Aśōkan Edicts (19) found at Erragudi and Rājulamandagiri of Kurnool district and Amarāvati of Guntur district. These consists of fourteen Rock Edicts from Erragudi and two each of the Minor Rock Edicts from Erragudi and Rājulamandagiri. A fragmentary pillar inscription is available at Amarāvati which might belong to the time of Aśōka. These Edicts show the southern most expansion of Aśōka's vast Empire and the remains of Āndhra Buddhism. Aśōka Edicts reveal very little information concerning the administrative structure and officers of the kingdom. But the details regarding the officers appointed for

the propagation of *Dharma* are well described. There are five types of officers whose main duty was spread of *Dharma*, viz. *Rajuka*, *Rathika*, *Rāshtrika*, *Prādēsika*, *Mahāmātra* and *Bhūmaka*⁵. According to the Erragudi record, Aśōka visited Erragudi and prepared fresh transcripts of the Edicts from the original rocks. It refers to the non-participation from killing of animals for curry in the royal kitchen. Aśōka said that two animals were killed at that time and that in future these also should not be killed. A fragmentary pillar inscription from Amarāvati belonged to the time of Aśōka, which mentions the king's repentance on the killing of people. The message of non-violence and non-injury to humans and animals, was preached, and practiced by the king himself⁶. The Relic casket inscription of Bhattiprōlu⁷ proves that by 200 BCE Buddhism was well propagated in that area and it also referred to the *stūpa* that was built on a genuine corporeal relic of the Buddha. The inscriptions of Amarāvati, Nāgārjunakōṇḍa, Jaggayyapēta and Indrapālanagara give us a clear idea of the different stages in the evolution of Buddhism in Āndhradēśa. These places contain clear references to the *Hīnayāna*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* in Āndhradēśa and to the popularity of the Bodhisattva doctrine. The Jaggayyapēta inscription refers to the *Bhadanta* Nāgārjuna of the sixth century CE and this proves the prevalence in Āndhra of *Vajrayāna* in its early stages.

The Jain records also refer to the various *Gachchās* and *Ganās* and support to a large extent the evidence of the *Pattāvalis*. The terms like *Asstāṅgapūja*, *Angabhōga* and

Rangabhōga, in the Jain records prove that the Jain mode of worship came very close to that of the Hindus. The inscriptions of the pre-Śātavāhana and the Śātavāhana periods adding together around one hundred and fifty were found at different parts of Āndhradēsa⁸. Fifty five records were found at Amarāvati, Bhattiprōlu, Dhūlikatta (Karimnagar district), Kēsanapalli and Vaddamānu and these belonged to the pre-Śātavāhana period⁹. The stratified layers in the excavations at Kōtilingāla of Karimnagar district show that the Śātavāhanās succeeded some of the rulers like Gōbhada, Nārana, etc. In addition to these, Kubēraka was one who ruled over the Guntur region. He is known from the Bhattiprōlu relic casket inscription as belonging probably to second century BCE. The inscriptions and coins of this period mentioned the names of some of the rulers like Kubēraka, Sōmaka, Gōbhada and Sāmagōpa. The famous Kalinga ruler Khāravēla's Hathigumpha inscription refers to him as *Mahāmēghavāhana*. The *Airas* or Mahāmēghavāhanās seem to have ruled over the area from Vizianagaram district to Guntur district. So, these may have been related to Khāravēla. The record of Siri Sada at Guntupalli¹⁰ of west Godavari district and Velpūru record of Siri Māna Sada may have been issued by the Mahāmēghavāhana family. The discovery of the record of king Sada at Guntupalli helps us to conclude that the beginning of Jainism in Āndhra should definitely date back to some centuries before Christ. The Guntupalli inscription of king Khāravēla mentions that the army of the Kalinga ruler reached *Kannabenna* (Krishna River) and threatened Mushikanagara. It also records the conflict between Śātakarni I and Khāravēla

for the control over the Godavari and Krishna river basins, but does not claim any success for the latter¹¹. His invasion should have given force to the spread of Jainism. The record establishes the Jain character of the earliest monuments at Guntupalli.

More than a hundred inscriptions of the Śātavāhana period have come to light at Amarāvati, Vaddamānu, Gōli, Dhranikōṭa, Jaggayyapēṭa, Sankaram, Jungligundu, Bāvikōṇḍa, Thotlakōṇḍa, China-ganjam, Nāgārjunakōṇḍa, Ghantasāla and Guntupalli. Besides those at Sālihundam, a few inscribed pot-shreds are also available at Amarāvati and Vaddamānu of Guntur district. These records mention the names of different regions, the names of administrative officers, Buddhist architectural terms, Buddhist schools, the names of preachers of law, the family name (*Gadhika*) and also the names of slaves (Arjuna and Sangha). The Śātavāhana inscriptions in Āndhradēśa belonged to the time of Pulōmavi and his successors. All the Śātavāhana inscriptions are in the *Prākṛit* language and Brahmi scripts. The only record which is considered by some scholars to have been written in Telugu language is *Nāgabū*¹². These records contain very little information about administration and cultural aspects of Śātavāhanās. The Nānāghat inscription of Nāganika, the queen of Śātakarni I, is a landmark in the history of Brāhmanism in the Deccan. Although it is found in the western Deccan, its contents are related even to the east that is to Āndhra. Śātakarni is described in it as the performer of numerous Vēdic sacrifices and was called *Daksināpathapati*. *Daksināpatha* includes Āndhra and it is reasonable to except

that he followed a uniform religious policy throughout his Empire.

The Ikshvākūs succeeded the Śātavāhanās in Āndhradēsa. Eighty-one records of the Ikshvāku period belonging to the third century CE and the early part of the fourth century CE have been discovered at Nāgārjunakōṇḍa¹³, Ghantasāla, Jaggayyapēta, Rentala, Kāsanapalli, Uppugunduru, Gurazala and Gangapēruru. The records of Nāgārjunakōṇḍa show that the different schools of Buddhists lived in peace in the valley. Besides Buddhism, Saivism, Vaishnavism and Saktism flourished in this area. Seventy six records written in Prākṛit, four in Sanskrit and one record is a mixture of Sanskrit and Prākṛit. Of them seventy eight records are assigned to the Ikshvākūs and three records are of Abhira Vāsusēna. One of the inscriptions of Abhira Vāsusena made some scholars to suggest, the theory of an Abhira interregnum in the history of the Ikshvākūs. But the record refers to the names of the rulers of Ujjain and Vanavasi who had matrimonial relations with the Ikshvākūs, and therefore, it suggests only a friendly visit of the neighbouring rulers to Vijayapuri. The record also mentions about the installation of a wooden image Ashatabhujanārāyana in a temple on Sēthagiri. Incidentally, it may be noted that the Nāśik inscription of Gautami Bālasri mentioned Sēthagiri among the hills in Gautamiputra Sātakarni's Empire. It is only reason to take the Sēthagiri of both the records as identical. Helping thus to identify Sēthagiri, this record discredits the view that Āndhradēsa was not included in the Empire of Gautamiputrasātakarni. Further, the silence of the Nāśik record about Śrīparvata in the

vicinity of Sēthagiri only indicates that Śrīparvata did not become famous by the time of the Nāsik record¹⁴. Sanskrit was used in the inscriptions for the first time by Ehūvula Chāmtamūla towards the end of third century CE. These records contain the information about members of royal, subordinate families and their position in the administration of the kingdom, matrimonial alliances with other ruling families like Abhiras of Nāsik¹⁵ and Ksātrapas of Ujjain,¹⁶ the construction of Buddhist *stūpās*, making additions to them in the form of pillars, sculptural slabs and the building of *mandapās*. Most of the inscriptions of the Ikshvākūs record land gifts to Brāhmins and temples. The records of the Ikshvākūs and their successors show how Bhāgavatism made progress in Āndhra and how it got reconciled with ritualism. The inscription from Phanigiri of Nalgonda district refers to the erection of a pillar containing the symbol of *Dharmachakra* by a chief physician (*aggrabhishaja*) Dhēmasēna. It also bears significance as it prolongs the regnal period of the king by seven years to the period reported earlier. In the light of the record, the chronology of the Ikshvāku kings has to be revised¹⁷.

The downfall of the Ikshvākūs resulted in the rise of many small families like the Brihatphalāyanās, Śālankāyanās, Ānandās, Vishnukundis and the early Pallavās in the region of the river Krishnā. There were several political conflicts among these families. The first to rise on the ruins of the Ikshvākūs were the Brihatphalāyanās. The only one evidence i.e. the Kōndamudi (near Tenali). The Prākṛit copper plate grant of Jayavarma gives information about the Brihatphalāyanās.

It mentions Jayavarma's victorious camp at Kūdūra (Gudur near Machilipatnam). It also refers to the grant of land in favour of a number of Brāhmins¹⁸. The Chezarla inscription of Kandara and the plates of Mattēpādu (Prakasam district) and Gōrantla (Attivarma) give information about Ānandagōtrās. These rulers ruled over the Guntur region from the end of the third century CE to the beginning of the sixth century CE. The king Damodarvarma issued Mattēpādu (Ongole) grant in Sanskrit mixed with Prākṛit and written in Archaic Telugu-Kannada font of fourth to fifth century A.D.¹⁹.

The Śāṅkāyana records were issued both in Prākṛit and Sanskrit languages. The Eluru grant of Dēvavarman was inscribed in Prākṛit, while Kantēru and Kollēru grants were issued in Sanskrit. Since Sanskrit replaced Prākṛit as is seen from the epigraphical records, towards the end of third century CE. The Ēluru grant of Dēvavarman appears to be the earliest grant of the Śāṅkāyanās. It refers to the village Ēlura, which name remained the same till now, except for the word ending *u* for *a*. It is usual that in the early period, *ūra* (and not *uru*) represented village in Telugu, like *grāma*, *palli*, etc. The record also refers to share-croppers (*addhiya-manussānam*) which shows that those who cultivated the land got a half-share, though other details are not forthcoming. It is interesting to find that the share-croppers as well as donee's servants get house sites in a generous locality. Another grant, the Kanukollu grant of Nandivarman mentions the gift of a village to scholars well-versed in the four *Vēdās*. They had Nandi as their motif on their inscriptions. Chitraradhaswāmi (Sun) was their family deity.

The Vishnukundis succeeded the Śāṅkāyanās in coastal Andhra. Tummalagūdem (Indrapalanagara, Nalgonda district) plates of Govindavarman and Chikkullu (east Godavari district) plates of Vikramendravarman II are the inscriptional sources of the Vishnukundis. These are written in Sanskrit and archaic Telugu-Kannada font of fifth and sixth centuries CE. The figures of Lakshmi or a *Svastika* are used by the Vishnukundis on their inscriptions and coins. The Ipur (Tenali taluk of Guntur district) plates of Madhavavarman son of Govindavarman contain the image of Lakshmi or a *Svastika*²⁰ on a pedestal, flanked by two lamp-stands and surmounted by the sun (?) and the moon. According to the Tummalagudem plates, Govindavarman I built temples and *vihārās* and was a giver of villages, gold, elephants, horses, cows, bulls, clothes, servants, public services like wells, ponds, gardens, etc. These records mention that the performance of a large number of Vēdic sacrifices and some of the *mahādānās* by one Mādhavarman, who was the great grandfather of Vikramēndravarmān II. In fact, he was described as one who performed eleven *asvamēdhās* and one thousand *kratūs*. It is also to be noted that Indravarmān II attained religious merit by establishing *ghatikās* (educational institutions). It is possible that these were academies where higher learning and intellectual work must have been carried out, apart from the *agrahārās*, which promoted Vēdic, Epic and Purānic studies. One such *ghatika* is known to have existed at Kanchipuram, the capital of the Pallavās²¹.

After the end of the Vishnukundi rule (570 CE) a number of small families in different parts of Āndhradēśa emerged.

Among them, the Rāma-Kasyapa family seems to be the foremost. Tāndivāda and Gālavalli plates of Prithvi mahārāja belonged to the Rāma-Kasyapa family²². These records mention that Prithvi Mahārāja was the grandson of Rana Durjaya and son of Vikramēndra. The name Vikramēndra sounds like that of the two rulers of the Vishnukundi family, Vikramēndra I, and Vikramēndra II. This shows the subordinate role played by Rana durjaya in the reign probably of Vikramendra II, which resulted in the adoption of his master's name to his son. Simultaneous with the Salankayanas at Ēluru, and the Pallavas rose to power at Kanchipuram, their headquarters, with the area south of the river Krishna under their control. The copper plates of the Pallavās record mostly grants to brāhmana scholars known as *brahmadēyās*, and sometimes to temples but never to any Buddhist or Jain institutions except, the Pallankovil plates of Simhavarman. The Mayidavōlu (Guntur district) plates of Sivaskandavarman, Pikira (Nelatur of Prakasam district) grant and Vīlavatti grant of Simhavarman referred to the donations to Brāhmanās. The revival of Vēdic sacrifices, patronage of temples and scholars well-versed in Vēdic and Purānic tradition are the essential features of the Early Pallavās. The Manchikallu inscription of Pallava Simhavarman found in the neighbourhood of Śrīparvata proves that the Pallavās replaced the Ikshvākūs at Vijayapuri²³.

Inscriptions are usually divided into stone and copper, on the basis of the material on which they are written. Stone inscriptions are found on rock boulders, caves, walls and pillars. Copper plates record usually gifts to groups of scholars

or individuals for advancement of education or for meritorious acts to the kingdom. Inscriptions are inscribed on stone, pot-shreds, conch-shells and prisms of crystal. The stone inscriptions were carved on rocks, boulders, stone slabs; stone pillars, stone images and their pedestals, sculptured slabs, granite uprights, railings of *stūpa*, etc. In Āndhradēśa, Buddhist Edicts were issued only on granite. But the granite used for engraving the Erragudi and Rājulamandagiri Edicts was not smoothened properly. So, the letters of these Edicts were found in a very badly spoiled condition. Another record of this period, which was the only one to be carved on basalt is Amarāvati fragmentary pillar inscription written in Brāhmi script. This is the only refined record containing the early Brāhmi script in Āndhra. Polished granite stone was also used in the Bhattiprōlu casket inscriptions. From this, it can be inferred that during the early period in Āndhradēśa, granite stone was mostly preferred for engraving due to its durability. But this practice changed in the later period and mostly locally available materials like limestone of different colours and marble were used during the period of the Śātavāhanās and Ikshvākūs. The only exception is Pulumavi's Jungligundu (Adoni taluk of Kurnool district) inscription²⁴ engraved on reddish granite stone. A large number of pot-shreds bearing inscriptions are found at Śālihundam, Amarāvati, Vaddamānu and Nandūru. At Śālihundam and Nāgarjunakōnda four inscribed conch-shells, two at each place have come to light. The only record inscribed on prism of crystal bead is found at Bhattiprōlu. Two terracotta seals are found at Peddabankur. Only one ivory seal is brought to light from Dhulikatta. The

early records of Āndhradēśa can be divided into two types. They are royal or official records and private or individual records. The royal records issued by the kings or by their relatives or the ministers, and private records issued mainly by the common people. On the basis of the content of the records, they can be divided into five different types viz., religious, administrative, votive or dedicative, donative and commemorative. Copper was the material which was commonly used for the writing of inscriptions. An inscription of copper plate was called *Tamrapata*, *Tamrapattra*, *Tamrasasana*, *Sasanapaptra* or *Danapattra* according to its contents. From these inscriptions, we get useful information on the conquests of the kings, extent of their kingdoms and many other achievements made by them in different fields.

Like inscriptions, the coins also help us to reconstruct the early history and culture of Āndhradēśa. Although a large number of coins have been found on the surface, many of them have been unearthed digging. The study of coins is called numismatics. Ancient currency was not issued in the form of paper, as is the case nowadays, but as metal coins. They give the names of the kings who ruled at various times in different parts of the country. In many cases, coins are the only information we have regarding the existence of certain kings. Without those coins, the very existence of those kings would have remained unknown. The coins also help us to fix the chronology. Coins mention the year in which they are issued. The existence of a large number of coins issued during the different years of the reign of a king helps us to fix the exact dates for the accession and the death of the king. The

location of coins helps us to decide the extent of the territory of a king. From the coins, we also come to know about art and its development. The figures of kings, gods and goddesses, along with a lion, tiger, axe, bow, and many other articles engraved on the coins, clearly point to the development of art during that time. Ancient coins were made of gold, silver, copper, tin and alloy metals. Generally, the coins contain two pictures of the king and goddess on either side. These coins communicate the characters of the rulers, economic condition of the kingdom, religious beliefs, foreign trade, etc. The *viddhantaka* coins of the Mauryans are the earliest coins of Āndhra. Before that the trade guilds or the commercial institutions issued coins. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Roman coins of gold and silver were imported in considerable quantity in the course of trade and circulated freely in the country. The small copper coins bearing Roman devices and legends might have been locally produced by foreign settlers. Coins belonging to the pre- Śātavāhana period from Veerapuram of Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh are available. These coins are bearing the legends of *Rānō Gabhadra*, *Rānō Samagōpa*, *Siri Kamvaya* and *Siri Nārana*. The coins of Simukha, Gobhadra and Samagopa are of immense value for the reconstruction of the pre-Śātavāhana as well as the early Śātavāhana history of the Deccan. The coins of Samagopa contained a triarched-hill, a tree in railing, a rayed circle, triangular-headed bow and arrow, taurine symbol (letter *ma*). Sometimes the Samagopa coins bear a rayed circle and a bull with the legend on the obverse. Other coins of the same king have the triarched hill, a triangle-headed standard, The Brahmi letter *ma* or taurine

with the legend Samagopa in the middle on the obverse and four *nandipadas* on the obverse²⁵. Mahārathis, Mahātalavārās and Sēbakās are also known from their coins²⁶. But the information is too meagre to reconstruct the dynastic history.

Śātavāhanās were the earliest series of coins representing numerous types. The symbols on them are *chaitya* (Buddhist chapel), bow, elephant, lion, horse, ship, portrait, tree and the so called Ujjain symbol²⁷. Śātavāhana coins in Āndhradēśa are found at several places like Bāvikōnda and Thōtlakōnda of Visakhapatnam district, Amarāvati, Vaddamānu and Nāgārjunakōnda in Guntur district, Pudugupādu in Nellore district, Nandalur in Kadapa district, Virapuram in Kurnool district and Palvay in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. The gold coins of the Śātavāhanās were found at Dharmavāripālem, a hamlet of Mannepalli village of Darsi taluk of Prakasam district. On one side of these coins, the facsimiles of Roman emperors and their consorts and on the other, the gods and goddesses of Roman and Greek mythology are depicted. In this context, it is presumed that the Śātavāhanās, who ruled over the area, had trade links with the Roman Empire. The trade was carried out mostly by the sea probably from Mōtupalli, the nearest port to the oldest trade centre at Dharmavāripālem village²⁸. A number of coins discovered during the excavations at Thōtlakōnda represented Yajnasri Śātakarni, Siri Śātakarni and Siriyāna on the obverse a ship with two masts anchored on the shore and a tree with railing on its right was found. This is an important discovery testifying to the maritime trade during this period. Various coins of the Śātavāhanās are very useful

to have the knowledge of the then existing conditions. Gautamiputra Śātakarni's restamped coins reveal the victory of Gautamiputra Śātakarni over Nahapāna. The most remarkable of the Śātavāhana coins, is the bilingual and biscriptural silver coin of Vāsistiputra Śātakarni²⁹. On this coin, the name of the king is in two languages. One is in Prākṛit and the other may be called *Dēsi*. According to D.C. Sircar, it is apparently Telugu, which was in older times closed to Tamil than it is now and was the mother tongue of the Śātavāhanās and they wanted to exhibit their Dravidian character by using an admixture of that language and Sanskrit-Prakrit in the reverse legend on their coins in the northern most parts of their empire conquered from the Śakās. It is learnt that some more bilingual coins of different Śātavāhana kings, including Gautamiputra Śātakarni have been discovered in the north western Deccan. These coins are a proof not only of the racial affinities and the original home of the Śātavāhanās but also of the existence of Telugu as a language independent of Sanskrit and Prākṛit. This is further supported by the Telugu words found in the *Gāthasaptasati*³⁰. The chief characteristic of the Śātavāhana coinage is the use of metals like potin and lead, the former being more predominant. Veerapuram excavations yielded a good number of coins belonging to Sadakanaputa, Mahārathisa, Mahātalavāra, Mahāratiputasivala, Mahārathisa Siva Mahā Hatasa, Mahārathisa Kada Porihalasa, *Mahārathisa* Siva Khadasa, etc. There is also a solitary coin of Sada Kana Kalalaya. From these coins, we come to know that the above mentioned rulers were the contemporary of the Śātavāhanās. However, an inspection of stratigraphy reveals that the

Mahārathi coins were found in earlier levels than Śātavāhana³¹. These coins bear *Swastika* on the obverse with legend and part of the Ujjain symbol on the reverse³². According to D. Raja Reddy Talavāra, Rathi, or Mahārathi and Mahāgrāmika were not the names of dynasties but official designations.

The Ikshvākūs imitated the Śātavāhana potin coins having an elephant on one side and the Ujjain symbol on the other. These coins are somewhat crude and cannot be credited to any particular ruler. Two hundred and seventy seven coins of the Ikshvākūs were discovered by R.Subrahmanyam. These coins are circular in shape and more than half an inch in diameter. The average size of the coin is 0.65 in diameter and its normal weight is 50 grains³³. To compare with the Śātavāhana coins, the Ikshvākū coins are small in size and far less in number.

The Śālankāyanās did not pay much attention to the issue of coins. Six copper coins bearing the figure of couchant bull facing right on the obverse and legend *Śrī Chadava* on the reverse were assigned to the Śālankāyanā king Chandavarman³⁴. The coins of the Vishnukundis bear the lion symbol. It is not unreasonable to suppose that it has something to do with their religious beliefs. The worship of Narasimha appears to have become popular in Āndhra from the time of the Vishnukundis. The Kondakotu sculpture of Narasimha and the Pedamudiyam sculpture wherein Narasimha is found along with other deities belong to this age. Vishnukundi coins were discovered at Gopalapatnam in Visakhapatnam and Mortha (two copper coins) in west

Godavari district. The Gopalapatnam site appears to have directly received the *Vajrayana* element in to its main orthodox school without the influence of *Mahayanism*³⁵. A copper coin of the Pallavās bearing the figure of a bull on obverse and legend *Śīr Śrī* in Pallava grantha characters are on reverse³⁶.

Historical monuments of Andhradesa is of special importance for the study of social, economic and cultural history of the land. The tools of old, middle and new stone ages are available from Āndhradēśa. Stone and copper remains were unearthed near Karapalli in Krishna district. Iron Age is associated with the *Rakshasagulles* (the tombs). These reveal the beliefs and religious traditions of that period. The Brāhmanical statements that the Āndhras are *Mlechchas* appear to be meaningful against that background of proto history. The Buddhist remains at the places like Amarāvati, Nāgārjunakōṇḍa, Bhattiprōlu, Guntupalli, Bāvikōṇḍa, Thōtlakōṇḍa, Śālihundam, Sankaram, etc. reveal the spread of Buddhism in Āndhradēśa along with their artistic and architectural skills. The doctrinal differences among the Buddhist sects are reflected in the general layout and architecture of their respective *vihārās* at Nagarjunakonda. The Buddhist sculptures from Amarāvati and Jaggayyapēṭa represent shrines with round and wagon-shaped (*śāla* or *Gajaprishta*) domes and contain a *stūpa* and a throne as articles of worship³⁷. They are assigned to the first and second centuries BCE. From these sculptures, it is clear that the Buddhists built, besides *Chaityās* and *Chaityagrihās*, shrines with the symbols of the Buddha as articles of worship. It is

not probable that the architectures of these shrines influenced the *dēvakulās* built at Śrīparvata - Vijayapuri from about 270 CE. The Jain remains were discovered from Dānavulapādu and Peruru in Kadapa district. A careful study of these finds throws a flood of light on the polity, economy, society, art and architecture.

Literary sources for early Āndhradēśa are very meagre. A reference about the Andhras was seen in the *Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa*. The Buddhist and Jain literature, the *Epics*, the *Puranās* (*Mastya*, *Vāyu Bhagavatha* and *Brahmanda*) and the *Manu Dharmasastra* also referred to the Andhras to a little extent. The Buddhist literary sources are in Prākṛit and Sanskrit. Though Buddhism held the field in Āndhradēśa for a long time, there is no Buddhist literature in Telugu. Two of the *Jātaka* stories, *Bhīmasena Jātaka* and *Serivāṇija Jātaka* refer to Āndhra. The *Suttanipāta* story of Bāvari, the *brāhmaṇa* teacher who lived on an island between Assaka and Mulaka help us in determining the date of the advent of Buddhism into Āndhradēśa. The *Kathāvāsthū* from the *Abhidhamma Pitika* is the most important piece of Buddhist literature that vividly describes the part played by the *Andhakās* (Andhras) in the Third Buddhist Council. The Buddhist works like the *Jātakās*, the *Pitikās*, the *Mahāvāstu* and the *Kathāvāstu* also contain references to the Andhras. Āchārya Nāgārjuna, Āryadēva, Bhāvivivēka, Siddha Nāgārjuna, and Dharmakīrti's works represent different stages in the evolution of Buddhist religion and philosophy. The *Mahāyāna* work *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, the only Buddhist work to be found in India, of about the fourth century CE contains reference to the

Vihārās of Dhānyakataka and Śrīparvata. The work shows the conversion from *Mahāyana* to *Vajrayāna*. Yuan Chwang and Tāranātha describe Dhānyakataka as a centre of *Vajrayāna*. The Jain sources are found in all the three languages (Prākṛit, Sanskrit and Telugu). But the Jain literature in *Telugu* is incomplete and inconsiderable. The Epics, and the Purānās, though late in origin, repeat ancient traditions regarding the people of India. The *Rāmāyana* contains hints as to how the people in the Deccan slowly accepted the expanding Āryan culture. The *Purānās* give us the list of Āndhra rulers who are identified with the Śātavāhanās mentioned in the coins and inscriptions. Besides the religious literature, secular works also give us an insight into certain aspects of history and culture of the ages in which they are composed. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* based on *Bṛhatkatha* of Guṇadhya gives information about the society. Hala's (the seventeenth king of Śātavāhanās) *Gāthāsaptasatī* and the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsāyana reflected the social and cultural life of the Śātavāhana period. Though the *Gāthāsaptasatī* was subjected to many interpolations until about CE 400, the agreement is that the core of the work belongs to the Śātavāhana period³⁸. It throws ample light on the rural conditions in the Deccan of the age and clearly shows the growth of Purānic theism characterized by *Vrata* and *dāna* and indicates the wide popularity gained by the Epic and *Purānic* stories, especially those of the incarnations of Vishnu. The age of *Gāthāsaptasatī* is in fact the heyday of Buddhism both in the western and eastern Deccan. It is the most important of the secular works, giving us an idea of the religious life in Āndhradēśa during the early centuries of

the Christian era. Still, it is rather strange that the work contains only a drift and circuitous reference to the Buddha. It may be said that during the period of its compilation, Buddhism was predominant both in the western and in the eastern Deccan. The *Kāmasūtra* gives an insight into the urban life and its values³⁹. *Līlavati*, a *Prākṛit* work of Kutuhala tells of the love story of Hāla and Līlavati from Srilanka. The background of the main scene was Sapta-Godavari. *Dharmasūtras* of Kētana also refers to members of the royal family in early Andhras. The *Prajñāpāramita* literature, which forms the basis of *Mahāyanism*, was evolved in the monasteries of Āndhradēśa⁴⁰. In *Ratnāvali*, *Āchārya* Nāgārjuna advised his patron king to punish only with a view to reform; not to imprison for life; to make prison-life tolerable by providing good food, drink, clothing and facilities like baths, barbers and medical treatment; to abolish capital punishment; and to let to let the blind, sick, crippled, etc. get food and drink equally and freely. It is rather inopportune that we do not have sovereign means to prove what extent this gracious suggestion was translated into practice⁴¹. *Āchārya* Nāgārjuna was a greater teacher of Buddhism. His other works were *Satasahārika* and *Mādhyamika Sūtrās*.

In the Jain literature, there are references to Prathisthāna as the capital of the early Śātavāhana kings. The *Kālāsiachārya kathānika* tells an interesting account of the Saka - Śātavāhana conflict over Ujjain. The hero of the story, Vikramanka of Paithan, who excluded the Sakās from Ujjain, is not yet suitably identified. The *Kālāsiachārya kathānika* and the *Āvaśyaka cūrni* of Hāribhadra give us substantial information

on the attitude of the Śātavāhana kings towards Jainism. The Jains showed interest in learning and education. At Rayadurga in the Anantapur district are found sculptural representations of students and teachers with *Vyāsapīthās* (book-rests) before them. Scholars are of opinion that it was a big centre of education or a university. Such centers should have produced important literary works but only a few of them are available and some of them are not yet finished. Among such works, *Kalyānakāraka* of Ugrāditya comes first in time. It is a treatise on medicine composed in the monastery on the hill of Ramatirtham in the Visakhapatnam district. It was again during the Śātavāhana period that one of the early thinkers of Jainism, Kondakundachārya lived at Kōnakōnda near Guntakal of Anantapur district who made remarkable contributions to the Jain canon.

We also get information from the writings of foreigners. The first person to mention about the Andhras was Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador in Maurya Chandragupta's court in his work *Indica*. He noted that the Andhras were second only to the Mauryas in military might, having possessed⁴² fortified cities and an army consisting of 1,000 elephants, 3,000 horses, and 100,000 infantry. This account of the military might of the Andhras tends to support the view that the Andhras became independent after the decline of the Mauryan Empire, and soon became an imperial power. The narration of Arrian that the Andhras were divided into a number of tribal kingdoms applies to the pre- Śātavāhana times. Exports and Imports of Āndhradēśa of around third century BCE were well described by Pliny, Ptolemy and

Periplus of Erithrean Sea. The Greek geographer Ptolemy mentions Pulumāvi (Siro Polemaios) in the Paithan (Baithana). The *Periplus of the Eritrean Sea* by an unknown Greek writer gives an account of the Āndhra region and makes a mention of Masalia (Machilipatnam). It had been identified with Maisolia, the greatest market of the Āndhra kingdom by Ptolemy also. *Periplus of the Erithrean Sea* also describes the maritime trade that Āndhradēśa carried on and its ports on the eastern and the western coasts. Ptolemy visited many ports of western India and had little knowledge of the east coast. The Chinese traveler Fa-hien had not visited Āndhra, but gave details about Āndhradēśa. The celebrated Yuan-Chwang, master of Law (of Buddhism) visited Āndhradēśa in seventh century CE and described the religious and social conditions of his work *Si-Yuukee*.

A careful study of these Archaeological and Literary sources throws a flood of light on the religious beliefs, the social life and the artistic attraction attained by the Andhras in the past.

References

1. S. Rama Chandramurthy, *A Study of Telugu Place-names*, Delhi, 1995, p.10.
2. G. Jawaharlal, *Jainism in Andhra*, Hyderabad, 1994.
3. C. Somasundara Rao, *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh*, Hubballi, 2014, pp.1-3.
4. *EI*. XXXII. p. 12.

5. B. Ramesh Chandra Babu, *The Paleography of Brahmi Script on Andhra*, Delhi, 2006, p.48.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *El.* XXXIX. p. 247.
8. *Ibid.* XV. p. 208.
9. *Ibid.* XX. p. 24.
10. *Ibid.* p. 5.
11. P.R. Rao, *History and Culture of Andhra Pradesh*, New Delhi, 2008, p. 25.
12. *El.* XVII. p. 327.
13. *Ibid.* p. 334.
14. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Socio-Cultural History of Ancient and Medieval Andhra*, Hyderabad, 1995, p. 11.
15. C.Somasundara Rao, *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh*, Hubballi, 2014, p. 7.
16. *El.* XXXIII. pp. 87-90.
17. *Ibid.* XIV. pp. 153-155.
18. *Journal of Archaeology*, III. No.2. p. 22.
19. G. Yazdani, *The Early History of Deccan*, p. 139.
20. *Annual Reports*, 1983/84, p. 6.
21. C.Somasundara Rao, *Op.cit.* pp. 6-7.
22. *Journal of Archaeology*, *Op.cit.*
23. B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit.* p. 14.
24. *Andhra Pradesh Journal of Archaeology*, III. No.1. p. 31.
25. Shankar Goyal, *Ancient Indian Numismatics*, Jodhpur, 1998, pp. 140-146.
26. R. Subrahmanyam, *A Catalogue of the Ikshvāku Coins in the Andhra Pradesh*, Hyderabad, 1962, pp. 1-4.
27. *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, XXXIV

28. A.R.Series, No. 71. p. 9.
29. *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, XXXIV
30. Ananda Kumaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, Nos. 142 and 145
31. *Indian Archaeology*, A Review, 1956/57
32. A.B. Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 224.
33. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit.* p. 5.
34. K. Gopalachari, *Early History of the Andhra country*, p. 59.
35. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit.* p. 7.
36. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, XVI, pp. 200-201.
37. S. Gopalakrishnamurthy, *Jaina Vestiges in Andhra*, Figs. 70,71 and 72
38. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, p. 163.
39. McCrindle, *Ancient India*, pp. 140-141.
40. *Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society*, VIII.p. 118.
41. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit.* p. 7.
42. *Journal of Archaeology*, III, No.2, p. 155.

Coinage in Ancient India – As Gleaned From Sanskrit Literature

V. Yamuna Devi, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
K.S.R. Institute, Chennai.

Coins illustrate the events of history and culture of a country. The study of coins acquaints one with the metals used in their composition, their various inscriptions and devices, their mechanical execution and their artistic merit. The study is more corroboratory to history and relates to the chronology of pedigrees of the royal houses. Coins served three main purposes in ancient India –

- 1. For purchase of commodities*
- 2. To offer as Dakṣiṇā or honorarium to priests and teachers*
- 3. To pay taxes.*

The earliest study of ancient Indian coins as known to us is the study of Major-General Sir A. Cunningham. He has published his memoir titled *Coins of Ancient India from the earliest times to the 7th century CE*” Following him many scholars have handled this science of numismatics. The present paper assimilates the terms of coins as found in early Sanskrit literature – the *Vedas*, grammatical texts and the *Arthaśāstra*.

Vedas

Tracing the history of coinage, one finds in the *Vedas* terms relating to coins, though the barter system was in vogue. It is found that of the many things used to buy commodities, gold is one, as seen in the passages of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (III.3.3.1-5).

According to this passage, *Soma* is bought against gold, a she-goat, a cloth, a skin, a milch-cow and other ten objects. The passage is not clear about the unit of gold. But from the analogy in the passage it is inferred that probably a cow was equivalent to one gold piece; the word *pāda* came to be used for one quarter (as the cow has four *pādas* –legs); the word *śapha* came to be used for 1/8 since the cow has 8 *śaphas* or hoofs in all. The word *kalā* means 1/16 which is also a unit of the cow as well as a gold coin. A piece of gold is referred to as *candra* in the passage.

From the *Yajur Veda* XIX.93 it is known that *śatamāna* is a gold coin equivalent to a hundred gold units (*śatamānamāyuscandreṇa*): *indrasya rūpa śatamānamāyuscandreṇa jyotiramṛtam dadhānāḥ*.

Niṣka is the term to denote a gold coin which occurs in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI.4.1.1; XI.4.1.8), *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (III.6), *R̥gVeda* (II.33.10; V.19.3; VIII.47.15), *Atharvaveda* (V.17.14; V.14.3; XIX.57.5; VII.104.¹; XX.127.3; XX.131.5²). From the above passages it is clear that *Niṣkas* were gold coins and one *Niṣka* stands for a hundred gold coins.

The fractions of the *Niṣkas* used are termed as *kalā*, *śaphā* and *śafa* are also recorded in the *ṚV*. VIII.47.17 – *yathā kalā yathā śapham yathā ṛṇam sannayāmasi evā duṣṣvapnyam sarvamāpatye . . .*

According to V. Varadachari, the earlier portions of the *Vedas* were as early as 6000 B.C and the entire *Vedas* were available before 600.BCE

Grammatical texts

The next literary evidence of coins is from grammatical texts like the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini (700 B.C) and others. *Niṣka* is found mentioned in the *sūtra* V.I.20 – *asamāse niṣkāḍibhyaḥ*, the word *Naiṣkaka* means ‘purchased for’ or ‘worth’ one *Niṣka*. That these *niṣkas* were made of gold is confirmed by the *Kāṣikā*, a grammatical text which acts as a commentary to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, which states that it was not usual to add the word *suvarṇa* before *niṣka* as it was understood – *suvarṇaniṣka-śatamasyāstītyabhidhānānnā bhavati*.

It is also assumed that the *niṣka* gold coins had its submultiples as *pāṇika*, *pādika* and *māṣika* which are terms used to denote articles purchased for the coins – *paṇa*, *pāda* and *māṣa*³. This is confirmed by Patañjali, the author of the *Mahābhāṣya* (an important and authoritative commentarial text on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of 150B.C), who mentions *panniṣka* and *pādanīṣka* – *niṣke copasaṅkhyāyam kartayam* on *sūtra* VI.3.56 and II.163.

The aphorism *Dvipūrvānniṣkāṭ* (V.1.30) enables the terms *dviniṣkakam* or *dvai-niṣkikam* and similarly *triniṣkikakam* or *trainiṣkikam* to refer to a transaction concluded for two or three *niṣkas*. The *sūtra* V.2.119 which reads *Śatasahasrāntācca niṣkāṭ* ordains the suffix *ṭhan* in the sense of *matup* and thus the words *naiṣka-śatika* and *naiṣka-sahasrika* are derived denoting a person possessing one hundred or thousand *niṣkas*.

The term ‘*Suvarṇa*’ is not directly mentioned by Pāṇini but implied in the *sūtra* (VI.2.55.) – the *Hiraṇyaparimāṇam dhane*. *Hiraṇya* is a synonym of term ‘*Suvarṇa*’.

Śatamāna is another coin mentioned by Pāṇini in the *sūtra* (V.1.27.) – *Śatamāna vimśatikasahasra vasanādaṇ*. The word *Śatamāni* denotes an article purchased for one *Śatamāna*. From the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (V.5.5.16) – *tasya trīṇi śatamānāni dakṣiṇā* and (VIII.2.3.2) *hiraṇyam dakṣiṇā suvarṇam śatamānam tasyoktam*) it is evident that *Śatamāna* was also a gold coin. Again from a passage in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XIII.2.3.2)⁴ it is known that *Śatamāna* could also denote a silver coin. From the *Vedic Index*, *māna* in Vedic literature is understood as a measure of weight equivalent to *kṛṣṇala* or *rattikas*. So the weight of *Śatamāna* is taken to be 100 *rattis*. Thus *Śatamāna* may be a gold or a silver coin with a weight of 100 *rattis*.

Śāṇa was probably the most popular coin during the periods of Pāṇini and Patañjali as they refer to a range of prices in terms of *Śāṇa*. In the *sutra* (V.1.35) – *Śāṇādvā* - Pāṇini mentions *adhyardha Śāṇam* (one and a half *śāṇas*),

adhyardha Śāṇyam (article purchased for one and a half *śāṇas*), three *Śāṇam*, Patañjali (II.350) adds *pañca Śāṇam* (five *śāṇas*) and *pañca Śāṇyam* (article purchased for five *śāṇas*).

Kārṣāpaṇa was the name of the silver punch-marked coin of which numerous hoards have been found in various parts of India. Pāṇini regulating the forms *adhyardha kārṣāpaṇa* (one and a half *kārṣāpaṇa*), *dvi- kārṣāpaṇa* (two *kārṣāpaṇa*) refers to the term *Kārṣāpaṇa*. This term was coined only in the *sūtra* period as they are not mentioned in the *Samhitas* or *Brāhmaṇas*. Pāṇini also mentions the sub- multiples of the *Kārṣāpaṇa* as *ardha* and *bhāga* – ½; *pāda* – ¼ and *māsa* – 1/16 – p [pad ma; zta*t! V.1.34. From the commentary of Patañjali on *sūtra* (V.1.21) – *tadasminnadhikamiti daśātāṇaṁ* that *iha kasmāṇna bhavti, ekādaśa māṣā adhikā asmin Kārṣāpaṇasata iti...*

Other names of coins are mentioned in grammatical works such as *adhyardhamāṣa*⁵, *vimśatika*, *trimśatika*⁶, *Raupyakākāṇī*⁷. The metals of these coins whether they were cast of gold, silver or copper is inferred from other texts like the *Jātakas* and the *Smṛti* texts.

From the *sutra* – *rūpādāhata praśamsayor-yap* (V.2.120) it is understood that the word *rūpa* takes the suffix *yap* in the sense of *āhata* – ‘impressed’ or *praśmsā* – ‘praise’. The *Kāśikā*, states that the symbols were struck with a punch on the coins – *nighātikā-tāḍanādinā*. It is also known from the word *rūpa* used in the singular in Pāṇini’s *sutra* that one

symbol was stamped with one punch at a time and that for each symbol separate punching was required. Thus a standard silver coin of 16 *māṣas* which bears a group of five symbols of great variety was stamped with its particular punch for each figure. From the later literature it is known that the smallest units were grains and *ratti*. The grammatical texts do not mention these denominations. But from the excavation specimens of coins available of that period the above is confirmed.

A table of weight of coins in *Rattis* and grains are furnished below as given by V.S. Agrawal.

Silver punch-marked coins

<i>Śatamāna Series</i>	<i>Rattis</i>	<i>Grains</i>
<i>Śatamāna</i>	100	180
<i>Ardha Śatamāna</i>	50	90
<i>TriŚāṇa</i>	37.5	67.5
<i>pāda Śatamāna</i> or <i>Dvi- Śāṇa</i>	25	45
<i>Adhyardha – Śāṇa</i>	18.75	33.75
<i>pādārdha Śatamāna</i> or <i>Śāṇa</i>	12.5	22.5
<i>Aṣṭabhāga Śatamāna</i> or <i>Ardha Śāṇa</i>	6.25	11.25
<i>Tri-vimśatika</i>	120	216
<i>Dvi- vimśatika</i>	80	146
<i>Adhyardha vimśatika</i> or <i>Trimśatika</i>	60	108
<i>Vimśatika</i>	40	72

<i>Ardha-vimśatika</i>	20	36
<i>Pāda-vimśatika</i> or <i>pañcamāṣaka</i>	10	18

***Kārṣāpaṇa* Series**

<i>Kārṣāpaṇa</i> (=prati)	32	57.6
<i>Ardha- Kārṣāpaṇa</i> (= <i>bhāga</i>)	16	28.8
<i>Pāda- Kārṣāpaṇa</i>	8	14.4
<i>Aṣṭa bhāga- Kārṣāpaṇa</i>	4	7.2
<i>Raupya-adyardha māṣaka</i>	3	5.4
<i>Raupya –māṣaka</i>	2	3.6
<i>Raupya tri- kākaṇī</i>	1.5	2.7
<i>Raupya ardha māṣaka</i> or <i>Dvi – kākaṇī</i>	0.75	1.8
<i>Raupya- kākāṇī</i>	0.5	0.9
<i>Raupya ardha – kākāṇī</i>	0.25	0.45

Copper punch marked coins

Vimśatika Series

<i>Dvi- vimśatika</i>	200	360
<i>Adhyardha vimśatika</i> or <i>Trimśatika</i>	150	270
<i>Vimśatika</i>	100	180
<i>Ardha-vimśatika</i>	50	90
<i>Pāda-vimśatika</i>	25	45

***Kārṣāpaṇa* Series**

<i>Kārṣāpaṇa</i>	80	144
<i>Ardha- Kārṣāpaṇa</i>	40	72
<i>Pāda- Kārṣāpaṇa</i>	20	36

<i>Tri- māṣa</i>	15	27
<i>Aṣṭabhāga- Kārṣāpaṇa</i> or <i>Dvi- māṣa</i>	10	18
<i>Māṣa</i>	5	9
<i>Ardha- māṣa</i>	2.5	4.5
<i>Kākaṇī</i>	1.25	2.25
<i>Ardha- kākaṇī</i>	0.623	1.125

Arthaśāstra

Another reliable source of information on coins is the *Arthaśāstra*, (6th C.A.D) the science on polity. It has two chapters dealing with terms of currencies- Chapter 12 and 19 of Second Adhikaraṇa.

The *Arthaśāstra* chapter 12, Second Adhikaraṇa (25-33) also mentions the superintendents appointed at mints – the *lohāhyakṣas* who were in-charge of the manufacture of silver coins – *rūpya-rūpa* made up of four parts of copper and one sixteenth part (*māṣa*) of any one of the metals tin, lead or antimony. These shall be a *paṇa*, half a *paṇa* a quarter and one eighth. Copper coins *tāmra rūpa* made up of four parts of an alloy *pādaḥjivam* shall be *māṣaka*, half a *māṣaka*, *kākaṇī* and half a *kākaṇī*.

A special officer to examine these coins was also appointed as *rūpadarśaka*. He regulated the currency both as a medium of exchange and as legal tender admissible into the treasury.

The system of currency prevalent during the period of the *Arthaśāstra* is known from the nineteenth chapter of the second *Adhikaraṇa* of the *Arthaśāstra*. This is presented in the table below:

10 seeds of *māṣa* or 5 seeds of *guṇjā* = 1 *suvarṇa māṣa*

16 *suvarṇa māṣas* = 1 *suvarṇa karṣa*

4 *karṣas* = 1 Pala

88 mustard seeds = 1 silver *māṣa*

Inferences and Conclusion

It is clear that coins have been in use from the early Vedic period. The coins of gold, silver and copper were used for commercial purposes. These coins had punch marks of symbols on them. There were mints to produce the coins and officers to monitor their purity. Thus from the early 6th C.BCE to 6th C.A.D the system of coinage as gleaned from the select important Sanskrit texts reveal their richness and advancements.

Only a few excerpts of the facts regarding the coins as found mentioned in Sanskrit literature is presented in this paper. A lot of information regarding this still lie in the literature mentioned which have to be taken up for further study.

References

1. *hotṛṣadanam haritam hiraṇyayam niṣkā ete yajamānasya loke*

2. *Śatam niṣkā hiraṇyayāḥ*
3. *Sūtra* (V.1.34) – *paṇa-pāda-māṣa śatādyat*.
4. *Rajatam hiraṇyam dakṣiṇā nānārūpatayā śatamānam . . .*
5. *Sūtra* (V.1.34) – *paṇa-pāda-māṣaśatādyat*.
6. *Sūtra* (V.1.24) – *vimśati-trimśatibhyām dvunnasñāyām*.
7. Kātyāyana's Vārttika as mentioned in Kāṣikā – *kākiṇyāścopasaṅkhyānam* on V.I.33

Bibliography

1. *Arthaśāstra*, Ed. R.P.Kangle, Vol. 1-3, Motilal Banarsidass, 2006.
2. *Mahābhārata* (Vol. I-VII), Gitapress, Gorakhpur, 1962.
3. *Manusmṛti*, Ed., Narayan Ram Acarya, Nirnaya Sagar Press, Mumbai, 1946.
4. *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana*, with the Com. of Kṣīrasvāmin, Ed. by Hardutt Sharma and N.G. Sardesai, Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 1941.
5. *Ṛgveda Samhitā*, Ed. by Damodar Satvalekar, Part D, Svādhyāya-mandali, Pārdi.
6. Agrawala, V.S. *India As Known to Pāṇinī*, University of Lucknow, 1953.
7. Puri, B.N, *India in the time of Patañjali*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, Delhi, 1990.
8. Satya Prakash and Rajendra Singh, *Coinage in Ancient India*, The research Institute of Ancient Scientific Studies, New Delhi, 1968.

The Concept of Ardhanarisvara with special reference to Tamil Literature

T. Kausalya Kumari, Ph. D.

Assistant Professor & Head

Department of History & TTM, Ethiraj College for Women
(Autonomous)

Abstract

Ardhanarisvara is a beautiful illustration of Siva, combined with the Sakti as one form, half-man half-woman. This embodies a syncretism of two popular faiths centring on Siva and Sakti even as the image of Harihara is for Siva and Vishnu. Generally, the right side of the image is represented as male (Siva) with male attributes, whereas His left side is female (Uma) with female attributes. Ardhanari represents the union of father-god and mother-goddess – two ancient forms of worship. The Tamil name “ammai-appa” brings out the significance of this concept.

Ardhanarisvara is indeed a striking and realistic representation of the dynamic harmony between the husband and the wife. The image proclaims not only the joy of togetherness but also the strength in the unity of man and woman. The image appears to have been conceived to prove that man and woman are complementary to each other; one is incomplete without the other. Thus, significantly the earliest and best Ardhanarisvara images were produced at

a time when the ideal of “avibakta atma” or ‘ideal couple’ was frequently euologized in literature, especially in the works of the dramatist-poet Kalidasa who lived in the court of the Gupta ruler Chandra Gupta II (380-412 CE).

Keywords: Ardhanari, Siva-Sakthi, Ammai-appa, Manikavasagar, Thiru Gnanasambandar, Sundarar, Bhagam Kondan, Pankan

Ardhanarisvara is a beautiful concept of Siva, combined with the Sakti as one form, half-man half-woman. This embodies a syncretism of two popular faiths centring on Siva and Sakti even as the image of Harihara is for Siva and Vishnu. Generally, the right side of the image is represented as male (Siva) with male attributes, whereas His left side is female (Uma) with female attributes.

Ardhanari represents the union of the father-god and the mother-goddess – two ancient forms of worship. The Tamil name “*ammai-appa*” brings out the significance of this concept.

Cult of Ardhanárisvara

Though there is enough material to show that the cult of Ardhanarisvara was prevalent but there is no definite evidence available proving the existence of a particular sect following the cult. But images show how the cult was taking shape in different periods while the later literary texts

evolved legends and principles of iconography to explain the same.

The Ardhanari form of Siva seems very popular during the time of two Saivite *Nayanmars* viz., Appar and Sambandar seems to be popular and also during the time of the three early Alwars. The practice of placing the Ardhanarisvara image at the back of the *sanctum sanctorum* of Siva temples started during the time of the early Pallavas and this was popular during the time of the Chola ruler Aditya I.

Universality of the Siva-Sakti Principle

All the forces and energies as ultimately found to be integrated in Siva-Sakti, which is a two dimensional unity known also as “Ardha-Naari-Nateshwari” (half-male and half-female, the Lord of the Universe), in which the male represents consciousness and the female, pure cosmic energy. The whole universe is a manifestation of Sivam brought about by this dual principle. Siva is the static power potential while Sakti is the active energy of movement and change, actualizing in the various phenomenon Siva is related to space and Sakti to time.

Dr. Fritj of Capra further explaining the Siva – Sakti principle points out, “the most spectacular aspect of subatomic physics is the creation and destruction of material particles. Modern physics shows that, movement and rhythm are essential properties of matter; that all matter whether here on earth or in outer space, is involved in a continual dance. This dynamic

view of the universe is similar to that of modern physics and consequently finds its most beautiful expression in India in the image of Shiva Nataraja”¹.

Concept of Ardhanarisvara in Tamil Literature

There are three terms used by Nambi Aururar or Sundarar viz., *panku*, *pankan*, and *kuran*. *Kuru* is a division or a share. *Panku* is *paku* with nunnation and means a share. *Panku* is *paku* with nunnation and means a share.

Paka derived from *Bhaga*, also means a share. It may also be taken as a form of *pankan* – a partner, a friend.

Arurar has used the term ‘*vitaiyin pakan*’² in punning on this word he makes the Lord Paka of the bull and Parvati and Vishnu as their leader or as being by their side. But the term *pankan* and *pakan* are explained sometimes, as is shown in the Tamil lexicon as, ‘one who is by the side of.’ They become merely the name of the part of any like ‘*orupal*’³.

Kanni panka, *pavai pankan*, *umai pankan*, *mankai panka*, *matantai panka*, *umai nankai panka* or *pankutaivyay*⁴ - all these use the word *panku* in various forms and combinations. The idea of *utanurai valkkai* is conveyed by these terms.

Pakan is the next word. Arurar speaks of or *pakam*, *oru pakam*, *oru paka*, *or pakam vaittukantan*, *pakam amarntavan*, *oru pakam vaittar* or *vaittu*, *anankoru pakam vaittu*, *elai pakam*, *umai pakan*, *pakam* and *pakan*⁵.

Depiction of Ardhanarisvara by Tirugnana Sambandar

It is in this form of Ammai-Appa that Siva gave *darshan* to the boy Saint Sambandar. The very first song of this poet commences with “*Thodudaia Seviyan*” which means a man with a woman’s ornament in his ear or, in the words a hermaphrodite, Sambandar makes the mother inseparable in almost all his songs.

He speaks of this form as follows:

‘Pennodu aanagiya pemmanai’

‘Penkattum uruvanam’

‘Umai pankan’

‘Umai oru bakam udaiyanai’⁶

‘He is our only Lord, conjoined still
To her whose breast no sucking lips have known
They who in Annamalai’s holy hill,
Where falling waters noisy chatter down
And the hill glistens gem-like, bow before
Our great one who is Lord and Lady too,
Unfailingly for them shall be no more,
Dread fruit of good and bad deeds they may do’⁷

In this way he has described beautifully Ardhanarisvara in his poems.

Description of Ardhanarisvara by Tirunavukkarasu or Appar

Appar extols the forms of Lord Siva, his complexion, attributes, garments, jewellery weapons, mounts, etc., thus giving a complete picture about Siva's iconographic features. He speaks of this form as follows:

‘Aanagiya pennaya vadivu thondrum’⁸

Siva married Parvati and took her as a part of his body – a rare form - “arum thirumeni”. The legend is not developed beyond this. The same story is alluded to at another place as one who remains as part of Uma, who did severe penance – “*arun tavattal ayilaiyal umaiyal bagam amarntavan*”⁹

As Ardhanri, he is called *nari bhagan*. Siva showed his respect for women by giving Parvati a part of himself, *matinai madittan oru bagamah*¹⁰; *madittan* respect. This expression is interesting and emphasizes the honour bestowed on woman by the Hindu community, especially the Saivites. Ardhanari is called *umaiyoru bagan*, *nangaiyai bagam vaittan*, etc.,

Siva as Ardhanari carrying a *vina* is to be noted. Ardhanarisvara carrying a *vina* in the Pallava sculptures are there in the Rajasimha period, e.g., in the Kailasanatha temple of Kanchi and the sea shore temple of Mamallapuram. Such a representation is seen of which the best illustration comes from Thirukalukkunram near Mamallapuram wherein in the sanctum of the upper Siva temple, the study found the

Ardhanari with a beautiful *vina*. Such a representation is not found in the later periods.

The hymns addressed to the Lord of Thiruvankadu begins with the praise of Ardhanari both in the compositions of Appar and Sambandar. This has influenced the devotees of the Chola period to make a beautiful form of Ardhanari in metal. In a remarkable hymn of ten verses called '*Sivan enum osai*'¹¹, Appar praises the Ardhanari aspect of Siva.

Description of Ardhanarisvara by Manikavasagar

Manikavasagar calls this form as the most ancient form '*tonmaikolam*'¹². He makes frequent references to the Ardhanarisvaran aspect of Nataraja.

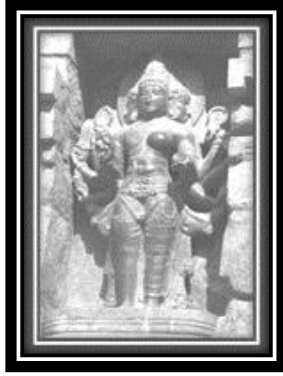
“He abides in the Ambalam with His consort
(Sivakamasundari) incorporated in Him”¹³

“One half of the form is a beautiful woman, the
Other half a handsome man”¹⁴

“the Lord shares in his form his soft-eyed consort”¹⁵

Siva is said to be both golden red and emerald in colour, an obvious reference to his Ardhanari form. The same is expressed in a difficult way when He is said to be both *mani* (crystal like) and emerald.

Different forms of Ardhanarisvara in Tamilnadu Airavatesvarar temple – Darasuram



The composite god in the Darasuram relief has many novel features such as three faces, eight arms, a big halo behind its three heads and he stands in the *samapada sthanaka* pose without Nandi behind him; some of the eight hands hold an *aksamala*, *khadga*, *pasa*, *darpana*, the objects in the other hands (one left hand is broken) being indistinct. The left and the right sides, i.e., Parvati and Siva respectively, are distinctly demarcated but three faces appear to be somewhat peculiar.

J. N. Banerjee suggested that, “the faces may emphasize the *ugra*, *saumya* (aspects of Siva), and Uma aspects of the god”¹⁶ “It is indeed a composite form of Siva where his two aspects, *saumya* as well as *ghora*, are combined with his Sakti Uma. In support of his view, he cites the authority of the Great Epic where Siva has two tanus (forms), Siva and

ghora (dve tanu tasya devasya.....ghoram anyam Sivam anyam.....”¹⁷

Manavalesvarar temple – Tiruvelvikudi



Another sculpture of absorbing interest is an image of Ardhanari in the *devakoshta* sculptures at the Manavalesvarar temple in Tiruvelvikudi. This statue was later inserted later in the temple. This Ardhanari statue is pertinent to note for its somewhat unique features. Usually, Siva is placed on the right side and Parvati on the left side, but in this image Parvati is found to be placed on the right side and Siva on the left side.

In this image, the right side i.e., Parvati is standing in *dvibhanga* posture and on the left side i.e., Siva is also in *dvibhanga* posture. At the back of the Ardhanari, a bull, the vehicle of Siva, is standing. This statue has two hands, the right hand in *lolahasta* while the left hand's elbow is rested on the head of the standing bull.

Ardhanarisvara sculptures are known throughout India from Nepal and Mathura in the north down to Madurai in the south. The sculptures are both in stone and metal. The stone sculptures, however, outnumber the metal ones.

Conclusion

Ardhanarisvara is indeed a striking and realistic representation of the dynamic harmony between husband and wife. The image proclaims not only the joy of togetherness but also the strength in the unity of man and woman. The image appears to have been conceived to prove that man and woman are complementary to each other; one is incomplete without the other. Thus, significantly, the earliest and best Ardhanarisvara images were produced at a time when the ideal of “*avibakta atma*” or ‘ideal couple’ was frequently euologized in literature, especially in the works of the dramatist-poet Kalidasa who lived in the court of the Gupta ruler Chandra Gupta II (380-412 CE)

References

1. Saivism Questions and Answers, 5th World Saiva Council Durban Saiva conference release, Meikandar, Adheenam, U.K., 1996, p.25
2. M.A.Doorai Rangaswamy, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tevaram with special reference to Nampi Arurar (Sundarar)*, University of Madras, Madras, 1990, p.240
3. *Ibid.*, p.240
4. *Ibid.*,

5. *Ibid.*, p.241
6. Swami Avinasanndhar(Ed.), *Tevara, Tiruvasaga Thirattu*, Sri Ramkrishna Madam, Chennai,1998, (Tamil), p.26
7. Pranabananda Jash, *History of Saivism*, Roy and Chaudhury, Calcutta, 1974,p.157
8. Swami Avinasanndhar (Ed.), *op.cit.*, p.104
9. Dr. R. Nagasamy, *Siva Bhakti*, Navrang, New Delhi, 1989, p.172
10. *Ibid.*, p.173
11. *Ibid.*, p.173
12. M.A, Doorai Rangaswamy, *op.cit.*, pp.244-245
13. B.Natarajan, *Tillai and Nataraja*, Mudugala Trust, Madras, 1994, p.320
14. *Ibid.*,
15. *Ibid.*,
16. Prabhananda Jash, *History of Saivism*, Roy and Chaudhury, Calcutta, 1974, p.158
17. Prabhananda Jash, *Ibid.*, p.158

Advaita and Problems in Indian Metaphysics

Godabarisha Mishra, Ph.D.

Emeritus Professor,
School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Management, IIT
Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The word "Advaita" refers to a system of Vedāntic thought which believes in a Non-dualistic ultimate reality. Śaṅkarācārya is the chief exponent of this system. But he was not the first to propound this philosophical school. As a system named as Vedānta it claims its allegiance to the Vedas and as per the meaning of the term, it is understood to be the last part of the Vedas. The Vedas are divided into four parts viz. Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣads. The last part called Upaniṣad is otherwise known as Vedānta or it is taken to be a system which has Upaniṣad as its pramāṇa. (vedānto nāma upaniṣat pramāṇam). However, it has not been the case always, since there are Upaniṣads which come in the Āraṇyaka portion like Taittirīya, and there are some which are in Saṁhitā as well as Brāhmaṇa portions also.

The Vedas consist of two parts, the earlier part is known as Karmakāṇḍa and the later part is known as Jñānakāṇḍa. The jñānakāṇḍa is usually taken to be the portion which is termed as Vedānta or which is the source for Vedānta thinking.

Now in Vedānta we have several schools claiming the status of independent Vedānta schools. Why should there be so many Vedāntic schools? The answer to this question lies in the conceiving the reality in multifarious ways by the Ācāryas who tried to give a hermeneutic turn by engaging in an exegesis of the Vedas. There are certain points of agreement and difference among the schools of Vedānta. All the Vedāntic schools are in total agreement with the fact that Brahman is the supreme reality. They accept the Vedas as the source of knowledge. But the disagreement lies in conceiving the nature of the ultimate reality as portrayed in the Vedas. The Vedas have large number of statements that talk of unity or non-difference and there are also a large number of such hymns which talk of difference. The former variety of texts is known as *Abheda-śruti* and the latter ones are known as *Bheda-śruti*. Among the Vedāntins, some give importance to *Abheda-śruti* and they come to be known as Advaitins, and Śaṅkara belongs to this group. The Advaitins interpret the *bheda-śruti* passages in order to suit their context, almost exactly as the *arthavāda vākyas* are interpreted, like they say that even though the reality is ultimately non-dual, in the empirical level, duality namely *saguṇa-brahman* is accepted. That is how the *bheda-śruti* passages are interpreted. For Advaita the chief import of the Vedas lie in the *Abheda-śruti* passages only. The case is diametrically opposite in the Dvaita school of Madhva. He says that the chief import of the Vedic passages lie in portraying difference i.e. *bheda*. *Abheda* passages are definitely secondary (*gauṇa*) and are meant to show the supreme quality and independent nature of the God, the

Lord Viṣṇu. He is *svatantra*, independent and the other consisting of world and soul are *Paratantra*, dependent, and in that only they are meaningful. In the development of Vedāntic thought, in between Śaṅkara and Madhva appeared Rāmānuja, who propounded that both the types of *śruti* passages are equally meaningful. This is called as *bhedābheda* or *ghaṭaka śruti* passages which find meaning in all types of Śruti passages and for him and other Śrīvaiṣṇavas, even the Karmakāṇḍa is as important as the Jñānakāṇḍa as they form aikyaśāstra (one text) and jñānakāṇḍa does not have any preeminence or superiority over karmakāṇḍa as enunciated by Śaṅkara and other Advaitins¹.

Historically, Rāmānuja's advent was prior to that of Madhva and the former holds an exegetical position giving equal weightage to both the types of *śruti* passages which was not acceptable to Madhva. Rāmānuja says that God is different from soul and the world, how so ever these two, namely soul and world form his body. There is *śarīraśārīribhāva* between them. Madhva appreciates the idea of difference propounded by Rāmānuja but says the difference is not adequate as at some point Madhva feels that Rāmānuja has compromised with the Advaitins in propounding the idea of non-difference. The difference must be total. He holds on to the view of *bheda*, difference and propounds *pañcabheda* in which he brings about all the entities as different from other entities of the world. Howsoever, Rāmānuja, following the tradition of Nāthamuni and Yāmuna gave the foundation for the Vaiṣṇava theistic schools which branched off into many streams in later

periods. Śaṅkara and the views of the post-Śaṅkarites have been taken in to task by all the theistic schools and among them Madhva is the champion.

Basic Doctrines of Advaita

Coming to Śaṅkara, the philosophy he propounded was based on the basic conception that the non-dual supreme reality is without any quality or characteristics. It is here that Rāmānuja felt inconvenient saying that how can we contemplate of a reality which is without any characteristics. For him, if there is no characteristics, there are no content and a content-less cognition is a contradiction in terms. For Śaṅkara the first basic feature of Advaita is that the Vedas, i.e. *śruti* propound a reality which is without any characteristics. In other words, Brahman is the only reality. For other schools, however, the reality is multifold. The second distinct feature of Advaita is that Maya, which is identical with Avidyā is responsible for the appearance of Brahman as God, Jīva and the world. Viśiṣṭādvaitins even do not admit the existence of Māyā at all. For them, Advaitins māyā is a pseudo concept and it has no standing at all. In his Mahāpūrvapakṣa, Rāmānuja finds sevenfold objections (problems) in the concept of māyā and in post-Rāmānuja Viśiṣṭādvaita it multiplies. The third is: The state of God and the soul are illusory, while the essential nature of both are real. Rāmānuja and the Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins do not accept this; for them no form either God or the soul can be illusory. The fourth feature is that the world is superimposed on Brahman through Māyā and it cannot be either real or unreal but indeterminable, *anirvacanīya*.

For Vaiṣṇava thinkers, the world is real. The fifth distinct feature of Advaita Vedānta is that the direct knowledge of the true nature of the jīva as Brahman is the sole means to liberation. The Vaiṣṇava thinkers think that by knowledge one can not get liberated. Knowledge is necessary, but it is sufficient. Śaṅkara holds it in a different way and says that all the karma and devotion (*bhakti*) is a subordinate means to liberation and by knowledge alone one can be liberated. The sixth feature of Advaita Vedānta is that the liberation can be had right here and now, if knowledge comes then liberation is instant. They believe in Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti as against Videhamukti accepted by the Vaiṣṇava schools.

In short, the study of the God (*Īśvara*) soul (*Jīva*) and world (*Jagat*) constitute the basic to all Vedāntic schools. The theistic schools who believe in pluralism consider these to be distinct realities. Advaita considers them as manifestation of Brahman which is pure consciousness and non-dual. Maya conceals the true nature of Brahman and projects the world, soul and God. The God and soul are complex entities consisting of the sentient element called consciousness and insentient element of māyā-avidyā as their characteristics. The essential nature of God is the sentient element of consciousness which is known as Brahman and that of the jīva is known as Ātman. The point of importance here is that though the state of being God and soul are illusory, their essential nature is real. The world is an illusory appearance of Brahman through māyā like a rope-snake which is caused through ignorance. Hence no part of it real. For Advaita, God is always aware of his essential quality as Brahman and hence, he is ever liberated.

The jīva, who wrongly identifies with the mind, body and the sense organs, is ignorant of its essential nature and undergoes transmigration. Hence, the Advaitins say that this wrong identification which is produced by ignorance can be removed by knowledge that its true nature is Brahman.

From the above discussion it can be seen that the term "Advaita" implies Brahman which is devoid of duality, and also stands for the school that enunciates the reality to be non-dual. Here I would like to refer to one more Advaita or Advaya tradition which was prevalent in the Indian subcontinent much before the advent of Ācārya Śaṅkara. The writer of *Amarakośa* refers to Buddha as Advayavādin². A close study of the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* reveals how Gauḍapāda was highly influenced by Buddha in formulating the tenets of Advaita. In his commentaries also we find that Śaṅkara is not that vociferous in criticizing Buddha while he writes his *bhāṣya* on *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* authored by his grand preceptor Gauḍapāda, where as his criticisms are quite pungent when he wrote a commentary on the *Brahmasūtra Tarkapāda* where he says that the Buddha must have had hatred for his subjects because of which he has propagated a thesis having contradictory views³. Śaṅkara does not seem to be charitable to Buddha who opened the door of liberation to one and all. Anyway, Buddhistic non-dualism must have influenced Śaṅkara to give a logical shape to his thinking. In fact, when we analyse the thinking of the Buddha, we find that he has been so much influenced by Upaniṣads, even though he strongly denied the validity of the Vedas as authority. To my mind what Buddha wanted is to do away with the karmakāṇḍa

portion of the Vedas and prerogative of strong Brahminism which was preeminent during his period and his philosophy for liberation can be easily traced to Upaniṣads. The individuality of a separatist Buddhist ideology beyond the Upaniṣads was questioned by Gauḍapāda who held that the whole lot of thinking of Buddha can be traced back to the Upaniṣads. He almost made reconciliation between the Upaniṣads and Buddhism and showed how even the smallest of the Upaniṣads would commend what Buddha said and what he wanted to say and did not say⁴. After Gauḍapāda, it was Ācārya Śaṅkara who almost reconstructed the Advaita with spice logic and *śruti* and showed how Buddhism is not logical and liberative. In his commentary on the first verse of the fourth chapter of *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, Śaṅkara gives the meaning of the phrase “*dvīpadam varam*” and Viṣṇu where as contextually it would be appropriate to have the meaning as Buddha. Howsoever, Śaṅkara was responsible for deifying Buddha as an incarnation (*avatāra*) in Hindu pantheism and building up his own brand of Advaita on that of the Buddha⁵. I would also like to refer to the fact that Advaita thinking with *māyā* was prevalent in the pre-Gauḍapāda Śaṅkara period. Sadyojyotiś, a Kashmirian Śaiva scholar does not refer to either of them while criticizing the views of Vedānta which is similar to that of Advaita. Hence the tradition of Advaita is Upaniṣadic which Śaṅkara reiterates in his Bhaṣya several times (*asmākam tu aupaniṣadam darśanam*) and comes down till today in an unbroken manner.

The word Advaita is commented upon by Śaṅkara in his *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā-bhaṣya* (*advaitam caṭurtham manyante sa ātma sa vijñeyah*) but it was Madhusūdana who having the

opponents views in his mind defines Advaita in his *Siddhāntabindu* as "*nāsti dvaitam yātra*." He feels that to counter the Mādhyamikas who also talk of a non-dualistic entity called "*sūnya*," it is necessary to put "*yātra*" in the definition as in the locus (*yātra*) that is Brahman there is no trace of dualism. As I have referred to earlier, Madhyamika which talks of *Sūnya* as the reality is also non-dualistic but there is no necessity of a substratum for that system, for them Advaita is not dvaita and hence the definition is modulated by putting "*yātra*" the locus i.e., Brahman. Now if it is non-dual, the word "*eka*" or "*aikya*" will do, why Advaita. Monism is alright but there are a number of Vaiṣṇava schools which talk of *eka* as the supreme reality like Viśiṣṭādvaita, for which Viṣṇu is the only reality. But in their scheme of thinking, duality is accepted and hence the word Advaita seems to be more appropriate for a pure non-dualistic thinking since it does not accept any duality in its understanding of the ultimate reality.

In fact all these Vedāntic schools will operate in both the dimensions, Advaita and Dvaita. They are Advaitic and Dvaitic at the same time, the problem comes in the emphasis the Ācāryas lay on the either. For example, even Śaṅkara has to accept the world of duality, the empirical existence, the *vyāvahārika* so that his *mathas* and *bhaṣyas* and the tradition of teaching and learning are meaningful. It is not for the *Jīvanmuktas* that Śaṅkara wrote the *Bhaṣyas*, it is for the benefit of the people who are in the world of duality and who want to be liberated for them the entire thinking is meaningful. For Viśiṣṭādvaita, it is non-dualistic, since it

accepts Viṣṇu as the supreme reality and even Śaṅkara would have no problem in accepting Viṣṇu as the supreme reality. The problem between the two is whether to accept or not to accept Maya. On that score, Madhva also talks of the independent status of Lord Viṣṇu, i.e. even though there is difference between God, soul and man, the God is *svatantra* and man is *paratantra*. So indirectly he too accepts non-duality as far as the independence of God is concerned. So we may call his Dvaitavāda as svatantradvaita. Caitanya seems to be tired of all this deliberations and says let's not brand with this and that. God is beyond thinking, *acintya*. Hence he would also support a type of non-dualistic dimension of reality, though he follows Madhva's logic of interpretation.

From the above we can say from a surface level analysis that we find that all the schools, even the hard core Dvaitins have to accept both the Dvaita and Advaita dimensions in their philosophical enterprises. But when you get into the deep structure of their schools it would be quite naive to view that they operate on both because each one of them wants to retain his own identity and here is where we are in working out the Advaita of Śaṅkara. Why I say this is because the philosophical systems are not like ordinary views which stand to be corrected if found wrong. They are *darśanas*; their views are based on direct perceptions. The word indicating philosophy in Indian tradition is *darśana*. All the Ācāryas had direct realization⁶.

Before we discuss Advaita, I would like to explain the word “*Darśana*.” Etymologically, *darśana* means seeing, but seeing what? *Drs* is *sakarmaka dhatu*. *Darśanam* implies the direct realization without any obstruction. *Darśanam nāma pratibandharahitam pratyakśajñānam* of the *prameya* and *pramāta*. It is doubtless, free of error and not dependent on inference, *samsaya rahitam*, *viparyayarahitam* and *anumāna anapekṣam jñānam*. The object of this perception is *jīva*, *jagat* and *Īśvara*. “*Drs*” is not a weak word like “*man*.” It is essential to know one's own self being a part of the universe. Hence the teaching is oral in nature so that it leaves behind a prominent imprint on your mind⁷.

In the West, they have been always had this question as to whether India has a philosophy or not. Most of the times in the West, Indian thought is pushed to theology department. Such compartmentalization of philosophy and religion is not possible in Indian thinking. Nor do we mix them up. Conceptually both are differentiated. Philosophy is knowledge and religion is attitude. Both can never be separated nor can they be mixed up. Now what is it that is discussed in the West? Philosophy comprises of logic, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. Logic deals with methods and principles of reasoning. Epistemology deals with origin, sources and principles which govern knowledge and the nature of truth and error. Metaphysics enquires into the nature of reality, cosmology is a part of it. Axiology is the study of the values, all that which is desired. Ethics deals with enquiry into good and right. To the question as to whether India has a philosophy as we have in the West, my submission

is that India has a philosophy and in addition to all these four we have some thing called liberation which is spelt out in all the schools.

Epistemology and logic are the *pramāṇasāstras* in Indian tradition. Metaphysics is called as the *prameya śāstra*, the enquiry into what is to be known - the man world and the God. The Indian thinkers have given a formulation that the ascertainment of prameya, the object of knowledge is dependent on the means of knowledge⁸. Considering the Axiology, Indian tradition uses the word *puruṣārtha*, the desired object of a person. The desired object should be a proper one, not any desire. This ethics is included under a different subject called *Dharmaśāstra*. These are the texts which is the basis of religion if we want to say so. Thus India has philosophy not only a theoretical one but also it has practical aspects - the way of life is brought in. Thus in India, we have philosophical discussion and practical discipline⁹. In India, philosophy is not only a theory but also a practice. What they have done is that the thinkers have established a relation between values and action. In this sense Indian Philosophy is value oriented. Indian Philosophy is to some extent Dharma oriented and primarily Mokṣa oriented. Among the values *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*, the first three are of instrumental value and the last one has intrinsic value. The instrumental values would answer the question 'why' but it is not possible in the case of intrinsic value. This is the core of Vedānta where liberation comes to be identified with *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. The main idea is to say that all the other values are values for courtesy's sake. They

are necessary but not sufficient. Indian philosophy is action oriented because there is a close relation between value and action and since it is value oriented, it is action oriented. So there is nothing wrong in saying that Indian philosophy is philosophy.

Now how do we know such a value which culminates in liberation? The Vedāntic thinkers are vociferous in saying that it is the śruti which shows the way. That is the meeting point of all the Vedāntins and Śāṅkara is no exception, but one thing which I want to bring home is that there is a way to get out of this śruti and even in doing Vedānta, śruti is not binding to a man all the times. The critics say that the Vedānta cannot be done without śruti. This is true for a beginner, not the man who has reached that unexcelled state. There is no special divinity attached to śruti. Metaphorically of course it is thought of to be sacred because it talks of a spiritual liberation, but all the Vedāntic system have an inbuilt dimension to get out of śruti which is supported by śruti itself. Once the truth is known the Vedas become *avedas*. (*yatra vedaḥ avedaḥ bhavanti*). I cite this to say that Indian philosophy and religion have shown the path and also shown how to get out of that path making a more meaningful dimension of liberation possible. I do not think this particular aspect is present in any other religious tradition of the world.

The Vedānta has always made provisions to work with śruti and once the purpose is fulfilled, it becomes the part of the *sabḍaprapaṅca* which is operative in the world of our ordinary activities. It is applicable to all the Vedāntins, for

Rāmānuja, the ideal of *prapatti*, Caitanya's model of repetition of names of the God and many such instances can be cited to exemplify this. My purpose here is to show that a question is usually asked if Śāṅkara says that *brahmasatyam* and *jagatmithya*, then what happens to that sentence which is a part of the jagat. The answer is that as *sabḍa* it is also mithya, but as having a referent it is true. The word water is not the thing water that does not mean therefore we should not use the word water, which is indicative of the thing water. Similarly, the śruti is indicative and once the object is known it is not necessary. In that sense it is said that the Vedas become *Avedas* once the reality is known. This is one of the most peculiar characteristics of Vedāntic thinking in particular and Indian philosophy in general.

Advaita operates through the śruti to show a holistic life beyond śruti or the Vedas. Since Veda is very ancient, Advaita too is very ancient and was available in fragmentary writings. It is usually thought that Śāṅkara is the earliest exponent of Advaita, which is not true. He may at best be a very prominent expounder of the school. The first teacher to expound the Advaita as I have said earlier is Gauḍapāda who wrote a *kārikā* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* in which he reconciled the Buddhist tenets with that of Upaniṣadic concepts showing that the Upaniṣads contain the quintessence of Buddhism and much more than that. There is a teacher-disciple tradition which is usually uttered whenever any traditional Advaita teaching takes place. They say the first teacher was Lord Narayana, and he taught Brahma. Brahma taught his son Vaśiṣṭha and then Śakti learnt from the latter.

Śakti taught this to his son Parāśara and it then came to the latter's son Vyāsa, who taught this to his son Śuka. Till this, according to this invocation, this tradition went on where the father taught Vedānta to his son. Śuka was not married and he taught this to his disciple Gauḍapāda from whom Govindabhagavatpāda learnt Advaita. Śaṅkara happens to be the disciple of Govinda and that is how the tradition has been coming down till today. The chief contribution of Śaṅkara is his bhāṣyas on *Prasthānatrayi* i.e. on the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahmasūtras* and *Bhagavadgītā*.

Before I conclude, I would like to devote a few words about the greatness of Śaṅkara and how he contributed to the synthesis of many traditions as he is popularly known as *sanmatāsthāpanācārya*, a person who established six traditions which were getting lost. In seeking to discover the greatness of Śaṅkara, we should not isolate him from his age. The historical individual is definitely inseparable from the society in which he lived. The works of Śaṅkara can only be understood in terms of the religio-cultural trends of the 7th and 8th centuries in India. This period may be the period of transition from the classical to the early medieval age. There was Buddhism which was fast declining and *smārta-paurāṇika* religion was emerging having very rigid social dimension though they are catholic as far as their spirituality is concerned. Bhakti and Tantra, abstract logic and polemical metaphysics, ritualistic mode of worship and social codes were developing side by side. Śaṅkara not only epitomised up his age, but founded a tradition which continues till today. He reconstructed the philosophy of

Gauḍapāda and refuted other schools like Samkhya and the like. His non-dualistic interpretation of Vedānta became the core for others to support, refute and develop their own thinking. His thinking never encouraged any social eligibility for pursuing Vedānta for which we have examples in Janaka, Vidura and the like.

Śaṅkara brought about a synthesis in accepting *pravṛtti dharma* and *nivṛtti dharma*, the life of indulgence and renunciation respectively. The distinction between Nirguṇa Brahman and Saṅguṇa Brahman provided place for worship without challenging the final thesis that one has to go beyond it. There is also a synthesis for jñāna and karma which must have been the dominant topic of debate of his time and this included an esteemed position for bhakti. Śaṅkara himself was a great bhakta which is evident in his large number of writings on the theme. The structure of Vedānta kept enough space for reconciliation of faith, reason and spiritual experience. The identity of the self and Brahman can only be known from śruti but it has to be personally experienced. It is almost modeled on the Buddha's saying *parikṣa madvaco grahyo bhaksavo natu gauravat*. Reasoning is needed to do away with the defects like the impossibility of such a state of realization and impossibility of realizing such an entity which are called as *asambhāvaṇa* and *viparītabhāvaṇa*.

There is difficulty in providing a proper history about life and works of Śaṅkara because of absence of any authentic biographical source about him. What has happened in the

so called biographies is that the history has been largely replaced by legends. The existing mathas and the literature available at those places are of not much help to come to a conclusive date of the advent of Śaṅkara. One important aspect of Śaṅkara's analysis is that though it begins with a faith in śruti it takes other hermeneutic channels like rational reflection to transcend and interpret the śruti and also to negate the instinctive and philosophical prejudices against it so that personal experience becomes possible. The analysis of self-awareness is a significant part of this process. He never negates the world as has been accused by the opponents. He models his philosophy on the basis of two truths. He is one of the earliest Indian thinker who shows how to refute others views. In preaching Advaita, he appeals to two basic principles, that the subject can never be the object and the real can never be sublated. On the basis of this he says that empirical consciousness and existence are false or illusory. The transcendental falsity is compatible with pragmatic authenticity so that there is the possibility of discovery of truth by *adhyāropa* and *apavāda* which is superimposition and subsequent negation.

The whole endeavour of Śaṅkara is not only to establish a philosophy of Advaita by the negation of māyā or ignorance which is the cause of the universe, but it is more to show the Indian tradition as to how there is an amount of non-dualism in whatever they do and he has been very successful in doing this. Hence there is a need to see Śaṅkara from a different angle which is what is being attempted here. As is stated earlier, Śaṅkara was a product of his time and

with that sympathetic eye we must perceive him and his contribution. Swami Vivekananda once said: If Rāmānuja had been born in the period of Śaṅkara, he would have only taught Advaita.

References

1. For Śaṅkara in the Upaniṣads also the mahāvākyas are really important.
2. *ṣaḍabhijño daśavalo'dvayavādī vināyakaḥ*
3. *yada ayam saugatasamayaḥ upapattimatvaya pariksate tāda tāda sikatakūpa vād visiryate eva. Natra kimcid upapattim pasyamaḥ, bahyarthavāda-vijñānavāda-sunyavāda tritayam itaretaraviruddham upadiṣata sugatena spaṣṭikṛtaṁ ātmanaḥ asmābaddha pralapitvam, pradveśo va prajasu. Ataḥ ānadarāṇiyoyam saugatasamayaḥ sreyaskāmaiḥ ityabhiprayaḥ.*
4. *Naitāda buddhena bhaṣitaṁ.*
5. In the Badrinath temple which was established by Śaṅkara, the Buddha's statue is being worshipped as Viṣṇu. One can clearly see that it was iconographical affinity with the image of the Buddha.
6. It is not earlier Wittgestein or Aiyer who changed their views later in their life.

7. All philosophical instructions were oral in the ancient times.
8. *Manadhiṇa meyasiddhiḥ*
9. In the west, say for eg. the philosophy of Hume, a sceptic, who says everything in the world consists of impressions and things are a bundle of sensations. One particular bundle of impression is called by a particular name. Such a philosophy of David Hume has no bearing on practice.

**Colonial Despotism and British Judicial Intervention
in the
Bengal Presidency, 1772-1798**

Om Prakash, Ph.D.

Assistant professor in history,
Executive Director, Centre for Human Welfare and
Empowerment
National Law University, Rajasthan

Abstract

Among the various theories, which the British framed, one of them was oriental despotism. The related theories such as White Man's Burden, Theory of Guardianship, and Civilizing Mission were primarily framed and meant to assert the legitimacy of the British rule in India by declaring how abominable were the culture and rituals of Indians; how uncivilized and barbaric were Indians having the tendency to be ruled under tyrants with an iron hand. The colonial administrators realised that for the perpetuity of the Raj, major change was required in the legal system. This paper has touched upon the issue of colonial despotism and how mercilessly the British manipulated and intervened in the existing indigenous law, judicial administration and as a result caused chaos and disorder and subsequently lost the people's faith in the British sense of justice and fair play.

Key Words: *Justice System, Despotism, Bengal Presidency, Colonialism.*

Introduction

Reorganisation of the judicial system of Bengal got prominence after 1765, when the East India Company acquired the Diwani of Bengal. Various court systems and laws created anarchy. (Fawcett 1934, pp. 208-11) The Colonial administrators realised that for the perpetuity of the Raj, a major change was required in the legal system. In the initial phase however, the British were bound by treaty to administer law according to the existing law of Bengal. (Atchison 1909, p. 76).

One of the objectives of the paper is to find out the motives of the East India Company in the judicial interventions in Calcutta presidency, as to whether the British Judicial efforts had a narrow mercantilist and imperial interest or was there some element of welfare involved in the whole process. The paper attempts to look into a number of issues. Firstly, why and how did the British authorities usurp the right to capital punishment from the Nawab of Bengal? Secondly, what justification did the British give to their attempt to control the civil and criminal administration of Bengal? Thirdly, the paper has endeavored to probe the reaction of the natives against such judicial intervention. The period of study is confined to the periods of two governor-generals i.e., Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis. The paper has also attempted to test the hypothesis that the native laws of a

colony take a jumbled and distorted form with the introduction of colonial laws.

The British believed that they had substituted legal security for disorder, predictability for uncertainty, and impartiality for whim and nepotism. “Under the old despotic systems,” James Fitzjames Stephen wrote, “the place of law was taken by a number of vague and fluctuating customs, liable to be infringed at every moment by the arbitrary fancies of the ruler.” (Stephen 1895, p. 285).

Judicial transformation and Justice, Equity and Conscience

Colonial laws are the principles consisting partly of Imperial legislation, such as charters, letter patent and colonial enactments, and all the applicable metropolitan law and local customary law throughout the colonies of the colonial state. Apparently, colonial laws sometimes take a jumbled and distorted version of metropolitan law, because the metropolitan structure is superimposed on the existing laws of the colony. As a result, this form of law becomes a composite creature like a sphinx and since it is primarily meant for the convenience of the rulers as it opens a floodgate of intense exploitation of the natives.

The town of Calcutta was brought under the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, established by the Crown in 1774 under the authority of the Regulating Act of 1773. There were several defects in the Regulating Act, which led to a serious conflict between the Governor General

in Council and the Supreme Court and threatened to paralyse the administration of the country. The Judges were instructed to decide the cases based upon Justice, Equity and Good Conscience. (Anderson, 1963, pp.113-53). Henry Maine defined the maxim Justice, Equity and Good Conscience as “any body of rules existing by the sides of the original civil law, founded on distinct principles and claiming incidentally to supersede the civil law in virtue of a superior sanctity inherent in those principles.” (Dias 1994, pp.318-21) Mahatma Gandhi was quite emphatic in his assertion that the British committed egregious blunders in their interpretation of the native laws of India. (*The Hindustan Times*, 1926)

The new courts opened the scope of serious troubles such as intimidation, harassments and new means to carry old disputes. They also enforced the sense of individual right not dependent on opinion of usage, which could be enforced by the government despite complete opposition of the community. (Cohn 1959, pp.79-83).

Lord Bryce remarked: “It was inevitable that the English should take criminal justice into their own hands-the Romans had done the same in their Provinces and thus it was inevitable that they would alter the Penal Law in conformity with their own ideas.” (Bryce 1901, p. 120) The practice of mutilation, prohibited by the Mughal emperor Akbar, resumed under a sentence of the native Faujdari Adalat, and the Calcutta Chronicle of 1789 gives a terrible

account of such a sentence being carried out in the case of a gang of fourteen dacoits. Only in 1791 was imprisonment with hard labour substituted for mutilation. It was not till the following year (1792) that prosecution for murder ceased to depend on the concurrence of the murdered man's relatives.

In their early efforts to claim the prerogatives of Sovereignty, the British stipulated that the feudal powers of the intermediary involved in the revenue collection and jurisdiction, as well as the personal jurisdiction of a creditor over his debtor, were to be transferred to the supreme authority. The Company thus began to extend its own punitive jurisdiction in place of the punitive and retributive claims of its subjects against each other. The result was extended to public justice in contradiction to personal injury. (Singhna 1998, pp. 3-6).

Another telling instance is the Colonial state's effort to wrest the right to confirm death sentences and capital punishment from the Nawab of Bengal. Disguised as judicial reforms, they were designed to benefit the Colonial state. Cornwallis usurped this authority of capital punishment on the ground of the sovereign's 'privilege of taking life'. Cornwallis promoted the introduction of the abstract and the so-called rule of law in the hope that this would implant a spirit of rationality and would further pave the way for so-called reforms.

Warren Hastings, Colonial Barbarity and Judicial Intervention

The mal-administration and disorders, which the Dual system of Clive had created was echoed in the British Parliament. In order to reorganise the whole administration, Warren Hastings was sent to India. Warren Hastings's judicial plan of 1772 divided the whole of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa into thirty-six districts. In each district, one junior company servant (only Englishmen) was appointed as Collector, solely responsible for the collection of revenue. (Davies 1935, p. 84). In each district, Mofussil Diwani Adalat was established to deal with all civil and revenue cases. The Collector was made the only judge of this court. In case of disputes relating to contract, property and succession of natives Shastrik law was made applicable for Hindus and Islamic law for Muslims, and for the rest of the people, British law was applicable. (Gleig 2005, p. 263). For the help of the Judge of the Diwani Adalats and for the clear application and interpretation of Shastrik or Islamic law, Pundits and Kazis were appointed. (Ilbert 1915, p. 355).

From 1772, when Warren Hastings ordered that Hindu and Muslim law be applied in British courts, J. D. M. Derrett writes how it led to misconceptions among the natives:

The relationship between custom and *dharmasastra* was taken for granted. The judges were directed to refer only to the *dharmasastra*...Hastings and his contemporaries...were gravely misled...Non-Brahmans admitted that Brahmins

were the expounders of law, and that the Hindu religion required obedience to the *dharmasastra*, which the Brahmans alone knew . . . It was nearly a century before the mistake was generally recognised . . . (Derrett, 1961 pp. 24-25)

Derrett also observes that Hastings had been advised that the law of the Hindus must be ascertained from Shastrik texts and no steps were taken to collect evidence of local or caste custom.” (Derrett 1961, pp.79-80).

In the field of administration of criminal justice, a *Mofussil Nizamat* or *Faujdari Adalat* was established in each district for deciding criminal cases according to Islamic Law. The Kazi, Mufti and Maulvi were appointed for the *Nizamat Adalat*. The *Mofussil Nizamat Adalat* could decide petty cases and in case of capital offences, the *Nizamat Adalat* had to refer the case to *Sadar Nizamat Adalat*. (Jones 1918, p. 314). *Sadar Nizamat Adalat* was not competent to award the death sentence and, for that purpose, the matter was to send to the Nawab for approval. The Nawab in consultation with the Governor General could grant approval for the death sentence.

The greatest defect of the system was that the Collector became a despot in the district and earned a lot and crushed the natives in the collection of revenue because he had dual positions one as administrator and other as judge. Bribery and other illegal method became the order of the day. By the time the Regulating Act of 1773 came into being, Warren Hastings as Governor General wanted to modify the existing

administrative and judicial system in the Mofussil area for his convenience, by declaring a plan of 1774.

Warren Hasting's Plan of 1774 established six Provincial Councils in Bengal Presidency comprising of the Company's servant. The Provincial Council was to supervise Diwans and Amils for the collection of revenue. A further appeal could lie from the decision of the Provincial Council to the *Sadar Diwani Adalat*. The main purpose of the establishment of the Provincial Council was to supervise the working of the *Mofussil Adalats*, hear the charge of corruption against the judges of these adalats and to act as a liaison between Sadar Adalats and Mofussil Adalats.

In addition to that plan, he organised Criminal Administration of Justice and divided the whole territory into 23 Nizamats and in every Nizamat, he constituted a *Mofussil Adalat* (Criminal Court) comprising of an Englishman to be assisted by a Kazi and a Mufti. He also constituted the *Sadar Nizamat Adalat* and shifted its Headquarters from Calcutta to Murshidabad. (Jones, p. 322). However, this plan had a number of defects. The Provincial Council members turned despots, monopolized trade in their jurisdiction and Calcutta Council had little influence over them. These judicial plans were meant to address British needs rather than the people's welfare.

The three infamous cases at the time of Warren Hastings show the mockery of the judicial system of the time. These cases were Nand Kumar Case (1775), Patna Case (1777-79)

and Cossijurah Case (1779). All these three cases reflect the conflict between the executive and judiciary at the most ridiculous and wretched level.

The infamous *Nand Kumar Case* occurred during the period of Warren Hastings and is a true example of judicial murder in the Calcutta Presidency. Raja Nand Kumar was Governor of Hoogly in 1756 and was a British loyalist. Since Warren Hastings had enmity with one of his councillor Francis, Francis instructed Raja Nand Kumar to make a complaint of bribery and corruption against Warren Hastings. The Supreme Council decided to dismiss Raja Nand Kumar from his post because he gave the bribe and Warren Hastings was held guilty of corruption and bribery and was asked to deposit Rs. 3,54,105 in the treasury of the Company.

Later, Warren Hastings hatched a conspiracy to teach Nand Kumar a lesson and implicated him in a false case of forgery. The Supreme Court awarded him death sentence by applying the provisions of Act of 1728 of UK.

The case was a serious instance of miscarriage of justice on the following grounds:

- (a) This was the result of the tussle between the Supreme Council comprising Warren Hastings and the four councilors, in which Chief Justice Impey, the childhood friend of Warren Hastings decided to side with Warren Hastings.

- (b) The Act of 1728 of England under which a person charged for forgery may get death sentence was unjustly applied to Nand Kumar due to following reasons. Firstly, the Act of 1728 was never promulgated in Calcutta, no one was aware about the Act, which sanctioned death sentence for the act of forgery. (Beveridge 1886, p. 48-51) Secondly, the circumstances in which this Act was passed in England were not the same in Calcutta. Due to commercialisation and industrialisation in England, bribery, corruption and forgery were rampant and this was seriously hampering the economy. Under those circumstances, the 1728 Act of UK made the act of forgery punishable by death.
- (c) There is no evidence of promulgation of this Act in Scotland or America or other British colonies and Calcutta was certainly not as commercial as these regions. Thirdly, Nand Kumar being an Indian should have been tried by native laws, and native laws both *Shastrik* as well as Islamic, did not prescribe, the death sentence for forgery.
- (d) The judges of the Supreme Court cross examined the witnesses of Nand Kumar, difficult legal language was used and this was incomprehensible to the witnesses, which led to the collapse of the witnesses. The defense lawyer was not a barrister and could not take an independent position in front of the Chief Justice Impey (Beveridge, Ibid, p.218).
- (d) An appeal was drafted to file to the King in Council in London against the judgment of the Supreme Court for which the application was given to the Supreme Court to

grant certificate and to stay the execution of the sentence. However, the court rejected the application. It was a fit case to be sent to the King in Council to look into the technicalities. Also, the mercy petition to the crown was not allowed and the Supreme Court rejected the petition on its whim.

The *Patna Case* of 1777 – 1779 caused a number of controversies. Supreme Court had no jurisdiction to decide proprietary right over the properties situated outside Calcutta town. It was also illegal because *Sadar Diwani Adalat* was the competent court to hear the matter. The Supreme Court could not entertain the complaint against a person residing in a *moffusil* area and had no authority to harass judicial officers acting under the authority of Provincial Council. Muslim judicial officers were immune from criminal liabilities for their official act. However, such immunity was granted only in the Act of Settlement of 1781. In the *Cossijurah* case also, the Supreme Court and the Supreme Council emerged as two warring factions. It was a serious case of conflict between executive and judiciary.

The gravity of these cases was voiced in the British parliament when an impeachment motion was brought against Justice Impey and Warren Hastings. (Stephens 1885, pp. 123-26). These were the factors responsible for the passing of the Pitt's India Act, 1784 by the British Parliament by which company's authority and jurisdiction were to be watched closely (Keith 1996, p. 121).

The *Shastrik* and Islamic texts on law, which the earliest European students of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit were discovering, were, for the English administrators, the visible embodiment of Indian law. Hastings was not aware, for example, that most Muslims in Bengal were Hindu converts, who often continued to use local Hindu law rather than Islamic, Koranic and traditional law after their conversion. Nor were eighteenth century British administrators always aware that the Hindu texts which Halhed, Sir William Jones and later Colebrooke translated for court use were largely what a later generation would call 'Brahmanical' law, that is, law which embodied the morality and interests of the Brahman and other twice-born castes who were considered as the creators and guardians of Hindu high culture. William Jones came to India as *puisne judge* of Calcutta Supreme Court in 1783 (Langford 1989, pp. 484-85).

Until 1864, when their offices were abolished, *Maulvies* and *Pundits*, Muslim and Hindu authorities on the classic texts were attached to the new courts to tell judges what the law was. They were encouraged to support their views with citations from the texts. As literary men, their inclination was in any case to consult and stress the texts rather than custom. They also found considerable difficulty in distinguishing between legal and moral commandments, a difficulty with which they recapitulated the experience of archaic law elsewhere (McNaghten 1829, vi).

Warren Hastings had stopped the payments of a fixed annual sum to the Nawab to impart justice. This led to serious neglect

to the justice system and brought corruption to the fore. Cornwallis ended this by giving the colonial state control over the criminal jurisdiction (Aspinall 1931, pp.79-82).

The first major British intervention in the criminal law can be observed during the period of Governor General Warren Hastings. As criminal cases for both Hindus and Muslims were decided according to the Islamic Criminal law, a number of justifications were given by Warren Hastings for taking over the criminal administration. The Islamic criminal laws were considered too harsh and unjust. In the Islamic jurisprudence, Hanafi School prescribed that the intention of murder cannot be proved by the nature of the weapon used in a crime and so as *Kisas* says eye for an eye or tooth for a tooth is to be followed, which means a murderer has to be executed. This was considered as against the principle of common sense and justice. Also, the concept of *Diya* or blood money in Islamic law was considered as backward and medieval. *Diya* prescribes that the victim's family can pardon a criminal by accepting the compensation money (Misra 1961, pp. 284-86).

It is paradoxical to note that British jurisdiction at the time was much harsher than Indian native laws. For the minor offences like forgery, theft etc. the sentence was death. Murder was also punishable by death. (Jain 2001, pp.80-85). The British attempt to establish a three-tier mechanism to differentiate between the black and white offenders is questionable. British criminals were never given any harsh punishment, if the crime was directed against an Indian.

Alexander Dow, a servant of the East India Company brought out his translation of Ferishta's "History of Hindostan" (1770-72). He commented on the miserable condition of the Indian polity and arbitrary Justice System of India in comparison to the British sense of good governance and civil society:

The History now given to the public presents us with a striking picture of the deplorable condition of a people subjected to arbitrary sway; and of the instability of the empire itself, when it is founded neither on law, nor upon the opinions and attachments of mankind...In a government like that of India, public spirit is never seen, and loyalty, a thing unknown. The people permit themselves to be transferred from one tyrant to another, without murmuring... (Dow 1997, pp. 62-63).

There are a number of instances when the Calcutta Council decided to intervene in the criminal adjudication. Several times they tried to influence the decision of the Muslim judges and demanded the death penalty in certain cases. Since most of the time such attempts were not heeded by the Muslim judges and clerics, which shows their independent mind and character, the British planned to usurp the criminal administration from Nawab.

Warren Hastings held:

Although we profess to leave the Nazim, the final Judge in all Criminal cases, and the officers of his courts to proceed according to their own laws, forms and opinions,...yet many

cases may happen, in which an invariable observance of this rule may prove dangerous...I conceive it to be strictly conformable to Justice and Reason, to interpose the authority and Influence of the Company. (Banerjee 1943, p. 496).

The unequal application of law against the *thugs* and highway robbers dubbed as 'criminal tribes' required a different punishment rather than individual crime, pushing the jurisdiction of the colonial state into a despotic one. (Freitag 1991, pp. 227-61). Warren Hastings prescribed deterrent punishments for such criminals. He says:

Every such criminal on conviction shall be carried to his village to which he belongs and be there executed for a Terror and examples to others, and for the further prevention of such abominable practices, that the village of which he is an inhabitant shall be fined according to the enormity of the crime and each inhabitant according to his substance, and that the family of the criminal shall become the slaves of the state, and be disposed of for the general benefit of the Government. (Banerjee 1943, pp. 24-30).

The so-called deterrent punishment was draconian in nature, which discriminated between a British criminal and an Indian one on the ground that the latter had an inferior bent of mind. Such instances prove, beyond doubt, the racial discrimination in the administration of justice and ridicule any claim of rule of law.

Cornwallis, Colonial Despotism and Paradox of Rule of Law

When Cornwallis became Governor General, he completed the unfinished task of Warren Hastings, i.e., complete control on criminal judicature. Cornwallis did not attempt to make a fundamental change in the criminal judicial system due to fear of sharp reaction from the natives (Aspinall 1931, pp. 74-76). He wanted to make modifications in the existing system. Muhammad Reza Khan, who had so far enjoyed the right as *naib nazim* was relieved from his position. Sadar Nizamat Adalat as highest criminal court of appeal in India presided over by the Governor General and Council took all the powers of *naib nazim*. Very shrewdly, the Calcutta Council replaced the presentation of evidence in case of a murder as prescribed by the *Hanafi School* with that of Yusuf and Imam Muhammad School's prescription. Accordingly, in case of a murder, a fatwa was to be drawn up based upon the intentionality of the crime (Colebrook 1807, pp. 154-155). The Company government camouflaged it against arbitrary intervention. Further, a special clause prevented *Diya*, or victim's relative's right to pardon the offender (Colebrook 1807, p. 115). Accordingly, the Calcutta Council passed an order to the newly established Courts of Circuit as follows:

When any person shall be convicted of murder, the Judge shall cause to the reference prescribed in such cases by the Muhammadan Law to be made to the heir of the slain. If the heir shall require the murderer to be punished with death (kisas), Judges shall pass sentences accordingly. But when heir shall require *Diya* or blood money and pardon the

murderer, the Judge shall not pass any sentence, but shall forward the record of the trial to the Nizamat Adaulat, and wait the sentence of that court (Colebrook 1807, p. 115).

Another order passed on the same day by the Council to Sadar Nizamat Adalat stated:

In case of murder, in which the murderer would be liable to Kisas or capital punishment as the heir of the slain demand it, if the heir shall pardon the murderer, or shall require from him Diya or blood money, the will of the heir shall not be allowed to operate, but the Court of Nizamat... shall sentence the murder to suffer death (Colebrook 1807, p. 160).

When the relatives asked their right to pardon, they were told by the Court of Circuit that the case will be appealed to the higher Court of Appeal along with *fatwas* and the requisition letter of the heir and the case will be decided along with the traditional legal practice. Since *fatwas* had to be submitted to the court once trial is over, in case of any claim later on it was held that a relative of the heir was present during the trial in higher courts. Thus, the British proved themselves as a master of deception, perjury and mischief. In a number of cases it was impossible to change the law, so the basis for issuing a *fatwa* was changed to get the desired result (Fisch 1983, p. 46).

The British depiction of so called “Oriental Barbarity” continued in their rule also. Official flogging of the culprits,

branding of the culprit's forehead, public execution and displaying of their bodies in public, public gallows, etc., are just a few such examples (Arnold 1994, pp.148-87).

Day by day British judicial administration was becoming scandalous, arbitrary and irregular. This invited the people of Bengal's ire and anger and also made the British insecure. In order to deal with this problem, the Chief Judge of the Calcutta Supreme Court Justice Impey compiled a Civil Code of Procedure (Colebrook, pp. 37-39). It contained ninety-five clauses, which replaced all previous decrees concerning civil court cases. It was later on translated into Persian and Bengali (Narain, 1959, pp. 13-15).

The language barrier further added to the misunderstanding of the people. Since Cornwallis instituted the institution of lawyers and by that all the litigants had to necessarily put their case with a lawyer, this added the financial burden on the people. Not only this, since now the cases had to be in written form, this also took away the illiterate people's language. The wigs and robes of the British judges were a disturbing figure for the people, who had to appear before them.

According to the new code of procedure, both plaintiff and defendant had to submit the written statement and testimonies, which were to be translated first into Persian and then in English. This practice proved to be a comedy of errors. Sometimes it completely changed what the parties had alleged. (Cohn 1987, pp. 474-77) The British Judge had to

reach to a verdict based upon such procedural errors and the end result out of it can be easily understood. The so-called 'Rule of Law' of Cornwallis slipped into chaos and in the process both civil and criminal law were smothered.

Further on the question of taking an oath during a court proceedings, a lot of controversy was aroused. Already, there were lots of suspicions due to missionary propaganda, now the members of both the Hindu and Muslim community feared that the oath would lead to social pollution or degradation. The idea of taking a religious oath to uphold an institution without any spiritual meaning was alien to the people (Singhna, pp. 46-48).

Indian nationalists and Englishmen with a certain kind of cultural sensibility held the contrary view, that law had become less meaningful and useful because of its distance, expense and impersonality. Sir Thomas Munro wrote:

Such agency is too expensive, and even if it were not . . . it is in many cases much less efficient than . . . the natives' . . . I have never seen any European whom I thought competent from his knowledge of the language and the people to ascertain the value of the evidence given before him (Woodruff, 1954, p.195).

These views highlighted moral differences concerning the appropriate procedures to be used in settling disputes, maintaining order, and fostering social integration, differences that were rooted in the clash between Britain's more modern

and India's more traditional society. (Cohn 1959, p. 61) It is very helpful for a specific understanding of the problem in the Indian situation. The difference is not merely one between Indian and western approaches. However, it is as much a shift from traditional to modern methods of settling disputes. The vexations that accompanied the rise of the British system were mainly expense and delay in the administration of justice, the so-called rise in litigation, and the prevalence of false witness (Gupta 1914, p. 56).

To some extent, these were a consequence of the shift in procedure itself. Hiring a lawyer and getting oneself and one's witnesses to a distant law court fifty miles away to the District court was unacceptable in Indian rural life. Not only this, they needed to pay the initial costs of registering a complaint and supporting the witnesses, which made such courts less appealing than local tribunals.

Sir Thomas Munro argued, for example, that the separation of the offices of Collector and Magistrate, rational in terms of separation of functional theory, made no sense for the villager's pocketbook, as it forced him to travel twice, where once might do. 'The *vakils* (agents),' Derrett observes, "who soon became available to represent clients, ousted the parties who had formerly appeared in person or through relations or well-placed patrons. The latter acted gratuitously but the former required to be paid and they also learned how to protract litigation." (Derrett 1961, p. 23). M N Srinivas observes:

Justice can be swift and cheap in the village, besides also being a justice, which is understood as such by the litigants. The litigants either speak for themselves or ask a clever relative or friend to speak on their behalf. There are no hired lawyers arguing in a strange tongue, as in the awe inspiring atmosphere of the urban state courts (Srinivas 1966, p. 18).

Conclusion

Thus, the introduction of the British legal system in the Bengal Presidency affected the balance between divergent indigenous legal traditions and procedural assumptions and practice. For the most part, the *raj* disregarded, largely through ignorance, the existence of the orally transmitted customary law of villages, castes and regions. It identified Indian law as inscribed in the classical texts monopolized by the elite groups such as *pandits* and *maulvis* and in so doing imprudently strengthened it at the expense of the ‘popular’ law of the peasant society. All such claims of benevolent rule and reforms were guided by administrative convenience, mercantilist interest, colonial subjugation and imperial design.

References

1. Aspinall, A. 1931, *Cornwallis in Bengal: The Administrative and Judicial Reforms of Lord Cornwallis in Bengal*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
2. Arnold, David. 1994, “The Colonial Prison: Power, Knowledge and Penology in Nineteenth Century India”,

- in David Hardiman (eds) *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. VIII, Oxford University Press, Delhi.
3. Atchison, Charles U. 1909, *Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Calcutta, Vol. 2.
 4. Beveridge, Henry. 1886, *The Trial of Nand Kumar: A Narrative of a Judicial Murder*, Calcutta.
Bryce, 1901, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, Vol. I, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
 5. Cohn, B S. 1959, "Some Notes on Law and Change in North India", *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 8.
 6. Cohn, Bernard S. 1997, "Law and the Colonial State in India", Oxford University Press, Delhi.
 7. Cohn, B S. 1987, "From Indian Status to British Contract", in *an Anthropologist amongst the Historians*, Oxford University Press, Delhi.
 8. Colebrook, James E. 1807, *Supplement to the Digest and Laws enacted by the Governor General in Council, the Civil Government of the Territories under the Presidency of Calcutta*, Calcutta.
 9. Derrett, J. D. M. 1963, "Justice, Equity and Good Conscience" in J N D Anderson, ed, *Changing Law in Developing Countries*, Allen and Unwin, London.
 10. Derrett, J. D. M. 1961, "Sanskrit Legal Treatises compiled at the instance of the British", Vol. 63.
 11. Derrett, J. D. M. 1961-62, "The Administration of Hindu Law by the British", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. IV.

12. Davies A M. 1935, *Strange Destiny: A Biography of Warren Hastings*, Putnam.
13. Dias, R.W. M. 1994, *Jurisprudence*, Aditya Books Limited, New Delhi.
14. Banerjee, D N. 1943, *Administrative System of the East India Company in Bengal, 1765-1774*, Longman, London.
15. Fawcett, Charles. 1934, *The First Century of British Justice in India*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
16. Fisch, J. 1983, *Cheap Lives and Dear Limbs: The British Transformation of the Bengal Criminal Law, 1769-1817*, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag.
17. Freitag, Sandra B. 1991, "Crime in the Social Order of Colonial North India", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, no. 2.
18. Gleig, G R. 2005, *Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, First Governor General of Bengal*, Vol. 1, Shubhi, Gurgaon.
19. Gupta, N. S. 1914, *Sources of Law and Society in Ancient India*, Calcutta.
20. Ilbert, Courtney. 1915, *The Government of India*, 3rd ed. Oxford University Press, London.
21. Jones, Monckton. 1918, *Warren Hastings in Bengal, 1772-74*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
22. Jain, M P. 2001, *Outlines of Indian Legal History*, Wadhwa and Co., Nagpur.
23. Keith, A B. 1996, *A Constitutional History of India, 1600-1935*, Low Price Edition.
24. Langford, Paul. 1989, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727-1783*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

25. McNaghten, W. H. 1829, *Principles and Practice of Hindu Law*, Vol. I, Calcutta.
26. Misra, B B. 1961, *Judicial Administration of the East India Company, 1773-1783*, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi.
27. Narain, V A. 1959, *Jonathan Duncan and Varanasi*, Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta.
28. Stephen, Leslie. 1895, *Life of Sir James Fitzjinnqec Stephen*, New York.
29. *Hindustan Times*, 7 August, 1926.
30. Singhna, Radhika. 1998, *A Despotism of Law, Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
31. Srinivas, M N. 1966, *Social Change in Modern India*, Asia Publishing House.
32. Stephen, James Fitzjmes. 1885, *The Story of Nuncomar and the Impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey*, McMillan, London.
33. Woodruff, Phillip. 1954, *The Men who ruled India*, Vol. I, New York.

Porto Novo Iron Works- Retelling the Story of a Failed Industrial Enterprise of 19th Century Madras and its Impact

Dolly Thomas, Ph.D.

Associate Professor & Head

Department of History, Stella Maris College (Autonomous),
Chennai

Abstract

The paper analyses the changes made in iron technology during the 19th century India, by focusing on the efforts of the biggest iron manufacturing unit established in India in the early decades of the 19th century, namely the Porto Novo factory. The founder of the factory Josiah Marshall Heath, found his inspiration from the fabled wootz industry of India and the early efforts at iron manufacture in England. Despite his best efforts and support from the East India Company in Madras in multiple ways, profits eluded. Despite difficulties the factory was able to manufacture and sell iron and steel to establishments in India and England. Every innovation in iron technology introduced in England during the period was tried at Porto Novo. Even the Bessemer process was tried at the Bypore branch. However, continued losses led to the closure of the factory.

Key words: *Porto Novo, Josiah Marshall Heath, Parry & Co, Salem, Carburet, Robert Brunton, cast and wrought iron,*

Beypore factory, Madras Government, Sheffield, Alexander & Co, Palampatti.

Introduction

Iron ore occupies a place of central importance among all metalliferous minerals because of its significance in terms of production, trade, sectoral linkages and its contribution to economic development. Indian ore reserves are estimated to be about 11976 million tons, accounting for about 4.76% of world reserves, thus making her the fifth richest country in the world endowed with bountiful reserves¹. In purity of ore, and in antiquity of working, the iron deposits of India are ranked among the first in the world. They were found in every part of the country, from the northern mountains of Assam and Kumaun to the extreme south of Madras². Iron smelting had been at one time a wide spread industry in India and the West had been indebted to India for its supplies of iron and steel for centuries. At one time, Indian steel was so highly prized that according to legend, Alexander was glad to accept a present of 40 lbs. of steel from Porus.

Legends of wootz steel and Damascus swords aroused the curiosity of the European scientific community from the 17th to 19th centuries. The use of high-carbon alloys was not known in Europe previously and thus research into wootz steel played an important role in the development of modern English, French and Russian metallurgy. The celebrated wootz steel caused quite a stir in the scientific world of England. It was asserted that wootz when properly

treated became vastly superior to the best cast steel of Europe. It was fit to be manufactured into cutlery of every description and even surgical instruments. It took on a beautiful polish and did not appear to be subject to oxidization as common cast steel³. In 1790, samples of wootz steel were received by Sir Joseph Banks, President of the British Royal Society, sent by Helenus Scott. These samples were subjected to scientific examination and analysis by several experts.

Production of Iron in Madras Presidency

Like in the rest of India, iron and steel had been manufactured in the Madras Presidency from time immemorial. The excellent quality of the ore resulted in excellent steel that was admired worldwide⁴. Salem was favoured for its manufacture of iron and steel. There is evidence to show in the reports of Robert Bruce Foote and Sir Thomas Holland, not to mention the old manuals and the Gazetteers that the industry was carried on in several parts of Madras till about the close of the last century⁵. Sir Thomas Munro in his evidence before the select committee of 1813, stated that “In India, almost every article which the natives require is made cheaper and better than in Europe. Among these are all cotton and silk manufactures, leather, paper, domestic utensils of brass and iron and implements of agriculture⁶.” All through the 18th century not only was India self-sufficient in iron production but had enough surplus for exports. However by 1850’s, the native industry had virtually died out and the industrial houses that were established began to import iron from Britain for their needs. To quote from

Sarada Raju, she says while the textile industry somehow managed to survive, iron manufacture virtually disappeared.

Early methods of production in Madras

The ore was procured in the form of iron sand from the beds of streams or was dug from shallow pits. Since the iron bearing strata was widely scattered and transportation was by using donkeys and buffaloes, smelting was limited to regions where there was timber for charcoal production. The smelters, lived in crude huts and frequently moved about in search of better ore or timber. Iron was smelted in crude furnaces built of clay. Two smeltings could be accomplished in a day. Various types of crude bellows were used to blast the furnace. Generally, the iron from the furnace was very impure and required further forging before it could be made into tools and implements but when finished it was often of very high quality⁷. The Madras government records mention that small scale ironsmiths produced wrought iron(malleable and of high tensile strength iron alloy of low carbon content, usually obtained by puddling pig iron when molten) using cone shaped furnaces. The volume of ore fired in each furnace each day varied from 116 to 195 kgs. These conical furnaces were similar to modern blast furnaces.

Decline of the industry

The work of the blacksmiths across the Madras Presidency had recorded a decline. Formerly they had been engaged in the manufacture of swords, spears and other weapons, but since

there was no more demand for such work, they confined themselves to rough knives, razors, spokes for country carts, agricultural implements, bolts and nails⁸.

In the 19th century, iron was imported from Britain, some of it was consumed by the Company itself as cannons, gun parts or construction material and the rest was used by the several business houses that opened their own foundries to produce implements and tools. The Company was aware that a household industry in iron smelting existed in rural areas in tiny tribal hamlets. But typically those areas were hilly and forested and there was limited access to them.

Modern iron production

There was an attempt to bring in new iron technology that began in the West into India during the 19th century because by then India's indigenous industry was in a state of disarray and ruin. This study looks at the period of transition from the ancient form of iron technology to the adoption of Bessemer process world over.

This study focuses on the genesis of this new technology in India, specifically the role of one factory, which was remarkable for the fact that in the 19th century, it was India's biggest iron factory, built with state of the art equipment that required huge investment. Similar ventures did not last beyond a few years but the Porto Novo factory lasted for over four decades during which time it served the needs of several establishments in India and Britain. The Porto Novo story is

one of great persistence in the face of great difficulties. The Porto Novo story is also one of the direct involvement of the government to promote an industry it considered crucial for growth. This study focuses on western iron technology before the Bessemer process revolutionized the industry both in India and the West.

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, there were several Europeans who were keen on benefiting from the unlimited opportunities a large and deindustrialized country like India provided. There was an urgent need for iron and steel production among the expatriate industrialists in India who were importing iron from Britain incurring huge expenses. The imported iron was not of a superior quality.

In 1808, the East India Company had a Mr. Duncan to investigate the iron resources of Madras, and with the help of the Company he established a small factory which was unable to operate successfully and eventually it was forced to closed down.⁹

It is recorded that iron smelting in India, using modern techniques, commenced with the efforts of John Farquhar, a Writer with the English East-India Company in Calcutta and Thomas Motte, a diamond merchant, who collaborated to establish an iron foundry in Panchet, which is located in present day Jharkhand. Farquhar and Motte attempted to produce soft iron for civil and military uses of the Company. They also hoped to build cannons, and to produce cast-iron

pots, frying pans and other domestic implements. However, their efforts were short lived.

Another Britisher who attempted the manufacture of iron was James Erskine. He started the Bengal Iron Works in Kulti in 1875. He used raw coal to fire open top furnaces, with locally available iron ore. The company however could not compete with the cheaper imported steel and eventually folded up. This enterprise was taken over by the Calcutta government in 1881 and renamed as Barakar Iron Works. In 1889, it was taken over by private enterprise yet again and renamed the Bengal Iron and Steel Company. In 1892, Martin & Co. took over as managing agents. This was the first iron manufacturing company in India to use a coke oven battery for its production.

Dr. Balfour, an eminent scientist, who in 1850, held the post of the Superintendent of the Government Central Museum, also made an attempt to manufacture iron in Madras. During the Crimean war when iron became scarce and its import from England very expensive, he made a detailed study of the indigenous iron and steel industry. He felt that the iron ore of Madras was far superior to the ores of England. All that was lacking in Madras was the knowledge of working on a large scale and economically enabling Madras to export to England, what was chiefly being obtained from Sweden and Russia¹⁰. The first Briton who attempted manufacturing iron and steel in India on a very large scale based on modern processes was Josiah Marshall Heath of the

Madras Civil Service. Heath incidentally was a close friend of the famed writer Charles Dickens¹¹.

Since the need to initiate large scale production of iron in India became a felt need and to minimize the imports from Britain, the East India Company was willing to offer forest lease and a captive market to iron masters from Britain to begin iron production in India.¹² In-fact the story of the Porto Novo factory is a case in point of the Government at Madras taking a direct interest in promoting private enterprise.

Since every industrial venture requires adequate supply of iron and steel, it was only natural that the bigger business houses would also enter the fray and attempt its manufacture. Parry & Co. was the first business house from Madras to attempt the manufacture of iron and steel when it became the managing agent of the Porto Novo Iron & Steel Co. in 1833.

Heath - the Pioneer

Josiah Marshall Heath came to Madras as a civil servant. He was first appointed as the relieving commercial resident in Salem and then as full commercial resident of Coimbatore-Nilgiris district. Heath was an enthusiastic naturalist and a man of considerable scientific knowledge. It was during his tenure at Salem that he learnt about the richly endowed geomorphology of Salem and the idea of iron manufacture germinated. In 1818, J. M Heath, spent some time observing the native process of manufacturing steel. He found that though the process of manufacture was highly defective, yet

it produced fine cutlery. He inferred that an undertaking using the excellent iron ore of the Presidency coupled with the technical knowhow of the West would be able to manufacture iron and steel profitably¹³. He returned to England to study the process and he resigned from the civil service in 1829 to become a full time iron maker. In 1830, he launched the Porto Novo Iron Works.

J.M. Heath applied to the Government of Madras for license to manufacture iron and steel in 1824¹⁴. He sought exclusive rights to build a factory that would operate on European lines. He claimed that he would be able to supply iron and steel at rates cheaper than what Britain was acquiring from Sweden and Russia. The Madras Government granted him exclusive right over the ore in a vast tract of land spread across 38,000 miles. They guaranteed purchase of finished products. In consideration of the risk, labour and expenditure he would incur, Heath was given a temporary monopoly of 21 years for iron and steel manufacture in the districts of south and north Arcot, Trichinopoly, Salem, Coimbatore and Malabar.

Heath began to direct his efforts at being an iron master and studied the developments in the field of iron and steel manufacture. He was influenced by the research and work of the French inventor Rene Antoine Ferchault de Reaumur and English inventor Benjamin Huntsman. His trials with steel making using the 1-3% carburet of manganese, which essentially is using manganese in the metallic state as a deoxidizer resulted in cast steel which was cheaper. On 15

April 1839, Heath received a patent for his work. It was a path breaking invention and subsequently all cast steel in Sheffield was made using Heath's method. Such steel possessed the quality of welding either to itself or to malleable iron. In the early days of his invention, he supplied the carburet to his licensees in small packets. However as the demand grew, it was proving to be expensive and cumbersome to supply the carburet. So, he suggested to his licensees that it would be cheaper to put a given quantity of oxide of manganese and charcoal powder along with cold pieces of iron or steel to be melted. When the materials were sufficiently heated, the subsequent chemical reaction would produce the carburet and achieve the desired result. However, to Heath's dismay, his licensees said that the new method was not exactly what he had patented and refused to pay him royalty. The matter went into litigation. Nine years later the House of Lords did rule in his favour but by then Heath was heart-broken and ruined¹⁵.

As result of his enthusiasm and persuasiveness, he obtained the powerful backing of Thomas Munroe and convinced the government to lend him in successive sums, money amounting to almost Rs.6,00,000/- by 1835. With the means at his disposal, he was able to prove that pig iron could be made without difficulty in the tropics. In Salem were some remarkable deposits of magnetic iron from 50 feet to 100 feet in thickness, extending continuously for miles. Heath worked the beds at Palampatti¹⁶. In 1833, Heath applied for a lease to explore the iron and chrome ores within the limits of Baramahal¹⁷. In 1834, Heath applied to the government

to collect iron ore and cutting fuel in the district of south Arcot, Malabar and Coimbatore¹⁸. In 1834, he was granted exclusive rights for raising iron ores in Canara for 21 years within the limits of the district¹⁹.

Though Heath had the complete blessings and support of the Madras government for his venture, the amount loaned was far from sufficient to make the production profitable and Heath had to turn to assistance from private enterprise²⁰.

Antiquity of Porto Novo

Porto Novo which means “new port” in Portuguese was also known as Parangipettai. It was a Portuguese settlement from the 16th century established by Alfonso de Albuquerque. Porto Novo was acquired by the English in 1748. The river Vellar runs through the area and drains into the Bay of Bengal at Porto Novo. The choice of Porto Novo by Heath was the proximity to Salem, which was roughly 200 kms away and could supply iron ore through the waterways of Vellar.

The Factory

J M Heath established the Porto Novo Iron Works at Porto Novo in 1830. The main foundry was 30.48 x 18.29m in size. It had proper cranes, air furnaces, cupolas and other foundry appliances. In front of the blast furnaces ran the pig iron beds and foundry hall. There were several sheds containing refinery, puddling and reheating furnaces and a rolling mill driven by

50 horsepower. The factory was provided with several sets of rollers of round, square and flat iron bars, bending gear, rolling plates, saws and shears.

Iron ore was transported there from Salem by boats using the Khan Sahib brackish water canals. The canal linked the north-lying Vellar river to the south-lying Kollidam, which is a tributary of the Kaveri. To facilitate the carriage of iron-ore, the old Khan Sahib's canal was made navigable in 1854. 3 locks were constructed, one where the canal entered into the Vellar, opposite the town of Porto Novo; the second where it left the Viranam tank and the third a little lower down. Before this facility was created, Heath had dug a short canal of their own for about 2 miles and iron ore was transported in small basket boats. This was the transportation method followed for 24 years, and as can be imagined it was a slow and laborious process²¹.

Initial troubles and subsequent progress

The smelting operations during the initial stages were a disaster. A significant stumbling block was deciding the shape of the charcoal fired furnace suitable to the chemical nature of the ore and the charcoal used as the energy source. The machines ordered from England were incomplete. Initially cattle power was used to operate the bellows but that did not work effectively. The European workmen arrived a year

after the machinery died, thus causing further delay in the production.

The workers who finally arrived from Britain were unfamiliar with charcoal fired furnaces. They were also unsure of the conversion of the cast into wrought iron. Eventually, they adopted methods prevalent in France and Germany, which used finery fires. The iron and steel produced were of good quality but the firm was not able to guarantee consistent quality or quantity even after a decade of manufacturing experience at Porto Novo.

In 1835, the Porto Novo factory's application for erecting blast furnaces and work sheds in the Musiri and Oodiarpolliem taluks was sanctioned by the Government²².

In 1838, an engineer called Robert Brunton joined the factory after being persuaded by Heath. He devoted his enterprise and energy to improving the quality of the pig iron and more economical methods of smelting. In May 1838, he tried steam power similar to the kind used by William Avery and Ambrose Foster of USA. In 1831, the duo had patented their design of a "reacting steam engine." The Foster-Avery steam engine was introduced at Porto Novo with adaptations introduced by Brunton. The adaption was found to work quite well. The finished iron that was exported to Britain received very favourable reports. During this time, the financial situation seemed better. The pig iron produced was shipped to UK free, since the ships carried the iron as ballast during their return haul.

In 1840, an improved process in iron production that was introduced in France was experimented with. The gas that emanated from the furnace was re-used as fuel. This facilitated greater money savings in the generation of steam, reheating and repuddling iron. Robert Brunton trained at the Paris factory of Tusey and Treveray, where the process had been patented. After his training, a combined steam engine for rolling mills and blowing apparatus was installed at Porto Novo.

The new process was found to have a flaw which was discovered eventually. The heat generated in the furnaces was so high that every now and then it stopped functioning and needed repairs.

The production

Heath fixed the cost of sale at 12 pounds per ton. In Heath's license application, the price of bar iron was set at 34-40 pounds per ton in England and 18-24 pounds per ton in India. In both markets, he managed to convince the concerned company officers that his enterprise would make profits²³.

In 1837, Heath received a request from Capt. Foster, Superintendent of Roads at Poona as to whether the American Plough could be made at Porto Novo. The same year an order of 400 ploughs to be used by the Bombay government was received. The superior performance of the plough resulted in another order in September 1837 for 800

ploughs in Madras. Several Indians who possessed estates in Madras wanted the plough. The weight of the cast and wrought iron work was about 60lbs and it cost Rs. 10/-. The ploughs could be worked in light soil but were found to be unfit for ploughing rice fields²⁴.

In 1859, Sheffield imported about 1000 tons of iron, which they obtained from Porto Novo. The iron was soon regarded as of superior quality and was found to be best for steel tools. The Britannia Tubular and Menai bridges in Sheffield were built with Porto Novo steel. The Sheffield ironmongers prophesied that India would become one of the largest sources of iron supply for Sheffield²⁵. The Porto Novo iron was very highly thought of and a depot was established at Chelsea. The Gun Carriage Factory at Madras which received iron from the Beypore establishment was very pleased with the product. The Beypore factory was the first in India to use the Bessemer converter.

Financial problems

By 1833, Heath had borrowed Rs. 5,71,000/- from the Madras government. The firm also tried to raise capital by enlisting the support of Surgeons of the East India Company, stationed at Madras as shareholders. In 1833, the name of the company was changed to the Indian Steel and Iron company with Parry & Co. as the main financiers.

The financial problems continued and by 1838, Heath was in severe debt. He sailed to England and floated a public limited

company called the East Indian Iron Company. The company had the support and backing of the British Parliament.

By 1849, the losses incurred at the Porto Novo works had risen to Rs. 8,22,240/- and in the same year, Heath gave up the venture and returned to England. He died in 1851 at Sheffield.

Reasons for failure

All the pioneering factories in iron production which begun in the 19th century in India failed; some like Porto Novo failed after decades of struggle. All these ventures had underestimated the huge difficulties involved in making a success of an iron factory based on the British model. What had not been envisaged was the cost of transporting wood for charcoal would be large in the Deccan region which did not have big rivers. Moreover, the factories could not easily attract and retain European foremen and engineers thus leading to inconsistency in production methods. While smelting was conceived on a large scale, mining happened using old methods.

Most of the suggestions for Porto Novo's failure revolve around the narrative of capital shortage. There was just not enough capital to ensure consistent supply. The iron produced at Porto Novo was of good quality and orders were pouring in. Sheffield in-fact wanted an increased supply of the iron but Heath refused the offer of a contract to supply more. Porto Novo's problem was therefore not that of demand, nor quality, nor the price but of lacking resources to supply. The

wood for charcoal had to be transported from about 25 miles and this was a significant impediment. When the factory faced deficiency of fuel, it was forced to bring wood fuel from Sri Lanka by sea. There were also difficulties connected to shipping of the finished product. All these impediments resulted in irregularity of supply.

Another reason for failure was the cost of labour and materials. The report of 1833 prepared by the Madras government had stressed the importance of “steady supply of intelligent workmen and steady supply of charcoal.” Lack of both these ultimately led to the closure. Capital was expensive in India unless one belonged to established banking communities. Heath with his limited resources had to depend on financial help from the government, which needed returns on its investment and when the factory continued to be unprofitable, there was no justification in continuing. The agency house of Alexander & Co. were the first private financiers, who were themselves dependent on the earnings from indigo trade, and this was encountering a rough phase itself. The agency of Parry & Co. made two attempts to expand and modernize the factory but profits continued to be elusive.

Impact on environment

In the absence of a viable alternative, charcoal was used extensively. To develop the Porto Novo factory, extensive lease on land for mining as well as firewood for charcoal production was obtained from the government. From 1825 onwards, trees

were cut, land was prospected and mining operations commenced. Heath was granted the right of cutting fuel in all the jungles in the region. In 1835, he was given the exclusive right of cutting fuel in government waste lands and jungles in Trichinopoly and Salem²⁶. It is not hard to visualize the impact on the environment. The factory even got permission to obtain wood from the reserved forests of the region. The 1854 shift to Beypore was largely necessitated by the fact that timber was no longer available for large scale production at Porto Novo. In three decades, the industrial needs of just one factory had destroyed the forest cover of several districts.

Mining is also rightly called a robber industry as it results in the depletion of the mineral wealth of a nation. The large scale mining operations run by the firm caused great damage to the environment besides severe depletion of mineral resources. Close on the heels of iron ore mining by Porto Novo, several European firms in Madras began iron ore mining in Salem and the neighbouring districts. By the time of Indian independence, the extensive mining by foreign firms had depleted mineral wealth.

Impact on employment

There is no evidence that Indian workers were employed at Porto Novo except for in the most unskilled tasks. Given the character of indigenous smelting in the interior regions, it would have been difficult to contemplate employing the services of Indian iron smelters as the main workforce.

However, it was a very large scale operation and it can be safely assumed that Indian labour was employed in mining operations and other base line functions.

Financial help from private enterprise

When the Madras Government was not able to bail Heath out of his growing debt, he turned to private companies. The earliest business house to pitch in their force behind the manufacture of iron and steel at Porto Novo were Alexander & Co., of Calcutta²⁷ and Parry & Co., of Madras, who were the major financiers of this first attempt to manufacture steel on a large scale using modern technology in India.²⁸

The business house of Alexander & Co., of Calcutta were the first to take up the project, investing over 2,50,000/- in it.²⁹ However as a result of the continuing losses, Alexander & Co., relinquished the agency³⁰. It is at this juncture that Parry & Co. entered the project. The trustees of the Porto Novo Iron and Steel Co., headed by Parry & Co. raised the funds to pay Alexander & Co., and also appointed Capt. Keighly to audit the debts³¹. The Madras Government at this juncture appointed a committee to report on the iron works established by Heath³². The government also received requests from Heath soliciting protection for his iron works by continuing the exclusive privilege granted to him of raising minerals and cutting fuel³³.

Parry and Company became the managing agents of the Porto Novo Iron and steel Co., in 1833³⁴. New furnaces, forges

and rolling mills were erected. Despite concessions from the Government on the usage of reserved forest, the factory continued to encounter difficulties in obtaining charcoal fuel. Parry & Co. continued as the managing agents of the Porto Novo Iron & Steel Co., till 1850. The Madras Almanac of 1851 lists Bainbridge & Co., located in Bentinck's building, North Beach as being the managing agents for the Porto Novo Iron & Steel Co., They returned as the agents till 1853³⁵. By the mid-19th century, the demand for iron and steel in India had increased dramatically with the development of railways and other public works in Madras. The disappointing results with the first attempts to manufacture steel did not dissuade Parry & Co., from making another attempt to resurrect the Porto Novo enterprise. The factory at Porto Novo was renamed as the East Indian Iron Co., in 1853. The new Company was floated on 1st June, with a start up capital of 400,000 pounds, obtained by selling 40,000 shares of 10 pounds each³⁶. A sum of 10,000 pounds was given to the Madras government in liquidation of all claims against the Porto Novo Iron & Steel Co.³⁷. The new company probably with the intention of reducing difficulties encountered with the supply of charcoal, decided to form several centres instead of relying on Porto Novo alone.

Mr. James Beaumont, a talented and energetic manager from Abersychan Iron Works was appointed as General Manager. Two subsidiary works were erected at Palampatti on the Kaveri river about 20 miles west of the Kanjamalai ore deposit and Trinomalai in south Arcot, and a few years later similar works were established at Beypore on the west Coast.

In Beypore, the earliest Bessemer converters in India were established³⁸. It was found necessary with the appliances at their disposal to expend 3 ¼ tons of charcoal per ton of iron produced. The resulting output of iron was too small to make the project a commercial success.

Despite the difficulties faced during this period, large quantities of very superior quality pig iron was manufactured and some of it was sent to England to be made into ballast for cotton and tea ships. The iron manufactured at Porto Novo was used to build the Menai and Britannia Tubular bridges. It was also during this period that iron produced was used for the construction of the Egmore and Central railway stations. It is said that the iron pillars of both these stations bear the trade mark of 'Made in Porto Novo.' The pig iron was sold at Rs.66 ¼ per ton at London. The freight charges however were very high making transportation difficult. The laborious puddling process was found to be totally unsuitable and repeated failures to manufacture wrought iron on a satisfactory commercial scale resulted in a financial crisis.

A new method of manufacturing steel introduced in Madras by William Maylor was tried. It involved the manufacture of steel from crude iron prepared by forcing through crude molten metal powerful jets of atmospheric air for a few minutes. Commercial success, however, continued to elude the company and Parry & Co., relinquished their agency of the iron manufacturing factory and it was taken over by

Oakes & Co., a firm which had been fairly successful with its Beehive iron factory located at Madras. The Palampatti works were closed in 1858. The Porto Novo & Beypore works shut down in 1864. Further, in 1874, the Company was finally dissolved and its privileges were surrendered to the Government³⁹.

Therefore, the first attempt to manufacture steel using modern technology in the Presidency of Madras was a dismal failure. What is ironical is that despite the coming of the railways, the iron works languished and ultimately died a lingering death.

Other iron factories at Madras

The Beehive Iron Foundry and Engineering Works belonging to Messrs Oakes & Co. situated at 93, Pophams Broadway, Madras, was established in 1843⁴⁰. The Company successfully carried out contracts of some magnitude for the railway authorities, for shipping companies and for many of the leading merchants and building contractors throughout the Madras Presidency. Considerable extensions were made to the foundry during later years in order to meet the increasing demand for structural steel and iron work and a staff of competent engineers and draughts-men were kept for the preparation of designs and for estimation of costs. The company specialized in the construction of steel roof principles, girders, stanchions, oil and water tanks, pulleys,

shafting, bridges, sluice gates, aerial tramways, rubber-washing mills, vacuum dryers, hot air drying plant, hay or goods sheds, fire proof doors, spiral and straight stair cases, sanitary carts, crab winches, ballast road rollers, garden seats and expanded metal.

The store room was always stocked with a large variety of goods such as engineering tools, sanitary appliances and fittings, agricultural machinery, corn and grain crushers, engines and boilers of all kinds, pumping machinery, rolled steam beams, mild steel doors and window sashes in teakwood, flooring and ceiling boards, joists, scantlings and a general assortment of engineer and contractor requisites. A number of expert shipwrights were employed to carry out repairs to vessels, and it was not a mean tribute to the company that they were entrusted in September 1914 with the necessary iron, steel and brass-work in connection with the fitting up of a hospital ship in Madras. Steam power for driving the machinery was used throughout the foundry until the close of the year 1914, when a modern system of electricity was substituted⁴¹.

Best & Co. of Madras began iron ore mining at Kanjamalai in Salem and opened two iron foundries Gaudart and St. Elizabeth Iron Works both of which were located at Puducherry and specialized in the manufacture of decortication machines used for shelling groundnuts, and machinery for rice mills and distilleries and production of pig iron.

TISCO and IISCO

The Tata Iron and Steel Company and Indian Iron and Steel Company were launched in 1907 and 1918 respectively. It was the Indian firm of Tata Iron and Steel pioneered by Jamshedji Tata that proved to be the first big success story in the iron and steel industry. The Britishers were very skeptical of Indian manufacturing capability. The Chief Commissioner for Indian Railways, Frederick Upcott on hearing of the Tata venture commented that he would “eat every pound of steel rail the Tata’s succeeded in making.” Most of the British industries of Madras, who had ventured into the engineering industry purchased their raw materials from the Tata Iron and Steel Co⁴².

Conclusion

India’s first large scale and modern iron industry survived due to great persistence for four decades. Maybe if it had persisted for a few more years it could have benefitted by the highly inexpensive Bessemer process that was beginning to revolutionize the industry by 1859. Though the Bessemer converter was used at the Beypore factory, persistent losses weighed heavily on the management who gave up the project just at a time when they should have been most persistent.

References

1. 1.Kadekodi,Gopal, *Economic Planning for Iron Ore in India*, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, 1982, New Delhi,p.1.
2. Hunter W.W, *The Indian Empire-Its People, History and Products*, Asian Education Services, Madras, 2005, First published, Trubner & Co. 1886, London, p.618.
3. Revenue G.O No. 619, 29.6.1887.
4. Baliga, B.S. *Prospects of an Iron and Steel industry in Madras*, Government of Madras, 1960, Madras, p.1.
5. Richards, F.J, *Madras District Gazetteer Salem*, Vol-I, Part –I, 1918, Madras, p.272.
6. A. Sarada Raju, *Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency (1800-1850)*, Madras, 1941.p.146.
7. Francis Buchanan, M.D, *A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar*, p.171.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Balfour, *Report on the Iron Ores and Coals of the Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1855, p.185.
11. Pandey S.N, *Economic History of Modern India*, Readworthy Publications Pvt., Ltd., 2008, New Delhi, p.73.
12. Roy Thirthankar, *A Business History of India. Enterprise and the Emergence of Capitalism from 1700*, p.66
13. *Madras Almanac* 1864, pp.385-386.
14. Public Department, *Minutes of Consultations*, Nos.586-587, 30 July, 1824.

15. Raman, Anantanarayanan, *Large Scale Iron and Steel Production in the Coromandel: The Earliest and Longest survived Porto Novo Iron Works*, Current Science, Vol.113, No. 5, 10 September, 2017.
16. Hunter W.W, *Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol-IX*, second Edition, Turner & Co., London, 1886.
17. Board of Revenue G.O No.31-32, 30.12.1833.
18. Board of Revenue G.O No.27-30, 10.2.1834.
19. Board of Revenue G.O No.9-10, 23.6.1834
20. Public G.O No. 41 & 42, 8 January 1833
21. *The Illustrated Guide to the South Indian Railway*, <https://books.google.co.in/books, isbn=1445650827>
22. Board of Revenue G.O No.32-33, 30 .3.1835.
23. Roy Thirthankar, *India in the World Economy from Antiquity to the Present*, p. 152,
24. *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, <https://books.google.co.in/booksid=wq41AAAAQAA>
25. Ranade M.G, *Essays on Indian Economics- A Collection of Essay and Speeches*,
26. Board of Revenue G.O No.63, 14.9.1835.
27. Public, G.O No. 14 & 15, 19 May 1833.
28. Public G.O Nos.21-23, 27 August, 1833.
29. Mahon, R.H, *A Report on the manufacture of Iron & Steel in India*, Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1899, Shimla, pp.16-21.
30. Public, G.O Nos.45-49, 6 September, 1833.
31. Public, G.O Nos.3-4, 19 November, 1833.
32. Public G.O Nos.4-5, 23 January, 1833.
33. Public G.O Nos.44-45, 9 August, 1833.

34. Public G.O Nos.21-23, 27 August, 1833.
35. *Madras Almanac* 1851, p.338.
36. *Madras Almanac* 1863, p.557.
37. Op. cit.,
38. *Madras Almanac* 1865, p.386.
39. Op. cit.,
40. Ibid. p.184.
41. Ibid. p.240.
42. Indian Tariff Board, *Evidence Recorded during Enquiry into the Steel Industry*, Vol.I, Superintendent, Government Printing India, 1924, Calcutta, pp.12-31.

Hisory of the New Architecture of Colonial Madras

G. Balaji, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor,

C.P.R. Institute of Indological Research, Chennai - 600018.

Architectural forms are the most visible discourses of past civilizations. Indian civilization presents a very rich and diversified architectural tradition. Everywhere it is the human and the social approach that is the determining spirit behind the forms, designs, and expressions of both contemporary and traditional architecture. Further, each period presented architecture that was the trait of its people. It is their creativity and acceptance, their adaptation of new ideas and at the same time accommodating various external influences according to their needs.

During the colonial period in India, a new architectural style was introduced. It was a mixture of various European styles that included the traditional Indian architecture styles. It evolved as an Indo – European architectural heritage in the late 18th to early 20th century CE and that amalgamation was popularly known as Indo-Saracenic architecture.

This is an attempt to trace the various architectural styles and movements that were to become the “new” architecture of Madras, under the colonial powers. Colonial buildings have

varying styles, such as Palladian, colonial and Indo-Saracenic. The Madras terrace roofing, which was to become popular all over India also appeared at this time. The role of architects and native contractors is noteworthy.

The earliest colonial building surviving in ‘then Madras - now Chennai’ is a Portuguese church built in 1516 CE. The inscription on the foundation stone further reads that the friars, in honour of their safe arrival, built the *Church of Our Lady of Light*. The high bell towers and detailed gateway and windows are typical of Portuguese churches and are a major theme of Portuguese colonial religious architecture of the 16th century CE¹.

The architectural style of the church includes Gothic style arches and Baroque (front elevation) ornamentations which evolved during the period of mediaeval Christian art in France². Distinct characters of Gothic style are the pointed arches, ribbed vault, buttresses, including flying buttresses; large windows which are often grouped, or have tracery; rose windows, towers, spires and pinnacles decorated with crockets and finial; and ornate façades³.

The Dutch who came with the interest of trade in the seventeenth century CE continued constructing structures in the Gothic architectural style in India. In 1613 CE, they established Pulicat as their main trading base on the Coramandel coast⁴. They constructed a fort in 1616 CE on the foundations of the pre-existing Portuguese fort⁵. It was

named as Fort Geldrea. Though the fort is at present in a ruined condition, we come across a cemetery complex which retains the architectural style of the Dutch. The tombs and mausoleums are decorated in European architectural style with many of the tombstones being carved in Holland⁶.

The Dutch fort at Saduranga Pattinam, also known as Sadras, was built for commercial purpose. They have built warehouses, granaries, stables, mansions and burial grounds inside this fort. This fort served as a fortified town which would also fulfill their commercial activities. According to the tomb plaques found inside this fort complex, we can approximately say that this fort may have been built between 1618 - 20 CE⁷. The huge fort walls made of lime mortar and brick were strong enough to face cannon balls. The bastions, ramparts and watch towers found in this fort complex shows that the Dutch built this fort to serve the purpose of offensive and defensive techniques.

Although initially the Portuguese and Dutch evolved colonial architecture in India, no major civil constructions came up in Madras. However, in the early seventeenth century when the English East India Company landed in Madras (now Chennai), which is the early settlement of the British in India, numerous colonial buildings were built over the centuries⁸. Madras witnessed the growth of the early new architecture of colonialism in India, which can be compared favourably with Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi.

The British settled down slowly and consolidated their position by expanding their trade and empire in the early stages of their arrival that is, in the early seventeenth century CE. After they had conquered the country in the early nineteenth century CE, they started building structures which demonstrated their power and supremacy over this land.

The first construction of the British in Madras was the 'factory' on the piece of land they negotiated for the purpose of trade from the Raja of Chandragiri in 1639 CE by Francis Day, an English East India Company agent⁹. The construction of the fort started in 1640 CE. Initially, the British constructed a warehouse with accommodation facilities and later they fortified their township. The fort was completed on 23rd April 1644 CE, coinciding with St. George's Day and named it as Fort St. George¹⁰. A local settlement also emerged nearer the fort consisting of local merchants and labourers which grew to envelop the villages and led to the formation of the city of Madras¹¹.

The Georgian buildings within the fort which were constructed some time after the plans of Benjamin Robins for the reinforcement of the fort walls and bastions were accepted and put into effect. Benjamin Robins (1707 – 51) is acknowledged as the founder of ballistics and was an expert on gunnery and fortifications¹². The fine Georgian buildings within the fort came up sometime in the 1770's and 80's as part of the rebuilding programme along with Robin's improvements. Many of the buildings including the King's

Barracks still stand and are fine examples of Indo-European workmanship and materials¹³ (Fig. 1).

Architectural details of the buildings inside the fort¹⁴ (Fig.2)

1. It is an Indo - European style fort complex.
2. Government offices, Civil (Mansions and individual houses), commercial (warehouses), religious (Church) and military buildings (barracks and arsenal) were constructed inside the fort complex.
3. Palladian-style façades supported by pillars
4. Indian style pillared verandahs,
5. Large shuttered windows,
6. Beginnings of Romanesque frontages – triangular façade, turrets, arches
7. Traditional native houses continued to exist outside the Fort walls
8. Flat ceilings made of Madras terrace - developed by British engineers?

Madras terrace ceiling – flat-roofed houses

It is a traditional ceiling technique in South India, generally used for small spans, made of wood and *aachikal* or *kandikal* (a small brick) and lime plaster. Thick teak wood beams were placed on the wall. The beams supported wooden rafters that ran along the shorter side of the room laid at intervals of about 45cms from each other. The gaps between the rafters were filled with *kandikal* bricks laid on edge across in diagonal fashion stuck together with lime paste to create a sheet of bricks over the frame of rafters¹⁵. A three layer

diagonal brick course was laid with each layer in an alternate direction forming a 12 inch thick slab and covered with a layer of lime mortar. *Myrobalan* fruit is soaked in water and poured on the surface. The roof was manually beaten to become firm and weatherproof. The surface was then covered with pressed tiles for a final finish. Clive house, Fort exchange, dwelling houses of European settlements or White town, Fort Square, and Government house are examples of the flat roofed buildings with Indian type pillared verandahs and decorated with Palladian-style façades supported by pillars¹⁶.

St. Mary's Church built in 1680 CE is the only bomb-proof building in the Fort on account of a bomb-proof roof approximately four feet thick and rounded in the manner of a wagon's roof so as to cause cannonballs to ricochet. The internal dimensions of the building are 86 feet by 56 feet with the outside walls 4 feet thick and the walls separating the nave from the aisles, 3 feet thick. The extraordinary thickness of the walls was to protect the building from the saline air and attack and damage during storms. The church was designed and built by William Dixon who was the chief gunner and designer of bastions for the East India Company¹⁷.

Black Town grew up outside the walls of Fort St George to the north on the seafront. In the 18th century, the Europeans moved out of the fort and into Black Town¹⁸. Some important streets are Armenian Street, Portuguese Church Street, Coral Merchants Street, etc. Popham's Broadway named after Stephen Popham, a former British MP and later the Advocate General in Calcutta who moved to Madras in 1778 CE. He

is credited with establishing a modern police force in the city in 1782 CE¹⁹ (Fig. 3).

A hand coloured painting from the British Library collection displays a castle in Madras as two neo-gothic castellated houses with a third house in the centre background. The water-colour painting has a description 'The Castlets' at Madras, by John Gantz (1772-1853 CE). The house was built by James Brodie, an East India Company servant who was granted 11 acres of land on Quibble Island in the estuary of the Adyar River at Madras. 'Brodie Castle' was an imposing white structure flanked by twin castellated turrets set on either side of the main house²⁰.

In Santhome to the south-east of the Cathedral stands the house known as Leith Castle, after James Leith. This served as a refuge for the garrison of Mylapore. The erection of small suburban forts or redoubts was part of the Company's plan for the protection of the outlying quarters of the city. The remains of the redoubts existed in 1939 CE on this site consist of a square keep having walls fifteen feet high and three feet thick, demonstrating a well fortified place²¹.

Palladian architecture is a European style derived from and inspired by the designs of the Venetian architect Andrea Palladio (1508–1580). Palladio's work was strongly based on the symmetry, perspective and values of the formal classical temple architecture of the ancient Greeks and Romans, for example, the temple of Zeus at Olympia, Greece and the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Rome²². From

the 17th century Palladio's interpretation was adapted as a style known as Palladianism. It continued to develop until the end of the 18th century CE.

A few examples of Palladian structures in Madras are Bentinck's buildings (1793 CE) were erected as mercantile offices during the administration of Lord William Bentinck, Governor of Madras from 1803 to 1807 CE²³, Government house (1752 CE) and Banqueting hall (1802 CE) now known as Rajaji hall²⁴ (Fig. 4) and Madras club (1832); later, it became Indian Express Estate, home of the Express group of newspapers²⁵. Now, it has been pulled down and it is now Express Avenue, a shopping mall.

Churches built in Madras during the colonial period also reflect Palladian architectural styles. A sketch by artist Justinian Gantz on St. George's Cathedral, with carriage arriving at the door, 1849 CE, depicts the elevation of the building. The cathedral was built in 1815 CE on a site called Choultry Plain (now Cathedral Road). It was designed by Col. J.L. Caldwell, senior engineer of the British East India Company. St. George's Cathedral occupies an important place in the history of Christianity in India as the Church of South India was inaugurated here on 27th September 1947 CE²⁶.

St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk) belongs to the Scottish Presbyterian tradition and was built to serve the Scottish community in Madras. It was modelled on St. Martin-in-the-Fields, an Anglican church in England. The church was

consecrated in 1821 CE. The Church is one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in Asia and its nave is constructed in a circular shape²⁷.

Indo-Saracenic Architects & Contractors

Indo-Saracenic architecture is a synthesis of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Muslim and Gothic revival styles and developed by British architects in India using Indian materials during the late 19th and early 20th centuries CE²⁸.

Its important features are the Gothic cusped arches, domes, spires, tracery, minarets and stained glass, again an adoption of the Gothic style²⁹.

Other features are

- Overhanging eaves
- Harem windows
- Pavilions – open or with bangla roofs (Mughal style of Bengali roofs)
- Pierced open arcades
- Vaulted roofs
- Madras terrace ceiling for upper floor(s)
- Walls of relief plaster, decorative & painted
- Stone flooring
- Arcaded verandahs
- Construction material - red brick painted with lime mortar

Chepauk Palace, designed by Paul Benfield (1742-1810) is said to be the first Indo-Saracenic building in India³⁰.

Robert Fellowes Chisholm (1840-1915 CE)³¹ was the Principal of the School of Industrial Art, Madras and his major contributions to Indo-Saracenic architecture are the Presidency College (Fig. 5), Senate House in the Madras University, Central Railway Station, pavilion at M.A.C. Stadium etc. Henry Irwin (1842 – 1922 CE)³² who succeeded Chisholm continued this constructional style and built Chennai Egmore Railway station, Madras Museum, etc., Charles Mant, William Emerson, George Wittet, Frederick W. Stevens were the others who contributed much to Indo-Saracenic architecture in different states in India.

But from the 1880's onwards, a series of Indian names emerges and foremost among these was Thatikonda Namberumal Chetty. He was foremost in the business of civil contracts for constructing public buildings and several of his works still survive, standing testimony to his building skills. During his career, Chetty constructed the buildings of the Government Museum, Victoria Technical Institute, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Madras Law College, Connemara Library, Bank of Madras and the Victoria Memorial Hall³³.

Structures built in the Indo-Saracenic style in India were predominantly grand public edifices such as civil utilitarian buildings and government offices.

Art Deco

This architectural form first appeared in France after World War I and became popular in the 1920's, '30s and '40s³⁴. Eclectic style that combines traditional motifs with modern imagery and materials are the primary features of this form. It is also characterized by rich colours, bold geometric shapes and lavish ornamentation especially on the façade. From the 1930s onwards, many buildings were built in the Art Deco style. Other characters of this style include no external verandahs and incorporating new technologies such as the lift, cantilevered porches, stepped motifs used in grills, parapet walls along with vertical windows and curved frontages³⁵.

Some of the examples of this architectural style we found in Madras are Parry building (Fig. 6), Casino Theater, Dasaprakash Hotel, Oriental Insurance building on NSC Bose Road and Bombay Mutual building on NSC Bose Road.

Bungalows of Madras

“Bangla“ meaning "Bengali" and used elliptically for a "house in the Bengal style" - a small house, with only one storey, detached, with a wide verandah³⁶. The English adapted the concept to their needs by designing one or two storeyed houses with wide, covered verandas and an open floor plan to facilitate cross-ventilation and protection in the hot, dusty Indian climate. The common features of this style of architecture is a low-pitched roof often with broad eaves. Entry generally opens directly into the living room, large front

porch that creates an outdoor covered space, surrounded by verandahs, porches, and patios.

There are a few examples of bungalows and heritage houses which exist presently in Madras and they are as follows. The Moubray's Garden house also known as *Moubray's Cupola* because of the *cupola* on its roof (Fig. 7). It has an octagonal central hall, dining room, billiards room and attached toilets and baths rooms. A garden house in Ben's gardens owned by John de Monte, a Portuguese businessman, is a fine example of an individual bungalow with a single storey³⁷. Another typical "bungalow" is Marble Hall. It was built in the garden house style with a large portico, wide verandas, ornamental balustrades, marble floors, high ceilings and many large, wide windows that let in air during the hot, humid summers. It has the roofs of the "Madras Terrace" style. "The Grove" an ancestral property of C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar is also a fine example of a garden house in Madras. The construction of this bungalow includes both Indian and European materials and architectural styles. The addition of suite rooms on the first floor and the use of Burma teak, Venetian marble, Belgium ceiling and Italian stain glasses add charm to this building.

As mentioned earlier, the colonial architecture was a synthesis and confluence of styles which gave new dimensions to the planning of buildings.

References

1. Narasiah, K.R.A., *Madras - tracing the growth of the city since 1969*, Chennai, 2008, p.211.
2. Edith Tomory, *A History of Fine Arts in India and the West*, Madras, 1989, p. 351.
3. Ibid., p.355.
4. Om Prakash, European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India, *The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge University Press. 1998. pp. 127–128.
5. "Handelsposten: Coromandel"(in Dutch, VOCsite.nl. Retrieved 18 February 2010.
6. Krishna Nanditha, *Madras – Chennai its history and environment*, The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, 2010, p.65.
7. Anusha Parthasarathy (June 14, 2012). "Sadras musings". *Times of India*. Retrieved June 25, 2012.
8. Muthiah, S., *Madras Discovered*, Affiliated East West Press, Madras, 1992, p. 11.
9. Op.cit. Narasiah, K.R.A., 2008, p.30.
10. Ibid., p. 37.
11. Op.cit. Muthiah, S.,1992. P.17.
12. Narayanswami, V., *Madras – from the city to the presidency*,Chennai, 2010, p.37.
13. Ibid.
14. Love, H.D., *Vestiges of Old Madras*, (Reprint 1996), New Delhi, p. 271-86.
15. Deborah Thiagarajan, *Domestic Architecture of Tamilnadu, A Celebration of Tamilnadu*, Madras, 1996.
16. Op.cit. Love, H.D., 1996, p. 277 – 80.

17. Stagg, H.C., Fort St. George and St. Marry's Church, *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939, p. 372.
18. Kuriyan, G., Growth of the City of Madras, *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939, p. 295- 315.
19. Op.cit. Love, H.D., 1996, p. 309.
20. Raghavan, A. D., Some Old Madras Houses, *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939, p. 116 -17.
21. Ibid.
22. Op.cit. Edith Tomory, 1989, p. 416.
23. Op.cit. Muthiah, S.,1992, p.241.
24. Ibid. p. 216-17.
25. Ibid. p. 68-69.
26. Krishna, Nanditha, *Madras Then - Chennai Now*, Roli Books, New Delhi, 2014, p. 26.
27. Op.cit. Muthiah, S.,1992, p.300
28. Op.cit. Krishna, Nanditha, 2014, p. 61.
29. Op.cit. Edith Tomory, 1989, p. 352 - 61
30. Kalpana, K., and Frank Schiffer, *Madras: the architectural heritage*, INTACH, Chennai, 2003, p. 161.
31. Ibid. p.160-163
32. Ibid. p.136, 141
33. https://www.wikiwand.com/en/T._Namberumal_Chetty
34. Texier, Simon, *Panorama de l'architecture* (in French), Parigramme, Paris, 2012, p.128.
35. "Do Chennai's art deco buildings have a future?". Madras Musings. XIX (6). 1–15 July 2009. Retrieved 23 Sep 2012.

36. Oxford English Dictionary, "bungalow"; Online Etymology Dictionary.
37. Sriram, V., *Historic Residences of Chennai*, Kalamkriya, 2008, p. 19,65

Bibliography

Brown, Hilton, *Parrys of Madras*, Parry & Co. Ltd., Madras, 1954.

Charles Lawson, *Memories of Madras*, London, 1905.

Frank Penny, *Fort St. George Madras*, London, 1900.

Kalpana, K., and Frank Schiffer, *Madras: the architectural heritage*, INTACH, Chennai, 2003.

Krishna, Nanditha, *Madras – Chennai its history and environment*, The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, 2010.

Krishna, Nanditha, *Madras Then - Chennai Now*, Roli Books, New Delhi, 2014.

Muthiah, S., *Madras Discovered*, Affiliated East West Press, Madras, 1992.

Muthiah, S., *Madras, The Gracious City*, Affiliated East West Press, Madras, 1990.

Muthiah, S., *Tales of Old and New Madras*, Affiliated East West Press, Madras, 1989.

Narasiah, K.R.A., *Madras - tracing the growth of the city since 1969*, Chennai, 2008.

Narayanswami, V., *Ealy Portraits of Madras*, The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Chennai, 2008.

Narayanswami, V., *Madras – from the city to the presidency*, The C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Chennai, 2010.

Srinivasachari, C.S., *History of the city of Madras*, Madras, 1939.

Sriram, V., *Historic Residences of Chennai*, Kalamkriya, 2008.

Sudhakar, G.J., *Aspects of Madras – A Historical Perspective*, Department of History, Loyola College, 1993.

Runganadhan, S. E. ed., *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, MTC Committee, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1939.

This City of Madras, Madras University Centenary City Guide, Madras, 1957.

Wheeler, J., *Madras in the Olden Time*, Madars, 1993.



Fig. 1. View from the King's barracks Fort St. George, Madras



Fig. 2. Fort Square, Fort St. George, Madras



Fig. 3. View of a Street in Black Town, Madras



Fig. 4. Banqueting hall (1802 CE) now known as Rajaji hall, Madras



Fig. 5. Presidency college, Madras



Fig. 6. Parry building, Madras



Fig. 7. The Moubray's Garden house, Madras

**Gandhi's Visit to Rayalaseema Region of
Andhra Pradesh
during the Non-Cooperation Movement**

P.C. Venkatasubbaiah, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Dept. of History, Archaeology and Culture,
Dravidian University, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

Non-Cooperation Movement was a significant phase of the Indian independence movement led by Gandhi through non-violent means and a way to show non-cooperation to British Raj, the last phase of Indian National Movement, i.e. Gandhian phase (1919-1947), in which all Indians got united for their common cause of attaining independence irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The present paper is a critical analysis of Rayalaseema people's response and their participation in the non-cooperation movement campaigned by Gandhi and his visit in different parts of the region under discussion.

Key words: *British Raj, Antagonism, Demonstration, Satyagraha, Propagation, Magnitude, Swadeshi, Untouchability, Eradication, Upliftment.*

Introduction

The Non-Cooperation Movement was a significant phase of the Indian independence movement led by Gandhi who aimed to demonstrate strict resistance to British rule through non-violent means of 'Ahimsa', influencing Indians to refuse British goods, adopt the usage of local handicrafts and picket liquor shops, etc., which exemplified his ability to rally hundreds of thousands of common citizens. It was a call for a nationwide protest in order to close all government offices, factories, withdraw from British Raj sponsored schools, police services, the military and civil services. It also encouraged Indians to return honours and titles given by the government and by resigning from various posts, like teachers, lawyers, civil and military officers¹.

The suppression of the 1857 revolt made Indians to understand their position and the situation of their country under the British Raj for which several factors were responsible although the latter helped the former through the introduction of English education, development of travel and communication system, establishment of centralized state structure, public services, etc. It also made Indians feel bitter, insecure and suspicious about foreign rule because of racial feelings. The emergence of the Indian National Congress at Bombay in 1885, brought Gandhi to the scene of Indian's struggle for independence with methods like non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience policies. During the last phase of Indian National Movement, i.e., Gandhian phase (1919-1947), Indians got united in their common cause of

attaining independence irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Gandhi chalked out programs for visiting several places in South India, especially the Madras presidency comprising the present Rayalaseema region as its people had actively taken part and showed their splendid response to his call with studded historical episodes which wrung the admiration of the people and leaders of whole India².

The Rayalaseema region formed the south-western part of the present Andhra Pradesh with a definite topographic features, socio-economic development and political-historical antecedents comprising the districts of Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool with an extent of 67, 340 sq.km., and considered as one of the backward regions of our country because of below normal rainfall and lack of industries, and also known as ‘stalking ground of famines’³. It is interesting to note its historical and final formation through geographical readjustments. However, it has been known to people as the ‘Ceded districts’ (earlier it had been handed over to the British under the subsidiary alliance system concluded between the Nizam of Hyderabad and the British East India Company on 24th October 1800⁴), till 1928. However, Adoni and Koilkuntla of Kurnool district, give a vivid picture of the historical experience of revolts against the British Raj by Poligars⁵ which can be considered as early antagonism towards foreign rule. Moreover, the growth of English education, Vernacular press and opening of reading rooms or libraries resulted in the general awakening of the public in all the four districts, i.e., Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa⁶ and Kurnool on various issues, like social, economic, religious,

racial discrimination, etc. The present paper is a critical analysis of people's response and their participation in the non-cooperation movement initiated by Gandhi and his visit to different parts of the region.

Inception, participation and process of Non-cooperation Movement

At the inception, the Home Rule Movement left a deep imprint on the minds of the people of Rayalaseema region, as it initiated the establishment of Theosophical Societies at several places in all the districts, for eg., the Besant Theosophical College, in Madanapalli, Chittoor district. Deliberations held in district conferences as well as publication of issues in the local newspapers, helped the nationalist enthusiasm among the people and this had ultimately paved way to the then forthcoming non-cooperation movement. Its actual initiation began when Gandhi visited Madras Presidency where people for the first time celebrated his birthday on 2nd October in Gokhale Hall, in which the Andhra leader Kashinadhuni Nageswara Rao, editor of the Telugu daily, *Andhra Patrika*, participated. He was responsible for popularizing the Gandhian ideology in the region. Later on, in response to Gandhi's call on 6th April 1919 against the Rowlatt Act, a hartal was observed all over Rayalseema, especially in Chittoor, where a meeting and demonstration was held in a befitting and peaceful manner with national mourning to condemn the Jallianwala bagh incident in which leaders like Konda Venkatappayya, Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu, K.V.R Swami, etc. were involved⁷.

Gandhi rightly anticipated the active participation of the Andhra region which supported his views. So, Konda Venkatappayya was made the member of the Congress Working Committee and its General Secretary⁸. From 1920 onwards, Andhra became an important centre for Gandhian experiments and an unique feature was that women like Duvvuru Subbamma, Ponaka Kanakamma and Unnava Lakshmi Bayamma excelled men with their ability in swaying the masses⁹. As part of this activity the 'Telugu press' did its best to enhance the image of Gandhi and gave wide publicity to 'Satyagraha' reminding its followers of the necessity of boycotting elections to the Legislative Council. As a result, lawyers gave up their practice, one of them being Ayyadevara Kaleswara Rao¹⁰, and even students discontinued their studies. Kalluri Subbarao of Hindupur, Anantapur district not only participated in the AICC session at Vijayawada but also acted as a volunteer. The other prominent leaders who attended the session were M. Anantasayanam Iyenger, Neelam Chinnappa Reddy, Tarimella Subba Reddy, N. Sankar Reddy and this had great impact on the progress of the freedom struggle in Rayalaseema¹¹.

Several Indians in British India resigned their positions in the region, i.e., Sankati Konda Reddi, Munsif of Tadipatri of Anantapur district and thirteen village officers in Rayachoti taluk of Kadapa district from their hereditary positions¹². Liquor and toddy shops stocking and shops selling foreign cloths and goods were picketed in the region. Local leaders like A.P. Kavi, Venkatappa and A. Narayana Reddi preached

the boycott of toddy shops in Kalyanadurgam, Penugonda and Tadipatri taluks of Anantapur district and a toddy shop in Rayachoti taluk was burnt down. Several students came out of their colleges to work as Congressmen. Many young men gave up their studies and government jobs to work for the nationalist cause. Kidambi Varadachari of Chittor became a Congress worker since 1919 and during Gandhi's second visit to Madras, he participated in the non-co-operation movement during 1920-21 and also worked for the propagation of Khadi, Harijan upliftment, prohibition and rural reconstruction¹³. Subbarao (1897-1973) from Hindupur of Anantapur district, was a scholar in Telugu and Kannada literature, who took part in the movement from 1920 onwards. He also participated in the Andhra Conference held at Mahanandi in 1920 and developed friendship with Ayyadevara Kaleswara Rao and Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya of Chirala-Perala fame. Pappuri Ramacharyulu and Kalachaveedu Venkataramanacharyulu of Anantapur district gave up their studies to work for the nationalist movement in 1920¹⁴.

As a result of boycotting schools and colleges, several students sat at home. In order to utilize their talent, National Schools were established. By the end of June 1921, 2800 students were enrolled in 44 schools in the region. In place of regular courts, panchayat courts were established. Several others who took part from the region towards this goal were Panyam Ramachandrappa, Kasarbada Narasinga Rao, Mahandayya, Kaipa Subrahmanya Sarma, and Despondya Subba Rao, B. Narayana Reddy, and Sankara Reddi, from

Kurnool district, A.P. Kavi, Obi Reddy and Setam Rao, Hatti Siva Rao and Hatti Sankara Rao, B. Narayana Reddi, Subba Sastry, C.V. Venkatarangachari and Srinivasachari, Muluguri Gurumurthi and Sivasankaram Pillai, from Anantapur district, Lakshmipati and Nemali Pattabhirama Rao, Doraiswamy Iyyengar, Srinivasachari and Ranga Sreshti, from Chittoor district from 1921 onwards¹⁵.

The intensity of this movement was reported from all corners of the region in connection with activities, i.e., defiance of forest rules, no-tax campaign and other related matters. For instance, the no-tax campaign in Rayachoti taluk of Kadapa district necessitated the establishment of a special police station at Sanipaya as it was centrally located in view of troubled forest zones. As the government agents were collecting both entry and sales tax from the petty and casual vendors in the weekly fair, the activists convinced them not to pay any kind of tax as they were selling their own goods. The police report was different from the report of village officers in Rayachoti taluk. However, these activities interrupted the biddings at liquor shops on 5th & 6th, July 1921 which was in tune with the non-cooperation as well as the temperance movement. The villagers exhorted by activists in disobeying forest rules caused destructions in the forest areas near the villages of Rayavaram, Madithadu, Tsundupalli, Veeraballi, Vengimalla and Gadikota in the entire Rayachoti taluk. The forest guards and rangers estimated the forest loss of Rs.7, 714/-. The villagers dismantled 145 cairns, which formed the forest border to a length of 13 miles and felled 1,775 red sanders and 367 other classified trees, removed

99 cart- loads of fuel and 625 cart-loads of manure leaves from these forest areas. Apart from this, they removed fibre from 52 trees and drove 2,550 goats and 800 other cattle into the forest to graze. The Range Officer of Sanipaya was severely assaulted by the men who were taking wood from forest, however, the latter were arrested and prosecuted. In order to change the situation, the Madras Government sanctioned an additional police station to Sanipaya with enough staff of police men, whose expenditure the villagers had to bear. The demand to grant permission for grazing their cattle in the reserved forest areas of Rajampeta and Rayachoti taluks emulated the example of Palnadu and declared it as prohibited areas as forest guards were assaulted by the local people. The No-Tax campaign also had its impact in other parts of Rayalaseema, where sporadic attempts were made to start the movement.

Between September-October 1921, Gandhi again undertook a tour of Rayalaseema accompanied by Konda Venkatappayya, Shoukat Ali and others, which included Tirupati, Cuddapah, Tadipatri, Kurnool and Bellary (then part of Rayalaseema). It was arranged by Gadicherla Harisarvothama Rao, the then Secretary of Andhra Provincial Congress Committee. Gandhi's tour of Rayalaseema began with his arrival at Chittoor at 5 a.m on 28th September 1921 where seven thousand people gave him a warm welcome and his associates. The function hosted by the local municipality lasted for 10 minutes making people and their leaders realise the importance of that moment. Gandhi then advanced to Tirupati and Chittoor districts, on the same day which attracted local leaders

belonging to both Hindu and Muslim communities. It was attended by 16,000 to 20,000 volunteers headed by Venkata Rao and Mohammed Osman Sahib and other prominent citizens of the town¹⁶. Gandhi then proceeded to Rajampet, where he delivered a speech on Swadeshi, spinning and removal of untouchability and the local Vysyas felicitated him. He then left for Kadapa on 28th of September, 1921 which remained a red letter day in the annals of Kadapa town on account of his visit. Gandhi, accompanied by Maulana Subhani Azad, arrived at 4.40 pm where they were given a warm welcome and taken in procession to the meeting. A huge gathering attended the meeting having most of them wearing white Khaddar dress and Gandhi caps. Gadicherla Harisarvothama Rao translated Gandhiji's speech into Telugu¹⁷. Later on, Gandhi left for Tadipatri and Anantapur districts on 29 September 1921, Gadicherla Harisarvothama Rao and KondaVenkatappayya accompanied him on the tour. On this day around 5:30 a.m., Tadipatri, Anantapur district, could witness a spectacle of fifty thousand people from the town and surrounding villages. In the same forenoon of the day, Gandhi covered two meetings, one held on the river bed of the Pennar and the other arranged by the ladies of the town. An address on behalf of the ladies was read and presented to Gandhi by Smt. Kamalamma, the wife of the local Congress Secretary, K. Srinivasacharlu. About 40,000 people of all classes attended the programme suggesting the arrival of a national leader which testifies the amount of their interest in the national cause. The artists from Nosam, Kurnool district utilized the occasion and exhibited their art pieces, including paintings on

Khaddar cloth. Gandhi showed interest in the exhibition and appreciated the skills of the Kurnool artists, particularly those coming from *panchama* segment. On the same day when Gandhi and his associates proceeded to Kurnool, people in large numbers gathered at Gooty and Dronachalam railway stations.

On the midnight of 29 - 30 September 1921, people at Dronachalam railway station demanded to see Gandhi, but Konda Venkatappayya told the gathering that Gandhi was fast asleep, and appealed to the people not to disturb him. He also requested the people, as per the wishes of Gandhi, they all should wear *Khaddar* clothes and participate in the Swadeshi movement, the only source of getting independence, and give up all expensive fairs and festivals. Mahatma Gandhi reached Kurnool town on Friday 30 September 1921. Medam Venkayya Sresti took the leader to his house and presented a purse of Rs 1,116 with all reverence and respect. People arrived from different places to welcome him enthusiastically. Along with Gandhi, Moulana Abdul Khader Azad Subhani, Konda Venkatappayya and other prominent leaders also visited Kurnool. Gandhi wanted that there should be no procession or demonstration; hence people decorated the main streets with festoons, welcome arches with 'May God protect Mahatma', etc., on the banks of the Tungabhadra River. Thousands of people attended the meetings of Gandhi who highlighted the necessity of freedom, anti-arrack and gambling during his visits to Chittoor, Tirupati, Kadapa, Anantapur, Tadipatri, Gooty, Guntakal, Dronachalam and Kurnool. Picketing was observed on 17th of November 1921 at Anantapur, Kurnool,

Nandyal, Chittoor and Tirupati, despite the imposition of Section 144. The prominent leaders involved in this venture were A.P. Kavi, Medam Venkaiah Chetty, Rangaswamy T.K. Narasimhacharyulu. Telugu students at Kadapa on 23rd December 1921 boycotted the visit of the Prince of Wales. Similarly, the action at national level percolated so deep into the masses that the workers, daily wage-earners, barbers and washermen stopped their work as a token of their participation in the Non-Co-operation Movement. Railway workers, particularly gang-men went on strike and began removing keys (iron pieces with bolts and nuts) at the joints of railway tracks to cause train accidents. One such incident occurred between Madras and Arakkonam on the Madras-Bombay railway line as Mr. Kannappan of Thoyyadavuru in Tiruttani taluk, then in Chittoor district, involved himself in that particular act and got arrested by the police. Removal of rail keys was presumably to hamper, as much as possible the movement of trains which carried soldiers and policemen to the places where the non-co-operators were suspected to cause disturbance¹⁸.

In the Rayalaseema region, *Khaddhar* was popularized by Konda Venkatappayya. As part of this activity, five hundred 'Charakas' were distributed in Nagalapuram (Kurnool district). The visit of Harisarvothama Rao and Medam Venkayya Chetty helped the villagers of Brahmanakotkuru, Nandikotkuru, Karivena and Atmakur to revive this spinning industry. At Nandyal, Elukuri Yellayya Sresti started 'Tilak Spinning Ashram'. Gooty and Tadipatri became popular centres of *Khaddar*. In Kalyanadhurgam of Ananapauram district, a

‘Gandhi Weaving School’ was established to train people in this regard. The visits of the well-known Congress leader, K.C. Kelkar, helped to start *Khadhi* production units in many parts of Anantapur district. Likewise in Chittoor district, *Khadhi* became popular and Chittoor District Nationalist Sub- Committee granted rupees one thousand for the purchase of spinning wheels for distribution in Tirupati. In order to discourage people towards liquor, an anti-arrack movement was started by A.P. Kavi and Kalluri Subba Rao (Anantapur), Medam Venkayya Chetty (Kurnool district) and Srinivasa Ayyangar (Chittoor district). Likewise in Kadapa district the campaign made a promising start in places like Jammalamadugu, Badvel and Rajampeta. It had a positive effect on the people of Anantapur, Kadiri, Hindupur, Gooty and Tadipatri, Kurnool, Jammalamadugu, Badvel, Rajampeta, Chittoor, Tirupati, Palamaneru, Punganuru and Pileru. The Municipal Council of Tirupati requested the government to ban the sale of toddy and arrack in the temple town. Similar requests were made by the citizens of Narayanavanam¹⁹.

Coincidences of Non-Cooperation Movement (Khilafat) in Rayalaseema:

Cooperation between Hindus and Muslims was a need, hence Gandhi forged an alliance between them. On 24th November 1919, he expressed the policy of non-violence and non-cooperation as a solution to the Khilafat issue in the INC annual session of Amritsar²⁰. In this regard, a manifesto was issued to advocate his policies by declaring

Khilafat Day and a Day of National Mourning on 19th March 1920. So, all the leaders in Rayalaseema region took initiatives to remove the hurdles between Hindus and Muslims by involving them in the anti-British agitation as per Gandhi's wishes which could promote 'a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows'. Meetings were held at Bellary, Tadipatri, Kurnool, Kadapa and Tirupati in connection with this issue²¹.

In some parts of Rajampeta taluk of Kadapa district, the relations between Hindu and Muslim communities were not cordial, hence congress workers tried to bring them together by offering prayers in their respective places. When D. Narayana Rao, the Congress Secretary of Yadiki, Anantapur district, was arrested. Muslims undertook the lead in continuing his work in view of the *Khilafat* movement as volunteers to sustain perfect peace²². Gandhi addressed a gathering of 25,000 people regarding this issue and after their respective prayers, Gadicherla Harisarvothama Rao presented a *Khaddar dress* to Gandhi. Later, he reiterated the use of *Khaddar* as a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity and abandonment of drinking, gambling as well as prostitution and dwelt at length on the issue of untouchability and the need to work for its eradication. A Swadeshi box containing lectures to people, with silver toy moving *Charka* attractively mounted on it, was given to Gandhi as a gift for which he appreciated their response and also auctioned the *charka* for Rs. 450/- was donated to the Khilafat and Tilak Swaraj Fund at that juncture²³.

About 83 persons were punished with terms of rigorous and simple imprisonment for their participation in the *Khilafat* movement in Rayalaseema. Mohammed Hussain and Shafiqur Rahaman Kidwai from the National Muslim University, Aligarh, visited Kadapa and delivered several speeches on 11th October 1921. It helped to form the Khilafat Committee and an amount of Rs.2, 000/- was collected as fund. Chittaranjan Das visited Tirupati on 27th June 1923 where he addressed the necessity of giving up dogmas and metaphysical issues which had a tremendous impact on the minds of common man²⁴.

Eradication of untouchability and Harijan upliftment also formed a part of the Non-cooperation movement in Rayalaseema as a result of Gandhi's visit. Madahushi Anantasayanam Ayyangar gave up his career as a lawyer and worked in this endeavour by starting a Harijan hostel at Tirupati in 1921 after returning from the AICC session at Vijayawada. In Kadapa and Chittoor districts, attempts were made to preach against the evil of untouchability and in Kadapa district due to the efforts of Peddharaju Ramakrishnaiah, many Harijans were enrolled in the Congress Committee. In Chittoor, the District Nationalist Sub-Committee allowed Harijans to involve themselves with other Hindu castes in meetings. A Harijan member of the Tirupati Municipal Council appealed to the government to allow Harijans to worship Lord Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala by removing the prohibition of Harijans entering temple as a mockery when the Western and anglicized caste Hindus were allowed²⁵.

In a way the personal visit of Gandhi to the Rayalaseema region, Andhra Pradesh brought tremendous impact, involvement and get togetherness of its people irrespective of caste and creed during the Non-cooperation movement and also tremendous change in their mindset. It paved a way for the eradication of discrimination in view of the religious bigotry among them, hence they developed a feeling of oneness and forgot their differences and stood to support for achieving the determination of Gandhi. The process of the Non-cooperation movement brought awareness among them and the immediate necessity of their nation and real sense of nationalism by looking at the personalities coming from different parts of India, hence they realized their social involvement and support for a common cause of Indian struggle for independence. Moreover, it became a juncture for the eradication of social evils like untouchability and prohibition of Harijans into temples, an old tradition and custom that were prevalent in the society not only in the present region of discussion but also in other parts of Andhra Pradesh and one can visualize that it was a mass movement, even though only certain places were historically known and noted during its process.

References

1. P. Yanadi Raju, *Rayalaseema during Colonial Times: A Study in Indian Nationalism*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 2003, p.154.
2. A. Chandrasekhar, *Census of India, Vol.II* (1961), Andhra Pradesh, Part A. Hyderabad, 1966, p.13.

3. P.R. Rao, *History and Culture of Andhra Pradesh*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 2011.
4. K.Anjaneyulu (ed.), *Andhra Pradesh lo Gandhiji, Telugu Akademi*, Hyderabad, 1978.
5. K.Maddaiah, *Freedom Movement in Rayalaseema: A Study of Peoples Response to the major Phases of National Movement, 1905-1947*, unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, 1995.
6. G.Samba Siva Reddy, *Colonial Dominance and Local Resistance in South India*, Research India Press, New Delhi, 2016, pp.141-180.
7. A.Kaleswara Rao, *Naa Jeevitha Katha : Navyandhramu (in Telugu: An Autobiography)*, Telugu Samiti: Hydeabad, 2006, p. 281.
8. K. Venkatappayya, *Sweeyacharitra (An Autobiography)*, (Telugu), Hyderabad, 1996, p.266.
9. M. Venkata Rangaiya (ed.), *The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh (Andhra)*, Vol, I, Government Secretariat Press, Hyderabad, 1965, p.42.
10. A.Kaleswara Rao, *Naa Jeevitha Katha: Navyandhramu*, 2006, p.267.
11. M. Ananthashayanam Ayyangar, *Freedom Struggle in Chittoor District*, Andhra Pradesh, Vol. XXII, No.1, November 1977 (Anniversary Special Number), p.64
12. M.Veerabhadra Rao, *Sree Sarvottama Jeevithamu (A Biography of Gadicherla Harisarvottama Rao)*, Andhra Pradesh Grandhalaya Sanghamu, Vijayavwad, 1965, pp. 43-44.

13. Sarojni Regani, *Who's Who of Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh*, Vol.1, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1978, p.63.
14. M.Veerabhadra Rao, *Sree Sarvottama Jeevithamu (A Biography of Gadicherla Harisarvottama Rao)*, 1965, pp.39-40.
15. A. Kaleswara Rao, *Naa Jeevithakatha-Navyandhrmu*, Vijayawada, Andhra Grandhamandali, 1959, pp.330-31.
16. P. Yanadi Raju, *Rayalaseema during Colonial Times*, 2003, pp.165-66.
17. P. Yanadi Raju, *Glimpses of Non-cooperation Movement in Rayalaseema*, South Indian Congress, Gulbarga, 1996, pp.36-37.
18. K. Maddaiah, *Freedom Movement in Rayalaseema: A Study of Peoples Response to the major Phases of National Movement, 1905-1947*, 2012, p.60
19. K. Anjineyulu, *Andhra Pradesh lo Gandhiji*, 1978, p.311.
20. Asha Rani, *Gandhism, Non-Violence and India's Freedom Struggle*, Delhi, 1981, p.137.
21. A.Kaleswara Rao, *Naa Jeevitha Katha: Navyandhramu*, 1959, p.341.
22. P. Yanadi Raju, *Glimpses of Non-cooperation Movement in Rayalaseema*, 1996, p.38.
23. K. Anjineyulu, *Andhra Pradesh lo Gandhiji*, 1959, p.312.
24. K.Maddaiah, *Freedom Movement in Rayalaseema*, 2012, pp.62-63.
25. M. Ananthashayanam Ayyangar, *Freedom Struggle in Chittoor District*, Andhra Pradesh, 1977, p.65.

Dr. R.M. Alagappa Chettiar (1909-1957): Far-sighted Industrialist and Philanthropist

Prabha Ravi Shankar, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History,
Post Graduate Centre for M.A. in History,
S.N.D. T. Women's University, Mumbai

Abstract

'Wealth and knowledge not shared are useless', so says the famous Tamil poet Tiruvalluvar in the Tamil classic Tirukural. The tradition of giving in charity in abundance has existed in India since time immemorial. It continues even today. It has played a big role in the building of modern India. The munificent activities of Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy in Bombay (Mumbai) the Tatas and the Birlas, Raja Annamalai Chettiar and Alagappa Chettiar in Madras (Chennai) are legendary. The existence of merchant communities in India such as the Chettiars, the banias and the marwaris in pre-industrialised India, the subjection of the country to colonial rule and the rise of private and state enterprises after independence –all these makes Indian business philanthropy unique. The purpose of this paper, based on primary and some standard secondary sources is to appraise the role of Dr. Alagappa Chettiar, who was not merely a far-sighted industrialist and a financial genius but one whose generosity was unbounded and whose thirst for the spread of education was measureless. His business interests were wide and varied. He has left

behind permanent monuments of his philanthropy and his one special vision and mission in life was to spread primary and secondary education and, more importantly, technological institutions so that India would be modern in mind and spirit.

Key Words: Chettiars, business Family, Visionary and enterprising Indian business, challenge and response, colonial context, educational institutions, philanthropy

Introduction

Alagappa Chettiar (1909-1957), a far-sighted industrialist, philanthropist and educationist belonged to the Chettiar community of Karaikudi in Tamil Nadu. The Chettiars or Nattukotai or Nakarathar Chettiars of Chettinad (Nattukotai in Tamil means people with palatial palaces in the countryside). They are Tamil-speaking and are a distinct set of the indigenous *vaishya* community who operated throughout the south-east Asian territories of the erstwhile British Empire. They became renowned money-lenders throughout south and south-east Asia by the early nineteenth century, famed lenders and to the British and had been ‘bankers who had been for centuries developing and perfecting to a remarkable degree a system of indigenous banking’¹. Able and adventurous, Alagappa Chettiar had been a pioneer businessman, philanthropist and educationist in the 1930s and 1940s in south India. The purpose of this paper is to critically appraise his role in the transformation of the region of Karaikudi, a dry and backward region, from a remote place into a modern town².

In order to understand his role in proper historic perspective, it is necessary to briefly recapitulate his early life and formative influences. A pioneer in more fields than one, Alagappa Chettiar was born on 6 April 1909 in an affluent family of Kottaiur near Karaidudi. His parents were K.V.A.L. Ramanatha Chettiar and Umayal Achi. He had two sisters and an elder brother. His father Ramanatha Chettiar had a successful business in Malaya. Alagappa Chettiyyar began his schooling from S.M.S. Vidyasala in 1915. At home, he was simultaneously tutored in the system of accounting so that he could join the family business. As soon as he finished his final schooling, his father insisted on his joining the family business in the Federated Malay States. Alagappa had already set his mind on higher education and therefore, unwillingly, began his journey to the Port of Nagapatnam, in the north of Chettinad. But as providence would have it, Alagappa fell ill as soon as he boarded the ship and he was therefore disembarked. He then pleaded with his father to allow him to join a college. Fortunately, his uncle supported him and on his invitation, Alagappa went to Madras where he joined the famous Presidency College. He became the first from his community to complete his graduation as well as his post-graduation in English literature. He was an intelligent, sincere and hardworking student and showed his penchant for debate and oratory by becoming an active member of the Triplicane Debating Club, of which he was also the treasurer. Though he was fluent in English, Alagappa developed a strong liking for Tamil literature, science and sports and was a voracious reader. He also got interested in the Indian struggle for freedom during his student days and participated

in the boycott of the Simon Commission along with other classmates of his college. It was during his term at the Presidency College that he met Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the famed scholar and statesman who went on to become the President of India. He was deeply influenced by his warmth as well as his scholarship. At this time, Alagappa had to endure personal tragedies as he lost both his parents within a month when he was still a teenager. He was married early, as per the custom of the day, and he also lost his first wife, just days after she had given birth to a daughter. Later, he remarried.

Intelligent and intellectually curious, the initial ambition of Alagappa Chettiar was to join the Indian Civil Service that generally attracted many young graduates. After a bright academic career in the Madras Presidency College, he proceeded to London in the year 1930³. Unfortunately, he failed to clear the medical examination and therefore could not qualify for the civil service. Undeterred, he qualified for the Bar at the Middle Temple in England which was again a first for the Nagarathar. His love for adventure was so overwhelming that he also obtained a pilot certificate and licence in flying at Croydon Flyers Institute in London, the first to do so from his community. Impressed by his intelligence and skill, the management of the Chartered Bank in London enrolled him as a trainee for two years, again the first Indian trainee to get such an offer. After polishing his skills in London, Alagappa decided to return to his motherland. Though by then his face had been disfigured,

he decided to meet the challenges of life with a positive attitude, strong will and determination.

After his return from London, Alagappa Chettiar enrolled himself as an advocate in the Madras High Court in early 1934. Though well-informed on all legal matters, he was not interested in practice as a lawyer. Meanwhile, he had inherited his share of family property as per the family tradition, broke from the traditional family business in Malaya and Singapore and brought his inherited material gains to launch his career as an industrialist. His activities were characterized by driven principles.

Attracted by the liberal policies of R.K. Shanmukam, the then Diwan of Cochin, Alagappa entered into his first business venture which was in textiles in the erstwhile State of Travancore. In the year 1937, he established the Cochin Textile Spinning Mills near Thrissur, later renamed as Alagappa Textiles. His risk-taking enterprises helped him to tide over the initial losses. For the sake of the employees of the Alagappa Mills, he built living quarters, school, a post office, a temple and a hospital at Pudukadu in Cochin. He then began the Umayal Weaving Industry in Cannanore (Kannur) in northern Kerala, the finished products of which he could export to foreign countries. Later, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, as the Diwan of Travancore from 1936 to 1946, encouraged him to start another textile mill at Aluva called Ashoka Textiles in the year 1939. This mill with fully automated machines functioned well and earned him good profits. This was followed by Alagappa's entry into the share

business and he became a well-known figure in the Bombay Stock Market. Even though he earned great wealth, a time came when the market crashed. However, Alagappa did not lose hope. With his training in flying, he founded a private limited company called Jupitar Airways and his company operated chartered flights. He offered the services of his Dakota planes to the Government of India during the merger of Hyderabad and Kashmir into India. Even though he had to endure losses, he was content that he could serve his motherland. Alagappa then entered into the hotel business and purchased Hotel Ritz and Westland Hotel in the south of Bombay and operated them successfully in the western style. When he found the right time, he sold out the shares of the hotel, earned a good profit and invested them in educational ventures in the south. He then entered into the real estate business in Madras and soon became a celebrity. His last business venture was into theatre and he built theatres in Kerala and Madras for the entertainment of the people. He also became the President of the Madras Chamber of Commerce. So successful and dynamic was his business empire that the *Calcutta Business Standard* carried an article titled “The Meteors of Indian Business over the Millennium” and wrote on Alagappa: ‘Though it is difficult to estimate Dr. Chettiar’s worth, he is often referred to as the “unsung business Maharajah of south India” in the [nineteen] thirties and forties’⁴. The secret of his success has been the diversification of business portfolios. Dwijendra Tripathi, the eminent business historian, rightly remarked ‘that when you come from the business class, willy-nilly, you get concerned with business strategies which have nothing to do with

community but has something to do with the kind of business environment that prevails'. This can be said to be true in the career of Alagappa as a businessman⁵.

Alagappa was a whole-hearted philanthropist who invested his wealth for social welfare. He wanted to provide educational amenities to Karaikudi and therefore built schools, and colleges in arts, science, commerce, engineering, medical and technical colleges among others⁶. His dream of a University for his native place was fulfilled in 1985 when the Alagappa University came to be established. Though a Chettiar, he believed more in building temples of education rather than just temples of worship so that no child suffered from a want of opportunity to learn. He stated his vision as follows:

I am a dreamer but you will agree that dreamers are most practical of men; without visions and dreams there is no shaping of the future and have sufficient faith to tell that there is more and more of these dreams will be soon transformed into reality⁷.

Alagappa Chettiar had a fondness for music and he, therefore, organised the First Tamil *Isai* (Music) Conference in August 1940 in Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu. He did much to promote classical Carnatic music in Singapore and Malaysia for the preservation of Indian culture. He loved sports and built a modern stadium called Bhavnagar stadium in February 1952 at his native place. His generosity knew no bounds and he made innumerable donations to various institutions for various causes. He was a lover of books and

had a fondness for journalism. For some time he was the honorary editor of *Kumudam*, a Tamil weekly. In 1948, despite ill health, he met Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister, in Delhi to offer Karaikudi as a home for India's Science Research Institute. Impressed by his patriotism and commitment to the people, Nehru accepted his offer of three hundred acres of land and fifteen lakhs in cash to set up a science research institute in Karaikudi. The result was that the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute was set up in a sprawling campus between Karaikudi and Kottaiyur. The land of Karaikudi-- once a remote place with no higher educational institutes until Indian Independence in 1947 now became totally transformed. Interestingly, during his visit to southern India, Nehru introduced Alagappa Chettiar as a 'socialist capitalist' to his sister Vijiyalakshmi Pandit⁸.

True to Nehru's remark, Alagappa believed in ploughing his wealth for social causes. Chettiar's vision and generosity reached many parts of India. He established a Chair for Tamil Studies in Anna University in Tamil Nadu and provided funds to support student's studies overseas. He also supported Travancore's free midday meals programme. He generously donated large amounts to Annamalai University to begin a programme in technology and also provided a substantial amount to the Madras University for the setting up of technical institute at Guindy which was considered as the largest single individual donation in the country and had resulted in the beginning of technological courses in these Universities⁹. Alagappa also founded the [Srinivasa] Ramanujam Institute in 1951. Initially, it was housed in his

own famous residence called Krishna Vilas in Vepery, Chennai. It later merged with the Department of Mathematics in the Madras University. It is now called the Ramanujam Institute of Advanced Study in Mathematics.

Though a successful businessman, Chettiar attained fame more as a philanthropist and educationist. Two Universities—the Annamalai University and the University of Madras conferred honorary doctorates on him in 1943 and 1944 respectively. What is more, in an age of patriarchy and male domination, Allagappa gave all encouragement and support to his only daughter, Umayal Ramanathan, to learn the art of business administration and financial management. Even today at the age of eighty-nine, she manages the educational institution. His eminent record as a business entrepreneur was recognized by the British Government when he was knighted in 1946 at the age of just thirty-seven. But he renounced the title after India became independent. Remembering the educational munificence of Alagappa and as a token of gratitude, the Anna University unveiled his life size statue during the silver jubilee celebration of the University on 14 December 2002.

It is remarkable that in a short life of just forty-eight years crowded with multi-faceted business, philanthropic and educational activities, Alagappa Chettiar had the vision to eradicate the poverty of India, promote education and contribute to the industrial development of India. He believed in the emancipation of women and their empowerment through education. Although he belonged to a family of

businessmen but it is through his indefatigable energy, systematic work and attention to detail that he achieved success in business. Such was his force and driving power that his business ventures ran exceedingly well. But he was convinced that education was the prime need of the country. He therefore established the first college in Ramanathapuram district in 1947 in the scrub jungle of Karaikudi which ultimately became the Alagappa University. Alagappa had the good fortune of meeting Mahatma Gandhi in 1946 and made a generous donation of rupees three lakhs for his Thakkar Baba Industrial School. Gandhi hailed Alagappa as a '*Dharma Karta*' and wished that there would be many more *dharma Kartas* in India to speed up the development of the nation. While Alagappa's, business acumen, like Jamshejee Jeejeebhai's, is evident and he had been largely a self-made man, it was through philanthropy that he garnered his reputation.

True to his nature, Alagappa Chettiar has been described as *Vallar* in Tamil. In his speech to welcome Jawaharlal Nehru on the occasion of the laying the foundation stone of the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute at Karaikudi on 25 July 1949, Alagappa Chettiar said:

I have not been an active participant in the struggle for freedom in India. I have been just an eye witness; perhaps, I may add a heart-witness. But it will be true to say that right from the days when I was at School, I, like many of you, have been an admiring spectator of the grand spectacle of the struggle of our beloved Prime Minister

for the freedom of our land from his early days of his almost ascetic resolve to scorn the delights of conventional success and to live laborious days during the exacting years of his discipleship of the Father of our nation—Mahatma Gandhi in the midst of suffering people, the life story of our distinguished son of India is verily the discovery of the great and the good that was India¹⁰.

A few years before his death, Alagappa was diagnosed with cancer of bone that rendered him immobile. He underwent treatment and recuperation at his home in Chennai where he received distinguished visitors such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, C. Rajagopalachari and others. In January 1957, the Central Government honoured him with the prestigious Padma Bhushan award for his contribution to the country. In the next month, the citizens of Karaikudi felicitated him for his immense contribution to the making of his native land. Soon after he returned to Madras but fell ill and died on 5 April 1957 at his residence when he was only forty-eight. Many national newspapers carried an obituary on him and recalled his achievements. Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi released a postal stamp in his honour on 7 April 2007. The spirit with which Alagappa Chettiar worked throughout his multifaceted life facing trials and tribulations, sufferings and sacrifices, is revealed in his last speech which he made on 15 February 1957 before the staff and students of his College of Engineering and Technology in Karaikudi:

“Right throughout my life, it has never been my habit to take things lying down. I have always stood up for my rights, fought for them and pleaded for them. But now it has become the will of God that I should be confined to bed lying down for the last eight months and God knows for how many months more. Friends, I am deeply overwhelmed with the elaborate arrangements that you have made and what is more, the great enthusiasm that you have shown in making me to be present at least for a few moments before I leave for Madras.... I think of the campus as one indivisible unit both of students and staff and I take such unmixed happiness from their own happiness and this is what keeps me alive¹¹”.

What made him unique from the other industrialists of the time was that Alagappa was an intellectual and philanthropist unprecedented. Indeed philanthropy has played a significant role in the building of modern India, especially in the pre-independence era¹². Indian philanthropy had its unique evolution—Indian business had its origin in business communities such as the Chettiars, Baniyas, Marwaris and the Parsees; India being under colonial rule for long and the struggle to obtain freedom from foreign domination left a mark on philanthropy; and thirdly after independence, the Indian State envisioned a mix of private and state enterprise to usher India into the modern era¹³. And in this sense, the philanthropic activities of Alagappa Chettiar can be said to have attempted to produce a more equitable and a just and caring society. He set up standards for

philanthropy even before independence. Rajaji's remarks made a few months before his death are a befitting tribute to Alagappa Chettiar. He said: 'These bodies of ours will go into smoke and ashes; works alone remain'. Indeed Alagappa Chettiar's work will remain all the more glorious for the trials and tribulations he faced'¹⁴.

References

1. L.C. Jain, *Indigenous Banking in India*, Macmillan, London, 1929, pp.28-30. The word *Chetty* the honorific plural for the members of the caste and numerous variants of their name such as Chetti, Chetty, abound but Chettiar was used by the members of the caste themselves when rendering their collective name into English and it is also the spelling that most often appears in official and contemporary reports of their activities. By the late nineteenth century, lured by better prospects, large numbers of the community had moved to Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Indo-China (Vietnam) and operated almost throughout the Southeast Asian territories of the British Empire. The Nattukottai Chettiars are the most prominent merchant class in South India and they traded in pearls, salts, and got into money-lending business to the growing demand for credit, propelled by commercialization unleashed by British rule. Their long traditions and experiences in indigenous banking and trade in open market created opportunities for them in the money transactions. Lack

- of credit and bank facilities made the locals and foreign traders depend on the Chettiar agents. For a critical study of them see David Rudner, *Caste and Capitalism in Colonial India—the Nattukottai Chettiars*, California Press, University of California, 1994. Also see Raman Mahadevan, “Pattern Enterprise of Immigrant Entrepreneurs—a Study of Chettiars in Malaya, 1830-1930”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 13 4/5, 28 January to 4 February 1978, pp.146-48. For a useful general introduction on business history in India, see N. Benjamin and Prabhaskar Narayana Rath, “Modern Indian Business History: A Bibliographic Survey”, Gokhale Institute of Politics, Pune, 2004.
2. Chettinad consists of fifty-eight villages in the eastern half of Ramanathapuram district and twenty-eight villages of the former Pudukotah State, now forming the Tiruchinapalli district. Their traditional home consists of Poongkundram, Parambunadu, Kanaperiyar and Okkur. See Nilakanta Sastri, *The Culture and History of the Tamils*, Calcutta, 1984, p.92. They built huge and beautiful mansions. See S. Chandrasekar, *The Nagarathars of South India*, Madras, 1980, pp.19-20. Also see Ramanathan Chettiar, *Nattukottai Nagarathar Varalaru* (Tamil), Commercial Printing and Publication House, Madras, 1953 and M. Chandramurthy, *Nagarathar Marabhum Panpadum*, (in Tamil) Chidambaram, 2007.
 3. This is an example of Alagappa setting out in a new direction. For a short information on his early life see K. Vairavan, *Dr. R.M. Alagappa Chettiar: A Beautiful Mind*, Sai Amartiya Publishers, New Delhi, 2014. There

is a good doctoral study of his life and educational work, in particular, of the Alagappa University.

4. Ibid., p.43.
5. Dwijendra Tripathi, an authority on business history, in an interview on the evolution of Indian business, *The Economic Times*, 17 May 2013.
6. In the early days Karaikudi was described as *Pottu Kadu* in Tamil meaning a dry and hollow area with no chance of cultivation. It was very backward with no higher educational institution. Alagappa Chettiar was a man of keen vision who realised that the dire need of the hour was education. On 11 August 1947, he established the Alagappa College at Karaikudi, the first higher educational institute in the region. Soon he established a cluster of educational institution—pre-primary, primary and higher education with a vision for a University. *Golden Jubilee Souvenir 1957-2002, Alagappa College of Engineering and Technology*, Karaikudi, 2014, pp.14-16.
7. Welcome Address of Alagappa Chettiar on the occasion of the laying of the Foundation Stone ceremony of CECRI by Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India on 25 July 1948.
8. *Madras Musings*, December 1-15, 2015.
9. K. Vairavan, Chettiar's grandson, in his tribute to Alagappa Chettiar at a function held in CECRI in Karaikudi, *The Hindu*, 15 February 2012 and *Alagappa: A Beautiful Mind: A Saga of Perseverance, Compassion and Sacrifice*, Alagappa Educational Trust, Chennai,

2014. Also see for Memoirs, Kumdudham, Madras (Tamil Weekly), 2 April 1998.
10. Welcome Speech of Alagappa Chettiar on the Occasion of the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of CECRI in Karaikudi, ,
 11. Welcome Address of Alagappa Chettiar, Alagappa College of Engineering and Technology, 15 February 1957.
 12. Apart from Kavasji Jehangir Readymoney (1812-1878) and Premchand and Roychand, One of the most renowned philanthropists of Bombay was Jamshetji Jeejeebhoy (1783-1859) who is said to have donated huge amount for hospitals, colleges and public transport. In Madras, Pachaippa Mudaliar (1754-1794) whose generosity helped set up the first private college there, Raja Annamalai Chettiar gave a new direction to the charitable activities of his community by establishing schools, colleges and hospitals.
 13. Mathew C. Dweep Chanana et al (ed.), *Revealing Indian Philanthropy*, Alliance Publishing Trust, UK, 2013.
 14. Cited in a letter from Alagappa Chettiar to C.Rajagopalachari, 20 August 1956, Dr Chettiar's Correspondences, Alagappa Group of Educational Institutions.

The Madras City Council for Child Welfare in the Early 1960's

G.J. Sudhakar, Ph.D.

Head, Centre for Historical Studies
C.P.R. Institute of Indological Research, Chennai.

Abstract

The tradition in various parts of the ancient world and in India too was that there was no questioning of parental authority. With time, the status of the child improved slightly ----- in medieval Europe, it was no longer possible for a father to kill or sell his child with impunity. World opinion was crystallized with the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, commonly known as the Geneva Declaration, in 1923. The final stamp of recognition of the child's status came in 1959 with the U.N Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The Council for Child Welfare was registered under Act XXI of 1860 on 22nd December, 1955 in Madras. The State Government declared the Home to be a place suitable for the custody of boys and girls of ages 8 to 16 dealt with under Section 29 of the Madras Children Act, 1920. On 1st April 1959, there were 319 boys and 19 girls. Education based on the ordinary avocation practiced in villages was provided upto the eight standard in the school attached to the Home. Attached to the Basic School, crafts section was run for the

training of children in various cottage industries. Film shows and radio programmes were the other activities added to the institution in the evenings During the year 1959-60, the dispensary attached to the home was further equipped with surgical instruments and drugs. The industrial sections namely, textile weaving, coir-rope, mat plaiting, carpentry etc. that functioned during the year 1959-60 showed good progress. Thus, the paper reveals the sincerity and seriousness of officials and society at large for the cause in the reference period.

Key words: *Child welfare, Juvenile Courts, Discharges, Craft Section, Dispensary.*

Child welfare has depended on the social valuation of children; in other words, on their position or status in society. Societies differ in their customs but there are broad trends regarding the position or status of a child. These trends follow a historical pattern of development.

The tradition in various parts of the ancient world and in India too was that there was no questioning of parental authority. With time, the status of the child improved slightly until in medieval Europe, it was no longer possible for a father to kill or sell his child with impunity.

It was not till the 20th century, however, that the child at last found his status in society; that he came to be recognized as a person in his own right.

This feeling was first embodied in a law in England in 1822, which gave the child protection from his own parents where necessary. But it gained momentum only with the formation of the first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in New York by Henry Bergh and others in 1875. This was followed by similar societies in other parts of the USA; in London in 1884 and gradually all over the world.

World opinion was crystallized with the “Declaration of the Rights of the Child”, commonly known as the Geneva Declaration, in 1923. The final stamp of recognition of the child’s status came in 1959 with the “U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child”.

To give examples, the International Union of Child Welfare (IUCW) is a non-governmental organization with its headquarters in Geneva. It came into being after World War I in 1920.

The Indian Council of Child Welfare emerged in 1952 as a result of the merger of the Indian National Committee of the U.N. Appeal of Children and the “Save the Children Fund”¹. Its purpose is to coordinate, foster and initiate child welfare services in the country.

The origins of the Madras City Council for Child Welfare

It was found that about 2,000 children of ages eight to sixteen go begging in the city of Madras. To successfully reclaim and rehabilitate these destitute and disadvantageously

placed children in the city, the then Mayor of Madras, Shri. M.A. Chidambaram, convened a conference of persons interested in child welfare in October 1955. The conference decided to form an association called the Madras City Council for Child Welfare.

The scheme was prepared by the then Commissioner of the Corporation of Madras and was approved by the Standing Committees and the Council of the Corporation. In accordance with the scheme, the committed inmates of the Corporation Industrial Home at Royapuram, namely, the able bodied beggars, were transferred to the Government Care Camp at Avadi and the inmates of the Poor House at Royapuram thus vacated, were placed at the disposal of the Council for Child Welfare by the Corporation, which also agreed to pay an annual subsidy of Rs.50,000/- for running the home. The Government of Madras agreed to meet the net cost. The Madras Rotary Club agreed to meet the cost of equipments for running a workshop to the tune of Rs.25,000/-.

The Council for Child Welfare was registered under Act XXI of 1860 on 22nd December 1955. It was inaugurated on the evening of the 26th December, 1955 at the premises No. 81, Suryanarayana Chetty Street, Madras, by Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh, Chairman, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi. The Child Welfare Home was declared open on the same date by Shri. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, Government of Madras. A workshop attached to the Home with tools and plant equipped for carpentry,

tailoring, etc. by the Madras Rotary Club, was declared open by the then Union Finance Minister, Shri. Chintaman Deshmukh.

The State Government² declared the Home to be a place suitable for the custody of boys and girls of ages 8 to 16 dealt with under Section 29 of the Madras Children Act, 1920. Until 22.04.1956, the institution was under the management of the City Corporation. On the afternoon of 23.04.1956, the Council for Child Welfare took over the management of the Home and Workshop.

In order to open a section for girls, the Central Social Welfare Board in their letter No. CBG/Mds/C-67-57 dated 12.12.1957, sanctioned a grant of Rs.3,000/- for running a Girls' Section for the period from the 1st January 1957 to 31st December, 1957, subject to the condition that the institution should raise an equivalent amount by way of matching contribution and spend during the same period on welfare activities coming within the Board's purview. The institution raised a matching contribution equivalent to the amount of grant towards the expenditure on the object.

The Board was requested to renew the grant for the next financial year 1958-59 also and to enhance the contribution in view of the expanding activities of this particular section. Somehow or the other, the grant was not given, but the section was run from out of funds of the institution. This had put the finances of the institution under great strain. A matching contribution of Rs.2,500/- was met from fees collected

from ordinary members of the Madras City Council for Child Welfare.

Later, the State Government declared the Child Welfare Home, Royapuram, Chennai, as a place suitable for the custody of boys and girls between 8 and 18 years of age dealt with under Section 29 of the Madras Children Act, 1920. In view of this order, the Juvenile Courts had sent children to this Home from 1.4.1960 upto the age of 18 years, as against 16 years previously in force³.

Strength of the Home

On 1st April, 1959, there were 319 boys and 19 girls⁴. The strength of the institution steadily increased during the year to 340 being the net result of committals of 45 boys and 5 girls and reductions due to discharges and escapes. In the next year, on 1st April, 1960, there were 319 boys and 21 girls⁵. During the year, the strength of the institution steadily increased by committals through Juvenile Courts. There was also a reduction due to discharges on completion of the committal period in the institution and on account of certain escapes. In accordance with the rules, pupils discharged were sent to the Chief Probation Superintendent under escort with a request to him to do what he could towards helping the pupils to start a fair life. All pupils discharged were paid pocket money accrued weekly to their credit at rates specified in 1960. Certificates were issued for pupils in deserving cases. There were during the year, certain escapes which worked out to 2% as against 3% in

the previous year. On 1st April, 1961, there were 341 boys and 22 girls⁶. The strength of the institution increased to 405 inmates, consisting of 380 boys and 25 girls during the course of the year. On the 1st April, 1962, there were 380 boys and 25 girls⁷. At the end of the year, the strength of the institution was 310 boys and 21 girls. A statement showing the details of admissions, discharges, etc. is furnished below:

Sex	Inmates as on 1.4.1962	Admiss- ions	Dis- charges	Escapes	Re- capt ures	Total strength as on 31.03. 1963
Boys	380	5	55	31	11	310
Girls	25	2	5	2	1	21
Total	405	7	60	33	12	331

The strength of the Child Welfare Home on 1st April, 1963 was 310 boys and 21 girls⁸. At the end of the year, the strength of the Home was 240 boys and 18 girls. A statement showing details of admissions, discharges, etc. is furnished below:

Sex	Inmates as on 1.4.1963	Admi ssions	Dis- charges	Escap es	Death	Re ca pt ur es	Total streng th as on 31.03. 1964
Boys	310	17	72	17	1	3	240
Girls	21	2	5	-	-	-	18
Total	331	19	77	17	7	3	258

Education

Education based on the ordinary avocation practiced in villages was provided upto the eighth standard in the school attached to the Home. Instructions in the institution were in Tamil and it was of senior basic standard. Every child in the Home had to attend the school by shift either in the morning or in the evening for three hours in the day, except on Sundays and holidays. Most of the children committed to the institution practically knew nothing and they were all socially or morally maladjusted requiring proper shelter and succour. The school was growing in usefulness year by year. Basic seminars were conducted in this Home by the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Royapuram Range, in December 1959 and in February 1960, for orienting primary schools towards basic pattern and to guide its working. This Home served well as a guide in the Royapuram Range and demonstrated the full meaning and possibility of basic education. In addition, music was taught to all girls and to some boys who had an aptitude for the same. The school continued to be recognized by the District Educational Officer, Madras North and received teaching grants for the year 1960-61⁹. The same

recognition continued with teaching grants in the year 1961-62¹⁰ and 1962-63¹¹ also.

During the year 1963-64¹², a senior basic school upto VIII standard was maintained for the benefit of children of the Home.

Crafts Section

Attached to the Basic School, crafts section run for the training of children in various cottage industries like spinning, weaving, knitting, tailoring, coir rope making, mat plaiting / carpentry and glass ampoule manufacture inculcated amongst children an enthusiasm for labour and aptitude for self-help. A book binding-cum-cover-making section was started during the year 1960-61. Children attended the crafts section either in the forenoon or in the afternoon for four hours in the day by shift. The carpentry section was able to manufacture the furniture and some parts of the equipment required for maintaining the basic and crafts sections. Natural glass ampoules of sizes, white and amber coloured, continued to be supplied to the King Institute, Guindy during the year 1959-60¹³. At the fag end of the year, an envelope making industry was introduced. In the year 1960-61, the institution obtained orders to bind books belonging to the Local Library Authority, Madras City. Glass toys and beads manufacturing, and straw board boxes were made during the year 1962-63¹⁴. Students were trained in handloom weaving also by the year 1963-64¹⁵.

Other activities: Games and Receptions

The daily routine observed in the institution had been drawn up after careful study of the activities of other similar institutions. Since this institution was imparting both industrial and basic education, a schedule was accepted by the Executive Committee of the City Council for Child Welfare.

Film shows and radio programmes were the other activities added to the institution in the evenings.

In her endorsement in the Visitor's Book dated 10.12.1958, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, President, Indian Council for Child Welfare, New Delhi, had remarked that there was a need for games such as volleyball, carrom, etc. for the inmates of the Home, both for boys and girls and she helped the institution for the said cause. Her donation was used for acquiring basketball game equipments.

Mass physical exercise and parades were conducted for the children by the Police Staff attached to the Home.

Health of the children

During the year 1959-60¹⁶, the dispensary attached to the Home was further equipped with surgical instruments and drugs. Minor ailments were attended to in the institution itself by a part time doctor-in-charge of the Home. Cases which required special treatment were sent to the

Government Stanley Hospital, Madras. There was one case of death as in-patient in the Government Stanley Hospital and the cause of death had been attributed to 'Tetanus'. During the year 1960-61¹⁷, the general health of the inmates was satisfactory and no epidemic broke out in the institution. Emphasis was laid in the institution on the preventive aspect of disease amongst children, maintaining sanitary conditions and serving the children balanced nutritive diet. Periodical medical checkup of the health of each inmate in the institution was done by the part time doctor attached to the Home.

Industrial Sections

The industrial section namely, textile weaving, coir-rope, mat plaiting, carpentry, etc. that functioned during the year 1959-60¹⁸ showed good progress. It is worthy of note that all the uniforms required for the children were stitched by the inmates in the Home itself.

Conclusion

The purpose of the paper to study the origins of governmental child welfare institution in Madras has been amply justified. It reveals the sincerity and seriousness of officials and society at large for the cause in the reference period.

The Madras Council of Child Welfare has evolved into a separate boys home in Royapuram and a girls home at

Purasawakam in Madras. The services are continuing today well enough to produce self-respecting individuals like doctors¹⁹ but workshops producing goods for the market from the training and effort of children has been stopped due to recent child labour laws. However, they are trained in the industrial training institutes²⁰ and other similar organizations to seek employment.

References

1. Goshasp N. Ruthonsha, *Aspects of Child Welfare*, Rochouse and Sons Private Limited, Madras, 1965, p.40.
2. G.O. Ms. No. 3670 (Home) dated 22.12.1955.
3. G.O. Ms. No. 2615 (Home) dated 30.08.1960.
4. Annual Report 1959-60, *The Madras City Council for Child Welfare*, Madras, 1960, p.6.
5. Annual Report 1960-61, *The Madras City Council for Child Welfare*, Madras, 1961, p.6.
6. Annual Report 1961-62, *The Madras City Council for Child Welfare*, Madras, 1962, p.6.
7. Annual Report 1962-63, *The Madras City Council for Child Welfare*, Madras, 1963, p.6.
8. Annual Report 1963-64, *The Madras City Council for Child Welfare*, Madras, 1964, p.8.
9. Annual Report 1960-61, *Op.cit.* p.8.
10. Annual Report 1961-62, *Op.cit.* p.8.
11. Annual Report 1962-63, *Op.cit.* p.7.
12. Annual Report 1963-64, *Op.cit.* p.9.
13. Annual Report 1959-60, *Op.cit.* p.10.
14. Annual Report 1962-63, *Op.cit.* p.8.

15. Annual Report 1963-64, *Op.cit*, p.9.
16. Annual Report 1959-60, *Op.cit*, p.12.
17. Annual Report 1960-61, *Op.cit*, p.13.
18. G.O. Ms. No. 1015, Home Department, dated 22nd March, 1961.
19. Interview with Mr. M. Sundaramurthy, Assistant Superintendent, Government Boys Home, Royapuram, Chennai on 16.10.2017.
20. Interview with Mr. Senthil Kumar, Regional Officer, Department of Social Defence, Government of Tamil Nadu, Purasawakam, Chennai on 18.10.2017.

Immoral Trafficking in Women: The Indian Scenario

B. Pramila, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Head

Department of Historical Studies, Bharathi Women's College
(Autonomous), Chennai

Abstract

Trafficking, deal or trade with something illegal including in humans for innumerable causes which violates their rights and dignity. Women and children have become worst victims of this heinous crime. Among many other causes the most important one for which they are being trafficked are for commercial sexual exploitation and the consequences are multifarious. In spite of international and national covenants, laws and measures of the government at the centre and state levels, the trends and number of cases registered are alarming.

Key words: *Human trafficking, trafficking in Women UNO International Conventions, National Crimes Records, Beareau - Rehabilitation measures.*

Introduction

Trafficking, a deal or trade with something illegal, has also become the trade of human beings for innumerable causes, which is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Every year, thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers, in their own countries and abroad. Almost every country is affected by trafficking and people become victims. Trafficking of persons constitutes the third largest global organized crime (after the drugs and arms trades) and it is growing year on year. Irrefutable is the fact that trafficking in women and children, an obscene affront to their dignity and rights, is a gross commercialization of innocent human lives, indulged in by organized criminals. It violates all canons of human rights and dignity. Almost 80 percent of worldwide trafficking is for sexual exploitation, with an estimated 1.2 million children being bought and sold into sexual slavery every year. Crimes and violations against women have become the order of the day and are multi-dimensional. They become the vulnerable class. Hapless women and children are trafficked with impunity and exploited, forcing them to lead a life crippled with indignity, social stigma and with lots of ailments including HIV/AIDS.

Exploiting women and girl children is not a recent phenomenon. It originates from an early age not only in India but also at the global level. From temple girls or *devadasis* to prostitutes are the terms given to these innocent and unfortunate human beings who were and are

economically not in a position to lead a comfortable life. The wealthy and unscrupulous people take advantage of their economic status and forcibly force innocent women into prostitution or subject to other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or for the removal of organs. Gender discrimination, dowry, forced marriages, female infanticide, child marriage, poverty, inadequate employment, lack of educational opportunities, social stigma against single women, the practice of dedicating girls to Gods and Goddesses accelerate the crime. Erosion of traditional family systems and values, girls' ignorance, criminal's attraction towards lucrative returns without investment also pave the way for this flesh trade.

According to the National Human Rights Commission in India, the vast majority of victims belong to socially deprived sections of the society, as well as children from the drought prone areas and places affected by natural or human made disasters. Trafficking in human beings needs to be treated as a human rights issue as this trafficking not only involves females but also males who are forced to work as sex workers. In spite of continuous measures taken by the Government and the world organizations, trafficking in women continued to be a menace. In India, the statistics on human trafficking, especially in women is alarming.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to analyse the factors responsible for trafficking in women, the statistics of

the crime, and the efforts taken at the international and the national level to curb this evil, and the measures for rehabilitation taken by the government.

The major sources for this paper are the UN Reports, United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), IAHTI (International Association of Human Trafficking Investigators), Government of India Publications, the Annual reports of the National Commission for Women, New Delhi, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development, National Crime Records Bureau, State Crime Records Bureau, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), New Delhi, newspapers and the literary work on the topic of research.

The Article of UN Convention defines trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation¹. The then UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, Radhika Coomaraswamy in her article, “Trafficking: Issues and Outcomes” says that, “There is a clear link between migration and trafficking, and trafficking should be seen as an abuse of migration”².

It is one of the major concerns, which has taken rapid pace with globalization. Free movement and free trade accelerate this crime. It starts as a domestic village trafficking and goes to the level of internationally organized networked trafficking. Trafficking in women and children is one of the worst and most brazen abuses of human rights. Among the many forms of trafficking, the most visible and widespread is the trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation. The consequences are very serious as it not only affects the life of an individual or family, but the entire society.

International Conventions against Human Trafficking

There are a number of Conventions taken at the global level to eradicate this heinous social crime, and some of them are:

- International Convention of the suppression of sraffic in women of full age, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- Convention for the suppression of the traffic in persons and of exploitation of the prostitution of others, 1949
- Tourism Bill of Rights and the Tourist Code, 1985
- Convention on Protection of Rights of Migrant Workers, 1990
- UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, 2000, etc.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) - guardian of the UN Convention against Transnational

Organized Crime (UNTOC) assists States in their efforts to implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Trafficking in Persons Protocol).

- UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children adopted in December 2000 in Palermo, Italy and it came into force on 29 September 2003³.
- In 2010, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in association with ATSEC India (Action Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children), a network of NGOs working on prevention of human trafficking organised for the first time in south Asia a three day regional workshop on International Cooperation in Trafficking in Persons/Smuggling of Migrants cases in Kolkata, India from 6 – 8 March, 2010 in which Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated⁴.

National Level

The Government of India ratified an International Convention for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Persons and Exploitation of the Prostitution of others, held at New York on 9 May 1950⁵.

- Article 23 (1) in the Constitution of India prohibits trafficking in human beings and forced labour, and in 1956 The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 has been enacted to protect persons from being trafficked⁶,

which has been amended in 1986 and was known as Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls (Amendment) Act, 1986 (44 of 1986), and finally known as The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 from 26 January 1987⁷. The National Commission for Women in India suggested that the word “person” used in the Act for the purpose of punishment, should be substituted with the words “man and woman” and in the place of “commercial sex worker”, the word “prostitute” should continue to be used. There should be a provision in the Act to distinguish the girls who are forcibly thrown into prostitution through an act of rape and intimidation, and in that cases the persons responsible should be charged as abettors, and the burden of proving that they have not abetted or forced the girl or woman to enter into prostitution.

- IPC Sections 366 (A), 372 also aim to prevent human trafficking. To make it more effective, the Government proposed to amend the Act. Agreeing to the amendments proposed by the Department of Women and Child Development on the Draft note on the amendments in the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1956 communicated vide their letter No. 3039/Secretary (WCD) /2000, dated 31.7.2000, the National Commission for Women made the following additional points for consideration the government⁸.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development released the draft “**Trafficking of Persons (Prevention,**

Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2016 on 30th May 2016⁹.

Present Scenario

Despite innumerable efforts taken by the government, immoral trafficking in human beings, particularly in women and girls continues in alarming proportion. A government data released in India in 2016 authenticates that almost 20,000 women and children were victims of human trafficking in the country in 2016, with a rise of nearly 25 percent from the previous year. NCRB showed that almost equal numbers of women and children are trafficked. The data says, there were 9,104 children trafficked in 2016 which was a 27 percent increase compared to the previous year and that of women rose by 22 percent with 10,119 victims¹⁰. West Bengal which shares borders with Nepal and Bangladesh is known as a human trafficking hub and for that reason registered more than one – third of the total number of victims in 2016. Rajasthan recorded the second highest number of trafficked children in the year, while Maharashtra showed the highest number of trafficked women.

Table-1 not only indicates the continuous increase in the number of cases registered from 2005 to 2015 under various categories¹¹. However, there might be chances for many more cases unregistered and unreported.

TABLE - 1
Details of cases related to trafficking of women registered
during 2005-2015
Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2005 - 2015

Year	No. of Cases Registered				
	Procurat ion of Minor girls (Sec. 366 - A IPC)	Importation of girls from foreign countries (Sec. 366- B IPC)	Selling of girls for Prostit ution (Sec. 372 IPC)	Kidnapp ing & Abducti on of Minor girls (Sec. 363 to 373 IPC)	Cases under Immoral Traffic (Prevent ion) Act, 1956
2005	145	149	50	78	5908
2006	231	67	123	17414	4541
2007	253	61	69	20416	3568
2008	224	67	49	22939	2659
2009	237	48	57	25741	2474
2010	679	36	130	29795	2499
2011	862	80	113	35565	2435
2012	809	59	108	38262	2563
2013	1224	31	100	51881	2579
2014	2020	13	82	57311	2617
2015	3087	6	111		2641

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, the incidences of human trafficking show a rising trend during the period between 2009 to 2015¹². A total of 13 cases of

importation of girls from foreign country were registered during 2014 compared to 31 cases in 2013 showing a decline of 58.1% over the previous year. The maximum number of cases were registered in Bihar (5 cases) followed by West Bengal (4 cases), 2 cases were registered in Jharkhand and 1 case each in Assam & Maharashtra during 2014.

Cases under the IT (P) Act, 1956 have registered an increase of 1.5% during the year 2014 as compared to the previous year (2,579 cases). 509 cases were reported in Tamil Nadu followed by Karnataka (392). Under the Immoral Traffic (P) Act, maximum cases were registered under section 5 of IT (P) Act (766 cases) followed by section 7 of IT (P) Act (129 cases), section 8 of IT (P) Act (113 cases) and section 6 of IT (P) Act (90 cases). Out of 113 cases reported under section 8 of the IT (P) Act (relating to seducing or soliciting for the purposes of prostitution), maximum cases were reported in Kerala (55 cases) followed by Karnataka (21 cases) and Tamil Nadu (19 cases), these three States together accounted for 81.4% of total such cases. Out of 766 cases reported under section 5 of the IT (P) Act (relating to procuring or inducing or taking persons for purpose of prostitution), the number of maximum cases were reported in Tamil Nadu (110 cases) followed by Telangana (105 cases), Karnataka (104 cases) and Maharashtra (100 cases), these four States together accounted for 54.7% total such cases. There were 3,351 victims (consisting of 595 males and 2,756 females) for 2,617 cases reported under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act.

Cases under the head procurement of minor girls have increased by 65.0% during the year 2014 as compared to the previous year (1,224 cases). 852 cases with equal number of victims were reported in West Bengal followed by Assam (303 cases & 303 victims). There were 2,025 victims for 2,020 cases. The maximum number of cases of procurement of minor girls were reported in West Bengal (852 cases) followed by Assam (303 cases), Bihar (280 cases) and Haryana (277 cases) during 2014.

Cases under buying of minors for prostitution have increased by 133.3% during the year 2014 as compared to the previous year (6 cases). In 2014, data collected under buying of minor for prostitution whereas in previous edition it was collected under buying of girls for prostitution. A total of 7 cases in Maharashtra followed by 4 cases in Jharkhand were reported under this crime head.

A total of 82 cases of selling of minors for prostitution were reported in the country during 2014 as against 100 such cases in 2013, thus indicating a decrease of 18.0% over 2013. West Bengal has reported 67 such cases accounting for 81.7% during 2014. As per NCRB, more than 50% of human trafficking involved minors and close 90% of them were girls trafficked to be forced into prostitution in 2015¹³.

Rehabilitation Measures

In 1998, the Department of Women and Child Development drew up a Plan of Action and constituted a Central Advisory Committee to combat trafficking¹⁴. Measures were introduced to rescue and rehabilitate victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, and activate legal and law enforcement systems to strengthen the implementation of the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act. State Advisory Committees on Trafficking have been set up and guidelines issued for effective implementation of the Plan of Action. The existing legal framework for tackling trafficking, including the Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act is presently being reviewed. The government should handle the cases in a serious manner. The Group of Ministers (GOM) recently proposed amendments to the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1986¹⁵. The States, Union Territories and the National Commission for Women accepted the amendments suggested by the group of ministers with their own suggestions. The amendments also provided for additional clause for a constitution of central nodal authority for combating trafficking in women and children at the national level with similar authorities at the State level. Community awareness and community involvement being essential for prevention of trafficking, the involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions in anti-trafficking work are other important steps taken by the Government. UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Home Affairs organized the **“South Asia Regional Conference on Human Trafficking”**

as a part of the Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking (UN-GIFT)¹⁶.

In December 2015, the Supreme Court of India directed the government to establish an organized crime investigative agency by December 2016 to investigate human trafficking cases, and rescue and rehabilitate the victims¹⁷.

In 2016, the Ministry of Women and Child Development formulated a Central Scheme called **Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking for Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation – Ujjawala** with the aim of preventing trafficking on one hand and rehabilitating the victims on the other, which has come into effect from 1 April 2016¹⁸. The central government budget for the Ujjawala Programme was increased from 180 million in 2015 – 2016 to 240 million in 2016 -2017. In May 2016, the central government revised programmes for rehabilitation of female sex trafficking victims and the compensation was increased to 3,00,000¹⁹. The Government is spearheading active advocacy against trafficking in partnership with NGOs, and has formulated a detailed media campaign using TV, radio and print. Emphasis is placed on awareness generation, networking amongst stakeholders, counseling, non-formal education and vocational training for prevention of trafficking. Various States have taken special measures to combat this evil and introduced schemes for rescued women. However, the NGOs who rehabilitate the victims continue to report the inadequacies of government shelters

which results in overcrowding. Both government and NGOs running shelters face shortage of financial resources and trained personnel, especially counselors and medical staff, and rely mainly upon donors.

Conclusion

It is very difficult to eradicate this social evil as long as caste based and gender discrimination are prevalent. Other impediments against the socio-economic development of women should be removed. Awareness about trafficking in women and girls should be created in society. NGOs' role is more important not only in combating this crime, but also in the successful implementation of rehabilitation programmes for the rescued victims. Special women's cells should be opened in the police stations to deal with these cases. The police should interrogate the victims with empathy and be stern towards the perpetrators. The international consensus is more important to deal with migration and trafficking in human beings. High levels of legal reforms and legal awareness are needed for combating this menace.

References

1. Article 3, paragraph (a) of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).
2. Aruna Goel, *Violence and Protective Measure for Women's Development and Empowerment*, Deep and

- Deep Publications Private Limited, New Delhi, 2004, p.222.
3. Resolution A/RES/55/25 of 15 November 2000 of the General Assembly.
 4. www.atsecondia.org retrieved on 21. 11.2017.
 5. United Nations Treaty Collection (UNTC).
 6. *Act No. 104 of 1956*, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.
 7. *Act No. 104 of 1956*, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India. *Act No. 44 of 1986*, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India.
 8. *Annual Report 2000-2001 of the National Commission for Women*, New Delhi, pp.23-24.
 9. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, September 14, 2016. *Annual Report 2015-2016, National Commission for Women*, New Delhi.
 10. *National Crime Records Bureau Report, 2016*.
 11. *National Crime Records Bureau Report, 1996 – 2014*.
 12. Crimes in India, 2015, National Crime Records Bureau.
 13. *The Indian Express*, September 01, 2016.
 14. Programmes of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.
 15. *The Hindu*, June 26, 2005.
 16. *Annual Report 2007 – 2008*, Ministry of Women and Child Development.
 17. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, December 10, 2015.
 18. Programmes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, April, 2016.

19. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

The Historian at Work: A Sreedhara Menon and the Practice of Kerala History

Sreerekha P.L.

Senior Research Scholar

Department of History, University of Kerala

Abstract

This research paper on 'The historian at Work: A Sreedhara Menon and Practice of Kerala History' attempts to critically examine the major works of A Sreedhara Menon and place them in a proper historical perspective. Through his copious historical writings Menon established himself as 'the historian' of Kerala' and meticulously replenished the vacant spaces of historical knowledge with scientific objectivity. His confident narrative of the ancient, medieval and modern history of Kerala called, 'A Survey' was pioneering and exceptional in scholarship and content. The political, social and cultural history of Kerala, till contemporary times, inter-alia, was studiously examined and published. Menon was perhaps the first historian of modern India to candidly recognize the comprehensive contributions of Sir C P Ramaswami Aiyer and present him in objective finesse. No other historian in Kerala can match the broad spectrum of his work that moulded the psyche of the modern Malayalee in more than one way. Lapses in the use of

conceptual tools and ideological anathema were part of the scholar's panache that he marginalized with empirical strength and fierce determination never compromising with the historians' sovereignty.

Key Words: *Methodology-Empiricism- Objectivity- Popular-Historian-Kerala-Survey- Political history- Culture- Social Reforms- British- Travancore- Cochin- Malabar- Indian National Congress- Abstention- Memorials- Residents- C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer- American Model- Punnappra – Vayalar-Maharaja- Revolt.*

E H Carr and Fernand Braudel were two noted historians who opposed Ranke's ideas of empiricism as naive, boring and outmoded. They averred that historians did not merely report facts but selected them to suit a rational causative chain. Braudel's approach was based on the *histoire probleme*. The legacy of Ranke's dictum that historians should represent the past *wie es eigentlich gewesen* (as it actually happened) represented the strongest opium of the nineteenth century¹. Ranke was probably the most important historian to shape the historical profession as it emerged in Europe and the United States in the late 19th century. A Sreedhara Menon schooled in that generation of historical method legitimized historical writings in Kerala by imbuing it with empirical data, wider holistic narrative and a literary flair.

A Sreedhara Menon, Kerala's most celebrated historian of modern times largely emulated the method of doing history

popularized by Leopold von Ranke. However, Sreedhara Menon went beyond the dictum in his practice of history, especially at the later stages of his career. The hypothesis would be that Sreedhara Menon substantially followed the Rankean method, anchored in public/government records, and subsequently realizing the inherent constraints of the methodology became more interpretative and perhaps speculative in the last phase of his writing history.

A Sreedhara Menon in his major works (Malayalam and English) dealt with a wide spectrum of historical material covering the ancient, medieval and modern periods of Kerala history². Sreedhara Menon meandered from the Thucydidean obsession with accuracy to the officially patronized perceptions of Polybius. He intertwined Rankean Positivism strangely with the Trevelyan fetish of 'history as art' and in a consummating flourish of his career as a historian, arrived at the interpretative 'deconstruction' of the received legacy of Travancore history³.

Historiographical tradition in Kerala was weak in the ancient and medieval period. It was during this time that chroniclers and historians like Vaikkathu Pachumoothathu, Herman Gundert, Samuel Matter, William Logan, Nagam Aiyya, T K Velupillai, P Sundaram Pillai, T A Gopinath Rao, K P Padmanabha Menon, Sardar K M Panikker and others emerged. Among them, A Sreedhara Menon, in terms of spatiality and profundity, covered extensive new ground and added fresh dimensions to Kerala historiography⁴.

Sreedhara Menon had made significant contributions to the historiography of Kerala in the popular and academic perspective. He wrote more than twenty five books in English and Malayalam, which have been widely accepted by the reading public and the academic community. He did extensive research and studies on modern Kerala. *A Survey of Kerala History* (*Kerala Charithram* in Malayalam), is one of his noted works that runs through the history of Kerala from the ancient to the modern period. A work in thirty exhaustive chapters, which begins with the geography of Kerala reminiscent of the Annales School, builds his mansion of history on it. This work exhaustive for the period it traverses in terms of space and time is a crucible for the study of his method and philosophy of History⁵. This work was largely responsible for the impression that Sreedhara Menon was a chronicler, a master of the Gazetteer style and at best an empirical historian of the Rankean mould drawing broad comparisons with Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Menon's background as a Gazetteer *par excellence* reflected in his historical works to large extent. The significance of Gazetteers goes back to ancient history and Greek Gazetteers were known to have existed since the Hellenistic era⁶. Perhaps this backdrop allowed Menon to introduce comprehensive geographies in his studies. On the other end of the spectrum were his later works like, *Sir. C. P. yum Swathanthra Thiruvithamcorum: Charithra Rekhakaliloode* (Mal.); *Sir. C.P Thiruvithamcore Charithrathil* (Mal.); *American Model Arabikkadalil: Sir. C. P yude Parajayappetta Bharana Parishkara Nirdesam* (Mal.) *Punnapra Vayalarum Kerala Charithravum* (Mal.);

Swathanthra Thiruvithamcore Vadavum Sir. C. P enna Villanum, Vittupoya Kannikal (Mal.) along with its comprehensive English version, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore: Annals of Sir. C P's Sixteen Years*. These works were complemented by the *History of the University of Kerala* in two volumes with an unpublished third⁷. These works saw Menon at his interpretative best shedding his image as a monotonous chronicler juxtapositioning one dull fact after another in chronological sequence. The series on the freedom movement in the state are well received and widely discussed and assimilated works⁸.

The works of A Sreedhara Menon can be broadly classified into major and minor works. This paper endeavors to analyze the major works of A Sreedhara Menon and his practice of history. The major works of A Sreedhara Menon have been categorized on broad parameters of scholarship, exhaustiveness of the review and general acceptance of the academia and lay public readership. They are: *A Survey of Kerala History* (1984); *Cultural Heritage of Kerala*, (1978); *Social and Cultural History of Kerala* (1979); *A Political History of Kerala* (1988); *Kerala and Freedom Struggle* (1997); *Indian History*, Part I, II and II (1995); *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore: Annals of Sir.C.P's Sixteen years* (2001) and the *History of the University of Kerala Vol I and Vol II*. (2003). The Malayalam works largely convey the same historical themes with a linguistic difference that has

made Sreedhara Menon a popular historian reaching out to all sections of the Kerala population. This aspect has institutionalized his histories and made him a powerful intellectual. The Malayalam works are: *Kerala Charithram* (Mal.), Madras, 1967; *Kerala Samskaram* (ed.) (Mal.), Kottayam, 1978; *Kerala Charithra Silpikal* (Mal.), Madras, 1987; *Adhunik Kerala* (1885-1957) (Mal.), Kottayam, 1988; *Sir. C. P. yum Swathanthra Thiruvithamcorum: Charithra Rekhakaliloode* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1991; *Kerala Rashtreeya Charithram* (1885-1957), Kottayam, 1996; *Keralavum Swathanthrya Samaravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1997; *Punnapra Vayalarum Kerala Charithravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1999; *American Model Arabikkadalil: Sir. C. P yude Parajayappetta Bharana Parishkara Nirdesam* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2000; *Swathanthra Thiruvithamcore Vadavum Sir. C. P enna Villanum*” *Vittupoya Kannikal* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2000; *Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai*, New Delhi, 2001; *Sir C.P. Thiruvithamcore Charithrathil* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2003. All these works are widely accepted by historians, students of history and the popular readers.

A *Survey of Kerala History* along with its Malayalam version *Kerala Charithram* (Mal.), has become the popular *piece de resistance* of A Sreedhara Menon. It aimed at making available to the general reader and the University student a brief general survey of the history of Kerala through the ages and not a research imbued comprehensive history⁹. It gave him a place in the historiography of Kerala and historical scholarship in general, thereby moulding the

contours of his academic identity. The work went on to become one of the most notable of the works produced by Menon. It was an attempt to understand the history of Kerala in its totality, in many ways analogous to Sardar KM Panikkar's *Survey of Indian History*. In thirty chapters of three hundred and fifty pages Menon tells us the history of over two thousand years. It analyses and narrates the history of Kerala in mostly a traditional and conventional manner firmly embedded in official and corroborated secondary sources. The presentation is in an easy flowing language comprehensible to both the expert and layman. In this work, A Sreedhara Menon endeavours to present a continuous narrative from the Sangam Age to the modern period. The influence of Elamkulam P N Kunjan Pillai notwithstanding, the lucidity, simplicity and brevity in treatment, selection of facts and their negotiations are noteworthy. A Malayalam version of this book titled as *Keralacharithram* has also been brought out by the same publishers¹⁰.

The most prominent feature of the *Survey* is that it is the first book that rationally glues all periods of Kerala history into a compact story. It commences its historical enquiry by positing Geography in the backdrop of Kerala's history and casually alluding to its deterministic role in the pre historic and historic period of Kerala's past¹¹. It also deals with the cultural history of the state. Regional or local history had not been taught even at the graduate level in Kerala until the 1960's¹². Menon's experience as the editor of the *District Gazetteers* had given him the requisite confidence to write this book with authority¹³.

A Sreedhara Menon follows an interdisciplinary approach while analyzing the geographical and environmental features of different areas and land formations of Kerala, the climate, flora, fauna, etc. Rationally critiquing the ‘Parasurama legend’ Menon said that: “There is very little historical or factual basis for the Parasurama tradition, Parasurama himself being considered a mythological hero. The legend seems to have been concocted at a certain stage by interested parties with a view to popularizing the theory of Brahmin predominance. There are references to the legend of Parasuram’s creation of Kerala from the sea in Kalidasa’s *Raghuvamsa* (Chapter IV verse 53) and in the ‘Thiruvallangadu Plates’ of the reign of Rajendra Chola (1012-1044). It was handed down from generation to generation and finally enshrined in the *Keralolpathy*, a Malayalam work of doubtful historical value compiled sometime in the 18th or 19th century.” Though Menon rejected the Parasurama tradition, he expatiates that the legend unambiguously pointed to some geographical facts connected with ancient Kerala. To justify his contention, he gives some geographical and geological theories to prove Kerala’s origin from the sea. In the same chapter, the historian also scrutinizes the origin of the place names Kerala and Malabar. He averred that an examination of the theories regarding the origin of place names ‘Kerala’ and ‘Malabar’ were profoundly relevant to Kerala history¹⁴.

Conscious of the importance of historiography and methodology, A Sreedhara Menon delineates the evolution

of history writing and its practice in Kerala. The contributions of scholars like Elamkulam P Kunjan Pillai and other historians of Kerala are evaluated. Sreedhara Menon expatiates: “The native scholars of the age who wrote works on the early history of Kerala were preoccupied with political history. The emphasis on social or cultural history was missing in their works”¹⁵. He also pointed out that the contents of the *Thiruvithamkoorcharithram* (Malayalam, 1868) by Pachumoothathu and the *History of Travancore* (1878) by P Shangunni Menon bear evidence to this lopsided treatment. This aspect of historical perception among early writers of Kerala history had also been critiqued by Sardar K M Panikkar. Sources obviously were the backbone of the study of Sreedhara Menon and it gives credibility to the work. Traditional sources, literature, Sanskrit works, Tamil literature, Malayalam works, classical accounts, Chinese accounts, Arab sources, European travelogues, Archaeological sources, monuments, palaces, forts, coins, inscriptions, *et al.*, form part of his study. Menon classifies the sources under two major heads; Literature and Archaeology. The literary sources are again classified as indigenous and foreign. He had also divided archaeological sources into three sections such as monuments, coins and inscriptions. Interestingly, Menon had also interrogated his sources to ascertain their credibility as genuine historical sources reminiscent of the research method of Leopold Von Ranke¹⁶. The scholar in Menon had analyzed the historical perceptions of Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai and the genealogy and chronology as worked out by M G S Narayanan.

Inter-alia., Menon deals with the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English powers in Kerala; the rise of Venad under Marthanda Varma; history of Cochin and its relation with foreign powers, etc. On the chapter dealing with the Mysorean interlude, the scholar brings out the important socio- economic and political results. To Sreedhara Menon, the most decisive political result was the disappearance of the feudal system of administration and its replacement by a centralized system of government. Another major fact pointed out by Menon is that the Nayars who played a prominent part in the resistance to Haider and Tipu, lost their position of pre-eminence in the body politic of the state. The author feels that the Mappila riots of the 19th century were in many ways the outcome of the Mysorean invasion¹⁸.

Menon concludes his survey with an analysis of the modern history of Kerala. He examines the backdrop of the socio-religious movements of Kerala leading to renaissance, the political movements in Travancore and Cochin, the unification of Kerala as a state, the rise and fall of various ministries, *et al.* To sum up, it can be asserted that the *Survey of Kerala History* is the only book which deals with the complete history of Kerala of this genre. This highlights the place of A Sreedhara Menon in the writing of Kerala history.

Another seminal work of A Sreedhara Menon is the “*Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore – The Annals of Sir. C.P’s Sixteen years*” (2001). This work is reflective of a methodological change in Sreedhara Menon. We see an

interpretative flourish in the scholar who was largely relegated to the status of a Rankean chronicler by his critics. Sreedhara Menon authored a series of works on C P Ramaswami Aiyar (C P). Among those works *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore* deserves special mention. All the works by Menon have generated debates and criticisms largely due to the dispassionate nature of his presentation anchored in archival data and corroborated evidences. The work is an interpretative and exhaustive account of C P Ramaswami Aiyar's years in Travancore, first as Constitutional Advisor (1931-36) and then as Diwan (1937-47). In the preface of the work, Menon states that "The period of sixteen years, 1931-47, covered in this volume is marked by triumph and tragedy in the history of the erstwhile Travancore which today forms part of the state of Kerala and is still fresh in the memory of an earlier generation which has not yet become extinct"¹⁹.

In a fine deconstructive discourse in three hundred and thirty two pages segmented into fifteen chapters, Menon tells us the history of sixteen spectacular years of Travancore's past that in many ways constructed modern Kerala. Sreedhara Menon expatiates: "I have written this volume mainly on the basis of the study of primary sources, hitherto unutilized, in the hope that I would be able to set the record straight for the benefit of those who value historical facts as they are"²⁰. He has also discussed some important land marks in Kerala history and the role of Sir. C P Ramaswami Aiyar in it. These chapters are : 'Travancore National and Quilon Bank Crash'; 'Legislative Reform and

Abstention Movement'; 'The Struggle for Responsible Government'; 'American Model Constitution'; 'Punnapra Vayalar'; and the 'Independent Travancore Imbroglio.' The last three chapters were 'Relations with the Press'; 'The Communal and Caste Scenario' followed by a 'Miscellany'. Finally an 'Epilogue' was included by the author. Through this work, the historian covers almost all important matters relating to modern Travancore history.

In this work, the dialogue between the author and his facts takes us to a higher plane of interpretation in examining the relationship between Chithira Thirunal and C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Menon brings in an exhaustive array of documentary evidence to prove his thesis exonerating C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar of the charges levelled against him by insufficient scholarship. Archival and related documentary sources from the National Archives and Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi are garnered in support of his historical averments. Here the author re-examines his earlier contentions and initiates a new dialogue with sources. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar is presented in a new incarnation as a compliant, devoted and extremely loyal subject of the Maharaja. Menon expatiated that: "Neither of the two let down the other by blaming each other for the lapses and failures of the administration. At the same time each gave credit to the other for all positive achievements of the reign"²¹. The one quality, which stands out in C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar is his mature loyalty. While he took the blame on himself for all the failures. He attributed his success to the co-operation that he received from the Maharaja in abundant measure. Sreedhara Menon

points out that there were ample opportunities for C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar in later years to speak about the developments in Travancore during his Dewanship, but he refrained from doing so and embarrassing the ruler whom he had served with devotion and competence for a long period. This deconstruction of the villain that C P Ramaswami Aiyar was in the minds of the common people, by an acknowledged historian of Kerala, went a long way in clearing many myths around the venality of the Dewan's administration.

Sreedhara Menon states unambiguously that: "All decisions on matters of state, major as well as minor, were taken after serious discussions between the ruler and the Diwan, with the Maharani herself sometimes being present"²². He presents an image of Ramaswami Aiyar, supported by facts, as a man of steel surrounded by men of straw and whose only fault was unflinching loyalty to the Royal family that he served and owed allegiance to. A Churchillian image emerges from this historic portrayal. The title analogous to Winston Churchill's *'Triumph and Tragedy'* adds to the endorsement. During his long tenure as Diwan, Ramaswami Aiyar did make Travancore a model state in British India with myriad reforms and innovative administration. The author laments in the earlier chapters of the book as to how Sir C.P. was misunderstood by society and historians and was eventually heading towards being nothing more than a foot note in the history of free India. C.P. was presented anew as an intelligent and farsighted statesman who took the blame for wrong policies and mal-administration leading to mass protests on himself mainly because of his

unflinching loyalty and dedication to the Royal house of Travancore. This deconstructed historical presentation of A Sreedhara Menon led to the blame being foisted on the Travancore monarchy and the Royal house much to the chagrin of the descendants of the Maharaja Sree Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma.

A watershed in CP's administration was the Temple Entry Proclamation of November 1936, a milestone in the history of Travancore and India. At the instance of C P Ramaswami Aiyar, Maharaja Sree Chithira Thirunal issued the proclamation which gave Hindus of all castes, including Harijans or untouchables, the right to enter Hindu temples in the state. "In this work, Sreedhara Menon has demonstrated how a major historian can apply his mind, without pride and prejudice to unravel the realistic portrait of a society and an age under C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar" ²³. While the *Survey of Kerala History* was a path-breaking and pioneering effort in presenting the history of the state and its people in an adequate conspectus, but, his *magnum opus* is his brilliant and exhaustive account of C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar's years in Travancore.

Sreedhara Menon authored a monumental two volume work which portrays the *History of the University of Kerala*. He compiled a history of the University in two parts out of which one is based on the University and the other based on affiliated colleges under it. Sreedhara Menon considered this work as his most important. His tenure as a Registrar enabled him to write this work with authority. This work of Menon is

in many ways of a different genre. The two volumes of the *History of the University* of Kerala presents the history of all the departments of the University, teaching, research and administration accurately and honestly without fear or favour. The University of Travancore was established in 1937 by a Royal Proclamation by His Highness Balarama Varma-Maharaja of Travancore to promote technological education in the state, to encourage original research in various branches of applied sciences and to provide education to all classes of people. The conversion of the Travancore University into the University of Kerala in 1953 gave a new impetus to the educational process in the state. It played a leading role in the field of education and culture in Kerala. A Sreedhara Menon in these volumes delineates the history of the University from its establishment to the Golden Jubilee year of 1987²⁴. He describes the administration, academic programs, institutions, etc., related to the University in detail.

In the first volume of the work, there are X chapters and each part is divided into various sub-headings. There are 580 pages in the first volume. The first part of the work titled as “Historical background” gives a wide knowledge about the history of Education in Kerala and the University of Kerala. Here, Sreedhara Menon also mentions about the role and the contribution of C P Ramaswami Aiyar, who was holding the post of the legal and constitutional Adviser to the Maharaja since 1931, “as a trusted friend of the family” and who assumed the office of Dewan on 8 October 1936. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the then Dewan of the state was the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Travancore. He

was an eminent scholar and administrator²⁵. Through this work, Menon gives a clear picture about the rich history of the University of Travancore and its evolution. The ten parts of the first volume are: historical background; officers of the University; authorities of the University; General administration; University finance; course of studies and academic programmes; research, planning and development; academic Department; and finally other departments, centres and institutions. All these parts are equally important because it includes each and every detail about the University affairs. This work is marked largely by dogged empiricism in a narrative mode.

In the second volume of the work, a *History of University of Kerala*, there are seven parts and 255 pages. The seven parts of the work are titled as Students Unions, Student's Services, Examinations, Elections, Residential matters, and affiliated Colleges. B Iqbal, Former Vice Chancellor, University of Kerala reveals that: on the occasion of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Kerala University, Sreedhara Menon was entrusted the responsibility of writing the history of the University. In record time even without accepting or hoping for any remuneration from the University, he completed the work. The *History of the University of Kerala* by Sreedhara Menon is the only authentic history not only of the Kerala University but also of the advent of the higher education institutions in Kerala. While examining the crisis of the higher education sector in Kerala, it will be worthwhile re-reading the history of Kerala University again and again. Menon had meticulously recorded

the strengths and weakness of our higher education sector in this volume. In many situations, Menon was a daring historian who was not afraid of the powers that be, either of the present or past, when it came to calling a spade a spade, presenting unpleasant historical truths with candour²⁶.

Political History of Modern Kerala (1987) by A Sreedhara Menon deals with the political movements in modern Kerala. The political developments in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, leading to the Aikya Kerala Movement which culminated in the formation of Kerala in 1956 are traced in a scientific manner. The freedom movement along with popular movements, with their focus on issues of local importance is candidly delineated. Such movements in the Travancore, Cochin and Malabar regions of Kerala are showcased in this work. Sreedhara Menon broadly mapped the history of political movements in modern Travancore commencing from 1885, and this was the year of the accession of Sri Moolam Thirunal to the throne. The political movements in the state are broadly divided into three phases. Such as, the constitutional agitations sponsored by the educated middle class, the struggle for democratic and civil rights waged by the lower classes in Hindu society and Christian and Muslim religious minorities and finally the peoples movement for the achievement of responsible government of the state²⁷.

Sreedhara Menon brings out the importance of the birth and rise of the Travancore State Congress, agitation for responsible government and the rise of the Communist Party.

The Punnapra-Vayalar uprising was a Communist uprising against Maharaja in the princely state of Travancore. Common men with slogans of “chuck the American model into the Arabian Sea” confronted the police in the streets²⁸. The police resorted to suppressive measures as a result of which thousands of people lost their lives. In this chapter, Sreedhara Menon gave a short description about the uprising. He argued that “The tragic happenings of Punnapra and Vayalar cast a pall of gloom all over the state. Though the Travancore State Congress was opposed to adoption of violent methods to achieve political objectives, it registered its emphatic protest against the repressive measures resorted to by the government to put down the communist insurrection²⁹. Menon also accepts the fact that in spite of its immediate failure, the epic struggle of the workers of Punnapra and Vayalar made its own contribution to the eventual liquidation of autocracy and the establishment of responsible government in Travancore.

Sreedhara Menon in a chapter on ‘Political upheavals in Malabar’ analyses the political developments of the region. The Malabar district, a part of the erstwhile Madras Province of British India actively participated in the Indian freedom struggle. Manjeri political conference, Non Co-operation, Khilafat movement, Malabar rebellion, Payyannur political conference, salt satyagraha, Guruvayur satyagraha, Civil disobedience movement, Right- left polarisation in the Congress, Congress Ministry, Quit India movement, et al., were the major landmarks that have been discussed in this chapter.

The Manjeri political conference saw the first open split between the extremists and moderates within the Congress structure. Any survey of the political history of Malabar would be incomplete without a special mention about the Muslim League. Here, Menon concludes this chapter with a valuable sketch of the role of Muslim League. Malabar became the theatre of almost all the national and political movements related to the freedom struggle of India and then have been succinctly highlighted by Menon. The most significant feature or merit of Sreedhara Menon is his ability, as the master of methodology, to select sources that have been verified and corroborated for its authenticity from a plethora of documentary and non-documentary sources³⁰.

Kerala has a great cultural heritage. The culture of Kerala is a part of both Indian and Dravidian culture even though it has its own inimitable essence and endearing flavour. *Cultural heritage of Kerala* by A Sreedhara Menon picturizes the life and culture of the people of Kerala. It is the study of the evolution of Kerala culture in the general backdrop of Indian culture. Through this work, Sreedhara Menon endeavours to consummate all facets of Kerala's life and activity, viz., religious, artistic, social, economic, and political. In his delineation, he underscores the integrative and assimilative tradition of Kerala culture³¹. This work first published in 1978 has a Malayalam version titled as *Kerala Samskaram*. The seventh impression of the book was published in 2007. The work in three hundred and twenty pages describes and analyzes the varied aspects of Kerala's rich cultural heritage. The chapters are so planned as to make

available to the reader a broad understanding of the diverse aspects of the life and culture of the people of Kerala in a historical perspective. The confidence of Sreedhara Menon in recreating the past of Kerala with élan came from his personal experiences. In 1958, he joined the Kerala State Gazetteers department as its first state editor- a position which he held until 1968. This Gazetteer experience for more than a decade made it easy for Sreedhara Menon to compile any aspect of Kerala history and its culture³².

Another notable work by A Sreedhara Menon is *Kerala and Freedom Struggle* (1997). This book was actually written by him for the Government of Kerala on the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Indian Independence as per the personal request of the Director of Public Relations. However, the government decided to entrust the writing of the book to a committee of three members including Menon. The work was to be completed in consultation with E M S Namboodiripad. Sreedhara Menon disagreed and protested. He did not want to write history as per external political dictates³³.

Here we can see the mind of an independent and objective historian who was not ready to compromise in the writing of history. He published the book independently. It marks the history of Kerala from May 1498, when Vasco de Gama landed at Kappad, to August 1947. This work was first published in the English language, titled as '*Kerala and Freedom Struggle*'. The Malayalam version of this

book is also available in the market entitled as '*Keralavum Swathanthrya Samaravum*'³⁴.

The most valuable contribution made by Sreedhara Menon in the field of History is his work on Indian history, Vols I and II (1956); *Modern India – A History since 1707* (1989) and its Malayalam version '*India Charithram*' Part I and II.(1972)³⁵. These works aimed at a readership ranging from students to lay public and gave primacy to tradition, civilization, culture, geographical features, *et al.*, A major criticism against these works is that they sought to explain myriad causative factors in Indian history without any evidence of substantive research. However, the work satisfied the desire of the reader for credible historical information in a cogent narrative without claiming to be an original research effort.

The task of presenting facts in a scientific historical perspective was initiated by Menon with his monumental work *A Survey of Kerala History*. This work remains unrivalled in the wide spectrum of its coverage and extreme readability. His major work provide the readers with all information concerning the land's past and present. Although he adapts extensively from the works of earlier historians of Kerala, he presents his improvised narrative with originality and lucidity in an inimitable style. History writing preceded Sreedhara Menon in Kerala but its compartmental and periodical treatment left much to be desired. Although Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai presented a large number of problems on Kerala history with a critical

perspective, he failed in presenting his findings in a correct methodological perspective. There have been historians in Kerala who have excelled Menon in their research and understanding of micro historical themes³⁶. However, he remains unchallenged in weaving together micro aspects into general narrative of Kerala's history giving meaning and life to segmented facts. As Kerala's story teller of the past, he remains unquestionably its *numero uno*.

References

1. Peter Baofu, *The Future of Post-Human History, A Preface to a New Theory of Universality and Relativity*, Cambridge, 2012, pp.288-290; Also vide, E H Carr, *What is History?* Great Britain, 1980, p.10.
2. Vide Malayalam works: Sreedhara Menon, A., : *Kerala Charithram* (Mal.), Madras, 1967; *Kerala Samskaram* (ed.) (Mal.), Kottayam, 1978; *Kerala Charithra Silpikal* (Mal.), Madras, 1987; *Adhunika Keralam (1885-1957)* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1988; *Sir. C. P. yum Swathanthra Thiruvithamcorum: Charithra Rekhakaliloode* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1991; *Kerala Rashtreeya Charithram (1885-1957)*, Kottayam, 1996; *Keralavum Swathanthrya Samaravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1997; *Punnapra Vayalarum Kerala Charithravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1999; *American Model Arabikkadalil: Sir. C. P yude Parajayappetta Bharana Parishkara Nirdesam* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2000; *Swathanthra Thiruvithamcore Vadavum Sir. C. P enna Villanum" Vittupoya Kannikal* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2000; *Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai*,

- New Delhi, 2001; *Sir. C.P Thiruvithamcore Charithrathil* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2003.
3. *Vide*, A Sreedhara Menon, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore: Annals of Sir CPs Sixteen Years*, Kottayam, 2001; Alappatt, Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala Charitram and Samskaram* (Malayalam) Kottayam, 2013.
 4. K K Kusuman, *Issues in Kerala historiography*, Thiruvananthapuram, University of Kerala, 2003.
 5. A Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Madras, 1984
 6. Robert C White, "Early Geographical Dictionaries," *Geographical Review* (Volume 58, Number 4, 1968), pp. 652–659.
 7. A Sreedhara Menon, *History of the University of Kerala*, Trivandrum, 2003.
 8. A Sreedhara Menon, *A Concise Political History of Kerala: 1885-1957*, Madras, 1987; *Political History of Modern Kerala*, Kottayam, 2011; *Social and Cultural History of Kerala*, Trivandrum, 1979; Also *vide*, K K Kusuman, *The Abstention Movement*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1972; P K Karunakara Menon, *History of Freedom Movement in Kerala (1885-1938)*, Vol.II, Trivandrum, 1966.
 9. A Sreedhara Menon, Preface, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 2007.
 10. *Vide*, Alappatt, Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala Charitram and Samskaram* (Malayalam) Kottayam, 2013.
 11. *Vide*, K M Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, Bombay, 1969.

12. T P Sankarankutty Nair (ed.), *India: Yesterday and Today*, Trivandrum, 2009, p. xx.
13. In an interview with A Sreedhara Menon at the Academic Staff College, Kariavattom, University of Kerala.
14. A Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1967, pp. 20-23.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Wood Gray and others, *Historian's Handbook, A Key to the Study and Writing of History*, second Edition, Boston, USA, 1991; Also vide, Fritz Richard Stern, (ed.), *The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present*, New York, 1956.
17. A Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1967, pp. 220-248.
18. *Ibid.*
19. A Sreedhara Menon, Preface, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore – The Annals of Sir. C.P's Sixteen year*, Kottayam, 2001.
20. *Ibid.* p.23.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. In an interview with the historian, M G S Narayanan, on 20 May 2015, at Calicut at his residence from 11.00 am to 02.30 pm.
24. A Sreedhara Menon, *A History of the University of Kerala*, Vols.I, II, Trivandrum, 2003.
25. *Ibid.* p.30.
26. *Ibid.*

27. A Sreedhara Menon, *Political History of Kerala*, Kottayam, 1987.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.* pp.40-42.
30. *Vide*, Louis Gottschalk, *Understanding History, A Primer of Historical Method*, second Edition, New York, 1968; Also *vide*, Wood Gray and others, *Historian's Handbook, A Key to the Study and Writing of History*, second Edition, Boston, USA, 1991; Also *vide*, Fritz Richard Stern, (ed), *The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present*, New York, 1956.
31. A. Sreedhara Menon, *Cultural Heritage of Kerala*, Kottayam, 1978.
32. *Ibid.* p7.
33. In an interview with the A Sreedhara Menon at the Academic Staff College, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997. Also in an interview with the historian, M G S Narayanan, on 20 May 2015, at Calicut at his residence from 11.00 am to 02.30 pm.
34. A Sreedhara Menon, *Keralavum Swathanthriya Samaravum*, (Malayalam), Kottayam, 1997; Also *vide*, A Sreedhara Menon, *Indiacharithram*, Part I and II (Malayalam), Kottayam, 2016.
35. A Sreedhara Menon, *Indian History*, Vols I and II, Madras, 1956; *Modern India – A History since 1707*, Madras, 1989.
36. Also *vide*, T R Shama Bhat, *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, January 1982; vol. 19, 1: pp. 91-92.

BOOK REVIEW - 1

Beyond Stones and More Stones *Defining Indian Prehistoric Archaeology*

Edited by

Ravi Korisettar

Vol.1

This is an edited volume containing an anthology of eleven papers dealing with different aspects, mostly prehistory.

The first chapter is an introductory one by Professor Ravi Korisettar entitled 'Beyond Stones and More Stones: Defining Indian Prehistoric Archaeology', making the reader aware of the definition and scope of Indian Pre-history and dealt in important sub-headings such as major issues and new leads; Discussion related to the early expansion of hominins out of Africa and anatomically modern humans (AmHs) in the subcontinent, etc. He has also made an attempt to give a brief account or summary about the rest in the chapters, i.e., 2nd to 11th followed by Caveat.

Chapter 2 'The Hunt for the Last Common Ancestor: Hominoids and Hominins in the Indian Subcontinent' by Anek R. Sankhyan reveals the historical survey of palaeoanthropological search for the last common ancestor

of MioPliocene hominoids and hominids from the Subhimalayas and firmly observes the presence of hominin diversity in the Narmada valley as well as the co-existence of several lineages at least four, i.e., large bodied archaic human (*Homo heidelbergensis*), short and stocky archaic human (*Homo narmadensis*), short and stocky lineage evolved from the second lineage and short bodied lineage forming the ancestral stratum of ancient populations of mainland India.

In Chapter 3 ‘The Genus *Homo* and the African Exodus’ by the Editor himself has dealt with a comprehensive summary of the current status of knowledge of human bio-cultural evolution since the Late Miocene. He further observes that the colonisation of Eurasia should be viewed independent of Europe-centric models based upon inadequate treatment of archaeological, geographical and genetic information from the Asian continent and Australia.

Chapter 4 entitled ‘Out of Africa, into South Asia: A review of archaeological and genetic evidence for the dispersal of *Homo sapiens* into the Indian subcontinent’ presented by Michael Haslam along with Stephen Oppenheimer and Ravi Korisettar, critically viewed over and looked at various theories relating to out of Africa and based on dated archaeological and generic data from South Asia and placed the eastward dispersal of *Homo sapiens* outside of Africa to be sometime during the first half of the Late Pleistocene with the support of evidence of archaeological, genetic and fossil findings.

Chapter 5 by Sheela Athreya on ‘Major issues in South Asian prehistory and early history: A view from the genome’ presented her observation with the development of more extensive sequencing techniques of mtDNA, Y-chromosome and autosomal DNA that has been possible to accurately delineate the history of varied sub-populations in the subcontinent. Her identification of four broad questions regarding the south Asian populations are quite interesting to anthropologists, i.e., What was the timing and route of entry of earliest hominins into south Asia during Pleistocene?, The relationship of modern day tribal populations to the earliest inhabitants of south Asia?, Relationship of caste populations to the tribal populations and the difference between the north and south Indian ancestral groups?.

Chapter 6 on ‘Monsoon climate and marine isotopic stages over the Indian subcontinent during the last 200,000 years’ by Shradda Band et.al., deals with a number of palaeomonsoon studies from various monsoon proxy records (both marine and terrestrial such as tree-ring width, density, stable oxygen, etc.) generated in and around the Indian Ocean region affected by monsoons. In this study focus has been made on the last ~200ka, and summarises how monsoonal changes were linked to marine isotopic stages representing global climatic fluctuations.

Chapter 7 by John A. Westgate and Nicholas J.G. Pearce on ‘Quaternary tephrochronology of the Toba Tuffs and its significance with respect to archaeological studies in peninsular India’ is a major contribution to fix absolute

chronology of alluvial sequences, Palaeolithic cultures, the primary and secondary context of youngest Toba Tuff (YTT) in the peninsular Quaternary sequences. Both these authors reconfirmed that all tephra samples from India belong to YTT in view of different dates produced by different laboratories on the same sample and that there are old tephra marker beds associated with the Acheulian culture in India.

In Chapter 8 ‘Pleistocene geoarchaeology of the west coast of India: Are there Palaeolithic settlements submerged in the continental chelf ?’ by Sushma G. Deo and S.N. Rajaguru, have discussed about the archaeological record of the west coast of peninsular India and suggests that future marine archaeological studies in the offshore zone of the west coast may reveal buried Palaeolithic sites on the Fifty Fathom Flat (FFF) and the shelf edge basin of the continental shelf of the Arabian sea.

Chapter 9 by Tam Smith, Jinu Koshy and P.Arvezhi on ‘Excavating Limesone Caves in India: The Bill Surgam Experience’, is about a graphic description of meticulous excavation efforts against the historical background of clearly stated aims and objectives of cave expeditions and changing emphases since 1883 (R.B.Foote) and the authors declare that the limestone caves were the best targets for a successful expedition in the past as well as now through a well organised multipronged excavation programme in 2008 with the objective of establishing an absolute dating for human occupation. The significant results of their expedition being three fold a. Identification of 2,00,000 year continuity of

mammalian fauna in the cave; b. the first identification of YTT in a cave environment and c. The first directly dated rock art in India. They also place an view that there is still more to be done in view of investigating Holocene use of the cave as well as rock art.

Chapter 10, by Ceri Shipton on ‘Chronological patterns in the Indian Acheulian culminating in the transition to the Middle Palaeolithic’ is a presentation of discussion on the scope for identifying chronological patterns in Indian Acheulian and focuses on shifts in typology between older and later Acheulian assemblages with particular reference to the assemblages from Bhimbetka IIF-23 rockshelter excavations. The author recognises the existence of the technological behaviour of hominins and their cognition in the choice of raw material usage exclusively in the case of flake blanks, extension biface use-life, biface refinement and marginalisation of bifaces relative to small flake tools, etc.

Chapter 11 on ‘Lithics at the crossroads: A review of technological transitions in south Asia’ by Chris Clarkson, Clair Harris and Ceri Shipton dealt with one particular issue, i.e., the nature of transitions between the Lower Palaeolithic, Middle Palaeolithic and Microlithic in India and what does the lithic evidence tell us about. They would like to pay attention to the critical role of the Indian subcontinent in current debates on human expansions out of Africa in terms of geographical location and rich archaeological records even if this potential observation has not yet been fully realised through this chapter.

By editing the collection of eleven chapters dealing at different angles, Prof. Ravi Korisettar is of the opinion that Indian prehistoric archaeology has really moved beyond stones and more stones and categorically states that the study of prehistoric archaeology should doubtlessly become a synthesis of sciences not only for meticulous documentation of archaeological record of data but also generate models for the reconstruction of behavioural pattern of prehistoric populations.

P.C. Venkatsubbaiah, Ph.D.

Associate Professor,
Dept.of History, Archaeology and Culture
Dravidian University, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh

BOOK REVIEW - 2

An Outline of the Aryan Civilization, Manohar, Delhi 2017, pp. 265

R.N.Nandi

History cannot exist for long on the shoulders of traditional historians. We talk of the merits of professional writings, values of genuine research on the basis of actual findings from primary sources and need of freedom of thought in reaching any objective conclusions; but the barrier of the schools to which we proudly belong does not let us any liberty to break off its disastrous wall even to some extent. R.N.Nandi, eminent historian of ancient Indian history remarks in the concluding lines of the Introduction to his work *An Outline of the Aryan Civilization* (the book under review), “the duty of a scientist, artist or writer is to engage in conflicts against repressive regimes of knowledge. Any kind of limited knowledge is a form of bondage.”

R.N.Nandi has been dedicatedly engaged in delving deep into the Rig vedic study for over three decades and has published to his credit several research works like *Aryans Revisited*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi 2001), *Ideology and Environment: Situating the Origin of Vedic Culture* (Aakar Books, Delhi 2009), *An Outline of the Aryan Civilization* (Manohar, Delhi 2017), and has very recent work, *The Rgveda in its Historical Setting* (Primus, Delhi

2018), besides a number of articles including “*Anthropology and the Study of Rgveda*”, “*Archaeology and the Rgveda*”, “*Aryan Settlements and the Rgveda*” and so on, which have appeared in the Journals of *The Indian Historical Review*, Delhi.

The book under review falls into thirteen chapters besides a short introduction, a laboriously prepared bibliography and an extensive general index. Use of transliteration throughout the book is a welcome feature of the book. One appendix following the chapters mentions a table showing declensional variation in Old and Middle Vedic language. It is actually appended to chapter eleven “*Ethnicity and Dialect Variation*”. The conclusion is not provided at the end and this a general reader may miss; but probably the author wants the readers to go through thoroughly all the thirteen chapters and take in the esoteric truth about the Aryans.

The introduction discusses the meaning, age and land of the Aryans. The author says that the Arya of the *Rgveda* represented a loose association of diverse and disparate ethno-cultural groups at the same or different levels of social formation, interactive or unrelated, each with a separate identity but all thriving together under a common religious umbrella. Further, it has been pointed that *dasa*, *vrtra*, *pani*, *pakhta*, *bhalana*, *siva* or *visanin*, all of whom represented divergent ethnic groups, could become an Arya, physical feature and dialect being of little importance in the ideological study. The Arya is said to easily go back to the late third or early second millennium BCE which may

correspond to Middle Bronze Ages described by archaeologists. The homeland of the Aryans stretched from Haryana and Rajasthan in the east to Afghanistan on the west, and from the valley of Kashmir in the north to Kutch, Sindh and Baluchistan in the south, except for certain parts of Afghanistan. This area was also the home of the Greater Indus Valley Civilisation (north of north-west Asia).

The first chapter discusses the nature of the state during the Rig Vedic period. The chiefs of the Vedic period are described to have possessed fortified settlements, the structure as forts with a thousand pillars. The King was infallible, youthful, destroyer of enemies, endowed with royal power and provider of beautiful dwellings to his people.

The second chapter chiefly underlines the role of corporate bodies like *Vidatha*, *Sabha* and *Samiti* under the title “*The Form of Government*”. How the religious authentication of political power inevitably gave rise to the doctrine of the divine right on kingship is the main discussion of this chapter. The third chapter entitled “*The City and the Citadel*” argues that the Rig Vedic Aryans built their citadels and fought among themselves for disposing one another from their strongholds, as Sudas did in relation to Anu and Puru. The author emphasizes that the fort or citadels occupies the pride of place in the description of bards of the *Rig veda*. The three terms *vr̥tra*, *vr̥jana* and *durgaare* said to mean strongly built masonry structures. The description of these structures in the *Rgveda* correspond to walled habitation and citadels found throughout the Greater Indus Valley.

The fourth chapter gives a detailed account of merchants and money lenders, discussing routes and merchandise of the Bronze Age. Terms like *ṛna*, *kṛi* (to purchase), *niṣka*, *ṣulka* etc. relate to the trade activities of the Aryans. *Vanīk*, *paṇi* and private bankers are discussed as professional traders. The fifth chapter “*Cruising the Blue water*” chiefly outlines the maritime activities of the Vedic Aryans. This is very remarkable when a general notion prevails that the Aryans simply knew the sea, and wonderfully, to some scholars of Rig Vedic Aryans who were not aware of it. The author frequently writes that the rescue operation carried out by *Asvins* on the high seas was among the most celebrated episodes relating to voyages and ship-wrecks. Tidal waves, monsoon winds and gulfs, marine fires, sea faring crafts all seem to suggest that maritime activity was carried out on a huge scale during the Rig Vedic period. The sixth chapter gives an elaborate account of caravans on dusty tracks. Chapter Seven highlights at length the practice of crafts and craft working during the period. It also discusses agricultural tools like plough, plough share, yoke and so on, besides the wooden handles of ripping and cutting implements like *srini* and *dātra*. Further the craft of weaving has been described as a very popular profession of the Rig Vedic people.

The story of the cow- tale finds mentions in chapter eight in which the strong hold of Rig Vedic Aryans upon cattle has well been underlined. Cattle-based agricultural life of the Rig Vedic people who had their own permanent dwellings is noticed in a large number of Rig Vedic hymns. Discussions relating to existence of peasants and plough-lands are the

subject matter of chapter nine. The writer observes the sound agricultural foundations and high end peasant surplus in the Rig Vedic society on the basis of the sources that focus upon territorial kingdom, walled urban places, specialised production of crafts goods and long distance trading journeys by land and sea. There are illustrations of crop production and consumption in the tenth chapter. A large number of terms for summer and winter crops, cereal dishes, plough lands etc, find mention in this segment. Chapter eleven under the title “*Drainage and Discord*” describes the history of drainage activities in north western South Asia during the Bronze Age and this shows the high socio-economic development of the period. Here is also a sound depiction of the long spell of hydrological crisis throughout north western south Asia during the Middle Bronze Age dated 2300 BCE -1750 BCE. A large number of Rig Vedic hymns frequently repeat the natural calamities like low precipitation causing drought and crop failure. The archaeological records also endorses the same view.

The twelfth chapter “*Language and Ethnicity*” suggests that the old Iranian and the Indo Aryan originally belong to a Dravidian dialect. Both the Dravidian and Indo Aryan influences were upon the Elamite, a major dialect of Iran, roughly between the mid third and mid first millennium BCE. The thirteenth chapter, the last one relates to ethnicity and after life ideology of the Rig Vedic people. Divergent Vedic communities are said to have shared different funerary practices with other ethnic groups in the concerned localities. The idea of full cremation came into being in north western

South Asia as early as mid third millennium BC. Cremations, full or partial, are mentioned in funerary hymns of the *Rig Veda*. Major types of burial pits at Kalibangan, Harappa and Surkotada have been found in oval, rectangular and round shapes. These pits are well described in the *Rig Veda*. The term *arohantu janayahyoni magre* is significant in the *Rig Veda*. The term *yoni* means a firepit, furrows of a cultivated field, a home, and female genitals. The term may also relate to burial pit.

The formulations of the author described in each chapter are deep, scientific and analytical. Each chapter seems to have been prepared assiduously and meticulously. For primary sources, the author has chiefly depended upon four volume *Rig Vedic Samhita* with the *Commentaries of Sayana*, edited by F. Max Muller, first published in 1890-2. Placing text citations and other references in the main narrative and not as footnotes is the other attractive feature of the book. This may help the reader to easily look for references and not deviate unnecessarily.

All the presentations are well documented, seriously planned and nicely written. The meaning of the ideas presented in the monograph is indicative of the high intellectual grasp of the author which encompasses both logic and objectivity. The book is not meant for a mere bird's eye view, rather for a diligent, close and serious study. It will make the reader appreciate the diligence and hard work put in by the author. Existing formulations relating to meaning, date, areas and scope of the *Rig Veda* are quite

far away from those of the author, hence to many, accepting new ideas becomes problematic. But a researcher in the true sense of the term cannot compromise with simplification of writing history and must take in the views of the writer as most convincing and thus acceptable.

S.N. Arya, Ph.D.

University Professor of History,
Patliputra University, Patna

